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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features eight pages of the latest news including a cover wrap from **Tourism New Zealand**, a photo page from **Brisbane Airport**, a product spotlight from **ANZCRO**, our **Sustainability** page, plus full pages from:

- Silversea
- Eva Airways
- Abercrombie & Kent

## T+L concludes sale

**ACCOR** Vacation Club is now officially under the ownership of Travel + Leisure Co (T+L), after the sale of the timeshare division (**TD** 01 Feb) was closed yesterday.

The move means T+L has taken responsibility for marketing the brand in Australia, NZ, and Indonesia, as well as management of its 24 properties.

Current Accor Vacation Club CEO, Craig Wood, will continue to oversee the business, reporting to T+L President Barry Robinson.

## QF hires new sales chief

**QANTAS** will welcome highly experienced aviation sales and marketing executive, Kathryn Robertson, to its leadership team in the coming months, tasked with overseeing its domestic and international sales teams.

Robertson brings 30 years of sales and marketing experience to her new role of Executive Manager – Global Sales and Distribution, including 15 years with Air New Zealand.

She replaces Igor Kwiatkowski, who moved within the company last year to head up the Qantas Freight division (**TD** 25 Oct 2023).

Robertson links up with Qantas after most recently finding her sea legs with Carnival Australia as its Chief Commercial Officer.

Reporting to Qantas International CEO, Cam Wallace, Robertson's duties will also include working closely with the Australian travel trade, which has suffered setbacks in recent years

in the wake of cuts to Qantas commissions on trade bookings.

Speaking to *Travel Daily*, Robertson described herself as a "seasoned airline professional", and that she wasn't intimidated about making tough decisions which are "part and parcel of a role of this size and scope".

She added it was too early for her to be able to comment on Qantas' exact objectives.

"It's nice from a trade perspective because I'll still be working with a lot of the same partners that I've worked with in this role [at Carnival Australia]," Robertson said.

Carnival Australia Interim boss, Peter Little, said he wished Robertson all the best at Qantas.

"We thank Kathryn for the contribution she's made to Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises, including the highly successful 'Brings Us All Together' campaign," Little said. *ML*

## NZ famil appeal

A **MYRIAD** of experiences await agents exploring New Zealand on their personally curated famil, with dozens of tour operators eager to welcome trade partners.

For more info and to start planning, see today's **cover page**.

## JetBlue backs away

**PLANS** by JetBlue Airways to acquire US low-cost carrier Spirit Airlines are now off after JetBlue walked away from the deal.

The nixed bid comes after the US Federal Court rebuked the planned acquisition (**TD** 24 Jan), stating airfares were sure to rise.

## Eva Air impresses

**BRISBANE** agents recently enjoyed an enchanting evening of topsy-turvy discovery at the Queensland Art Gallery, courtesy of EVA Air, Club Med and Wendy Wu Tours - for highlights from the night, see **page 10** of today's **TD**.

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## Jayride targets cost cuts



**BELEAGUERED** airport transfer company Jayride will look to significantly slash costs by as much as 44% across the business while targeting higher margins to improve its bottom line.

According to a strategic review published yesterday, the company said it had found and executed \$3.75 million in annualised cost savings, none of which are expected to affect efficiency or hamper future growth prospects.

Jayride will also sharpen its focus on airport transfers as a core product line, abandoning its early mantra of being able to transport 'anyone, anywhere'.

Travel agents will become a key focus for the company, with the review labelling advisors as "creatures of habit" and stating "once they adopt Jayride, they're inclined to remain loyal".

Further opportunities for Jayride include developing a wider range of luxury transport products to suit higher-yielding travellers, along with new people-moving options for families and groups.

The company will also evaluate the value each booking partner provides to cut any dead weight.

In the past six months alone, Jayride has been forced to reach out to investors with two rounds of capital raising, generating \$3.5 million in funds to shore up its flagging bottom line. *ML*

## Hall takes charge of SAA in Oz



**WITH** South African Airways (SAA) recently recommitting to the Australian market with flights to Perth (*TD* 09 Jan), the carrier has promoted Michael Hall to Country Manager, ANZ to spearhead local growth plans.

Hall will formally assume the position from 01 Mar, having held the National Sales Manager Australia role for eight years.

