

## \$100 off for readers

**TRAVEL Daily** subscribers are being offered a special \$100 discount on registrations for next month's btTB Business Travel Conference & Awards in Sydney.

Taking place at Royal Randwick Racecourse on 15-16 Aug, the event promises to be a two-day deep dive into the travel category, including NDC, sustainability, AI, technology and more.

Sign-ups are now open, with the **TD** pricing available by simply choosing the **Travel Daily** option when registering [HERE](#).

More details on the upcoming event on [page six](#).

## Save \$1k with Wendy

**TRAVELLERS** can save up to \$1,000 on their 2024 holiday with Wendy Wu Tours by taking advantage of the Asia specialist's new earlybird promotion.

The first round kicks off today until 10 Aug - for details, visit [wendywutours.com.au](http://wendywutours.com.au).

## Bonza seeks "reliability"

**IN A** bid to reduce its number of cancelled and delayed flights, Bonza has made the decision to axe five routes so that it can become a "more reliable" air service (**TD** breaking news y'day).

In an open letter penned by Chief Commercial Office Carly Povey yesterday, she revealed the fledgling Aussie carrier will discontinue its Sunshine Coast-Coffs Harbour, Sunshine Coast-Port Macquarie, Sunshine Coast-Tamworth, Cairns-Mackay and Toowoomba-Whitsunday Coast services from 01 Aug.

While some of the remaining 22 routes' frequencies will also drop by one flight per week, three of the stronger performing routes for Bonza, Sunshine Coast to Albury and Melbourne (Avalon), plus Melbourne (Tullamarine) to Port Macquarie, will all welcome a new service each week.

Povey said the restructure of the flight schedule will allow

the airline to build in additional spare capacity to accommodate circumstances when "things don't go to plan", as well as focus more on better performing routes.

The airports who spoke with **TD** following the news have been largely philosophical about the axing of routes, with Cairns Airport CEO Richard Barker stating that although the loss of the Cairns to Mackay service was "disappointing", Bonza routes from Cairns to Sunshine Coast and Rockhampton are continuing to "perform strongly".

Sunshine Coast Airport Interim CEO Gary Allen added that he "fully understands" Bonza's move, adding the "long-term success of Bonza is the most important thing", and changes are better to be made now for the long-term.

Industry commentator David Beirman has penned an exclusive opinion piece for **Travel Daily** on the axings - see [page 5](#).

## WIN with Collette!

**YOU** won't want to miss this... fifty packs of limited edition Collette playing cards are up for grabs for **Travel Daily** readers in a special promotion which kicks off today, with each deck featuring one of the touring specialist's small group Explorations trips.

To win one of these highly prized ultra-rare Collette collectibles, be one of the first to answer the following question:

*Where do travellers overnight on day nine of Collette's 'Japan Past & Present Tour'?* (hint: see the website at [gocollette.com](http://gocollette.com)).

Email your answer ASAP including your name, agency name and postal address to [collettecards@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:collettecards@traveldaily.com.au).

### Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today features seven pages of news, including our **Corporate Update** page, plus a full page from **Oceania Cruises**.

# LET US COVER IT

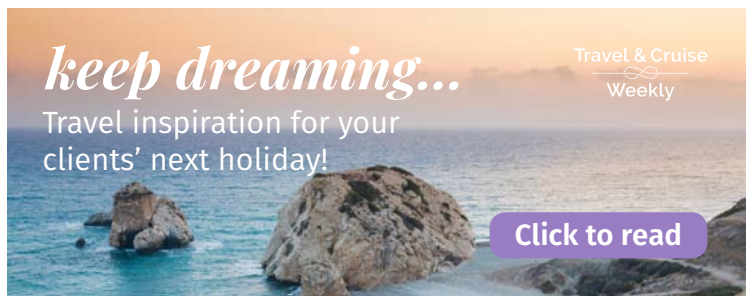
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## CLIA shakes it off

**THE** impacts of Taylor Swift's mega stardom has now been felt in the cruise sector, with Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) Cruise Industry Awards forced to shift dates next year.

