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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news.

Jetstar CBR routes

JETSTAR Airlines has announced new Canberra flights linking with Melbourne and the Gold Coast.

The new daily flights from Melbourne will take off from Jul, while Gold Coast services will commence in Sep flying four times weekly.

The services mark the first time Jetstar has operated the routes, which are anticipated to bring an additional 100,000 tourists to the ACT each year.

The announcement follows the successful launch of Brisbane-Canberra flights in Dec.

Intrepid invests in CABN

INTREPID Travel has announced a \$7.85 million investment in off-grid accommodation developer CABN, which currently offers 11 "cosy-minimalist escapes" across Australia.

CABN's self-contained, eco-friendly tiny houses are built offsite from predominantly locally sourced and sustainable materials, and once completed are transferred to private land in partnerships with farmers or other landholders.

The Intrepid investment will accelerate CABN's plans to deliver over 70 properties by 2023, with the deal feeding into an "increase in the vertical integration of Intrepid's businesses," according to CEO James Thornton.

Future plans will see

CABN included as featured accommodation in a number of Intrepid trips, with Thornton saying "CABN's offering and business model aligns perfectly with our move into the accommodation vertical, and is a natural fit within our vision to grow as a purpose-led adventure travel company".

CABN, which claims a 90% occupancy rate for its existing locations, will continue to be run by founder Michael Lamprell.

Intrepid's push into the accommodation sector also includes last year's partnership with Drifter Hospitality Group to acquire and rebrand "sustainable owner-operated premium hybrid hotels (**TD** 25 Oct 2021).

Rex adds one more

REX Airlines has signed a Letter of Intent to lease an additional Boeing 737-800NG aircraft.

The airline's Deputy Chair John Sharp said: "with the full reopening of borders, Rex will continue to expand its domestic fleet and will look at introducing new aircraft whenever these become available for lease at favourable terms".

It will join Rex's current fleet of six Boeing 737-800NGs, in addition to its 60 Saab 340s.

The announcement follows a deal signed by Rex to form a reciprocal interline ticketing services agreement with Delta Air Lines (**TD** 02 May), which will kick in from Q3 and allow Rex pax to connect to DL's daily flights between Sydney and LA.



Earn commission in 2022 with Viking's river cruise sale

Earn commission this year when you book your clients on one of Viking's three most popular river journeys in 2022. For a strictly limited time, Viking is offering a special cruise only fare that allows your clients to explore Europe from only \$267 per day. Plus, your solo travellers will get 75% off the single supplement for the special cruise only fares in selected stateroom categories.

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Hockey hooks Adina

ADINA Hotels has announced a two-year partnership with Hockey Australia, including the sport's flagship national teams, the Kookaburras and Hockeyroos.

Adina Hotels becomes Hockey Australia's exclusive Accommodation Partner supporting teams as they play competitively in Australia, NZ, Europe and Asia.

The pact also sees Adina as an Official Partner of the various Australian Hockey Championships including U13, U15, U18, U21, Country Challenge and the Men's and Women's Masters.

Japan confirms tourist trial

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has confirmed that some of its current strict restrictions on tourism will ease next month.

Speaking in the UK, Kishida suggested that the easing would initially allow small groups of vaccinated tourists to visit, with a trial possible even in late May seeing groups undertake fixed itineraries to allow officials to trace movements and respond to any COVID-19 outbreak.

Currently inbound travel to Japan is restricted to students and holders of business visas.



Six new Mediterranean cruise offers you can't miss

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Charging regional tourism

THE NSW Government has announced a major investment in electric vehicle charging stations, a move the state believes will provide a major boost to regional tourism over the next four years.

The grants totalling \$20 million will be offered in amounts of \$2,000 through to \$40,000, with an expanding electric vehicle network enabling Aussies to leverage a growing demand for environmentally-friendly vehicles.

NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, Sam Faraway, added that a series of electric vehicle tourist drives would also be developed across the state to promote more travel across regional NSW following the rollout of the EV chargers.

