



Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news including a photo page from Visit Sunshine Coast.

TraveLeague tickets

TRAVELEAGUE 2022 will be held on 14 Dec at the Crown Entertainment Complex, Melbourne, with tickets going on sale at 12pm (AEST) this Mon.

Tickets are limited so organisers encourage you to book early - [CLICK HERE](#) to purchase tickets.

Club Med flash sale

CLUB Med has extended its Asia Flash Sale until 09 Sep with discounts on last-minute departures, providing agents with extra time to nab deals for their clients on five-night holidays.

The offer is valid for travel through to 16 Dec, including school holidays dates, [CLICK HERE](#) for further details.

EK extends Premium in Oz

EMIRATES' recently revamped Premium Economy options (TD 11 Aug) will be featured on all Sydney to Heathrow flights from 15 Dec, as well as debut on services between Dubai and Melbourne from 01 Feb 2023.

The announcement is part of an expansion of the carrier's newly retrofitted A380s, with five new cities to be serviced by the planes from Dec, including NY JFK, San Francisco, Auckland & Singapore.

Emirates will also debut A380 services featuring Premium Economy on services to Christchurch from 26 Mar 2023, serving as an extension of its Dubai to Sydney service, while Heathrow will also rise to three daily services from 01 Jan 2023.

"Since Emirates debuted its Premium Economy class to London, Paris and Sydney, customer response has been overwhelmingly positive with demand exceeding expectations,

demonstrating the willingness of travellers to trade-up and try the quiet luxury and the meticulously customised experience," EK said.

Australian travellers will be the beneficiaries of a scaling up of A380 operations globally, with the airline seeking to expand services to 42 new destinations by the end of Mar 2023.

By the end of 2022, EK will be serving close to a third of its network with its 85 A380s as it unlocks more destinations like Perth, Houston, Bengaluru, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur, with additional cities to be announced in the coming weeks.

The Premium Economy cabin is located at the front of the main deck with 56 seats laid out in a 2-4-2 configuration, offering passengers a generous seat pitch and width for working and relaxing, as well as customised features such as in-seat charging points and a side cocktail table.

Travel Daily on location aboard Norwegian Prima

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line, aboard the christening voyage of its new Norwegian Prima.

THE extended industry inaugural of Norwegian Prima wraps up tomorrow in Amsterdam, after a day at sea en route from Le Havre in France and an overnight in port in the Netherlands city.

The final day on board will give industry partners one last chance to enjoy the huge array of onboard restaurants, activities and experiences, likely to include a few hot laps on the three-storey Prima Speedway.

The final evening aboard Norwegian Prima will include a celebration concert featuring 80s disco funk queen Chaka Khan.

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Aurora adds sessions

AURORA Expeditions has announced new dates for its virtual events for those who missed out on attending the first round of webinars.

The cruise line will showcase its upcoming seasons in Antarctica, the Arctic, and beyond in its two new webinar dates.

The first session will take place on 19 Sep at 11am (RSVP [HERE](#)), while the second is scheduled to run the following day at 4pm (RSVP [HERE](#)).

VA rebirths global deals

VIRGIN Australia has relaunched a booking platform offering travellers more than 400,000 hotel room and car rental deals that can be booked directly on the airline's websites.

The revamped platform is the result of a partnership with Rocket Travel, a sister brand to Booking.com and Agoda, and marks the first time VA has offered hotel and car rental options through the one partner since the airline was relaunched less than two years ago.

Aside from offering its customers hundreds of thousands of new offers globally, the new tie-up also provides a number of new ways for its loyalty members to redeem points.

"Our more than 10.8 million Velocity Frequent Flyer members now have more ways to earn and redeem points which we know is a great benefit to many Australians who are looking for more cost-effective ways to travel amid rising inflation," Virgin Australia Group Chief Commercial Officer, Dave Emerson said.

To celebrate the platform's launch, Velocity Frequent Flyer members who make an eligible hotel booking by 13 Sep will earn triple points, the equivalent of nine points per \$1 spent.

Members will also earn 1,000 bonus points on eligible car rental bookings made by 30 Sep, with both offers valid for travel until 28 Feb 2023.

Benefits for booking hotels through VA include free cancellation options on eligible hotels, book now & pay later options, and pay on arrival rates for eligible bookings.

Meanwhile car booking perks include free cancellation up to 48 hours prior to pick-up on eligible car rentals through dealers such as Europcar, Hertz, Thrifty, Dollar or Ace.

The Rocket Travel platform can be accessed directly from the Virgin Australia and Velocity Frequent Flyer websites and apps.

