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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* features a cover wrap from **Tourism New Zealand**, 11 pages of news, including a photo page from **Brisbane Airport**, a special feature from **Imagine Holidays** and our **Sustainability** page, plus a product profile from **Inspiring Vacations** and full pages from:

- Silversea
- 24/7 Solutions

## Bhutan gets cryptic

**BHUTAN** has announced the launch of a national-level crypto payment system for tourism.

In partnership with Binance Pay, visitors to the country can pay for trips to the Asian country using crypto end-to-end, from flights tickets to local purchases.

Tourism Bhutan has hailed the move as an industry-first.



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## Webjet equity changes

**HELLOWORLD** Travel Group has acquired a more than 5% stake in Webjet Group Limited, through its subsidiary Retail Travel Investments.

In a recent substantial shareholder notice, Helloworld was revealed to now hold close to 19.7 million shares in the online travel business, amounting to 5.015% of Webjet Group.

Eighteen times over the past month, Helloworld has collectively purchased 19,683,849 shares in Webjet at around \$0.80c each.

The equity grab has coincided with BGH Capital, Ariadne Australia Limited, and Gary Hilton Weiss combining efforts to become substantial holders in the company as well, with the bloc now boasting a combined 10.76% stake through their acquisition of 42,235,904 shares.

It is speculated that the acquisition of shares may form part of a future bid to buy Webjet, which has endured some financial challenges since the consumer-facing business demerged from WebBeds.



“The parties will consult with one another as to how they will exercise the voting rights of their shares on each resolution at any meeting of the members of Webjet Group,” the ASX update from the combined bloc stated.

The update also noted that for at least six months, the parties would not be allowed to pursue any joint bids for Webjet with a third party.

BGH and its subsidiary Oceania however were also not precluded from buying more Webjet shares.

Under the guidance of Webjet Chief Executive Katrina Barry, the company recently embarked on a major brand reinvigoration designed to significantly grow the company's share in the business travel market and the package holiday sector. *AB/ML*

## Skytrans on Sabre

**AUSSIE** regional airline Skytrans has signed a deal with Sabre making its fares and offers accessible to agents through the tech's global travel marketplace.

The deal will assist Skytrans in growing its B2B presence among advisors, especially to Sabre-connected travel agencies and corporate travel buyers.

Cairns-based Skytrans has timed the agreement as it looks to ramp up growth plans, most recently launching Sydney to Lord Howe flights as part of an agreement with Qantas.

## Explore Aotearoa

**TRAVEL** advisors can start curating their dream self-famil New Zealand trip - discover how by checking out the **cover page**.

### 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:

- 1x July carry-on suitcase
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## Intermediaries facing greater exposure

TRAVEL agencies, consolidators and travel management companies remain at risk of financial loss from airline failures due to persisting with outdated payment models with no recourse, a new report suggests.

The new *Protecting Travel Intermediaries in an Era of Disruption* report, commissioned by virtual payment company WEX, purports that traditional methods of payment, such as bank transfers, leave intermediaries without financial recourse in the event of an airline failure.

Citing 14 recent airline failures, the report highlights how modern remittance methods such as virtual credit cards can enable



chargeback protection, with funds able to be recovered quickly.

"A fundamental risk remains today [with] air travel's prepaid nature creating supplier default exposure, and there are no industry-wide protections despite over 1,200 commercial passenger airline failures in the past 25 years," said WEX Head of Insights and Growth, Kristian Kish.

WEX's research correlates oil price spikes and depressed passenger demand on the back of major global events such as 9/11,

the GFC and the pandemic as a common link with airline failures.

Despite this, the report said there were fewer airline failures than expected between 2021-24, despite a consistently high oil price, which WEX said should have put the industry under stress.

However, it cites government bailouts and cash injections designed to keep them afloat during the pandemic, followed by airlines operating more efficiently, restructuring and lowering fuel costs through hedging.

The report says these government top-ups mean there is now an incentive for these airlines to remain in business, with protectionist measures a possibility, which may result in higher fares for travellers.

Some payment providers in Australia have already introduced new chargeback protections this year to combat agent concerns, such as risk exposure. *ML*

## Explora unveils 2027

EXPLORA Journeys has announced new itineraries for summer 2027, including journeys in the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, Canada, New England and, for the first time, Alaska.

