

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of the latest industry news, plus a full page from **Abercrombie & Kent**.

## CTM cleared in Aus

**CORPORATE** Travel Management (CTM) has been cleared of systemic overcharging in its Australian Government travel arrangements following an independent audit.

The results of the review, which was commissioned due to the company's major accounting irregularities in the UK, were released today by the Department of Finance.

Commencing in Jan 2026, the review assessed CTM's management of the Australian Government travel program, including the application of travel charges, fees, refunds and booking practices.

The department said it would continue to closely monitor the company's operations. *JM*

## Terra Nova swaps ships

**AFTER** facing challenges with returning its *St Helena* vessel (pictured) to Australia from the Persian Gulf, Terra Nova Expeditions has confirmed a pivot to a different ship to keep its Antarctica season on schedule this summer.

Citing safety concerns in being able to make the transit through the Strait of Hormuz in time for the inaugural season, the cruise company has secured the services of *Terra Nova Adventurer* in place of *St Helena* for its first three seasons, starting on 09 Dec.

CEO and founder Greg Carter said that "change is hard", especially when you have to invest so much into a business.

## A&K is ready to book

**ABERCROMBIE & Kent** (A&K) is highlighting its private ready-to-book journeys, such as the 'A&K Sanctuary Kenya Safari'.

See the **back page** for more.



"Geopolitical uncertainty has forced us to make some tough decisions as we head into our packed-out first season," he said.

"That has ultimately led us to the *Terra Nova Adventurer* - building a business is rarely a straight line and you just have to keep moving forward," he added.

Previously known as the *MS Expedition* and the *G Expedition* for G Adventures, *Terra Nova Adventurer* has a capacity of around 128 pax, slightly larger than *St Helena's* 98-guest size.

Terra Nova Expeditions will now make some upgrades ahead of her maiden season, including furnishings and adding a Jacuzzi and a new sauna on Deck 5.

Carter also confirmed the cruise line still has some spaces left for the debut season outside of its sold-out departures. *AB*

## Helloworld in support

**HELLOWORLD** Travel has placed its support behind the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) as the major sponsor of Beyond Borders (BB) and the gold sponsor of entertainment for the National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA).

"Both events provide an important platform to highlight the talent, innovation and professionalism that define the Australian travel industry," Helloworld Travel COO and exec director Cinzia Burnes said.

ATIA CEO Dean Long added: "As Major Sponsor of Beyond Borders, Helloworld is helping us build a summit that moves the sector's thinking forward rather than restating it."

"As Gold Sponsor of the Entertainment at the NTIA, they are helping us give the trade a night the industry deserves."

BB takes place on Fri 09 Oct, followed by the prestigious NTIAs on Sat 10 Oct. *JM*



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## Twenty years of going solo

**ENCOUNTER** Travel celebrated its 20th anniversary this month, marking two decades of group travel for solo guests in Australia.

Founded by Justine Waddington (**pictured**) in 2006, the company today offers small-group tours, resort escapes, and ocean and river cruise groups exclusively for solo travellers, working directly with a network of travel agents across Australia.

"I'm incredibly proud of where we started and where



we are today, with departures across more than 50 countries," Waddington said.

"When I started this business, there was very little out there for people who didn't have a travel buddy but didn't want to go it alone," she reflected.

"They were joining tours full of couples and feeling like the odd one out, or they just weren't travelling at all.

"That is the gap we have filled, and we are still here filling it 20 years on."

Showing no signs of slowing down, Encounter is seeing growing demand from people in their fifties and over. *JM*

## Bolivia warning

**SMARTTRAVELLER** has upgraded its warning for Aussies travelling to the Chapare region in Bolivia, raising the level to 'Reconsider Your Need to Travel' due to a sharp rise in violence linked to drug trafficking.

The DFAT division continues to advise 'Exercise a High Degree of Caution' in Bolivia overall. *AB*

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## Welcome WebBeds

**WEB** Travel Group has advised the market that it has received shareholder approval to change its name to WebBeds Group Limited, a move flagged by chair Roger Sharp last week before the vote (**TD** 27 Aug 2026).