AAT Kings s'ship

AAT Kings is driving a new partnership with AusCycling, which will see the tour operator provide a unique green and gold-branded coach to support the team throughout the UCI Road World Championships.

The company will also provide fun activities for visitors to AusCycling's central hub during the World Championships, which is scheduled to be held in the NSW city of Wollongong from 18 to 25 Sep.

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NT Muster returns

TOURISM NT has announced it is bringing back the Territory's annual domestic travel trade roadshow, NT Muster 2022, for the first time in two years.

The three-day event will visit Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney over 11-13 Oct, with more than 30 NT tourism operators expected to attend each event and over \$30,000 worth of prizes up for grabs, as well as entertainment.

Registrations are essential - [CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

Global Stars is back

HELLOWORLD'S consultant recognition programs Global Stars and Cruise Stars will return for 2022/23, each month rewarding top sellers for being the 'Monthly Stars' in recognition of both cruise and FIT sales.

In late 2023, the top 50 FIT consultants across ANZ will participate in the Global Stars destination event and gala dinner, while cruise consultants will access a cruise famil on board a Cunard vessel in late 2023.

Agents are rewarded for sales across wholesale brands including Viva Holidays, Sunlover Holidays and Ready Rooms.

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Window Seat

AS THE world emerges from its COVID-induced slumber, it's good to see that major events are once again returning - like the Olympics, grand slam tennis and Formula 1.

In that vein, there was incredible excitement in Lancashire, UK earlier this week when the 12th annual World Gravy Wrestling Championships resumed after a two-year pandemic-related hiatus.

The popular event sees competitors grapple in a gigantic pool of gravy in a series of two-minute bouts, in the process raising funds for a local hospice, the *BBC* reported.

There was a huge amount of anticipation for the wrestling extravaganza's return, with people coming from "far and wide" to watch and take part, according to Carol Lowe from the Rose N' Bowl Pub which organised the gathering.

"The atmosphere has been absolutely bouncing," she said.

As well as wrestling ability, points are awarded for fancy dress and entertainment value.

"Basically people come in fancy dress - men and ladies - and then they wrestle in gravy and get eliminated as the day goes on," Lowe explained.

"It's very messy," she added.

South Korea lifts testing rules

THE Government of South Korea has announced the removal of current pre-travel COVID-19 PCR testing requirements for inbound travellers.

A state infectious disease advisory committee has made the recommendation, saying it believes the recent wave of the virus has passed its peak.

"All inbound travellers, whether our nationals or foreigners, arriving aboard a plane or ship, will not need to hand in a negative PCR test, starting midnight of 03 Sep," said Second Vice Health Minister Kee Ki-il.

However travellers still need to take a PCR test within 24 hours of arriving in Korea from overseas.

Amtrak Vancouver

US RAIL operator Amtrak has announced the return of daily round-trip services between Seattle and Vancouver.

The Cascades service into Canada has been suspended for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the first train on the reinstated route scheduled to depart on 26 Sep.

The operator said a second daily trip would be added in the future "as Amtrak staffing and equipment allow".

As well as standard entry documentation required at the US-Canada border, governments of both countries require non-citizens to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Igniting Honfleur's laneways



YOU literally never know who you're going to bump into when you're wandering the streets of a French seaside town in summer.

Ryan Thomas and Randall Deer from Ignite Travel Group took the opportunity to explore the picturesque locale of Honfleur during *Norwegian Prima's* port call in nearby Le Havre yesterday, and *TD* chanced upon the pair as they roamed the historic streets.

Others on board headed further afield, with the ship offering excursions to Normandy, Giverny, Rouen and even Paris where some guests enjoyed a Seine lunch cruise and a visit to the Eiffel Tower.

Honfleur is a delightful place to spend a day, offering gorgeous cobbled laneways, a huge variety of boutiques, souvenir shops, art

galleries and restaurants.

There's also a manicured seaside "Garden of Personalities" showcasing sculptures of many of the locality's historic figures and their achievements.

Thomas and Deer are among the key Australian travel partners being hosted on the special *Prima* christening cruise which wraps up in Amsterdam tomorrow.

Wendy Wu appoints

LISA Farrugia has returned to Wendy Wu Tours in the role of State Account Manager for NSW, ACT and WA.

Farrugia was formerly with the tour operator from 2018 until the onset of the pandemic, after prior roles with Excite Holidays and Creative Holidays.

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Thailand incentive

UNTIL 07 Oct, Australian agents booking stays at select Centara Hotels & Resorts and Cross Hotels & Resorts in Thailand will earn up to 15% commission for travel and stays until 31 Oct, 2023.

