

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of the latest news including **Business Events News**, plus a product profile from **eRoam**.

JQ's affordable tix

AUSSIERS travelling to Japan can snatch discounted one-way fares from just \$239 to Kansai Airport in Osaka with Jetstar's flash sale.

Valid for booking until 04 Jun, travellers can score Cairns to Kansai from the listed price, to Tokyo's Narita from \$249, from Brisbane to Narita from \$289, and from Sydney to Kansai from \$305, for selected departing dates.

Club Jetstar members can earn further reduced fares from \$225 on the Cairns-Kansai route.

View the offer **HERE**.

Clients stumped by closure

A TOUR operator specialising in overseas cricket trips has reportedly left clients short-changed by over \$1 million after it went into liquidation this month.

Calypso Destinations, owned by Kevin Tyler, allegedly cancelled a fully paid tour to India in Apr, leaving clients without refunds, according to a report in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The sudden closure has impacted bookings for close to 100 families, with children on the planned trip scheduled to learn from former NSW and Tasmania

batsman, David Dawson's, Sydney-based academy, Pro Performance Cricket.

Only two days before the operator's clients were due to fly out on 14 Apr, Tyler notified the group by text that the tour was cancelled due to "circumstances beyond our control".

Calypso Destinations also cancelled a cricket trip to Qld's Sunshine Coast in Jul.

The media report suggests customer losses as a result of Tyler's company going out of business exceed \$1.1 million, comprised of the families of cricketers training at seven cricket academies, the academies themselves, as well as other related organisations.

Tyler informed the liquidator the business only has \$2,418 in the bank and \$15,000 in assets.

CATO has confirmed Calypso Destinations is not a member. **AB**

VA adds to Vanuatu

VIRGIN Australia has got the jump ahead of Qantas in its bid to add capacity to Vanuatu.

The carrier has been given approval by the International Air Services Commission to add more seats between the two countries, paving the way for it to launch flights between Sydney and Port Vila.

"We are currently working through the next steps and continue to operate an increased schedule of services between Brisbane and Port Vila in May and Jun," VA told *Travel Daily*.

WA snags an Irwin

ROBERT Irwin has been announced as the first major speaker for the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTTC) Global Summit, which takes place in WA from 08-10 Oct.

Under the theme 'Ancient Land: New Perspectives', the three-day event is expected to bring 200 world industry leaders to Perth.

"Robert Irwin is a household Australian name so we're very excited to have secured him for this prestigious event," said WA Tourism Minister, Rita Saffioti.

"Robert's passion for wildlife and nature definitely make him an ideal speaker for this event, and I have no doubt he'll be a major drawcard for attendees."

eroam to the rescue

ARE you dreaming of bookings which normally take two hours condensed into 10 minutes - eRoam Office is the new agent friendly, must have tech - **p7**.

Alliance eyes profits

ALLIANCE Aviation has expressed confidence in posting a record profit before tax above \$83.9 million for the 12 months to 31 Jun 2024.

If the company can achieve the milestone, it will exceed forecasts delivered earlier in the year, and will represent a rise of 60% compared to the previous year.

The profit prediction has been driven largely by the sale of five General Electric CF34-10 engines to European buyers after Alliance sold parts from 11 of its E190 aircraft (**TD 27 Mar**).



Travel Daily ON LOCATION



FIJI

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of MTA, which is holding its National Conference this week in Fiji.

IT'S a day of travel today as we head to Fiji to attend the MTA National Conference on the popular Pacific island.

Agents are already in Fiji taking part in masterclasses while the conference sessions kick off officially on Fri.

A range of activities are also planned during the conference, including lunch tomorrow at Malamala Beach Club.

Stay tuned for more details.

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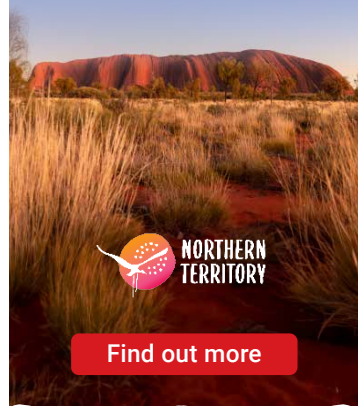
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Tali Wiru on a plate

AYERS Rock Resort's chef-hatted outdoor dining experience Tali Wiru has launched a revised menu featuring dishes paired with wines from the prestigious Penfolds collection.

The seasonal experience draws on Australian produce prepared using ancient cooking techniques to create culinary masterpieces.

