

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features five pages of the latest news, including our **Corporate Update** and a full page from **G Adventures**.

## Cashed up with G

**AGENTS** can earn \$3,000 to spend on travel by participating in G Adventure's new trade incentive, '15 to Anywhere'.

Find out more on **page six**.

## QF boosts Sapporo

**QANTAS** has expanded capacity by more than 50% on its Sydney-Sapporo service for the 2026/27 season, now offering five flights per week up from three.

The announcement was made in response to the route's strong performance and robust demand during the current ski season, and comes just weeks after QF brought back the seasonal service for the first time since COVID (**TD** 20 Jan).

# Social media policy may cost US billions

**THE** Trump Administration's proposal to introduce wider social media disclosures for entry into the United States (**TD** 11 Dec 2025) could cost the country up to US\$15.7 billion in visitor spend, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has warned.

If introduced, the changes could result in a drop of up to 24% in international demand, with the US potentially seeing 4.7 million fewer international arrivals from ESTA countries in 2026 compared with a business-as-usual baseline.

The findings are based on a multi-country survey of travellers across ESTA-eligible markets, along with a detailed economic impact report assessing potential effects on international arrivals, visitor spending and wider tourism-related GDP and employment in the US.

According to WTTC's analysis, around one-third of respondents (34%) said they would be



somewhat or much less likely to visit the US in the next two to three years if the changes are introduced, and only 12% said they would be more likely to visit.

A large portion of respondents also believe the policy would make the US feel less welcoming for both leisure and business travel, and a majority said it would either have no impact on their personal safety or make them feel less safe while travelling in the country.

"Security at the US border is vital but the planned policy changes will damage job creation, which the US Administration

values so much," said Gloria Guevara, WTTC President and chief executive officer (**pictured**).

"Even modest shifts in visitor behaviour, put off by the planned changes, will have real economic consequences for US travel and tourism, particularly in a highly competitive global market."

Additionally, WTTC found that more than 150,000 jobs are at risk if the policy goes ahead.

"WTTC urges US policymakers to carefully assess this policy and its consequences for the economy and jobs," Guevara added.

The findings coincide with the release of new data from the National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO), which shows a 3% YoY decrease in international visitor spend on travel to, and tourism-related activities within, the US for Oct 2025.

It marks the fourth month in a row that the country recorded a decline in spend. *JM*



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Journey from Barcelona to Venice on a 13-day voyage through iconic cities, Renaissance art, and sun-soaked coastlines. Get insider tips, see what life is like on board, and take advantage of special booking offers.

## Airports on alert

**AIRPORTS** across SE Asia have implemented tight measures following a Nipah virus outbreak in India's West Bengal region as well as Bangladesh.

The zoonotic (contractable between animals and humans) disease currently has no known cure as well as a fatality rate of 40 to 70%.

Health-screening checkpoints have already been set up at major Asian airports including Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport, Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu and Denpasar International Airport.

The Australian Government has confirmed it will be monitoring the situation 'very closely'.

"It's a very serious virus; it's relatively rare but its mortality rate is very high for a respiratory virus, so obviously I think all countries are monitoring this reported outbreak very closely," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

## The Comms wins

**MARKETING** and PR agency The Comms People has recently secured several new tourism clients, including Mount Isa Council and Eden Retreat and Experience Eumundi.

The project will kick off with the creation of a new outback drive connecting Mt Isa with Cloncurry and Camooweal.

The Comms People is ramping up its destination focus in the lead-up to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic Games.

## Rolling out the red carpet

**CELEBRITY** River Cruises will welcome 10 additional ships to its fleet, which will double in size to 20 by 2031.

The announcement of the new order of ships also marks the start of construction for the cruise line's first river vessel, which will be named *Celebrity Compass*.

She will launch next year alongside *Celebrity Seeker*, and will be followed by *Celebrity Wanderer* (pictured), *Celebrity Roamer*, and *Celebrity Boundless*, which will join the fleet in 2028.

The announcement comes as Celebrity opens its 2028 season for booking, which will be its second on the rivers.

This program will feature an 80% increase in European destinations compared to the cruise line's inaugural 2027

## TAF, DC team up

**TRAVEL** Agent Finder (TAF) has partnered up with Destination Canada to launch a new Canada Specialists page.

Designed to help travellers quickly identify and connect with Canada travel experts, the page includes a featured list of Australian agents who have completed the Platinum Canada Specialist Program (CSP) training.

