

QF Japan sale

QANTAS has launched a Japan Red Tail Sale, offering special Economy return fares on its direct flights from Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne to Tokyo Haneda.

Offers are available for booking through until midnight on 04 Apr for travel 12 Apr-30 Nov 2023.

\$2m for biz events data

EXCLUSIVE

THE Federal Government has today confirmed a \$2 million allocation to measure the impact and benefit of business events.

The project is being rolled out in two phases, including the addition of new questions to Tourism Research Australia's National and International Visitor Surveys which are already in place and collecting data.

Secondly, the Government will work closely with the Business Events Council of

Australia to roll out "bespoke data collection points including venues, organisers, delegates and exhibitors" across the country.

Tourism Minister, Don Farrell, noted that business events are vital drivers of the wider economy and contribute around \$36 billion annually in industry expenditure.

"They encourage high-yield travel, build networks, support the development of commercial concepts and expand business opportunities," he said.

"The new business events data project is a critical part of the Government's support for the ongoing recovery of Australia's business events sector.

"Better data means better decisions, better decisions mean better events, and better events mean a bigger boost for Australia's visitor economy."

Leo Jago, Chair of the Business Events Council of Australia, said the \$2m allocation is the country's largest ever single investment in business events research, and will help establish a long-term framework to measure the sector's contribution.

He urged industry to provide data in a timely fashion - more Business Events News on **page 5**.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news including **Business Events News** and photo pages from **Collette** plus a full page from **The Travel Junction**.

WIN an NZ holiday

THE Travel Junction is offering a Christchurch city break for two to the top-selling travel advisor of its NZ "Highways Collection" campaign deals.

Packages include a 15-night South Island itinerary from \$2,999pp - see the **last page**.

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Farrar turns 60!

THE Australian travel trade sector is marking a momentous milestone today, with the iconic, legendary David Farrar celebrating his 60th birthday.

Farrar, who spent more than 20 years at The Travel Corporation and then last year joined Collette as Head of Sales (**TD** 01 Aug 2022), is renowned as one of the industry's true gentlemen, with a stellar reputation and strong relationships at all levels.

A quick search of the **Travel Daily** archives reveals he's appeared in our pages no less than 45 times since 2011, with Collette honouring the landmark commemoration with a surprise spread of photos showcasing Farrar's stellar career on **pages six and seven** of today's issue.

Happy birthday David, we salute you and thank you for all your support over the decades!

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Slow return for China - QF

QANTAS is predicting a slow recovery of the Australia-China aviation market, with a submission to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) indicating expectations that overall capacity will still be at just 75% of pre-COVID levels in 2024/25.

The forecasts are part of a QF response to queries from the Commission in relation to the proposed extension of the Qantas China Eastern alliance (**TD 09 Dec 2022**) which is still under consideration by the ACCC after issues were raised by AFTA earlier this year (**TD 30 Jan**).

The ACCC has queried why Qantas has deferred the resumption of Sydney-Shanghai services by six months, with the

flights now on sale for travel from late Oct this year.

Qantas cited "several operational and regulatory challenges including aircraft availability," in part related to the slow A380 return to service which means "other fleets have needed to cover routes normally flown using that aircraft".

In addition, "significant operational plans could only begin to be fully-actioned when the Chinese authorities had announced the opening of borders," the carrier added, leading to the decision to defer the restart from Mar to Oct.

QF said it continues to closely monitor demand for the China market, saying "recovery is still expected to be patchy", with consumers perceiving a relatively higher risk in relation to China.

Current QF forecasts are for total Australia-Shanghai flights to reach just 10% of pre-COVID capacity this financial year, jumping to 50% in FY24 and approximately 80% in FY25.

Overall capacity across all carriers between Australia and China is expected to reach 14% of pre-COVID levels this year, increasing to 50% in 2023/24.

The ACCC has not yet rendered its draft decision on the pact, despite an indicative timetable stating the ruling would be handed down in Feb/Mar this year.

A new discovery

QUEENSTOWN'S Southern Discoveries has a new CEO, with former GM Sales & Marketing Kerry Walker promoted to now lead the business following the retirement of CEO Tim Hunter after seven years in the role.

Southern Discoveries offers a range of exceptional nature experiences in the region, with David Skeggs, Director of owner Skeggs Group, hailing Hunter's huge contribution particularly during the challenges of COVID.

More appointments on **page 8**.

A TIME-ly gathering in Brissy



THE Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) held an event this week at the Courtyard Marriott in Southbank Brisbane, where graduates Jacqui Tufala and James Sitters shared their experience of being mentored via the TIME program.

