# Travel Daily First with the news



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**MORE INFO** 

Thursday 17th Apr 2025 **traveldirectors.com.au** 

#### Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily has seven pages, including a photo page from Scenic, Business Events News. plus full pages from:

- Club Med
- APT McGeary Awards
- APT Million Dollar Agent Club

## **BUNNIK'S** BIRTHDAY GIVEAWAY

#### Win a trip for two on 1 of 4 Bunnik Tours!

Book your clients on a Bunnik Tour before 30 November to go in the running.

Learn more here.



## Small ship brand debuts

THERE is a new player in the small ship adventure cruising space, with Australian operator World Expeditions Travel Group launching On Water Expeditions to the market.

A new website has gone live and features 140 curated small ship expeditions spanning a number of international destinations, such as Antarctica, the Maldives, Europe, the Americas, the Galapagos, and more.

There is also a range of domestic itineraries to choose from, such as Shark Bay and Dirk Hartog Island in WA, the Kimberley, and Tasmania.

On Water Expeditions is seeking a point-of-difference in the market by capping all cruises to under 200 passengers, with many accommodating fewer than 50.

On Water Expeditions will keep sustainability and communityfocused tourism at the forefront of its operations, pledging its smaller groups will mean a smaller ecological footprint.

Twenty-five-year veteran of World Expeditions Rachel Imber will spearhead the new brand,

#### Have a great Easter

JUST a reminder to our loyal readers that Travel Daily will not be published again until Tue 22 Apr, following the Easter break.

We wish everyone in the travel sector a well-deserved rest and will be back with you with all the latest industry news soon.



which she said will look to redefine small ship travel.

"Our expeditions take travellers to places that larger ships simply can't access, creating an unparalleled connection with nature & local cultures," she said.

Imber added the brand is not suited to those wanting passive sightseeing cruises, with each expedition designed for action, offering kayaking, snorkelling, diving, hiking, climbing, and camping activities.

Outside of sustainability, the new brand is hopeful of resonating with cost-conscious travellers looking for a cruise adventure on a smaller budget.

On Water Expeditions has plans to introduce more than 100 itineraries across new destinations over time. AB See more details HERE.

#### **APT** hails high flyers

APT has recognised the highperforming advisors and agencies who have been inducted into the illustrious Million Dollar Agent Club and McGeary Club, thanks to their exceptional achievements across the APT, Travelmarvel and Botanica brands - see page 9 and page 10 for all the winners.

#### Club Med savings

**CLUB** Med has unveiled the final release of its earlybird sale for 2026

Travellers can save up to 30% off on all-inclusive beach or ski holiday, and the deal is available for travel between Nov 2025 and Jun 2026 - see page eight.



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### Qantas to resume J'burg

**QANTAS** is preparing to resume its Perth to Johannesburg service from 07 Dec, operating three times a week using A330-200s.

The decision still needs to pass regulatory approval, and follows a hiatus for the Flying Kangaroo operating the long-haul South Africa route since early 2023, largely driven by logistical issues at Perth Airport's Terminal 3.

Qantas will compete with South African Airways on the route, with the latter ramping up frequencies in Nov last year (**TD** 04 Oct 2024) fuelled by strong demand, and following its resumption of flights to the WA capital for the first time since the pandemic in 2024 (**TD** 29 Apr 2024).

The timing of relaunched Johannesburg flights is timely, with several African operators noting a significant uptick in demand for safaris in countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.



During the same month, the Aussie carrier will also restart Perth to Auckland flights.

On 07 Dec, Qantas will operate the long-haul Kiwi service three times a week.

**MEANWHILE,** the ongoing brand rehabilitation project at Qantas appears to be working, with the carrier moving up five places to rank 16th in the annual *Brand Finance Airlines Report*.

The ascension up the ladder is primarily attributed to a 46% increase in brand value to \$4.1 billion, the highest figure since the pandemic.