New dishes on the menu include Glacier 51 toothfish paired with Penfolds Bin 311 chardonnay.



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Do not give a miss to the Swiss



SWITZERLAND Tourism is aiming to broaden Australian travel habits to the destination, in the wake of a record-breaking year to the landlocked country from Aussie travellers.

The DMO's Director Sandra Babey told **TD** Switzerland is hoping to push Australians into lesser-known regions of the country, and get them travelling at different times of the year.

Some of the nation's more obscure regions were profiled last night at the Switzerland Tourism Showcase in Sydney - part of a week-long exhibition of the destination to the Australian travel industry.

"We are we are trying to invite [Australians] to visit Switzerland in another time, like the Swiss autumn; we're trying to move them a bit away from the peaks of Jul, Jun and Aug," Babey said.

"We believe the Australian market is flexible enough to do that...it's really a very mature market," she added.

Switzerland is also encouraging Aussies to experience the country during Nov-Dec, when you can visit its Christmas markets.

Travel to the country from Australia is not slowing down, despite the high watermark set last year, with Babey reporting bookings for the first quarter as "very good", and many Swiss Travel Passes already sold.

Australians average roughly six to seven nights in Switzerland, Babey added. **MS**

Pictured Switzerland Tourism's Event Manager Sonia Holt, Marketing Manager Lauren Thomas, and Babey.

Marina back to sea

OCEANIA Cruises has returned its *Marina* ship to service after a major refurbishment (**TD** 23 Nov).

The ship now sports three new dining venues including a poolside ice-cream parlour, while penthouse rooms have been completely redesigned.

SQ321 investigation

RAPID gravitational change has been blamed for extreme turbulence which caused a Singapore Airlines plane to drop 54 metres during a recent flight.

According to an initial probe of the flight's voice recorder data by Singapore's Transport Ministry, preliminary findings showed the jet experienced strong vibration due to being caught in a draft before the autopilot pitched the aircraft downwards.

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REVEALING THE NEXT 24 MONTHS IN TRAVEL

Conflicts to shape luxury

LUXURY travel in 2024 will be shaped by geopolitical conflicts and political uncertainty, staffing shortages, and environmental concerns or natural disasters, according to a Virtuoso survey of agency owners and managers.

The trends report also revealed that an overwhelming majority of Virtuoso owners and managers view AI as an opportunity, rather than a threat.

The insights were revealed at the luxury global travel network's annual Symposium last week in Dubai, which attracted more than 400 of industry professionals from 37 countries.

Virtuoso's Executive VP, David Kolner, took to the stage on the first day of the event to present travel trends and forecasts,



revealing that Jan-Apr 2024 sales for travel in 2025 and 2026 were up 49%, and future cruise sales were up 52% compared to the same booking period last year.

He also shared that bookings worth over US\$50,000 were up 86%, with cruise bookings in the same price range up 102% and safari bookings up 159%.

Meanwhile, a deep dive into generational travel motivators found that Millennials and Gen Z are significantly increasing their travels in 2024, while Gen X and Baby Boomers' demand for travel this year remains steady.

Virtuoso highlighted that most Millennials and Gen Z travellers are willing to pay more for travel products or experiences that promote sustainability and benefit local communities.

The two younger generations are also more likely to travel for a sense of belonging and are twice as likely to seek an adrenaline rush or participate in social impact, while Gen X travel to reconnect with nature, and Boomers travel for educational purposes and curiosity. *JM*

Princess Asia cruises

PRINCESS Cruises has announced an extended 2025-26 Japan & Southeast Asia season, with *Diamond Princess* returning for a program showcasing the region's fall foliage.

The extended season will see 11 new voyages ranging in length from nine to 22 days, visiting 25 destinations throughout Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

Diamond will also sail to Singapore on a special 12-day Southeast Asia & Japan cruise.

AAT's deadly Koorie event



AAT Kings is celebrating National Reconciliation Week with the Koorie Heritage Trust, hosting a special event at the tour operator's Sydney offices.

Chief Executive Officer of AAT Kings, Ben Hall, emceed the event, with guests indulging in a barbecue, which included some bush tucker favourites from Kurrajong Australian Native Foods and Torres Strait Islander partner Mabu Mabu.

The event placed a spotlight on AAT Kings' indigenous tourism partners, focusing on their history and product, as well as how and why they launched, and why its partnership is important.

Those in attendance included Rob Hyatt, Manager of Cultural

Experiences from AAT Kings partner, the Koorie Heritage Trust, who provided a deeper understanding of the Melbourne-based nonprofit organisation - the only Aboriginal-owned and operated cultural centre in a major Australian city.

