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MTA MICHELLE YOUNG

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## Travel Daily on location in Doha, Qatar

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of **MSC Cruises**, which last weekend named its new **MSC World Europa** in Doha.

**TRAVEL Daily** is heading home today after an exhilarating few days on board the innovative **MSC World Europa**.

The ship left port briefly this morning to reposition in preparation for the arrival of sister ship, **MSC Poesia**.

A sight to behold, the two vessels will port at the new Grand Cruise Terminal in Doha, Qatar throughout the FIFA World Cup this Nov and Dec.

Soon to be joined by sister ship **MSC Opera**, the three vessels will accommodate approximately 10,000 guests at a time throughout the games.

After the tournament **World Europa** will kick off her maiden season homeporting out of Qatar, before repositioning to the Mediterranean for the 2023 northern summer.

## Star Alliance in world 1st

**THE** world's first credit card created by an airline alliance has launched in the Australian market today, with Star Alliance partnering with HSBC Australia to offer the HSBC Star Alliance Credit Card.

Australian travellers can earn Star Alliance points on their everyday credit card purchases, which can then be converted to miles or points in participating Star Alliance member carrier loyalty programs, which include Air Canada, Air New Zealand, EVA Air, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, THAI and UA.

The new credit card also offers Aussies the chance to fast-track to Star Alliance Gold Status in the first year when they spend \$4,000 on eligible purchases, within 90 days of the card's approval.

Advantages of Gold Status include access to 1,000 airline lounges globally, priority check-in, boarding and baggage handling, as well as excess baggage allowance on eligible fares operated by Star Alliance member airlines.

Customers can also retain the

Gold Status when they spend at least \$60,000 on eligible purchases over the course of the previous year, while Silver Status can also be attained when card holders spend over \$30,000.

Further benefits include uncapped Star Alliance points, with clients earning one Star Alliance point per \$1 spent in Australia and overseas for the first \$3,000 spent per statement period, and an earning 0.5 Star Alliance points per \$1 spent on purchases thereafter.

Card holders can also book flights interest-free for six months on purchases made directly through participating Star Alliance Member Airlines websites.

Star Alliance points will also not expire so long as the Star Alliance Rewards account remains active - sign up for the card [HERE](#).

## Qatar Tourism hails upcoming CLIA

**QATAR** Tourism Global Head of Cruise, Craig Upshall, has expressed his delight that the brand will be the headline sponsor for the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia Awards.

The sponsorship, revealed earlier this month (*TD* 01 Nov), will allow the tourism body to "celebrate the achievements and commitment to cruise of travel agents in Australia and New Zealand," Upshall said, with the awards to take place at Sydney's Luna Park on 11 Mar next year.

Eleven of the 18 award categories are open to self- or peer-nomination before 30 Nov - [CLICK HERE](#) for info - more in **CW**.

## Today's issue of *TD*

*Travel Daily* today features seven pages of news including our [Sustainability](#) page.

## Sustainability news!

A **NEW** feature has launched in today's issue of *Travel Daily*, with a new page dedicated to sustainability in the travel sector going live, viewable on [page six](#).

The page will be published once a week every Tue.

evergreen

## CANADA & ALASKA 2023

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[VIEW 2023 BROCHURE >](#)

## Travel Daily On Board: *Viking Polaris*



### Expedition Central

This part of the ship is where guests can organise and check on their upcoming activities. There are also large map tables and presentation screens which are sometimes used by the onboard scientific, zoological and cultural experts to run lectures and training sessions for any interested passengers wanting to delve deeper into the experiences they've had.

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## Stay away from regional NSW

AUSTRALIANS are being urged to reconsider travel plans to regional NSW as floods continue to cause closures of major roads and highways across the Central Tablelands, Central West, Orana and Far West regions.

"Many people and communities are being evacuated and the extent of the damage cannot yet be safely assessed, so for now we are asking all motorists to reconsider the need to travel to flood affected areas," NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Sam Farraway said.

Visit [livetraffic.com](https://www.livetraffic.com) for updates.

