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AGENTS can access more than 370 discounts across airfares, accommodation and experiences when they sign up for Tourism New Zealand's Explore New Zealand Discount Programme.

For more information, check out **page seven**.

Entertaining advisors

EXCLUSIVE

ENTERTAINMENT Group's new travel portal (**TD** 02 May) opens the door for travel advisors to curate high-value experiences, CEO Heidi Halson believes.

Speaking with **Travel Daily** in the wake of the portal's relaunch in the Australian market, Halson said the collaboration potential with the trade is clear.

"[Our travel portal] is a unique distribution channel with a qualified audience who value exclusivity and lifestyle-enhancing benefits, and seek high-end and tailor-made travel experiences," Halson explained.

"[Agents] have the opportunity to co-create premium packages - think private villa escapes, experiential stays, or fine dining inclusions - that align with Entertainment's ethos of elevated value," she added.

Halson said there is the potential for preferred partner status, offering agents visibility and access to affluent, loyalty-driven consumers who are already engaged with the brand's premium member benefits.

While Entertainment Group has a broader ambition to expand the inventory of travel and cruise product available on the platform, the company will not seek to add brands for the sake of it.

"We want to curate a collection of memorable, unique experiences, giving our members immersive local experiences, luxury, depth, and distinction in



their offerings," Halson said.

"We also want to build trusted partnerships that prioritise guest satisfaction and a high standard of service to generate positive word-of-mouth about all our brands," she added.

Partners on board with the discount brand's latest foray into travel include Rocky Mountaineer, TFE Hotels, Emirates, Princess Cruises, Celebrity Cruises, Scenic, Oceania, and more. **AB**

HLO OMC 2026

HELLOWORLD Travel will take its 2026 Owner Manager Conference (OMC) to Cairns in 2026, CEO Andrew Burnes announced to delegates at this year's event in Vancouver, Canada.

Taking place from 11-14 Jun 2026, the OMC will be held in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news, plus a product profile from **City of Gold Coast**, and a full page from **Tourism New Zealand**.

GC nature boost

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

Find out more about the program, which aims to boost the region's tourism while showcasing its natural environment, on **p8**.

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Lux show even bigger

MORE than 65% of exhibitors showcasing at Luxperience 2025 will be brand new to the show, organisers announced today.

The exclusive marketing and agent networking event will return to the International Convention Centre Sydney and is scheduled for 07-10 Oct 2025.

Australia and New Zealand will take a greater share of the spotlight this year, organisers said, with changing market dynamics showing luxury travellers are gravitating towards longer and more immersive experiences and stays in the local region.

New partners locked in for 2025 will see Sri Lanka debut as a destination, while new suppliers will include HX Expeditions and The Royal Portfolio South Africa.

Also setting up for the first time will be Italyscape, Desert Nights Camp and Black Balloon, a TMC offering exclusive nature and local experiences in Chile.

Luxperience Event Director Lynn Ormiston said the event is an essential platform for partners eager to establish themselves in the luxury space.

"The overwhelming interest from new partners applying to attend this year cements the appeal of this unique event globally, and we are very excited to host some of the best partners and buyers of this booming luxury travel industry," Ormiston said. *ML*

JQ Tasmania sale

TOURISM Tasmania has teamed up with Jetstar to launch discounted fares to drive bookings into the state, particularly during the winter and shoulder periods.

As part of the budget carrier's national Weekend Fare Frenzy campaign, travellers can secure fare sales on routes from Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney to Hobart and Launceston, along with Adelaide and the Gold Coast to Hobart.

The cheaper flights start at \$46 for the Launceston to Melbourne route and are available until 11.59pm AEST tonight, **HERE**.

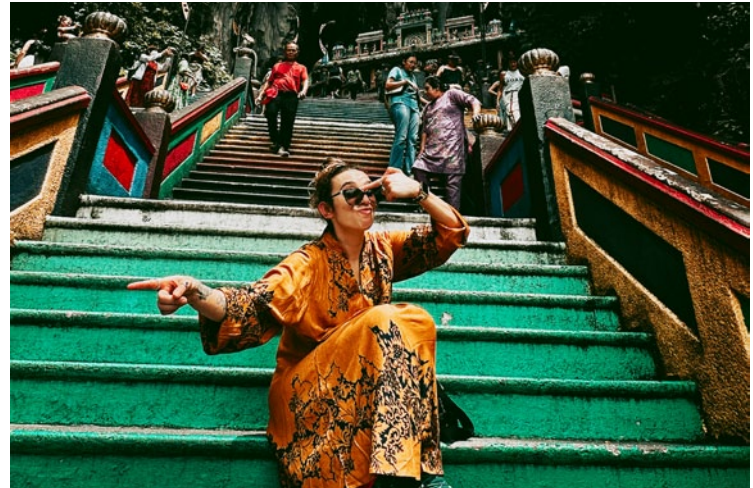
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G expands Aussie team



G ADVENTURES has welcomed new Global Purpose Specialist for NSW and ACT, Maria Brufatto (**pictured**), who is charged with supporting agency partners across the region.