Clean Cruising Director Jean Summers-Reeves was the guest speaker, sharing her tips and successes in finding new employees for her business, while Kim Tomlinson from Travellers Choice shared TIME Founder and Chair Penny Spencer's top five tips for success.

Pictured: James Sitters, Oceania Cruises; Jean Summers-Reeves, Clean Cruising; Nina Hedges, AFTA; Emily Warbrick, Snowscene; Jacqui Tufala, Abercrombie & Kent.

Sabre live with AA

SABRE Corporation has confirmed it will offer American Airlines' new NDC offers via the Sabre GDS from 03 Apr.

The content will include paid seats, with American Airlines telling travel agencies earlier this week that from next Mon it will "offer our best available third-party public channel content only through NDC connections".

The controversial AA push comes despite objections from the American Society of Travel Advisors, which has protested that many travel agencies are not ready for the major change.

Sabre users will be able to shop and book AA NDC content, but initially without the ability to service multi-passenger bookings.



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Window Seat

AUSSIERS love a great island holiday, and it turns out this week the chance to lounge around on a tropical beach may be more obtainable than one might think.

Poole Island in the Whitsundays has hit the market, again, and here's the amazing part, it is retailing for less than \$1 million.

Property market observers would know that price tag is less than what a buyer would pay for a one-bedroom apartment in Bondi, so what's the catch?

Part of the reason is that the last buyer disappeared without a trace and the owners need to sell the real estate ASAP, the other is Queensland's urgent need to develop island tourism.

Singapore flexes cruise win

SINGAPORE has struck a major blow against rival Asian cruise markets, overnight revealing a deal with Disney Cruise Line (DCL) to have the line homeport one of its ships year-round for five years, starting from 2025.

The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) said the new Memorandum of Understanding with Disney affirmed its position as Asia's "premier cruise hub and major player in cruise tourism", suggesting its strategic location, world-class air connectivity and port infrastructure puts it ahead of other countries when it comes to attracting fly-cruise passengers.

"It speaks volumes for our region's significant potential for cruise tourism and to become, as some have described it, 'the Caribbean of the East'," Singapore's Minister for Transport S. Iswaran said.

Figures released by the STB

show that cruise passengers in Singapore have doubled from 900,000 in 2012 to more than 1.8 million in 2019, just before the pandemic attracting 400 cruise ships across 30 cruise brands.

DCL estimates the passenger capacity of the vessel will be 6,000, and is expected to be among the first in the cruise industry to be fuelled by green methanol, one of the lowest emission fuels available.

The cruise line also confirmed the ship stationed in Singapore will feature "innovative Disney experiences", including world-class dining options, dedicated spaces and activities for families, as well as the usual cast of colourful Disney characters.

Iswaran concluded the announcement by stating that Singapore's cruise sector is excited by the prospect of growing its cruise hub & showing off its array of cruise offerings.

We're water efficient

THE global travel and tourism sector's total water footprint is just 0.6% of the global water use, according to new research from The World Travel & Tourism Council & the Sustainable Tourism Global Centre.

Much of the sector's water use is indirect, the report found, produced through its supply chain, with food production accounting for 66% of the total.

Pantheon to charge

ONE of Italy's top tourist attractions is set to slug visitors a €5 fee to visit.

While no date has been set, Italian authorities have flagged the historic Pantheon will start charging visitors to enter, with those aged under 25 getting off more lightly, with only a €2 levy expected to be introduced.

A coalition of church and culture officials reportedly signed the new policy last week.

Hello Hong Kong

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Huge Easter egg-stra spend

EASTER is gearing up as a prime time to travel for Australians, who are set to spend an extra \$2 billion on their Easter getaway compared to last year.

Around 4.6 million Aussies, or 21% of the population, intends to take a holiday over the Easter period this year - over half a million more than 2022, according to new research from the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) & Roy Morgan.

Not only are more Aussies taking a holiday this year, they're also spending bigger, with a total \$6.5 billion set to be injected in the national economy - up around \$100 million on last year.

"While our borders have been reopened for some time, we're starting to see the cost of travel stabilise - which is potentially prompting a lot of families to plan their first getaways in some time this Easter," ARA CEO Paul Zahra explained.

More than 90% of holidaymakers will travel domestically, with around 60% staying within their home state and 30% venturing interstate; only 9% of those with travel plans are heading overseas.

More than a third of the Easter travellers fall within the 18-34 age bracket, while those aged 65 and over are expected to spend the most due to taking longer holidays, with an average length of over 11 nights.

Bonza's MEL base

BONZA has launched its Melbourne base in time for Easter, with its inaugural flight to Maroochydore departing today.

