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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news, plus a cover wrap from **Silversea**, a photo page from **HX**, a product profile from **Tourism Solomons**, our **Sustainability** page, and full pages from:

- **G'Day Group**
- **Inspiring Vacations**

Say G'day to savings

TRAVELLERS can save 25% off Discovery Parks destinations around Australia.

Learn more on **page nine**.

An Inspiring deal

INSPIRING Vacations is inviting travellers to bring a friend for 50% off their next holiday.

Discover more details about the offer on **page 10**.

Solomons winner

TOURISM Solomons has announced the winner of its 'Let Your Imagination Set Sail - and Win' challenge for Australian agents - more on **page 11**.

Rocky incentive

HX EXPEDITIONS and Rocky Mountaineer have partnered to offer Australia and New Zealand travel agents the chance to win a spot on the Ultimate Rockies & Alaska famil.

To enter, make a deposited booking with either of the brands between 17 Nov 2025-27 Feb 2026 - **CLICK HERE** for details.

EK opens door on B777-10

THE embattled Boeing brand has enjoyed a big win at the Dubai Airshow this week, with Emirates signing on to purchase 65 additional B777X aircraft for US\$38 billion.

Emirates' latest deal for more of the long-haul, widebody aircraft also included an option to convert its latest B777-9 order into the larger B777-10, if the mooted plane goes ahead as a concept.

At this stage, the B777-10 remains at the feasibility phase, but the firm order option with Emirates suggests the manufacturer is taking the model seriously as a future variant.

Industry speculation suggests the B777-10 could seat as many as 450 passengers and use its large GE9X turbofan engines.

"Emirates has been open about the fact that we are keen for manufacturers to build larger capacity aircraft, which are more efficient to operate - especially with projected air traffic growth

and increasing constraints at airports," said Emirates Group chief Sheikh Ahmed. **AB**

Webjet collaboration

INVESTMENT company Ariadne Australia has extended a cooperation agreement with BGH Capital regarding Webjet Group for another six months.

The two investment companies will continue to consult with each other about how they vote at any Webjet shareholder meeting.

Equity held in Webjet Group by their respective investment businesses, Portfolio Services and Oceania, amounts to 17.75%.

The two companies previously attempted to buy a controlling stake in Webjet (**TD** 14 May), and Portfolio Services has since nominated Daniel Asher Weiss and Andrew Taylor for board election at Webjet's extraordinary general meeting this Fri, with Oceania to support the motion.

Save up to \$15,000

SILVERSEA is offering savings of up to \$15,000 per suite on its expedition cruises, and up to \$10,000 per suite on its Classic itineraries, as part of its Black Friday sale.

The promotion also includes reduced deposits starting at 15% - see the **cover page** for details.

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Wendy Wu Tours

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VIEW DEAL

Travel Daily ON LOCATION



AT SEA

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of **Celebrity Cruises**, which this week is hosting us on board its new **Celebrity Xcel**.

TODAY is the last day on board *Celebrity Xcel*, before she arrives back in Fort Lauderdale, and begins her revenue sailings.

The travelling group from Australia was offered a peek behind the scenes of the inner-workings of The Bazaar, one of Xcel's flagship new venues.

Before waving goodbye, guests will enjoy dinner at Raw On 5, Xcel's signature seafood restaurant, before grabbing our Stetsons for a night of boot scootin' in The Club.

Serko revenue surges in H1

SERKO has posted a total revenue result of \$61.8 million for the six months to 30 Sep 2025, representing a growth of 45% from 1H25.

The corporate travel software company has also reaffirmed its FY26 total income guidance of \$115-\$123 million.

The strong results were driven by the Booking.com for Business platform, with completed room nights up 32% to 2.1 million, while active customers increased 40% compared to 1H25.

Online bookings were also up by 2% for Serko's Australasia business, rising from 2.1 to 2.2 million - however, this was offset by a 2% drop in average revenue per booking, which is now \$5.58.

The revenue decline was due to reduced third-party pass-through costs, Serko pointed out.

"Our performance reinforces

serko

Serko's continued track record and ability to deliver high growth and cost discipline as we execute on our strategic focus areas," CEO and co-founder Darrin Grafton said.

