

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of the latest travel industry news, plus a full page from Ponant.

Bali Bonanza sale

AIRASIA has launched its 'Bali Bonanza Sale', offering one-way flights from Melbourne to Indonesia's most popular leisure destination from \$185.

Available for bookings made until 17 Jan and for travel until 31 Mar, the budget carrier's promotion also includes Adelaide to Bali flights from \$185, Perth from \$135 and Darwin from \$165.

The Big Bali Bonanza sale is available via the AirAsia MOVE app, airasia.com, online travel agents and authorised partners.

Croatia incentives

TRAVEL advisors who book an Unforgettable Croatia cruise before 02 Mar will be entered into a draw to win a trip for two to Greece with sister brand, Unforgettable Travel.

The winner will be selected at random and includes flights, accommodation and tours across Athens, Crete and Santorini.

Outside of the grand prize, the operator is also offering a bonus 3% commission on any Unforgettable Croatia bookings made before 02 Mar.

Unforgettable Croatia cruises include daily swim stops, free wifi; expert excursions and more.

Family travel skips a gen

SKIP-GENERATION holidays are shaping up to be one of Australia's defining travel trends of 2026, new research from Hilton has suggested.

The hospitality group's 2026 *Trends Report* revealed that 44% of families in Australia plan to travel this year with just grandparents and grandchildren, while 38% are already looking to take at least two skip-generation trips this year.

Most of these trips (76%) are for leisure, however more than a third of respondents said they would travel together for family functions such as weddings and reunions (38%), or to visit



ancestral hometowns (31%).

Educational and cultural trips (24%) and festival-based travel (19%) were also listed as motivators for skip-gen holidays.

According to Hilton, popular destinations for skip-gen travel include cultural hotspots, beach resorts, and emerging city escapes across the Asia Pacific, with most of these holidays being planned around school breaks.

Additionally, families are booking early, with over half (54%) already researching or reserving trips for the year ahead. *JM*

Irish cap pressure

A PROMINENT aviation group in the United States has called for Dublin Airport to lift its long-standing annual cap of 32 million.

Airlines for America (A4A) has requested the US Department of Transport look to curtail or suspend the access of Irish airlines to the country unless the Irish Government lifts the restriction by 01 Feb.

The advocacy group argued that if the existing cap was to remain in place this year, it would effectively result in a restriction of trade on American airlines, and an overall 11% reduction in air traffic growth at Dublin Airport.

A4A members include Delta Air Lines and United Airlines.

Pearl opens 2026-27

BOOKINGS are now open for Pearl Expeditions' 2026 and 2027 seasons, with the price of staterooms leading in from \$8,995 per person, twin share for a five-night expedition.

Sailings for the fledging expedition cruise line's program includes The Kimberley, Papua New Guinea, eastern Indonesia, Borneo, and indigenous regions such as Rowley Shoals.

Pearl Expeditions lists some of its point-of-differences as providing intimate small group trips capped at 30 guests, and curated itineraries created in consort with local communities.

Unlock early savings

PONANT is offering up to 30% savings on its 2026 and 2027 voyages, such as the 13-night 'Expedition to the Edge of the Ice Sheet' itinerary, for travellers who book early.

See the **back page** for details.

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Royal close on Discovery?

MEDIA reports in France suggest Royal Caribbean Group is preparing to place an order with shipbuilder Chantiers de l'Atlantique for its highly anticipated new class of vessels.

A story published by *Le Marin* claims the announcement will be finalised in the coming weeks, and while Royal has not formally confirmed any updates to its



order book, speculation is rife it is the start of production on the touted mid-sized class project under the banner 'Discovery'.

President and CEO of Royal Caribbean International Michael Bayley had previously teased the cruise line was working on a new class of vessel that would compliment its Icon megaships.

"We've been working a lot on the Discovery Class...but it takes a lot of work to design a ship," Bayley previously stated.

One of the rumoured advantages of a smaller mid-sized ship class for Royal would be the ability to visit a larger range of ports and waterways that its larger vessel cannot access.

Royal did not respond when contacted for comment. *AB*

Hurtigruten incentive

HURTIGRUTEN is offering travel advisors the chance to join its ultimate Norway mega famil.