Two aircraft will operate from Melbourne, taking customers to 10 destinations.

AB's second base will also be home to multiple Bonza legends, with more roles being recruited.

West is Best at Doltone



BUSINESS owners and community leaders from across Western Sydney gathered at Doltone House Western Sydney last Thu for a glamorous cocktail event showcasing the growing success of the region.

The event's speaker panel included Mayor of Fairfield, Frank Carbone, President of South-West Sydney Tourism Taskforce Fazila Farhad, and Doltone House CEO Anna Cesarano, with esteemed former Australian news broadcaster and journalist, Anne Fulwood, as MC.

Attendees heard insights and initiatives to bring businesses and communities of Western Sydney together, while also enjoying lavish global cuisine and cocktails.

The region is "getting bigger and better," Fahad enthused, highlighting that one-third of the local visitor market comes to Greater Western Sydney.

Everyone on the night was also entered into a draw for a free business event at Doltone House Western Sydney, where they can experience the venue's recently renovated event spaces, the La Boheme, Elettra and Colosseo.

For more business events news, see **page five**.

Pictured: Anna Cesarano, CEO Doltone House; Frank Carbone, Mayor of Fairfield; Anne Fulwood, former news broadcaster; Fazila Farhad, CEO South West Sydney Taskforce; Nina Milazzo, COO Doltone House.

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AIME delivers big

INDUSTRY-LEADING trade convention, Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME), is forecasted to inject \$200 million in business between exhibitors and buyers over the next 12 months - up 70% on 2022.

The 30-year anniversary event, which took place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) over three days last month (TD 16 Feb), recorded a 90% satisfaction rate among both exhibitors and visitors, outperforming equivalent benchmarks and also previous AIME events.

"Excitement is building for AIME 2024, with the majority of 2023 exhibitors already reserving space for next year," AIME Event Director, Silke Calder, said.

AIME 2024 will take place at the MCEC from 19-21 Feb.

BEA'S ASIA MEGA FAMIL

BUSINESS Events Australia (BEA) has today launched its Asia Mega Famil Showcase, with the first group of international meeting planners arriving in Australia for the event.

About 50 participants will attend the Sydney program in partnership with Business Events Sydney, including arrivals from China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea and Japan.

Robin Mack, Tourism Australia Executive GM of Commercial & Business Events, said the Asia Mega Family Showcase was a key element of the organisation's distribution activity this year.

"Asia is an important region for Australia with more than 316,000 business events visitors from the region travelling to our shores in 2019, contributing \$1.4 billion in direct expenditure," he said.

"The Business Events Australia Asia Mega Famil Showcase provides the opportunity to bring

international agents from Asia to Australia to meet our warm and welcoming people, enjoy our unique and diverse landscapes, and experience first-hand the wealth of new product we have available," he added.

"It also provides Australia's convention bureaux the opportunity to connect and build relationships with international planners during the business session and capitalise on the short lead business coming from the region."

Coinciding with the recent return of two-way quarantine travel, there is a strong contingent from greater China, indicating that Australia remains a highly desirable destination for business events, Mack said.

Lyn Lewis-Smith from BESydney said "we are thrilled to be partnering with Tourism Australia on this initiative so quickly after markets have reopened".

WA event grant

THE Western Australian Government is offering grants of up to \$5,000 to eligible local health and medical life science companies to travel to major industry conferences or business events.

The Market Access Grant Scheme helps cover costs such as event registration, exhibition booths, & airfares - **CLICK HERE** for info.

Arinex in Cairns

OVER 50 team members from event management company Arinex descended on Far North Queensland this week, showcasing Cairns as part of the organisation's 50th anniversary conference.

Arinex MD Nicole Walker said Cairns was the perfect location for the carbon-neutral event, which included three days of presentations and workshops at the Cairns Convention Centre.

There were also tours of the local World Heritage-listed tropical rainforests and the nearby Great Barrier Reef.

Tourism Tropical North Queensland Partnership & Events GM, Rosie Douglas, said hosting Arinex highlighted the importance of business events to Cairns, which will tomorrow also host the Business Events Cairns & Great Barrier Reef Conference.

Spark, VIPeople

SPARK Event Group is set to acquire VIPeople, an Australian supplier of specialised customer service staff to the venue and event industries, from 01 May.

Spark, which boasts a portfolio of major events including the F1 Australian Grand Prix, said the amalgamation would strengthen its offering and provide a "big benefit" to the industry by making a larger events workforce available across the country.

Wellington showcased to events experts

TOURISM New Zealand recently hosted a group of international business events media and buyers on a famil to Wellington to learn about the city's events offerings.