Under the banner 'An Ocean of New', the collection will also visit maiden ports in the Mediterranean and welcome the launch of new ship, *EXPLORA IV*.

## Assistance 24/7

24/7 Solutions is here to help your clients get home safely in the event of unexpected circumstances and disasters.

See the full range of assistance on offer on [page 13](#).

## Swiss inspiration

INSPIRING Vacations is showcasing its iconic rail journeys through Switzerland, including a 12-day Grand Train Tour.

Find out more on the [last page](#).

## Spread Silversea love

AGENTS can quickly and easily post Silversea-branded content to their social media using Rallio - see [page 12](#) for details.



## Unlock European Trains with Sandy Battle

The Agent RailPortal makes booking Eurail passes and passholder fares easy!



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### What is a passholder fare?

High speed, International and Swiss Panoramic trains are compulsory to reserve. Point to point tickets on these types of trains always include the seat reservation fee in the total cost of the ticket. When travelling with a Eurail pass you still must confirm a seat reservation, this reservation fee is known as a passholder fare.

### Which passholder fares are available on the RailPortal?

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1. Log in to our [RailPortal](#).
2. Select the "Tickets" tab, on the home page, and complete the mandatory fields as you would for point to point ticket search.
3. Select "Already have a Pass" to tell the system to search for Passholder fares.
4. Browse the search results for availability and select the preferred departure time.
5. Complete the booking process and finalise to receive instant e-tickets.

*Note: The customer's Eurail pass number needs to be added during booking process to confirm the passholder fare.*

[Click here for a guided walkthrough.](#)

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## McKenna to lead

**THE** role responsible for managing NSW's major cruise ports has been filled by John McKenna, after the Port Authority of NSW promoted the executive to the position this week.

McKenna (**pictured**) was recruited to CEO from his previous tenure as Chief Commercial Officer and acting chief, formally replacing Philip Holliday, who exited the role late last year (**TD** 13 Dec 2024).

One of McKenna's responsibilities will be working with stakeholders in cruise to determine the location of a third major cruise terminal in Sydney.



## Albo returns leaders

**THE** Albanese Government's reshuffle of its front bench has seen the most important portfolios for travel and tourism retained by former ministers.

Don Farrell has been reappointed as Minister for Trade and Tourism, Catherine King will continue to manage the key transport and infrastructure portfolio, while Penny Wong has also held onto her position as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

However there is some new blood in the tourism portfolio, with Nita Green appointed Assistant Minister for Tourism.

Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) CEO Dean Long said the largely retained team will serve the travel sector well.

"These ministers know our industry...and we are ready to hit the ground running to ensure that the priorities of our members remain front and centre," he said.

ATIA stated it had established

"strong and collaborative relationships" with all key ministers, and will work closely with them on a range of important goals, such as a more competitive aviation market, addressing workforce needs, and ensuring regulatory settings recognise and promote accredited Australian travel businesses.

Meanwhile, the Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) said it also looked forward to working with Minister Farrell for another term, a relationship that has already delivered the Reviving International Tourism Grant (RITG) program.

"The RITG program...recognised the importance of Australia's outbound travel sector and helped our members to reconnect with international supply chains, drive investment in innovation and build resilience as international travel resumed," CATO MD Brett Jardine said. **AB**



**NADI BAY**

Today's issue of **TD** is coming to you from Nadi Bay, at the **Fiji Tourism Exchange**.

**ON THE** final day of FTE, we will hear about new developments from Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa, Balabala Bobo's new wellness tourism program, Tourism Fiji's marketing and sustainability plans, and updates from IHG Fiji Hotels, The Barefoot Collection and others.

After lunch, we will stroll the exhibition hall and find out about Fiji's experiences and suppliers.

Tonight, FTE will come to a close with a sparkling celebration at the Crowne Plaza's Urban Sugar Beach Club.

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## EXP avoids big nosedive

**EXPERIENCE** Co has managed to post an underlying EBITDA rise of 10% versus the prior corresponding period, despite weather impacts affecting the company's trading.

The unaudited EBITDA result reflects improved performance for both of Experience's skydiving and adventure experiences divisions, the company said.

Year-to-date revenue of \$103 million is the same as it was 12 months ago, Experience Co reported, reflecting the ongoing recovery of inbound tourism, as well as a 7% hit it took to its adventure experiences revenue brought about by Tropical Cyclone Alfred in Feb and Mar.