Brufatto previously worked at one of Flight Centre's high-performing Mega Stores.

In her new role, she will be on the road and connecting with agents, helping them across marketing, product and sales.

"[Maria's] front-line experience and passion for connecting people to purpose-driven travel make her an incredible fit for this role," said Matthew Drummond, Sales Manager at G Adventures.

"I know she's going to bring energy, creativity and deep product knowledge to the agents she works with."

According to the tour operator, Brufatto has a foundation of sales and customer service and brings industry knowledge combined with practical experience. *JHM*



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Perisher pass prices

THERE is still time for travellers to lock in Perisher's 2025 Epic Australia 4-Day Pass for the discounted price of \$609 **HERE**.

The pass offers four days' combined lift access to ski and board any day of the 2025 season at Perisher, Falls Creek and Hotham - prices rise Wed 28 May.

The WA Dream hits the road



MORE than 500 travel agents in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Auckland welcomed Tourism WA during its bi-monthly trade roadshow last week.

Events featured more than 25 exhibiting suppliers ranging from major tour operators, small attractions, hotel operators and expedition cruise brands.

The roadshow highlighted the latest developments in Western Australia including new hotels and attractions, while reinforcing touring options and regions across the state.

Agents also had the chance to meet with new tourism operators taking part in Tourism WA's Trade Ready Introduction Program (TRIP), which facilitates meetings with the trade, especially for new market entrants.

Speaking at the Sydney event, Tourism Western Australia's new Managing Director, Anneke

Brown, reaffirmed the state's commitment to the trade.

The roadshow series also had a major prize consisting of a Ponant Kimberley cruise at each Australian event, with the winners being Nancy Tin, Peggy Travel (Sydney); Donna Elliott,

MEL on the telly

MELBOURNE Airport will be the star of a new Network 10 TV series revealing all the behind-the-scenes action at the hub.

Premiering on 05 Jun, *Airport 24/7: Melbourne Airport* will air every Thu night at 7.30pm.

"It's time to meet our team and witness the moments that ensure Melbourne Airport operates around the clock," a spokesperson for MEL said on LinkedIn.

Part of the aim of the new series is to inspire people to consider a career in aviation.

ATAC in Adelaide

THE Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) has opened registrations for its flagship event, Future Focus 2025, taking place from 05-07 Sep in Adelaide at the brand-new Marriott Hotel.

Members are encouraged to secure spots early - find out more details **HERE**.

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Window Seat

IMAGINE walking into a hotel room to the tantalising scent of cinnamon donuts.

Ovolo Hotels has teamed up with Donut King to deliver that very thing in celebration of National Donut Day.

Known as the 'Hot Cinni Suite', two rooms at Ovolo Woolloomooloo in Sydney have been transformed into a cinnamon donut escape, with pink wall paint, a Donut King bedspread and cinnamon donut-themed pop art.

Guests can also enjoy a cinnamon donut diffuser, cinnamon scented towels and bathroom amenities and a 'Press for Hot Cinni donuts' exclusive room service.

But rooms are limited - there are only six nights available, on sale from 29 May [HERE](#).

QTIC raises hotel alarm

QUEENSLAND continues to fall behind in meeting surging demand for accommodation, with urgent action needed to address lagging hotel development and infrastructure needs, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) believes.

The organisation says the city only has 46,000 hotel rooms in its inventory, compared with 120,000 in Los Angeles and 133,000 in Paris.

QTIC CEO Natassia Wheeler (pictured) said the issue has been highlighted early with prices soaring as Brisbane hosts the first State of Origin game this week.

"We cannot ignore the reality - our infrastructure is not keeping pace," Wheeler said.

"We need strategic, accelerated investment to ensure our state remains competitive and resilient."

Wheeler said rugby league is always a major drawcard, with hotels reaching 80% capacity



during the recent four-day Magic Round footy festival.

This week's Origin match has the city at 77% occupancy but this is expected to grow further.

"Queensland is attracting more visitors, more often, for longer stays [but] our ability to host them is at breaking point.

"Hotel capacity, transport links, and tourism infrastructure must expand now to match our ambitions for 2032 and beyond."

