

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest news, including our **Corporate Update**, plus full pages from:

- Helloworld
- Scenic

Nominees honoured

HELLOWORLD is recognising and celebrating its cohort of NTIA nominees across its suite of brands ahead of the annual gala dinner in Oct - see **page eight**.

Try the Scenic style

FIND out more about a Scenic river cruise on the Danube on an upcoming series of episodes of *Getaway* - details on **page nine**.

Explora agent boost

TRAVEL agents now have access to a suite of new tools from cruise brand Explora Journeys.

In collaboration with social portal Rallio, the tools include social content that can be branded, scheduled and easily shared, along with post-planning and performance tracking.

"By investing in easy-to-use tools that reflect the same care and precision as our ocean journeys, we are enabling our partners to thrive in today's luxury travel landscape and capitalise on the potential it presents," Explora Journeys President Anna Nash said.

Co-branded landing pages are also available to direct enquiries and bookings back to agents.

56% doubt human need

MORE than half of Aussies doubt the importance of the human touch in travel planning, according to a new report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

The survey found that developed nations like Australia, the US and the UK were the least enamoured with human-advised travel planning, well behind developing countries like China, which had 80% of its respondents endorse human advice.

BCG's startling finding was revealed as part of a deep dive into how AI is being used by travellers globally, with the study suggesting generative AI represents an "existential threat" to travel companies, as AI-driven search platforms take on a more active role in directing users to relevant travel offers.

The report predicted that travellers will increasingly adopt AI agents over the next 15 years, which will provide users with itinerary recommendations through to completed bookings.

Over time, users will then look to leverage AI agent findings through social media to enter what is called the "imagination and inspiration phase", with social interactions and likes to shape how AI-powered agents facilitate travel bookings directly within the social platforms themselves.

A recommendation put forward by the study is for travel agencies to create their own AI agents to remain relevant in the face of the rapidly changing landscape.

However, in what may be a reprieve for human agents, the report found a positive link between countries that consider AI valuable in travel planning, and a higher need for human advice.

The relationship suggests that smart AI integration through a hybrid human approach may best suit evolving travellers' needs.

Aussies are behind all but Germany in using AI tools in travel planning, the study said. **AB**

Qantas class action?

THERE is a possibility of class action against Qantas from customers impacted by a major data breach this week (**TD** 02 Jul), according to a legal specialist from Monash University.

Dr Aashish Srivastava said that under the *Privacy Act 1988*, Qantas has a legal obligation to take "reasonable steps" to protect personal information.

"This has happened before in the case of Optus in 2022, where 160,000 of its customers joined a class action seeking redress for the mishandling of their personal data," he said.

"For Qantas customers...they have the right to make a formal complaint to the Office of the Information Commissioner or explore legal options if harm results," Srivastava added.

Meanwhile, Qantas is reportedly yet to decide on whether it will directly compensate the customers affected by the hack.

Adele on stage

ROY Morgan Head of Travel and Tourism Adele Labine-Romain will deliver the keynote presentation at ATIA's Beyond Borders on the Road (BBOTR) events.

The events will take place in Adelaide on 28 Jul before moving to Perth on 30 Jul - **CLICK HERE**.

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Ready for holiday surge

AUSTRALIA'S major eastern airports are all bracing for strong travel volumes these holidays, with the three capitals revealing their forecasts this week.

Sydney Airport said it is preparing to set a new passenger record for Jul, with more than 2.5 million arrivals passing through.

The peak for domestic travel will be today, with 81,000 expected through the turnstiles, while international's busiest day will be on 12 Jul as 54,000 pax arrive.

Staffing levels will be boosted across the facility to help cater to the influx, with some drop-off traffic redirected to the arrivals level to improve traffic flow.

At Melbourne Airport, nearly two million travellers are expected through the facility as Victorians head north.

Numbers equivalent to that of an AFL grand final will pass through MEL's terminals every day of the school holidays, with a

daily average of 107,000.

Coupled with the visit of the British and Irish Lions rugby tour, Brisbane Airport said it will break its own records as it welcomes 2.78 million arrivals through its domestic and int'l terminals.