The company's strong Jan performance allowed it to offset some of the challenging trading conditions, with PCP growth mostly driven by Experience Co's skydiving division.

This was countered by weather-



impacted trading for Experience Co's adventure experiences division, namely the Reef Unlimited product.

Cyclone Alfred in Mar, which most heavily impacted South East Queensland and the Northern Rivers, also negatively affected general tourism demand in the Sunshine State.

Other significant weather events for the period included a low-pressure system off the coast of Far North Queensland during the end of Jan/start of Feb, which coincided with the typically buoyant Lunar New Year period.

Experience Co did not feel the same periodic effects overseas however, with its New Zealand product exceeding the PCP during Lunar New Year. *MS*

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## QR-VA cargo deal

**IN** A new partnership with Virgin Australia, Qatar Airways Cargo has revealed it will offer an additional 180 tonnes of cargo capacity per week across Sydney, Brisbane, and Perth.

## Belgium now safer

**DFAT** has lowered its advice for Australians travelling to Belgium, yesterday moving the formal advisory down to 'exercise normal safety precautions'.

Belgium previously had a higher warning message in place due to the threat posed by terrorism.

The small European nation known to Aussie travellers for its beer, chocolate and being the home of Jean-Claude Van Damme, had become tainted by jihadist terror cells in recent years, resulting in the bombing of Brussels' main airport in 2016, killing 32 people, and a smaller incident in 2023 that resulted in two deaths and a serious injury.

## Russia is responsible

**THE** Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has ruled that Russia is responsible for the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over Ukraine in 2014 - killing 38 Australians and 260 other pax.

Described as an "historic moment in the pursuit of truth" by Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, the landmark ruling was the conclusion of a case brought by Australia and the Netherlands in 2022.

The ICAO ruled that Russia violated international aviation law under the Chicago Convention, the foundational treaty governing international civil aviation.

Australia has requested that Russia now enter negotiations regarding reparations for the families of the victims "in good faith and according to specific timelines", with the ICAO confirming it will determine the official penalty for the 2014 incident in the coming weeks.

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## Infinity to LA & beyond



**INFINITY** Holidays and Los Angeles Tourism have hosted a select group of agents on a five-day famil to the City of Angels, immersing them in the culture, attractions, dining scene and accommodation options the famous city has to offer.

Advisors got the opportunity to discover Hollywood Boulevard, gained exclusive access to Universal Studios Hollywood, and dined at renowned venues like Grandmaster Recorders, Castaway, and Level8.

They were also taken on a VIP studio tour at Warner Bros., a scenic bike tour through Beverly Hills, and a full-day escape to Catalina Island, situated south of Los Angeles and accessed via the Catalina Express.

Adam Dickson, National

Business Development Manager at Infinity Holidays said, "This famil was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the energy and diversity of Los Angeles to our valued agent partners.

"From Hollywood's glam to Catalina Island's laidback charm, we gave agents an insider's look at the best LA has to offer.

"I'm excited to be on the ground with the group, helping bring these experiences to life and strengthening our partnerships for the future," he added.

Participants flew with Fiji Airways via Nadi and stayed at the W Hollywood and Beach House Hermosa Beach. *DF*

## Elegant expansion

**ELEGANT** Hotel Collection has launched a new joint-venture in the Asia Pacific, with Anita Chan appointed CEO for the region.

The full-service marketing and sales support company servicing luxury hotels has teamed up with Chan to grow its presence in countries like Australia.

"Powered by HotelREZ, Elegant Hotel Collection is the most exciting luxury soft brand in the market and I am thrilled to be joining at this time," Chan said.

"Elegant Hotel Collection is in an excellent position to cater to the needs of discerning travellers across the region and offers a unique value proposition that independent, luxury hotels offer in these key markets," she added.

Chan previously served as CEO for Compass Edge for the past decade, based in Hong Kong.

## Travel on wish list

**GOING** on a holiday was ranked highly by Australians when asked what they would do if \$100,000 was added to their savings accounts, a new report from Finder has showed.

A survey of 1,029 respondents suggested 13% would use the funds for travel, ahead of property investment (7%), contributing to superannuation (7%) and shares (6%).

The leading response suggested most Aussies want to get ahead in their savings plans, with one in five stating they would place the large cash sum into a high-interest savings account.

One in seven would deposit the six figures into a mortgage offset account, while 13% said they would use it to buy a house.

