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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of travel industry news, including a photo page from **Entire Travel Group** and our **Corporate Update**.

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION



GOLD COAST

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of the **Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC)**, which is hosting its **Future Focus conference on the Gold Coast**.

FRESH from its successful conference in Canberra last year, the Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) is on Queensland's Gold Coast this year to reflect on the last 12 months and look at the prospects for the year ahead.

Members and suppliers can once again expect to immerse themselves in a dynamic 'Hands on, Future Thinking' program, featuring keynote presentations, a range of interesting panel discussions, workshops, networking opportunities and an extensive supplier exhibition.

"Not only will delegates learn about the latest industry trends, there will also be opportunities to experience the incredible offerings of the Gold Coast," GM Michelle Emerton said.

Complex Travel links LTC

BY-INVITATION agency group Luxury Travel Collection (LTC) has signed its first affiliate member in the form of the South Australia-based Complex Travel Group as it launches a new luxury brand (**TD** breaking news).

Onboard Luxury will feature a range of top-tier travel experiences and itineraries developed in collaboration with the Flight Centre Travel Group-owned Luxury Travel Collection.

These will sit under two tiers, the first known as 'Relax and Recharge', which will promote exclusive hotels and ultra-luxe stays across the globe.

The second tier 'Explore' will focus on curated tours, cruises and itineraries packed with exclusive and insider access to the world's most sought-after destinations and attractions.

Complex Travel Group currently operates as an independent member of the Link Travel Group and is now affiliated with Luxury Travel Group, both of which sit



within Flight Centre Travel Group.

Luxury Travel Collection General Manager Sales & Operations, Nikki Glading, welcomed Complex Travel Group as the first affiliate member of the exclusive group.

"As our first independently owned affiliate member, Complex Travel Group is able to access the luxury product requirements of clients as an extension to its existing host membership with Link," Glading said.

Complex Travel Group Founder, Mark Trim, said Onboard Luxury reflects the group's commitment to meeting the needs of the Australian travel market.

"We've meticulously selected each hotel, tour and cruise supplier to ensure we're offering truly indulgent experiences where every need is anticipated, allowing for true escapism and relaxation," Trim said. *ML*

Glading is pictured above third from left with Mark Trim; Luxury Travel Collection Product Director, Shannon Fogarty; and Complex Travel Group Chief Executive, Anthony Riemann.

New TEQ leadership

OLLIE Philpot will step in as Acting CEO of Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) from next week following the resignation of Patricia O'Callaghan (**TD** 04 Nov).

The TEQ leadership transition will begin from 11 Nov.

Queensland's new Liberal state government has also sworn in Andrew Powell as Minister for Environment and Tourism.

Pop rocks the rock

AYERS Rock Resort and Imagine Holidays have introduced a new four-day package to Uluru to be headlined by a performance from pop sensation Jessica Mauboy.

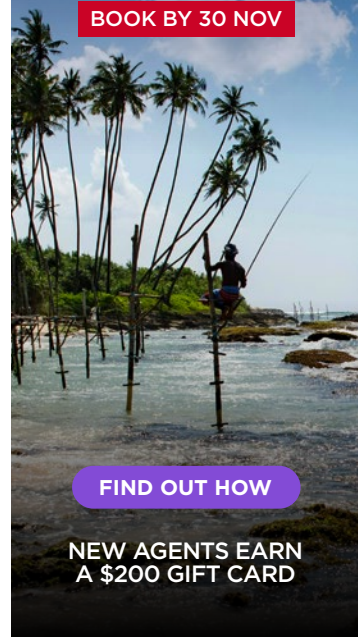
Departing 18 May 2025, the package includes flights, accom, tours and concert tickets.

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Little things bring big numbers



AUSTRALIA'S love affair with Japan has never been more evident than this year, with the number of Aussies making trips between Jan and Sep already eclipsing 2023 by 24,000 trips.

So far this year, 637,000 Aussies have booked a trip to The Land of the Rising Sun, surging ahead of the 613,062 Aussies who made the trip north last year.

By the end of 2024, it is expected that around 850,000 Aussies will have crossed Japan's borders - which would represent a record milestone.

