



Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news including our **Business Events News** page plus a full page from **Tourism New Zealand**.

BA marks 90 in Oz

BRITISH Airways is celebrating 90 years of Australian services by offering special fares between Sydney and London.

Travellers can take advantage of up to \$90 off one-way fares in World Traveller (economy) and up to \$900 off return fares in Club World (business class).

The sales period ends 20 May, and applies to travel dates between May and Nov 2025 for World Traveller fares, and May, Jun and Sep 2025 for Club World fares - learn more **HERE**.

Is UK self-sabotaging?

THE World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has lashed out at one of Australia's biggest outbound markets, claiming a series of government decisions is damaging its tourism reputation.

The global travel body issued a statement claiming the UK's nosedive in international visitor spending last year was directly attributable to the addition of new taxes, red tape and slashing the budget of VisitBritain.

QF wants capacity

QANTAS is seeking to expand its codeshare partnership with partners Finnair and Air France on flights to Japan, according to a submission to the International Air Services Commission.

Under the proposal, Qantas wants Air France to codeshare with the carrier between Australia and Tokyo (Haneda), with The Flying Kangaroo to place its code on Air France operated Tokyo (Haneda)-Paris flights.

Qantas is also seeking added codeshares with Finnair between Australia and Tokyo (Haneda and Narita), with the Aussie airline requesting to place its code on Finnair's Tokyo (Haneda and Narita) to Helsinki flights.

MEANWHILE Qantas Group has applied for its budget brand Jetstar to operate three services a week between Perth and Manila from 27 Nov via an additional 696 seats of capacity.

Jetstar plans to use A320neos configured with 232 seats on the route, with the option of the Qantas brand using the added capacity as well.

A separate application also seeks unrestricted capacity on Philippine routes to all ports outside of Manila and Clark.

If approved, the unlimited capacity would be valid for 99 years and would pave the way for Jetstar to operate three services a week between Brisbane and Cebu from 27 Nov.



International visitor spend remains 5.3% below pre-pandemic levels at £40.3 billion (A\$84.08 billion), representing a concerning £2.2 billion loss to the country's economy.

The WTTC said the UK is already one of the most expensive destinations in Europe to visit, and that the recently announced ETA, lack of tax-free shopping, growing business taxes, and hikes in Air Passenger Duty, have all contributed to the downturn.

The UK Government has also drastically cut VisitBritain's budget by 40%, which will likely hamper visitor growth in 2025.

"If the UK wants a share of the pie, it must stop sabotaging its own success," a spokesperson for WTTC said. **AB**

Seabourn 2026-27

SEABOURN has announced several new itineraries as part of its 2026-2027 fall, winter and spring seasons.

Travellers can opt for new Japan voyages timed for plum blossom season, culinary-focused cruises through Singapore and Southeast Asia, and explore the Caribbean's hidden gems.

More details in **Cruise Weekly**.

Off for Anzac Day

WE WOULD like to inform our wonderful readers that we will not be publishing tomorrow for the Anzac Day public holiday.

But never fear, **Travel Daily** will return to publishing on Mon.

Visit NZ, for real

TOURISM New Zealand is giving agents the chance to win the ultimate trip to NZ for two - find out more on the **back page**.

WSI in India talks

WESTERN Sydney International Airport is reportedly in talks with Air India and IndiGo to operate direct services once the hub comes online in late 2026.

According to *The Hindu Times*, once Air India and IndiGo secure new aircraft, the carriers are keen to commence flights to WSI.

Air India and QF both operate direct India flights from SYD.

T'way overturns call

SOUTH Korean carrier T'way Air has adjusted its planned services to Australia, reversing a previously flagged increase on the Seoul Incheon-Sydney route.

The airline will now maintain three weekly flights between 01 Jun and 25 Oct, instead of four weekly services.



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CHINA AIRLINES

Sell a way to Buble

QATAR Airways, Virgin Australia, and Visit Qatar, are giving 12 top-selling agents the chance to win tickets to see Michael Buble perform in Doha in May.

To be eligible to win, advisors must issue a QR or VA ticket departing Australia to or via Doha between 01-30 Apr, for travel until 31 Mar 2026.