Wheeler said urgent action is now needed to address this slide, with Brisbane and its surrounding regional areas now seven years away from hosting the 2032 Olympic & Paralympic Games. *ML*

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION



SYDNEY

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Carnival Cruise Line, which this week is hosting us on a voyage to Moreton Island aboard *Carnival Adventure*.

WHILE there are many Aussies who no doubt miss the P&O Cruises brand, Carnival Cruise Line is keen to let Aussies know what to expect on board the rebadged *Carnival Adventure* as she sails the company's next chapter in local waters.

TD is aboard a special media voyage from Sydney to Moreton Island, where we will experience all of the updates, such as the brand's iconic Fun Squad, free pizza daily, the Carnival HUB app, and staples like the popular Build-A-Bear workshops.

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New initiative to boost WSI



WESTERN Sydney International Airport has launched a new aviation microcredential to help boost the workforce ahead of the airport's opening in late 2026.

Named the 'Introduction to Aviation Operations Micro-credential', the new initiative was developed in partnership with Bradfield Development Authority

and Western Sydney University to offer career pathways for school-leavers and other industry newcomers who are looking for formal aviation accreditation.

As part of the certification, graduates will earn a nationally recognised Statement of Attainment aligned with the Certification I in Aviation.

They will also be armed with skills for entry-level aviation roles like ramp operations, ground handling and security screening.

Priced at \$350, the program is affordable and accessible and now open for applications.

Indigenous Australians, people with disability, women returning to work, and regional jobseekers are encouraged to apply for scholarships during the enrolment process.

For more details, see [HERE](#). *JHM*

Pictured: The WSI & UWS team at the launch, with students who were part of the pilot.

New snowfall index

THE new Snow Conditions Index helps travellers plan for the most snowfall by analysing 16 years of historical data across 12 of Australia and New Zealand's ski resorts.

According to the index, Treble Cone in NZ will enjoy the most snow in the first week of Aug.

Meanwhile, the best time to ski in Australia will be Mt Hotham in the third week of Aug, which ranked seventh in the list of top 12 resorts - see the index [HERE](#).

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AAT Kings unveils RAP

AAT Kings group has launched its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Coinciding with Reconciliation Week, the RAP details the company's commitment to creating lasting and meaningful connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities across Australia.

Among the key goals of the plan are to foster cultural awareness, support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, and ensure genuine engagement with communities on the lands where it operates.

Ben Hall, CEO of AAT Kings Group, described the RAP as "a significant milestone in our journey towards reconciliation".

"Our RAP reflects our commitment to fostering strong, respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander peoples and supporting the cultural, social, and economic opportunities of these communities.

"We are excited to continue our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, ensuring that these cultures are represented and celebrated within our business and for our guests," Hall added. *JM*

Exoticca joins CATO

EXOTICCA has earned Council of Australian Touring Operators (CATO) accreditation, and joined the organisation's Touring Academy, in an aim to boost its presence in Australia.

The Academy offers resources and training aimed at supporting travel advisors in delivering Exoticca's product.

"Being recognised by CATO is a meaningful milestone for us," Exoticca Managing Director Dennis Basham enthused.

"It demonstrates our commitment to responsible growth in the Australian market and highlights our focus on building strong partnerships with travel advisors through education and support."

QF ups SYD-WLG

WELLINGTON Airport is welcoming a big increase in flights from Sydney slated to arrive this summer.

Qantas will increase its flights to the New Zealand capital by almost a third from 15 Dec to 26 Jan.

The increase of 14 flights per week to 19 will mean travellers will have a choice of three Qantas flights per day to choose from, five times per week, WLG Chief Executive Matt Clarke noted.

CHINA AIRLINES

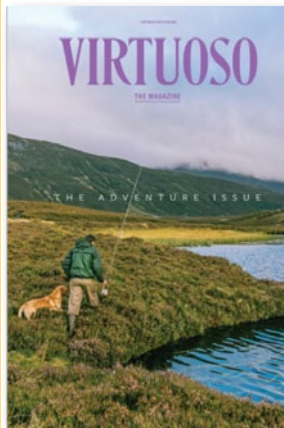
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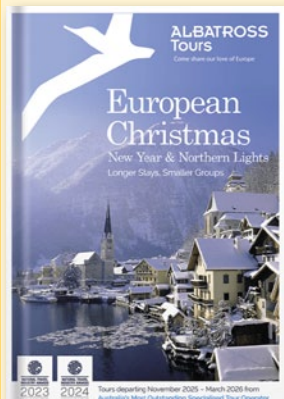
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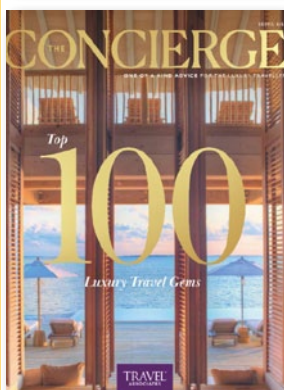
Virtuoso, The Magazine AU/NZ