Gen Z prioritised the purchasing of a house over any other area.

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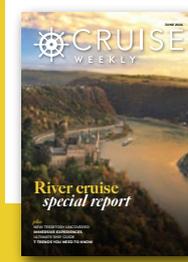
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## Fiji caps on the cards?

FROM preemptively capping visitor numbers to revisiting successful metrics, industry professionals at the Fiji Tourism Exchange yesterday discussed the bold moves needed to boost the island nation in the future.

Tourism Fiji Chief Marketing Officer Srishti Narayan proposed putting a cap on visitor numbers well in advance of reaching overtourism, before it impacts the local community, environment and culture.

“I’d love us to take the stand and say it’s not always about growing bigger, it’s about growing deeper and more meaningful,” Narayan said.

“People are waiting until they’ve tipped into overtourism before they take action, I’d love to see us take action before that.”

Fiji Airways Chief Customer Officer Akuila Batiweti also called for more financial support so the airline can invest more locally.

“How do we jack that up over the next few years to make sure we don’t need to go to Australia to buy Lindt chocolate and that we can buy chocolate here that has a story and it comes from this place?” said Batiweti.

“It’s grown by these people, and it’s harvested by these people, and it creates 500 jobs.”

Tewaka Fiji Transport MD James Sowane discussed the need for affordable housing to support those local employees working within the sector, so they can live comfortably instead of sleeping



on the floor of a family member’s home.

“We expect them to perform at five-star level each and every day, it doesn’t match,” he emphasised.

“Let’s look after our people; affordable housing is critical for our industry for [our people] to perform at the level that we need,” Sowane added.

Lastly, Kylie Ruwhiu-Karawana, consultant at TRC Tourism and a tourism development specialist, suggested the industry reconsiders its success metrics.

Instead of concentrating on its financial performance, the sector also needs to look at the numbers behind how it is giving back to the local community and leaving behind a legacy.

“What we need to do as an industry is change our metrics of success - how many youth are we employing? How many businesses have we started with their start-ups?” she said.

“How are we starting to change visitors’ views of the world, one visitor at a time, but also lifting the capability and capacity of our industry?” JHM

## Hoffmann crew feel Vietnam



THE culture and landscapes of Vietnam have been thoroughly explored by an executive team from Phil Hoffmann Travel (PHT) on a famil trip hosted by Adventure World.

Emphasising connection, discovery and responsible travel, the itinerary included Hanoi’s Old Quarter, social enterprise



dining at KOTO, and a Make Travel Matter (MTM) Experience at Animals Asia’s bear sanctuary, where PHT are “guardians” of a moon bear named Twilight.

The MTM Experience included exploring Pu Luong’s rice terraces and villages, directly benefiting the local community.

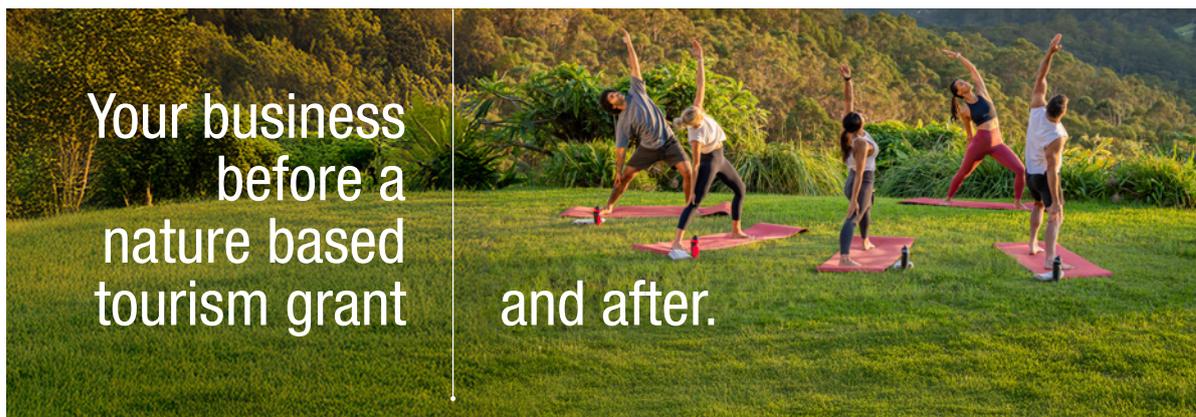
Michelle Ashcroft, General Manager at Phil Hoffmann Travel said, “Witnessing the inspiring work at Animals Asia Bear Sanctuary and the profound moment with Twilight touched our hearts deeply, reinforcing the shared values and friendship that bind Phil Hoffmann Travel and Adventure World as true partners, with the opportunity before us to make a difference”.