For the Queensland capital, the busiest day is forecast to be 18 Jul, as 82,400 people pass through both terminals, with the holiday season expected to result in a 1.4% growth in domestic and an 18.4% spike in int'l traffic.

Amid heavy redevelopment work ongoing at BNE, airport management are asking travellers to arrive 90 minutes ahead of a domestic flight and three hours before jetting off overseas.

In Tasmania, Launceston Airport is expecting a 3% jump in school holiday traffic as it prepares to handle more than 60,000 arrivals.

The last day of the holidays will be its busiest, with more than 4,400 expected on 20 Jul. *ML*

EY loyal to Vietnam

ETIHAD Airways and Vietnam Airlines have signed a deal to allow loyalty members of either carrier to earn and redeem miles across both networks.

The agreement went live on 01 Jul and follows an initial agreement last year to explore collaborations across loyalty.

Further cementing the benefits of the loyalty tie-up for Etihad is its plan to launch flights to Hanoi from 02 Nov.

The Abu Dhabi-based airline has also revealed it will add seasonal flights to Krakow in Poland and Salalah in Oman to its network next year, using its A321LR and A320 aircraft.

Salalah services will take off on 21 May 2026, while Krakow will be added from 16 Jun 2026.



France disruptions

FRENCH air traffic controllers who walked off the job yesterday to protest staff shortages and ageing equipment have forced airlines to cancel hundreds of flights across the country.

The strike action started Thu afternoon and is expected to run throughout today, including at major hubs like Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport.

Around a quarter of flights departing or arriving from France's largest airport were cancelled yesterday, but according to airport disruption maps, so far today the hub is only experiencing mild disruptions.

The worst affected airports in France are Nice Cote d'Azur Airport and Marseille Provence Airport, the latest data shows.

The Airlines for Europe Association, which includes Ryanair, Air France-KLM, Lufthansa, British Airways and EasyJet as members, described the strike action as "intolerable".

 Wendy Wu Tours

2026  2027

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Norway tourist tax

SELECT municipalities in Norway will be able to charge tourists a 3% tax on overnight stays from the middle of next year, under newly approved legislation in the Nordic country.

The levy will primarily target cruise visitors and travellers using short-term accommodation platforms like Airbnb, and follows a rejection of a blunt approach through a nation-wide hotel tax.

But in what could prove to be a saving grace for tourists, each municipality wishing to impose the tax will need to prove how travellers are placing a strain on local resources, and also demonstrate to government how the funds raised will be used.

Tahiti One of a Kind

SAVINGS of up to \$7,500 per couple can now be enjoyed through Entire Travel Group for new bookings made by 28 Jul.

The company's 'One of a Kind' promotion - **CLICK HERE** - features packages covering both the major and more remote Tahitian islands such as Tikehau and Nuku Hiva.

All packages include return air with Air Tahiti Nui and a range of bonus inclusions.

Top savings can be enjoyed on a seven-night package featuring InterContinental Bora Bora Resort



Top End rejigs platform

THE Northern Territory has consolidated its major tourism events calendar into a one-week extravaganza in Nov, a move it said would add greater flexibility for all stakeholders.

Timed to coincide with the Brolga Awards, the inaugural Destination NT platform will take place in Darwin from 04-08 Nov, and see a national conference, a new public-facing session on tourism's role in NT life, and a specialist Aboriginal tourism forum incorporated into a single jam-packed agenda.

"This government isn't afraid



of change," NT Tourism Minister Marie-Clare Boothby declared.

"If the majority of the industry wants something done differently, we listen, and we pivot - that's what Destination NT is all about; practical solutions leading to stronger outcomes," she added.

Boothby also confirmed work is underway to integrate Tourism NT and the territory's Major Events teams in a bid to reduce duplication and sharpen efforts.

The 2025-26 NT budget committed \$88.4 million to tourism and events, including an increase to baseline funding of \$8 million per year for the first time in many years.

The Top End struggled to inspire tourist growth last year, piling on modest numbers with a reduced average spend per person. **AB**

Scoot adds three

SINGAPORE Airlines' budget carrier Scoot will add three ports to its network, with Da Nang and Nha Trang in Vietnam, and Kota Bharu in Malaysia to come online later this year.