With so many Aussies booking flights and hotel rooms in Feb 2024 for their dose of Tay Tay, CLIA has decided to move the cruise sector's night of nights to 09 Mar 2024.

A spokesperson for CLIA said despite the change, the event will return to the Star Event Centre in Sydney next year and "promises a spectacular celebration for hundreds of CLIA members".

Tickets will be released in the coming spring.

## The ultimate journey

**JOURNEY** Beyond has partnered with Silversea Cruises to launch a new one-departure-only package combining two iconic rail journeys with a cruise.

The 28-day Ultimate West by Land and Sea package includes a 17-night all-inclusive luxury cruise from Perth to Darwin aboard Silversea's *Silver Cloud*.

Guests will also cross the Nullarbor from Sydney to Perth on the Indian Pacific over three nights, as well as three nights on the Ghan Expedition travelling from Darwin to Adelaide, with off-train experiences included on both journeys.

The itinerary departs 21 Aug 2024 and is priced from \$35,295pp - [CLICK HERE](#).

## Travellers Choice plans ahead



**TRAVELLERS** Choice members gathered around the country this month to hear the strategic plan for the company over the next 12 months in the face of ongoing challenges and opportunities.

The independent travel network invited members from across five state capitals to help shape future strategy, as well as share important insights on the broader issues currently impacting travel agents and the industry.

Sessions were hosted by Managing Director Christian Hunter and Chairman Trent Bartlett, and saw a valuable exchange take place about the key topics of recruitment, airline capacity, retail sector consolidation, cybersecurity and sustainability.

Hunter also indicated that emerging tech trends were also discussed in detail, most notably the headline-grabbing generative AI platform ChatGPT.

"Members explored the

potential impact of emerging technologies such as ChatGPT and ways in which independent travel businesses could stay ahead of the curve," Hunter said.

**Pictured:** Travellers Choice General Manager Marketing Robyn Mitchell (left) and Managing Director Christian Hunter (right), with Sue and Chris Holmes from Perth's Carine Travel Bug business.

## Scenic France offers

**SCENIC** has announced special bonus offers on its France 2024 journeys to coincide with France Month, including a bonus night's accommodation and experience for bookings made by 30 Sep.

The offer can be combined with Scenic's Super Earlybird flight promotion, such as the inclusion of Economy flights up to \$2,500pp on selected 11-day France river cruises.

For further details, see [HERE](#).

## All of Europe out

**APT'S** full range of 2024 European holidays is now available to book, including the nine-day Croatian Island Discovery from Zagreb to Dubrovnik, priced from \$7,495 including savings of \$1,600 per couple for bookings by 30 Nov.

## The Chat

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## Cunard on theme

**CUNARD** Line has launched its Events Voyages program for next year, unveiling sailings with some of the greatest talents in gastronomy, art, and entertainment on board flagship *Queen Mary 2* & *Queen Elizabeth*.

The vessels will host seven newly-launched themed voyages, including a London Theatre at Sea cruise and a special Literature Festival at Sea sailing.

## Curating the Med

**OCEANIA** Cruises has curated a collection of enticing Mediterranean voyages for next year, with almost 100 distinct itineraries spanning the entire region, sailing from cities including Rome, Barcelona, Lisbon, Athens, and London.

The selection of voyages sail aboard *Marina*, *Riviera*, *Sirena* and Oceania's new ship *Vista*.

For more details, see the **back page** of today's issue.

## CASA to examine VTOLs

**THE** Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) has been requested to work with government to enable the integration of Urban Air Mobility (UAM) services into Australian airspace by providing regulatory oversight of the safety aspects of unmanned aviation, Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Catherine King, has revealed this morning.

As part of a new Statement of Expectations for CASA over the next two years, how autonomous electric vertical take-off and landing vehicles (VTOLs) will fit into the Australian aviation ecosystem has been laid down as a core expectation of the safety body, and arrives amid a flurry of investment in the pioneering tech at airports all around the world.

UAM services include the use of VTOLs to provide vertical takeoff and landing capabilities, similar to helicopters, but instead

operating on electric propulsion systems that offer reduced noise, emissions and operating costs.

