

VA extends Myer

EXPANDING on its deal with department store Myer, Virgin Velocity members can now make purchases using points in-store as well as online.

The tie-up was extended under the watch of former Qantas Head of Loyalty Olivia Wirth, who is now Myer's Executive Chair.



Wendy Wu Tours

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2026/27
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DISCOVER MORE

NT merges tourism efforts

JUST two months after the NT Government revealed Tourism NT and the Territory's major events teams would integrate efforts to avoid duplication (**TD** 04 Jul), it has been confirmed the two entities will merge on 01 Jan 2026 to drive greater visitation.

Tourism NT and NT Major Events Company will operate as Tourism and Events Northern Territory, which NT Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Marie-Claire Boothby, said would streamline operations and enhance the ability to market tourism and events with "greater impact".

A new Tourism and Events NT Advisory Board will also be formed under the reform, charged with providing forward-thinking ideas that align with the NT Government's broader economic strategies.

"We want innovators, connectors and thought leaders who can provide transformational advice, anticipate national and



global trends, and help shift the dial for the NT economically, reputationally and experientially," Boothby said.

The Top End has also recruited former Brand USA marketing supremo Staci Mellman to be the CMO of the combined entity.

She will formally take the reins from 01 Oct, with her remit to have an emphasis on driving more visitation during the shoulder and off-peak seasons.

A bill will be introduced next month to amend the *Tourism NT Act 2012* to establish the new entity and advisory board. **AB**

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily features six pages of the latest travel news.

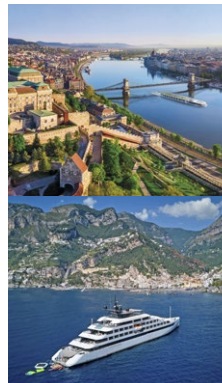
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Scenic Group which includes Scenic & Emerald Cruises brands is looking for a Product Co-ordinator to work in the Sydney office Product Team.

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QF axes WA flight

QANTAS has confirmed it will drop its Perth to Busselton flights, only three months after launching the route (**TD** 30 Jun), citing low demand as the reason.

Tickets for the 45-minute flight cost about \$450 return on average, which was operating at less than 20% capacity.



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NSW taps advice on 2035

THE NSW Government has established three new advisory committees to help it achieve its ambitious goal of attracting \$91 billion in annual visitor expenditure by 2035 (**TD** 27 Aug).

Chaired by various Destination NSW board members and industry leaders, the trio of committees will focus on objectives concerning aviation, accommodation, and jobs.

The Aviation Advisory Committee is co-chaired by Destination NSW executives Andrew McEvoy and Venues NSW CEO Kerrie Mather, while the Accommodation Advisory Committee is led by Anna Guillan, Deputy Chair of Destination NSW.

Meanwhile, the Jobs Advisory Committee is co-chaired by Destination NSW's Kirsten Andrews and Emma Hogan.

As Vice-President, External Engagement at the University of Sydney, Andrews currently



manages recruitment of international students, identified as a key opportunity to strengthen the state's tourism and travel workforce.

"Achieving the bold and ambitious targets set by the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035 will require collaborative action," NSW Minister for Tourism Steve Kamper (**pictured**) said.

"The new advisory committees will...ensure we are equipped to create new pathways for visitation and expenditure growth," the Minister added.

The Visitor Economy Strategy 2035 also seeks to achieve 40,400 new hotel rooms, 8.5 million new airline seats, and an additional 150,000 jobs. **AB**

Win a trip to Japan

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) is offering three of its members the chance to visit Fukushima in Japan on a famil hosted by the body's Director of Membership and Industry Affairs, Richard Taylor.

A competition to score a spot is now open for ATIA-accredited businesses, with contestants asked to submit a short application explaining why they should be chosen - see **HERE**.