Delta Air Lines topped the list for 2025, demonstrating a US\$14.91 billion brand value, ahead of UA and AA. *AB* 



#### JQ links GC and Bali JETSTAR will introduce Gold

Coast to Bali (Denpasar) flights on 01 Aug, offering three flights a week and adding 58,000 new budget seats to the popular Aussie hotspot each year.

To mark the announcement, the Aussie budget carrier has launched a 72-hour sale, with one-way tickets priced from \$199.

#### Arabian price match

**DESTINATION** management brand Arabian Adventures has introduced a trade price match guarantee to ensure agents have access to the best rates at more than 500 hotels in the UAE.

The company said agents can access special B2B prices to ensure they can compete when being asked to price match.

Arabian Adventures has worked to meet rising demand by introducing a range of new experiences, with Aussies often booking a Dubai desert tour. A Force for Good focuses on Sydney

A FORCE for Good will be back in 2026, this time focusing solely on Sydney as it cuts Auckland from the schedule.

Next year, the Sydney event will be shifting location from Dockside to the Sydney Wentworth Sofitel.

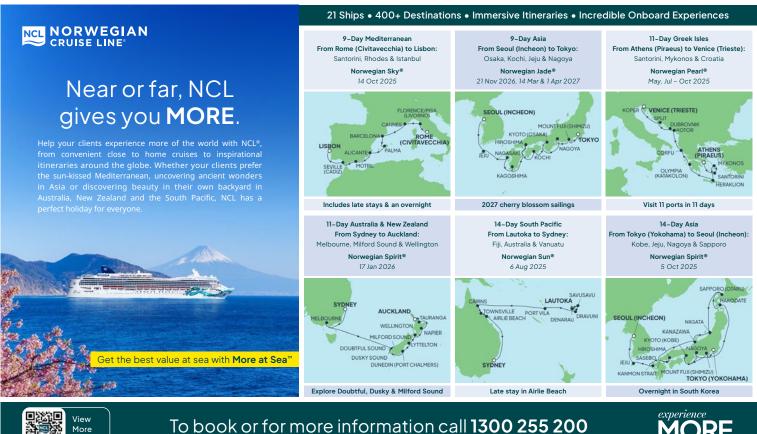
Principal sponsor Helloworld has also been announced.

Past keynote speakers included Uniworld MD Alice Ager; Ponant Asia-Pacific CEO Deb Corbett; Wendy Wu from Wendy Wu Travel; Crooked Compass CEO Lisa Pagotto; and more.

#### **BNE Escape lounge**

**ESCAPE** Lounges has opened its first location in Australia at Brisbane Airport's int'l terminal.

Access to the premium facility is now available to pre-book, with guests able to enjoy zoned seating, freshly prepared seasonal dishes and both local and internationally sourced beverages.



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Sailings





#### NCL fights tax move

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line Executive VP and General Counsel Daniel Farkas has declared proposed taxes on cruise ships in Hawaii as "unconstitutional".

Bills have been passed in both houses in the US for a perpassenger fee, or a 11% tax per cabin, to be introduced in the state, putting the cruise sector in line with the hotel industry.

NCL stands to be impacted by the levy more than most, as it sails Hawaii all year round.

### SCENIC°ECLIPSE **Ultra-Luxury** Cruising **EXPEDITION VOYAGES** 2025-2027 Antarctica



#### Antarctica in Depth

Buenos Aires > Buenos Aires 13 Days

**VIEW ITINERARY** 

### BPG welcomes new chief

**RESPECTED** senior cruise and travel industry leader Matthew Vince (pictured) has joined **Business Publishing Group** (BPG), publisher of Travel Daily and Cruise Weekly, as General Manager and Publisher.

Vince will lead the business through its next phase of growth as it continues to expand and develop its industry-leading titles.

Previously, he spent over eight years at NCLH, most recently as Director of Marketing & Strategy for Asia Pacific at RSSC.