Three times weekly flights to Da Nang will begin on 20 Oct using A320 aircraft, before shifting to daily flights by Dec 2025.

Twice weekly flights to Nha Trang will begin on 21 Nov using E190-E2 planes, moving to five times weekly by Jan 2026.

Meanwhile, Scoot will operate twice-weekly flights to Kota Bharu from 26 Oct on E190-E2s.

To mark the trio of new routes, Scoot has launched a sale this week, with one-way economy fares from Sydney to Da Nang, with a stopover in Singapore, starting from \$285 from Sydney.

Confused on Cannes

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) global has expressed its confusion over a French Government decision to mitigate cruise ship visitation in the tourist city of Cannes on the French Riviera (**TD** 01 Jul).

"[CLIA] is perplexed by the decision to place undue limits on cruise, a sector of travel and tourism that contributes significantly to the economic and social vitality of port cities," the industry body stated.

CLIA also said the timing of the ban on cruise ships of over 1,000 passengers was unusual, given the prohibition starts from Jan 2026 and cruise lines have to plan years in advance.

Adding to the mixed signals is the fact CLIA signed the Sustainable Cruising Charter for the Mediterranean with the French Minister of Transport and cruise lines a few weeks ago, which committed the sector to a set of environmental objectives.

Two New Tours to the Balkans

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Window Seat

RIDERS on the “tallest, longest, and fastest tilt coaster” were stuck upside down for 10 excruciating mins when it malfunctioned.

A power outage brought the Siren’s Curse coaster in Ohio to a screeching halt mid-ride (**pictured**), with some riders suspended as high as 50 metres off the ground.

The power reportedly went out when a nearby motorist rammed into a utility pole.

A spokesperson for the amusement park, Cedar Point, told the local *Akron Beacon Journal* all guests eventually exited the ride safely.

“The coaster’s safety system performed as designed, the ride was restarted, and guests continued their ride,” the spokesperson said.

Worst of all, the incident happened during the coaster’s grand opening - what is it they say about never being the first to test out something new?



TC gets AI on the road

TRAVELLERS Choice is encouraging agents to embrace AI this month during a roadshow around the country, which kicks off in tomorrow in Sydney.

During the annual member meetings, Managing Director Christian Hunter and Chair Trent Bartlett (**pictured**) will provide in-depth updates on the group’s business plan, the current trading environment, and emerging risks and opportunities.

“When it comes to AI, we certainly see an opportunity for our members to gain a competitive advantage,” said Hunter, who joined the Travellers



Choice Board in an intensive AI boot camp in Feb.

“AI will introduce even more uncertainty into the online booking process, and consumers will be looking to travel agents to help them navigate this fast-evolving environment.”

Travellers Choice is aiming to equip members with the skills and confidence to start incorporating the technology into their work processes, with the goal of boosting their efficiency.

The annual roadshow will head to Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth over the next few weeks. *JM*

Park Hyatt Jo’burg

PARK Hyatt Johannesburg has opened in the Rosebank district of the South African city, offering a chic, residential-style experience within a refurbished 1930s colonial mansion.

The property offers 31 suites and guestrooms, featuring king-size beds, floor-to-ceiling windows, and marble bathrooms.

Guests can enjoy the Room32 restaurant, and relax at The Lounge with cocktails and cigars.



LE designs a new tour

LUXURY Escapes (LE) has announced a new Signature Series tour to Japan with *Grand Designs* presenter Anthony Burke (**pictured**), off the back of huge demand to the destination.

The 12-day tour will combine design, art, architecture and aburi (flame-seared delicacies) to showcase Japan’s cultural highlights and aesthetic mastery.

The itinerary will visit Tokyo; Hakone; Kyoto; Osaka; and the renowned Naoshima and Teshima ‘Art Islands’, with Burke to guide travellers through some of the country’s greatest destinations.

“Japan is one of those rare places where every detail of the built environment has meaning,” Burke said - for more information on the tour, [CLICK HERE](#).



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What Makes Tahiti One of a Kind?

- No big crowds — mostly quiet beaches and peaceful villages
- Stunning natural features, like volcanic peaks and crystal lagoons
- Rich Polynesian history you can see, hear, and taste



HX shifts to spend

HONG Kong Airlines has modified its frequent flyer program to reward loyalty based on the price of tickets rather than the distance flown.