Winners will receive return economy class flights from most major Aussie cities, three nights' hotel stay, and concert tickets.

Foreign domestic trial

THE Coalition has thrown its support behind short-term cabotage dispensations that would allow a selection of foreign carriers to operate domestic flights from Darwin.

Speaking late yesterday, Senator Bridget McKenzie said the move would lead to cheaper domestic airfares for Aussies travelling interstate, as well as better connectivity to overseas hubs from the Top End.

"For too long, Territorians have endured some of the highest airfares and poorest aviation service levels in the country," McKenzie said.

"The Albanese Government has failed to act, protecting major airlines, blocking competition, and ignoring the unique transport needs of northern Australians."

If successful in the Federal Election on 03 May, the Coalition will establish a two-year trial to allow international airlines to carry domestic passengers to other Australian capital cities from Darwin.

In the *Aviation White Paper* released last year, the Federal Government reaffirmed its historical stance that it would consider cabotage requests on a case-by-case basis, a position the two biggest domestic players - Qantas & VA - want to continue.

In a previous *Green Paper 2023* submission, Qantas said cabotage concessions would encourage foreign airlines to "cherry pick" high-density trunk routes by adding marginally-costed extra sectors to existing international services, and also disincentivise foreign players from becoming fully-fledged domestic airlines.



Virgin is also critical of any policy shift, stating previously that allowing cabotage provides no consumer or competition benefits, while also compromising the viability of regional routes. *AB*

Australia is unsafe

AUSTRALIA has ranked a dismal 82nd out of 147 in a 2025 *Safety in Tourism Index* which ranked countries around the world based on the overall level of reported crime involving travellers.

The annual study from Numbeo is based on user surveys that assess a destination on crime levels, personal safety and first-hand experience with property theft and violent crime.

Each country was given an index score out of 100, with the small European nation of Andorra claiming the top spot with 84.7.

Australia received a score of 52.7, wedged between Egypt and Ireland, while New Zealand fared even worse in 86th position with a score of 51.8.

Destinations popular with Australian travellers that performed well in the study included the UAE, Qatar, Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan, which all ranked within the top 10.

The United States came in 89th place with a score of 50.8.

Other surprising results saw Indonesia rank in 76th, the United Kingdom in 87th spot, France in 110th and Fiji in 114th.

Numbeo's website indicates it is 80% funded by advertising.

Indo regions grow

NEW data from BPS Statistics has shown a growing appetite from travellers for destinations in Indonesia outside of Bali.

While Bali still dominates and captures 38% of all visitation, the Riau Islands is gaining ground with 11.9%.

North Sumatra also ranked highly in the list with 7.4%, a spike fuelled mainly by growth in the sports and eco-tourism space.

Growth in West Sumatra has seen it attract 4.3% of visitors.

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Sabre is preferred

SABRE Hospitality has inked a multi-year renewal of its deal with Preferred Hotels & Resorts, which now offers agents SynXis Retailing and gift card options.

Aussies not affected

THE Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has confirmed it has not received any requests for consular assistance following a deadly assault on tourists in Kashmir yesterday.

DFAT told **Travel Daily** that any citizens with concerns about the welfare of other Australians can contact 1300 555 135 within Australia and +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas.

Smartraveller continues to advise not to travel to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



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Viva launches Indochina

HELLOWORLD Group wholesaler Viva Holidays has expanded its product range in southeast Asia with a new brochure dedicated to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

In what are the first new destinations added to the range in six years, the product selection across the three nations has been sourced from local Asian DMC Thien Minh Group (TMG) and Vivu Journeys, which has 30 years of experience in the region.

The new range features FIT and custom independent touring product that Viva said is ideal for families, couples and groups, ranging from active adventures to resort breaks and ultra-luxury.

Product and prices in the new brochure cover travel through to Mar 2027, enabling agents to make bookings nearly two years in advance.

Travellers can also select from a wide range of cruise experiences on both the Mekong River and Ha Long Bay, with both day and overnight itineraries available.

The range also features a strong lineup of land-based day tours and independent touring featuring the services of friendly and knowledgeable local guides.

