

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest travel industry news, including a photo page from **Norwegian Cruise Line** and our **Sustainability** page, plus a full page from **A Force for Good**.

A truer Morocco

TRUTRAVELS has expanded its Moroccan adventures with two new tours: North Morocco Adventure and Discover Morocco.

The new nine-day North Morocco Adventure tour takes travellers through destinations in the country's north, including Marrakech, Chefchaouen, Fes, and Casablanca.

Travellers will explore the famous blue streets of Chefchaouen and visit some of the nation's ancient Kasbahs.

There is also a 17-day Discover Morocco tour, inviting travellers to sandboard through the Sahara, camp in the desert, and more.

Sydney breaks record

SYDNEY has this year secured the most valuable future pipeline of business events in its history.

New figures released by Business Events Sydney (BESydney) show the record-breaking bank of events will attract around 59,000 delegates, who will stay a collective 253,000 days and generate \$250 million in future direct expenditure.

"These events are a fantastic stimulus for the New South Wales Government's new Visitor Economy Strategy 2035 in which business events were enshrined for the first time as a key driver of economic growth for the state," BESydney Chief Executive Officer Amanda Lampe said.

"Not only do these events support the visitor economy and jobs across the tourism and hospitality sector, but they are also a powerhouse for innovation, trade, investment and skilled talent attraction across a wide



cross-section of the economy from advanced manufacturing and AI through to universities and scientific research." *AB*

CTM amends credit

CORPORATE Travel Management (CTM) has looked to shore up its operational and financial stability by agreeing to enhanced reporting commitments with its current debt facility lenders.

However, the total amount of its debt facility has been reduced by \$10 million to \$140 million in the wake of its auditing crisis, which is made up of a bank guarantee and revolving line of credit.

CTM has also secured an extended financial reporting deadline to 30 Jun 2026.

A shiny new Crown

PRINCESS Cruises' *Crown Princess* has returned from her dry dock with new features such as O'Malley's Irish Pub, a redesigned casino, and other fresh enhancements.

The dry dock in Singapore brought Princess' highly popular Irish pub concept to *Crown*, serving classic comfort food and an extensive beverage collection.

There is also a new Effy Lounge, replacing the Internet Cafe, featuring pieces from the New York City-based jeweller.

Crown has now set sail for Sydney for her Aussie season and subsequent world cruise.

MEANWHILE, Princess has welcomed Alison Thomas as its new State Manager for Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania.

Thomas brings around 40 years of experience across the aviation and hotel sectors - she will manage the southern states.



Tourism Malaysia Sydney has the following job vacancies:

Marketing Officer

- Plan, prepare & implement marketing, promotion & advertising activities
 - Execute Market Development activities to position Malaysia as preferred holiday destination
 - To plan & execute development activities
 - Master / Bachelor Degree Holder in Marketing, Communications or equivalent with minimum of 5 years of experience in Marketing
- CLICK HERE TO APPLY - Applications close 10 January 2026**

Assistant Marketing Officer

- Support, implement and execute marketing and promotion activities
 - Plan and execute publicity and advertising activities
 - Execute market development activities
 - To manage & oversee social media content
 - Diploma in marketing communication or equivalent with a minimum of 5 years experience in Marketing
- CLICK HERE TO APPLY - Applications close 10 January 2026**

Driver

- Assist with all transport related duties
 - Assist and maintain office errands
 - Must have a valid driving license
- CLICK HERE TO APPLY - Applications close 10 January 2026**

*Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

*No recruitment agency submissions accepted.

*Only applicants with Australian citizenship or Australian permanent residency need apply.

Have a great Xmas

THE team at *Travel Daily* would like to thank all of our loyal readers who have supported us during another huge year.

Today is the final day of publishing for 2025, and we will return again on 05 Jan 2026.

In the meantime, our entire team wishes you all a wonderful Christmas break full of family cheer and - naturally - plenty of classic holiday treats.

Celebrate women

CELEBRATE International Women's Day with some of the travel industry's top leaders at A Force for Good.

There will be two A Force For Good events next year - visit **page eight** for all the information on next year's dates.