Under the revised structure effective from yesterday, points for the Fortune Wings Club will be earned based on the airfare paid as opposed to route travelled.

The carrier said the new model is more straightforward and aims to make the program more flexible, with reward tickets now more accessible under a revised redemption structure.

Members of higher tiers will continue to earn a percentage of bonus points based on their ranking within the program.



PER project appt

PERTH Airport has appointed Australian firm Woods Bagot to lead a global consortium of architecture and design companies to shape the face of its new international and domestic terminals, in a major milestone for the project.

The development will include new terminal facilities, aprons and taxiways, and will be one of the most complex construction projects undertaken in Perth.

Woods Bagot will draw on the global expertise and experience of more than 24 companies, collaborating with Nordic Office of Architecture, Architectus, WSP, and other firms to carry out the design phase for the project.

Perth Airport Chief Executive Officer Jason Waters said that the partnership with Woods Bagot will aim to set a new benchmark in airport design.

"The new terminal facilities will reflect a modern, vibrant and dynamic WA," he said.

Lap it up with AW in Lapland



ADVENTURE World has unveiled a new 'Nordic Family Adventure' in Finnish Lapland.

The six-day itinerary includes husky safaris and encounters with Santa Claus, and is priced from \$3,999 per person.

Guests will stay at the enchanting Northern Lights Village Pyha, where the aurora borealis can often be witnessed directly from the resort.

The itinerary departs daily between late Nov and late Apr, and can be customised to suit individual family needs.

There is limited availability remaining for Dec 2025, with more departures available in Jan 2026 and Dec 2027.

"Finland's pristine nature, with its untouched forests, crystal-clear lakes and pure arctic air, offers a serene escape into true

wilderness," Nordic Product Manager Lubica Sibikova said.

"From baking gingerbread with Santa's elves to dashing through the snow on a husky sled ride, every moment of the Nordic Family Adventure is designed to ignite wonder.

"This itinerary brings fairytales to life." *MS*

Club Med incentive

CLUB Med has launched an interactive digital experience for travel advisors to mark the launch of its Club Med Beach & Safari in South Africa.

The 'Journey to Paradise' experience offers advisors the chance to win a grand prize of a seven-night stay for a family of four at the brand-new African Club Med location.

Journey to Paradise consists of eight quizzes to complete to go into the running to win the prize, which will also include South African Airways flights to reach the destination.

Sales for Club Med Beach & Safari are set to open on 14 Oct - learn more on the dedicated Facebook group [HERE](#).



FOR SALE: two well-established Australian travel publications.

Signature Media is exploring the sale of two of its popular consumer travel titles in order to re-focus on our core publications. This offers a unique opportunity to acquire and further develop these highly respected publications, and we'd love to find them an excellent home.

Vacations & Travel

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Ski & Snowboard

Operating for over 19 years: originally launched as Ski & Snowboard with Kids, expanded in 2025 to serve the wider snow travel market. Editorial focus: Global ski destinations, gear reviews and expert advice.



For confidential discussions and further information, please contact Tom Green.
tom.green@vitapointpartners.com

Adamaz new chief

ADAMAZ Travel has expanded its global vision, with the appointment of Greg McCarthy as co-Chief Executive Officer, alongside founder and fellow co-CEO Ben Ross.

McCarthy, formerly Chief Executive Officer of CTM, brings a wealth of experience and leadership to the company.

Adamaz was founded to help small-to-medium sized travel agencies with options and succession plans via acquisition.

CORPORATE UPDATE

Incentive trips cut

TRAVEL managers are anticipating further rising costs in 2025, with 71% expecting higher expenses compared to 2024,

CT mobilises on ME

CT PARTNERS Chief Executive Matt Masson said no amount of AI can match the human expertise of its network as it deals with ongoing volatility with flights through the Middle East.

Masson added its network of 33 independent corporate specialists have been “going above and beyond” for clients impacted by the crisis in the region.

“When borders close or airspace is restricted, they don’t just re-issue tickets - they calm nerves, find safe alternatives and stay in touch until every traveller is home,” Masson said.

