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## If you seek reality...

**IF YOU** seek reality, you'll find it in New Zealand.

Tourism New Zealand is currently offering the ultimate New Zealand familar for travel agents, perfect for those curious enough to seek it.

For those ready to go a little further, ask more, immerse in and respect, see the **cover page**.

## HK eases again

**HONG** Kong has announced a further relaxation of its border measures, with visitors now only required to take PCR tests on the first and third day after arrival, effective from today.

Previously, travellers were asked to undergo a PCR test at the airport on arrival, as well as on the second, fourth and sixth day.

## Figures back QF claim

**NEW** aviation figures show that Qantas became the most punctual airline in the country during the month of Oct, with on-time departures and on-time arrivals for the carrier both performing better than any of its domestic competitors.

The new data released by the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE) arrives at a time of high scrutiny for Qantas, with the business keen to overcome a deluge of bad media publicity regarding cancelled and delayed flights this year.

The BITRE report showed that Qantas managed to land 74.2% of its jets on time and take off on schedule 73.9% of the time, well ahead of fierce rival Virgin Australia, which averaged 63.95% across departures and arrivals during the same period.

Rex, which has outperformed its rivals the majority of the time

during the COVID era, also trailed Qantas, with 68.3% of flights arriving on time and just over 70% taking off as per schedule.

But it was not all good news for The Flying Kangaroo, with its subsidiary Jetstar continuing to struggle, recording only 64.4% of on-time arrivals and 61.6% of departures.

Jetstar also landed the dubious honour of making the highest percentage of cancelled flights, scrapping 3.9% in Oct, followed by VA with 3.6%, and Qantas and Rex tying in first place on 2.2%.

Overall, the collective on-time performance is still well behind the long-term average of 82.35%, with the airlines only managing a combined 68.9%.

The collective 3.7% cancellation rate was also higher than the historical average of 2.1%.

## Strong interest in NT

**SIX** international hotel operators have already expressed interest to operate the slated Darwin Convention Centre Hotel.

The Northern Territory Government has revealed that its commercial advisor, CBRE Hotels, started sounding out investment interest last month, so far receiving "strong interest" from Accor, EVT, Intercontinental Hotel Group (IHG), Marriott, Radisson Hotel Group & Toga Far East Hotels.

Around 200 to 250 rooms are expected to be offered by the upcoming Darwin Convention Centre Hotel, providing new, upscale accommodation options for corporate and leisure reasons.

The development site is on Stokes Hill Road, directly adjacent to the Convention Centre, and will offer views across Darwin Harbour and the Waterfront.

Expressions of interest are due by 31 Jan 2023.

## Vic tackles vacancies

**ADVENTURE** Tourism Victoria (ATV) is calling on the tourism industry to help it tackle the job vacancy crisis in Australia, particularly in regional Victoria.

Victoria is not doing enough to attract working holiday makers (WHMs) to the state, ATV argued, pointing out that 417 and 462 visa holders need to complete 88 days of agricultural and "other specified work" in regional Victoria to extend their visa for an additional year.

In comparison, these workers are able to extend their visas by completing 88 days of tourism or hospitality work anywhere in the entirety of NT, and anywhere in WA and Queensland that is north of the tropic of Capricorn.

ATV is urging industry players to help it "equal the playing field" by supporting its call to action for the Federal Government to align the regional work requirements nationally of 417 and 462 working holiday maker visas.

**CLICK HERE** for further details & **HERE** to support the call.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of news plus a cover page from **Tourism New Zealand** and a full page from **Destination Canada**.

## Collette gives thanks

**TODAY** is the last chance to register for Collette's special thanksgiving update, which highlights some of the brand's most popular tours in the USA, as well as all the latest news, promotions and trade support.

Led by Collette's Head of Sales, David Farrar, the 'Tour the US with Collette webinar' will run tomorrow, with two session times on offer - 8.30am or 12pm AEDT.

To register and be in the running to win a \$100 Prezzy gift card, **CLICK HERE**.

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## Window Seat

**GOLFERS** playing a round at the Western Lakes Golf Club in Pewaukee, Wisconsin had to contend with a hazard of a very different kind when a plane crashed on the course carrying 53 rescue dogs from New Orleans on board.

