

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of the latest travel industry news, as well as full pages from:

- Titan Travel
- ATIA Beyond Borders

Stop in at San Fran

INFINITY Holidays has relaunched its six stayover San Francisco packages, with 2% bonus commission on all hotels and the chance for agents to win their own trip.

In partnership with United Airlines and the San Francisco Travel Association, Infinity Holidays has launched a new functionality on its booking platform allowing agents to include a stayover mini-break in an airline booking.

The itineraries include a stayover fare with UA, an accommodation option, and a San Francisco attraction or tour.

For the full details, see [HERE](#).

No flight? Then don't pay

KOALA Airlines has pledged to implement a guaranteed cash refund policy when it launches operations in Australia.

While no date for debut flights has been revealed, Chief Executive Officer, Bill Astling, said the challenger operation will look to take on Virgin Australia and Qantas by placing funds for airfares into a trust account until the flight is taken.

"If you don't fly, you'll get your money back. It's simple," Astling told the ABC's *Four Corners*.

Koala Airlines will try to tap into

the well of discontent shared by many Aussies about airlines deploying misleading tactics around refunds in instances of delays and cancellations.

However, the carrier remains scant on the details, with Astling claiming that its limited public game plan is a deliberate move.

"We are just not prepared to give away what our strategy is and allow competitors to be able to think, 'right, well, we can work on this or work on that,'" he said.

While remaining tight-lipped, Astling did reveal Koala will avoid the same fate of carriers like Bonza by not trying to beat Qantas and Virgin by lowering airfares, suggesting that strategy has "never worked".

Instead, he said Koala will take a similar approach to that of supermarket chains Aldi and IGA, pushing on "niches" left by the main carriers and would not get "emotionally carried away". *AB*

ATIA is coming up

TIME is running out for travel industry professionals to secure their spot at ATIA's Beyond Borders 2024 summit.

Find out more about next month's event, which features speakers like FCTG's Graham 'Skroo' Turner, on [page seven](#).

Shore power ticked

THE NSW Government has finally flicked the switch on the build for its shore power project at White Bay in Sydney, awarding Danish company Powercon the \$20 million contract.

Despite numerous delays which has seen the infrastructure installation miss its original finish date of this year, the latest deal will see work begin this year and be switched on by 2026.

When operational, it will be mandatory for any cruise ship at White Bay to use shore power, negating the need for vessels to keep engines on in port, and in the process, lowering emissions.

"This decision marks a significant step forward in progressing this important project that reinforces the commitment by New South Wales to assist the cruise sector in reaching the target of net zero emissions by 2050," Australian Cruise Association Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel said.

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Lufthansa APAC role

LUFTHANSA Group has appointed Felipe Bonifatti to the position of Vice President Asia Pacific & Joint Ventures East.

Based in Singapore, Bonifatti will lead all commercial activities - including joint-venture sales - in the APAC region from 01 Nov.

contiki
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ATAS the Gold Standard

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) made moves on 34 different businesses to either cancel or withdraw their ATAS accreditation in Aug 2024.

In its monthly update, ATIA affirmed it was unapologetic for efforts to position the ATAS mark of accreditation as "the gold standard in the travel industry".

The highly robust program has a high rejection rate of 25%, reflecting the stringent trust and customer service criteria that accredited businesses must meet.

In Aug, seven businesses - Ormina Tours, Helloworld Travel Ferntree Gully, SportsLink Travel, 2nd Chance Travels Pty Ltd, Opulent Cruises, Blake Travel and Inspiring Travel - met the criteria and had accreditation approved.

Conversely, three businesses - Worldmark Travel, Smart Flight and Alice's Wonderland Travel - either failed to renew or opted to withdraw voluntarily.

A fourth business, Travel Mart, had its accreditation cancelled due to a breach of the terms in the ATAS Charter.

"ATAS accreditation is more than just a logo; it is a testament to the exceptional levels of professionalism and reliability that accredited travel professionals have day in, day out.

"Our stringent processes ensure that the reputation of the Australian travel industry and the confidence of Australian consumers in the industry remains strong," said acting ATIA



CEO, Ingrid Fraser.

A further 19 businesses were placed on quarterly monitoring agreements, and five others were issued with 'show cause' notices, giving them 14 days to respond to concerns raised or risk their accreditation being cancelled. *ML*

EES launch doubt

EUROPE looks set to delay the introduction of its biometric EES border system after at least three member nations said they will not be ready for the Nov launch.