The carrier said the appointment arrives at a "crucial" time for its ongoing expansion plans, as it looks to spread its

wings sustainably by reconnecting with key markets globally.

The first flight from Johannesburg will land in Perth on 29 Apr.

Hall was previously the GM for ANZ with Experience Travel. *AB*

## Escape to Bundy

**ESCAPE** to Bundaberg on the southern Great Barrier Reef with ANZCRO, with seven ready-to-sell packages for travel advisors.

Read more about ANZCRO's Bundaberg offering on **page 12**.

## A&K recruitment

**THOSE** seeking the next adventure in their careers might be the right fit for A&K's latest recruitment push across multiple positions - see **page 11** for info.

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**new caledonia**  
Pacific heart



## Vietjet Hanoi bound

**BUDGET** airline Vietjet will operate a new direct flight between Hanoi and Melbourne, off the back of its rapid expansion across Australia.

The carrier will offer travellers two round-trip flights a week, with the inaugural service scheduled to take off on 03 Jun.

Vietjet has also inked a new deal with SwissPort to grow its ground handling & cargo services.

## Gosnell a winner

**INTREPID** Travel has revealed Peter Gosnell from MTA Travel as the first winner of its 'Experience More in 2024' agent incentive.

In his entry, Gosnell shared that it was his dream to sail the Greek Islands and explore the attractions of Turkiye and Cyprus.

## Going small to go big

**EXCLUSIVE**

**AUSTRALIAN** travellers love small group touring more than ever and Collette plans to take full advantage of that trend, the company's global CEO, Jaclyn Leibl-Cote, told *Travel Daily* while in the country this week.

"Australians are such amazing travellers and Collette has such a great product that fits with many of the travellers in this market - especially our small group explorations line which is doing extremely well," Leibl-Cote said.

"Australia is bigger than some of our other markets in regard to the small group product overall, so there's a great opportunity here and I'm excited that we're seeing growth starting to kick off again in a really good way for 2024," she added.

Collette's newly installed global chief (*TD* 10 Oct 2023) said that in Australia, small group style tours represent more than half of total sales - above the global average - suggesting that Australians are prepared to pay a slightly higher premium for a better quality



travel experience in 2024.

Leibl-Cote added that one of the reasons she believes Aussies are taking to small group adventures in higher numbers is the way in which Collette formulates the creation of its tours.

"We're not taking our 'Classic' itineraries, that could include up to 40 travellers, and just netting it down to a smaller group and adding a premium.

"We are actually curating 47 itineraries that are designed with small group touring in mind which is definitely a big differentiator in the market."

Last year was one of the strongest sales years for Collette on record after a sluggish rebound following COVID. *AB*

## QF, VA promotions

**AUSSIES** can nab discounted flight fares on almost every route across the country, thanks to Qantas' week-long Australia Red Tail promotion.

Domestic economy fares start from \$109, with more than 34 routes on sale for under \$150 for travel from Apr to mid-Dec.

The promo ends midnight AEDT 11 Mar, unless sold out prior.

**MEANWHILE**, Virgin Australia has partnered with Tourism Tasmania to deliver a seat sale and paid media campaign.

The carrier has released thousands of sales fares priced from \$39 one-way for travel to Launceston and Hobart from five major Australian cities.

The sale applies to travel dates between 30 Apr-12 Dec, and is available until 08 Mar.

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## Clock tik toks on youth

THE travel and tourism industry is in dire need of fresh, youthful travel advisors breaking into the sector, according to itravel Australia CEO, Steve Labroski.

Speaking at the company's annual conference this past weekend in Canberra, Labroski lamented a lack of mentorship to those outside the sector and a poor understanding by young people of the potential the career can provide as major sticking points to attracting new faces.

Labroski acknowledged money was a significant hurdle, explaining that many young people expect salaries that the industry can't initially afford.

Conversely, he countered that those who stick with the industry long enough and have the right drive and motivation can earn salaries well into the hundreds of thousands per annum.

"There's so much money on the table that these young kids,

if they were prepared to spend three to five years of their lives to commit to something, that eventually when they look back, they're going to go 'oh my God, I never thought this was possible,'" Labroski believes.

