

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of travel industry news, including a product profile from **City of Gold Coast**, plus full pages from:

- **Regent Seven Seas**
- **Consolidated Travel**

Win big with Etihad

BE A top seller of Etihad Airways flights through Consolidated Travel and get a chance to win a grand prize of up to \$1,000.

A travel voucher of up to \$1,000 will go to the winner, while second and third place will score \$500 and \$200 respectively - see **page eight** for further details.

Azamara unveils 70 options

AZAMARA Cruises has announced its new 2027 program, which includes almost 70 itineraries.

Guests are invited to embark on six Grand Voyages, ranging from 35 to 41 nights, which visit multiple countries and continents, offering ample time to explore each destination.

Itineraries feature Miami to Venice, Copenhagen to New York City, Kobe to Vancouver, and Athens to Lisbon.

Each Grand Voyage includes airfares, shore excursion credits, wi-fi for two devices, weekly laundry service, and an upgraded



beverage package.

Highlights of the season will see guests offered access to world-famous events in Europe, such as the Monaco Grand Prix and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Nearly half of the program's cruises feature late nights or overnights, allowing travellers to immerse themselves in authentic local culture after dark.

This includes Azamara's exclusive AzAmazing Evenings concept, which incorporate a guided night tour, or savouring a destination celebration dinner under the stars.

Azamara will also return to a number of its beloved ports in 2027, including Dartmouth and Fowey, for the first time since 2009 and 2018 respectively.

The two ports are accessible only to the kind of smaller ships operated by Azamara. **MS**

Get nature funding

ELIGIBLE travel businesses are being encouraged to apply for funding secured under the City of Gold Coast's Nature-based Tourism Program.

Funding will be allocated for a wide array of reasons - see **p9**.

It's Regent's treat

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises is offering up to 50% off select 2025-2026 voyages.

Cruises in northern Europe, the Mediterranean, Asia, Africa & Arabia, Alaska, the Pacific, the Caribbean, and South America are all included - see **page 7**.



Island dreams for your clients, BIG PRIZES for you!

Every island hotel booking you make between 05-25 May gets you an entry into our prize draw with the following up for grabs each week:

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East Africa EXPLORER

LTC bolsters team

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group's The Luxury Travel Collection has added Jarred Reinke as Product Communications Executive.

Reinke brings years of luxury experience to the role and was most recently in the marketing team at Sofitel Brisbane Central.

Beyond Borders expands

THE Australian Travel Industry Association's (ATIA) Beyond Borders Travel Summit will be expanded in only its second year, with the concept to be taken on the road to South Australia and Western Australia in Jul.

Designed to bring important travel insights and industry discussion to more parts of the country, an event at Crowne Plaza Adelaide will be held on 28 Jul, while Novotel Perth Langley will host a similar gathering on 30 Jul.

The agenda of the interstate Beyond Borders sessions will include key initiatives and post-election advocacy conducted by ATIA; a national snapshot of travel; a panel covering topics such as airline competition, border force, and airport operations; as well as a brief segment recognising local NTIA winners and finalists.

"We've seen just how powerful these conversations can be, and now we're bringing that energy

directly to members and industry leaders in South Australia and Western Australia," ATIA Director of Membership and Industry Affairs Richard Taylor said.

"This is all about creating more opportunities for connection, insight, national engagement, and with the NTIAs in Brisbane this year following stops in Melbourne and Sydney, Beyond Borders On The Road continues that nationwide momentum."

View more details [HERE](#). **AB**

Shaping the future

MARKETING leads, CMOs, and business owners across the tourism, travel and cruise sectors are being called upon to help guide industry operators through the challenges of 2026.

Take part in the short survey and shape future strategy [HERE](#).

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HX links with CLIA

HX EXPEDITIONS has joined Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) as a Regional Expedition/Ocean Cruise Line member in Australasia.