The figures were revealed last night by JNTO's Media and Marketing Senior Assistant Manager, Andy Coombs (pictured), at Kuro Bar in Sydney.

While a weak yen has clearly been a significant driver of Aussie visitation, Coombs said that

another key factor is the appetite of Aussies to explore parts of Japan that are less known to the broader travelling public.

Alongside adventure and luxury travel, sustainability makes up the third important pillar for Japanese visitation.

"For JNTO, sustainability is not just about ecological factors, it is also about cultural sustainability - there are many small communities in Japan who require tourists to keep their way of life going," Coombs said.

The JNTO rep also revealed that Aussies are staying longer and spending more in Japan than any other market, with the country making great strides in recent years to bolster its luxury credentials, including a flurry of premium hotels coming online over the next two years. AB

Travelmarvel Rigel

TRAVELMARVEL has marked the launch of its 2026 Europe season by adding a new river cruise ship to its fleet.

The tour operator will introduce *Travelmarvel Rigel*, a new sister ship to the existing *Travelmarvel Capella*, *Vega* and *Polaris*, which will sail a new eight-day itinerary on the Rhine and Moselle rivers.

Cruising between Amsterdam and Basel, the new tour also marks the summer debut of Travelmarvel on the Moselle.

Onboard, guests can enjoy the popular McGeary's Bar with casual dining menu, the Sun Deck and Sun Deck Bar, along with a top-deck whirlpool.

The tour features scenic driving in Cochem, wine tasting at Schlagkamp Winery and more.

Travelmarvel CEO David Cox said the advanced technology on *Travelmarvel Rigel* will allow the brand to offer even more enriching journeys that befit its 9.8 guest satisfaction rating.

TAG reorganisation

THE Appointment Group (TAG) has introduced a revised corporate structure to facilitate its next phase of growth and build on investment from ECI Partners.

Executive changes will see Gabrielle Carr take on the role of Chief Operating Officer globally, an expansion of her existing territory in the US and EMEA.

The Australian-born Carr will be based in Los Angeles and has expressed her excitement at the "full circle" moment to work more closely with the company's APAC presence.

New sales and business development will be spearheaded by Shane Barr as Chief Revenue Officer, while Byron Carr has been tasked with strategic direction and vision for touring as the company's largest division.

The executive team is completed by Chief Technology Officer Bruce Wildgust and Interim Chief Financial Officer, Neil Barnes, who remain in their current positions.



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Heed Bali warning

DFAT has posted a warning on its Smartraveller travel advice website urging Aussie holidaymakers to ensure they are appropriately covered with travel insurance prior to a trip to Bali.

The warning comes amid a spate of incidents on the holiday island resulting in serious injuries to some Australian tourists.

Smartraveller says visitors need to confirm their intended activities are covered by their policy, check it is valid for the entire trip and that all forms of transport are covered.

"The Australian Government won't pay for these costs - if you can't afford travel insurance, you can't afford to travel," DFAT said.

The warning was reiterated by Royal Life Saving Australia CEO, Justin Scarr, who singled out pool villas as particularly dangerous for parents with young children still crawling or just walking, as pools are not required by law to be fenced in Bali.

Ascend to rep Celestyal

TRAVEL representation firm Ascend Travel Group has been appointed to handle trade marketing services for Celestyal Cruises in the Australia market.

The appointment takes effect on 18 Nov and follows a recent local reorganisation which saw the departure of the line's Regional Manager, Stewart Williams.

Celestyal Cruises is prepared to embark on a major three-year growth strategy helmed by the deployment of *Celestyal Journey* to join fleet-mate *Celestyal Discovery* sailing year-round in the Arabian Gulf, based in Doha.

The addition of the second ship will mark a 30% jump in capacity in the region year-on-year.

Celestyal Vice President Business Development, Janet Parton, said she is looking forward to working closely with Ascend Travel Group to broaden its reach and exposure in a key growth market of Australia.



Ascend Travel Group Director Lynda Wallace said she is thrilled to be appointed as the official representative for Celestyal Cruises in Australia.