## Domestic spend soars

DOMESTIC travel spending has continued to outperform pre-pandemic volumes in Aug, the latest figures from Tourism Research Australia have shown.

Overnight spending for the month eclipsed the same period in 2019 by 30%, with travellers forking out \$8.1 billion on trips.

Greater spending was recorded across all of the major categories, including accommodation, which was up an impressive 51%, as well as food and drink, up 33%.

The average spend per trip was also up on 2019 by 31%, while the number of trips taken for holiday

purposes also jumped by 16%.

There were strong spend results noted across all states and territories, however it was Queensland topping the list of achievers, recording the highest increase of 64% (\$967 million) when compared to Aug 2019.

Overall, visitors spent 31 million nights away from home during the month, a slight uptick of 2% compared to Aug 2019, while the total number of overnight trips has managed to claw its way back to 8.5 million, now only 1% shy on two years ago.

Aussies spent close to \$5 billion while travelling for leisure, totalling 3.4 million trips, while those visiting friends and relatives took 2.6 million trips, and 2 million business trips were taken, contributing \$2 billion in spend.

The number of day trips are still lagging behind however, 25% down on Aug 2019 and 5% behind in spend.

## Learn about Tahiti

TAHITI Tourisme is inviting agents to join the Discover the Pearl Resorts of Tahiti webinar tomorrow at 10am AEDT.

Led by Maria-Luisa Ignacia Soto, Group Sales Manager at Pearl Resorts of Tahiti, agents can register for the session [HERE](#).

## Position Vacant

### National Business Partnership Manager

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For more information and a confidential discussion, please call 0414 666 801 or email [michael.gazal@travelmanagers.com.au](mailto:michael.gazal@travelmanagers.com.au)

Applications close Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> November



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## Delays now trump COVID

EXCLUSIVE

AUSTRALIAN travellers are now starting to move away from COVID coverage being the priority when it comes to taking out a travel insurance policy, according to Southern Cross Travel Insurance CEO Jo McCauley.

Speaking with *Travel Daily* recently, the insurance company's chief said that internal figures showed the risk trend from consumers had migrated away from health to other considerations such as flight delays and lost luggage.

"One of the things we're actually seeing is that over the last few months, the focus is now much less on the COVID risk, because that was really the theme coming through strongly from our customers only around six months ago," she said.

"The concern now has really moved on to being all about

'my flight has been delayed' or 'I haven't got my baggage'," McCauley added.

Despite the shift away from health, McCauley did note that the threat of sickness and injury had not gone away entirely as a concern for most travellers, with Southern Cross Insurance data showing that younger demographics were now the most likely to neglect health cover while travelling, concurring with a recent Insurance Council of Australia report (*TD* 04 Nov).

In response to the trend, the company has recently launched a new 'medical-only' policy, which will target "budget-conscious travellers".

The new product offers travellers unlimited cover for medical treatment, doctors' visits, prescribed medication, specialist treatment, as well as legal expenses up to \$1 million - more details available [HERE](#).

## MEL plan approved

MELBOURNE Airport is a step closer to getting a third runway, after the aviation hub's 2022 Master Plan was approved by the Federal Department for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

The airport is now preparing to submit its proposal to build the third runway to the Commonwealth for consideration, after which a decision is expected around the middle of next year.

## VA expands reach

VIRGIN Australia will commence codeshare flights to Zagreb, Croatia on 21 Nov and Belgrade, Serbia on 25 Nov, as part of its new partnership with Qatar Airways (*TD* 13 Sep).

Pax are now able to book flights to the two cities through VA's website, with frequent flyers from both airlines able to enjoy reciprocal benefits.



## Window Seat

TRAVELLERS searching online for information on the Swedish coastal destination of Halland are instead being directed to posts about prolific Manchester City football player Erling Haaland - all due to a persistent misspelling.

"We are Halland. He is Haaland," Visit Halland Director Jimmy Sandberg emphasised in an open letter to fans and journalists, following an influx of social media posts conflating the striker's name as 'Halland'.