He has also held senior positions at Experience Co, Lindblad Expeditions and Orion Expedition Cruises.

On joining BPG, Vince said, "I'm excited to be part of the team that is creating the leading trade titles in the travel industry.

"I look forward to collaborating closely with our travel partners to explore innovative opportunities and deepen our strategic partnerships," he added.

Vince will work alongside Editorial Director Damian Francis, who continues to lead the editorial team.

"Welcoming someone of

#### HA NZ return date

**HAWAIIAN** Airlines has confirmed it will resume its seasonal service between Auckland & Honolulu on 18 Nov. The US carrier will operate three times a week after a planned pause in operations from 30 Apr. HA will operate the route with 278-seat wide-body A330s, featuring 18 premium cabin lieflat, 68 extra comfort, and 192 economy seats.

Disneuland 7



Matthew's pedigree is a huge vote of confidence for BPG," Francis said.

"The team and I are looking forward to working with him closely and know he will push the publications even further."

Contact Vince via matthew. vince@traveldaily.com.au.

#### Silversea hotel deets

**MORE** details have emerged about Silversea's first-ever hotel, located in Puerto Williams in Chile and set to open during the 2025/2026 Antarctica season.

The new luxury property will be named The Cormorant at 55 South, acknowledging its location at 55°S, making it the southernmost hotel on Earth.

Guests in the 150-room hotel will enjoy two distinct room views overlooking the forest landscapes and the Beagle Channel.

The luxury cruise line has also launched a new video series called Stories by Silversea, which includes a multi-part highlight on the development of the hotel.



#### China pauses Boeing

THE ongoing trade war between the United States and China has seen the latter place a pause on all Boeing aircraft orders.

Reports suggest China has ordered its three largest airlines to suspend all deliveries of American jets, equating to 170 units over the next three years.

Some analysts have also suggested that while bad news for Boeing, it will accelerate the rollout of aircraft to other brands. VA & QF declined to comment.

SCENIC°ECLIPSE **Ultra-Luxury** Cruising **EXPEDITION VOYAGES** 2025-2027 Antarctica Antarctica & the Weddell Sea

> Buenos Aires > Buenos Aires 16 Days

**VIEW ITINERARY** 



**Disney Days is back! Register your interest now!** cheim







## Home Ex still inspiring

**TRAVEL Daily** virtual event Home Ex continues to inspire and educate home-based agents wherever they are located.

The free on-demand event will remain available for agents to consume until Aug, featuring a jam-packed speaker program within the auditorium and suppliers in the exhibition hall.

In a series of short videos, travel legend Wendy Wu shares the story of how she built her business; 1000 Mile Group founder Nicola Veltman reveals the power of automation; Envoyage Global Chief of Operations Astrid Richardson (pictured) discusses how to scale up your business; and Helloworld Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director Cinzia Burnes discusses insights gathered during Helloworld's evolution.

People and culture expert Gabrielle Roux offers practical tips on how to cultivate a thriving



remote workplace culture and business coach Cameron McDonald speaks about how agency owners can build their leadership remotely.

Meanwhile, in the exhibition hall, attendees can receive business updates and watch videos from suppliers including Expedia TAAP, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Tourism WA, Royal Caribbean, Globus family of brands, MTA, Journey Beyond and plenty more.

Available at your leisure with new content added regularly, Home Ex is the best way to connect for home-based advisors. Sign up to Home Ex **HERE**. JHM



#### Join our Societe

**LUXURY** Escapes has introduced a new loyalty program called Societe, offering customers pointearning opportunities across bookings for hotels, flights, tours, and more.

The new scheme presents members with four tiers across platinum, gold, silver, bronze, with points and status credits able to be earned.

Status credits are accrued on eligible purchases, and as these credits move members into higher tiers, they will gain access to even more exclusive benefits.

The top platinum category offers VIP extras such as room upgrades at select hotels, unlimited free private airport transfers, as well as discounts on travel protection.