Airports overseas are already working on plans to implement vertical landing aircraft so that connecting passengers can move quickly after disembarking traditional flights to major urban hubs and tourist attractions.

**MEANWHILE** Minister King also wants CASA to supply sufficient resources to ensure the development of Western Sydney Airport and associated airspace hits its 2026 launch date, as well as work with Geoscience Australia and Airservices Australia to implement satellite-based augmentation systems in the aviation environment.

CASA will also be required to support the Federal Govt in preparing the Aviation White Paper, which aims to set the long-term policies to guide growth and innovation in Aussie aviation.



## Window Seat

**CHARLES** De Gaulle Airport in Paris has taken out the unfortunate title of "most stressful European airport", according to a new study from StressFreeCarRental.com.

Perhaps contributing to the unfavourable ranking is the fact that the French aviation hub is the busiest in Europe, with almost 57.5 million pax passing through its gates in 2022 alone.

Other factors include its 40km distance from the CBD, an exorbitant weekly car park charge of A\$327, a relatively low number of restaurants, and a high departure delay score of 2.6 out of 5 - outdone only by Heathrow Airport, which scored 2.7 and ranked as the second most stressful European airport.



## Don't get beaten on price again.

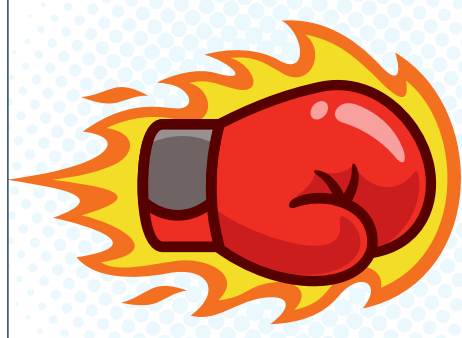
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## Southern bounty

**CORAL** Expeditions has announced a new culinary themed eight-night voyage between Adelaide and Melbourne, departing 01 Dec 2024 on *Coral Adventurer*.

Highlights include a 'Taste of the Southern Ocean' dinner on board in the historic Port McDonnell and sampling locally farmed abalone on Kangaroo Island.

Guests who book before 31 Jul can save 10% on the price.

## EK private charters

**EMIRATES** is offering a new on-demand charter service from Dubai's Al Maktoum International Airport to a range of Gulf nation destinations.

Travellers who land in Dubai can now jump aboard a twin-engine jet to visit Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and the UAE, while also accessing Emirates Chauffeur Drive Services, lounges, faster clearance at customs and more.

## Expedia splits with Hopper

**ONLINE** travel giant Expedia has suspended its supply agreement with travel booking app and online marketplace Hopper, claiming the fintech's business model "exploits consumer anxiety and confuses customers".

However Hopper, which recently signed a major deal with Australia's Commonwealth Bank (**TD** 26 May), claims Expedia's move is because it now views Hopper as a "significant competitive threat".

Expedia has advised Hopper it will not distribute inventory via Hopper channels, insisting that the platform's features "lead consumers to purchase services they neither need nor fully understand".

Hopper offers a range of add-ons during the booking process such as price freezes on air and hotel bookings, allegedly in some cases applying to already fully refundable rates, reports *Skift*.

Insurance-like products offered by Hopper have also been criticised for claims to protect customers against overbooking, missed connections & disruptions.

For its part, Hopper notes its rapid growth in the direct-to-consumer travel market, with over 100 million app downloads and claims it is now the third largest US online travel agency.

Noting Expedia's withdrawal, Hopper added it had "moved substantially to direct inventory", insisting the pullout will not impact the selection or price available to Hopper customers.

## The TIME is now!

**EXPRESSIONS** of Interest are now open for the 53rd intake for the Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME), an ideal opportunity to invest in long-term career prospects - info via [time@travelindustrymentor.com.au](mailto:time@travelindustrymentor.com.au).

## Say hi to Shanghai

**HURTIGRUTEN** Expeditions has opened a Shanghai office, expanding its APAC division with four new team members.

Reporting to Melbourne-based Managing Director Damian Perry will be China Sales Director Joe Zoe, Sabrina (Hui) Ju, Nora (Junru) Huang, Yolan (Yan) Wang and Belle (Sijia) Liu.