Thankfully, all humans and canines on the plane survived the crash with relatively few minor injuries, with one rather relieved dog jumping into the arms of rescuers and planting many sloppy kisses (pictured).

The flight was one of the many operated by the Humane Animal Welfare Society to ferry at-risk adoptable dogs from southern states in the US to shelters in the Waukesha region.



## Lindeman to be restored

THE island that once housed a Club Med Resort off the coast of Queensland has been purchased for an undisclosed amount by prominent developer Shaun Juniper, and his wife Samantha.

Lindeman Island was listed for sale by Chinese-based White Horse Group in Jul (TD 21 Jul), with Juniper already flagging plans to restore the once-popular tourist draw in the Great Barrier Reef back to its former glory.

Juniper told *The Courier-Mail* he saw big growth potential in Lindeman as Queensland islands ride a wave of renewed interest since the announcement of the 2032 Olympic Games in Brisbane.

"It's a great time to be the owner of an Australian island resort because there's been a massive tourism uplift, people are re-discovering Australia and not always going overseas," he said.

"That's the big difference, people used to search for paradise but have now discovered paradise in their backyard."

Lindeman Island is home to 637 hectares of national park, seven private beaches, 136 hectares

of perpetual leasehold and four term leases, inclusive of the former Club Med Resort, golf course and air strip.

Juniper has extensive experience in the restoration of tourism assets in Queensland, having already developed resorts in destinations like Port Douglas and the Gold Coast.

The news follows the purchase of Lizard Island by Andrew Forrest (TD 01 Nov 2021), as well as Long Island being acquired by Sydney hoteliers Bill and Mario Gravanis.

## Fiji Airways loyalty

FIJI Airways has partnered with British Airways to offer customers of each airline's loyalty program the option of earning and redeeming rewards & points when booking with either carrier.

Members from both airlines can also enjoy added benefits as a result of the tie-up, including reciprocal priority check-in, boarding and lounge access.

MEANWHILE Fiji Airways has added two more weekly overnight flights to Tonga and three additional weekly flights to Samoa from Nadi, Fiji.

The move sees the carrier fly up to seven flights a week from Nadi to Samoa and up to five times a week to Tonga, driven by both routes performing "ahead of expectations", and coincides with Qantas applying for capacity to both countries (TD 01 Nov).

## Travel Daily on location in Antarctica

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Viking Cruises, which is hosting key industry partners on a voyage aboard its *Viking Polaris* in Antarctica.

INCLEMENT weather hasn't stopped the *Viking Polaris* team from making the most of our time in Antarctica, with each day seeing new frontiers explored as the ship seeks out the best places to do shore landings, head below the surface in the vessel's two submarines, kayak among the icebergs or explore in the high-speed jetboat comfort of a Special Operations Boat.

Today while in transit to an afternoon landing site, the Australian trade partners on board were also treated to a private tour of The Hangar, the high-tech part of the ship from which all of these "toys" are deployed each day.

The three specialist submarine pilots on board were able to answer all those tricky questions about the multiple layers of safety incorporated in the underwater operations, before returning to their duties preparing the subs for launch once we reached our destination.

Kayaks are being deployed as well, with a break in the weather providing a fabulous opportunity to take in the Antarctic serenity.



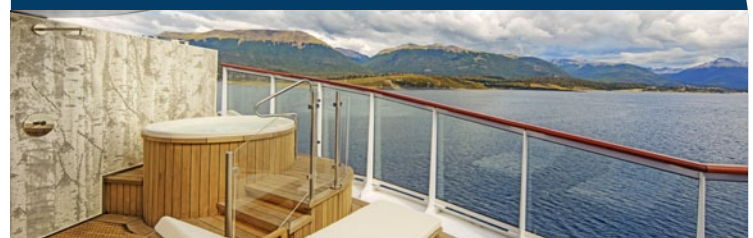
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## Travel Daily On Board: Viking Polaris



### Owners Suite Badenstamp

Passengers who stay in the *Viking Polaris* Owners Suite can enjoy the delights of their very own "badenstamp" - or wooden-sided hot tub. Located on a private balcony, it's the perfect location to soak away the cares of the world while taking in some spectacular scenery.