Silver provides lounge pass access, tour credits, and discounted photoshoots, while gold gives members higher value vouchers for tours and other VIP perks like upgrades and transfers - sign up to bronze **HERE**.



**MONKEY** bites, scooter bagsnatches, and reef cuts were among the more unusual claims made by Australians holidaying in Bali last year.

That's according to a new report from Southern Cross Travel Insurance, and follows an Aussie tourist having to pay out \$6,000 in medical bills after being bitten by a monkey while in Bali last year.

Jami Groves was travelling with a friend when she was set upon by an angry monkey while posing for photos at an animal sanctuary - thankfully the pic of the primate feasting on her leg went viral.

Southern Cross Insurance also cited scooter and mopedrelated accidents as being on the rise, with 21 claims received last year alone.



In Norway, the locals use this saying to describe a very positive, happy person. Well, if your client takes a Hurtigruten voyage along the stunning Norwegian coastline, they're bound to meet some locals who might call themselves a happy salmon - and when your client dives into our Early Bird savings for **2026/27 voyages**, they might even call themselves one!



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## Scenic Jade charms Aussie agents

A SELECT group of 80 handpicked travel advisors from Australia, New Zealand and Canada were invited to experience Scenic's award-winning river cruise product during an exclusive six-day pre-season global famil aboard Scenic Jade.

The roundtrip journey from Budapest offered a unique opportunity for agents to deepen their understanding of Scenic's all-inclusive, ultra-luxury offerings along the iconic Danube River.

Led by Amanda Todd, Senior Business Development Manager, alongside Queensland Business Development Managers Narelle Ryan and Anthony Patching, agents were immersed in a carefully curated itinerary featuring a diverse range of included Scenic Freechoice excursions and signature Scenic Enrich experiences.

These included on shore cultural encounters, active e-bike adventures, and exclusive events and onboard culinary delights - each designed to highlight the all-inclusive, ultra-luxury experience Scenic is renowned for.





attending a private classical concert.

JANELLE Maher, Scenic Product; Amanda Todd, Senior Sales Manager; Narelle Ryan, Sales Manager; and Scott McGlynn, Helloworld Winston Hills; and Canadian associate.



AGENTS enjoying a Freechoice tour visiting a Budapest concert hall.



AGENTS visit Budapest renowned Central Market Hall.







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Travel Daily

Thursday 17th April 2025

SCENIC Enrich - Our partner agents

**OUR** travel agent partners gathering in the recently refurbished Scenic Jade's Panorama Lounge & Bar.

> **ICONIC** Hungarian Parliament Building from the comfort of Scenic Jade.

# **Note:** business events news

#### Thursday 17th Apr 2025

#### businesseventsnews.com.au

#### **IAPCO delivers**

**THE** International

Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO) delivered an economic impact of over €17.8 billion (A\$37 billion) in 2024.

According to the newly released 2024 IAPCO Annual Member Economic Impact and Business Strategy Report, the figure is a 20% increase on the year prior.

Collectively, the association's membership delivered 19,469 events across the globe last year.

The growth in economic impact is driven by an increase of 2,425 conferences delivered by the 92 member IAPCO-accredited companies, that collectively have 180 IAPCO-registered PCO offices around the world.

Martin Boyle, IAPCO CEO, said the report "showcases the resilience and growth potential of the global meetings industry".

"Our results not only represent strong economic impact, but advancements in health, academia and research, science and engineering, energy, financial and professional services, technology and manufacturing - all sectors our members specialise in."

IAPCO predicts strong numbers for the next three years, with 1,969 conference contracts already confirmed.

## **MEET VCET'S ACCESSIBILITY TEAM**

VICTORIAN Convention and Event Trust (VCET) has taken a significant step towards more inclusivity by appointing four individuals living with disabilities to its newly launched Accessibility Advisory committee.

The operators of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and soon-to-open Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre selected the committee members following an open expression of interest process.