"The popularity of the football phenomenon is completely suffocating our online presence," he lamented.

"To our despair, we now see that all of our efforts promoting Halland are rapidly being wiped away."



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## Aussie travel appetite up

**AUSTRALIANS** are more inclined to travel internationally this coming summer season than the one prior, Tripadvisor's Seasonal Travel Index has found. Tripadvisor's Dec 2022-Feb 2023 Seasonal Travel Index Results has revealed the propensity for Australian travellers to take an international trip is up 7% to 28%, with cost/affordability (70%) rated as most the important

holiday-planning factor.

Overall, half of Aussies are planning to travel more this holiday season than we did last year, with 72% of Australians already planning their upcoming domestic trips.

Tripadvisor believes this could be due to seasonality and the recent reduction of COVID-19 restrictions for Australians.

The Aussie market contains the second-highest proportion of prospective travellers (71%), behind Singapore (84%), and ahead of the United Kingdom (60%), the United States (59%), and Japan (53%).

However, 47% of Aussies were found to be less likely than the rest of the world (52%) to spend more on trips compared to the same period last year.

Markets planning to splash out the most during the upcoming travel season are Singapore (61%) and the United States (58%).

**THE** Utah Office of Tourism (UOT), alongside regional partners like Visit Salt Lake, recently visited Australia and NZ for the first time since 2019, linking up with travel trade in Sydney, Auckland and Melbourne.

Aussie travel advisors and tour operators learned about new tourism offerings across Utah, including several new luxury campgrounds like Open Sky Zio, Yonder Escantle and Bryce Canyon Glamp & Camp.

Utah is currently tracking 5% ahead of other US states in the return of Australian travellers, according to Corey Marshall, Account Director for Utah across Australia and New Zealand.

Utah Office of Tourism's Global

Market Specialist, Zach Fyne, said "It's so great to see the positive response from travel advisors and tour operators here in Australia to Utah and to the products we have to offer their clients".

**Pictured:** The Utah delegation.

## EY expands Garuda

**ETIHAD** Airways and Garuda Indonesia have expanded their codeshare pact, doubling the number of routes currently offered from Etihad's Abu Dhabi hub and Garuda's Jakarta base.

The two airlines also revealed the deepened agreement will mean more joint marketing activities to promote reciprocal mile accrual and loyalty redemption options on offer.

## MH17 verdict soon

**A DUTCH** court is set to hand down its verdict in the Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 trial, with four men on trial for killing 298 passengers and crew members on board MH17 in 2014, a flight which included 27 Australians.

Three Russians and one Ukrainian national are on trial, with the defendants unlikely to be extradited from Russia even if they are found guilty.

# Human Resource Manager

Ikara Wilpena Enterprises (IWE) is a unique property and is the only accommodation located within the Ikara- Flinders Ranges National Park, 430km north of Adelaide. A haven of outback hospitality, Wilpena Pound Resort offers a swag of [accommodation](#), [dining](#) and [touring](#) options. This extraordinary landscape includes 800-million-year-old fossils unique in the world and has been home to the Adnyamathanha people for tens of thousands of years.

IWE have an exciting opportunity for an experienced, highly motivated, and enthusiastic individual to join their team as a [Human Resource Manager](#) at this stunning property. This newly created role will be responsible for all human resources activities and projects, including implementing contemporary HR policies and processes across the Ikara Wilpena Resort. This role will be integral to developing a resilient and capable workforce with a strong Adnyamathanha Yura presence.

You will develop a genuine connection with the region and community as you assist with the recruitment, development and succession of the local Adnyamathanha Yura and other First Nations People. This role is ideal for someone who is aligned with the strong cultural and spiritual significance of the First Nations People.

You must have the ability to balance strategic and operational focus, with a hands-on approach together with the flexibility and maturity needed to live in a remote location. An attractive package including accommodation and meals will be offered to secure the best talent for this role. Confidential enquiries can be directed to Delinda Kalic or Jedda Gito at Morton Philips on (08) 8210 8510.