"We're seeing agents earn \$20k, \$30k, \$50k, \$70k virtually every month - that's a lot of money to sit at home, advise people, and sort out holidays."

Labroski admitted that those financial opportunities were not communicated properly, but that finding the mentors to lead young advisors through their initial years was the biggest challenges.

"I think we're not sharing, and people need to know that if you can become good at what you're doing, you'll make a lot of money in this industry because people want knowledge and experience and they're prepared to pay for it," he said. *DF*

More itravel details on p8.

## Come and Play in California



CALIFORNIA is inviting travellers to experience their 'ultimate playground', after unveiling its first brand overhaul in more than a decade along with the launch of its 'Let's Play' global campaign.

Highlighting a myriad of the state's free-spirited adventures and experiences, the US\$32.8 million integrated campaign will air across Australia, the United States, Canada, Mexico, the UK, and China for three months.

Visitors can also take a new quiz on [visitcalifornia.com](http://visitcalifornia.com) to identify

their 'play style' and receive recommendations accordingly.

"Travel is a time and place that gives us permission to embrace play, and California offers every visitor an opportunity to play in a way that speaks to them," Visit California President and CEO Caroline Beteta said.

More than 85% of consumers across six global markets, including Australia, agree it is important to incorporate play into their lives, according to new research from the DMO. *JM*

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Here's the scoop: To throw your hat in the ring, simply book a Return International Philippine Airlines ticket to Manila between February 26th and March 17th, 2024. Want more shots at winning? Book any Philippine Airlines domestic ticket to Cebu or Boracay and double your chances to win one of the 8 golden spots up for grabs!

Secure your spot in the race for adventure by shooting an email over to [famil@philippineairlines.com.au](mailto:famil@philippineairlines.com.au) with your ticket/PNR details.

We'll reach out to the winners on March 31st, 2024!





## ATAC wines 'n' dines high flyers



**THE** Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) hosted a celebratory luxury overnight event at The Langham Gold Coast last Fri.

The exclusive gathering saw the co-operative buying group's high-flyers from across the country treated to a mouth-watering culinary experience.

### LATAM adds Disney

**LATAM** Airlines customers can now enjoy Disney+ content on their flights, after the airline became the first in South America to add the streaming platform to its in-flight entertainment service.

There are more than 50 Disney+ episodes available on LATAM Play, including the first season of the series *Loki and Obi Wan Kenobi*, as well as films like *Disenchanted* and *Lady and the Tramp*.

The new agreement with Disney means the carrier now offers content from three streaming platforms on board.

The event aimed to recognise the contribution of the attending members to the success of ATAC, as well as offer them an opportunity to share insights and strengthen partnerships.

Guests were served an eight-course degustation menu in an elegant private dining room at the hotel's Akoya restaurant, backed by ocean views to inspire strategic discussions.

"We are honoured to welcome the members of the ATAC to The Langham," The Langham General Manager, John O'Shea, said. *JM*

### Peru dengue fever

**TRAVELLERS** planning a trip to Peru are being advised to consult their medical professional ahead of departure, due to an outbreak of dengue fever in the country.

Updated Smartraveller advice urges Aussies to ensure hotel rooms are mosquito proof, to use insect repellent and to wear long, loose and light-coloured clothing.

## ATIA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



**I AM** on the road this week and it all started in at the itravel conference in Canberra.

Steve Labroski and the team held a great conference

with 120 travel professionals from around the country attending.

Today I am in Melbourne catching up one-on-one with some of our members.

I really enjoy getting out and meeting members in their offices to hear about their issues, and importantly, receive first-hand feedback about how we at ATIA are performing.

Last month, we saw some results of our advocacy efforts in relation to reforming how airline slots are allocated.

We have worked very hard with a small group of committed stakeholders to drive the Fed Govt into making this reform.

We have been pushing for this reform because every time there is a cancellation, we know it creates more work which you are not remunerated for and it impacts your clients.

Our advocacy also seeks to provide direct member support, and in our pre-budget submission we focus on the growing risks of cyber breaches.

The Fed Govt recently announced that there is an ever-increasing focus by international criminals on businesses that hold significant personal data.

To assist members in strengthening their businesses, we are asking the Government to reintroduce and make permanent the 'Skills Training Boost'.