"With both ships set to sail year-round next year, we have ambitious plans to double Australian bookings and with the majority of our business coming via trade channels, our travel agent partners are critical to our success," Parton said.

Ascend Travel Group Director, Lynda Wallace, said the partnership marks a significant step forward in expanding Celestyal's presence in the Australian market. *ML*

TC board additions

MEMBER-OWNED agency group Travellers Choice has appointed two of its shareholder agents to the company's Board of Directors at its Annual General Meeting in Sydney this week.

Benjamin Apsey from Globetrotters Travel & Cruise, Toowoomba in Queensland and Naome Burdon of Argyle Travel & Cruise Naracoorte in South Australia will now hold two of the four Member Director roles on the company's Board.

The positions became available after Phil Dalley from Travel Makers in the ACT and Trinity Hastwell from South Australia's Hastwell Travel & Cruise stepped down after 11 years.

"Phil and Trinity have shown exceptional commitment to Travellers Choice since they joined the Board in 2013 and have been instrumental in helping our organisation achieve sustained growth," said Travellers Choice Chairman, Trent Bartlett.



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Rail rails for groups

AGENTS can now more easily handle Rail Europe bookings for parties of 25 or more, thanks to a new product launched by the rail aggregator and wholesaler.

The new RailGroupEasy has been designed to offer improved flexibility and customised arrangements including luggage porters, catering needs, welcome services and branding options.

CLICK HERE to get in touch with Rail Europe for access.

QF paradise on sale

QANTAS has opened sales on its newest route linking Brisbane with the South Pacific island nation of Palau (**TD 17 Oct**).

The 'Palau Paradise Express' QF165/66 service is a contract from the Federal Government, with the inaugural flight taking off 07 Dec and flying once weekly.

The six-hour flight will be the fifth new int'l service launched by Qantas in the last 12 months.

EK flies to A\$4.2b profit

STRONG customer demand has spurred Emirates Group to post an AED10.4 billion (A\$4.2 billion) half-year profit before tax for the 2024-25 half year ending 30 Sep.

The result is based on record revenues of AED70.8 billion (A\$28.8 billion) across its passenger and cargo divisions and new customers won on the back of sizeable investments in its inflight experience.

Emirates Airline and Group Chairman and Chief Executive HH Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum said the group surpassed its previous result to record another positive mark.

"We expect customer demand to remain strong for the rest of 2024-25, and we look forward to increasing our capacity to grow revenues as new aircraft join the Emirates fleet and new facilities come online at dnata," Al Maktoum added.

"The outlook is positive, but we

don't intend to rest on our laurels - we will stay agile in deploying our capacity and resources in a dynamic marketplace."

Overall head count across the Emirates Group grew 3% over the half-year to 114,610, with further strong recruitment drives underway to support future workforce requirements.

Over the half-year, Emirates increased flights to eight cities to meet demand - Amsterdam, Cebu, Clark, Luanda, Lyon, Madrid, Manila and Singapore.

EK also restarted service to Phnom Penh, Bogota via Miami and opened a new route to Madagascar via the Seychelles.

The half-year also saw eight aircraft - three A380s and five Boeing 777s - emerge from an extensive retrofitting program boasting all-new cabin products including its new 1-2-1 business class product with lie-flat seats and personal minibars. *ML*



Window Seat

DISNEY World in Florida has been left with a unique question of what to do with Donald Trump's likeness in its Hall of Presidents attraction.

Following his election win this week, Trump is likely to become the attraction's first animatronic to be returned to centre stage - a position held by the sitting US President.

Disney is also wondering whether to ask the incoming leader to record a new voiceover for his likeness (**pictured**), as every President since Bill Clinton has done.



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Air India NDC link

MARKING a major milestone in air travel distribution for India, Sabre Corporation has announced the launch of New Distribution Capability (NDC) content for the country's flag carrier, Air India.

As part of the airline's modernisation efforts, NDC offers through Sabre will enhance the way agents shop, book and service Air India bookings, while also giving travellers more choice, transparency, and flexibility.