"To meet the increasing demand from our agent networks, we are pleased to deliver a brand-new product range for South East Asia, featuring Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos," said Helloworld Travel

Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director, Cinzia Burnes.

Many popular hotels in the range have also included perks for Viva customers including room upgrades, early check-in and late check-out, and earlybird rates. **ML**

G'Day adds Bargara

G'DAY Group has expanded its Discovery Parks portfolio after securing the sub-lease for Bargara Beachfront Holiday Park, located 15 minutes east of Bundaberg.

The property will be rebranded as Discovery Parks - Bargara, with G'Day Group to take over management of the popular tourist destination under a 20-year lease term.

The 6.7-hectare property features 15 cabins, 226 powered sites and 78 unpowered sites, and offers access to a wide range of amenities both on-site and in the adjoining Nielson Park coastal precinct, including a playground, walking trails, and camp kitchen.

As part of the sub-lease arrangement, G'day Group will inject an initial \$2 million as part of broader \$10 million investment commitment over the lease term.



Longreach is ready

TRAVELLERS are being encouraged to return to Longreach in Outback Queensland with a new all-inclusive package.

Fully commissionable at 15%, the 'Ultimate Outback Longreach Escape' package is designed to boost visitation following a wave of cancellations prompted by media coverage of the recent floods across the region.

Priced from \$949pp twin share, the new offering includes three nights' accommodation at Saltbush Retreat, a business class tour of Qantas Founders Museum, a sunset cruise, rail experience, some meals, and much more.

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Guests safe after quake

INTREPID Travel has confirmed that all customers, tour leaders and staff are safe and accounted for after a series of earthquakes struck Türkiye yesterday.

The epicentre of the quake was located 40 kilometres southwest of Istanbul, striking at a shallow depth, injuring at least 150 people and causing building damage across the city.

Intrepid said its tours will

continue as planned as the majority of its guests were in areas thankfully unaffected by the earthquake.

Future departures will also go ahead as scheduled.

"Safety is Intrepid's top priority and the company is working with its local team to monitor the situation," a spokesperson for Intrepid told **Travel Daily**.

Another source with contacts on the ground in Türkiye said that all major transport and accommodation infrastructure remain unaffected, and that travellers should not cancel their travel plans.

Many of the injuries were reportedly sustained by people jumping from buildings after feeling panicked by the tremor, especially after the country was afflicted by massive quake in '23.

Star Seeker peek

WINDSTAR Cruises has offered a first look at the interior design of its new yacht, *Star Seeker*, set to be delivered in Dec 2025 (**TD** 11 Apr 2024).

New images reveal the 224-passenger vessel's social hubs, including Amphora Restaurant, Main Lounge and Yacht Club (**pictured**).

Star Seeker will also feature Windstar's newest specialty venue, Basil + Bamboo, which offers a blend of Mediterranean and Asian flavours.

The first-ever Star Class newbuild will set sail on its maiden voyage in Dec, followed by a christening celebration in Miami on 26 Jan 2026.



QR FIFA packages

QATAR Airways is set to launch FIFA World Cup 2026 travel packages as the official global airline partner of soccer's governing body.

Qatar Airways Holidays will introduce travel packages for the next World Cup, set to be held in North America.

The packages will include international flights, domestic flights, transfers to various cities, hotel accommodation in four- and five-stars hotels, airports and stadium transfers, and tickets to the games.

FCTG helps NCL clean up



FLIGHT Centre travel advisors and Norwegian Cruise Line have stepped up to reinforce their shared commitment to environmental stewardship with Take 3 for the Sea.

The initiative saw advisors across four states collect well over 200 kilograms of trash from local beaches and waterways, with the group bringing in 100 kilograms more than the previous year's effort.

Stores in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and South Australia all took part on Flight Centre Volunteer Day, as part of the company's Accreditation Program.

NCL has been a partner of Take 3 for the Sea since Sep 2022, working to inspire and encourage its staff, travel partners, and guests to be part of the change.