"We have strong momentum in our Booking.com for Business performance and conviction in our growth strategy." *JM*

Remember our Lyn

TRAVEL Beyond Group has confirmed a memorial event for the late Lyn Keep (*TD* 03 Nov) will take place at Hyatt Regency Sydney Ballroom on Sun, 14 Dec.

The company said the gathering will be a chance for friends and industry colleagues to "celebrate the beautiful life of our beloved friend" and "share cherished stories and find comfort in the love she shared with us all".

As per Keep's wishes, attendees are asked to don their most colourful attire.

Register to attend [HERE](#).



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ATAC MEMBER ACQUISITION MANAGER

The **Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC)** is expanding and seeking a dynamic Acquisition Manager to champion the growth of its community of independent travel agents and entrepreneurs.

This newly created role will focus on identifying and onboarding new member agencies, strengthening relationships across the travel industry, and supporting ATAC's mission to empower independent businesses through shared strength, collaboration, and purpose.

The ideal candidate will have proven business development experience within the travel sector, exceptional relationship-building skills, and a genuine passion for helping independent travel entrepreneurs grow and succeed.

Location: Flexible (hybrid/remote options available)

Applications close: 28 November 2025

→ [Click here to apply](#)

ATAC
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HX appoints ANZ head

HX EXPEDITIONS has expanded the remit of senior sales executive Nathaniel Sherborne (**pictured**) to include the Australian and NZ markets.

The promotion sees the UK-based Sherborne take on the new role of Senior Vice President and Managing Director for EMEA, ANZ and global sales enablement.

A spokesperson for HX told **Travel Daily** the Australian and NZ markets have been shifted from the Americas to the European structure, leaving the former local chief Steve Smotrys to focus on North America.

"The broadening of my remit across EMEA and ANZ, alongside continuing to lead global sales enablement and the integration of our GX team,



comes at an important time for HX as we move toward our 130th anniversary," Sherborne said.

"As we approach this milestone, these developments strengthen our ability to elevate the customer experience, drive performance across key regions, and support the next phase of the brand's global growth."

HX's boots-on-the-ground presence will continue to be led by Sales Director Amber Wilson.

The latest development follows a major restructure globally which took place in Sep, and saw CCO Alex Delamere-White, VP People & Culture Belinda Henriksen, and Chief Expedition Officer Alex McNeil exit the line (**TD** 24 Sep). **AB**

Brighton share value

HELLOWORLD Travel paid \$420,000 in shares in addition to an undisclosed sum for its 40% stake in Brighton Travelworld.

An ASX statement confirmed the travel giant issued 240,000 shares priced at around \$1.75 each to fund part of the acquisition (**TD** 14 Nov), placing the share transaction value of the prominent Victorian agency and Magellan network member in excess of \$1.5 million.

Last week, Brighton's Managing Director Julie Avery said the equity purchase demonstrated Helloworld's strong commitment to the business.

EK Starlink rollout

EMIRATES will deploy Starlink wi-fi across its entire fleet, beginning with its B777 aircraft in Nov before completion in 2027.

The ultra-fast internet service will be free for customers across all cabins as part of its wider retrofit program, which CEO Tim Clark said is part of a push for consistency across all aircraft.

Xcel christened in Florida



CELEBRITY Cruises' new ship *Celebrity Xcel* was named yesterday in a pierside ceremony attended by employees, trade partners, international media, and more.

Passengers gathered around *Xcel*'s pool deck for the ceremony, which took place in Fort Lauderdale and included performances from the ship's onboard entertainment team.

Formalities included a pipe and drum corps presentation from the St. Andrews Pipe Band of Miami, as well as an electrified performance of the American national anthem from house guitarist Jeff Arnold.

Attendees also heard from Royal Caribbean Group Chief Executive Officer Jason Liberty and Celebrity President Laura Hodges Bethge, before *Xcel* was christened by her godmother

Janaina Torres, last year named the best female chef in the world by the annual World's 50 Best Restaurants list.

"With each new ship, we raise the bar for the ultimate vacation experience – and *Celebrity Xcel* stands in a class of her own," Liberty said.

"With innovative design, elevated style, and signature hospitality, *Celebrity Xcel*'s arrival sets a new standard for the industry and adds to our collection of experiences that turn the vacation of a lifetime into a lifetime of vacations."

Xcel is now sailing her inaugural season from Fort Lauderdale, offering seven-night itineraries alternating between the Bahamas, Mexico, the Cayman Islands, Puerto Plata, and more.

