

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including the latest Corporate Update news.

Japan group trials

JAPAN will allow group tours into the country from 10 Jun. 'Test tours' are currently taking place, with the latest announcement coming ahead of the doubling of daily entries to Japan from Wed.

"We will resume accepting tourists on package tours with guides from the 10th of next month," Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said.

"Step by step we will aim to accept (tourists) as we did in normal times, taking into consideration the status of infections," he added.

Viking's Great Lakes

VIKING is celebrating the start of its inaugural Great Lakes season, with *Viking Octantis* recently completing a round trip through the Welland Canal.

One of the most modern vessels sailing in the Great Lakes, *Octantis* has been designed specifically for the region, and recently became the largest passenger vessel to ever traverse the key section of the St. Lawrence Seaway, which connects Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

Octantis will remain in the Great Lakes until early Oct, sailing a variety of itineraries between Toronto and Duluth.

Qantas paces up boarding

QANTAS has commenced rolling out its next-generation airport kiosks, which the carrier claims will make the airport experience for travellers much faster and easier for those travelling on domestic flights.

The new system can process boarding passes four times quicker than current models, with the process to print a bag tag now taking just 20 seconds.

It is a timely rollout for The Flying Kangaroo, which has faced the fury of passengers across the country who have endured major wait times as the country reboots its aviation sector after a virtual two-year hiatus.

Qantas has started a "limited trial" of new self-service kiosks in Terminal 3 at Sydney Airport, and following what it hopes will be a successful trial, the airline said it expects to have the kiosks fully installed in Sydney by early Jun and around 140 kiosks across all major Aussie airports by Sep.

With more than three quarters of customers already checking in online and using digital boarding passes on their smartphone, the

St. Regis is saintly!

A STUDY from Bounce has revealed the best-reviewed hotel chains in the world, with Marriott International's St Regis Hotels racking up a perfect 5/5 rating.

Unfortunately, Choice Hotels International's Econo Lodge scored worst, averaging 2.3/5.

new kiosks will primarily be used for bag tag printing, Qantas said, while customers will also be able to use the new kiosks to purchase additional checked bags.

Any travellers who haven't checked in prior to arriving at the airport will also be able to use QR codes on the kiosks to check-in online and receive a digital boarding pass, while customers will still have the option to be checked in by a human agent.

"The existing kiosks were instrumental in reducing queuing for check-in at airport counters when they were introduced more than 10 years ago, and these new kiosks will match the latest technology with customer preferences," Chief Customer Officer Stephanie Tully said.

WA parks its plan

WESTERN Australia has revealed more details about its planned national parks tourism initiative (TD 13 May), revealing a raft of new, "environmentally sensitive" tourism experiences and accommodation options.

\$6.5 million will go towards the development of eco lodges & retreats, \$7.6 million has been allocated for national park tourism experiences, while \$3.6 million has been awarded for tourism development staff to run workshops with operators.

MEANWHILE WA has launched a tourism jobs site available to access at westernaustralia.jobs.

Milkovic promoted

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has announced the promotion of Bree Milkovic to the role of SVP, Head of Digital Marketing for the company's portfolio of corporate brands, effective 01 Jun.

She was most recently the company's Digital Marketing Manager Australia, a role she has held since 2019, and will relocate to Toronto in Canada where Flight Centre said it will look to establish a "best-in-class global hub" to connect and support its regional digital marketing teams around the globe.

"With her capabilities and passion for digital, Bree's considerable talents and expertise will prove invaluable as we propel our corporate travel businesses forward," the company's CMO Frits de Kok said.

The focus of her role will be growing the revenue of Flight Centre's FCM and Corporate Traveller brands.

More corporate travel news can be found on [page four](#).

Kyushu lands in Oz

KYUSHU Tourism Promotion Organisation (KTPO) is coming to the Australian market, and has named Linkd Tourism as its PR agency for Australia.

The announcement follows the recent news of Japan's phased reopening, with Linkd Tourism set to work with KTPO to showcase Japan's third largest island to Australian travellers.



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Window Seat

WHILE space travel is really heating up now with Virgin Galactic, Space X and Blue Origin representing just a sprinkling of the movers and shakers in the growing segment, a new research paper may provide some sobering context to any future human endeavours into colonising the final frontier.

According to the paper, called *Estimating the Prevalence of Malicious Extraterrestrial Civilizations*, there are approximately four “malicious extraterrestrial civilizations” just in our own neighbourhood of the Milky Way.

Authored by Alberto Caballero, a PhD student in conflict resolution at the University of Vigo in Spain, the study reached its out-of-this-world conclusion by extrapolating data from invasions here on Earth, i.e. countries making incursions against other countries, and then took that data and applied it to the number of known and estimated and potentially habitable exoplanets.