The initiative encourages participants to pick up at least three pieces of trash when visiting a reserve, beach, or waterway area. **MS**

Crystal's Gay time

AMERICAN singer Gloria Gaynor is set to return to Crystal this Oct, gracing the *Crystal Serenity* stage.

The singer of tunes such as *I Will Survive* and *Let Me Know* will return to Crystal on board *Serenity's* 07 Oct round trip from New York City.

Gaynor will perform with a 10-piece band, belting out a selection of her greatest hits, as well as a number of new songs from her new album *Happy Tears*.

She will also participate in an intimate Q&A session.

"Performing aboard *Crystal Serenity* was an absolutely wonderful experience - the warmth of the guests, the elegance of the ship and the incredible energy made it truly special," Gaynor said.

The seven-night cruise will take in destinations such as Newport, Provincetown, Boston, Bar Harbor, and St. John.

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Mr Long goes to Canberra

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has been driving hard on election advocacy this week, in order to help deliver a fairer operating environment for travel businesses.

This election campaign has seen ATIA advocating for reduced regulatory burdens and increased airline competition.

ATIA met with Federal Minister for Tourism Don Farrell, where they were joined by the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry to discuss the role of travel in future trade ties and current European Union and United States tariff negotiations.

The association also met with Minister for Immigration Tony Burke, pushing the case for the inclusion of travel consultants, travel agency managers, and tour guides in the Core Skills Occupation List.

ATIA briefings continued later in the week too, where opposition frontbenchers Bridget McKenzie, Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, & Luke Howarth, and independent Western Australian MP Kate Chaney, heard directly about critical issues, including the proposed Aviation Industry Ombudsman, workforce gaps, and support for small businesses.

"We're working with all sides of politics to fix the rules and deliver better outcomes for travel businesses and their customers,"



said ATIA Chief Executive Officer Dean Long, who is **pictured** left with Burke.

"Whether it's workforce reform, fairer airline competition, or smarter regulation, everything we're pushing for this election and beyond into the next federal parliament is about making it easier for travel businesses to grow and succeed.

"This sector delivers billions to the economy and connects communities. It's time policy settings better reflected that."

This year saw ATIA members book more than \$30 billion in travel services, and support nearly 17m Aussie travellers. *MS*

A&K luxury in Utah

ABERCROMBIE & Kent will develop a luxury retreat in the Great American West with a new A&K Sanctuary retreat in the town of Moab, Utah.

Catering to 40 guests, the retreat will sit at the doorstep of Arches and Canyonlands National Park, unlocking access to the red Rock canyons and US desert.

Accommodation will consist of a range of one- and two-bedroom standalone suites to blend the indoor and outdoor ambiance with "understated elegance".

Guests will have access to a range of activity programs including hiking, mountain biking, river rafting, scenic drives along with cultural encounters and expert-led photographic tours.

The new A&K Sanctuary retreat in Moab is scheduled to open to guests in 2027.

Explore more savings

EXPLORA Journeys has launched a new seasonal deal, offering savings of up to \$2,000 per suite on select Mediterranean, Caribbean, and Grand Journeys sailings departing between Jun-Dec 2025.

Guests who book before 14 May will benefit from up to €1,000 savings per person to offset their air travel arrangements, applicable to the first and second guests in each suite.

CLICK HERE to learn more.



Discover our River Cruise Special Report

Click here

Club Med rides Canada wave



SIX Australian agents recently had the opportunity to experience one of Club Med's most renowned ski destinations, on a VIP famil trip to Club Med Quebec Charlevoix.

Hosted in partnership with Air Canada, a selection of Club Med's Diamond travel agent partners enjoyed a six-day itinerary, which kicked off on the slopes.

The lucky group then participated in a brand immersion session, where they were given a first look at Club Med's latest brand developments.

Each morning of the trip was spent skiing, while afternoons were dedicated to group experiences, including a guided tour of Quebec City, a tasting experience in Baie Saint Paul, and dog sledding and horse riding through the snowy mountains.

The agents also had time to unwind and enjoy the resort's

spa, pools, and saunas, before indulging in gourmet dining and evening entertainment.