Sabre and Air India have an existing agreement to distribute the airline's traditional content, both in India and globally.

Kelsian CEO change

TOURISM and transport operator Kelsian Group has announced Clint Feuerherdt will step back from his position as Managing Director and Group CEO from 01 Apr 2025.

Feuerherdt, who has been at Kelsian for over 15 years, will remain onboard in a part-time role as Strategic Advisor, while current All Aboard America Holdings (AAAH) CEO, Graeme Legh, has been named Group CEO.

Connecting with Kerala

KERALA Tourism has wrapped up a roadshow around Sydney and Melbourne, where more than 100 Australian operators connected with hotel partners and tour operators from the Indian region.

Among the delegates attending the event was Hon. Consul of General of India, Dr. Sushil Kumar, who is based in Melbourne.

Giles Gilbert, ANZ Regional Manager from airline partner, Malaysia Airlines, also attended the roadshow, where he spoke to guests about the latest news from the carrier.

"We're pleased with the great success of the Kerala Roadshow, which reaffirmed Kerala's appeal to Australians with a strong interest in its special experiences from scenic backwaters to its responsible tourism initiative," said Kerala Tourism's Secretary, Biju K. IAS.

"We look forward to welcoming more visitors to experience the beauty and warmth of 'God's Own Country'."

The events featured networking and business development in a



rapid-fire speed-dating format, followed by presentations, where guests heard about Kerala's diverse landscapes, culture and product offerings, such as ayurveda, houseboats and tea plantations.

There was also a prize draw, where Chris Maxfield from Flight Centre and Andrew Denishensky from Entourage Travel scored round-trip flights to Kerala and a seven-night stay. *JHM*

Border Force failure

LONG lines of up to 500 people have been experienced at Sydney and Melbourne Airport this morning after a system outage affecting the Australian Border Force's (ABF) SmartGate kiosks.

According to ABC News, both airports resorted to processing travellers manually while the issue was rectified.

Around 1,000 people in total have been affected, with travellers advised to check their flight status with airlines.

"The staff are being very honest and up-front about it and taking people who have their flight soon first," one affected passenger flying to Brazil told ABC News.

An ABF spokesperson added the issue was being corrected and systems would be back online and returning to normal soon.

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If you have any questions or would like a copy of the position description, please reach out as we're always up for a chat.

AI transformational

THE growing importance of AI in the travel sector was a key talking point during the World Travel Market Ministers Summit in London this week.

At the event, UN Tourism Executive Director Natalia Bayona unveiled the 'Strategic Roadmap: AI For Good in Tourism'.

"The tourism sector needs to be prepared to make better decisions with the help of generative Artificial Intelligence," Bayona told attendees.

"Tourism has the ability to create unique stories, and the use of technology for good in marketing and promotion of destinations, digital public infrastructure and education is crucial, and hyper personalisation of travel can be our biggest asset."

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Memories made and paella shared

TEN lucky travel agents recently experienced first-hand what makes an Entire Group Journeys trip (brought to you by Entire Travel Group) so special, as they travelled through southern Spain for an exciting famil.

Starting in Madrid on 19 Oct and concluding in Barcelona on 28 Oct, the 10-day 'Southern Spain & Barcelona Journey' also included Seville, Cordoba, Granada, Ubeda and Valencia.

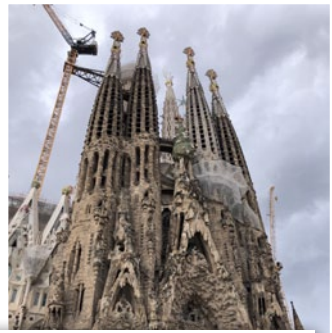
"The local guides were not only knowledgeable but also personable, bringing each destination to life," said Kate.

"Each destination revealed rich culture, making this journey truly amazing and memorable," commented Molly.

Leaving with full hearts and memory cards, Spain left an indelible mark on the group, eager to share their stories with family, friends and clients.