The name change will take effect on the ASX from tomorrow, but its trading ticker code will remain as 'WEB'. *AB*

## A brand-new dream

**SEADREAM** Yacht Club has hinted a third ship is on the way, dropping a teaser across its major marketing channels on Fri.

Stating that a "new chapter is on the horizon" alongside a trio of ship silhouettes (**pictured**), the hint implies a third vessel may be part of a new class. *AB*



## Win a trip to Britain

**VISITBRITAIN** and Emirates will select six Australian travel advisors to join an eight-night trip to Britain in Feb 2027, exploring Manchester, Wales, Bath, Bristol and Oxfordshire.

To be in the running to win a spot on the famil, agents need to submit an EOI **HERE** and register **HERE** to attend the VisitBritain Travel Advisor Showcase, which takes place in Auckland on 10 Sep, Sydney on 14 Sep and Melbourne on 16 Sep.

Two agents will be selected from each city, and must be present at the showcase when the winners are announced. *JM*

## More double rewards

**INSPIRING** Vacations has extended its double commission rates of up to 20% on all eligible new bookings until 04 Sep 2026.

Commissions will be applied at the time of booking, with no caps on the boosted earnings. *AB*

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## LATAM connects

**LATAM** has confirmed plans to install satellite wi-fi on more than 60 new aircraft, investing A\$34.8 million in SES technology that will be installed across its fleet of Airbus and Embraer aircraft.

“By introducing next-generation multi-orbit connectivity across a larger portion of our fleet, we will provide our passengers with a fast and reliable onboard internet experience, helping them stay connected wherever they fly, while continuing to raise the standard of travel across Latin America,” LATAM’s vice president of customer experience Paulo Miranda said.

LATAM Pass members access satellite wi-fi for free, while charges for texting for non-members start from US\$2 and streaming from US\$12. *JB*



## India bets on Netflix effect

OPINION

*Nupur Khurana is the representative for QXP India Travel across Australia and NZ.*

**ASK** an Australian traveller to picture a holiday in India and chances are the same places

spring to mind: Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, perhaps Goa.

But that barely scratches the surface of a country where the experience can change completely within a few hundred kilometres.

India’s challenge is not a lack of places worth visiting, but getting travellers to know they exist. That’s what makes the Indian Ministry of Tourism’s new partnership with Netflix interesting.

The partnership has announced ‘As Seen on Netflix’, a new section on the Incredible India website that will connect locations, cultural traditions and experiences featured in Netflix titles with travel inspiration.

It taps into the growing trend of ‘screen tourism’. *Emily in Paris* made viewers want to inhabit the French capital, while *Squid Game* helped feed international curiosity about South Korea. Travellers encounter these destinations through characters and stories,



“Netflix can put an unfamiliar corner of India on an Australian traveller’s radar”

rather than a tourism ad.

For India, that could be particularly powerful.

“There isn’t one India, there are many Indias,” Netflix co-CEO Ted Sarandos said at the launch.

Take the Academy Award-winning doco, *The Elephant Whisperers*, filmed at Tamil Nadu’s Theppakadu Elephant Camp.

Dating back more than a century, it is Asia’s oldest elephant camp.

Or Musafir Cafe, a hilltop cafe built inside the impressive Jharipani Castle, a working heritage hotel in the Himalayas.

Neither fits neatly into a first-time India itinerary.

But put a compelling story around a place and suddenly a traveller who had never heard of it is asking: can I go there?

That is where the opportunity for the travel trade begins.

Netflix can put an unfamiliar corner of India on an Australian traveller’s radar, but turning that curiosity into a great itinerary still requires local knowledge and connections.

Perhaps that is the real potential of ‘As Seen on Netflix’: giving travellers a reason to venture beyond places they already know.

Screen tourism may provide the inspiration, but it is the trade that will turn the trailer into a trip.