Hyatt shared with the AAT Kings team the significance of the Fed Square-based Koorie Heritage Trust, which houses 65,000 artefacts, including oral histories.

The trust aims to break the stereotype that indigenous culture is confined to the outback, offering interactive displays for visitors. *MS*

Pictured: Hyatt and Hall.

Tourist evacuation

AN ICELANDIC volcano on the country's Southern Peninsula has erupted for the fifth time in the past six months, forcing the nation's police force to declare a state of emergency.

The ABC reports the volcano shot lava 50 metres into the air earlier this week, along a fissure which authorities say is more than three kilometres.

The town of Grindavik was evacuated, as was the nearby tourist hotspot Blue Lagoon, with the area currently being surveyed for more information.

Ovolo + Peugeot

OVOLO Woolloomooloo and Peugeot have sparked a partnership for an 'Electrified Escape', which will see guests able to enjoy complimentary use of one of the car company's plug-in hybrids to explore Sydney.

The collaboration launches today, with guests able to get behind the wheel of the Peugeot 408, in line with Ovolo's 'Do Good. Feel Good' commitment.

The hotel company's Senior Marketing Manager, Toby Franklin, described partnering with Peugeot to offer its guests an unparalleled driving experience as a "masterstroke".

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Window Seat

WHILE you've probably heard of the 'quiet quitting' trend, a new movement dubbed 'quiet vacationing' is now gaining traction around the world among remote workers.

The trend involves people bringing their remote jobs on holiday instead of submitting a request to take paid leave, and is especially popular among Millennials, with a recent survey revealing nearly four in 10 have taken time off without communicating it to their supervisor.

The motivation behind this is apparently a reluctance to request time off.

According to *The Harris Poll's Out of Office Culture Report*, 61% of Millennials and 58% of Gen Z said they feel nervous about applying for leave.

Social media users have theorised that poor leave policies have also led to the uptick in the sneaky practice, with TikTok user, Manager Method, candidly stating that "if you're an employer that chooses to give employees five or ten days of vacation a year then they're likely to take more any way they can".

The divisive movement has prompted a debate around whether it should matter where people work from, as long as they are still fulfilling their duties.

Although the trend is largely taking off in the US, Google search results for the term 'quiet vacationing' has seen a sudden rise in Australia over the last week.



Brisbane visitors set to LyLo



BUDGET accommodation brand LyLo has opened the doors to its first location in Australia, with the brand eager to change the game for travellers seeking a more connected and social experience.

LyLo Brisbane can be found in Fortitude Valley in the inner city, with the property featuring a mix of private ensuite rooms, family and group rooms, & dormitories featuring four or six individual "pods" for solo travellers.

Each pod is self-catering and features a king-single bed with individual lighting, a fan and a mirror, multiple power and USB charging points, wi-fi connectivity, privacy screens and secure luggage storage next to each pod.

LyLo also features dedicated rooms for female travellers.

The brand's first Australian location builds on its existing portfolio, with LyLo properties also open in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

Key to LyLo's brand philosophy is a focus on celebrating local artists, with Brisbane visionary Jordache Gage conceptualising the building's exterior with a colourful display inspired by the city's flora and fauna.

Guests at LyLo Brisbane can enjoy a wellness corner complete with spin bikes or mingle with other travellers on a jazzed up rooftop hang-out, which features a communal kitchen and self-



serve beer, wine and cocktails.

"We do things differently at LyLo," said founder, Tim Alpe.

"From our innovative communal spaces to our commitment to guest comfort in unique sleeping formats, LyLo Brisbane sets a new standard for travellers seeking affordability without compromising on quality.

"Opening our doors in Brissie is just the beginning of our journey, and we've already got our next LyLo properties in the pipeline to continue expanding our presence across Australia," Alpe added. *ML*

Ritz-Carlton Nujuma

MARRIOTT International has opened its first Ritz-Carlton Reserve in the Middle East in the form of a private island retreat in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea.

Nujuma, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve which sits within the Blue Hole Islands, nestled between coral reefs on Saudi Arabia's coast.

The property features 63 beach and overwater villas with one-, two- and three-bedrooms, encircling a central lagoon and offering direct sea access.

Guest facilities include a seafood restaurant, French patisserie, wood-fired alfresco grill and the Conservation House, which hosts interactive sustainability seminars by cultural experts.