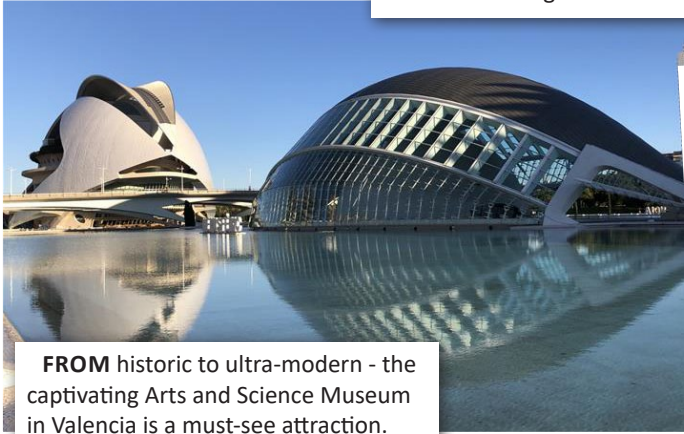
LEFT: Laurin, Tim, Molly and Abby.
RIGHT: Kate, Carlos (Tour Director), Kate, Tara, Robin and Jo.



NO VISIT to Barcelona is complete without a stop at the **Basilica de la Sagrada Família**.



SANTO, Kate, Tara, Abby, Kate, Laurin, Tim, Molly, Jo and Robin.



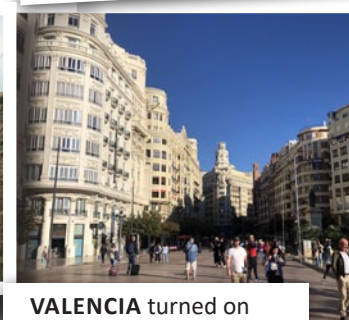
FROM historic to ultra-modern - the captivating Arts and Science Museum in Valencia is a must-see attraction.



THE hauntingly beautiful Casa Batlló in Barcelona.

ABBY, Carlos (Director), Kate, Jo, Tara, Kate, Molly, Santo, Laurin, Tim and Robin.

TOLEDO provided plenty of surprises and information the group never realised.



VALENCIA turned on some glorious late summer warmth and sunshine for our day of exploring.



THE Plaza de la Villa in Madrid.



ROBIN, Laurin, Santo, Tim, Kate, Abby, Kate, Molly, Tara and Jo.



CORPORATE UPDATE

ACTS prepares for lift off

THE Australian Corporate Travel Summit (ACTS) will take flight on 13 Nov in Sydney, bringing together a line-up of powerhouse speakers and industry experts.

ACTS is a collaboration of the Association of Travel Management Companies, the Global Business Travel Association, and Greener Airlines.

Taking place at the Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park, the event is predicted to attract more than 400 attendees, who will enjoy a three-tiered agenda built around delegates' levels of experience in the industry.

Among some of the 40+ keynote speakers in the program include Virgin Australia's CEO, Jayne Hrdlicka and Qantas' CEO of International and Freight, Cam Wallace, who will be interviewed by Greener Airlines Chairman,

Amadeus results

AMADEUS has reported strong third quarter results with profitable double-digit growth.

The global travel technology company has reported double-digit increases in revenue, EBITDA, operating income, and adjusted profit compared to the prior year.

Key highlights of the year include air distribution revenue growing 10%, and air IT solutions revenue up 16.2%.

Wyndham skis in

CLUB Wyndham has expanded in Japan with a new ski lodge, announcing the acquisition of Hotel Shirakabaso Shigakogen.

The resort will be rebranded to Club Wyndham Shirakabaso Shiga Kogen, and become the first international resort located within the Joshin'etsukogen National Park.

The Club Wyndham Shirakabaso Shiga Kogen is the second Club Wyndham property in Japan, and the 20th property in the country managed by Travel + Leisure Co.

Peter Harbison.

A panel on the global and local corporate travel outlook will feature Global Business Travel Association's Regional SVP - EMEA and APAC, Catherine Logan; Association of Travel Management Companies' Chairperson, Tass Messinis; and The Business Travel Association's CEO, Clive Wratten.

The summit's exhibition showcase will feature more than 30 industry heavyweights including American Express, Virgin Australia, Amex Global Business, FCM, CTM and more.