Bookings will need to be made through The Travel Junction's HELiO platform, with the incentive the result of a joint promotion between the hoteliers and the travel wholesaler.

The advisor with the highest Thailand sales during the campaign period will be rewarded with return flights for two to Thailand flying Thai Airways and spending four nights at Cross Hotels Vibe Bangkok and four nights at Centara Grand Phuket.

Each participating hotel will also offer a free one-hour spa treatment for up to two guests, per stay, in conjunction with three-night minimum stays at Cross Hotels and five-night minimum stays at Centara Hotels.

To learn more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Jayne hits out at caps

THE cost of air tickets will be pushed out of the financial reach of many Australians if caps and curfews are introduced at Brisbane Airport, Virgin Australia's Chief Executive Officer Jayne Hrdlicka has warned.

Speaking in Brisbane at a BNE Enterprise function, the VA chief conceded the aviation sector needed to be respectful of community needs, but not at the expense of travel affordability.

"If you reduce the capacity that's available out of an airport then you reduce the amount of supply...that means the prices are going to go up because there won't be enough supply to meet the demand," she said.

"I would hate to see that get to an extreme place because that means that it's really difficult to fly around the country."

Hrdlicka's comments follow calls for BNE to limit its number of flights to minimise the impact of noise on the local community.

Bali in the spotlight Down Under



EARLIER this month, BKB Holidays, in collaboration with Bali Mandira Resort & Spa and the Santrian Resorts, hosted an informative evening showcasing their range of Bali hotels and resorts in the destination to a group of top-selling agents.

The events were held across two nights on 17 and 18 Aug, with the first taking place at The Subiaco Hotel in Perth, before wrapping

up at Melbourne Cellar Door, with some lucky travel agents walking away with some great prizes.

Pictured are Russell Brown, BKB Holidays; Yuni, Bali Mandira Resort & Spa; Fiona Axford, BKB Holidays; Mery from Santrian Resorts; Jamie O'Brien, BKB Holidays; Julie Wheelhouse, BKB Holidays; Eka from Santrian Resorts; and Philip from Bali Mandira Resort & Spa.

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Applications close 21 September 2022

Cruise to return to PNG

PAPUA New Guinea has become the latest country to reintroduce cruising to their waters as the sector sails toward a global cruising normality.

Ships from two Carnival Corporation brands are set to return to PNG in line with the news, with Princess Cruises' *Coral Princess* to visit the Conflict Islands as part of her inaugural season in Australia.

Coral will make her maiden call to the Conflicts on 04 Oct during a 12-night itinerary from Sydney, marking the first of a number of maiden calls Princess ships will make as part of the fleet's restart.

Three days later, P&O Cruises *Pacific Encounter* will call at

Alotau during a 10-night cruise from Brisbane, which also includes calls to Kiriwina, Rabaul and the Conflicts.

"We are delighted that Papua New Guinea and its idyllic island communities in the Milne Bay Province and New Britain are about to see the benefits of cruise tourism's resumption," Carnival Corporation President Australia Marguerite Fitzgerald said.

"We are seeing 'normal' cruise operations steadily evolve putting together the elements and destinations that make Australia and the Pacific such a vibrant region for cruising.

"We also know that our guests and crew can't wait to reconnect with the people of PNG and other island nations," she added.

Intrepid Viet charity

INTREPID Travel is inviting the industry to unite to walk for good.

The small group adventure travel company is teaming up with the Blue Dragon Children's Foundation in an effort to break the cycle of youth poverty in Vietnam, one step at a time.

Taking place on 09 Oct, the 7th annual Blue Dragon Marathon Walk will see Intrepid team members and travel industry partners pull on their sneakers to raise money for the charity - a not-for-profit organisation that works to support and care for vulnerable youth in Vietnam.

To join an Intrepid team, email partners@intrepidtravel.com, or register individually [HERE](#).

Hurtigruten cash boost

HURTIGRUTEN Group shareholders will provide the company with a €55 million loan to be utilised by the Hurtigruten Norway brand's environmental projects currently being undertaken.

The marque is presently in the midst of its largest environmental fleet upgrade ever undertaken, with the loan to also deliver working capital to support other growth opportunities across Hurtigruten Group.

The environmental upgrades will deliver benefits including the reduction of CO2 by up to 25%.

VA celebrates 22 years



VIRGIN Australia celebrated its 22nd year on Wed, enthusing that it is "flying high" after withstanding many changes to its brand and the industry overall, and now has 7,000 team members.