The newly released winter issue of *Virtuoso, The Magazine* focuses on the Scottish Highlands, highlighting exclusive experiences, sustainable travel, and luxury accommodation across the region. The 68-page digital publication also covers Africa's most diverse and refined safari experience; sailing the remote reaches of New Guinea; a guide to Athens; a jewellery designer's quest to find red gold in northern Greece; searching for bears in Alaska's Katmai National Park; and unforgettable autumn adventures in Canada. Browse the new edition [HERE](#).



Albatross Tours - European Christmas 25

The latest brochure from Albatross Tours highlights its festive tour programs for 2025-26, featuring longer stays and smaller groups. The 71-page guide, which can be requested [HERE](#), invites travellers to discover the magic of Christmas in Europe. Readers can learn about the operator's Christmas Market Tours; six- and seven-night Christmas Holiday itineraries; and New Years tours, which can be enjoyed on their own or as add-ons to most Christmas holidays; and a Northern Lights adventure in Iceland or Scandinavia.



Travel Associates - The Concierge

Travel Associates has launched its 'Top 100 Luxury Travel Gems' edition of The Concierge. The fourth issue of the brand's signature quarterly magazine celebrates 100 unforgettable travel experiences from around the world, brought to life through remarkable stories, inspiration and insider recommendations. The 80-page publication showcases urban wonders; luxury stays from mountain to rainforest; exciting events around the world; and emerging destinations that invite travellers to go beyond the norm - read it [HERE](#).

St Regis brings the outside in



SINGAPORE'S Botanic Gardens will be reflected in a new interior design to be introduced at the city's luxurious St Regis hotel.

Launching in phases through to the end of the year, the new-look St Regis Singapore will draw on natural tactile textures designed to "bring nature indoors".

First to debut will be The Tea Room, the setting for the hotel's famous afternoon tea, which features ivory, teal and pink interiors reminiscent of a summer garden, said the brand.

Meetings and events will take place in the new John Jacob Ballroom, featuring two skylights, two nine-metre LED video walls, intelligent lighting systems and state-of-the-art sound systems.

Six additional meeting rooms will also undergo a full refurbishment, while the St Regis Bar Singapore will be reintroduced in Aug.

By the end of the year, all 299 guest rooms will feature subtle shades of green and blue in its design, with floral accents and bespoke furnishings.

"We will reaffirm the St. Regis Singapore as the best address in the city for exquisite stays, dining experiences and distinctive meetings and events, complemented by timeless St. Regis rituals," said General Manager, Allan Howden. *ML*

Accor boosts tech

ACCOR has expanded its partnership with Amadeus to encompass the tech company's Central Reversation System.

The tie-up will see Accor implement the cloud-based system across its global portfolio of properties, enabling it to boost revenues, maximise distribution strategies, and build deeper and more personalised connections with guests.

"Our ambition with this new distribution strategy is to transition from an in-house legacy system to a world-class, open system scalable across all regions, enabling future growth," commented Alix Boulnois, Accor's Chief Digital Officer.

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Tourism is in our nature:

New funding to boost nature-based tourism

Eligible businesses can now apply for grants and funding to expand existing and develop new nature-based experiences under the City of Gold Coast's Nature Based Tourism Program. "The Gold Coast is one of the most ecologically diverse cities in Australia and our new Nature Based Tourism Program is part of the City's ongoing commitment to preserve our rich natural and cultural heritage," says Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate. "We want businesses to help us protect and celebrate our 'green behind the gold' to enhance tourism while showcasing our unique natural environment.

"Eligible businesses are encouraged to apply for funding and make the most

of the benefits that will come with the growing global demand for nature-based tourism in Australia."

Nature-based tourism provides visitors with experiences in natural settings that combine enjoyment, education, and cultural awareness while focusing on sustainability and conservation.

The City's program aims to meet the growing demand of global travellers to connect with nature and engage in environmentally and culturally responsible activities.

"Research has found that 20 per cent of travellers seek travel experiences where the natural environment is front and centre," says Mayor Tate.

"This is a great opportunity for

businesses in the nature space to leverage off the popularity of nature-based tourism for their own benefit as well as for the benefit of our city's economy and our environment."

For details, visit [Nature-Based Tourism Program | City of Gold Coast](#).

APPLICATIONS OPEN

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

Apply now