The five-night famil will depart 03 Nov and return on 09 Nov, with participants to meet with local government officials to gain insights into Fukushima's tourism development and experience first-hand what the prefecture offers Australian travellers.

Fukushima will cover all costs related to international return flights, transport, accommodation and meals for the duration of the trip, with members only needing to cover personal spending, insurance and incidental spend.

Machu Picchu back

TOURIST train services to Machu Picchu and visitor activities within the Inca citadel have resumed following protests that blocked train tracks using rocks and logs.

Protesters were critical of how a new bus operator servicing the famous Peruvian attraction was being selected, with train transport blockages resulting in 1,400 tourists needing to be evacuated from Aguas Calientes.

PROMPERU has provided the WhatsApp number +51 944-492-314 for 24/7 assistance.

Vanuatu meets Ray

THE Vanuatu Tourism Office has launched a new video-led campaign called 'The Wake-Up Call', featuring Kiwi comedian and *Have You Been Paying Attention?* regular Ray O'Leary.

Painting the story of an "unlikely visitor" in O'Leary, the push showcases cheeky adventure.



EARN
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15 September – 10 October 2025

Royal Brunei Airlines will increase BSP commission to 6%



Contact melrba@rba.com.bn for more information. 6% Commission can be claimed on any BI672 ticket issued to any destination for any departure date on Royal Brunei published gross fares issued between 15 September and 10 October 2025 inclusive. Must be claimed via BSP at point of sale. Terms and conditions apply.

Punctuality still an issue

THE on-time performance of Australia's airlines has lifted slightly since Jun's plummet, with an average of 75% across both arrivals and departures in Aug - up from 73.6% the month prior.

However, the on-time figure is still significantly below the long-term of 81.3%, the latest data from BITRE shows.

Meanwhile, the cancellation rate has improved beyond the long-term average of 2.2%, with the carriers collectively achieving 3% last month.

In terms of punctuality, the



Qantas network led the pack of major domestic carriers, recording 76%, followed by Virgin Australia, which had an on-time hit rate of 68%.

Virgin Australia saw the best cancellation rate at just 1.4%, followed by Jetstar at 2%, while Qantas recorded the highest percentage of cancellations at 3.3% during Aug.

BITRE has also released its domestic passenger traffic data for Jul, which shows that 5.77 million pax were carried on Australian domestic commercial aviation (including charter operations) - up 3.9% on Jul 2024.

This also represents an increase of 1.1% on pre-COVID Jul 2019 passenger numbers.

Additionally, Australian carriers saw their capacity - measured by available seat kilometres - increase to 7.93 billion in Jul 2025 compared to 7.72 billion in Jul 2024 (up 2.7%).

Notably, regional airports enjoyed an uplift of 3.5% in domestic passenger movements throughout Jul, compared to the same period year prior. *JM*



Cyber disruptions

HUNDREDS of flights departing from London Heathrow, Dublin, Brussels and Berlin were heavily delayed or cancelled following a cyber attack on Collins Aerospace over the weekend.

The cyber attack affected check-in and boarding systems for several airlines, with staff working to manually check-in guests and print boarding passes.

Collins Aerospace said it was actively working to resolve the issue and restore functionality to customers "as quickly as possible".

Uber wildlife tours

SAFARI operators in Kenya can now connect directly with travellers eager to take a wildlife or nature-based tour following the local launch of Uber Safari.

The rideshare giant's new African venture promises to deliver greater visibility to smaller safari operators and more options for visitors in Nairobi.

Uber Safari's arrival in Kenya follows its launch in South Africa one year ago (*TD* 03 Oct 2024).

Industry observers however have expressed caution, warning that unregulated growth and unchecked visitor numbers have the potential to overwhelm habitats, dilute experience quality and impact sustainability efforts.

Legend to sail early

ROYAL Caribbean will introduce its third Icon-class ship *Legend of the Seas* nearly one month earlier than planned, bringing forward the date of its maiden departure of 02 Aug 2026 to 11 Jul 2026.