"Expedition cruising is an area of remarkable innovation right now - especially in areas like sustainability - so we're delighted to have HX join," CLIA Australasia Managing Director Joel Katz said.

Qantas and Travelport

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Fiji hits the magic million

THE Fiji Tourism Exchange kicked off with a bang last night at the Sheraton Fiji Golf and Beach Resort in Port Denarau, complete with local dancers and drummers to celebrate its opening.

The welcome event was attended by Fiji Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation, Viliame Gavoka, Tourism Fiji Chief Executive Officer Brent Hill (pictured), and Fiji Airways CEO Andre Viljoen.

Hill spoke of Fiji's "spectacular" past 12 months for tourism, marking its most successful in recorded history, as it ended 2024 with its millionth visitor, taking into account the 982,938 visitors who arrived by air and the 81,854 cruise passengers.

"It's a really significant milestone, and it's not just a number," he said, adding "it represents jobs created, businesses strengthened, communities supported and global hearts won over by the Fijian experience."

While Hill made mention of "geopolitical impacts" that



dominate the headlines, he pointed to Fiji's strong past 12 months and the 16 projects and 2,600 rooms under construction.

"Fiji is hot right now - & I don't just mean the temperature.

"It is this newness and this investment that will help meet the challenge of growing year-on-year, which we need to do," he said, noting 35-45% of tourists are repeat visitors.

One of many key focuses for Fiji this year is around value offered to tourists, especially as some similar markets proved unpredictable last month.

"But we also believe that value is in what you can do in Fiji that you can't do anywhere else.

"You can have beaches to yourself, reefs to yourself, and sandbars to yourself," Hill said.

FTE will continue today and tomorrow at the Sheraton, featuring an exhibition hall, networking opportunities and an agenda focused on connecting tourism operators and international buyers with Fijian experiences and hotels. JHM

Mel transport shift

MELBOURNE Airport will rejig its taxi and Uber ranks this month to improve accessibility.

From tomorrow, the T1 taxi rank will shift to the location adjacent to T1 Qantas domestic arrivals, the space previously occupied by Qantas Valet.

Later this month, a new Uber pick-up zone will go live, as will a new taxi rank outside T2 overseas arrivals to complement the existing Uber zone at the hub.

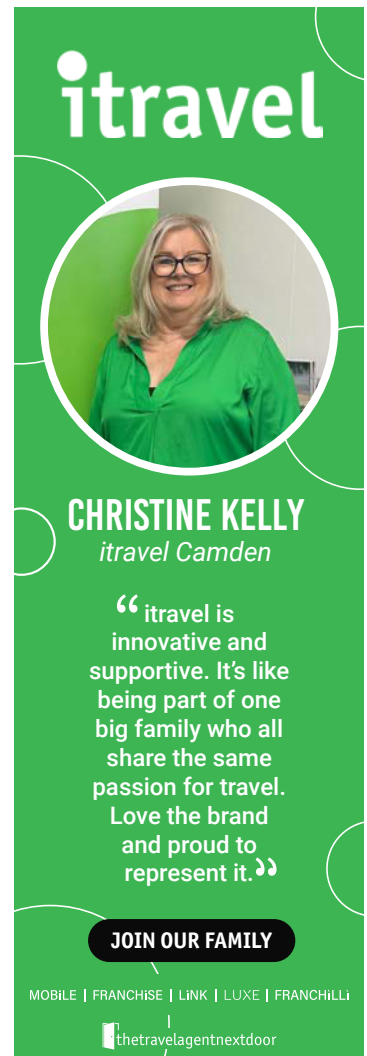
Virtuoso cruise head

VIRTUOSO'S five-month hunt to find a new leader to head up global cruise strategy is over, with former MSC Cruises sales exec Lori Sheller taking the role.

As VP of Global Cruise for the luxury network, Sheller will report into newly appointed VP of Global Partnerships Una O'Leary, and look to grow the luxury cruise segment through deepened industry relationships.

