



MTA Advisor Annie Morrison

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WINNER

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Collette cash offer

COLLETTE is giving away a \$200 Visa card or gift card from one of 80 leading retailers for every new, deposited booking made during its New Year sale period from today until 28 Feb.

The incentive, which is uncapped, also includes a bonus \$500 for every third booking.

Collette's New Year sale means clients can save up to \$3,000 per couple on any Collette tour for travel until 30 Apr 2027.

Youth floats cruise's boat

YOUNGER Australians are fuelling a growing appetite for cruise holidays over the next 12 months, new data from the Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) Australia has showed.

Around 44% of Aussies aged under 35 said they plan to book a cruise over the next year, a solid increase on the 35% recorded just two years ago.

The younger demographic spurred the overall rise in cruise sentiment, with one in three Aussies now indicating a desire to take a cruise in 2026.

While under 35s showed the biggest growth trajectory, interest also remains strong among 35 to 44-year-olds - a key demographic for families - with 42% mulling a cruise this year.



This cohort was also found to be one of the most interested in booking a local cruise.

In another win for cruising, Aussies believe sailings are one of the most cost-effective ways to enjoy a holiday, with more than half agreeing that cruises offer better value-for-money than any other mode of travel.

In terms of themed cruises, gourmet voyages polled the best (28%), ahead of Xmas (18%), music festivals (15%), adventure sailings (11%), and wellness (7%).

New Zealand topped the list of most appealing overseas cruise destinations with 21%, followed by Europe (16%), South Pacific (12%), Japan (7%), and Tahiti/French Polynesia (6%). *AB*

Ama pivots brand

AMAWATERWAYS has formally announced its rebrand, flagged by our sister masthead **Cruise Weekly** in Dec (*CW* 23 Dec 2025).

Outside of a new brand identity that encourages Aussies to "follow their own current", the luxury cruise line has also relaunched its website, offering streamlined functionality that helps users better discover destinations, learn about on-board experiences, and plan their journeys with ease.

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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news, including our **Sustainability** page.

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It's different out here

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has released a new brand and visual identity inspired by its 90s tagline, 'It's different out here'.

A national advertising campaign has also rolled out, with out-of-home placements and a TV piece called, 'For all maritime', highlighting passengers who reject "outdated norms" when they travel.

Global chief marketing officer Kiran Smith described the launch as "a pivotal moment".

"We're not just launching a campaign - we're re-anchoring our brand in the values that have always set us apart: freedom and flexibility," she said.

"For nearly 60 years, NCL has been an innovator, and this transformation honours that legacy," Smith added.



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TRA forecasts big growth

TOURISM Research Australia's (TRA) latest tourism forecasts predict a positive outlook in the near future for the country's visitor economy, despite a range of ongoing uncertainties.

Total visitor spend in Australia is forecasted to continue rising and reach approximately \$233 billion by 2030, despite global and domestic headwinds.

This would represent an average annual growth rate of 4% over the next five years, with key predictions from TRA including international visitor arrivals to Australia reaching 10.9 million over that period,

China outbound up

CHINA'S outbound travel market is predicted to rise by 10 million trips in 2026, buoyed by the expansion of visa-free policies for Chinese nationals and a stronger yuan.

Mainland Chinese travellers are expected to take between 165 and 175 million cross-border trips this year, up from an estimated 155 million in 2025, according to travel marketing and technology firm China Trading Desk, with South Korea, Vietnam and Thailand set to be the most popular destinations.

MEL breaks record

MELBOURNE Airport recorded its busiest-ever month in Dec, with 3,421,195 passengers travelling through its terminals.

The hub also set a new monthly record for the number of international flights it handled, with 5,596 services carrying a total 1,222,570 passengers.

Domestic passenger numbers were up 4.9% on the previous Dec, with more than 1,000 additional services added by Qantas, Virgin Australia and Jetstar compared to 2024.

Jan is also shaping up to be a busy month for MEL as sport fans travel for the Australian Open.



and international visitor spend reaching \$46 billion over the same time frame.

Domestically, overnight trips are expected to surpass 123 million, more than 313 million day trips, and \$187b of tourism spend.

Around \$130 billion of this will be spent on overnight trips, while a further \$57 billion will be spent on day trips.