The airline recently announced the addition of four Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft to its fleet, as well as the reopening of Premium Entry gates in Brisbane and Priority Screening lanes at

Melbourne Airport.

"Thank you for the wonderful support over the years and we look forward to being in Australian skies for many decades to come," the airline said.

CLICK HERE to view a video celebrating the airline's recent "special moments".

Pictured: VA cabin crew ready to mark the exciting occasion with delicious sweet treats.

WA eases mask rule

THE Western Australian Government has announced it will phase out the need for travellers to wear masks on all flights from 09 Sep.

Isolation periods in the state will also be reduced to five days from for people with no symptoms from the same date.

Rex hails record Aug

REX Airlines has enjoyed a bumper Aug, with passenger booking rising by 25% and revenue by 38% when compared the previous month.

Fuelling the growth was the airline's performance on the Golden Triangle Melbourne/Sydney/Brisbane routes, and follows a resilient Jul result.



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CORPORATE UPDATE

Tech key for managers

TECHNOLOGY remains a significant pain point for about 40% of travel managers, according to a newly released study from the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA).

The research, conducted in collaboration with FCM, explores how technology has impacted the travel managers' role, the traveller experience, and the TMC business as a whole.

The pandemic has had a strong impact on driving digitalisation and the use of technology, with new systems facilitating increased levels of contactless travel and online management.

GBTA CEO Suzanne Neufang said "the role of the corporate travel manager changed significantly as a result of the pandemic, elevating the position as companies navigated unprecedented challenges".

"Given the fast pace of change, technology has played a vital role in ensuring the efficiency of travel programs.

"Keeping updated and communicating with travellers has taken on renewed urgency for

companies, and travel managers looking to their TMCs to advise on innovative ways to manage travel programs effectively while keeping travellers safe," she said.

The study found that technology is the most important factor cited when travel managers select a TMC, rated as more important than costs, fees and account management quality and support.

The most popular technology component of a travel program was online booking tools, alongside other technology components such as reporting dashboards, mobile apps and single-use virtual payments.

A significant proportion of travel managers were interested in having online booking tools configured to show carbon emissions in search results, while there was also widespread interest in chatbots and artificial intelligence among respondents.

Travel managers' understanding of NDC was also mixed, with many "largely uninitiated" about the IATA-backed standards.

The full report is available for download at fcmtravel.com.



FCM names sustainability lead

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group's FCM Consulting division has appointed Glenn Thorsen (pictured) to lead a new sustainability practice.

Denmark-based Thorsen was previously Head of Partnerships for environmental technology firm Thrust Carbon, and is a "well-known and respected figure across the global sustainability community," according to FCM.

The creation of the new dedicated customer-facing practice specialising in sustainability is the first significant structural change within FCM Consulting since Jo Lloyd took over (TD 07 Oct 2021) as she reshapes the business after the pandemic.

"Glenn's entrepreneurial mindset, passion and deep knowledge of this incredibly important area will be invaluable in supporting our customers on their sustainability journeys," Lloyd said.

"As the customer and industry facing voice of the sustainability pillar within FCM Consulting, he will apply his considerable expertise to help our clients get the best out of their programs and achieve their goals...I know he will make an immediate impact," she added.

As well as his consulting



responsibilities, Thorsen will support FCM's internal sustainability efforts, collaborating with Flight Centre's Global Sustainability Officer, Michelle Degenhardt, as she further develops and oversees the execution of strategies to deliver on the organisation's environmental, social and governance (ESG) objectives.

Travelogix Tres pact

BRITISH travel data and analytics company Travelogix has announced an integration with Tres Technologies, a popular platform for TMCs in the North American market.

The collaboration provides agencies using the Tres system for their CRM, mid-office and back-office systems with access to real-time data, analytics and a range of duty-of-care solutions.

Tres Technologies founder Lee Rosen said, "Travelogix have already shown themselves to be technology leaders and experts at providing advanced and valuable reporting...this alliance is so exciting because the hosted, seamless integration of Tres and Travelogix will add so much value to agency users both in the US and abroad".

The move sees the USA become Travelogix's sixth international market beyond the UK and EU.

CWT wins US army

CWT has announced that its CWTsatoTravel operation has been awarded a new five-year US Government contract for the US Army CONUS (Contiguous United States) for both domestic and international travel.

The deal becomes effective 18 Oct and includes several new requirements including new onsite locations, with CWTsatoTravel President Gregory Harkins saying the award "continues our strong 28-year relationship with the US Army".