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Wind beneath agents

WINDSTAR Cruises is offering new incentives to seal bookings for its upcoming wave season.

The Beyond Inclusive deal gives advisors the option of offering clients bonuses such as all-inclusive upgrades, a free pre-cruise hotel night & transfer, as well as \$1,500 of onboard credit.

Booking incentives can be used on several Windstar voyages departing in Europe, Tahiti, Central America, Southeast Asia and the Caribbean.

“Advisors are core to Windstar’s success, and this wave offer was built with them in mind,” said Windstar Chief Commercial Officer Janet Bava.

“We know clients are looking for value, and this is one of the strongest value-driven promotions we’ve ever created.”



Dom aviation tardy in Nov

QANTAS and Virgin both saw a decrease in on-time flights and an increase in cancellations last month, according to the most recent report from BITRE.

In Nov, Qantas had 70.1% of its arrivals operate on time, a drop on last month’s 75.2%.

Only 72.9% of departures were on time as well, compared to 76.8% in Oct.

Virgin Australia saw on-time arrivals decrease from 72.1% to 67.2% and departures drop from 72.4% to 70.5%.

Meanwhile, 3.7% of Qantas flights were cancelled in Nov, more than double the rate of rival Virgin Australia, which only scrapped 1.5% of flights.

However, both airlines saw an increase, with Qantas having 2.6% and Virgin cancelling 1.4%.

In regional Australia, Rex continued to make steady progress with on-time departures, not dropping below



70% over the past three months.

However, on-time arrivals reached their lowest point in three months, with only 67.1%.

Hinterland remained at the top for the second month in a row with 91.8% on time arrivals and 95.1% on time departures, as well as no recorded cancellations.

In terms of route performance, the Adelaide-Gold Coast pairing took over from Brisbane-Mount Isa as the most efficient route, with 95.5% of arrivals on time and 91% of departures.

The Darwin-Perth route was the most cancelled route, with 8% of flights canned. *JB*

Wendy gets ready

WENDY Wu Tours has launched its ‘Ready, Set, Travel’ campaign, offering travellers savings of up to \$3,000 per person for selected departures in 2026 and 2027.

The promotion also includes discounts for solo travellers with free or half-price single supplements on selected tours.

Agents can access the new suite of deals until 27 Feb 2026.

Two ships in Arabia

CELESTYAL *Discovery* has arrived in the Arabian Gulf this month alongside *Celestyal Journey*, where she is now operating three-, four- and seven-night cruises roundtrip from the UAE cruise hub of Abu Dhabi.

Prices for the sailings start at \$509 per person.

The latest ship deployment from Celestyal represents a 211% year-on-year increase in the cruise line’s Arabian capacity, adding to its expansion in the Middle East.



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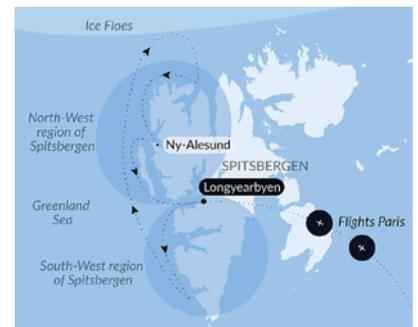
Sell ANY Holiday Offer Voyage with PONANT or Paul Gauguin and every guest you book = another chance to WIN a bucket-list PONANT Arctic Expedition in July 2026: a luxury adventure worth \$36,000!

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For more information contact SalesAPAC@ponant.com

CONDITIONS: Bookings must be deposited by 09 JAN 2026 to qualify. 1 guest booked = 1 Entry, with unlimited entries. Prize will be randomly drawn on 12 January 2026. Expedition is for 2 Adults travelling in a Prestige Stateroom on a PONANT 8 Day Arctic Expedition. Prize is for Cruise only and cannot be redeemed for cash or transferred. International airfares are at winners own expense.

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SpaceX endangered flights

DEBRIS from the SpaceX Starship launch vehicle came closer to passenger aircraft than the company originally admitted to, a new report by *The Wall Street Journal* has alleged.

A SpaceX Starship test flight earlier this year endangered three passenger jets, according to the new report, causing the rerouting of several flights.