"This will grow local economies and support small businesses in areas impacted by COVID, bushfires and floods," he said.

The grants will be co-funded in partnership with eligible NSW

businesses who can benefit from an expanding charging network, with businesses encouraged to apply for grants **HERE**.

NSW said it was aiming to increase electric vehicle sales to 52% of all new car sales by 2030-31, with broader funding to inject \$131 million towards manufacturing ultra-fast charging infrastructure and a \$20 million investment in charging in commuter car parks.

The news follows moves by major car rental companies to migrate their fleets across to electric vehicles, including Hertz, which announced a major partnership with Sweden-based electric vehicle maker Polestar last month (**TD** 06 Apr), purchasing up to 65,000 electric vehicles over the next five years, as well as the NRMA opting to represent electric vehicles for the German SIXT brand in Australia (**TD** 02 Dec 2021).

Hotels heating up

IHG Hotels & Resorts is continuing its rural expansion with a Crowne Plaza signing on New South Wales' south coast.

Crowne Plaza Shell Cove Marina will be IHG's first hotel in the region when it opens in 2025 in collaboration with Oscars Group.

The announcement is one of a number of recent hotel updates in Australia over the past week, with BWH Hotel Group to debut its Executive Residency brand in Australia in the last quarter of the year with the Executive Residency Woolloongabba.

BWH has signed an agreement with ARBT Property Group for the hotel, which will be positioned just two kilometres from downtown Brisbane.

Internationally, a new Rydges Hotels & Resorts property is also coming to Rotorua, New Zealand.

NZ Hotel Holdings announced **EVENT** Hospitality & Entertainment as the operator of the property late last week.



Window Seat

AN AUSTRALIAN cricketer was almost fatally dismissed on a flight while holidaying with his partner in The Maldives.

Travis Head and Jessica Davies were flying home from a holiday in The Maldives when, about 30 minutes into the journey, the plane started to rapidly descend, an Instagram story posted by Davies claimed.

"We ended up landing on an island 45 minutes away from our destination," she wrote, adding "after our second landing attempt, we slid off the tarmac into a field."

After the emergency landing of the The Maldivian Airlines flight, Davies added that passengers were herded into a room without means of communication for 45 mins.

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May travelBulletin is out

THIS month's gun issue of *travelBulletin* has been released, featuring an array of travel analysis, industry roundups and expert opinion pieces.

The magazine's cover story delves into how the entry of Bonza will affect the local aviation sector, consulting senior airline executives about how the sector can survive having four major players in what Qantas CEO Alan Joyce has characterised as "one of the world's most competitive markets".

Adam Bishop speaks with Bonza's CEO Tim Jordan and Rex Airlines Deputy Chairman John Sharp to pick their brains about the future of aviation and commercial hurdles Australia faces, as well as what the upside is for challenger brands against market leader Qantas.

There's also commentary from CATO and CLIA, our regular wrap-up of some of the biggest travel, cruising and tourism industry stories from the last month, and



this month's feature on mental health from Tim Hoopmann, as well as a special introduction to *The Jackson*, Sydney's newest multi-million-dollar floating events venue.

The magazine is available for viewing and download now at travelbulletin.com.au.

Hotel's top dog

A **NEW** study of the world's hotel chains has revealed the Holiday Inn brand to be the most Googled over the last 12 months.

The report from Bounce showed the Holiday Inn more than doubled second place with 24.4 million searches, followed by Hilton's DoubleTree (11.04 million), Crown Plaza (8.8 million), Hilton Hotels (8.74 million), and Embassy Suites (8.71 million).

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Behind the Archibald scenes



REGENT Seven Seas Cruises was last night showcased to an exclusive art-loving audience as the major sponsor of the Art Gallery NSW Members at their annual Archibald Preview Party at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Attendees were the first to preview the finalists in this year's Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes before they opened to the public, and also enjoyed drinks, canapes and dancing along with some fabulous door prizes.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises recently announced a new partnership with the Art Gallery Society of NSW (**TD** 08 Apr), "reflecting both organisations' commitment to providing stimulating art experiences that enrich the arts community and the lives of individuals engaging with the work of artists".