Ord River, near Kununurra, Western Australia

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## Linking four more

**LINKD** Tourism has added four new clients to its roster, revealing that Sentosa Development Corporation, ProColombia Tourism Management, Samoa Tourism Authority and Kintetsu Group Holdings all came on board last week.

The agency will deliver a range of services, including social media and influencer programs, events and roadshows, trade engagement and SEO.

To cater for its sharp growth, Linkd has redeployed Millie Browne as GM, trade and operations, while Emma Prineas moves into the role of GM, PR and marketing.

Meanwhile, Cathy Xu is now marketing & campaigns director, while Mel Newton moves into the trade director role. *AB*



## Rural agent salutes referrals for success

EXCLUSIVE

**RUNNING** a successful travel agency in rural Australia is based on establishing a strong sense of trust and relationships with the local community, according to Personal Travel Manager (PTM) Bronwen Dascombe.

Speaking with *Travel Daily* at the 2026 TravelManagers conference, Dascombe (**pictured**) operates her business in Taroom, a town in Qld's Western Downs, with a population of around 700.

Her company relies heavily on referrals, with 90% of her customers coming through word-of-mouth recommendations.

"They come to me for me, for my knowledge that has been [mentioned] by somebody, because these people want that experience and they also want to feel like they are looked after the whole time," Dascombe said.

"Honestly, word-of-mouth is the biggest compliment that anybody



can give - that is how most of my bookings come about.

"If you are a travel agent in a small community, people might say 'you need to go to this travel agent' because we did an Africa trip or 'she knew what she was talking about' because we have travelled to Canada."

Dascombe added that one of the biggest challenges working as a rural PTM is taking into account the unique travel trends of the average local resident, as well as their lifestyle.

"A lot of people in our

community own farms, so it is very hard to get away.

"So when they can get away, they do a month away at a time, because it is going to take just as much effort to organise a month away as it would to arrange a week away," she explained.

"Most of my international flights are out of Brisbane [so] I always tell people, arrive there the day before because it takes us six hours to drive to Brisbane."

However, Dascombe is keen to inspire more regional communities to travel, despite the challenges they may face

"There are so many people, especially regionally, who have these cattle properties that are very hard to look after, and these people deserve holidays.

"I would love to be able to help these people actually take that step in moving forward, and actually going on this holiday that they deserve." *JB*

## Seabourn storytellers

**SEABOURN** has revealed the first line-up of influential figures from *The Atlantic* who will sail as part of Seabourn Conversations.

David Frum and Megan Garber, the publication's staff writers, will join guests on *Seabourn Ovation*, alongside Yvonne Rolzhausen, senior editor and head of fact-checking, and Evan Smith, managing director of events.

The series will begin on 31 Oct 2026 aboard the 13-day 'Atlantic Coast: Lighthouses and New England Charms' itinerary. *JM*

## Transatlantic special

**CUNARD** has reduced deposits for its Transatlantic Crossing to 5% on select departures setting sail in 2026, 2027 and 2028.

The seven-night itinerary is operated by *Queen Mary 2* from Southampton, with the offer available on bookings made before 14 Sep 2026, or until sold out - more details **HERE**. *JM*

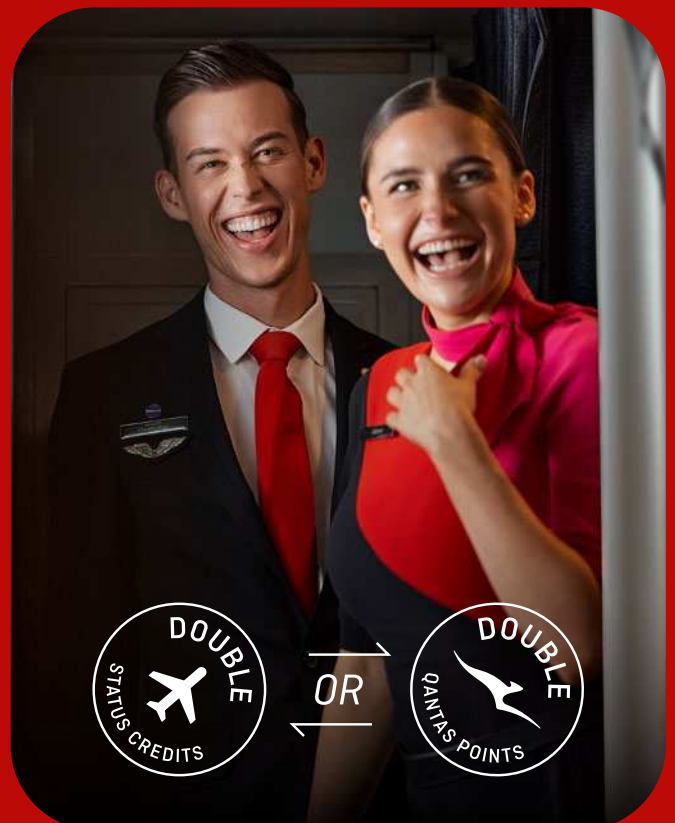
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## HAL makes passage