Each committee member brings unique expertise to the table, including Briar Harte, who is a specialist in inclusive design and a former winner of the Disability Inclusion Changemaker of the Year award.

Joining her is Nikhil Bora, co-founder of SignHow, a startup that developed the first community-driven sign language dictionary; Jess Price, the force



behind business consultancy Paradigm Makers; and Alex Stratikis, founder of Autism Adventures Abroad.

"At MCEC and Nyaal Banyul, we aim to create spaces where people of all abilities can connect, discover and enjoy," said VCET Chief Executive Natalie O'Brien, who joined the committee members for their inaugural meeting earlier this month.

"By actively engaging people with lived experience, we hope to ensure our facilities and services are truly inclusive. "The Accessibility Advisory Committee members bring a wealth of knowledge, personal and professional experience to the table and I look forward to the progress we can make together."

The announcement has seen VCET become the first convention centre operator in Australia to enlist a permanent external advisory committee dedicated to creating accessible, inclusive experiences for customers, visitors and employees. JM

**Pictured:** Harte, Stratikis, Price and Bora.

#### **Crowne offer**

**CROWNE** Plaza Hobart has launched a winter event offer, with discounted full day delegate packages available from just \$89.

Event organisers can also take advantage of a 10% saving on AV equipment hire and discounted accommodation rates, along with the chance to win a Melbourne weekend getaway. Book by 30 Jun for events held by 31 Aug 2025.

#### EventsAir, PCOA to continue partnership

**EVENT** management tech company EventsAir has renewed its longstanding partnership with the Professional Conference Organisers Association (PCOA).

The ongoing collaboration will see PCOA continue to use EventsAir's platform to power its annual national conference. EventsAir said the partnership reinforces its commitment to supporting the meetings and events industry.



"Renewing this partnership is a reflection of our shared vision with PCOA - to elevate the events industry and celebrate the creativity and resilience of event planners everywhere," said Renee Elliott, Chief Customer Officer at EventsAir.





## **APPOINTMENTS**

Send your new appointments to: appointments@traveldaily.com.au

Long-time **Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME)** leader **Kim Wethmar** has been appointed to the leadership organisation's Board of Directors. Wethmar has served as a Mentor with TIME on numerous occasions dating back to 2018. Focusing on culture, capability and commercial performance, Wethmar will help the organisation partner with business owners and executive teams to drive leadership transformation that delivers measurable impact.

Boutique luxury accommodation brand **Baillie Lodges** has welcomed **Michael Crawford** as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective 19 May. Joining from Hall of Fame Resort and Entertainment, Crawford's professional history also includes time with Four Seasons Hotels and 25 years with the Walt Disney Company. He replaces Michael Moret-Lalli, who has stepped into a new role to focus on the company's growth efforts as Head of M&A and Development.

Amanda Highfield has been named as the new General Manager at boutique European wholesaler, Greece and Mediterranean Travel Centre. The highly experienced Highfield joins the company from Inside Travel Group and has also held leadership roles with Wendy Wu Tours and Bill Peach Journeys. In her new role, Highfield will also oversee the company's Luxury Greece Collection.

Australian-born culinary talent **Chris Malone** continues to climb the culinary ladder, named Chef de Cuisine at Dinner by Heston Blumenthal at **Atlantis The Royal in Dubai**. With 15 years of experience, Malone has been part of the culinary team at the hotel for the past five years.

Bringing over two decades of hospitality experience, **Vincent Durier** will take charge of **Alila Villas Uluwatu** as the resort's new General Manager. The French native has worked at many prestigious hotel brands in his career, including St Regis Bora Bora, Sofitel Krabi and Como Point Yamu Phuket among others. This is Durier's second position in Indonesia, having also held the GM role at Nawa Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara.