Sheller fills the position vacated by Melissa Araya, who exited the business in late 2024 to do some consulting before taking a role as VP of Sales at Aman at Sea.

The luxury space has seen a number of new players enter cruising in recent years, most notably premium hotel brands such as Ritz Carlton Yacht Collection and Four Seasons.



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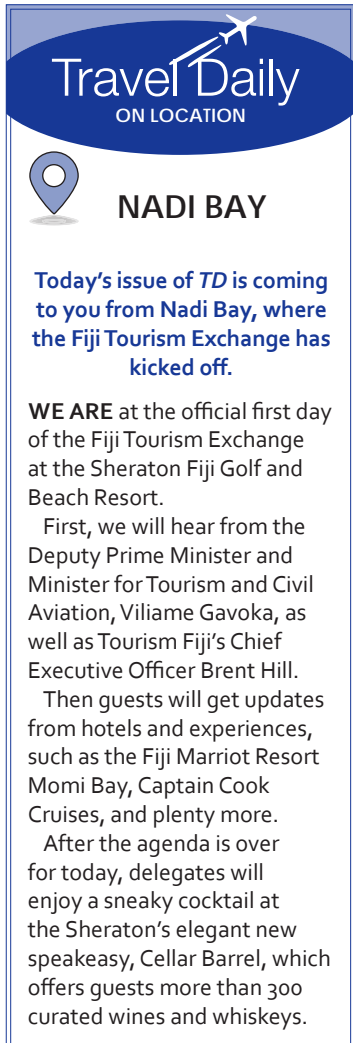
CHRISTINE KELLY
itravel Camden

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Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

NADI BAY

Today's issue of TD is coming to you from Nadi Bay, where the Fiji Tourism Exchange has kicked off.

WE ARE at the official first day of the Fiji Tourism Exchange at the Sheraton Fiji Golf and Beach Resort.

First, we will hear from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation, Viliame Gavoka, as well as Tourism Fiji's Chief Executive Officer Brent Hill.

Then guests will get updates from hotels and experiences, such as the Fiji Marriot Resort Momi Bay, Captain Cook Cruises, and plenty more.

After the agenda is over for today, delegates will enjoy a sneaky cocktail at the Sheraton's elegant new speakeasy, Cellar Barrel, which offers guests more than 300 curated wines and whiskeys.



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Treasures shine for Crystal

CRYSTAL has unveiled its 'Treasures of the Tides: A 2028 Global Odyssey' world cruise, billed as the cruise line's most expansive to date.

The global cruise journey will travel to more than 80 destinations across 40 countries aboard *Crystal Symphony*.

Bookings for the 150-night cruise, the ship's first since 2018, open to the public on 29 May.

The voyage departs round-trip from Fort Lauderdale on 11



Jan 2028, cruising through to 10 Jun 2028, with an option to disembark in Barcelona on 27 May 2028.

Guests will sail through the Caribbean, South America, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, and the Mediterranean.

Among the many highlights are first-time calls in Australia, including Portland, Kangaroo Island, Albany, and Geraldton, as part of an expansive sojourn Down Under.

Symphony will also make inaugural visits to Huahine, Nha Trang, and Mangalore.

Select shore excursions will be curated in partnership with Crystal's sister brand Abercrombie & Kent. MS

New Cal warning

PROTESTS may increase in the days leading up to the anniversary of the start of civil unrest in New Caledonia on 13 May last year, with DFAT advising travellers to avoid demonstrations and public gatherings.

Large crowds may turn violent at short notice, the latest advisory added.

Yarram on the map

THE Victorian Government will spend nearly \$50,000 to develop a tourism strategy for the town of Yarram, located in the state's south-eastern corner.

The investment will be made through the Forestry Transition Program's Community Development Fund, and follows the closure of the local native timber harvesting industry.

Focal points for the strategy will include investigating activities that currently attract visitors to the area and whether it can sustain a larger tourism economy.