## Ponant in icy straits



**THIS** group of intrepid Aussie agent explorers is getting up close and personal with the ice of Antarctica this week, aboard Ponant's *Le Commandant Charcot* icebreaker as it explores the White Continent's Weddell Sea.

The trip has included some incredible wildlife encounters, including hundreds of emperor penguins at Snow Hill Island, as well as a feeding frenzy of seals in Larsen Inlet, observed from on board the luxury vessel.

**Pictured** above on the ice are some of the Aussie contingent: Graham and Laurice Burke from Helloworld Kenmore; Julie Rogers of Ponant; Paul Rickard from Helloworld Caloundra; and



Alison and Stephen Lord of Travel Associates Turrumurra.

And **inset** enjoying the delectable French gastronomy on board the ship are Alan Reis from Reis & James Travel Associates; Ponant's Julie Rogers; & Alison Lord, Travel Associates Turrumurra.

### Bali ride share debut

**AUSTRALIAN** travellers to Bali will now have access to a new transport player in the local market, with airasia launching a new ride sharing service through its Super App.

To celebrate the debut in Indonesia, ride share users can earn 10 airasia points which can be used to exchange for transactions across all Super App services and products.

### Tragedy kills two

**TWO** passengers on a Quark Expeditions cruise have died after one of the vessel's Zodiacs overturned near Cape Lookout on Elephant Island on 15 Nov, likely due to a breaking wave - for more details on the tragedy, see today's *Cruise Weekly*.

## \$10m caravan park boost

**THE** Federal Government has delivered on its pledge to allocate \$10 million to the caravan park sector (**TD** 17 May), announcing today that new funding will go toward upgrades at sites around the country to maintain a growing pool of family tourism accommodation options.

The money will be provided through grants of between \$10,000 and \$100,000 on a shared investment basis for capital expenditure projects at privately-owned caravan parks.

"The \$10 million grant funding will assist caravan park owners to upgrade or create new infrastructure and visitor facilities, including improvements to accessibility," Federal Tourism Minister Don Farrell said.

"Domestic tourism is recovering

strongly and in many parts of the country has already rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, and upgrading caravan parks will further encourage Australians to hit the road and experience the very best of Australia's coastal and inland regions," he added.

Caravan Industry Association of Australia CEO, Stuart Lamont, said the infrastructure package reflects the growing value of caravanning to Australia's tourism and visitor economy.

"Caravanning has long been Australian domestic tourism's largest visitor and economic cohort, an almost \$24 billion economic driver in tourism," Lamont said.

Applicants must provide evidence their projects can be completed by May 2024.

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## View from the Viking bridge



SOME of the Australian contingent on board *Viking Polaris* in Antarctica this week were treated to a rare glimpse of the high-tech ship's bridge, courtesy of Captain Margrith Ettlin, who also happens to be Viking's first female master.

Participants were given an overview of systems like the electronic map table, shipwide safety monitoring, weather and shipping radar, communications systems and the dynamic positioning platform, which allows the ship to stay in place automatically without any requirement to drop anchor.

**Pictured** from left are Hunter Travel Group's Louise and Brett Dann; Travel Associates GM Australia Rachel Kingswell; Captain Margrith Ettlin; Phil Smethurs from Bicton Travel; and Viking Cruises MD Australia and New Zealand, Michelle Black.

## Do a Flip in Japan!

**INSURTECH** Flip has announced the launch of the Japan Pass, offering on-demand accident insurance to Australians planning an upcoming snow trip to the popular Asian destination.

With a model similar to on-demand streaming platforms, one week of accidental injury cover will cost just \$25 for travellers to the country.

Japan Pass covers tourists for all activities, such as heli-skiing, backcountry skiing, & ski patrol.

## Collette Black Friday

**COLLETTE'S** one-week Black Fri sale kicks off today.

Under the promotion, guests can save up to 20% when they book by 29 Nov for travel between Jan 2023 and Apr 2024.

Small Group Explorations tours have also been reduced by 10%.