Starship lifted off on 16 Jan from the SpaceX Starbase facility in Texas, however the flight did not go according to plan, with an early shutdown causing it to break apart, with debris raining down over the Turks & Caicos.

Federal Aviation Administration documents now reveal that the mishap posed an "extreme safety risk" for three aircraft with a total of 450 passengers on board, the *WSJ* detailed.

Air traffic controllers rerouted several aircraft, including a JetBlue airplane headed to Puerto



Rico, which was forced to fly through a temporary no-fly debris zone in order to avoid the risk of running out of fuel.

Two other planes were also forced to fly close to one another and faced a risk of collision, due to the failed launch.

Travel Daily reports from Jan noted Qantas was also forced to delay flights to South Africa due to falling SpaceX debris, however these were for flights over the Indian Ocean, not the Atlantic.

SpaceX, which is partially owned by Elon Musk, hit out at the *WSJ* report on social media platform X - another of the businessman's interests - calling it "misleading" and "incomplete." *MS*

The art of lodging

BAILLIE Lodges-owned Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island is set to launch an artist in residence program, which will run until Mar 2026.

Prominent artists from across the island will join the exhibition, with their paintings inspired by the island's natural landscape, wildlife and coastline.

There is also a complimentary opportunity for guests at the lodge to meet with artists and discuss their craft and experience

"It is a special opportunity for guests to see artists at work and experience their creative interpretation of this extraordinary landscape," Baillie Lodges Chief Operating Officer Craig Bradbery said.



Viking incentive win

VIKING cruises has announced the winner of its Holy Viking agent incentive, with Debbie Natoli from Helloworld Miramar in NZ taking out the major prize.

Natoli emerged victorious after selling Viking product during the promotional period, scoring a \$77,000 prize including three cruises across ocean, river and expedition, as well as flights valued up to \$17,000.

Twenty-three runners up all received \$1,000 each in Viking rewards vouchers, which can be used for luxury items and travel.

Smarter shipbuilding

ITALIAN shipbuilder Fincantieri has launched a new AI interface called CaptAI, allowing investors and media to get a better understanding of manufacturing process and cruise partnerships.

The AI agent also provides links to texts, image videos and corporate documents.

AD75 Swiss Travel Pass

Exploring Switzerland has never been easier!



The all-in-one ticket Swiss Travel Pass is the key to Switzerland's public transport network.

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The AD75 Swiss Travel Pass is available only to travel advisors with an active RailPortal account. Requests must be submitted via the **Contact Us** enquiry forms.

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Jetstar boosts Hamilton

HAMILTON Airport in New Zealand is flying once again after this year's return of international services, with Dec to be its busiest-ever month.

A new daily Jetstar Airways service between Hamilton and Christchurch started at the beginning of the month, while Air New Zealand returned a service along the same route in Sep.

Hamilton also began welcoming international flights in Jul, making it a year of aggressive growth for the airport.

In total, the hub expects about 60% more travellers in Dec 2025 when compared to the same time last year, with 70% more capacity on the Christchurch route alone.

"It's been very successful for us and I think what the low-cost carrier option of Jetstar introduces is it brings people back into the market that perhaps were finding the regional domestic airfares quite



expensive," the airport's Chief Executive Mark Morgan told local news website *Stuff*.

"It's been very successful for us and I think what the low cost carrier option of Jetstar introduces is it brings people back into the market that perhaps were finding the regional domestic airfares quite expensive," he said.

More competition and options on a route also influenced prices, softening airfares, Morgan noted.

"The airlines have more seats to fill, that provides more low-cost fares with Jetstar and perhaps more competitive fares with Air New Zealand," he said. *MS*

Singapore tightens

TRAVELLERS to Singapore will face greater scrutiny from its border control system next year as the country looks to clamp down on visitors it feels pose security or legal risks.

From Jan 2026, Singapore Airlines, Scoot, Emirates, Turkish Airlines and AirAsia will be the first carriers to implement the new no-boarding directive initiative, which will seek to bar more travellers from boarding flights and lower the volume of people blocked by immigration.