The 12-day adventure will take winners from the Arctic town of Kirkenes to Oslo on Hurtigruten's Original and Signature coastal voyages this Sep.

Those who sell the most Hurtigruten product between 01 Jan and 30 Apr will win a spot, with lucky advisors announced on 12 May - **CLICK HERE** for more.

Landing on Mayfair

A **NEW** 82-room upmarket boutique hotel called The Shepherd Mayfair will soon open its doors in London.

Part of the Elegant Hotel Collection, the upcoming property will offer guests three dining and bar concepts, including the all-day The Lounge, inspired by the May Fair.

There will also be a late-night cocktail bar called Teddy's on the ground floor and a cafe-style eatery serving guests from morning through to evening.

The Shepherd Mayfair's design concept draws upon modern premium influences and the hotel's surrounding neighbourhood for inspiration.



Trevi Fountain fee

TOURISTS in Rome will need to pay an entry fee to visit the Trevi Fountain, along with five other sites in the Italian capital, from 01 Feb (**TD** 06 Sep 2024).

The €2 (A\$3.50) fee aims to combat overtourism, along with a restriction that only allows a cap of 400 people at a time in the area around the fountain.

Entry fees will also be introduced at the Villa of Maxentius and several of Rome's museums.

EY to Luxembourg

ETIHAD Airways has announced nonstop services between Luxembourg and Abu Dhabi, beginning 29 Oct with three weekly services.

Making it the first Middle Eastern airline to service the European country, the new flights will operate using Etihad's A321LR, which features first class suites as well as lie-flat business seats with direct aisle access.

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Tauck a look at this

TAUCK has opened bookings for its safari and global journeys collection for next year, with the tour operator to celebrate 25 years of selling safaris in 2027.

The range, which also includes river and ocean cruising as well as land, will next year expand with a focus on shorter-format safaris.

This includes the nine-day 'Spotlight on South Africa and Victoria Falls' itinerary.

FJ pulls the plug

FIJI Airways has prohibited the use of power banks on board all of its flights and Fiji Link services, as well as in checked baggage and the overhead compartment.

Power banks must soon only be stored in the cabin baggage or seat pocket at all times.

The changes have been put in place to ensure that the airline complies with IATA's Dangerous Goods Regulation.

Changes will be effective 19 Jan.

Australia lags on load

FIGURES for Nov air travel released by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have hailed increases in total demand across revenue passenger kilometres (RPK), available seat kilometres and load factor, however Australia is dragging its heels in the latter category.

Year-on-year Nov revenue was up 5.7% globally, 7.8% for Asia-Pacific and 2.1% for the Australian domestic market, but when it came to load factor level, Australia dropped 3%, the biggest drop of any market data shared by IATA in its latest report.

While Japan (2.8%), Brazil (0.7%) and China (0.9%) recorded increases, Australia was joined by the US (-1.6%) and India (-0.9%) in recorded drops.

Despite this, Australian domestic flights brought in a higher RPK YOY, up 2.1% against a global domestic increase of 2.7%.

The biggest winner in the RPK

stakes was Brazil, registering an 8.3% increase, with India not far behind, increasing 7.7%.

"Nov 2025 saw continued strong demand for air travel with year-on-year growth of 5.7%," Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General said of the figures.

"Load factors reached a new record of 83.7% for the month as airlines continued to satisfy growing passenger demand amid continuing capacity constraints stemming from challenges in the aerospace supply chain."

Walsh urged Boeing and Airbus to clear the backlog of more than 17,000 aircraft orders that was reached in 2025 - he insisted it had to be reduced this year in order for the growth momentum to continue.

"The new year's resolution for the manufacturing sector must be to increase production to meet the needs of their airline customers," he said. *DF*



Window Seat

A STINKY office - we've all experienced it - whether it is a thoughtless colleague bringing in their pungent lunch or spare clothes which are well and truly overdue for a wash.