European Union Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson had given member nations until 10 Sep to declare their readiness to go live on 10 Nov, with a contingency date of 17 Nov.

According to *Euronews*, three countries - France, Germany and the Netherlands, have written to the EU to advise they will not make any existing deadline, blaming a lack of field testing.

In Aug, the EU claimed it was ready to push ahead with a 10 Nov date (*TD* 21 Aug).

Using biometrics, the system will capture a traveller's face, name, fingerprints, date and time of entry to simplify movement on the continent.

Titan marks one year

TITAN Travel is celebrating its first year in Australia by offering 25% discounts on all tours.

The operator offers travellers the option of 135 itineraries across six continents, including small group adventures, solo, rail, and cruise & tour - see **page six**.



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SYD mega essentials

SYDNEY Airport is set to create a new retail precinct across 14 locations in the T2 Domestic terminal which will seek to “redefine” the traditional news, books and convenience model, by including tech, pharmacy, LEGO stores, and a concept for Relay.

As part of the new retail offering, Sydney Airport will showcase one of the largest travel essentials stores in Australia, boasting a mega store with over 650m² of floor space.

“We’re flipping the script on the traditional travel essentials model to deliver a new and fresh concept for travellers who desire more from their airport experience at Australia’s busiest airport terminal,” Group Executive Commercial at Sydney Airport, Mark Zaouk, said.



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TEQ to woo more Kiwis

TOURISM and Events Queensland (TEQ) has announced Gate 7 as its new in-market representative for New Zealand, with Rachel Dickey (pictured) appointed to look after the account.

The tourism marketing agency will oversee all TEQ consumer, trade and aviation marketing in New Zealand, including fostering partnerships with key stakeholders and media.

Working closely with the DMO’s head office in Brisbane, Gate 7 will highlight Queensland’s unique experiences and destinations to inspire greater visitation across the state.

“More Kiwis visit Queensland than from any other international destination and we’re aiming to grow that by another 42 percent by 2028, so optimising our relationships and marketing in New Zealand is vital to TEQ’s international strategy,” TEQ CEO Patricia O’Callaghan.

New to the Gate 7 team, Rachel Dickey has also taken on the role of Country Director for New Zealand, in addition to Account Director for TEQ.

Dickey joins from Air New Zealand after spending two decades with the carrier, including five years managing the trans-Tasman market.

For the year ending Jun 2024,



there were 466,000 Kiwis who visited Queensland, spending \$820.5 million - a 130% recovery from 2019 figures, according to the latest data from Tourism Research Australia. *JM*

TFE Heritage tie-up

TFE Hotels has added 500 rooms across five properties to its New Zealand portfolio including the reintroduction of the Rendezvous brand to the country.

As part of a new management agreement with Heritage Hotels, the deal sees Heritage retain ownership, with TFE rebranding properties under Adina Citylife and Rendezvous.

Adina Citylife will open their doors in Auckland and Wellington, while Rendezvous will welcome guests in Auckland, Christchurch and Queenstown.

TFE Hotels will also establish a centralised country office in Auckland to facilitate the deal and expand its presence further.

QF avoids delays

QANTAS has not cancelled or delayed any of its flights this morning, in spite of industrial action that has been taking place at airports around the country since last Thu (**TD** 26 Sep).

“Our teams worked hard to put contingencies in place which meant there were no delays or cancellations to flights this morning as a result of the industrial action, despite incorrect claims from the unions,” the carrier said, adding it does not expect the strikes will impact pax for the rest of the week.

National G adds 3

G ADVENTURES and National Geographic Expeditions have announced the addition of three new ‘National Geographic Family Journeys with G Adventures’ trips, departing from next year.

Inspired by National Geo’s photography and storytelling, in Ecuador, travellers can explore the jungle by foot and canoe; participate in village life in a small community in Mexico; or dive into the history of the Real Madrid soccer team with a tour of Spain’s Bernabeu Stadium.