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## AAT Kings flies away with Brolga



AAT Kings Group Chief Executive Officer Ben Hall said the way the NT has managed to restore visitation to the region “sensitively” is something the entire Territory’s tourism industry can be proud of.

Accepting the brand’s Major Tour and Transport Operator Brolga award from Tourism Top End, Hall said Tourism Top End provided great support for many operators during the pandemic. “AAT Kings relies on the expertise and relationships of many businesses and suppliers

on the ground in the NT and without them, AAT Kings would not be able to deliver exceptional experiences to tourists on a daily basis,” he said.

**Pictured** are AAT Kings Operations Supervisor Penny McNamara, Tourism Top End GM Glen Hingley, and AAT Kings Day Tours Supervisor Alicia Loder.

## QF & TA campaign

**TOURISM** Australia and Qantas Airways have joined hands on a new travel campaign blitz, called ‘Come and Say G’Day’.

The multi-market partnership, which commenced in Singapore yesterday, will include a range of joint activities including a series of new co-created TVCs, followed by online channels including Viu, YouTube, and Meta – all designed to inspire travellers to plan and book an Australian adventure.

The new co-created TVC sees TA’s brand ambassador Ruby the Roo on board a Qantas aircraft, enjoying the warm Australian hospitality offered by the carrier.

The partnership will encourage international visitors to visit Australia’s cities and rural areas.

## CX eyes rebound by the end of 2023

**CATHAY** Pacific has updated its flight capacity, expecting to resume 70% of its pre-COVID passenger capacity levels by the end of next year.

CX is also planning to add about 3,000 flights and reach one-third of pre-pandemic capacity by the end of this year, and aims to return to pre-COVID levels by the end of 2024.

“The group is on track to achieve its target of operating up to one-third of its pre-pandemic passenger flight capacity levels by the end of 2022...this represents a doubling of the capacity that we offered in Aug and is approximately eight times the average capacity the airline operated in the first half of 2022,” noted Chief Exec Augustus Tang.

The airline added that it is now looking forward to the complete removal of Hong Kong’s travel restrictions.

## AFTA UPDATE

from Nina Hedges, Compliance Manager



**I HOPE** everyone is well and looking forward to the silly season which is fast approaching AFTA recently ran an extremely important

webinar for our members regarding the importance of having robust and clear terms & conditions to present to our customers.

This webinar focused both on the requirement to provide terms & conditions and also the benefits that having sound and available terms & conditions has on both the business and the consumer.

We were joined by top-tier law firm, King Wood & Mallesons Partner, Simon Cook, who provided much needed guidance to our members and also presented a draft template of terms & conditions tailored to travel businesses.

At the completion of the webinar, we made available the terms & conditions template

discussed during the webinar free for members.

We are happy to say that we had an overwhelming response to this offer with an impressive number of our members reaching out and requesting a copy of the terms & conditions template so they could review their own individual business processes.

As well as being part of the ATAS Charter, it is clear that ATAS travel businesses have a genuine intention to ensure that they are operating their businesses at an elevated standard and their focus to ensure their customers were allowed the opportunity to make an informed choice when they transacted with an AFTA business.

This was a very proud moment for AFTA, and we thank all of our members for their engagement and dedication to representing excellence in our incredible industry. If you are not a member of our association and this story ignites a spark inside of you then please reach out to join our association.

## IHG sinks big putt

**IHG** Hotels & Resorts has signed its third major sports partnership in as many months, with the PGA of Australia coming on board as an official accommodation partner this week.

The partnership will see golf players, fans, and PGA staff stay at IHG hotels as they tour across Australia, with the timing ideal, with the 2022 PGA Scramble Championship Final soon to be held at InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort in Qld.

“With the demand for golf tourism on the rise, this partnership is the perfect marriage of sport and travel,” said IHG Hotels & Resorts Japan, Australasia & Pacific VP Commercial Dean Jones.