The ACTS' carbon offset partner TEM will calculate and fully offset the event's carbon footprint.

The event is also supporting two forest conservation carbon projects, including the New Leaf Carbon Project in Australia and the April Salumei Community Rainforest Conservation Project, based in Papua New Guinea.

In addition, ACTS' charity partner is Dementia Australia.

CLICK HERE to secure limited tickets to next week's event. *JHM*

Boeing strike ends

BOEING workers have ended their bitter seven-week strike after clinching a new pay deal, with the deal drawing congratulations from President of the United States, Joe Biden.

The strike drew direct mediation by the White House, *The Guardian* reported, with most jet production at Boeing halted, deepening a financial crisis at the troubled company.

The union said members voted 59% in favour of the new contract, which includes a 38% pay rise spread over four years. Two previous offers were voted down in recent weeks.

The strike was the first in 16 years by Boeing's largest union, with 33,000 machinists who work on the 737 MAXs, 767s, and 777s walking off the job.

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Travel Daily CRUISE WEEKLY

HLO sends a ni-hao to home



HELLOWORLD recently joined forces with Wendy Wu Tours and China Southern Airlines to showcase its homeland to a lucky group of travel agents.

A key theme of the trip was for the eight agents to experience the new visa-free access to China that Australian passport holders can now enjoy (*TD* 19 Jun).

Touching down in Guangzhou, the group launched into a hectic four days in China Southern's hub city and Beijing organised by Wendy Wu Tours.

Highlights included an overnight Pearl River cruise and visits to the Forbidden City, the Great Wall in Juyongguan, the Summer Palace and Tiananmen Square, plus an acrobatic show and a traditional Peking duck lunch.

After packed days, the group rested their heads in Hotel Landmark Canton and Mercure

Beijing Downtown. *ML*

The group is **pictured** above and comprised Jen Gavin, Helloworld Lake Haven; Dylan Humphries, Helloworld Goulburn; Jane Bateup, Helloworld Cootamundra; Natalie Calder, Helloworld Head Office; Melissa Smith, Helloworld Bateau Bay; Chantel Vavasour, Helloworld Stanhope Gardens; Kelli Brushett, Helloworld Newcastle; Simone Varlow, Helloworld Seven Hills; Daniel Liebeck, Helloworld HTG; Dean Heke, Wendy Wu Tours; and Lorena Xu from China Southern.

MSC's new top tier

MSC Cruises has introduced Blue Diamond as the new top tier of its MSC Voyagers Club loyalty program aimed at rewarding its most frequent guests.

Announced in the US this week, the new Blue Diamond tier requires 25,000 points to be eligible, up from 10,000 needed for Diamond, the program's previous upper echelon.

Perks available to Blue Diamond members include access to the MSC Yacht Club lounge and luggage drop-off at check-in, but not on the ship itself.

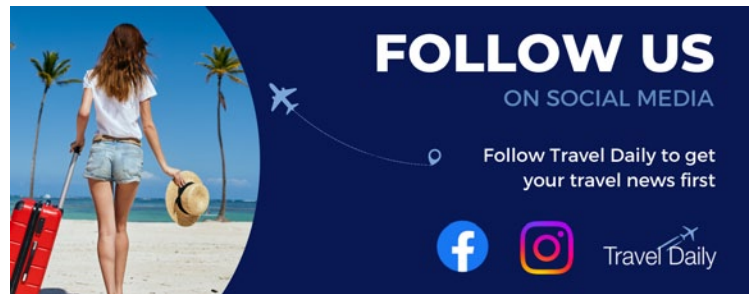
Blue Diamond members receive My Choice Dining in the main restaurant and complimentary wi-fi onboard, shuttle bus tickets in eligible ports, and an exclusive meet-and-greet with the Captain.

Winter wonderland

MUNICH Airport has opened its annual Christmas and winter market, located in the forum of the Munich Airport Centre.

The attraction features a range of activities including gingerbread houses, visits from Santa Claus, and even a 600sqm ice skating rink complete with a curling lane.