**HOLLAND** America Line (HAL) has opened bookings for its 2028 Alaska season, with cruises ranging from seven to 18 days.

The season will feature vessels such as the reimagined *Oosterdam*, *Noordam*, *Eurodam*, *Koningsdam* and *Zaandam*.

Highlights of the season include the 11-day 'California to Alaska: Shores, Fjords and Glaciers' voyage, commencing in San Diego, as well as Great Bear Rainforest itineraries and *Oosterdam's* Alaska debut. *JB*

## Cyprus ferry disaster

**AT LEAST** eight people have died after a ferry carrying 259 passengers capsized shortly after leaving Kyrenia, a holiday resort in Northern Cyprus.

A search-and-rescue operation is currently underway to locate at least a dozen passengers who are still missing, while an investigation is also being conducted to determine how the tragedy occurred. *JM*

## JB has good taste

**JOURNEY** Beyond (JB) is set to present the next Tasting Australia festival, running from 30 Apr to 09 May 2027 in South Australia.

In its 20th edition, the festival will bring together culinary venues across Adelaide and regional SA for a celebration of its food and wine culture.

Venues can apply to take part in the festival **HERE**, with applications closing 09 Oct. *JB*

## The biggest Avani yet



**MINOR** Hotels is preparing to launch the largest Avani property in Australasia, Avani Cypress Lakes Resort, set to open in phases from Oct.

Located in the NSW Hunter Valley, the development will bring together the existing Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort and

adjoining Elysia Wellness Retreat across 340 acres.

Avani Cypress Lakes will offer 204 rooms and suites across two distinct accommodation experiences, along with an 18-hole golf course, spa and wellness centre, 24 meetings and events spaces, two restaurants, a pool bar and all-day dining.

The property's transformation will also include three pickleball courts, an outdoor cinema, Pilates reformers and outdoor cold-plunge pools. *JM*

## Intrepid doubles up

**INTREPID** has doubled its commitment to the Nepal Flood Appeal (**TD** 28 Aug 2026), now matching donations up to \$200,000, through its not-for-profit The Intrepid Foundation.

The appeal was created to support communities affected by the catastrophic flash floods on the Nepal-China border, including those in the Timure, Rasuwagadhi and Syabrubesi regions, as well as those residing along the Trishuli River corridor.

The death toll stands at 804. *JB*

## VA soaks up the sun

**VIRGIN** Australia (VA) has launched its Queensland sale, with flights to the Sunshine State starting from just \$69 one-way.

Destinations on offer include Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Cairns.

The promo ends 06 Sep (unless sold out prior) for travel between 05 Jan 2027 and 22 Jun 2027. *JB*



## Window Seat

**THE** crowd attending a rugby test match in South Africa were left stunned after a celebratory low flyover by two planes almost collided with DHL Stadium in Cape Town.

While the act of stupidity on behalf of the pilots was bad enough, to make things even more precarious, fireworks were set off as the two Airlink Embraer 190s flew over the venue, with one plane only clearing the roof by less than five metres (**pictured**).

Aviation expert Michael Glynn was quick to post his shock at the display on social media, stating "there are low flyovers and then there's this - whoa boy."