Agent investigated

NSW Police has launched an investigation into Travel World Sydney in Arncliffe amid mounting complaints accusing the Director of absconding with hundreds of thousands in customer monies.

According to *A Current Affair*, Travel World Sydney Director, Zahra Rachid, failed to book flight tickets and other arrangements for clients who paid significant sums for trips to Europe.

One client, Nicole Vris, paid more than \$160,000 to Rachid for return tickets to Greece for 35 members of her family only to discover the airline confirmation she was sent was not real.

NSW Fair Trading added it has received 28 official complaints about the agency.

Travel World Sydney is not an ATAS accredited agency.

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EVENT TICKETING "RIPE FOR DISRUPTION"

AROUND two million Aussie event-goers have had their personal data put at risk following a cyber attack on Ticketmaster, which has affected millions of customers around the world.

Hacker group ShinyHunters has reportedly stolen 1.3 terabytes of customer data possessed by Ticketmaster, including names, addresses, credit card numbers, and phone numbers, with the intent of selling the information on the black market unless it is paid a ransom of \$750,000.

Ticketmaster has not yet released a public statement, however the Australian Govt's cyber security office said it is "engaging" with the ticketing giant to "understand the incident".

If the information is released, it could have enormous implications for the customers caught up in the hack, including the risk of financial fraud and identity theft.

The data breach comes just a

week after the US Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a lawsuit against Ticketmaster and its parent company, LiveNation, over claims they are operating an "illegal live event monopoly".

DOJ has accused the ticket companies of using long-term contracts to prevent venues from choosing rival ticketers, blocking venues from using multiple ticket sellers, and threatening venues that they could lose money if they don't choose Ticketmaster.

The company has hit back, saying the lawsuit "won't solve the issues fans care about relating to ticket prices, service fees, and access to in-demand shows", and insisted it isn't to blame for high prices.

If successful, the lawsuit will

allow more competition in the US ticket-selling market - of which

Ticketmaster controls 70% of - with the expectation that this will lead to cheaper ticket prices.

In Australia however, Ticketek and its parent company TEG dominate the live event ticket scene, with Ticketmaster taking a smaller slice of the pie.

Like their US counterparts, Aussie event-goers are frustrated with the cost of live event tickets, according to Eventfinda TixSuite, a new ticketing software model that launched earlier this year.

New research from the company found that, while demand for live events remains high, the majority of Aussies (79%) think tickets are too expensive, with 'junk'

fees being the main source of annoyance and confusion.

Only 40% of Australians say they understand the various fees and charges around tickets, and 72% would be more accepting of fees if there was more transparency around why they were charged.

Add in the frustration of high waiting times and ticketing websites crashing, and Aussies are rapidly losing trust in ticketing providers - in fact, only 21% believe they have the best interest of consumers at heart.

Eventfinda TixSuite CEO, James McGlenn, said the findings confirm "ticketing in Australia is broken and ripe for disruption".

He pointed out how the current model also poses problems for event organisers, who are "forced to pass on per-ticket fees to ticket purchasers" and "endure cashflow issues with ticketing providers holding cash from sales until after their event". JM



GCCEC calculates

THE Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) is currently developing an event emissions calculator in line with its five-year Sustainability Strategy.

The tool will provide an emissions estimate based on GCCEC-specific space and energy usage, which will in turn offer insights and actionable data to the venue and its clients.

Get the (Park) royal event treatment

PARKROYAL Melbourne Airport has unveiled a refresh of its dedicated meetings and events floor as part of the property's ongoing multi-million dollar refurbishment.

All 16 meeting rooms now feature a new colour scheme, with bespoke carpeting and accent lighting featuring throughout the venues.

Delegates can also access the business centre, which is



equipped with mini bars and the latest smart technology and audio-visual equipment.

Corporate events can also be held in the Victoria Ballroom, while intimate, private events can be hosted in the refurbished Airo Restaurant and Bar.

Byron's open day

EVENT planners are invited to an open day at Elements of Byron, specifically tailored to the MICE market to showcase the resort's facilities, dining options, accommodations, and leisure activities.

Taking place from 10am-3pm on 19 Jul, the event will highlight an array of possibilities for event, retreat, and conference organisers - register **HERE**.



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Perth Airport has announced the appointment of a new Chief Financial Officer, with **Peter Bryant** to replace the acting CFO, Andras Berta. He joins the hub as it gears up for a major development push, including a new parallel runway, terminal facilities, and hotel. Bryant is an experienced accounting and finance leader, and is currently wrapping up his tenure as CFO at global mining services group, Perenti.