Other airlines will join the initiative from Mar 2026, the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority has confirmed.

Singapore will introduce the new harder stance on entry after a surge in the number of travellers refused entry this year, which was 26% higher than the figure recorded two years ago.

Qantas has been contacted to see if it will look to participate in the program from Mar.

Robotaxis of London

ROBOTAXIS are due to launch London next year, as Lyft and Uber reveal tie-ups with Chinese firm Baidu on the project.

Lyft said it plans to start tests with dozens of Baidu's self-driving Apollo Go cars in London in 2026, while Uber has announced it is also planning to offer robotaxis in the UK capital.

CEO of Lyft David Risher said the company is working with the city's transit authority and local jurisdictions "to ensure these vehicles enhance London's transportation ecosystem".

Baidu's Apollo Go is Asia's leader in autonomous ride-hailing service, operating in more than 20 cities, and providing about 250,000 rides per week.



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NCL arrival lifts Australia's spirits

OFFERING a premium, adult-centric experience, *Norwegian Spirit*® is truly where grown-up getaways begin. Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL)® welcomed her back to Sydney last Sun for her third season in local waters, where she will sail immersive itineraries between Sydney and Auckland through to Apr 2026.

Appearing last week on 7's *Sunrise* from Melbourne, host Sam Mac showcased some of *Norwegian Spirit*'s signature spaces, including the adults-only Spice H₂O, Mandara Spa®, and an extensive choice of world-class dining venues.

Reinforcing her unique positioning in the market as a contemporary, refined cruise experience, *Norwegian Spirit* has also hosted numerous trade and media partners during her 19-day Singapore voyage, debut Fremantle visit, and calls to Albany, Esperance, Kangaroo Island, Burnie and Eden.

After her [Australia and New Zealand season](#), she will reposition to the South Pacific before returning in Dec 2026.



NORWEGIAN Spirit sailing into Sydney.



PREPARING for Channel 7 *Sunrise* - Emily Watters, Anne Wild & Associates, Leanne Fonagy, NCL; and Shannon Pitschitz, NCL.



THE Blazing Boots cast delivers a special pop-up performance.



NORWEGIAN Spirit decked out for the festive season at sea.

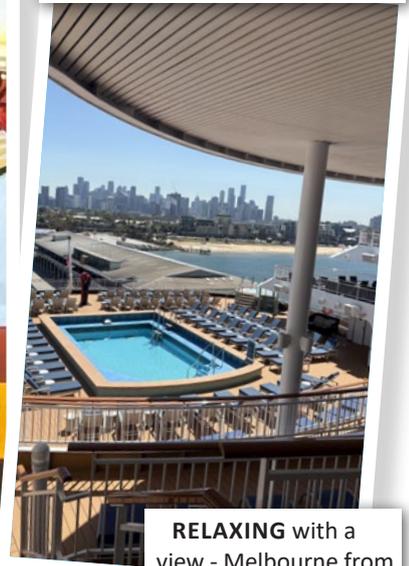


SYDNEY'S iconic harbour from *Norwegian Spirit*'s Spinnaker Lounge.



SUNRISE WEATHER
SAM MAC IS IN MELBOURNE

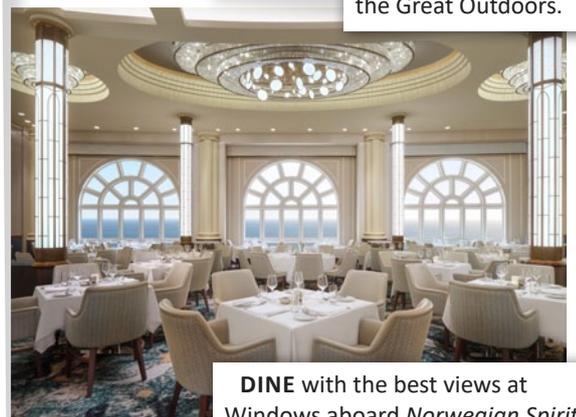
SAM Mac learns more about Spice H₂O - the adults only pool area



RELAXING with a view - Melbourne from the Great Outdoors.