The delegates enjoyed an action-packed itinerary, including a sneak peek at the new Takina Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre before opening in Jun.



Highlights included dinner on the stage of the grand St James Theatre, a chocolate-making workshop at Wellington Chocolate Factory, and gin-making at Southward Gin.

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Happy Birthday David Farrar!

THE travel industry is renowned for camaraderie, banter and positivity, but few exude this more than David Farrar, who today turns the big 6-0!

Often among the last to bed at conferences, and always smiling the next day, David is a true industry great.

At the recent Virtuoso Forum in Fiji, the description of "the nicest man in travel" was overheard no less than seven times.

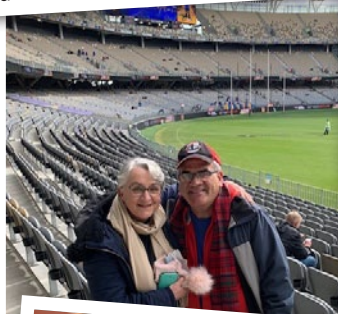
From all your colleagues across the industry, your new team at Collette, and your family who have loaned you to us so many times over the years, we wish you a fantastic celebration with a Saints win and fine wines.

Pass on your best wishes or pics to David at: dfarrar@collette.com.



DAVID/DAD,

Wishing you a wonderful 60th birthday. Lots of love your biggest support crew - Jackie, Georgia and Hannah xxx.



A TRUE Ansett
ambassador in the day...

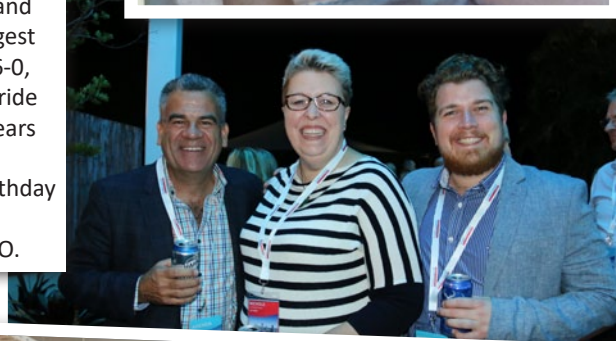


THE famous Movember which David has supported for many years.

DAVID...a travel legend, the ultimate professional, an inspiration to many, and above all, an amazing friend! From conferencing to traveleagues, top achiever dinners and late night kebabs, my favourite of all was your lesson to all about how to drink shots with your hands tied behind your back! Wherever you go, success will follow, and PHT will always be your biggest fan! So as you turn the big 6-0, I hope you look back with pride and sore cheeks from the years of laughter, and making our industry great! Happiest birthday David, we love you! Love Michelle and all at PHT XOXO.



DAVID - may your legendary dad jokes continue for a lifetime. You're the best boss EVER even when you trick us with a 'quick call' which ends up an hour long, after many laughs and a rich respectful discussion. Happy Milestone Birthday from your new Collette tribe, we're looking forward to many more 'quick' chats!





LIVING it up at Virtuoso Forum in Fiji!



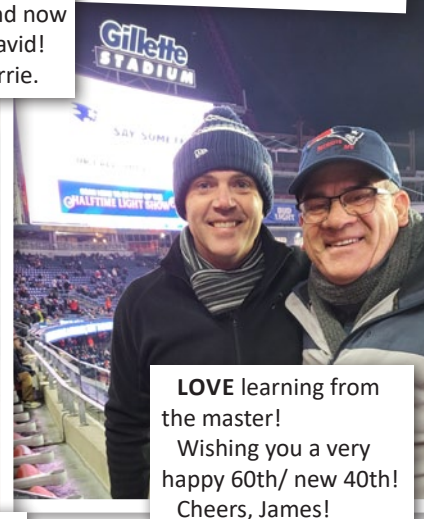
"HAPPY Birthday to an industry legend, a master entertainer, and a fellow Saints supporter – One of the very best!" Amber Kelly, Express Travel Group.



FROM your first job in Sydney painting a retail travel agency, through Contiki, Swingaway (hello Singa!!), Insight and now Collette, you have come a long way David! Best wishes from Stuart & Gillian Barrie.