Pictured: Hodges Bethge and Liberty prepare to welcome *Xcel*.

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QF's A321XLR takes off

QANTAS' next-gen Airbus A321XLR took flight on its first Brisbane-Sydney route yesterday, making it the fourth airline in the world to operate the aircraft and the first in the Asia Pacific.

It will operate up to one return service between the cities every day until the end of the year, although that will increase as more aircraft are delivered.

The A321XLR features a wider and longer cabin than previous narrowbody aircraft and has wider seats, higher ceilings, larger windows and space for around 60% more bags than the Boeing 737s, which it replaces.

"The A321XLR is also far more efficient than the previous generation aircraft it is replacing, which is helping us to progress toward our sustainability goals," commented Qantas Domestic CEO Markus Svensson, adding how much quieter the aircraft is compared to the 737s.



Qantas has two A321XLRs, while its third, Seven Peaks Walk (VH-OGC) is expected to be delivered over the coming weeks.

In Aug, the carrier increased its total order to 48 of the aircraft.

BNE CEO Gert-Jan de Graaff signalled his excitement about the A321XLRs, which he said align with the transformation of the airport's terminals.

"We're investing in screening upgrades, expanded retail and dining options, and improved passenger facilities to create a world-class airport experience from check-in through to boarding," he said. *JHM*



Travel Daily
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G Adv incentive

G ADVENTURES' annual agent incentive is back, offering 15 Aussies a spot at next year's annual GX Summit in Morocco.

Advisors earn one entry for each G Adventures trip they book between now and 31 May.

The top 10 agents from each region will qualify directly, with five 'wildcard' spots available for each region - see [HERE](#) for more

New Cal trade push

NEW Caledonia Tourism has unveiled a fresh B2B platform, offering the trade practical tools to promote the destination, such as brochures, fact sheets, elearning modules, industry updates, an image and video library and more.

The portal also features itineraries for travel agents to inspire clients, such as a roadtripping guide and stopover schedules for cruising itineraries in Lifou and Noumea - see [HERE](#).



Window Seat

OF ALL the items one might feel the need to take in their carry-on luggage, a meat cleaver usually isn't one.

However, staff on a Delta flight to Salt Lake City got a nasty shock when they discovered the "hazardous item" on board the plane - thankfully before take-off.

After reporting the incident to the TSA, all passengers were required to disembark and go through security again.

TSA later confirmed that a passenger had passed through a security checkpoint with a meat cleaver in their carry-on bag, and said they are reviewing the incident.

"We will take appropriate corrective action," it said, and we speculate that some security staff may get the chop.

'Spektakulært'

BLACK FRIDAY SALE



It's not just the views that are spectacular with Hurtigruten's Black Friday Sale. Get up to 50% off Hurtigruten cruises along Norway's famously picturesque coastline when you book before December 8, 2025, and you could witness the Northern Lights or the awe-inspiring Midnight Sun at a price that's just as amazing. Or as the locals would say... 'Spektakulært'! **Don't miss out. Call our local Coastal Specialists on 1300 151 548 or visit [hurtigruten.com](https://www.hurtigruten.com)**

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Tuesday 18th November 2025

Getting drastic on travel

AROUND one in five Aussies are recycling cans and bottles to afford a holiday, a new report from Finder has found.

The broader study showed that a significant cohort of the population are increasingly resorting to “drastic action” to afford their next trip.

This includes selling unwanted household items and clothing (14%), sacrificing social activities (25%), and taking on a second job or side hustle (13%).

The survey of 1,014 respondents also revealed that close to one in two people - equivalent to 10.3 million people - said they are willing to “get creative” so they can pay for their holidays.

Finder’s Money Editor Rebecca Pike said the data paints a clear picture that Aussies are overdue for a break.

“This shows just how desperate some are for a holiday, they’re not just cutting back, they are

hustling hard to make it happen.

“For many, travel isn’t affordable anymore, but consumers are willing to sacrifice everyday comforts to make it happen”. **AB**

Rocking agents in NZ

ARMSTRONG Collective has appointed Cruise World as its GSA for the New Zealand market, which will work with trade partners on product updates for its Rocky Mountaineer and Canyon Spirit brands.

“I’m really delighted to have the knowledgeable and respected team from Cruise World representing us,” said Tony Soden, Director of Sales, Australia and New Zealand.