Vietnam's **Alma Resort Cam Ranh** has appointed **Frederic Savoye** as its new Chief Commercial Officer, who brings more than two decades' in senior roles around the world to his new post. Savoye moves to Vietnam after having worked in the Middle East as Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Fairmont Raffles Hotels in Middle East, Africa & India. He has also worked in Egypt, Romania, New York and the Czech Republic.

**Ryan Kelly** has started in his new role of General Manager at **Outrigger Honua Kai Resort and Spa** on the Hawaiian island of Maui. Kelly joins Outrigger Hospitality with 15 years of luxury hospitality experience. In his new role, Kelly will be tasked with elevating the guest experience and overseeing the resort's overall operation. He moves to Maui from his most recent role at The Ritz-Carlton Oahu Turtle Bay.



## Rattler ready to shake up NZ



**GYMPIE'S** heritage railway line, Mary Valley Rattler, is ready to tap into the Kiwi market when Air New Zealand recommences its direct seasonal services from Auckland to the Sunshine Coast in a few months.

The operator's General Manager, Sherry Lowe, recently returned from a "hugely productive" sales mission to New Zealand, coordinated by Tourism & Events Queensland.

"Trade representatives had considerable knowledge about the Sunshine Coast and were particularly interested in what was being offered beyond the beaches," she said.

"There's huge enthusiasm for the Sunshine Coast over winter, and the fact that visitors can also experience attractions such as the Rattler provides even greater incentive to book a holiday to our region.

"Judging from the feedback I received, we will be seeing a significant increase in New Zealand inbound travel over the year ahead," Lowe added. JM **Pictured:** Lowe (second row, second from the right) with the TEQ sales mission delegation.

#### Bigger bins for FZ

**FLYDUBAI** has inked a new agreement with Boeing to retrofit 21 of the carrier's 737 MAX aircraft with larger Boeing Space Bins (**pictured**).

The compartments can accommodate up to six standardsized bags per bin by turning a bag on its edge, an increase from four bags per bin compared to a standard bin.

"This will provide our passengers with added convenience and increased storage space that rivals the experience offered on a wide-body aircraft," said Daniel Kerrison, SVP of Inflight Operations at flydubai.



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## Club Med the

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### HONOURING THE 2025 MCGEARY CLUB RECIPIENTS

We are proud to celebrate the exceptional agencies inducted into the McGeary Club for 2025 – our highest honour, awarded to agencies who have achieved outstanding multi-million-dollar sales across APT, Travelmarvel, and Botanica in 2024. Named in tribute to Geoff McGeary, a true pioneer of Australian touring and cruising, this award recognises businesses that exemplify excellence, consistency, and a deep commitment to delivering extraordinary journeys. These partners not only achieve exceptional results, but they do so with a deep connection to our brands – sharing our values, our passion, and our vision for unforgettable, Australian-designed travel.



Geelong Travel, VIC



Phil Hoffman Travel Modbury, SA



Our Vacation Centre, QLD



Global Journeys, QLD



RACV Travel & Experiences, VIC



Phil Hoffman Travel Gawler, SA







## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR

We're thrilled to recognise the outstanding achievements of consultants who have joined our Million Dollar Agent Club for 2025. These exceptional individuals have each sold over \$1 million worth of APT, Travelmarvel and Botanica journeys in 2024-a remarkable milestone that reflects their dedication, expertise, and passion for creating unforgettable travel experiences. Their success is a testament to the power of genuine partnership, deep product knowledge, and a true understanding of their clients' needs. Helen, Rita, Jackie, Paul, Lisa, Suraj, Hannah and Narelle, we're incredibly proud to celebrate your accomplishments and grateful for your continued support. What an extraordinary achievement!



Jackie Pool: Phil Hoffman Travel Glenelg Suite, SA



Hannah Campbell: Global Journeys, QLD



Helen Paulus & Rita Carlini: Geelong Travel, VIC



Suraj H Arachchige: Helloworld Travel Booval, QLD



Lisa Killen: The Travel Agent Caloundra, QLD







Paul Maclean: Naturaliste Travel, WA



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