This fetid wrath enveloped Sydney Airport's air traffic control tower over the 2025-26 holiday period, according to recent reports from *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The putrid smell even had some controllers dry heaving at their desks, with the pong at its most pungent when the wind was blowing in from the north-east - the Malabar Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The recently unearthed complaint found that Sydney Water has since taken action, undertaking work at the site to stop the stink by 10 Jan.



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*Terms and conditions apply. Advertised fares are correct as of 12 January 2026. Offer valid until 28 January 2026, for travel from 12 January 2026 until 30 November 2026, unless sold out earlier.





Luxury comes to Luang



LA RESIDENCE Phou Vao in Laos' Luang Prabang has reopened following its acquisition by HMD Asia (**TD** 04 Nov 2024).

Located in the region's mountainous area overlooking UNESCO-listed temples, the former Belmond property has undergone a full transformation.

The 37 suites now feature brighter timber tones and green accents, with new bathrooms boasting terrazzo bathtubs, separate walk-in showers and spacious dressing areas.

Guests can also enjoy advanced sleeping and lighting systems and options for connecting suites, ideal for large groups, as well as expansive private terraces.

The new restaurant, La Brasserie de la Residence, features an open kitchen and panoramic views of the mountains, and serves a mix of French cuisine and authentic Lao dishes.

Later this year, the hotel will

also roll out a new wellness centre, conference and meeting facilities, and a presidential suite.

"Our goal is to redefine the guest experience in Luang Prabang," said Anthony Lark, executive director of HMD Asia.

"This transformation is just the beginning, and we are excited to share our broader vision to make La Residence Phou Vao the ultimate destination for travellers seeking authenticity, elegance and comfort." *JB/JM*

AIDA's big return

AIDA Cruises will be returning to the Middle East for the 2027/28 season following a two-year hiatus due to concerns about Houthi Rebels attacking ships.

The cruise line has opened bookings on several sailings from seven to 14 nights, calling in the UAE, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar.

Sailings begin 16 Dec 2027.

Viking tees off

VIKING has been announced as the official cruise sponsor for the PGA Tour up until 2030.

The partnership with the golfing body is predominantly branding-based, with Viking looking to display its branding throughout PGA tour events through side billboards and ad campaigns during television broadcast.

"Both golf and travel are important priorities in the lives of many Viking guests, so partnering with the PGA Tour is a natural fit and builds on our continued commitment to support cultural programming," said Richard Marnell, Viking's VP of marketing.



Japan deals bloom

WENDY Wu Tours has introduced savings of up to \$1,000 for Japan trips in time for the cherry blossom season, which runs from mid-Mar to early Apr.

More than 1,700 departures are included in the sale, such as the 14-day 'Discover Japan' tour from \$12,090pp, the 18-day 'Japan Uncovered' from \$14,680pp, and the 22-day 'Japan by Rail' tour from \$16,980pp.

In WWT's recent *Journey Ahead* report, 46% of Australians expressed a desire to travel to Japan and immerse themselves in the scenery and local culture.

The offer ends 27 Feb - **CLICK HERE** for more information.

Asian visa delays

AUSTRALIA has flagged travellers from four Asian countries as high-risk for student visas, moving them into the greatest danger category.

Those from India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan are now subject to tightened security checks for student visa applications for study in Australia.

These countries have been shifted from Evidence Level 2 to 3 under the Simplified Student Visa Framework, and will result in longer processing times.

The re-rating follows concerns over fraudulent academic and financial documents, particularly amid reports of fake degree busts in India.

Blue Sky in Jakarta

SOEKARNO Hatta International Airport in Jakarta has opened a new lounge in collaboration with the Blue Sky Group.

The Blue Sky Lounge, Blue Sky's sixth facility within the hub, will be based in Terminal 1C for domestic passengers.

The 350m² space can cater for 76 guests, and offers a restaurant serving local dishes, an all-you-can-eat buffet, coffee bar, prayer room, as well as a VIP room for an additional fee.

The lounge is now available to passengers flying Citilink domestic services across Indonesia.