That rationale is...out there!



Hook, line and tinker

SYDNEY-BASED hotelier Glenn Piper has swooped in to purchase the Hook Island Lodge in the Whitsundays, revealing plans to transform the property into a \$20 million eco-lodge.

The property, which has been closed since 2013, was badly damaged in cyclones twice over the last 11 years, with the previous private owners reportedly sinking plenty of time and money into repairs and plans to turn the property into a major tourism attraction.

Sustainability and culinary appeal will form a major pillar of Piper’s renovation ambition he revealed, with research and development tipped to kick off in Aug to see how the lodge can be positioned to attract both international and domestic travellers.

“I want to create an experience that befits the beauty of the island, and the Whitsundays - respectfully and sustainably,” the Meridian Australia founder said.

“I’m energised at the thought of creating a world-class hospitality experience for this slice of paradise.

“Eco-tourism and sustainability in design are very current trends now and that’s not going to go away, since COVID, domestic tourism is booming and overseas tourists are keen to visit the natural wonders of Australia,” Piper added.



The high-profile property entrepreneur has reportedly linked arms with a small syndicate to make the purchase possible, believed to be in excess of \$10m.

Piper is already the owner of the Harbord Hotel at Freshwater Beach in NSW, and Manly’s Historic Q Station boutique hotel.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Rick Hamilton said he was “delighted” the buyer was an Australian.

“I think it probably helps to have an Australian buyer because they’d feel a greater sense of ownership rather than an overseas investor with perhaps different priorities,” he said.

Hook Island is located close by to Hayman and Whitsunday islands, and boasts national park areas, pristine reefs and beaches.

Celebrity curates

CELEBRITY Cruises has announced the launch of its new ‘Captain-Curated’ shore excursions program, to be offered on its Greek Isles sailings in 2022.

The excursions combine an iconic destination experience with a “hidden gem”, and include visits to Katakolon, Athens, Mykonos and Santorini.

Celebrity Cruises CEO Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, said, “Greece holds a special place in our hearts that we are now uniquely sharing with our guests”.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see more details about the program.

Baggage issues out of control: SITA

THE global mishandled baggage rate shot up by 24% to 4.35 bags per thousand passengers in 2021, according to the *SITA Baggage IT Insights 2022* report, with delayed bags accounting for 71% of cases.

The return of overseas and long-haul flights during the pandemic recovery was a key factor in the increase in baggage mishandling, with bags 4.7 times more likely to be mishandled on int’l routes compared to domestic routes.



E-Commerce Lead - Asia Pacific

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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

Hotel breaking new ground



CENTRAL Element and Boston Global have broken ground on the 25hours Hotel in Paddington, the first in Australia (*TD* 14 Jan 2021).

Set to open next year, the property will play an important part in the future of Oxford Street, with the official beginning of construction celebrated by VIP guests, including Government of NSW 24-Hour Economy Commissioner Michael Rodrigues, City Of Sydney Night-Time City Manager Libby Harris, Accor Chief Executive Officer Pacific Sarah Derry, Boston Global founder & Chair Bill Moss, and Central Element Director Wayne Chivas (pictured).

“On behalf of the Central

Element team and Boston Global our joint venture partners, we are extremely excited to be officially celebrating the commencement of construction of our 25hours Hotel Paddington today,” Chivas proclaimed.

“We truly believe this project will transform this site on Oxford Street and be a catalyst in restoring Paddington to one of Australia’s leading leisure and lifestyle precincts,” he added.

When completed, the boutique hotel will feature 105 guest rooms, a rooftop bar, central garden courtyard, destination restaurant, cafe, retail and entertainment, as well as live performance facilities.

Flights still landing short

THE total number of passengers carried on international flights to and from Australia in Mar increased 10-fold on the same period last year, but was still well short of pre-pandemic levels.

The latest figures from The Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics published this week show that close to 700,000 travellers hopped aboard overseas flights, 80% shy of the 3.29 million passengers Australia processed in Mar 2019.

Qantas managed to increase its market share significantly for the month, accounting for 14.6% of the total traffic, up from just 2% in 2021, however the top performer was still Singapore Airlines which captured close to one in five of all recorded pax.

Emirates also showed solid gains in Australia, growing its share from 9.3% last year to 14% in Mar 2022, while Air New Zealand wasn’t too far behind with 9.4%, followed by Qatar Airways (9.2%), Fiji Airways (3.8%) and Jetstar (3.4%).

Close to half of all Australian flights either took off or landed at Sydney Airport which recorded

48.3% of the market, well ahead of Melbourne Airport which attracted close to 30% of flights.

Brisbane was the next best with 12.2% of services, followed by a marked drop to Perth Airport, which only clocked 6.6% of the country’s overseas trips.