This would provide members with an additional 20% tax deduction on top of any cyber training spend.

We know this will make it easier for ATAS businesses to improve their digital capabilities to keep clients' data safe.

On Fri, many travel professionals will be attending International Women's Day events around the country.

As an industry, we have much to be proud of as a leader in female workforce participation and it is something I know we celebrate and advocate for all year round.

Finally, for most members, we are in the last month of the 2023 ATAS accreditation.

Members must have submitted documents well before the month's end to ensure you comply with the ATAS Charter and Code.

It is also a great time to make sure that your free listing on [atas.com.au](https://atas.com.au) is up-to-date, so that the close to 100,000 people who visit this site each year can find your business.



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## BNE delivers agents a Pacific 'Show & Go'

OVER 100 travel agents from around Southeast Queensland attended Brisbane Airport's latest 'Show and Go' event, partnering with Aircalin, Air Vanuatu and Fiji Airways for a mega Pacific gathering.

The event showcased the best that airlines serving Brisbane have to offer, and the appeal of Qld destinations.

The forum was also a chance to acknowledge the support BNE had received from the local travel industry.

A fantastic night was had by everyone, BNE said, with cultural dance performances delivered by Heilani Productions, received with enthusiastic crowd participation.

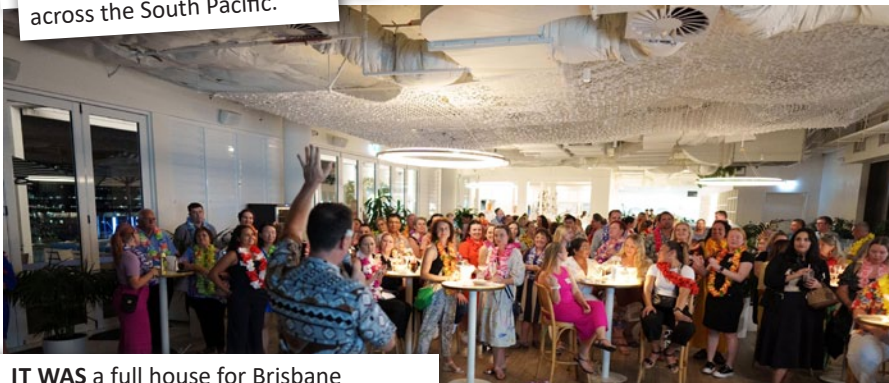
Six lucky winners also received flights and accommodation prizes to Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia.



**HEILANI** Productions provided entertainment from across the South Pacific.



**GUESTS** enjoyed the tropical vibes and scenic Brisbane skyline.



**IT WAS** a full house for Brisbane Airport's first 'Show & Go' of the year.



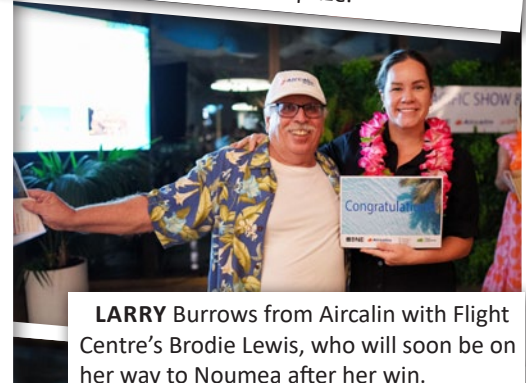
**ASHLEY** Rule from Air Vanuatu giving Flight Centre's Karen Oudeman her prize.



**INGA** Brown, Fiji Airways and lucky winner Gary Wyniewski from I Love Cruising.



**SMILES** as bright as the tropical outfits.



**LARRY** Burrows from Aircalin with Flight Centre's Brodie Lewis, who will soon be on her way to Noumea after her win.



**LUCKY** door prize winners (left and above) chosen by the Heilani Group for their dance skills.



### Ponant is green

**PONANT** was recently awarded the official Green Globe Certification, becoming the first maritime cruise line to achieve the eco certification.

Recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, the credential applies to the luxury brand's entire fleet, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to the adoption of more sustainable practices in tourism.

The Green Globe certification process is carried out annually by an accredited independent auditor.