Travellers can also wander among more than 40 exhibitors selling mulled wine, gifts and other Christmas treats.



SPECIALS

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specials@traveldaily.com.au

Trafalgar is offering 30% savings on its 13-day Switzerland & Austria tour - one of its most popular Central European itineraries. The journey departs 07 Apr 2025, and is reduced from the standard price of \$7,995 down to \$5,597. The Black Friday deal is available for today only, with a new offer coming tomorrow. The brand has many more departures on sale, making now the perfect time for travellers to book their 2025 tour. **CLICK HERE** for more information.

Families can take advantage of a special deal these summer school holidays from **Merlin Entertainments**, which is offering a 30% discount on gift vouchers for select experiences at its iconic attractions around Australia and New Zealand. Enjoy Wild Life Sydney Zoo's 'Breakfast with the Koalas' experience from \$63, reduced from \$90, or the 'Shark Dive Xtreme' package at Sea Life Sunshine Coast Aquarium, now priced from \$209 instead of \$299. Those looking for more than one adventure can also enjoy savings on the Merlin Annual Passes, **HERE**. The Black Friday deals go live on 29 Nov and end 02 Dec.

Cruise Traveller is highlighting savings of more than \$12,000 per couple on a new luxury expedition package in the Kimberley with Ponant. The 13-night 'Course for the Kimberley' fly, cruise and stay package featuring a 10-night, all-inclusive, ultra-luxe expedition cruise from Broome to Darwin aboard Ponant's *Le Jacques Cartier*. Three sailings are available from Jul to Sep 2025, with the deal also including two free nights' accommodation. Call 1800 507 777 to book before 30 Nov.

Travellers can stay at some of Singapore's top hotels with **Entire Travel Group's** latest promotion, which is offering savings of up to \$1,800 per couple on a range of independent holiday packages in the city. The 'Made in Singapore' packages are available to book until 06 Dec, and include private return airport transfers and a selection of inclusions - find out more **HERE**.

Mandarin Oriental is gearing up for the festive season with a selection of new packages at its properties around the world. Guests staying at Mandarin Oriental Mayfair, London, for example, can take advantage of the 'Season's Sparkle' package, which includes full breakfast for two, a festive cocktail and sweet treat upon arrival, a curated personal shopping experience, a Christmas decoration kit, and more. Similar packages are also available at the brand's hotels in Singapore, Tokyo and Hong Kong - more information **HERE**.

Travellers departing Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane can enjoy a business class upgrade offer on select **Wendy Wu Tours** in China in 2025. Available until 30 Nov 2024, the offer means customers can elevate their air journey from just \$399 per person one way or \$1,399 return, flying with Cathay Pacific. Perth departures are also available with an additional supplement. Get more details **HERE**.

Golden milestone for Doyle



HELLOWORLD Pursers Travel Group in Queensland has been in a party mood this week, celebrating 50 years in the travel industry for one of its team members, Geoff Doyle.

"From helping travellers make unforgettable memories to navigating the ever-changing landscape of travel, Geoff has been a constant source of expertise, passion, and

dedication," the agency wrote in a social media post.

Doyle's achievement was marked with a litany of gifts, including some delicious wines and luxury snack gift boxes.

"[Doyle's] vast knowledge and love for the industry have inspired us all," the post read. *ML*

If Only Queensland

UK-BASED luxury tour operator If Only has launched a new multi-channel destination campaign promoting Queensland as an ideal holiday destination.

The campaign, titled 'A Beautiful Way To Be', will run until the end of the year and includes marketing material rolled out to If Only's network of travel agents.

Destinations featured in the campaign include K'Gari, the Gold Coast and Whitsundays.

Royal's island buy

ROYAL Caribbean will spend nearly US\$300 million (A\$449m) to purchase the Port of Costa Maya in Mexico and adjacent land to develop its new Perfect Day private island (*TD* 11 Oct).

According to SEC filings, the cruise line confirmed development work on the island will include construction of a water park, along with multiple restaurants, bars and pools.

Perfect Day is due to open in 2027, which will be open to other cruise lines to call at, according to Royal Caribbean.