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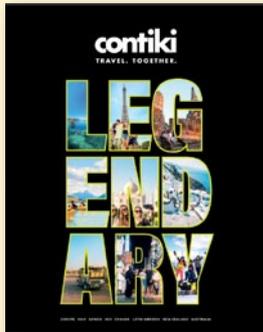
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Silversea - Brand Brochure

The latest brochure from Silversea offers a comprehensive overview of the cruise line's offerings, including its range of voyages, different classes of vessels, and the global destinations it visits. Each itinerary description includes a QR code that links to a page on the Silversea website with further details and booking information. The brochure also showcases the latest amenities and experiences available on board Silversea's vessels, including the various dining options, cooking and drink-making classes, entertainment, and personalised service. Agents and their

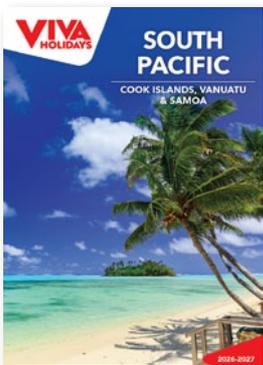
clients can view the full brochure [HERE](#).



Contiki - Europe & Worldwide 2026

Contiki has released its latest brochure aimed at travellers aged between 18 and 35. The 63-page digital document showcases 200 trips across six continents, whether it's island-hopping in the Philippines, exploring ancient history in Rome, or embarking on an active adventure in the US. Within the brochure, agents and their clients will discover a range of on-trip experiences, as well as special offers and insights into the brand's sustainability ethos. **CLICK HERE**

to see the Contiki brochure range.



Viva Holidays - South Pacific 2026/27

Viva Holidays' new brochure is packed with information on the brand's 2026/27 season in the South Pacific, featuring key destinations across the Cook Islands, Vanuatu and Samoa. From overwater bungalows to beachside villas and day tours full of local cultural experiences, the 36-page brochure makes it easy for travellers to plan their next tropical getaway. There are activities to suit every client's taste, from island-hopping and whale-watching adventures, to browsing markets for locally made souvenirs and handicrafts. You can view the full brochure [HERE](#).

Seabourn WC sets sail



SEABOURN Sojourn has officially begun her 129-day world voyage, departing from Long Beach, California last week.

Guests were treated to a pre-departure celebration, which saw them enjoy dinner at Spago Beverly Hills alongside Seabourn President Mark Tamis.

They were then treated to an exclusive Hollywood orchestral evening at the Fox Studios lot, with special appearances from actor Michael Nouri, two-time Grammy-nominated singer Monica Mancini and musician Dave Koz.

Seabourn Sojourn then set sail from Long Beach, and is scheduled to call into 63 destinations across 14 countries.

"Our 2026 World Cruise is one of the most meaningful journeys we offer," Tamis said.

"It brings together everything our guests value, such as time and access to explore the world in depth, paired with personalised service and a relaxed sense of luxury," he added.

Bookings are now available for

upcoming long-haul Seabourn voyages, including the 145-day '2027 World Cruise: Australia and South Pacific Panorama' and the 120-day '2028 Cape to Cape World Cruise', both aboard *Seabourn Quest*. *JB*

QF new business kits

QANTAS has teamed up with R.M. Williams to launch an exclusive collection of amenity kits for business passengers.

Inspired by a warm, earthy colour palette, the four distinctive amenity kits are crafted with R.M. Williams' signature trims with a lining that depicts an archival map of the stretch between Winton and Longreach, reflecting both brands' history in the region.

The kits, which are now available on select routes and will continue to rollout across QF's international network, include premium skincare products from Australian brand Grown Alchemist, along with socks, an eye mask, 3M ear plugs, a bamboo toothbrush and Colgate toothpaste.

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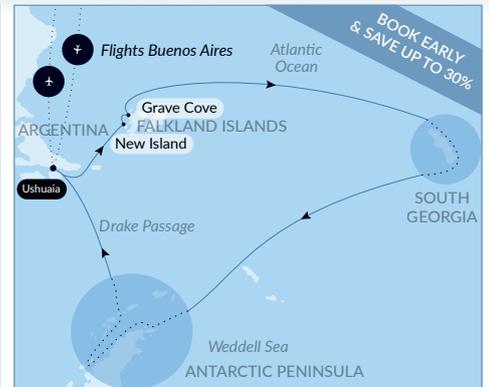
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