## G, what a cool ship

G ADVENTURES will introduce a new expedition vessel for its upcoming Antarctica season.

Chartered through Danish company SunStone, the 128-passenger *Expedition* will replace a previous vessel used by the tour operator to further minimise its carbon footprint by around 30% per pax, per day.

G Adventures’ new ship will service five Antarctica itineraries later this year, with prices leading in from \$12,599ppts.



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## ATIA UPDATE

from Jenny Le, National Manager Events & Corporate Partnerships



**OVER** the past three years, I've had the honour of managing the National Travel Industry Awards,

with the wider ATIA Team cheering me on.

I'm excited to now introduce Elaine Trinh, who has joined ATIA's Member Services Team as the Events & Communications Assistant to further assist.

You'll see her creativity shine through in some of the content we'll be rolling out across ATIA's social and email campaigns.

Elaine and I have been busy planning for the biggest ticket on the 2025 events schedule, which is once again the National Travel Industry Awards.

This consists of both the awards program, which is currently in

motion, and the gala dinner awards presentation scheduled for 18 Oct at the brand-new The Star Brisbane Queen's Wharf.

You may have seen the glitz and glamour of past NTIAs and are eager to have your name in lights for the chance to be announced as a winner.

But how do we get there?

The first step is to secure a nomination from your peers.

Peer nominations are open for NTIA 2025 and will close next Wed 21 May - **CLICK**

**HERE** for everything you need to know, including the award stages following nominations, submissions and key dates.

And lastly, I'd like to thank and acknowledge the NTIA Custodians (AC Jones, Barbara Whitten, Chris Fundell, Damian Borg, Jean Summers and Trish Shepherd), whose collective input once again has been integral to our commitment to ensuring the Awards Program continues to be relevant and fit for purpose.

## Italy goes shopping

**TWO** new modules have been added to the Travel to Italy Academy, with both new focused on shopping tourism.

"Italy is confirmed as a leading destination for shopping tourism, offering a unique experience that combines a rich cultural heritage with excellent products," said the Italian National Tourism Board.

"Whether you are shopping in the fashion boutiques or in local markets, in Italy, finding treasure to buy is an essential part of your holiday," the board added.

Italy has gained traction in visitation from Australia in recent years, with the country set for another boost next year when it hosts the Winter Olympic Games.

According to ABS data, in the first two months of 2025 there has been a 12.6% increase in visitor numbers from Australia to Italy when compared to the same time last year.

View the new modules **HERE**.



## Window Seat

**US PRESIDENT** Donald Trump's penchant for gold has risen to new heights, with reports suggesting the Commander-in-chief is poised to accept a new Air Force One with golden interiors.

The 747-800 plane - referred to as the 'floating palace' - will be donated by Qatar and is valued at around \$625 million.

Previously owned by Qatar's royal family, Trump will remarkably require a range of upgrades to make the jet viable as presidential transport - especially around security.

Another major incentive for Trump to accept the shiny gift is a condition that when he leaves office in 2029, the door is open to use it as his personal plane.

The reports arrive only weeks after the Trump Organisation announced a major deal to build a luxury golf resort in Qatar, featuring beach-side villas and an 18-hole golf course.

## Anderson departs

**KRISTIAN** Anderson has now departed The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, where he was SVP Global Sales since Sep 2021.

The global sales team will report to President Ernesto Fara while the luxury cruise operator searches for a new sales leader.

A company spokesperson expressed gratitude for Anderson's "leadership and [his] energy, passion and expertise".

## Explore with Pagotto

**CROOKED** Compass has announced its 2027 Founder's Tour - an exploration of Bangladesh and Bhutan with the company's originator, Lisa Pagatto.

Departing 20 Oct 2027, the 22-day journey takes guests to explore the Floating Markets of Banaripara, encounter Nomadic Water Gypsies, trek to Bhutan's Tiger's Nest Monastery, and much more - find details **HERE**.