“It’s an exciting time as we launch our new US brand Canyon Spirit for 2026 as well as looking forward to welcoming many more on board the iconic Rocky Mountaineer,” he added.

ATIA UPDATE

from Richard Taylor, Director of Membership and Industry Affairs



I’M BACK from a visit to Japan, after Fukushima prefecture invited ATIA members on a five-day family of the region.

Stopping in Tokyo before the trip began, the rise in international visitors was quite something to behold.

If the streets of Asakusa are anything to go by, Japan has been flooded with international visitors since my family visited way back in...2023.

So it was ironic that, on the train to Fukushima, I read an article in **travelBulletin** by Jo-Anne Hui-Miller about the growing clamour to get ‘off the beaten track’ - read it **HERE**.

By then I’d been joined by Charisma McDonald of Global Travel Co, Sophie Lin of Reho Travel and Simone Thannhauser of Connections Travel Group. Within a couple of hours we’d arrived at Aizu-Tajima station, where the tourists had melted away to be replaced by forests so mesmerising in colour that they’re my personal travel highlight of 2025.

A bus took us to Ouchi-juku where we ate negi soba, a local dish eaten with a leek instead of chopsticks.

And because this was an ATIA-related trip, we had attracted the

attention of the national broadcaster NHK and the local Fukushima news, both of whom had large cameras observing our every slurp.

If you’re the type of person that enjoys watching your travel friends struggle to eat noodle soup using only a leek, you can enjoy that **HERE**.

Over the next few days we moved towards the coast, where we tasted food and wine, met geishas, dressed up as samurai and painted our own souvenir dolls.

But you’ll also recall that Fukushima experienced the unique triple-whammy of an earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster in 2011.

It doesn’t hide that away, and under their banner of ‘Hope Tourism’, we were taken to several significant spots to learn more about the impact and the revival of tourism that ATIA members can hopefully play a small part in.

The trip was something to be cherished, and part of increasing collaborations with destinations to benefit our members. If you’re reading this as a destination wanting to get the very best travel people on your trip, consider something similar.

Before signing off I want to shout-out the Tourism Authority of Thailand, who commissioned delightful little artworks for the NTIA winners that they’ve recently received.

Collaboration can take many forms.

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Tue 18th November 2025

HX CEO touches down, catches up with trade

HX EXPEDITIONS kicked off an exciting week in Australia with CEO Gebhard Rainer visiting from the London head office to meet the local team and key partners.

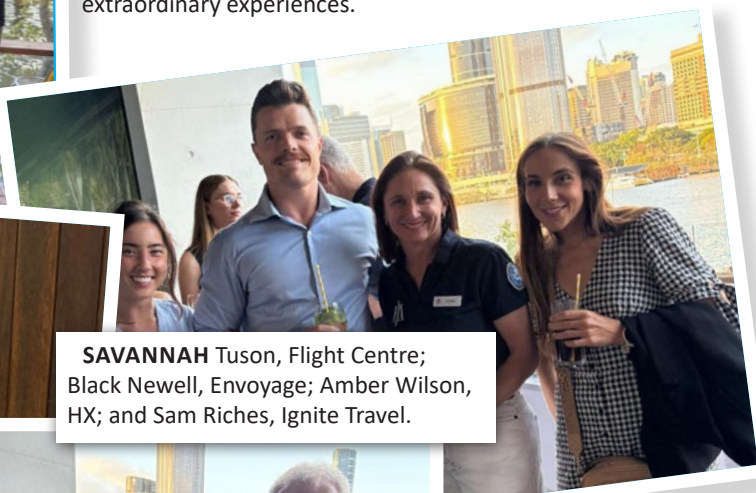
The visit included trade meetings, media interviews, and a lively B2B evening at OTTO Brisbane, all focused on strengthening relationships and sharing what's next for HX Expeditions.

The week wrapped up with the Luxury Travel Collection's Leaders Who Lunch event, where Rainer shared insights on the future of expedition travel.

The recent visit reinforced HX Expeditions' growing presence in Australia and New Zealand and its commitment to delivering extraordinary experiences.



BLAKE Newell, Envoyage; Amber Wilson, HX; Steven Demedio, Mind and Body Travel; Gebhard Rainer, HX; Savannah Tuson, Flight Centre; Jarred Reinke, Luxury Travel Collection; Ruth Bullock, Travel Associates; and Suze Gower-McDonald, Travel Associates.