Unsurprisingly, Singapore featured at the top of the list of most popular routes, with Sydney to Singapore accounting for 8% of total travellers, followed by Melbourne to Singapore (7.8%).

Another popular city pairing was Sydney to Dubai (6.2%), followed by Sydney to Los Angeles in fourth spot (4.5%) and Melbourne to Dubai rounding out the top five (3.9%).

Major airline movers in the local market in Mar included Air India, which carried close to 17,000 passengers for the period (up more than 16,000 pax), as well as Etihad Airways (up close to 20,000 pax), and Air Caledonie International (up by 2,500 pax).

One of the only carriers to reduce services between Mar 2021 and this year was China Southern Airlines, which reduced flight volumes from 3,340 pax to just 1,675 passengers.



PR Lead

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Marketing Executive - Trade

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CORPORATE UPDATE

Gap in travel priorities

ACCORDING to a recent survey by BCD Travel, duty-of-care is a top priority for travel buyers, followed by traveller satisfaction and wellbeing.

Despite this, only 62% of the 118 travel buyers surveyed said their companies provide travellers wellbeing support, and only 14% said their companies plan to increase budget for traveller wellbeing in 2022.

A previous BCD survey of 875 business travellers revealed that travel buyers rated mental support measures, such as stress management training and mental health counselling, as most important, while travellers prioritised physical wellbeing measures, including sleep and recovery advice, and gym membership while travelling.

The survey showed travel buyers and travellers agreed on the top five policy options to improve traveller wellbeing, including convenient hotel location, direct flights, and Business class for long-haul flights.

Freedom to decide to travel or

Atlas signs Zeno

ATLAS Travel has signed on as a Zeno by Serko reseller partner, with the aim of bringing the travel booking and expense platform to its customers in the North American market.

Atlas Travel says it is now in the process of implementing the user-friendly booking platform with its first client under the reseller agreement.

Atlas Travel Director of Product Management & Customer Implementations, Michael Dubsky, said, "we are pleased to offer Zeno by Serko as an online booking platform option for our valued clients."

"We continuously strive to tailor our product and service offerings to meet the demands and business needs of our clients... Zeno allows us to meet that objective."

not and a simple trip approval process were both ranked by travel buyers as important policy options for traveller wellbeing, while travellers preferred plane seat selection and fast-track security programs.

BCD Travel Global Chief Operating Officer and Chief Commercial Officer, Mike Janssen, believes there is "a significant gap between wellbeing supply and demand, and differing views on which measures most support traveller wellbeing."

"Travel buyers should align their policies to what their travellers value and need...[and] put in more time and effort to clearly communicating the benefits of mental support, which is currently valued less than physical support," he said.

Read the full report [HERE](#).

Corp travel returns

FLIGHT Centre Business Travel (FCBT) has reported an increase in international corporate travel over the last three months, with overseas bookings now accounting for 40% of total sales.

The top three destinations for business travellers were the United States, United Kingdom, and United Arab Emirates, according to FCBT's booking data.

FCBT General Manager Cameron Harris said, "The appetite for SMEs to return to business travel is clear to see and in the month of Apr we were back to almost three quarters of our pre-COVID travel volume."

CTM appoints

JOHN Nicolls was welcomed into the Corporate Travel Management (CTM) team yesterday, after being assigned the newly created role of Global Head of ESG and Sustainability.

Nicolls will be responsible for expanding upon CTM's sustainability strategy and customer solutions.

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events@traveldaily.com.au

The Grand Tour of Catalonia



THE Catalan Tourist Board held an event on Tue at Catalan restaurant, Parlar, in Sydney to showcase its new product, 'The Grand Tour of Catalonia' to travel trade and media.

The Grand Tour of Catalonia, which is launching for the first time in Australia, is a 13-day road trip itinerary designed to appeal to travellers visiting the Spanish region with friends and families.

The itinerary takes travellers through Catalonia's main attractions, and allows them to experience the region's heritage, nature, wine and food, as well as its customs and traditions.

Catalan Tourist Board Asia-Pacific Regional Director, David Miro, spoke at the event, stating "this really is a tour designed for Australian travellers interested in authentic manifestations of local culture, as well as the traditions, customs, landscapes and gastronomy of each area."

Sandals update

AS STATED by a number of local reports, carbon monoxide was the likely cause of three deaths at Sandals Emerald Bay in the Bahamas (**TD** 09 May).

According to the resort, the three guests who died earlier this month perished in "an isolated incident".

What led to the noxious gas entering the room is still unclear.

"Catalonia is a responsible tourism destination with over 30% of the region being protected," he added.