## Swan bonus comm

**SWAN** Hellenic cruise line is offering travel advisor bonus commissions of \$250 per guest up to \$500 per stateroom for each booking completed and paid in full within seven days of the option date as part of its Black Friday promotion - see more details [HERE](#).

## Amadeus applies for eMoney licence

**AMADEUS** has applied for an eMoney licence in Spain, as the company’s payments business is rebranded to Outpayce.

The company has applied to the Bank of Spain for a licence to provide regulated services within the country, and subsequently, the wider European Economic Area, with the transfer of assets and employees to the new Outpayce entity to take effect from next year.

The broader focus for Outpayce will be to strengthen the company’s current end-to-end payments offering, as well as develop an integrated ecosystem to which travel businesses can connect to access the latest fintech innovations.

“Payments are an integral part of the end-to-end travel experience...our aim is to ensure a smooth, integrated and connected payments experience in travel, whether that’s paying with virtual cards in the B2B space, or a traveller choosing to pay in a currency of their choice,” Amadeus said.



### Nancy-Bird buzzing bees

A PARTNERSHIP between Western Sydney Airport (WSA) and PlantingSeeds has resulted in 'B&B Highways' - Bed and Breakfasts for bees, butterflies and biodiversity - being installed at schools across Western Sydney.

WSA Chief Executive Officer Simon Hickey said students and WSA employees have built 12 garden beds, planted more than 200 natives and installed three native stingless beehives at Mulgoa, Wallacia, and Luddenham Public Schools.

Hickey also highlighted the importance of "giving back to our local community and ensuring that WSA commits to future generations".

## BNE LOCKS UP RENEWABLES FUTURE

BRISBANE Airport has secured a renewable energy future, entering into a six-year agreement to obtain power from Queensland's Clarke Creek Wind Farm & Blue grass Solar farm projects.

The airport is the first customer to sign onto Stanwell Corporation's renewable energy pipeline, which will supply up to 185GWh of power each year, as part of the hub's commitment to be net zero for scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2025.

The energy will power much of the operations at Brisbane Airport, from the runway lights through to the terminals.

It will also recharge BNE's fleet of electric buses, cars, as well as Australia's only electric aircraft refuelling trucks.

Brisbane Chief Executive



Officer, Gert-Jan de Graaff, hailed the landmark announcement, which supports the Airport's dramatically accelerated sustainability target.

"Queenslanders can travel through our terminals knowing their journey begins and ends at one of the world's most sustainable airports once this energy begins flowing from regional Queensland," he said.

Brisbane also announced it will increase the six megawatts of

solar energy it produces from its renewable energy system which harnesses energy to 11MW.

De Graaff added the latest moves are just the beginning. "Soon we will transition the rest of our fleet vehicles to electric and continue to look at new opportunities to decrease our carbon emissions, including researching the development of an on-site blue carbon removal project within our 285-hectare biodiversity zone," he added.

### Charging road trips

TRAVELLERS can "confidently explore" regional NSW in an electric vehicle (EV) thanks to an expanded regional network of fast chargers funded by the NSW Government and the NRMA.

Twenty new chargers were recently installed in the state's rural areas, including along the Mitchell Highway at Nyngan and Bourke and out to Brewarrina along the Kamilaroi Highway.

Overall, the state's charging network has enabled more than 13 million zero emission km of EV travel across the state.

### APAC governments need to step up to the plate on SAFs

THE International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly has adopted a Long Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 - but it will need the help of govts in Asia-Pacific to achieve its targets.

Incentivising the production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) forms part of the strategy, which is expected to account for 65% of carbon mitigation by 2050.

International Air Transport

Association (IATA) Senior VP & Deputy Director General Conrad Clifford urged APAC governments to stimulate the crucial sector.

"With both governments and industry focused on the same goal, the significance of LTAG cannot be overstated.

"Airlines bought every drop of SAF available in 2021 and have committed to over \$17 billion of forward purchasing agreements."

Clifford said the problem with SAF is that there is a limited supply and high costs, which could be improved through state intervention.