This year's forecast also includes a number of less favourable international and domestic scenarios, with the former including annual growth in arrivals averaging just 2.9% over the forecast period.

This would result in total arrivals reaching just over 10 million in 2030, with travellers from key markets such as China and the US growing much more slowly.

The flat domestic scenario involves overnight trips being outperformed by the less lucrative day trips category throughout the forecast period.

Overnight trips could also become shorter and generate lower average spend per night.

This would also see spend in this category increase to around \$10 billion lower than the main forecast over the period, reaching \$120.3 billion by 2030. *MS*

Bushfire waivers

QANTAS has confirmed it will continue its change fee waiver for bookings affected by the bushfire crisis in Vic for another week.

The policy extends to Qantas and Jetstar services flying to Melbourne and Avalon.

Meanwhile, VA guests who had booked to travel to and from Melbourne between 09-13 Jan can change flights for free to a new date within 14 days of the original departure date, or cancel flights for a travel credit.

Infinity road trips

INFINITY Holidays has launched its new Australia Road Trip Collection, a range of bookable self-drive itineraries designed to make it easier for travel agents to sell Australia.

Featured routes include Victoria's Great Ocean Road, Western Australia's city and wine country highlights, a luxury journey through SA's Adelaide Hills and Barossa, a NSW South Coast trip exploring beach towns and national parks, and a Tasmanian highlights route.

Agents can customise each itinerary to suit different budgets and travel styles, and seamlessly promote the campaign with dedicated digital content, trade-ready marketing collateral and social tiles.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more details.



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Win a trip to Texas

TRAVEL agents have the chance to win a spot on an exclusive famil to the Lone Star State, thanks to a partnership between Travel Texas and Fiji Airways.

The trip will showcase the state's dining scene, vibrant sports culture, hospitality and iconic ranch experiences.

To enter the draw, advisors need to watch a short, pre-recorded Texas update - see [HERE](#).

Terra Nova 2027/28

TERRA Nova Expeditions has launched its 2027/28 Antarctic season on board *St Helena*.

With a capacity of 98 guests, the small excursion groups offer an intimate onboard atmosphere and maximum time ashore with optional activities and dinner and drinks packages included.

A webinar on Thu at 11am led by CCO Beth Mercier & Ops Manager Amanda Hunter will provide more details - see [HERE](#).

US assesses the damage

THE US tourism industry suffered an estimated US\$6.1 billion (A\$9.11b) in total economic losses during the government's record-long 43-day shutdown (**TD** 07 Nov 2025).

On average between 01 Oct and 12 Nov 2025, the country saw 88,000 fewer trips per day compared to usual, according to the US Travel Association.

The estimates include direct trip-related losses of US\$2.7 billion (A\$4.03b), with reduced government-related travel accounting for nearly \$1 billion of that figure, while flight delays contributed more than US\$183.3 million (A\$273.8) in losses.

"Government shutdowns are costly, disruptive and unnecessary," said vice president of research, Joshua Friedlander.

"They disproportionately harm a sector that supports 15 million jobs and underpins America's economic growth.



"Protecting the continuity of travel operations and ensuring essential workers are paid gives due recognition to an industry that has proven to be essential."

There is bipartisan support for air traffic controllers, TSA officers and customs and border protection workers to continue being paid when government shutdowns force them to remain on the job, Friedlander pointed out, with a new national survey showing four out of five Americans support this idea. *JM*

Operator takes flight

AUSTRALIAN Geographic Travel has unveiled its first international tours to New Zealand across both the North and South Islands.

Given the island's diverse bird life, including a concentration of endemic species, the business was inspired to launch two new small-group birding journeys for one or both islands, which can be combined for an epic adventure.

Tour highlights include sighting endemic King shags at Marlborough Sounds, alpine birding at Arthur's Pass, kiwi night walks at Stewart Island, searching for the critically endangered Malherbe's parakeet at Blumine Island and visiting sanctuaries such as Tiritiri Matangi, Kapiti Island, and Zealandia.

The Australian Geographic Travel new Kiwi tours suit birders of all experience levels, from beginners to experienced twitchers seeking to view New Zealand endemic species.

Click [HERE](#) for more details.

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AMAWATERWAYS



Tourists frozen out

KITTLA Airport in northern Finland has grounded flights due to freezing conditions, leaving thousands of tourists stranded.