## TikTok Godmother

**SOCIAL** media platform TikTok has been used to decide who should be the Godmother of Royal Caribbean's soon-to-launch *Wonder of the Seas* vessel.

The #SearchforWonderMom TikTok contest awarded the honour to cancer survivor and Pennsylvania resident Marie McCrea, who was put forward by her daughter Allie.

The newly-announced Godmother will formally accept her new honour of blessing *Wonder of the Seas* during a naming ceremony at its first year-round homeport of Port Canaveral in Florida on 09 Dec.

## NCL Haifa debut

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line's (NCL) *Norwegian Epic* has become the first of the company's 18 ships to homeport in Haifa, Israel last week.

The occasion was celebrated with a traditional exchange ceremony on board the vessel, attended by Ministry of Tourism, Israel, VP Kobby Barda, before *Epic* sailed from Haifa on her 11-day maiden journey to five countries including Israel, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece, and Italy.

NCL also announced that the newest ship in its Prima Class, *Norwegian Viva*, will make a call at Haifa in 2025.



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## Kiwi travel insurer buy

**NIB** New Zealand is set to acquire Christchurch-based travel insurance provider, OrbitProtect, for an undisclosed amount.

Launched in 2005, OrbitProtect has strong relationships with recognised seasonal employers, schools, private training colleges, insurance brokers and education and travel agents, both in New Zealand and internationally.

According to nib New Zealand CEO Rob Hennin, Aotearoa's number of inbound workers and international students is expected to reach pre-pandemic levels now that COVID-19 lockdowns have ended, with the government also recently announcing it will issue

more visas for workers.

"There's a strategic alignment and synergy between OrbitProtect and our current businesses," Hennin said.

"This acquisition fits our business model and our vision of bringing better health and wellbeing to members in everything we do."

Hennin also revealed that OrbitProtect will continue doing business under its own brand following the acquisition.

Parent company, nib Group, is a major Australian travel insurer and global distributor of travel insurance, in addition to providing health and medical insurance for 1.5 million Australian and New Zealand residents.

## Greece office back

**THE** return of a Greek National Tourism Office (GNTO) in Australia is set to become a reality, eight years after closing the doors of its office in Sydney (**TD** 08 Oct 2014).

High-level discussions with the Greek Tourism Department about a possible return were held in Greece earlier this year (**TD** 26 Apr), with the ambition confirmed this week for Melbourne by President of the Greek Community of Melbourne Bill Papastergiadis.

The most likely location of the office will be inside the GCM Cultural Centre of Melbourne, however a final timing and location details for the GNTO are still to be confirmed.

## Margaret bigger

**WESTERN** Australia's Margaret River and wider South West region's tourism industry will grow in the next couple of years, with the Cabin Fever Festival secured for 2023 and 2024.

Supported through Tourism WA's Regional Events Program, the festival is expected to attract thousands of visitors to the state, and will feature an expanded program of events, championing local producers and operators.

## Regional gourmet

**AIR** New Zealand's regional lounges are being revamped to offer more gourmet food options.

On the menu now is ginger soy chicken with capsicum & spring onion, and a vegan option of sweet and sour tofu with edamame & sesame, while desserts include homemade chocolate cake served with whipped cream.

The new menu will be rolling out to Nelson Airport later this week, followed by Napier, with the new menu expected to be up and running in the remaining five regional lounges in the new year.

## Let QR entertain you

**QATAR** Airways has dedicated a song to World Cup fans, while unveiling a number of fun-filled experiences to help passengers departing during the tournament.

QR has launched two dedicated Passenger Overflow Areas at Hamad International and Doha International to mark the opening of the World Cup.

Qatar has also inaugurated a new anthem - listen **HERE**.



**KOREAN** Air has unveiled the interiors of its new Airbus A321neos, which will offer the carrier's first-ever narrow body Business class flat beds (**pictured**).

The carrier recently took delivery of its first A321neo and has 30 more on order, with options for a further 20.

The narrow body aircraft features eight 19-inch-wide Business class seats, which are spread across two rows in a 2-2 configuration, offering a 17-inch personal monitor, USB and AC power outlets, wireless charging, and a tray table with a mobile device stand.