"With Australia ranking among the top four markets globally for Club Med ski sales, this VIP trip was a fantastic opportunity to broaden our agents' knowledge and inspire confidence in selling a lesser-known destination within our portfolio," said Lisa Bacon, Head of Trade Sales for Club Med Pacific.

She added that, despite sales for Quebec Charlevoix skyrocketing by 148% for the 2025/2026 ski season, many agents were unaware of the presence of a Club Med resort in Canada.

"As a four-season resort, with incredible spring ski conditions, and summer activities like hiking, biking, and whale watching, Club Med Quebec Charlevoix is a compelling year-round destination," Bacon enthused. *JM*



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SE Asia hot seller

A NEW market snapshot from comparison website Finder has revealed 68% of Australians are planning a holiday this year, with one in three heading overseas.

Southeast Asia was found to be the most popular overseas target, with 15% of respondents set to hit destinations such as Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore.

Europe ranked close behind with 13% holding desires for Spain and Germany, while Japan rounded out the top 10.

The research also showed 40% of Aussies will holiday at home this year, with 8.3 million people set to travel domestically.

Voco enters Darwin

A REPURPOSED commercial office building in Darwin will become the home of a new voco branded hotel - the brand's first foray into the Northern Territory.

Voco Darwin Suites (pictured) will feature 87 rooms, each with a self-contained kitchenette, along with an all-day restaurant, outdoor swimming pool, fitness centre and meeting spaces.

The hotel will be located close to Darwin Entertainment Centre and within walking distance to the city's popular Crocosaurus Cove attraction.



Intrepid goes glamping

INTREPID Travel has partnered with First Nations tourism company Yalka Ratarra Aboriginal Corporation to offer a glamping experience in the Red Centre.

The collaboration will see Intrepid become the only tourism operator with access to the Corporation's newly developed Yalka Eco Stays, located in Palm Valley within the Finke Gorge National Park.

The campsite features eight eco-designed tents with air-conditioning, ensuite bathrooms, and views of one of the most remote landscapes in Australia.

"We're incredibly proud to partner with Yalka Ratarra Aboriginal Corporation to create an experience that not only showcases one of Australia's most spectacular landscapes but also supports First Nations tourism and economic empowerment," said Intrepid MD ANZ, Brett Mitchell.

"This partnership is a great example of how we can help drive more meaningful and sustainable tourism experiences in Australia's Red Centre."

Intrepid's 'Red Centre and Uluru Explorer' trip will operate through Palm Valley from 01 Jul, allowing guests to stay in the luxury glamping tents for two nights, enjoying included dinners and evenings around a campfire under the outback stars.

During their stay, guests will enjoy greater access to the West MacDonnell Ranges' hidden



gems, including a swimming spot surrounded by towering cliffs and ghost gum trees.

The journey concludes with a transfer to Alice Springs on day six, ensuring a seamless experience for travellers.

Find out more [HERE](#). JM

AS, HA get closer

ALASKA Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines are set to be new terminal neighbours at several key airports, as the two carriers align their operations following the integration of the two companies (TD 19 Sep).

The carriers will be co-located at airports including Los Angeles, John F. Kennedy International, Phoenix, and San Francisco.

Hawaiian's gates, ticket counters, and other airport resources will relocate next to Alaska's, with some locations featuring fully shared spaces between the two airlines.

First class passengers travelling on both carriers will also enjoy access to American Airlines' Admirals Club at JFK.

Window Seat

IF SWEDEN'S annual moose migration is slightly outside your travel budget, don't fear - there is now a livestream to watch this gripping event.

The annual 20-day *The Great Moose Migration*, which is a sleeper hit on Swedish television, began earlier this week, with around 10 million expected to tune in.

The show first aired in 2019, and drew in nearly a million viewers, which has skyrocketed to nine million last year.

The stream's (view [HERE](#)) remote cameras will capture dozens of moose as they swim across Angerman river, making their way toward summer grazing pastures.

Wilson joins Collette

TOUR operator Collette has expanded its Australian team to 35 with the appointment of Kylie Wilson as its new Business Development Manager.

Wilson will oversee the NSW and ACT markets in her new role in Collette's National Sales Team, based in the brand's Sydney office.