The temperature dropped to -37C° on Sun (local time), with the deep freeze set to continue, making de-icing of aircraft and other operations difficult.

Fired up for four-day week



PLATINUM Travel Group (PTG) has begun piloting a four-day summer work week, as the business invests more in the mental health of its teams.

According to COO Ryan Potts (pictured), its staff have the “same expectations, accountability, focus on delivering for clients, just with a bit more space built in to recharge”.

During the company’s trial, Potts said that he has noticed what time has “given back” to his week, whether it is spending time with family, enjoying the outdoors, or the ability to reset and return to the workplace energised and focused.

“For me personally, being able to get to the beach with my girls during the week, not rushed and not crammed into a busy weekend, has been incredibly grounding and motivating,” he said in a LinkedIn post.

“Of course, initiatives like this only work if the mindset comes with it - work hard, play hard.”

While the trial is still in its early days and the business will take note of its learnings off the back of the initiative, Potts said it has proven to be “a really positive reminder that when businesses genuinely invest in their people, the return goes well beyond a calendar or a policy”.

Last year, PTG received the Highest Revenue Growth - FY 2025 Air accolade from Link Travel Group. *JHM*



Window Seat

IF YOU’VE ever wondered what kind of entertainment Aussies favour when travelling 30,000 feet in the air, Qantas’ latest in-flight viewing stats offer a few clues.

The most-watched titles for 2025 suggest we favour musical numbers, high-stakes drama and escapism, with the latest *Wicked* film taking the number one spot in the movies category, followed by *Mission Impossible: The Final Reckoning* and *Gladiator II*.

It seems fitting that the most-watched TV show for Qantas fliers was *The White Lotus*, a series that manages to make luxury travel look both irresistible and deeply stressful, while *Landman* was number two, for those who like to keep things more grounded.

Wholesale & Cruise Consultant Join Lux Voyages!

Lux Voyages, operating since 2007, is growing, and we’re looking for a Wholesale Consultant to create unforgettable holidays for our clients!

We’re a boutique wholesale travel specialist with two specialist brands: Tahiti Voyages and New Caledonia Voyages, dedicated to delivering luxury experiences to destinations like French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Maldives, France, Sri Lanka, Palau and more.

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Mantis data points to Africa

FOR 2026, South Africa, Rwanda and Botswana are of intense interest for eco-travellers - that's according to the Mantis Travel Desk, the brand's personalised concierge service that designs bespoke itineraries and manages both traveller and agent enquiries.

In addition, it has reported that solo travel enquiries have risen around 9%, multi-generational trips continue to be strong, and more guests are seeking volunteer or community-focused experiences as part of their planned travels.

Geographically, enquiries remain highest from the UK (32%), US (27%) and Europe (21%), with notable growth from the Middle East.

"Booking and enquiry insights from the Travel Desk show a growing appetite for nature-led and purposeful travel," Mantis chief executive Craig Erasmus said.

Recently, the brand launched three new properties to cater for growth in and around Africa.

"The new properties in Africa and the GCC make these journeys possible, offering guests adventure, wellness, and meaningful cultural connections," Erasmus said.

HA focuses on community impact

HAWAIIAN Airlines has flagged significant investment in local community and sustainability in its five-year US\$600 million Kahu'ewai Hawai'i Investment Plan (**TD** 06 Jan).

The airline flagged expanded partnerships in education and workforce development initiatives, new grant-making opportunities, promotion of regenerative tourism efforts through its Travel Pono program, and new investments to preserve Hawaii's natural resources and advance new technologies for a more sustainable future.

Specifically, Hawaiian is expanding its partnership with business accelerator Mana Up to help local companies scale up for global expansion.

It will also be investing in locally produced sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) in partnership with



Pono Pacific and Par Hawaii, and will be the first airline to take delivery of Hawaii-made SAF later in 2026.

In addition, the US airline will work to advance lower-emission options for short-haul air services, with an investment in hybrid-electric propulsion developer Ampaire, and increase the use of electric ground service vehicles at Honolulu airport.

HA will also provide grants to non-profit organisations that promote cultural programs, environmental preservation and promote native Hawaiian art and language with the Alaska Airlines/Hawaiian Airlines Foundation.