A locally developed 'Future of Yarram' blue print has identified greater outdoor recreation, creative arts and eco-tourism experiences as potential opportunities to help boost the local visitor economy.

Yarram is one of 11 towns in Victoria receiving support to develop and transition to new economic strategies on the back of older industries closing down.



Window Seat

AUSTRALIAN golfing royalty Greg Norman was recently involved in a mid-air scare when his private jet was shaken by a loud "pop".

The flight departed Los Angeles International Airport bound for Palm Beach when the frightening incident occurred, with Norman telling *Golf Digest* that after the loud bang, the windscreen on the plane shattered, forcing the pilots to turn back and make an emergency landing at LAX.

While a near-miss like this might deter most people from flying for life, Norman said it was simply par for the course.

"It's certainly not my first rodeo with events like this," he said, adding he had endured lightning strikes, cabin fires, and a broken ceiling during his years of private flying.



Alfred grounds Feb figures

NEW figures released by BITRE showed domestic aviation had a sluggish Feb, with the month down across most of the major performance indicators.

The 4.67 million passengers carried on Australian domestic commercial aviation - including charter operations - in Feb was a 5.2% decrease on the same month last year.

The result was also marginally shy of the same period in the pre-pandemic era (-0.6%).

Aviation figures were impacted by 4.8% fewer flights in the air for regular public transport services, exacerbated by cancellations forced by the threat of Tropical Cyclone Alfred at the end of Feb and into early Mar.



The average revenue generated by carriers also fell away in Feb, with the key revenue passenger kilometres metric down by over 4% to 5.07 billion when contrasted with Feb 2024.

Capacity, measured on the basis of available seat kilometres, dropped to 6.3 billion from 6.56 billion last year, while load factor managed to hold steady, only lowering by 0.1% year-on-year.

The roughly 4.7 million passengers carried in the air across the country was also a decrease on the 5.1 million recorded in the typically busier holiday month of Jan, the same report showed.

While the month-on-month comparison for Feb may have looked like grim reading, the BITRE report noted that for the 12 months to Feb 2025, passengers carried was up by 2.1% on the previous yearly period. **AB**

NCLH gets some air

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) has welcomed Linda Jojo as its ninth director.

Jojo moves to the cruise line from her former role as Executive Vice President and Chief Customer Officer at United Airlines, bringing 30 years of leadership experience to her new role.

Her new duties will see Jojo serve on the NCLH Technology, Environmental, Safety and Security Committee.

NCLH President and CEO Harry Sommer said Jojo's "extensive leadership experience will be invaluable as we continue to advance our digital innovation and growth strategies."

The appointment to NCLH's board follows a push by its Norwegian Cruise Line brand to pursue more fly-cruise bookings.



Loyalty to Riyadh

REAL-TIME engagement and dynamic earn and redemption opportunities will form the backbone of a loyalty program under development from new Saudi national carrier Riyadh Air. The burgeoning airline, which is working to start operations by the end of this year, has signed an agreement with Loyalty Juggernaut to host and power its loyalty program.

The scheme will feature AI personalisation and will sit on Loyalty Juggernaut's cloud-based Gravity program which optimises a mobile-first customer interface.

Still untitled at present, the program will launch prior to Riyadh Air's first flights taking off to help spearhead its customer engagement and growth strategy.



Discover our River Cruise Special Report

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Off-season hot for Globus



OFF-SEASON travel is a hit, according to a group of Helloworld and Helloworld-affiliated travel advisors from across Australia, who recently returned from a trip to Türkiye with tour operator Globus.

The advisors, who were winners of a 2024 Globus incentive, recently spent eight days taking in the sights and delights of the Globus 'Turkish Escape' tour.

It formed part of Globus' off-season Escapes program, which showcases key sights at special shoulder season prices.