MEANWHILE, CT Partners has urged Australia’s business community to lean on professional travel support if they are serious about driving continuity and controlling spend and duty-of-care obligations.

With end-of-financial-year reviews now underway, the company said global unrest, operational volatility and risk management make the services of a travel expert indispensable.

“Business leaders must ask: if something goes wrong mid-journey, who is responsible, and how quickly can we respond?,” Masson said.

according to Cvent’s 2025 *Global Travel Managers Report*.

Based on a survey of more than 1,600 corporate travel decision-makers across Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe and the Middle East, the report found that 62% will increase their travel budgets by up to 40%, while only 8% expect their budgets to shrink.

In order to curb costs though, around three in 10 companies are planning to reduce incentive trips and company retreats.

For Australia in particular, company retreats look to be on the chopping block, with 38% of respondents - the highest percentage of any region - indicating they will implement substantial reductions in that area.

Other cost-cutting methods globally include timing business travel with meetings and events (26%), negotiating lower hotel room rates (25%), reducing the number of people travelling (23%) and sourcing hotels across different brand scales (23%).

The new Cvent report also found that Australia prioritises business travel for internal meetings and office visits (48%) more than anywhere else.

The region’s focus on education and training (39%) also ranks higher than in most markets.

Australian travel managers are leading the pack globally when it comes to sustainability, with 33% identifying it as a long-term priority when booking travel. *JM*

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FCTG’s triple triumph



FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has been named the winner of Plug and Play’s Corporate Innovation Award for the third time.

The travel giant has been a partner of Plug and Play, an accelerator program for early-stage startups and emerging growth companies, since 2020.

FCTG’s commitment to digital transformation has seen it bestowed with the award twice before, in 2020 and 2022.

This year’s accolade was presented during Plug and Play’s three-day Silicon Valley Summit, which was held recently at its global headquarters in California.

John Morhous, FCTG - Corporate Brands CEO, said the business was “incredibly proud” to receive the honour.

“Our flagship business travel divisions of FCM Travel and Corporate Traveller are committed to staying at the forefront of innovation, and this recognition reflects our dedication to driving meaningful

transformation across the corporate travel space.”

“Flight Centre Travel Group continues to set a high bar for what corporate innovation can look like in practice,” said Amir Amidi, Managing Partner at Plug and Play. *JM*

Hyatt in Mallorca

DESTINATION by Hyatt has debuted in Mallorca with the opening of Sarena de Muro Resort Mallorca, located on the beaches of the Balearic Islands.

The new five-star property features 184 rooms and suites, with sweeping sea views and direct access to the beach.

Guests can also enjoy four restaurants and bars; a spa and fitness centre; El Nino kids club; and outdoor pools.




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Up to \$1,000 per person can now be saved across a range of departures in 2025 with **Wendy Wu Tours'** new 'Getaway Sale'. The promotion runs until 29 Aug, and deals can be locked in with a \$300 deposit. For the full list of eligible tours and departures, **CLICK HERE**.

Holland America Line's latest 'Have It All' promotion is now underway, inviting travellers to save up to 60% on premium inclusions such as onboard credit, specialty dining, gratuities, beverage packages, wi-fi and more. It is valid on 2026 and 2027 departures - **CLICK HERE** for info.

There are only a few days left to take advantage of **APT's** latest 'Discover The World' sale, which ends on 09 Jul. Thousands can be saved across numerous APT itineraries departing in 2026, including up to \$12,000 per couple on its 15-day 'Mediterranean Wonders' tour and up to \$6,000 per couple on Antarctica voyages. **CLICK HERE** to learn more.

Those seeking a getaway to the Solomon Islands can get there cheaper with **Solomon Airlines** via its 'Independence Sale', which has special fares from \$752 return available to book until 13 Jul for travel from 01 Aug to 15 Dec 2025. Agents can book seats in the GDS using X class.


Embrace Fiji's Coral Coast with a combination stay at **Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort** and **Castaway Island Fiji** and receive FJ\$800 in resort credit to use on meal plans or beverage packages. Stay a minimum of three nights at each property, and book using the code word 'FIJICOMBO'. The package is available now - **CLICK HERE** to book.