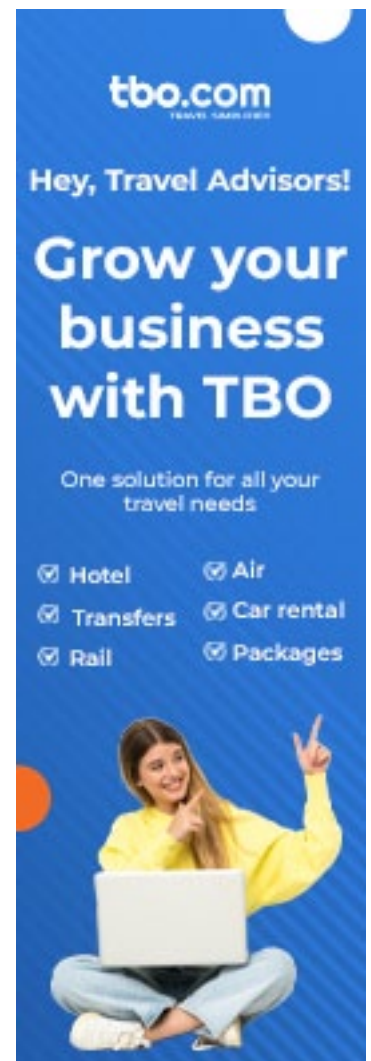
Win an Epic snow trip

TO CELEBRATE the launch of its 2025 Epic Australia Pass, Vail Resorts has announced a ‘Magic Moments Road Trip’ contest with \$45,000 in prizes up for grabs.

Among the rewards is an Australian ski resort road trip for four people for 11 nights across Perisher, Falls Creek and Hotham in 2025, as well as 25 runner-up prizes on offer.

To enter, Aussies need to lock in their 2025 Epic Australia Pass before 16 Oct, send in their favourite ‘magic moment’ captured on video in resorts at Perisher, Falls Creek or Hotham and share their video to a public Facebook or Instagram account using the hashtag #EpicAustraliaPassRoadTrip.

CLICK HERE to find out all of the promotion details.




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Eurostar joins SkyTeam

COMBINED air and rail fares across western Europe will soon be available after Eurostar signed on to become the first non-airline member of the SkyTeam alliance.

Expected to launch in the first half of 2025, travellers on integrated fares will be able to connect to Eurostar services from France, Netherlands, UK, Belgium and Germany on one ticket.

Eurostar's admission into SkyTeam will also allow eligible travellers access to more than 750 member airport lounges.

Already, around 13% of Eurostar passengers connect to the service from SkyTeam hubs, which has resulted in a reduction of flights between Amsterdam and Brussels.

Eurostar CEO, Gwendoline Cazenave, said the ability for travellers to access Europe by sustainable rail is a key part of its growth ambitions.

"We are creating a future where travellers can connect between



Eurostar trains, domestic railways and long-haul flying, opening up our services to new markets across the globe," Cazenave said.

SkyTeam CEO Patrick Roux said the admission of Eurostar underscores its commitment to delivering a more responsible and integrated travel experience.

"One of the world's most-loved train operators, with a reputation for high customer service, Eurostar is a natural fit for SkyTeam," Roux said.

"I look forward to developing our partnership and offering customers greater choice in how they travel across SkyTeam's global network." ML

Hawaii ready for Oz

HAWAII' Tourism Oceania (HTO) unveiled its latest campaign called 'The People. The Place. The Hawaiian Islands', at its recent roadshow visiting cities around Australia and New Zealand.

The marketing push seeks to encourage Aussie travellers to enjoy the unique culture of the US state, in addition to its sunny beaches and mountains.

While markets like Australia, NZ, and Japan are still slightly down on pre-pandemic volumes, HTO is confident Aussie travellers are ready to visit Hawai'i in greater numbers than 2019.

The marketing body said Australia has a strong repeat visitor rate of 55.4% and an average stay of 8.8 days, making it a lucrative market to chase.



Window Seat

ONE of the bridges crossing London's famous River Thames saw far more than tourists trooping across over the weekend.

Actor Damian Lewis wielded a crook and drove sheep across a bridge in celebration of a bizarre medieval tradition, at the same time raising much-needed funds for the wool trade's Woolmen Charity and The Lord Mayor's Appeal.

The *Homeland* actor said the event honoured anyone awarded the title of Freeman of the City of London, who is allowed to drive sheep toll-free across the bridge, a historic trading route.

Lewis is no stranger to status, with several of his ancestors previously serving as lord mayors of London.

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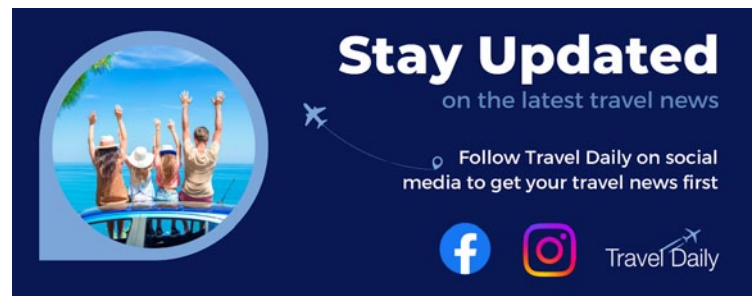
Brisbane

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Applications close 07 October 2024.