Globus Business Development Manager VIC/South East, Josh Galea, said, "It was...great to explore the truly amazing UNESCO World Heritage Centre Hierapolis-Pamukkale...without the intense summer heat".

The group included 11 top-performing Helloworld advisors and flew Turkish Airlines. **DF**

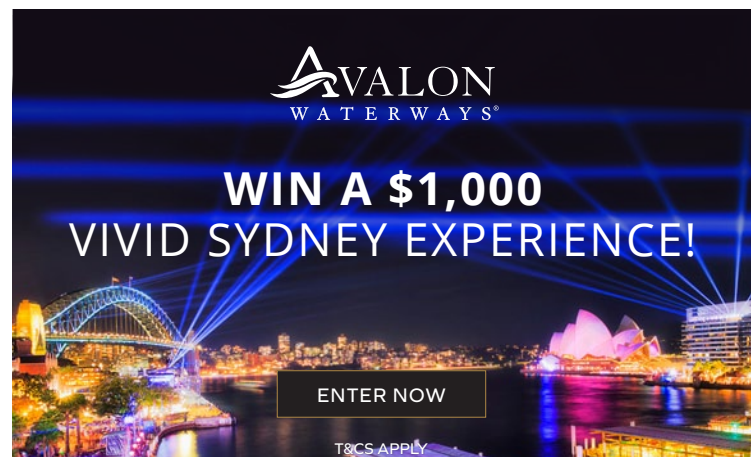
WestJet on a winner

CANADIAN carrier WestJet has sold a 25% stake to Korean Air and Delta Air Lines.

The minority equity interest from Onex Partners is valued at US\$550m - Delta will be investing US\$330m to acquire a 15% stake, and Korean will invest US\$220m for a 10% stake.

Delta has the right and intent to sell and transfer a 2.3% stake in WestJet to its joint venture partner Air France-KLM, also an existing WestJet partner, in exchange for US\$50 million.

"These investments, and the enhanced partnerships they bring, are an endorsement of our people and WestJet's differentiated performance through an extraordinary period for aviation in recent years," WestJet CEO Alexis von Hoensbroech said.



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Scenic Eclipse - Worldwide Discoveries 2027

Travellers can embark on an extraordinary journey across all seven continents in Scenic Eclipse's new guide to 2027. Itineraries for 2027 include the 12-day 'Greek Isles, Turkey and the Pyramids', which travels from Athens to Valletta. Adventures are also available in Greenland and the Canadian Arctic, Patagonia and Chile, Sicily and the French Riviera and the Caribbean, with the guide also detailing the guest experience on board.



Contours Travel - Latin America and Antarctica

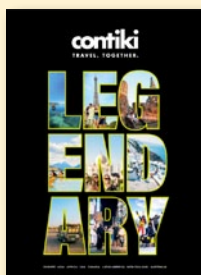
Across nearly 100 pages, South American specialist Contours Travel details itineraries covering almost the entire continent. Each one is highly detailed, with tours also offering a list of optional add-ons to enhance the experience. Handy maps also outline the route, with major landmarks displayed as well. There is also a section detailing exciting rail trips in South America, including departure dates and highlights visited.



MW Tours - China and Southeast Asia 2025/26

Travellers can build their own custom itinerary in Southeast Asia and China from MW Tours, whether that includes hotels, semi-independent touring or fully escorted small group itineraries, which features all international and domestic airfares. The brochure details the physical fitness levels required for each tour and the pace level undertaken. Travellers can also learn about the range of authentic experiences enjoyed, cuisine

to be served, destination guides and hints to make the trip more enjoyable.



Contiki - Europe and Worldwide for 18-35

There's nothing like a Contiki trip and more than 200 itineraries across six continents are detailed in the tour operator's newest guide. The colourful and easy-to-read brochure drops plenty of ideas and inspiration, inviting young travellers to explore the world's national parks, beaches and cities. There are numerous travel styles including age-specific trips, and a new range of 'Reunion' trips for travellers who may be outside the Contiki age window but wish to do it all again or see new shores with old friends.