While social media lit up with sentiments of astonishment and dismay, Airlink was quick to boast about the dangerous display, describing the flyover as an act of "planning, precision and performance".

Another flyover is reportedly planned for the third test between South Africa and New Zealand in Soweto on 05 Sep - let's hope the thrills remain on the pitch next time.



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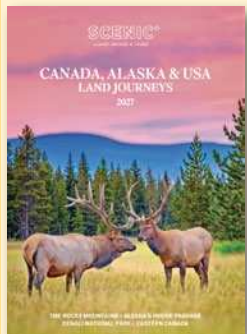
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**Aurora Expeditions: Antarctica 2026-2028**  
Aurora's 2027-28 Antarctica season brochure has been released, offering 34 voyages, including 10 special edition expeditions and four brand-new itineraries. The brochure includes a detailed guide to all the locations offered throughout the season, including East Antarctica, the Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia Island, the Falkland Islands and Patagonia. Each trip features an array of included activities, ranging from guided hikes, a polar plunge, Zodiac cruising and photography. Travellers can also embark on optional activities such as sea kayaking, scuba diving, snorkelling and camping. For a full glimpse of what the season has to offer, click [HERE](#).



The new North American brochure from Scenic showcases its collection of 2027 land journeys, spanning the Rocky Mountains, Alaska's Inside Passage, Denali National Park and Eastern Canada. Small-group itineraries range from nine to 36 days, offering trips across the East and West Coasts. Guests can also combine trips on both sides of the continent via a single booking, blending the rugged mountains of the west and the French-inspired charm of the east. Exclusive to 2027, guests can save up to \$2,000 per person when combining two or more land journeys, with bookings and full payment to be made by 11 Dec 2026. Read the full brochure [HERE](#).



AAT Kings' new brochure provides details on its guided holidays for 2026 and 2027, with travel across both the North and South Islands. Tours in the North Island range from four to 10 days, with highlights such as Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Waitomo Caves, Te Puia and Lake Taupo. For the South Island, trips are longer, ranging from nine to 13 days, where guests can experience Milford Sound, Franz Joseph Glacier, Arrowtown and Pancake Rocks. Alongside breathtaking experiences, guests can also take part in activities that foster connection with the local community, such as honey tasting with a beekeeper and visiting an endangered bird sanctuary. See the brochure [HERE](#).

## Stay Updated

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## Changes create new *Aura*



**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line (NCL) has unveiled the first look at wellness and culinary experiences coming aboard *Norwegian Aura* (TD 17 Apr 2026), slated to debut on 21 May 2027.

*Aura's* Thermal Suite includes 15 wellness experiences, with 11 brand-new options built around contrast therapy.

The Sensory Rain Pool is a 360-degree experience evoking the sensations of calm waters of a tropical rainfall, before culminating in a thunderstorm.

For *Aura's* culinary offerings, Tamara will debut as NCL's first restaurant dedicated to Indian cuisine, designed to elevate the menu enjoyed at the Indulge Food Hall, with a backdrop inspired by North Indian temples.

Another new dining experience is The Panorama Room, using LED displays, surround sound and synchronised lighting to transport guests through changing landscapes across the day and the evening.

"*Norwegian Aura* is all about giving guests more of what they love, with spaces and experiences

that make vacations feel even easier," said Ben Angell, managing director, NCL APAC.

"From Tamara, our new Indian specialty restaurant, which expands the already popular guest eatery in Indulge into an elevated culinary offering, to The Panorama Room's immersive dining experience and our most expansive Thermal Suite to date - every addition has been purposefully designed to give guests more freedom, choice and opportunities to relax, recharge and enjoy their vacation their way, without compromise." JB

## Cyber breaches MAN

**MANCHESTER** Airport (MAN) is the newest target of a cybersecurity incident, involving a breach of customer data.

Exposed personal information includes customers' email addresses, phone numbers and vehicle registrations.

In a statement, the airport reassured customers that it does not keep bank or card information on record. JB



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