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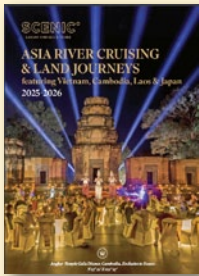
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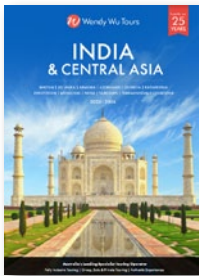


Omniche Holidays - South Pacific 2024

Now available to travel agents through TIFS, Omniche Holidays has released a new brochure showcasing a selection of accommodation and touring in the South Pacific region. The guide features destinations including Norfolk Island, Cook Islands, Tahiti, Fiji, Lord Howe Island, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and more. Agents and their clients can discover the myriad of experiences on offer in the South Pacific, from snorkelling among the fish and coral life at Emily and Slaughter Bays, and birdwatching at Hundred Acres Reserve. Whether it's a serene beach escape, a cultural immersion, or an adventurous exploration, Omniche Holidays offers something for every traveller.



Scenic - Asia River Cruising & Land Journeys 25-26
Scenic has shared its new Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Japan brochure, which highlights a range of the operator's new destinations and experiences in 2025 and 2026. Readers can learn about the new 23-day 'Indochina Explorer & Luxury Mekong Cruise', during which guests will enjoy an exclusive gala dinner at Angkor Wat, a Buddhist blessing, a slow voyage along the Mekong, and more. The 132-page brochure also showcases super earlybird offers and new Scenic Freechoice experiences, including a visit to Tan Phong Island and a chance to sample traditional egg coffee in Hanoi.



Wendy Wu Tours - India & Central Asia 2025/26
The newest brochure from Wendy Wu Tours combines both India and Central Asia into one comprehensive collection of unforgettable journeys. The guide features the operator's solo departures and its first cruise and tour holiday taking in India and Southeast Asia, as well as its Christmas Collection tours to India. A new addition to the 2025 brochure is 'Christmas in Kerala', a 15-day classic tour that visits Chennai, Pondicherry, Velankanni, Madurai, Periyar, Munnar, and Kochi. Another standout is the new 26-day 'India by Land, Southeast Asia by Sea' itinerary.

An amazing time in Thailand



TOURISM Authority of Thailand (TAT) and EVA Air recently hosted its first joint faml for Australian travel advisors, with seven lucky agents enjoying a week-long Thailand experience.

The group was pampered on the first day of the trip with the full treatment at the Women Massage Center in Chiang Mai, before spending half a day at the Elephant Nature Park, where they observed rescued elephants living in their chosen herd and learning about their individual histories.

"Visiting the Elephant Nature Park and hearing about how well the elephants are cared for, and how to lookout for non-ethical nature parks was super insightful for me," said Webjet Email Marketing Specialist, Liv Clear. "This will go a long way when the opportunity to promote Elephant Nature Parks in Thailand-focused EDMs comes forward."

The agents then learned how to cook classic Thai dishes such as Tom Yum soup at the Chiang Mai Thai Farm Cooking School.

Other itinerary highlights included an exploration of the Old City in Bangkok via electric tuk

tuk; a visit to the Grand Palace of Wat Pho; and a walking tour in Chinatown and Talad Noi. *JM*

Pictured taking in the wildlife of Thailand during the adventure are: Nathan Brown, Imagine Holidays; Emily Noble, Helloworld Rochedale; Kristie Sauer, MTA - Mark My World Travel; Jessica Hellak, MTA; Liv Clear, Webjet; Sally Berry, Globenet Travel; Sherly Handjojo, TAT; Jeff Kuo, EVA Air; Candice Wang, All Way Travel; and local guide Rapeeporn, AF Holidays. *JM*

What's new for Ikon?

IKON Pass is marking 100 days to go until the northern winter, trumpeting access to a range of new infrastructure and services for adventure seekers this season.

Skiers can access 28 new lifts and gondolas across the Ikon Pass destination range for 2024/25, some of which offer heated seats and bubble-like enclosures for the journey up the mountain.

Highlights for the season include new beginning ski trails at Deer Valley, which has been expanded with 3,700 new skiable acres.



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