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Travel Daily

Only the Best of the Best



FOURTEEN years ago, seven luxury suppliers embarked on a collaborative journey as a select group of like-minded partners in the luxury industry, united by a passion for showcasing the exceptional offerings in travel.

Originally focused exclusively on hotels, the Best of the Best collaboration has since expanded to include prestigious cruise lines and airlines, enriching the collective experience.

Taj Hotels, Inspired Luxury, COMO Hotels and Resorts, Seabourn, Uga Escapes and Uniworld, together with Minor Hotels, had the pleasure of hosting a Best of the Best (BOTB) dinner for 70 partners at the Ace Hotel in Sydney last week. AB

Pictured at the dinner from left: Jen Pagett, Uniworld; Thushara Liyanarachchi, Taj Hotels; Jonica Paramor, COMO Hotels and Resorts; Lynne Ireland, Inspired Luxury; Jennifer Compton, Seabourn; Brenda Nash, Uga Escapes; and Varun Mahajan, Minor Hotels.

IAG aircraft order

BRITISH Airways' parent firm IAG has ordered 32 Boeing 787-10 Dreamliners and 21 Airbus A330-900neo aircraft as it begins to modernise its long-haul fleet.

The 53-aircraft order comes after IAG reported a "better than expected" Q1 profit and follows a further 18 planes ordered from the two manufacturers in Mar.

Daintree eco-centre

CONSTRUCTION has begun on a new \$3.76 million cultural and eco-tourism centre in the Daintree National Park.

Jointly funded by the state and federal governments, the new centre will celebrate First Nations culture through art, dance, ceremonies and displays and will allow Eastern Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owners to share their heritage and stories with visitors.

The centre is being developed in partnership with the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and is on track to be completed by the end of this year.

Employment and business opportunities will be also be made possible for First Nations locals once the centre is open.

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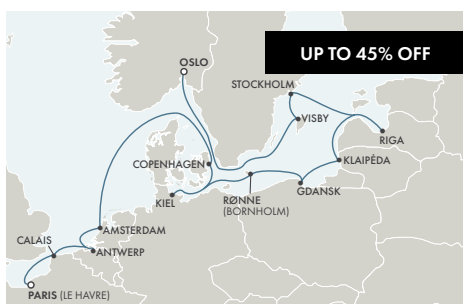
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New Gold Coast nature-based tourism grants opportunity

Gold Coast's nature-based tourism sector is set to receive a boost thanks to an exciting new grants program, now open for a limited time.

Eligible businesses are being encouraged to apply for funding via the **City of Gold Coast's Nature-Based Tourism Program**, which will offer support for the expansion of existing nature-based experiences on the Gold Coast, as well as the development of innovative new services and products.

Long renowned for its golden beaches, world-class theme parks and buzzing nightlife, the Gold Coast's unique biodiversity and lush hinterland are ready to take centre stage in its tourism offerings, based on growing consumer demand.

Nature-based tourism refers to any experience where nature is the main

attraction - visiting natural areas to enjoy their beauty, learning about wildlife and local cultures, and engaging in outdoor activities - with a strong focus on sustainability and conservation.

Nature-based tourism opportunities on the Gold Coast could include (but are not limited to):

- adventure and recreation activities like kayaking and eco-friendly outdoor adventures
- educational experiences like guided nature walks and cultural tours, including First Nations-led experiences
- sustainable-accommodation like eco-lodges near high-value natural areas
- local dining experiences featuring native or farm-to-plate ingredients

A panel including local tourism industry leaders, First Nations representatives and

environmental experts will consider the applications.

Applications are now open for a limited time.

[Find out more here.](#)

APPLICATIONS OPEN

Grants and funding applications for the Gold Coast Nature Based Tourism Program are now open for a limited time.

Apply now