MELBOURNE turned on an incredible *Sunrise* to kick off the show on 18 Dec.



DINE with the best views at Windows aboard *Norwegian Spirit*.

Inside donations

B CORP certified tour operator Inside Travel has achieved record growth while tackling overtourism.

Celebrating its 25th year in business this year, Inside Travel achieved a 22% year-on-year increase in sales and carried a record 16,000 passengers globally.

It also donated more than \$230,000 to a range of charity partners and remained committed to improving cultural adventure experiences in destination for travellers, as well as the local communities they visited.

This year, the tour operator launched an overtourism strategy working to disperse tourism across Japan, increasing awareness of the five key regions of Toyama, Nagoya, Nagasaki, Aomori and Yamaguchi.

Queenstown intensifies greening

ELECTRIFICATION, waste minimisation, sustainable construction and community partnerships were among the wins that Queenstown Airport (ZQN) has highlighted in its latest *Sustainability Report*, released late last week.

According to the report, ZQN lowered organisational emissions by 76% since the 2019 baseline, and remains on track for an 85% reduction by 2028.

Of the main projects successfully completed, it upgraded the system used to heat, cool, and ventilate the terminal, converting it to fully electric, with the diesel boiler used for pre-heating now permanently decommissioned.

GM Sustainability and Corporate Affairs Sara Irvine said, "It is vital that we operate sustainably and build long-term resilience".

"A key priority for us is to



understand, plan, and adapt to the impacts of climate change on our business."

The airport serving one of the country's most popular tourist spots also formed a new partnership with Remarkables Station National Trust Ltd to restore native forest to a 100-hectare area of farmland at the foot of the Remarkables mountain range.

In terms of waste minimisation,

the airport's on-site composting and recycling programs have been expanded, and a novel approach to confiscated, safe items, such as new liquids and aerosols over the allowed limit, is being trialled.

They will now be donated to the Salvation Army, halving waste in the first month alone.

A Whanau Policy providing benefits and support to staff members through key life events, was also introduced this year. *DF*



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MONEY

WELCOME to Money, TD's Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.666

TRAVELLERS have opened an early Christmas present this year, with analysts tipping the AUD to soar in Jan.

A predicted divergence in global interest rates will see the Aussie dollar continue to appreciate throughout 2026, after buying around just US\$0.61 this time last year.

Michael McCarthy, market strategist at trading platform Moomoo, told the *SMH* the AUD could grow between 10% and 40% next year.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.666
UK	£0.495
NZ	\$1.149
Euro	€0.566
Japan	¥104.5
Thailand	฿20.73
China	¥4.686
South Africa	11.13
Canada	\$0.916
Bitcoin	0.0000075

FCTG lets 2025 slide



FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has a reputation for doing things differently, and the end-of-year tradition of having employees slide at breakneck speed through its head office in Brisbane is a wild example of that fun corporate mentality.

Last week, a record number of sliders soaped themselves up, and as FCTG aptly characterised it, "ignored logic and committed fully to the chaos".

"Our 17-year long, iconic tradition didn't disappoint," FCTG said, adding that this year saw plenty of first-time participants join the sudsy fray, bringing with them some "creative



interpretations" about how to slip'n'slide.

"A few interesting launches left our emcees Tom Walley and Clinton Hearne watching on in a state of mild panic."

So who were crowned the winners on the day? That honour went to Tod Horton, Sean Austin and Emma Newlands.

See some of the wild and wet comp by [CLICKING HERE](#). AB

Window Seat

SANTA Claus is set to take flight tomorrow night and he will be protected by the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD).

Through radars, satellites and fighter jets, NORAD will track Santa's every move across the globe and ensure all presents are delivered safely.

Major Kathleen Leaton has assured children everywhere that Santa will have the same surveillance and protection that any other aircraft would.

"NORAD is tracking all aircraft in North America and around the globe 24/7, 365 days a year - it's our mission.

"We're working to make sure Santa is secure and safe from air threats," Leaton added.



YEAR IN REVIEW

Our analysis of the biggest news of the year

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Travel Daily

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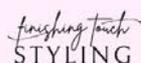
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