### Cairns cleans up

**CAIRNS** Airport will be powered by 100% renewable energy before the end of this year, thanks to a new partnership between Queensland energy company CleanCo, and the North Queensland Airport Group.

The agreement saw Cairns and Mackay Airports both commit to powering 100% of their land operations with renewable energy by 2025, with the hubs to draw clean power from the local Kaban Wind Farm.

The initiative will push Far North Queensland closer to its overall goal of 75% emissions reduction by 2035.

## SUSTAINABILITY NOT A CONCERN FOR PAX

### EXCLUSIVE

**THE** wave of sustainability as a key sales principle may not have hit the cruise sector as hard as the wider travel industry, a number of executives recently informed the trade.

Holland America Line President, Gus Antorcha (**pictured**), said his company had not seen guests favour cruise lines which claim to be more sustainable, bucking the popularly held conception around the travel sector.

Responding to a question from **Travel Daily** on board Holland America's *Volendam* earlier this week, Antorcha said his cruise line is yet to see the concept take hold, with guests still prioritising their desired itineraries.

"We haven't seen that to be perfectly honest," he said.



"I think guests want to go where they want to go, and they want to do it in a place and in a way that they feel safe and taken care of," Antorcha added.

"I don't think they'll risk, 'maybe one's more environmentally conscious than the other, but it doesn't go where I want to go... we're just not seeing it."

However, Antorcha believes cruise lines that do not handle sustainability with care can stand out for the wrong reasons.

"I think that could hurt demand...I think that is certainly a risk," he reasoned.

Meanwhile, Silversea Marketing Director, Philippa Walker, told **Travel Daily** guests' sustainability concerns depend more on the destination they are travelling to.

"The majority of guests would be quite considered about the type of ship they're going to sail into destinations like Antarctica, the Galapagos, where there are some sustainability concerns, be it on shore or on the ship," Walker said.

"I think they're the sort of passengers that would be looking at what we're doing...because we're making changes now on board the ships, I think our guests are starting to evolve in that way as well," Walker added. *MS*

### Air NZ hydrogen

**AIR** New Zealand has begun trialling hydrogen to charge its electric tugs and service vehicles, in partnership with Wellington Airport, Toyota New Zealand, and Hiringa Energy.

Taking place over the next few weeks at Wellington Airport, the test will be carried out using hydrogen fuel cells provided by Toyota New Zealand, and aims to demonstrate the safe use of hydrogen in an aviation setting for the first time in NZ.

### eVTOL aims for '26

**REVENUE** passenger routes involving electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft are expected to be in service by 2026, according to a study of global investors.

Of this, around 11% are more optimistic and believe services could begin in 2025.

The study found the overwhelming majority (96%) feel improved regulations governing eVTOL vehicles will fuel new investment and help to overcome public concerns over safety.

### Pan Pac certified

**PAN** Pacific Hotels Group has achieved certification from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council for its group of eight Singapore hotels.

The GSTC Industry Criteria for Hotels sets out standards across four key areas - sustainability planning, social and economic benefits, cultural heritage and reducing negative impact.

The certification comes on the back of green building design and environmental stewardship across the group.



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## MONEY

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

### AU\$1 = US\$0.651

**THE** Australian dollar has dropped against key global currencies over the past week, with a softer inflation rate and commodity prices blamed for the latest slump.

Despite a poorer recent showing against the greenback, the Aussie had been rallying well on the US dollar for the previous three weeks.

The Aussie closed at US\$0.65 cents yesterday.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.651
UK	£0.513
NZ	\$1.068
Euro	€0.600
Japan	¥97.97
Thailand	฿23.27
China	¥4.685
South Africa	12.39
Canada	\$0.884
Crude oil	US\$83.56

## Rio in Hyatt's world

**HYATT** Hotels will add its first Destination by Hyatt member in Las Vegas, with Rio Hotel and Casino to become an affiliated property later this year.

The move means World of Hyatt loyalty members can earn and burn points at Rio Hotel & Casino Las Vegas on qualifying stays.

Rio Hotel is currently undergoing an extensive multi-phased renovation, after which it will move into Hyatt's collection of independently owned properties.