With more than three decades of industry experience, Wilson comes to Collette from her most recent role at Viva Holidays.

Head to **page eight** for more appointments.



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Bali gets better

INTERCONTINENTAL

Bali Resort has unveiled the official website for Jimbaran Convention Center (JCC), offering easy access to the venue's facilities, services and event capabilities.

Set within the grounds of InterContinental Bali Resort, JCC blends Balinese charm with a modern aesthetic, accommodates up to 2,000 guests, and features 19 breakout rooms.

Using the new dedicated website, event organisers can now easily explore JCC's flexible spaces, amenities, and event solutions.

The platform also features a streamlined inquiry system, providing direct access to the resort's expert events team.

"We are delighted to introduce the Jimbaran Convention Center website as a key digital gateway for our clients," said Jezzy Atan, Director of Sales - Catering and Events at InterContinental Bali Resort.

"This initiative underscores our commitment to delivering exceptional event experiences and reinforces JCC as a leading venue in Bali."

To celebrate the platform's launch, JCC will soon be announcing a special offer for event organisers.

To check out the new website, [CLICK HERE](#).

GRAPE EXPECTATIONS FOR VIC EVENTS

VICTORIA'S regional events scene has received a leg up from the state government, which has announced funding for more than 20 events.

Victoria Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos joined local winemakers this week ahead of the upcoming Grampians Grape Escape to announce the recipients for the latest round of the Regional Events Fund.

The cash boost will support events across Victoria, such as the Mildura Fringe Festival, the Great Trentham Spudfest, the East Gippsland Winter Festival, and the Ballarat Int'l Foto Biennale.

It also supports marquee events held regionally, including the Rip Curl Pro, the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race and the 'Frida Kahlo: In her own image' exhibition in Bendigo.

In an earlier round, the Regional



Events Fund supported The Grampians Grape Escape, which is set to attract thousands of visitors to Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park in May, where dozens of local wineries, breweries, growers and chefs will host tastings, cooking demos and family activities.

"The Regional Events Fund brings thousands of visitors to local communities, providing a huge boost for businesses and showcasing some of Victoria's most incredible destinations," Dimopoulos said.

"We're ensuring communities

across the state benefit from our huge pipeline of events."

The initiative offers up to \$500,000 for major events of national or international significance, and up to \$50,000 for events that draw visitors from across the state and country.

In the past year, regional events across the state have attracted more than a million attendees and led to 300,000 hotel nights.

Applications for the next round of Regional Events Fund - Stream 2 opens on Thu 01 May - find out more [HERE](#). JM

MCEC makes Good Friday extra sweet

MELBOURNE Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) and the Good Friday Appeal have teamed up to raise a record \$23.8 million to support life-saving care for children across Victoria.

It marks the 11th consecutive year the two organisations have worked together to host the fundraising event.

MCEC's chefs ([pictured](#)) played a key role in this year's success, baking nearly 3,000



hot cross buns which measured more than 20 metres, while the venue's interactive Ice Cream-o-Rama served 1,200 house-made ice creams.

All profits from the food sales were donated to the Good Friday Appeal.

Travel Meet Asia

TRAVEL trade show Travel Meet Asia 2025 is returning on 25-26 Jun at its new venue, Swissotel Jakarta PIK Avenue, and is set to welcome more than 1,300 attendees and 400 buyers.

The event, which will feature exhibitors like The Ascott Limited and Melia Hotels International, will highlight key travel trends in Southeast Asia, exploring topics such as MICE and corporate travel.

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After a period outside the travel industry, **Kate Johnson** has been lured back via her new role as Partnership Relations Coordinator - Agency Maintenance & Reporting at **Norwegian Cruise Line**. Johnson joins the company with strong experience at Flight Centre Travel Group and its in-house wholesaler, Infinity Holidays.

Wendy Wu Tours has recruited the highly experienced **Julia Emelianov** as its new Customer Relations Executive. Emelianov joins the all-inclusive tour operator with experience gathered from many years with Globus, Creative Cruising and former TTC wholesaler, Creative Holidays.