Guests booked on the inaugural voyage have been contacted and offered the opportunity to move their booking to the new date, with three new sailings added.

Two other new sailings have been added as a result of the new timetable on 18 Jul and 25 Jul, voyaging roundtrip from Civitavecchia with stops in Naples, Barcelona, Palma De Mallorca, and Provence.

CEO blasts asset deal

NORTHERN Territory Indigenous Business Network CEO Naomi Anstess has criticised the likelihood of Journey Beyond acquiring Voyages Indigenous Tourism assets (*TD* 12 Sep).

While acknowledging traditional owners are involved in the conversation, Anstess claimed the assets falling into the hands of a US-backed company would be "dispossessing to mob".

"It will take away from the opportunities for it to be black owned and black led; it takes away from opportunities for mob to create an economic pathway."

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) previously stated its objective with the deal is to return land to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and create benefits for traditional owners.

Aranui's new duo

ARANUI Cruises has announced it will have two ships sailing French Polynesia for the first time in 2027, with the new 198-guest *Aranao* set to join the 230-guest *Aranui 5* to offer year-round cruises in the region.

Aranao will operate 18 itineraries during her maiden season, calling at Society Islands and Bora Bora.

The new ship will have 93 cabins including 62 with a private balcony, plus two restaurants, two bars, two spa pools, a fitness centre and tattoo parlour.

Aranui Cruises is offering a 20% discount for *Aranao*'s first two voyages to the Austral Islands including Rapa, with prices starting at \$7,611pp for departures on 06 Mar and \$7,347 for departures on 24 Mar.

2026

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Hobart hotel opens

BOUTIQUE hotel Moss has opened its doors in Hobart. Owned by the Behrakis Group, the 41-room hotel is located in 19th century warehouses and resides in two buildings separated by a city block - a more private property is at 39 Salamanca Place, while the other is at 25, in the middle of the main street.

Unforgettable recruit

UNFORGETTABLE Travel Company has announced its new Global Director of Product and Operations, Charlotte Wells, who will also be joining the business' executive team.

As part of her remit, Wells will focus on strategic product expansion, integration of a new reservations system, and operational delivery of all three brands: Unforgettable Travel, Unforgettable Croatia and Unforgettable Greece.

New Princess ports

PRINCESS Cruises' *Sun Princess* will be exploring new ports on its western Mediterranean voyages in 2026 and 2027, including maiden calls in Ajaccio, Palma, Ibiza and Santa Margherita.

The new ports will be added to 16 seven-day itineraries in France, Italy and Spain, departing from 04 Apr 2026 to 17 Oct 2027.

A two-night stay in La Spezia will also be included.

To make way for the flurry of new ports, Princess Cruises has dropped Gibraltar from calls.

Thomas goal a cut above



TRAVELMANAGERS (TM) Operations Executive Georgia Thomas has smashed her goal of raising \$5,000 for Variety's Hair with Heart campaign (**TD** 12 Sep), which saw her cut off and donate 60 centimetres of her golden locks to the organisation.

Thomas has raised almost \$8,300 for the cause, currently bettering her initial target by almost two-thirds, in an effort she described to **TD** as "insane".

"I was not expecting it at all," she said the day after the chop.

Thomas took to the stage on Wed at the company's annual conference to undergo the trim, where two of her colleagues, Tania Myles and Troy Coelho, made the first snips.

Thomas also had the chance

to speak to attendees about her personal journey since joining TravelManagers seven years ago, which has included battling a number of serious knee injuries.

She told **TD** preparing to tell her story on stage highlighted to her the importance of empathy.

"Working in head office, you have a customer service voice on, and people think you're a happy-go-lucky person, but back then, I was not," she explained.

"I can understand sometimes PTMs are probably not in a good place and they're just trying to get what they need from me."