## itravel enjoys its 'Golden Years'



**ITRAVEL** held its annual conference in Canberra over the weekend, with 120 industry professionals descending on Australia's capital for the event.

With **Travel Daily** in tow to capture all the action, itravel CEO, Steve Labroski, kicked off the two-day gathering - appropriately themed as 'The Golden Years' at the National Press Club, with guest speakers including ATIA's Dean Long, international speaker Anthony Bonnici, keynote speaker Wendy Addinsall, as well as a vast array of industry suppliers.

Delegates enjoyed plenty of downtime with the welcome reception taking place at Hotel Burbury's Leyla Bar, which featured stunning views across the Canberra CBD, while Sun's lunch took place at Nick O'Leary Winery Heywood, just across the border in NSW.

The weekend was capped off by a gala dinner at The Marion.

"We called our conference the 'Golden Years', and I have been mentioning the golden years for a couple of years now," CEO Steve Labroski explained.

"I think when you look at what we came out of after 2019, '21 and then '22, we all got a little

bit excited about what the future looks like.

"Fast-forward and '23 broke every record possible, so '23 was the biggest year for us as an organisation...we're virtually now talking 60-70% up on pre-COVID.

"What is scary is in 2024, I'm predicting another 50% growth on top of that again." *DF*

## Good Fri at Skydeck

**MELBOURNE** Skydeck has kicked off a partnership with the Good Friday Appeal this month to help raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

Located in Southbank's Eureka Tower, the venue will display stickers on its windows with a QR code encouraging visitors to donate to their preferred geographical region of Melbourne and greater Victoria.

One lucky entrant from the highest geographic donation area will win an Altitude Lunch Package experience for a family of four, which pairs entrance to Melbourne Skydeck with a three-course lunch at Eureka 89.

Skydeck Melbourne will donate 25% of direct general admission tickets to the appeal to raise \$20k.

## Window Seat

**JAPANESE** travellers were dealt a heavy blow last week, after the country's first low-cost carrier announced it would no longer be offering free Kit Kats on its services.

Skymark Airlines had been providing pax with a mini-size version of the popular choccy since 2016, along with a free cup of coffee or tea.

In fact, the airline has become loved in Japan for the sweet gesture.

Pikachu would appear on the wrappers of the in-flight Kit Kats from time to time, much to customers' delight, thanks to the airline's periodic collaborations with the Pokemon franchise.

The carrier discontinued the free Kit Kats at the start of this month, following the end of its partnership with Nestle.

Fans were quick to react to the news on social media, with many expressing sadness and fond food memories.

On a happier note, the airline will continue to offer free in-flight coffee via its new housemade brand, and pax can still get their sugar fix with complimentary apple juice.

There are also some very affordable Japanese sweets on the menu, including Ugisu Balls, which are priced from just US\$0.70 cents.





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# A night of wonder

EVA Air, in collaboration with Club Med and Wendy Wu Tours, hosted an enchanting evening for travel agents on February 21, 2024 at GOMA's Fairy Tales exhibition. Brimming with delightful surprises at every corner, our guests embarked on an adventure, beginning with an exclusive tour of the enchanting exhibition. Attendees were treated to engaging presentations, with valuable knowledge about EVA Air's services and insights into the premier ski products and tour packages offered by Club Med and Wendy Wu Tours. The evening culminated in a magical screening of 'Alice in Wonderland'. A wonderful time was had by all!



Michelle Nickelson, Club Med



Angelina Briscoe, Wendy Wu Tours



Jeff Kuo, EVA Air



To find out more about EVA Air's special events head over to the EVA Air Facebook page.



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Regional Sales Manager (SA/WA/NT)

### A&K – Tour Operator

Travel Specialist (MEL)

### A&K – Australian Inbound (DMC)

Guest Relations Manager (MEL)

### Abercrombie & Kent Travel Group (Crystal/A&K)

Director of Sales – Asia (Hong Kong/Singapore)