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WITH a fresh new look and feel, Imagine Cruising - formerly known as Imagine Holidays - continues to uphold its strong commitment to quality, meaningful supplier partnerships, and delivering exceptional holidays to travellers worldwide.

This rebrand is not just about a change in appearance - it reflects the company's true identity and its significant growth, reinforcing its dedication to offering extraordinary, personalised travel experiences.

While Imagine Cruising's range of global adventures is nothing short of exceptional, at the core, the company is all about delivering memorable cruise experiences, working closely



# Imagine, now reimagined

EST.  2011

IMAGINE  
CRUISING

with some of the world's most renowned cruise lines - Cunard, Princess Cruises, Holland America Line, and Celebrity Cruises to name a few, each offering a diverse range of experiences with their own unique features, styles, and designs.

In addition, Imagine Cruising's strong relationships with land-based tour operators and rail partners around the world allow

it to create holidays that go far beyond cruising, and all at exceptional value guaranteed to have you coming back.

## Imagine aims even higher

A RECORD-BREAKING year for Imagine Cruising (formerly Imagine Holidays) has been driven by the successful launch of its trade division, concluding its first full year on 06 May 2025.

Craig Spiga, General Manager of Trade Sales, has overseen the rapid expansion of the division.

"The reception received in our first 12 months collaborating with travel agents has blown me away," he said.

"The desire to openly collaborate on strategies that suit a range of individual businesses and networks has been inspiring for both the team

and myself.

"We've learned that each business or individual has their unique market, challenges and opportunities," Spiga added.

"Keeping adaptable and creative can be challenging but has been the key driver to our success," he added.

Looking forward, Imagine Cruising aims to exceed its first year's success, already hiring several key positions to facilitate the increasing demand, building off its strong launch and continuing momentum.

To learn more about the brand's offerings, [CLICK HERE](#).



## Score awesome prizes

TO CELEBRATE Imagine Cruising's exciting new look, it is offering a special promotion ([CLICK HERE](#)) from 13 May until 30 Jun.

For every booking made during this period, agents will receive a \$100 Prezzye voucher.

Additionally, each week, the agent who generates the highest revenue will be rewarded with two exclusive VIP tickets to see Ricky Martin live in concert, with shows in Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.



EST.  2011

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LOCAL CRUISING



RIVER CRUISING



## Agents taking off to the US, eh?

LAST week, over 100 travel advisors attended the 'Take Off to the US, eh!' event, hosted by Air Canada, Brisbane Airport and Linkd Tourism.

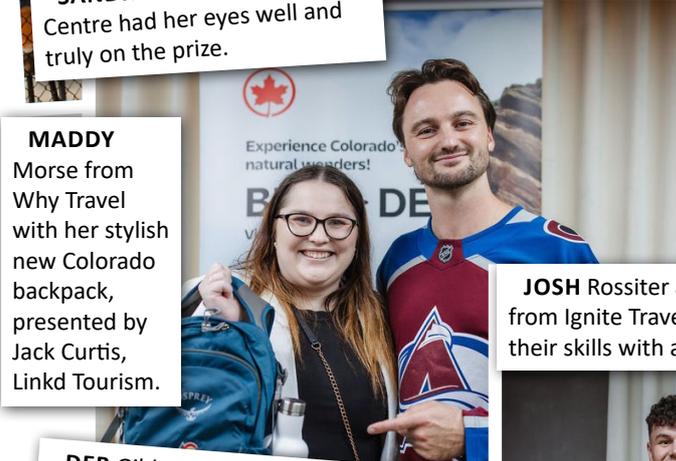
Supporting the event were destination partners from Anaheim, Colorado, New York State and the State of Washington.

Held at The Ballpark in Brisbane's Portside Wharf, attendees embraced the sporting theme, wearing their favourite US team jerseys for a chance to win exciting prizes.

The event reaffirmed the strength of the Air Canada - Brisbane Airport connection and the collaborative efforts of Linkd Tourism and its destination clients in supporting the travel trade and igniting interest in booking North America as a holiday destination.



**SANDRA** Pittelli from Flight Centre had her eyes well and truly on the prize.



**MADDY** Morse from Why Travel with her stylish new Colorado backpack, presented by Jack Curtis, Linkd Tourism.



**DEB** Gibb from Why Travel stepped up to the plate and showed she could swing for the fence.



**LOUISE** Terry and Kerri Lingard showed their love for New York.



**LAUREN** Wall (centre) from eCruising was the lucky winner of a trip to Anaheim, with her prize presented by Michael Cassis, Visit Anaheim and Janis McDonald, Air Canada.