"Government incentives for SAF could see 30 billion litres of production capacity globally by 2030," Clifford claimed.

"Japan and Singapore have demonstrated an exemplary approach to SAF, actively involving the industry in the consultation process".

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## MONEY

**WELCOME** to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

**AU\$1 = US\$0.670**

**THE** Australian dollar, which last week soared to its highest level since 22 Sep, benefited from the USD's plunge last week following a weak inflation report, which raised expectations that the Fed will ease up on its rate tightening.

The Reserve Bank of Australia has raised its inflation forecast, with a peak expected in Dec at 8% - it is also likely the RBA will raise rates by 0.25% in Dec.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.670
UK	£0.570
NZ	\$1.099
Euro	€0.649
Japan	¥93.78
Thailand	฿23.93
China	¥4.742
South Africa	11.593
Canada	\$0.892
Crude oil	US\$88.96

## Border closures not on the cards

**BORDER** closures are not effective in preventing the spread of the fourth COVID-19 wave, Associate Professor James Trauer from Monash University's School of Public Health has declared.

"We have lots of variants, but a lot of them have developed the same mutations...I don't think you'll keep it to one jurisdiction just by closing a border," Trauer told *Nine News*, adding that it would, however, be premature to rule out border closures ever taking place again.

## Aussies Rendez-Vous in Noumea



**FOR** the first time since the pandemic, a group of Australian wholesalers had the opportunity to attend the New Caledonia Rendez-Vous Workshop 2022 in Noumea last week.

Hosted by New Caledonia Tourism and the national airline Aircalin, the group, alongside wholesalers from New Zealand Singapore, Japan and France, were treated to famil activities in the lead-up to the event.

The itinerary included a visit to the west coast with an overnight stay at the Sheraton Deva Spa & Golf Resort in Bourail, two days on the idyllic islands of Lifou and Isle of Pines, and a day of hiking in national parks in the Great South.

The workshop, which took place at the DoubleTree by Hilton Noumea Ilot Maitre Resort, saw around 30 wholesalers from the four different markets take part in speed dating-style meetings with around 40 local industry partners.

Afterwards, the group were treated to a barbecue lunch followed by aperitifs and an

afternoon show with a traditional Kanak dance performance.

**Pictured:** The lucky Aussie wholesalers enjoying a slice of New Caledonian paradise.

## Big red bus is back!

**THE** Blue Mountains Explorer Bus will be back full-time from next month.

The fleet will return to its route on 17 Dec, after it was parked indefinitely in the middle of last year (*TD* 13 Jul 2021).

One of the hop-on/hop-off buses has already begun its sightseeing circuit around Leura and Katoomba on Sat and public holidays, to reintroduce the brand to the public.

"Now that the number of overseas guests is growing, we can operate seven days once more, albeit with just one bus," said Jason Cronshaw, Managing Director of Fantastic Aussie Tours, which owns the fleet.

The company was forced to sell four of its six double-deckers during the pandemic, and half of its overall fleet.

## Invest in the Grampians

**VICTORIA'S** The Grampians is expected to double its visitor numbers over the next 10 years, a new report commissioned by Grampians Tourism has revealed.

The *Invest in the Grampians* report found that accommodation demand will exceed supply by 2026, presenting a golden opportunity for investors.

The region's tourism boom will be spurred on by government investment in key tourism attractions, including the \$33-million-dollar flagship Grampians Peaks Trail.

"We have a five-star natural environment, but we really need a greater diversity of accommodation options to match that," Grampians Tourism CEO

Marc Sleeman said.

The paper went on to identify 15 investment opportunities, including a luxury eco lodge near Ararat, a holiday park near Horsham and an aviation activity hub at the Horsham Aerodrome.

Prior to COVID, visitor nights to the region were increasing by 7% each year.

## Minute's big news

**MINUTE** Suites recently held its grand opening at George Bush International Airport in Houston.

The new site is located near Gate C14, and contains five suites, a bathroom, and a shower.

Open 24 hours for a minimum one hour stay, it is Minute's 13th location in the United States.