The **South Australian Tourism Commission** has welcomed **Chris Burford** as its Executive Director of Strategic Communications & Engagement. Burford brings more than 15 years' experience in PR, media relations, marketing, strategy and management, and was formerly the senior advisor to the Premier of South Australia.

Peter Tichy has been appointed as General Manager of **Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Bangkok**. The seasoned professional brings more than three decades of experience in the hospitality industry across several countries, including Austria, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, Egypt, Nigeria, Vietnam, and now, Thailand.

Todd Barry has joined **TAG** as a Supplier Relations Specialist. Barry brings a wealth of experience in product development and procurement across the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on forging strong partnerships. His CV includes stints at Tucan Travel, where he led the APAC team, as well as Flight Centre Travel Group.

Rajeev Neolia has been promoted to become the Director of Sales at **Shangri-La Eros New Delhi**, marking a continuation of his 16-year tenure with Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts. Neolia moves up from his previous role at the Indian property as Director of Business Development, which he fulfilled for six years.

Starting from Jun, **Stephen Johnson** will assume the role of Chief Commercial Officer at **American Airlines**, taking over from the outgoing Vasu Raja. Johnson is currently Vice Chair and Chief Strategy Officer, and will continue to occupy the role as the US carrier searches for a new leader for the commercial division.

Four Seasons Hotel Seoul has welcomed **Emanuele Accame** to the role of Director of Food and Beverage. The hospitality expert joins from Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi, where for four years he led the hotel's VIRTU Bar, which was recognised as one of Asia's 50 Best Bars. He has also enjoyed stints at Four Seasons properties in Indonesia, Hawaii and Egypt.

Daniel Sim has taken on the role of National Business Development Manager for New Zealand at **Evolution Travel Collective (ETC)**. In a move to expand the collective's presence in the country, Sim is tasked with forging new relationships with agent partners while representing ETC's brands, including Touropa, Albatross Tours and Sun Island Tours.

First Nations, first-hand



A **FIRST Nations** student is channelling his passion for learning and understanding his culture by sharing his knowledge as a tour guide.

A proud Arrernte man from Mparntwe Alice Springs, **William (Will) Palmer** landed his first job as a First Nations tour guide.

Since accepting the gig, he has completed a Certificate I in Tourism (Australian Indigenous Culture) through Charles Darwin University TAFE.

Palmer said the training provided him with the confidence to guide a group, as well as an understanding of how to share the knowledge that has been passed down to him.

Having grown up on his homelands 100km west of Alice Springs, Palmer's grandmother passed down local knowledge to him, including the Arrernte language, culturally significant stories and knowledge of Country.

"The Certificate has complemented my existing language and cultural knowledge by providing structured training in

tour delivery," he said.

"It equipped me with essential skills such as understanding tour structure, customer service, first aid certification, and ensuring visitor safety."

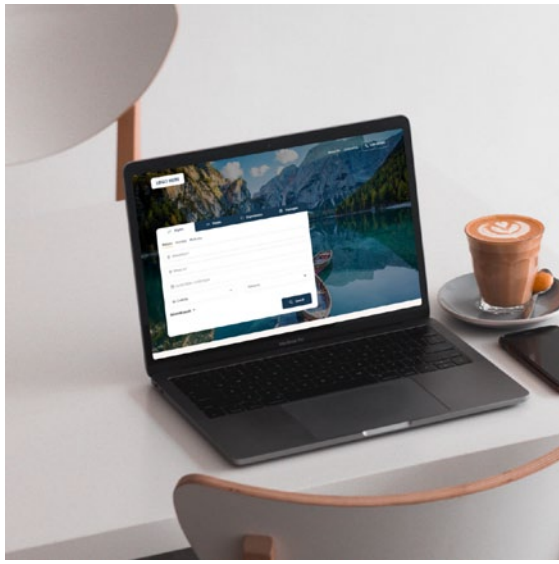
Palmer has now begun his Certificate III in Tourism, and aspires to eventually establish his own tours closer to his family homeland, as well as mentor other Indigenous individuals to join the tourism industry. *JM*

Stay like a diamond

SOFITEL Sydney Darling Harbour is giving guests the chance to win a Diamond Experience valued at \$7,500, as part of global celebrations for the Sofitel brand's 60th anniversary.

Guests who book and stay in one of the hotel's suites between now and 31 Aug will be entered into the draw, giving them the chance to score a luxury two-night stay for them and a companion in the exclusive Bellerive Suite.

The prize also includes a dinner and a spa experience.



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