**JOSH** Rossiter and Romi Karydis from Ignite Travel showed off their skills with a pool cue.



**ELIZABETH** Clark, The Cruise Centre by Travelcall (right) was announced as the Best Dressed winner by Michael Cassis, Linkd Tourism.



**ZEENA** Croudace (centre) from MTA Travel went home with a prize trip to Seattle, presented by Janis McDonald, Air Canada and Amanda McCoy, Visit Seattle.



**THE** teams from Air Canada, Brisbane Airport and Linkd Tourism were all smiles and ready to welcome agents to their sports extravaganza.



**DAVID** Streek from Consolidated Travel Group was all smiles after some big swings (and maybe a miss or two). Batter up!



### TTC to the rescue

**THE** Travel Corporation's (TTC) nature-based solution partner, Rainforest Rescue, and Down Under Tours have unveiled a new Daintree mural at the Rainforest Rescue Native Nursery in Queensland's Cow Bay.

Created in collaboration with local illustrator Victoria McGrane, the design depicts the biodiversity of the Daintree Rainforest and is testament to the partnership between environmental restoration action and local tourism specialists.

Attendees at the mural unveiling also planted native rainforest trees on the former Cow Bay airport site, symbolising a commitment to helping the Daintree Rainforest to regenerate.

Speaking on behalf of TTC's TreadRight Foundation, Erin Simpson, GM at Down Under Tours, said: "The Daintree is a unique and truly special destination globally.

"As tourism operators we have a duty to support its stewardship and today was testament to how we are working together with Rainforest Rescue to do so."

TreadRight will also match all donations this month to Lot 8, a section of tropical rainforest that Rainforest Rescue has the opportunity to purchase and protect.

## QTIC CHAMPIONS CLIMATE TALKS

**THE** Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) has revealed the speaker lineup for its upcoming World Environment Day Event.

Taking place on Thu 05 Jun in the Whitsundays, the event will bring together industry leaders, government, and communities committed to making Queensland the world's leading destination for responsible travel.

Among the industry voices taking the stage are representatives from Virgin Australia, who will present the airline's plan to bring sustainable aviation fuel into Whitsundays Coast Airport.

Crystalbrook Collection's Chief Financial Officer, Nigel Greenaway, will also offer attendees insights into tourism's circular economy.

Greenaway will be joined



on stage by marine biologist Johnny Gaskell, who will discuss coral regeneration and marine guardianship, and First Nations operator, Robbie Congo, who will spotlight Country-led experiences driving sustainability.

"With a wealth of knowledge across tourism and sustainability these leading industry voices, facilitated by EarthCheck CEO Stewart Moore, will share their experiences and insights on

pioneering climate resilience and the regional opportunities ahead," QTIC stated.

Tourism Whitsundays has put together an eco-certified itinerary for delegates who wish to stay and explore the destination before or after the event - find it **HERE** - as well as offering accommodation and experience deals, **HERE**.

Tickets to World Environment Day Event are on sale **HERE**. *JM*

### Singapore Airlines shakes on SAF deals

**THE** Singapore Airlines (SIA) Group has inked new agreements with Neste and World Energy to acquire sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and SAF certificates.

The aviation group will receive 1,000 tonnes of SAF from Neste, which will be blended locally and uplifted at Singapore Changi Airport.

Additionally, SIA has purchased around 2,000 tonnes of SAF in the form of emissions



reductions from World Energy, a United States-based producer, allowing the group to claim associated emissions reductions without physical fuel delivery.

Both deals are expected to reduce more than 9,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

### A Choice feat

**CHOICE** Hotels International has released its *2024 Sustainability Report*, which shows its Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions for the first time.

The report highlights the company's achievements last year towards its sustainability commitments, including a new collaboration with the National Park Foundation, which will see Choice donate \$150,000 to the foundation.

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## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.636**

**IT HAS** been a wild week for the AUD, with analyst suggestions coming in thick and fast for an AUD that is buying USD 0.70 by the end of the year.

Travellers who took confidence in that and booked travel may not want to look at this week's performance after the AUD faltered slightly, but it is only just off where it was this time last week.