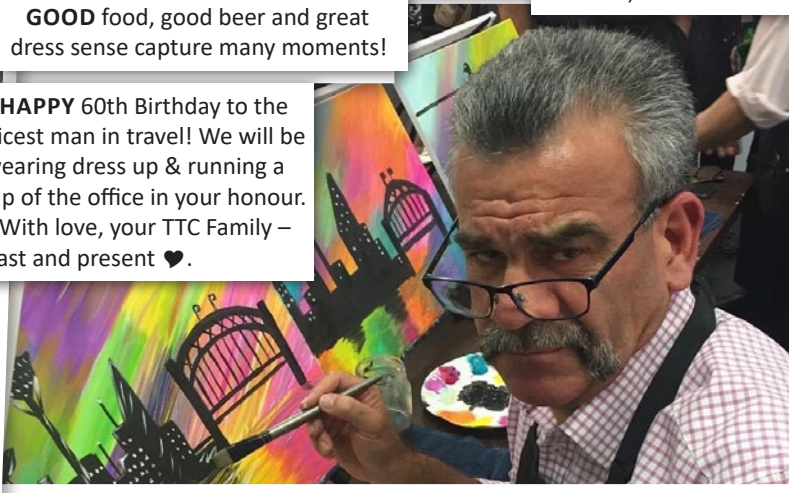
GOOD food, good beer and great dress sense capture many moments!



LOVE learning from the master! Wishing you a very happy 60th/ new 40th! Cheers, James!



HAPPY 60th Birthday to the nicest man in travel! We will be wearing dress up & running a lap of the office in your honour. With love, your TTC Family – Past and present ♥.



APPOINTMENTS

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Minor Hotels has appointed **Craig Cochrane** as its new Chief People Officer. Cochrane has over 20 years of hotelier experience, and most recently held the role of Senior Vice President Talent & Culture with Accor Hotels, specialising in operation and hotel management.

Morgan Benner is the new Director of Sales & Marketing of **Emporium Hotel South Bank** in Brisbane. Benner was formerly the Director of Sales, Groups, Apartments & Realty at Accor Hotels and will be responsible for driving sales as she leads the sales and marketing team.

TFE Hotels has welcomed **Katie Obst** as the GM at its new Vibe Hotel Adelaide. Obst has worked in a variety of management roles over the past decade with TFE Hotels across different states before stepping up to become the General Manager.

Natasha Stananov has taken up the role of Group Head of **Crown Resorts** Foundations & Community Partnerships. She was most recently the General Manager in Corporate Affairs under the same group.

Close up the closet

CLOSE to two-thirds of Australian LGBTQIA+ travellers say they mute their gender and sexuality while travelling, according to a new survey from Husbands That Travel.

The same report also noted that 98% actively change behaviours while travelling to avoid drawing attention to their sexuality or gender, with the alarming results sparking Hilton to advance its LGBTQIA+ inclusion efforts across marketing and guest experience training programs.

"We want to ensure the LGBTQIA+ community feels welcome and included at our hotels, so educating our team members on their travel needs, is crucial," Hilton said.

More than 350 NSW-based staff – including Hilton's Australasia regional office leadership team, have completed the training.

Greyhound update

GREYHOUND Australia has added free onboard wi-fi and USB charging ports for passengers to use aboard its coaches, the company's CEO Daniel Smith revealed to *CEO Magazine*.

Further recent innovations have included allowing customers to purchase seats online in advance, live coach tracking to allow passengers to track their vehicle as it approaches stops, as well as dynamic pricing for tickets using a model similar to airlines.

Planterra grants

PLANETERRA has introduced a Global Community Tourism Fund to provide grants of up to US\$3,000 & mentorship assistance to aid local businesses in benefiting from tourism.

Conditions apply for applicants, **CLICK HERE** for more details.

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EK Aussie & NZ roadshow



EMIRATES Airline recently conducted a series of travel agent roadshow seminars in partnership with Dubai Tourism, visiting Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, as well as Auckland and Christchurch.

The UAE flag carrier provided an update of its growing post-COVID capacity to Australia and New Zealand, as well as the introduction of its new Premium Economy cabin, at each of the breakfast events.

Agents also learned about the EK Dubai Experience (stopover) program, and heard updates from Dubai Tourism and several Dubai-based hotel partners.

At each location, attendees were given the chance to score some great door prizes, including a spot on the upcoming Emirates family to Dubai.

Pictured: Attendees at the Melbourne event, hosted at Sofitel on Collins.

Virgin's beer yoga

TO CELEBRATE the launch of the first ever Gold Coast to Bali flight this week, Virgin Australia held a special Bintang Yoga session at the departure gate at Gold Coast International Airport, combining the two things that travellers adore about Bali.

The route was announced by VA in Jun last year (*TD* 14 Jun 2022).



Cook Island c'share

AIR Rarotonga and Air Tahiti have agreed to increase flight frequencies between Tahiti and Rarotonga from 24 Jun.

The two airlines have agreed to codeshare on the thrice-weekly services to optimise flexibility and provide better connections beyond Tahiti.

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