Steve Odell, Senior VP and MD Asia Pacific of Regent Seven Seas Cruises, addressed attendees before the doors of the exhibition opened, highlighting the line's

Walker joins Royal

PHILIPPA Walker has been appointed to a new role as Partnerships Manager with Royal Caribbean International.

Her travel industry career has seen Walker in previous senior roles with Nine Publishing and The Travel Corporation.

meticulously curated onboard art collections, immersive lectures from art historians and exploring galleries the world over on shore, noting that "if art is your world, Regent Seven Seas Cruises can transport you there".

He's **pictured** with Regent Seven Seas Cruises VP and GM Lisa Pile, and Business Development Manager, Scott Graham.

QF points to travel

QANTAS has announced a major boost in availability of reward seats on domestic flights, with more than 1,700 so-called "Points Planes" to operate from capital cities to mostly regional destinations during Aug.

Points Planes allow every seat to be booked using Qantas Frequent Flyer Points, with the move giving members access to almost 130,000 Classic Reward seats.

Routes on offer include services from Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide, Canberra and Brisbane into over 20 regional destinations such as Uluru, Broken Hill, Coffs Harbour, Merimbula, Newcastle, Orange, Mildura, Tamworth, Burnie, Townsville, the Sunshine Coast and Mount Gambier.

Seats on the services can also be purchased with cash, while QF has announced a 30% reduction in the number of points needed to book reward seats on the flights.



With more major players in Australian aviation than ever before, the competition to fill seats is heating up. Plus more industry news in the May issue of *travelBulletin*.

travelBulletin

Airline queries spike

AIR New Zealand has revealed that many of its customers have indicated a preference for in-person help to organise their travel plans, as many are finding protocols increasingly confusing.

"For a lot of our customers, these trips will be their first in more than two years, and it's different to what it used to be and the new travel environment is complex, and what we're hearing from our customers is that they have a preference to speak to a person rather than booking online or using an app," said Air NZ's Chief Customer and Sales Officer Leanne Geraghty.

Previously around one in eight customers called the airline before travel, now it is seeing one in three, resulting in the carrier's wait times on the phone rising by 50% from pre-COVID to 16 mins.

Air NZ is now looking to add approximately 200 additional consultants in a bid to tackle the call wait time issue.

Minor adds distribution

HOTELBEDS has inked a new strategic partnership with Minor Hotels Australia and New Zealand, a deal which will encompass the hotelier's Oaks Hotels, Resorts & Suites and Avani Residences properties.

The agreement will see Hotelbed's network of travel agents able to access to Minor's

60 properties located throughout Australia and New Zealand, with the company's New Zealand Group Director of Sales, Daniel Csorntan, suggesting the timing of the tie-up was ideal as confidence in travel continues to grow in Australia and New Zealand, as well as globally.

"As confidence in corporate and leisure travel continues to increase, it will be invaluable to have access to their high-value distribution channels to reach a broader market of travel buyers," Csorntan said.

Hotelbeds is a bedbank that provides over 300,000 hotel properties internationally, providing segments such as travel agents with a wide range of travel products, including rooms and booking experiences.

The news comes as Hotelbeds ceased trading in Russia and Belarus last month due to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

Driven to new highs

MELBOURNE'S hotel industry recorded its highest monthly room rates on record for Apr on the back of the Australian Grand Prix, new figures from STR show.

Average daily rates reached \$238.30, while occupancy levels were also the highest since Feb 2020 at 65.1%.

A report commissioned by the Victorian Major Events Company estimates the racing event delivers around \$1.4 billion in economic value annually.

\$86m for NT tourism

THE Northern Territory Government will invest \$86.4 million into the territory's tourism and events sectors, according to its latest Budget papers for 2022.