## KLM rails for change

**KLM** Royal Dutch Airlines wants some of its passengers to stop flying and start taking the train.

Those travelling the 200 miles between Amsterdam and Brussels are being encouraged by KLM Chief Executive Officer Marjan Rintel to take Thalys' rail alternative to cut air emissions.

KLM has already bought out seats on specific rail services, but limited operating hours and other challenges still prevent the airline from completely cutting the flights on the route.

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Travel Daily

## Bonza could make a major motza

### OPINION

Tourism expert and academic David Beirman lives in the small NSW township of Nundle, about 60km from Tamworth.



Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to [feedback@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:feedback@traveldaily.com.au)

**WHEN** the people of Tamworth were told that Bonza was commencing flights into and out of Tamworth in May 2023 there was great excitement.

The news of cheap Bonza flights between Tamworth and Melbourne was very well received in the Country Music capital.

However, flights from Tamworth to Sunshine Coast seemed better suited to our well heeled friends in Armidale 100 kilometres up the road.

If Bonza wants to make a "motza" on routes to and from Tamworth, it should try out the Tamworth-Sydney route.

I note they have retained the

Tamworth - Melbourne route.

Tamworth-Sunshine Coast was always going to be a risky experiment.

Not only would Tamworth-Sydney flights force Qantas to review its rip-off rates on this

“ I have no problem with Qantas wanting to restore profitability after COVID-19, but Ned Kelly tactics are not the way to do it... we in the Tamworth region are sick to death of being treated like country cash cows ”

route, Bonza would become beloved by the citizens of the Tamworth region for fulfilling a real need and breaking an

avaricious monopoly.

I have no problem with Qantas wanting to restore profitability after COVID-19 but Ned Kelly tactics are not the way to do it.

We in the Tamworth region are sick to death of being treated like country cash cows.

I appreciate that when an airline experiments with new routes, the market research has to be thorough and even then, some routes just don't get traction.

I think Bonza's concept of offering low cost fares to and from regional destinations is great.

However, it may be wise to adapt that model by targeting some routes which have been traditional monopoly cash cows for either Rex or QantasLink.

One that springs to mind is Sydney-Broken Hill which for years cost the equivalent of SYD-SIN return.

Competition on air routes is the greatest guarantee of moderation in airfares and this really benefits the destination and all tourism businesses in it.

## SIA Bangkok boost

**SINGAPORE** Airlines will add a sixth daily flight between Singapore and Bangkok over the upcoming Northern Winter scheduling period.

The sixth service will commence from 29 Oct as SQ720/719 using a Boeing 787-10 Dreamliner.

## Hyatt appoints

**MARK** Foxwell was this morning announced as the new General Manager of the 277-room Hyatt Centric Melbourne.

Foxwell is a long-time Hyatt veteran, returning to the company after a brief stint with Lancemore Hotel Group.

## Browning joins THO

**TOTAL** Holiday Options (THO) has appointed Kellie Browning as Business Development Manager for Victoria/South Australia.

She has more than 35 years of industry experience, joining the Indian/Subcontinent specialist from TravelManagers Australia.

## Kinto goes hybrid

**KINTO**, Toyota's car rental and sharing service, has announced its Australian passenger fleet is now entirely comprised of fuel-efficient hybrid-electric vehicles.

"Research has shown that Australians are looking to travel in ways that are more environmentally conscious, and we're happy to be doing our part to help them do so," Kinto GM Mark Ramsay said, pointing out that the company's pricing remains competitive.

The milestone coincides with news of Kinto's national expansion, with the company now servicing all Australian states and territories in major capital cities and regional areas.

In light of growing demand, Kinto has increased its metro fleet by 145% and its regional fleet by 253% in the last 12 months, Ramsay commented.

Learn more about Kinto [HERE](#).

## Hahn Air adds 12 more airlines

**TICKETING** specialist Hahn Air has expanded its network with 12 new partner airlines added in the first half of 2023, allowing travel agents around the world to offer a broadened range of travel options to their clients via their GDSs.