Pictured at the exciting launch event at Parlar Restaurant are: David Miro, Asia-Pacific Regional Director - Catalan Tourist Board; Julie King, Founder & CEO - Julie King & Associates; Dean Long, Chief Executive - AFTA; and Brad McDonnell, Managing Director - Entire Travel Group.

RSSC goes huge!

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has revealed its longest world cruise in its 30-year history, the 150-night *Away in Wonder*, which is set to depart Miami aboard *Seven Seas Mariner* in Jan 2025.

Away in Wonder visits 97 ports of call in 25 countries, including Australia, as well as two new ports of call for RSSC – the remote Robinson Crusoe Island off the coast of Chile, and Muroran on the Japanese island of Hokkaido.

The cruise will also undertake a once-in-a-lifetime, three-day scenic sailing around Antarctica.

Other highlights include a glitzy pre-cruise gala event, and three shoreside tours in Buenos Aires, NZ, and Bangkok.

Fares for the 150-night sailing lead in from \$115,810 - pre-register your interest by calling 1300 455 200.

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BAC making noise to change

THE Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) has submitted a proposal to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) which seeks permission to allow aircraft at Brisbane Airport to increase landing speeds from five to seven knots in a bid to allay resident complaints about aircraft noise.

After completing a safety review with airlines and Airservices Australia, BAC said the plan was just one of many initiatives it is undertaking to reduce noise impacts on the community.

In its submission, the airport's management body noted it had operated with a 10 knot tailwind for thirty years without incident until CASA capped speeds at five knots in 2017.

Another area being looked at

to reduce noise is to increase the number of flights that arrive and depart over Moreton Bay, with BAC stating it wants to see more flights diverted onto these paths.

"BAC is working with... Airservices Australia to explore options that would allow more planes to depart and land over the Bay," BAC confirmed.

However, the plan to increase flights and speeds over Moreton Bay has already encountered headwinds, with the Australian Airline Pilots Association claiming seven-knot speeds are dangerous.

"Normalising tailwind operations reduces the capacity of our members to operate as safely as international standards require," the group's President Tony Lucas argued.



Regional Sales Manager - Southern Australia

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TRAVEL SPECIALS

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

Celestyal Cruises has introduced its biggest, lowest-price sale ever. The cruise line is advertising three-night sailings starting at \$479 and seven-night voyages from \$929, with inclusions such as two excursions, unlimited classic drinks, onboard dining, and taxes & gratuities. Book one of the selected cruises before 20 Jun to access this sale - celestyal.com/au.

Winter savings are available now at **Paperbark Camp**. The new-look luxury eco-camp has also announced 25% savings on midweek rates this autumn and winter, and all guests will receive a complimentary picnic and backpack to enjoy the beautiful scenery of Jervis Bay. The savings are available on stays until the end of Aug - paperbarkcamp.com.au.

Just a few days remain in **Stamford Hotels & Resorts'** Winter Flash Sale. Stay two nights at one of the company's properties and save 25% when booking this month, for stays between Jun and Aug. Find a hotel **HERE**.

Savings are available through **Cruise Traveller** on a luxury festive season cruise around Australia next year with Azamara. Save \$1,650 per couple on the ultra-luxe voyage to celebrate Christmas 2023 and the 2024 New Year, plus receive a complimentary mini-stay before or after your cruise in Perth or Melbourne. Book by 30 Jun **HERE**.

Venice tax delayed

VENICE has postponed its planned new tourist tax until next year, according to *Euronews*.

The levy, which is aimed at curbing the number of day trippers to the city to protect it from over-tourism, was initially slated to go into effect this northern summer.

Residents, students, and commuters will be exempt from the levy, which now won't be implemented until next year.

Overnight visitors to the Italian destination who book a hotel stay will also be exempt as they already pay a €5 per night tax.

In high season, tourists may have to pay as much as €10, while the fee will drop to €3 during less popular times.

Bali travel ban?

AUSTRALIA should ban travel to Indonesia during the country's foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak, Global AgriTrends analyst Simon Quilty argues.

A ban on Australian tourism into Indonesia for at least six months should be implemented due to the Indonesian Govt's "slow response to the crisis", Quilty said, adding the biggest concern was the island of Bali, arguing that FMD in cattle and pigs could hitch a ride back with tourists.

"We are creating highways through each of our airports for FMD because [FMD] is in Bali – and the disease can be carried on clothing," Quilty reasoned.

"We need to think seriously about banning people from Bali."

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper

Associate Editors– Adam Bishop,

Myles Stedman

Contributors – Nicholas O'Donoghue,

Anna Piper, Jenny Piper, Janie Medbury

info@traveldaily.com.au

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan and Hoda Alzubaidi

advertising@traveldaily.com.au

BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper

accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)

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