Brisbane's **Hotel X Fortitude Valley** - part of **IHG Hotels & Resorts'** Vignette Collection - has appointed **Daniel Gerritse** as the new General Manager. Gerritse moves to the property from his most recent role as Director of Sales and Marketing at InterContinental Sanctuary Cove and also brings experience with W Brisbane and Park Hyatt Sydney.

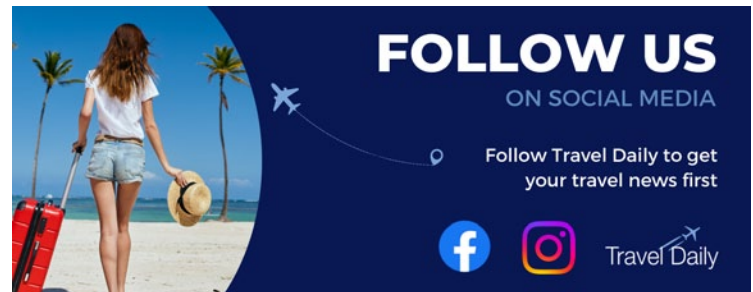
SeaLink Whitsundays General Manager **Asher Telford** has joined the Whitsundays Chamber of Commerce and Industry Board. Telford is deeply ingrained in the North Queensland region and brings a strong commitment to growing regional tourism and proven business skills.

Courtyard by Marriott Flagstaff Gardens in Melbourne has a new leader, with **Scott Breen** named as the property's General Manager. Breen brings over 15 years' experience in hospitality to his new role and has worked at hotels all over the world including The Ritz-Carlton Toronto and Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort Gold Coast.

A strategic realignment of executive functions is being implemented at **Air Canada** in a move designed to spearhead growth as new aircraft start to arrive at the end of 2025. The changes include **Craig Landry** being named Executive Vice President & Chief Innovation Officer; **Mark Nasr** as Executive Vice President & Chief Operations Officer; and **Mark Galardo** as Executive Vice President & Chief Commercial Officer and President, Cargo.

Leading Vietnamese tourism operator **Paradise Cruises and Hotels Halong Bay** has appointed **Gordon Bell** from Paradise Vietnam as its exclusive Australian representative. Bell is highly experienced in promoting Asia and has been tasked with growing market awareness of the company and making it the experience of choice for Aussie visitors.

Stephen Nash has been welcomed onboard at **The Other House Covent Garden**, a new luxury hotel opening its doors in London at the end of this year, as its new General Manager. Nash will oversee all operations at the property, which is the second location for The Other House in the UK alongside South Kensington, which opened in 2022. Nash will also continue the progress of the brand becoming a united group of Residents Clubs spanning London and beyond.



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Territorians flock to travel expo



MORE than 1,000 attendees flocked to the annual Darwin Travel Festival last weekend, an event which now claims to be the NT's premier travel event.

Hosted by Novotel Darwin Airport, the event saw 35 suppliers representing 55 brands at exhibitor stands.

The festival is an initiative of home-based agent Lisa Malnar from TravelManagers and Rachel Turner from Helloworld Travel Darwin, who have joined forces for the past three years to develop and run the event.

A special guest in attendance was Northern Territory Minister for Tourism, Marie-Clare Boothby, whose presence underscored the growth of the gathering.

Supported by Qantas, Airnorth, Island Escape Holidays and Elephant Hills, the event received funds from the brands to contribute to a prize pool of over \$20,000, which was given away to attendees on the day.

Malnar said she was thrilled with the results.

"Although Rachel and I are, in theory, competitors, we share a passion for creating a one-of-a-kind travel event," she said.

Malnar added she and Turner are eager to make the 2026 event even bigger.

"We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support from locals and visiting suppliers alike, which has helped us to create a must-attend event that we are aiming to make even bigger and better in 2026," she said. *ML*

Accor scores again

ACCOR has been recognised as one of the best companies to work for, earning the title of '5-Star Employer of Choice' (500+ employees) by HRD ANZ for the third year in a row.

The accolade included a detailed assessment of Accor's team offerings and workplace practices, followed by an anonymous employee survey evaluating satisfaction across multiple areas.

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