Five of the new partners, including Air Tanzania and SpiceJet, are available under their own code in selected GDSs, while seven are launching a global GDS presence with Hahn, including Aeris, ValueJet, and Arjet.

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From 30 October, United® is offering double daily flights from Sydney to San Francisco.

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## CORPORATE UPDATE

### btTB 2023 setting records

**NEXT** month's 23rd annual btTB Business Travel Conference and Awards has already attracted keen interest, with more travel buyers registered than prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event's newly released program details a host of highly relevant keynote sessions, covering such topics as the use of Artificial Intelligence in business travel, sustainability, airline performance & accommodation.

As well as buyers, travel suppliers are urged to participate and network with potential customers, as well as make the most of a key session specifically for travel suppliers focusing on Corporate Social Governance (CSG), reflecting an increasing prevalence of requirements in this area in travel tenders.

"Travel buyers are looking for suppliers that have runs on the board regarding attributes such as gender and racial equity, indigenous support, local input, social contribution and engagement, supply chain integrity and good work culture," said conference convenor Tony

O'Connor from Butler Caroye.

The CSG session will be moderated by the Association of Travel Management Companies (ATMC), while other items on the agenda include a presentation from Adele Labine-Romain of Deloitte Access Economics on the travel industry outlook amid the lasting structural effects of COVID.

John O'Shea, Senior Analyst from Ord Minett, will also provide a deep dive into the changed supply chain, while Amadeus, Air Canada and Aeronology will participate in a highly anticipated session on NDC.

The conference and awards take place on 15-16 Aug in Sydney - **CLICK HERE** to register now.

### VA biz portal easier

**VIRGIN** Australia has enhanced the online booking portal offered as part of its VA Business Flyer program, with an improved flight search function and simplifications for the management of stored traveller information within each member organisation.

There's also a new look Rewards Portal giving users more visibility on Tier Status and points balances, connecting through to Velocity's partner network.

VA Business Flyer members can also access discounts of up to 20% on United Airlines and 5% with Qatar Airways, depending on booking class - for more details see [virginaustralia.com](http://virginaustralia.com).

### UK CT appointment

**FLIGHT** Centre's Corporate Traveller has promoted Hannah Jarvis to become Head of Customer Success for its UK operation, with a remit to help clients streamline their travel programs and manage the importance of ESG issues.

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### FCM facilitates FCTG's Flichella



**FCM** Meetings & Events brought all of its creative talents to bear last weekend to deliver a record-breaking Flichella gathering for parent company Flight Centre Travel Group.

The end-of-financial-year celebration saw over 3,700 FCTG staff and supplier partners from across the country descend on Brisbane's Riverstage for performances by top artists including DJ Havana Brown, The Jungle Giants, Furnace & the Fundamentals, The Potbelleez' Dave Goode, First Nations singer-songwriter Chris Tamwoy and Ciaran Gribbin and band.

More than 40 partners also supported the event which was themed "The Future is Neon".

FCM Meetings & Events GM Simone Seller said "a showpiece occasion like this takes months and months of vision and planning...it's fortunate that we have the best people with incredible experience to put an event like this together".

### Flexibility key for corporate travellers

**MORE** than 90% of business travellers are willing to decline a trip they've been assigned to if it conflicts with an acceptable work-life balance or has an undesirable social or environmental impact, according to a new report commissioned by SAP Concur.

Consultancy firm Wakefield Research surveyed 3,850 business travellers across 25 global markets, also finding they overwhelmingly sought the flexibility to book travel outside of company policy in cases where it conflicted with their needs or values.

"These decisions to take a hard line are not made lightly... business travellers consider travel critical to their careers, essential to maintaining important relationships and imperative for aiding employee advancement," the report notes.

The full study is available for download at [concur.com](http://concur.com).

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## MSC readies China

MSC Cruises has announced it will start cruising from the Chinese mainland from 16 Mar next year, with its *MSC Bellissima* vessel to homeport from the city of Shanghai.

The initial season offers passengers nine sailings, comprised of four- and five-night itineraries to Japanese destinations such as Fukuoka, Kagoshima and Sasebo.