The Economy class cabin will offer 174 seats at 17.8-inch-wide each, set in a 3-3 configuration, also featuring a 13.3-inch personal monitor, USB and AC

power outlets, a headrest, and a coat hook.

Interestingly, the carrier opted for colourful cloth seats rather than the more easily cleanable leather (**pictured below**).

The new A321neos are part of Korean Air's plan to update and expand its narrow body fleet; it also has 30 Boeing 737 MAX 8s on order, five of which have already been delivered, and 10 newly acquired Airbus A220-300s.



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## 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](mailto:brochures@traveldaily.com.au).



**APT - 2023/24 Antarctica Luxury Cruising**  
APT has unveiled its full range of 2023/24 tours and cruises inside its new brochure, which showcases the best of South America and Antarctica. From small ship expedition cruising and river cruising, to rail journeys and tailor-made itineraries, there is a travel style to suit everyone. The brochure highlights the 14-day Antarctic Voyage, which departs Buenos Aires on board *Le Boreal*. Guests on the journey can enjoy experiences in three destinations, including a tour of Tierra del Fuego National Park and wildlife spotting while sailing on the Drake Passage.



**Lindblad-National Geographic - Explorations**  
The latest brochure from Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic features over 50 itineraries covering departure dates through to early 2025, including old favourites and brand-new options. Journeys on offer explore North America, Central & South America, The Poles, Europe, Asia & the South Pacific, and New Zealand & Australia. For example, Exploring Alaska's Coastal Wilderness is an eight-day adventure which will see guests hike through forests and muskegs, kayak into secluded inlets, cruise by Zodiac among blue icebergs, and explore Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve.

## Space (travel): The Final Frontier



**TRAVELMANAGERS'** access to Space Perspectives' product (*TD 11 Nov*) through the newly minted partnership between the two will be supported by an introductory webinar later this month, and a national TravelManagers roadshow will be held next year. Both initiatives will be

conducted by Space Perspective, with the luxury space travel provider's Head of Global Sales & Trade Partnerships, Edyta Teper, meeting with TravelManagers executives in Nevada in the US earlier this month.

**Pictured** are the agency's Chief Operating Officer Grant Campbell and Operations Manager Troy Coelho meeting with Teper, at Signature Travel Network's Annual Conference in Las Vegas.

## Wootton steps down

**THE** West by North West Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) in Tassie is recruiting for a new Chief Executive Officer following the announcement of Tom Wootton's resignation, which will see him wrap up in Jan.

The CEO will be responsible for the operational management of the organisation and for implementing the RTO strategy as agreed by the Board - **CLICK HERE** to find out more.

The Tourism Tasmania team and board released a statement thanking Tom Wootton for his "outstanding contribution and commitment to the region and it's tourism and hospitality sector".

## Sell Qld to the world

**CAIRNS** will host the 50th ATEC Meeting Place this week, giving the region's tourism operators the chance to meet face-to-face with more than 100 buyers who can sell and promote Queensland holiday packages to overseas travel agents.

The major B2B event will help restart the region's \$1 billion a year export industry, and is also predicted to contribute more than 1,000 visitor nights and \$1.5 million in delegate spend to Tropical North Queensland.

## Vignette Patong

IHG Hotels & Resorts has partnered with Dinso Resort Co. to bring its luxury and lifestyle collection brand, Vignette Collection, to Thailand's Patong region in mid-2023.

Dinso Resort Phuket, Vignette Collection will mark IHG's fourth opened or upcoming Vignette Collection property in Thailand since the brand's launch in 2021.

Located an hour's drive from Phuket International Airport and close to Patong Beach, the resort offers 148 rooms and suites as well as 26 tree-top pool villas.

## Charles de smooth

**PASSENGERS** travelling through Paris' two major airports will soon be able to drop their bags in just 30 seconds thanks to new self-service options.

Over the coming months, more than 100 new Auto Bag Drop (ABD) machines from Amadeus company ICM Airport Technics will be installed at Paris-Charles de Gaulle and Paris-Orly airports, increasing pax handling capacity and saving time for pax.

These will add to the 360 ABD machines already in operation across Paris Aeroport.



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