Thomas said her campaign is likely to remain open for a few more weeks before she wraps up the fundraising effort - **CLICK HERE** to donate. **MS**



Window Seat

COMEDIAN Dave Hughes recently suffered a rather embarrassing trip through Sydney Airport security.

Taking to Instagram to discuss the awkward moment, Hughes said security staff asked him to remove his jeans because there was an unidentified item lodged behind his upper leg.

When Hughes removed his pants, he was mortified to find yesterday's pair of underpants uncovered by staff.

But that was not the worst of the indignity suffered by Hughes, who told his followers that he was also asked to walk back through security and put the old pair of undies on a tray so they could be scanned by airport systems in isolation.

Hughes confessed the unusual moment was likely "the most embarrassing moment of my life".



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Mon 22nd Sep 2025

DAY two of the TravelManagers conference in Bali saw attendees up bright and early for a community project, with PTMs and other guests pitching in to help at a local school.

Following a range of plenary sessions and keynotes, conference delegates then headed to the other side of the Bukit Peninsula to Locca Sea House, where they ate, drank, and of course danced the night away, thanks to Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings.

However the highlight of the day saw TravelManagers' own Georgia Thomas lose her golden locks for charity, an effort for which she has raised a very impressive \$8,000 - see **p4**.

TravelManagers conference hits the beach



WHETHER you're a client or not, TravelManagers PTMs are always there to help.

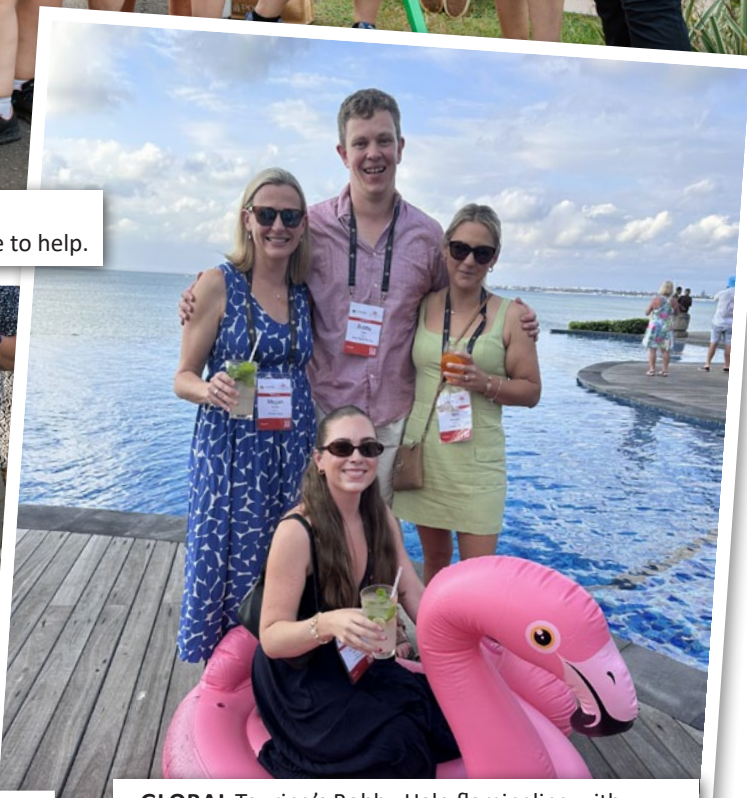


LIA Malone, TravelManagers; **Gaby** Percy, Coral Expeditions; and **Mel** Whyte, TravelManagers.

SOME got their toes wet at Locca Sea House, while others chose dry land.



TRAVELMANAGERS partnership managers **Lucy** Hunter, **Linda** McMullen, **Jodie** Beck, and **Nicole** Henderson.



GLOBAL Touring's **Bobby** Hale flamingling with Intrepid's **Meg** Lowe, **Rhi** Morgan, and **Caitie** Taylor.