## Don't manipulate us!

TRAVEL brands can expect to face negative backlash from consumers in Australia if they use manipulated images, the latest Getty Images & iStock VisualGPS Consumer survey has revealed.

Sixty-nine percent said they care if images are created on a computer vs "in the real world", with 40% saying manipulated images would "negatively impact their opinion of the brand".

## A huge Alaskan adventure



CUNARD Australia recently hosted its first-ever international famil, inviting a large group of consultants, product managers and reservation team leaders to experience first-hand the incredible experience of sailing the American state of Alaska with the cruise line.

During the seven-night voyage, the group took in the remarkable scenery of the Inside Passage and witnessed the Tracy Arm fjord, Sawyer Glacier, Sitka, Juneau and Ketchikan, as well as enjoying Cunard's signature onboard experiences, including the much-hyped Cunard Ice White Gala Ball.

**Pictured** enjoying their breathtaking trip to the Sawyer Glacier are: Lauren Togher and Kirsty Bell-Jack from Cunard Sales; Suzanne Bailey, Madeleine McIntyre, and Toni Turner from My Cruises; and Russell Cameron from Clean Cruising.

## ChatGPT to boom?

THE number of travellers using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT to plan their travel itineraries is set to skyrocket, according to new research from Euromonitor International.

A whopping 97.8% of travel executives said that AI would have an impact over the next five years, with convenience and 24/7 accessibility identified as the main reason behind the massive increase in the use of AI tools.

"The sector is ripe for more disruption as generative AI accelerates automation of tasks across every stage of the customer journey," the company's Head of Travel and Tourism Research Caroline Bremner said.

"Travel is highly digitalised, with 66% of all bookings now conducted online in 2023 and mobile accounting for 35% of all online sales".

## SPECIALS

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[specials@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:specials@traveldaily.com.au)

**Adina Apartment Hotel Bondi Beach Sydney** is promoting a Stay Longer & Save campaign, with guests booking a minimum three-night stay to enjoy savings of up to 20%. Rates begin from \$205.79 per night for stays until 31 Dec. Get a room [HERE](#).

Available until 27 Sep, travellers can save up to 30% off on select departures in all cabin types with **Quark Expeditions'** new promotion. An additional 10% discount applies if paid in full within seven days of booking on all departures in the Arctic 2024 & Antarctica 2024-25 seasons. More offers are available, [CLICK HERE](#) to book now.

**Contours Travel** is offering agents up to 12% of commission amid savings of 25% on a rare group tour to Guyana, French guiana and Suriname in South America. The 20-day small group tour includes a visit to 226m-high Kaieteur Falls in the Amazon forest and more. Call Contours Travel on 1300 135 391 or [CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Travellers can enjoy savings of up to \$490 per couple and more offers with **Cruise Traveller's** exclusive, 26-night 'South Africa to South England' fly-cruise package. Embarking on 25 Jan 2024, the package includes flights from various points in Australia to Cape Town, with an extra £200 (AU\$382) spending credit available on board. Priced from \$11,565ppts, call them on 1800 507 777 to reserve before 31 Jul.

**Malaysia Airlines** is offering savings of up to 30% on its Business class fares with its Global Business Class Sale. Valid until 24 Jul, the offer includes a huge range of destinations for travel through 31 Jan 2024. Learn more about the promotion [HERE](#).

Advisors can receive savings of up to 20% off on Eurail Passes from **Rail Europe** when booked between 14 Aug and 01 Sep in both First and Second classes across all passenger categories. Book on [agent.raileurope.com](http://agent.raileurope.com).

### EDITORIAL

**Editor in Chief and Publisher** - Bruce Piper  
**Associate Publisher** - Anna Piper  
**Editor** - Adam Bishop  
**Associate Editor** - Myles Stedman  
**Senior Journalist** - Janie Medbury  
**Contributors** - Anna Piper, Jenny Piper, Matthew Wai  
[info@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:info@traveldaily.com.au)

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### ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan & Nicki Harford  
[advertising@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@traveldaily.com.au)

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper  
[accounts@traveldaily.com.au](mailto: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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