### Non-salary benefits include:

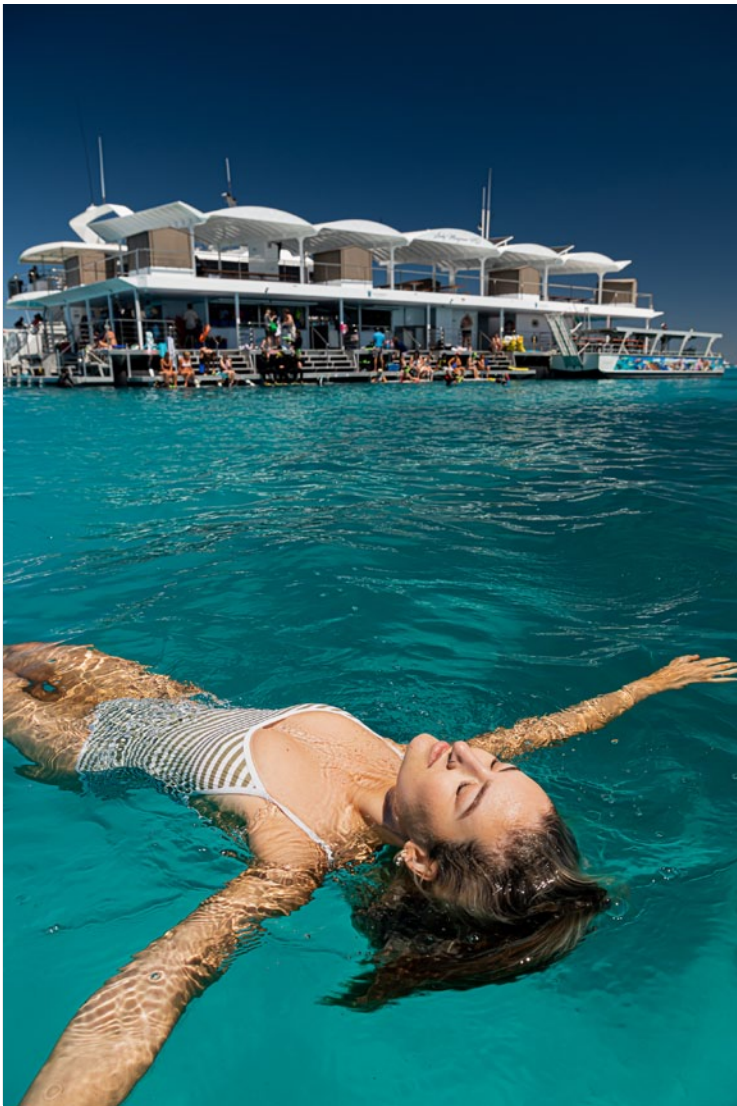
- ✓ Opportunity to work Hybrid
- ✓ 3 additional Wellbeing Leave days
- ✓ Access to an EAP
- ✓ Luxury travel benefits
- ✓ Supportive environment and career progression

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 Abercrombie & Kent

  
AKORN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

CRYSTAL®



# Escape to Bundaberg, Southern Great Barrier Reef

Have you ever wondered where great begins? Well, we know just the place! Welcome to Bundaberg, the picturesque town where turtles call home and every plate is filled with the bounty of it's local produce. Nestled at the meeting point of beach and reef, Bundaberg offers a slice of paradise where world-class rum flows and nature's miracles unfold before your eyes.

Experience the awe-inspiring sight of Mumma turtles hauling themselves up the beach at Mon Repos, while their hatchlings scurry towards the rhythmic waves. Just a short 4-hour drive or a 45-minute flight from Brisbane, Bundaberg serves as the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef. Here, visitors can witness large hard coral reefs

firsthand and swim alongside colorful fish, majestic turtles, and graceful manta rays.

For a truly immersive island reef experience, take a short trip out to the unforgettable Lady Musgrave Island and Lady Elliot Island. Step off the shores and snorkel with turtles or manta rays in the crystal-clear waters of the islands. Indulge in year-round dining experiences featuring fresh, locally sourced produce, brewed beverages, and distilled spirits.

Immerse yourself in Bundaberg's charm with 5 nights at the tranquil retreat that is Kellys Beach Resort. Dive into the town's rich heritage at The Bundaberg Barrel, sampling its famous brews, then embark on the Lady Musgrave Experience for an unforgettable journey into the Southern

Great Barrier Reef's breathtaking beauty on the 6 Day Highlights of Southern Great Barrier Reef from \$999\*pp.

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