TTC'S Global Head of Marketing & Campaigns **Mia** Hamzic and Key Account Manager **Ki** Williams.



TRAVELMANAGERS Executive General Manager **Michael** Gazal with Entire Travel Group Sales & Marketing Director **Greg** McCallum.

BROCHURES

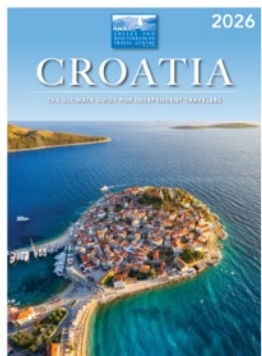
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Viva Holidays - UK & Ireland 2026

Designed to help you deliver truly memorable holidays, Viva Holidays' latest UK & Ireland brochure features a new collection of authentic experiences, such as a private viewing of the Crown Jewels with a Yeoman Warder and an exclusive after-hours tour of the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum vaults. Over 60 pages, the brochure also includes iconic experiences like ABBA Voyage, West End theatre tickets, Highland Games experiences, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo packages, Irish castle stays and much more. View or

download the digital guide [HERE](#).



Greece & Mediterranean Travel Centre-Croatia 2026

From ancient cities and UNESCO-listed landmarks to the waters and hidden island gems, the Greece & Mediterranean Travel Centre's latest collection is showcased in this brand-new brochure. Tailor-made land tours, immersive cruise journeys, and the freedom of a self-drive adventure are all highlighted in the brochure. New for 2026 are the brand's Variety Cruises - boutique itineraries that go beyond the Croatian coast to include Montenegro, Albania and

Italy. Download it [HERE](#).



Bunnik Tours - Egypt & Jordan 2026/27

Bunnik Tours has unveiled its new Egypt & Jordan 2026/27 brochure, showcasing its upcoming small group journeys across the region. Readers will discover a range of Classic Tours, including the 12-day 'Highlights of Egypt' journey, as well as the brand's In-Style Tours, which feature bespoke accommodation and deluxe experiences. The brochure also includes options for extensions, such as a four-day deep dive into the ancient city of Petra and a two-day adventure in Alexandria. The new

guide can be accessed online [HERE](#).

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Mitchell bowled by Stars



SELF-CONFESSED cricket tragic Brett Mitchell was caught and bowled over last week when players from the Melbourne Stars cricket side paid a visit to Intrepid Travel's Melbourne HQ.

The visit to the tour operator coincided with Intrepid signing on for a second year as the Platinum Partner of the Big Bash side.

"Cricket, like travel, has a special way of bringing people together from all walks of life and all corners of the world," Mitchell wrote on LinkedIn.

The Melbourne Stars Women's

Big Bash side open their season on 10 Nov when they take on the Adelaide Strikers. *ML*

Mitchell is **pictured** centre with Intrepid Travel General Manager - Sales & Marketing ANZ, Yvette Thompson and Melbourne Stars players - fast bowler Scott Boland and batter Meg Lanning.

SYD signs SkyBus

SKYBUS has been appointed as the Sydney Airport's new ground transport partner, providing airside and landside services, as well as inter-terminal transfers.

The five-year agreement covers services between gates and aircraft as well as landside operations to the Blu Emu Carpark and inter-terminal running.

SkyBus is also continuing to improve efficiency by progressing toward a fully-electric bus fleet.

Carnival to Hawaii

CARNIVAL Cruise Line will operate a dedicated series of sailings between the US West Coast and Hawaii as part of its 2027/28 line-up.

Operating under the Carnival Journeys banner, the line's new Hawaii program will see *Carnival Legend* depart from Long Beach on 14-day voyages between Oct 2027 and Apr 2028.

Itineraries will call in Honolulu, Maui, Kauai, Hilo and Kona, as well as a stop in the Mexican town of Ensenada on return.

Ten departures are now on sale along with a new series of six- and eight-day Mexican Riviera cruises, which visit Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and La Paz.