Against the Yen, however, the AUD has rallied, continuing to provide good reason for Aussies to travel to Japan - the same can't be said for the Euro or the Pound Sterling this week.

Regardless of where the Australian dollar sits at the moment, it is likely that travellers in general will be looking for additional certainty before committing to short-term travel, with Corporate Travel Management CEO Jamie Pherous telling the *AFR* they were looking to "get some certainty" in their business outlook before committing.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

<b>US</b>	\$0.636
<b>UK</b>	£0.484
<b>NZ</b>	\$1.087
<b>Euro</b>	€0.574
<b>Japan</b>	¥94.42
<b>Thailand</b>	฿21.26
<b>China</b>	¥4.591
<b>South Africa</b>	11.643
<b>Canada</b>	\$0.891
<b>Bitcoin</b>	0.000062

## Agents on the go in Africa



**ON THE Go Tours** is currently hosting 14 travel agents from Victoria on a 10-day famil trip in Africa, following a sales incentive earlier this year.

The group, who were hosted by On the Go Tours Vic/Tas BDMs Katie Rosenthal and Renee Cassar, travelled from Pretoria up to Victoria Falls, enjoying adventures through both Kruger and Chobe National Parks.

The agents first spent two days on safari in Kruger in search of the 'big five' before flying up to Livingstone, where they enjoyed plenty of time on and off the water at Victoria Falls.

Next on the agenda was Botswana, where the group experienced a game drive through Chobe National Park, spotting elephants, giraffes, hippos, antelope, and birdlife.

The agents are being treated to hotel and lodge accommodation throughout the famil, and are scheduled to return home to Australia shortly. *JM*

The group **pictured** at Victoria Falls and (inset) on safari.



## Hahnair NDC launch

**HAHNAIR** has launched 'Distriply by Hahnair', the new brand for its innovative NDC distribution solutions.

The company will introduce a range of products that will enable airlines and travel agencies to tap into NDC channels, complementing its existing GDS-based solutions.

Distriply is designed to simplify access to broad NDC content for travel sellers of all types and sizes, without the need to invest in large technical systems.

Users will benefit from an easy plug-and-play setup, simplified operations, and unparalleled servicing capacities, developed and backed by distribution authority Hahnair - for more info, visit [www.distriply.com](http://www.distriply.com).

## Lights on Serbelloni

**GRAND** Hotel Villa Serbelloni is now represented by Spotlight Communications in Australia.

The 150-year-old Lake Como-based hotel is entering an exciting new chapter this year, with the launch of the Baci da Bellagio Beach Club.

Guests can relax on teak-decked loungers, under the club's signature Baci Beach umbrellas, while sipping the hotel's Baci Spritz and Striped Cocktail.

Also new is Luce del Lago, the largest spa on the Lake.

The space's gem is the Hammam Private Spa, which offers three relaxing treatments focused on the use of steam.

## Chew on this tender

**WESTERN** Sydney International is ordering a serve of diverse and delicious dining, with restaurants, cafes, bars, fast food outlets, and more invited to tender at the soon-to-open airport.

An extensive registration of interest process may now be completed for those looking to join Western Sydney's growing retail and hospitality precincts within its terminals.

Chief Executive Officer Simon Hickey said WSI is excited to hear from hospitality operators that could help deliver a delicious dining experience for the millions of travellers who will soon be transiting through the airport when it opens its doors in 2026.

"We are rapidly approaching opening day, with the completion of major construction works mere weeks away and our focus shifting to asset testing, live airport trials and commercial operations," he enthused.



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15-31May 2024	Vanuatu	Civil unrest
8-22 Aug 2024	QF WA	Schedule change QF9 PER/LON
16 Aug 2024	Japan	Typhoon Ampil
Sep-Oct 2024	Lebanon	Lebanon/Iraq/Jordan unrest
18 Dec 2024	Vanuatu	Earthquake impact
Dec-Jan 2025	Middle East	Middle East unrest
9 Jan 2025	USA	California wildfires disruptions
13 Feb 2025	WA	Cyclone Zelia flight disruptions
6 March 2025	QLD	Cyclone Alfred flight disruptions
20 March 2025	UK	LHR airport Fire
20 March 2025	Indonesia	Volcano flight disruption
March - Sep	Tel aviv	Tel aviv unrest disruptions
17 April 2025	NZ	Cyclone Tam flight disruptions
28 April 2025	Asia	Myanmar Earthquake

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