The foundation, newly integrated after the merger of Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines, is dedicated to efforts in the native states of both. *DF*

A green first for Authority of NSW

FUNDING local projects, the path to net zero, supporting regional economies in Eden and Newcastle, and delivering psychosocial safety training for workplace leaders are some of the main topics shared in the first Port Authority of NSW Sustainability Report.

"FY25 was a challenging year for sustainability worldwide, as the global community continues its efforts towards a

net zero economy amid ongoing uncertainty and complexity," Port Authority chair David Marchant said.

"Sustainability is now embedded as a core pillar of our 'Direction 2025-30'.

"Notably, FY25 marked the first year in which our operations achieved zero Scope 2 emissions," he added.

To read the full report in detail, [CLICK HERE](#).

Thailand target

THAILAND Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has announced it plans to reduce carbon emissions by 20,000 TonCO₂e by 2030.

In 2025, the TCEB managed to avoid 2,446 TonCO₂e across 232 events - a 313% decrease compared to what was recorded in 2024.

TCEB will actively help event organisers to lower their emissions.



Jetstar's coolest arrival



JETSTAR has received its 23rd Airbus A321LR, which departed Hamburg in snowy conditions and arrived in Melbourne yesterday.

The carrier shared images on LinkedIn of the aircraft prior to takeoff, with the caption "Snowy takeoff, sunny touchdown".

The plane is part of an order placed by Jetstar in 2022 for 38 A321neos in the long-range and extra long-range variants to add flexibility (*TD* 25 May 2022). *JM*

The love of Fullerton

THE Fullerton Hotel Sydney is bringing back its 'Celebrate Love' room packages on all stays throughout Feb.

Included in the romantic deals is a buffet breakfast for two at The Place Restaurant, glasses of sparkling wine at the bar, a welcome amenity kit, and dining credit worth \$100.

ICAO gets technical

THE International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has partnered with Amadeus to propel the rollout of advanced tech across the airline industry.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding, the software company will contribute its technical expertise to promote the interoperability of biometrics between countries, as well as develop training programs focused on the technical and regulatory aspects of digital identity and biometrics.

"The digitalisation of identity documentation and management is essential to the sustainability of air transport's expansion and transformation," said Juan Carlos Salazar, ICAO Secretary General.

"ICAO's collaboration will help countries adopt the changes in line with its 2050 strategy."

ATAC gains another

THE Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) has announced WA-based advisor Annette Porter's agency as a member.

Porter runs Travel With Me, a full-service travel agency based in Mandurah, 70km south of Perth.

"Her passion for crafting meaningful journeys and her love of connecting people with the world around them reflect the heart of what we value at ATAC," a spokesperson for ATAC shared on LinkedIn.

TIME's new friend

THE Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) has welcomed Red Grape Social, a digital marketing agency for travel advisors, as its latest partner.

The company founder and CEO, Wendy Addinsall, has also previously served as a mentor.

"I'm so proud to become a friend of TIME because this program represents everything I believe in," Addinsall said.

"It's real, it's impactful, and it's moving our industry forward in the best possible way."

Get out of Iran now

SMARTTRAVELLER is advising Australians who are currently in Iran to leave now, with airspace closures and flight cancellations likely to occur very soon.

The Australian Embassy's operations in the country are suspended, with its ability to provide consular assistance in Iran extremely limited.

DFAT continues to advise against travel to Iran due to the volatile security situation, including ongoing violent protests and the risk of arbitrary detention.

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.67

TRAVELLERS set to embark on trips to Japan and South Africa will welcome recent gains by the Aussie dollar.

The Aussie is now exchanging for ¥106, a solid gain on last week, while South Africa's rand has also seen a slight rise with one dollar now paying 11 rand.

Those travelling to Thailand however will notice a slight decrease in their wallets against the bhat this week, with the Australian dollar dropping under ฿21.

Despite a projected gain against the Aussie, the US dollar remains unchanged at around \$0.67.

Currency across the globe is still on a steady gain against the greenback following the sharp drop in Apr last year due to the fallout around US tariffs.

However, in Europe the three largest currencies on the continent in the Euro, British Pound and Swiss Franc, have all made gains on most international currencies.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.673
UK	£0.491
NZ	\$1.16
Euro	€0.57
Japan	¥106.000
Thailand	฿20.972
China	¥4.688
South Africa	R11.000
Canada	CA\$0.931
Bitcoin	A\$0.000073

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