The funding will look to support "world-class attractions, boosting visitation and enhancing visitor experiences", with the breakdown to see \$14.2 million for direct tourism marketing over the next 12 months, \$1.3 million to attract and retain tourism workforce, \$2 million for a third round of the Roadhouse to Recovery Grant program, and \$1.9 million towards the NT Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2020-2030.

Sandals deaths

THREE American tourists have died at the popular Sandals Emerald Bay resort in the Bahamas over the weekend, with US reports suggesting a toxic coolant leak in the property's air conditioner may be to blame.

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HK nightmares

THE European Chamber of Commerce has labelled Hong Kong a travel “nightmare”, citing a range of remaining protocols as stifling business operations in the Chinese territory.

In a letter penned to outgoing Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam, the group said the destination needed to dispense with rules that suspend air routes when too many COVID infected pax arrive on a specific flight, adding that many of its members had “given up” on Hong Kong due to the risk of being stranded.

LATAM restructure

LATAM Airlines has flagged its ambitions to emerge from Chapter 11 Bankruptcy in the United States at some point in the second half of 2022.

The South American carrier’s confidence has been buoyed by a creditor’s vote to support a reorganisation plan, which will signal new funds into the company through a mix of equity, convertible notes and debt.

A Confirmation Hearing will take place later this month to formally evaluate the plan, the final hurdle to exiting Chapter 11.

Adina breaks the chains



TFE Hotels has confirmed its makeover of the historic Pentridge Prison site in Melbourne will be completed later this year and able to welcome its first guests.

A wider lifestyle precinct will accompany the 110-room Adina Apartment Hotel Melbourne, Pentridge hotel, with developers Shayher Group also constructing surrounding shopping areas, dining outlets & outdoor cinema. The hotel itself will be the refreshed result of the former Division B section of the prison, which TFE Hotels said will aim to

“seamlessly blend contemporary architectural design with the building’s distinct and remarkable heritage.”

Pictured: An artists conception of what the Adina Apartment hotel will look like.

BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily*’s Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you’d like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Scenic - The Arctic & Fjords 2023/24
Scenic has unveiled six new voyages in its 2023/24 *Scenic Eclipse* Arctic & Fjords brochure release. Marking a new era in expedition cruise *Scenic Eclipse II* is set to join the ultra-luxury Discovery Yacht fleet in 2023. This has enabled 40 new landings throughout the Arctic and fjords region to be featured in this collection, including reaching more destinations like Scotland and the Canada’s high Arctic tundra, providing travellers with the opportunity to discover new horizons and venture further than ever before in ultra-luxury.



SeaLink - Discover the Best of Kangaroo Island
SeaLink’s new 43-page Discover the Best of Kangaroo Island and South Australia 2022/2023 brochure showcases the tour operator’s day-trip and overnight Coach tours in the destination, as well as the new two-day/one-night Kangaroo Island Sights & Gourmet Delights 4x4 Kangaroo Island Odysseys tour. SeaLink’s ever-popular Kangaroo Island self-drive holidays feature in the brochure with ready-made, self-drive short break packages including ferry transfers and accommodation. Self-drive packages range from three to six days.

SL public emergency

DFAT has warned Australian travellers that a public emergency has been declared in Sri Lanka and curfews can be imposed with short notice, as anti-government protests grip the country.

Aussies are encouraged to carry relevant travel and identification documents with them at all times.

Tourism crucial: UN

THE first-ever session dedicated to tourism and how it can help the world’s economy grow was held by the UN last week, with themes such as sustainability and developing nations key among the roundtable discussion.

“Tourism is a leading provider of opportunities because it is based on people and builds bridges,” noted UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

Cuba explosion

AT LEAST 27 people are dead and 81 injured after a blast at Cuba’s luxury Hotel Saratoga.

Preliminary investigations point to a natural gas leak as the likely cause of the explosion at the 96-room property, which was not housing any tourists at the time of the disaster as the building was being renovated for a major relaunch this month.

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