SAVANNAH Tuson, Flight Centre; Black Newell, Envoyage; Amber Wilson, HX; and Sam Riches, Ignite Travel.



SHANNON Davis, Gebhard Rainer and Amber Wilson from HX Expeditions.



FLIGHT Centre's Meagan Aquilina and Skye Wilkins catching up with HX CEO Gebhard Rainer.



GEBHARD Rainer, HX; Emmalita Malmberg, Link Travel Group; and Shannon Davis, HX.



KELSEY McColl, Cruiseabout; Luke Oakenful, Cruiseabout; Gebhard Rainer, HX; Rebecca McDermott, Cruiseabout; Brad Kennedy, Cruiseabout; and Amber Wilson, HX.



LISA Wright, LTC; Rindala Jensen, TA; Amber Wilson, HX; Gebhard Rainer, HX; Nikki Glading, LTC; Adrian Clarke, LTC; and Shannon Fogarty, LTC.



LUXURY Travel Collection's Leaders Who Lunch in action at Crystalbrook Vincent in Brisbane.



HX'S Gebhard Rainer and Amber Wilson walking partners through what's ahead for the 2027/28 season.



SITA partnership

A PARTNERSHIP to explore flight-specific greenhouse gas emissions calculations has been created between SITA, Amadeus and the Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO).

The partnership will see leading sustainability platforms SITA Eco Mission and Amadeus Travel Impact Suite working together on data collaboration and technology in order to provide a detailed framework of verifiable emissions information across the air travel value chain.

AACO Secretary General, Abdul Wahab Teffaha said of the partnership, "Their collaboration will play a key role in advancing environmental sustainability and strengthening the bond that is between airlines and their customers."

IAATO goes wild

THE International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) is expanding its wildlife monitoring through a new partnership with marine conservation charity, ORCA.

New data integration from the partnership will offer a better understanding of how different marine species use the world's oceans.

Singapore slings a green flight tax

SINGAPORE will become the first country to impose a tax on passengers for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) confirmed this week.

Set to begin in Oct 2026, with the tax attached to bookings made from Apr 2026, it will be calculated according to the class of travel the passenger is flying in.

For economy travellers, that could be as low as SGD\$0.77, while business class passengers could be forking out up to SGD \$41.60 for their flight.

Cargo flights will also be taxed.

Those who are transiting need not worry as the levy will not apply to them.

The tax that the CAAS collects is set to go to the centralised purchase of SAF, with Singapore signalling that it would like to achieve a SAF adoption rate of 3%



to 5% by 2030.

The announcement is a significant one thanks to the amount of traffic that Singapore's Changi Airport attracts, and its status as an Asian mega-hub.

According to the latest statistics from Changi Airport Group (CAG) released on 22 Oct, 17.3 million passengers passed through the airport in Q3 of 2025, a 3.1%

year-on-year increase.

The move will be a welcome one for the SAF industry - the International Air Transport Association noted that SAF production doubled last year but still only accounted for 0.3% of global jet fuel.

CAAS chose to make the announcement while COP30 was taking place in Brazil. DF

HX uses 'silent science' in the battle to quash polar pollution

HX HAS announced the launch of two new 'silent science boats' (pictured), powered by electricity and designed to minimise underwater noise.

The new Zodiacs are fully electric and feature RAD Propulsion's RAD 40 drive system, touted as the most advanced electric drive available today which is whisper quiet.

They will call *MS Fram* and hybrid-battery powered *MS*



Fridtjof Nansen home, and will operate in the Arctic and Antarctic, where they will be

used predominately for the ships' science team, guest science boat trips, and guest scientists conducting research.

"Sound pollution is one of the most underestimated environmental impacts in these polar regions," Dr Verena Meraldi, HX Chief Scientist said.

"For wildlife under the surface - especially whales - noise can mean the difference between thriving and struggling." DF



SOUTHEAST ASIA SAILING

Viking Managing Director Michelle Black on the cruise line's growth in the region.

» CLICK HERE TO READ

Travel Daily

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.649

THE Australian dollar has lost ground against the greenback, which is gaining strength ahead of the return of US economic data this week as the government shutdown comes to an end.