Holiday Inn Express and Suites Queenstown has launched a special 'Stay with Pride' deal to celebrate the city's Winter Pride festival next month. Available until 31 Aug, guests can enjoy 15% off a minimum two-night stay and will receive a welcome cocktail, Express daily breakfast and late check-out at noon. Valid for stays from 11-31 Aug. **CLICK HERE**.

If swimming with whales has been on a client's bucket list, **Majestic Whale Encounters** is offering \$1,000 off its 'Off the Grid Whale Swimming Tour' in Tonga. The adventure takes travellers to the remote island of Uoleva for an eight-night retreat mixing wellness with watersports. The offer is on offer until 01 Aug - **CLICK HERE** for more.

Viking is offering a \$4,800 saving per couple on its eight-day 'Rhine Getaway' itinerary between Basel and Amsterdam. Save the full amount by pre-purchasing one or more pre- or post-cruise extensions before 01 Sep. Options include a three-night Lake Como adventure or two nights in Amsterdam. **CLICK HERE** for more information.




The year might be half done but it is not too late to score some great deals on a 2025 European adventure, especially with **Uniworld**. The luxury river cruise brand is offering savings of up to 40% on selected departures, with an extra sweetener being a chance to win 150,000 KrisFlyer miles with Singapore Airlines. **CLICK HERE** to find out more.



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Royal beach ready to book



HOLIDAYMAKERS can book the ultimate beach day in the Bahamas, with all-inclusive passes now available for Royal Caribbean's Royal Beach Club Paradise Island (**TD** 18 Dec 2024).

As of this week, travellers who are booked on sailings visiting Nassau beginning late Dec 2025 - when the new destination is slated to open - can purchase their all-inclusive day passes on Royal Caribbean's website.

The ticket will unlock access to the island's experiences and beach day amenities.

Guests aged over 21 can opt for an unlimited open bar and dining option, starting from US\$170,

while a non-alcoholic drinks and dining package option is also available from US\$130.

Children between the ages of four and 12 will be \$110 a ticket, while kids aged three and under get in for free.

Guests can also bundle their day pass with a beverage package on board or pair it with exclusive destination experiences at Royal's Perfect Day at CocoCay. **JM**

QR and KQ tie-up

QATAR Airways and Kenya Airways have signed a deal of intent this week to enter into a strategic partnership, including a codeshare agreement and increased flights.

QR will introduce a third daily frequency between Doha and Nairobi as part of a codeshare with KQ, with flights available for booking in the coming days.

Meanwhile, flights between Mombasa and Doha will launch in the coming months, operated by KQ and marketed by QR.

The two airlines will also look to collaborate in other areas such as airport and ground services, product development, loyalty programs, and more.

Museum revs up

CAR enthusiasts will be revved up about the expansion of the Trafalgar Holden Museum in Gippsland, Vic.

New features include the Neil Joiner Holden Heritage Centre, a mezzanine floor gallery and 24 display booths.

Seventy-five Holdens from 1948 onwards are featured, as well as other items from the brand's history, including saddles, engines, a tram, and a boat.



HELLOWORLD TRAVEL CELEBRATES NTIA NOMINATIONS!

We are thrilled with the recognition and proud of all our NTIA nominations this year.

Helloworld Travel - Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group

Magellan Travel - Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network

Helloworld Business Travel - Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network

Express Travel Group - Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network

VIVA Holidays - Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service

Kim Knight - Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Wholesaler

Jackie Gordon - Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Wholesaler

VIVA Holidays - Most Popular Reservations Team

Cruiseco - Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service

Creative Cruising - Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service

David Ninham - Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Cruise

Greg Wilson - Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Cruise

Cruiseco - Most Popular Reservations Team

Creative Cruising - Most Popular Reservations Team

Helloworld Travel - Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign

Helloworld Travel Academy - Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Program

This is a terrific demonstration of support from the industry and we share our congratulations with all nominees from across the Helloworld networks, as well as all representatives across the entire industry.



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05 July - Danube In Depth - Episode 1

12 July - Danube In Depth - Episode 2

19 July - Danube In Depth - Episode 3

Hosted by Catriona Rowntree



Watch all Getaway
episodes on YouTube.