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A little ray of Sunshine...Coast!

VISIT Sunshine Coast hosted a trade roadshow in Brisbane this week with appointments and networking between 27 tourism operators and over 50 agents.

The event held at High Church in Fortitude Valley paid homage to reconnecting face-to-face with our trade partners to showcase what's new about our destination and some terrific new experiences.



BENEATH the glow of a neon pineapple...Michael Nelson, Pinnacle Marketing; Shirley Dodt, Aquaduck; Ali Khan, Narrows Escape; Sonya Mroz, Visit Sunshine Coast; Joel McPherson, Joel's Journeys; & Lidia Hume, Con-x-ion.



THOMAS Dufraisse, We Wander; Tara Buckler, ANZCRO & Yann Charavel, Supported Travel Experiences.



ROBYN Cheshire, Amaze World & Michael Sommer, Tourism & Events Queensland.



GUESTS networking and connecting with speed dating style appointments.



VANESSA Whitaker, Flight Centre; Josh Basir & Daniel Savoff, Minor Hotels; & Jenny Ryan, Infinity Holidays.



ROSE Febo, Travel Managers; Jonny Fell, Sunreef; & Sarah Webster, Travel Partners.



MARGARET Ong, On Show Travel, with Jack O'Neill & Matt Hobson, CAVU Distilling, showcasing their Sunshine & Sons spirits and providing gin & tonics during the networking.



MICHAEL Nelson, Pinnacle Marketing; Sonya Mroz, Visit Sunshine Coast; & Keith Murray, Glass House Mountains Ecologde.



PAT Easton from Qantas Holidays and Lisa Monk, Travello, enjoying the event.



WITH 27 tourism operators and over 50 agents, the roadshow was a roaring success!

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

Rocky Mountaineer has extended its All Aboard 2023 promotion, offering savings of up to \$1,080 per couple and eligible savings for single passengers on select 2023 packages. Bookings must be made between today and 30 Sep - visit www.rockymountaineer.com.

Cruisers can take advantage of up to 40% off plus five free bonus offers on **Norwegian Cruise Line's** Northern Europe *Prima* sailings, such as the 10-day Northern Europe: Iceland & Norway cruise to London from Reykjavik, Iceland departing 26 Sep 2024. Call 1300 255 200.

Cruisers can save up to \$4,600 per couple of **Viking's** new 17-day Capitals of Eastern Europe river journey from Vienna to Bucharest, or up to \$4,000 per couple on the 15-day Australia and New Zealand itinerary from Sydney to Auckland. Phone 138 747 for information.

Virgin Australia is offering passengers one-way Economy fares as low as \$49 on select dates and destinations, including from Sydney to Byron Bay and vice versa, between 17 Jan - 24 Jun 2023 until midnight 05 Sep or until sold out. To book, go to virginaustralia.com.

Mullets for mental health

LOVE it or hate it, the mullet is back - and at least this time it's supporting a good cause.

Flight Centre Australia's Julian Roben has shaped his locks to don the infamous '80s-inspired style for the month of Sep, in support of Black Dog Institute's Mullets for Mental Health.

The Brisbane-based Search Engine Optimisation Specialist highlighted that one in five Australians will experience symptoms of mental illness in any given year, and around 65% won't seek help.

CLICK HERE to make a donation in support of Roben's mullet and to help fund crucial mental health research in Australia.



To learn more about the cause, or to sign up as an individual, team or workplace to show you're all ears for mental health, go to mulletsformentalhealth.org.au.

Pictured: Roben sporting his mullet shortly after the shears made their impression.



Travel Daily

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MONACO

NT events wrap

THE Northern Territory Major Events Company (NTMEC) has unveiled its huge 2023 calendar of events.

Highlights include the BASSINTEGRASS Music Festival at Darwin's Mindil Beach on 20 May and the Parrtjima - A Festival in Light from 7-16 Apr in Alice Springs, both of which attracted record numbers this year.

MEANWHILE, the Northern Territory Govt is offering multi-year funding to event planners via the 2022-2023 NTMEC Event Funding Program - **CLICK HERE** to find out more information.

WA management

TOURISM operators in Destination Perth and surrounding regions are being encouraged to share their thoughts and help shape the region's Tourism Destination Management Plan.

Any tourism business representatives who were unable to attend the workshops held around the region this past week, or anyone who would like to provide further thoughts, can complete the online survey.

The survey takes around five minutes to finish and will close on Thu 15 Sep at 5pm - see **HERE**.



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Entries to be sent to competitions@traveldaily.com.au

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