Additionally, US President Donald Trump cut a number of food-related import tariffs on Fri to relieve domestic inflationary pressures, which indicates a continued easing in trade tensions.

Meanwhile, investors Down Under wait with bated breath for the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) minutes to be released later today.

If the RBA is hawkish about the inflationary outlook for the economy, pundits believe we could see a lift in the AUD.

RBA Deputy Governor Andrew Hauser warned recently that Australia's economy has "much less spare capacity" than in previous cycles, signalling that interest rate cuts at this time are unlikely.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.649
UK	£0.494
NZ	\$1.149
Euro	€0.560
Japan	¥100.80
Thailand	฿21.08
China	¥4.613
South Africa	11.14
Canada	\$0.912
Bitcoin	0.00000676

Carnival thanks nurses



AS A gesture of appreciation, Carnival Cruise Line (CCL) recently treated 10 dedicated nurses and healthcare workers from Queensland Children's Hospital to a spa day on board *Carnival Luminosa*.

The hospital staff were invited to the luxurious Cloud9 Spa, one of the largest spas in the cruise line's global fleet, featuring a menu of indulgent treatments and offerings, including massages, a hydrotherapy pool and thermal suites.

Since 2019, CCL has donated over \$132,000 to the Children's Hospital Foundation in Queensland, which provides vital support and care for sick kids across the state, including access to specialist equipment, research, and wrap-around family services.

"Carnival is proud to support the incredible work of the Children's Hospital Foundation and the healthcare heroes who make a difference every day," said Anton Loeb, Assistant Vice President Sales & Marketing, Carnival Cruise Line Australia.

"Through activities like our

Conga for Kids initiative, our guests have helped raise funds that go directly towards improving the lives of children and families that need it most.

"Today's ship spa day was a small way to say thank you to those who give so much." *JHM*

Pictured: Dedicated hospital staff enjoyed a relaxing morning on board *Luminosa*.

Better data needed

SEVENTY percent of travellers in APAC would pay up to 30% for a personalised upgrade, according to a new report from data platform Ireckonu.

However, only 22% of hotel chains have a centralised data structure, signalling a need for robust data solutions.

"By connecting the dots between data, compliance, and guest experience, APAC hoteliers can lead the next wave of hospitality growth," said Sam Samsudi, Ireckonu's Director of Business Development.

LA Tourism appts

LOS Angeles Tourism has welcomed Myfanwy McGregor as Director of Global Communications, APAC and promoted Craig Gibbons to Regional VP, APAC.

McGregor will lead the DMO's comms strategy, while Gibbons now oversees its marketing, PR, trade strategy, and more.

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News Journalist

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Solomon Islands – Warm Welcomes, Wild Wonders

'Solomon Islands – Warm Welcomes, Wild Wonders' takes the Tagline win!

STAGE & Screen Travel Services' Cassy Nguyen has been named the winner of Tourism Solomons "Let Your Imagination Set Sail — and Win!" creative challenge for Australian travel agents.

Cassy's winning entry, 'Solomon Islands – Warm Welcomes, Wild Wonders' was chosen as the perfect encapsulation of the destination's dual appeal — the warmth of its people and the untouched adventure that awaits travellers across its 992-island archipelago.

The Tourism Solomons' judging panel described the tagline as "short, memorable, and emotionally resonant — ideal for use across social, digital, and print channels and aligns beautifully with the destination's core brand values and current South Pacific regional marketing trends.

A thrilled Cassy said her had wanted to succinctly capture the feeling of visiting the Solomon Islands.

"The alliteration made it more memorable, and 'Warm Welcomes' made me think of the smiling faces of the locals and their rich culture," she said.

"'Wild Wonders' evokes the imagination — the natural beauty and adventure that the Solomon Islands has to offer, from the beaches and diving to fishing and trekking."

Tourism Solomons Australia Trade Manager, Richard Skewes, who devised the concept, said the competition was designed to celebrate the creativity and insight of the Australian travel trade.

"This wasn't just about finding a tagline — it's also about recognising the critical role travel agents play in shaping how travellers see and

experience destinations. Cassy's entry stood out immediately; it's authentic, emotive, and beautifully captures what makes the Solomon Islands so special — the people and the place," Mr Skewes said.

NEED HELP?

Speak to the expert - Tourism Solomons' Trade Manager Australia/New Zealand, Richard Skewes is the go to point for all travel industry related enquiries:

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