Certified advisors can request their TAF Platinum badge from inside their account dashboard's Specialist Badges hub - once approved, they will automatically be added to the Canada page.



deployment, with more than 160 sailings to over 50 destinations across the continent.

Guests can sail the Rhine to the vineyards of Alsace, follow the Danube to Budapest's centuries-old market halls, and visit other highlights, including the Czech Republic and Vienna.

Itineraries will take guests to 24 new ports, including journeys into the wild beauty of the Lower Danube with a Celebrity-first overnight land stay in Bucharest, tulip-season sailings, and Christmas market cruises. *MS*

## TRAppe goes global

**LIFESTYLE-FORWARD** travel platform TRAppe has gone global, with the Singaporean startup expanding beyond Bali for the first time.

TRAppe connects travellers with locally owned stays, tours and restaurants, and now includes other Indonesian islands, as well as the Maldives, Portugal, Kenya, Uganda, Malaysia, and Peru.

The platform does not take commission from operators.

## APT's Best of Oz

**APT** Luxury Travel has launched a 'Best of Australia' sale, with savings of up to \$7,400 per couple on tours around the country, as well as free return flights on select Vietnam and Cambodia Mekong River cruises - both sales are on until 17 Feb **HERE**.

See **page five** for more specials.

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## Window Seat

**QATAR** Airways is launching a digital map of Doha known as Qverse Island in the video game Fortnite.

The map begins at Hamad International Airport, where players can wander around, as well as several Doha landmarks in digital form in order to complete various challenges and minigames.

Those who successfully complete or win these challenges can receive free Qatar Airways flights.

Throughout the map, you are guided by Sama, the digital assistant who is also prominent across Qatar Airways' social platforms.

Qverse Island is designed to have gamers engage and grow familiar with the brand before their next journey, ushering in a new era of consumer engagement within the travel industry and beyond.

The map can be accessed on Fortnite's Creative Mode using the code 6020-0265-6735.

The launch comes at the same time as Starlink was added to 120 of QR's aircraft.



## The South Island is different



A **NEW** campaign is inviting Australian travellers to discover what makes Christchurch, and New Zealand's Central South Island, so different.

Running through to mid-Apr, the campaign showcases the diverse regions, places, and stories that make this part of the country so unique, with the tag line 'Discover Different'.

Christchurch is working alongside Destination Kaikoura, Visit Hurunui, Venture Timaru, Mackenzie Tourism, and Development West Coast, after a successful application for a

second round of funding via the Regional Tourism Boost Fund.

The collective received NZ\$1m (A\$860,000) in funding to drive more visitation out of Australia during autumn's shoulder season.

Christchurch's GM of visitor economy Anne Newman said the campaign shows the strength of regional collaboration. *MS*

## Luxe Egypt train

**SKYLINE** Tours has unveiled Skyline Express, a luxury train travelling across Egypt, set to launch in Oct 2027.

The headline route will be a six-day journey between Cairo and Abu Simbel, stopping at destinations such as Minya, Qena, Esna and Kom Ombo.

Advisors can find out more about Skyline Express at this year's ITB Berlin from 03-05 Mar.

Skyline Tours has also opened GSA opportunities worldwide.

## Demand still high

**STRONG** passenger numbers last year masked the aviation industry's ongoing capacity constraints, with demand growing 5.3% compared to 2024.

Last year's international full-year demand numbers increased 7.1% compared to 2024, with domestic figures growing more slowly, at just 2.4%.

Dec marked a strong finish to the year, with overall demand rising 5.6% year-on-year, and capacity growing 5.9%, on a load factor of 83.7%.

This returns industry growth to align with historical patterns after the robust post-COVID rebound, IATA said.

However the strong and continuous increase in demand pulls two key challenges: decarbonisation and supply chain, into sharp focus.

The latter problem was the biggest faced by airlines last year, IATA noted, as the industry continued to be disappointed by unreliable delivery schedules for new aircraft and engines.

## Asiana adjustment

**ASIANA** Airlines has updated the schedule for its Sydney to Seoul flights, which comes into effect on 08 Jun 2026.

The SYD-ICN service will change from a morning departure to evening - more details [HERE](#).

## Do QTIC's survey

**THE** Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) is inviting tourism and hospitality businesses to take part in its Jobs and Skills Australia 2026 Occupation Shortage List Stakeholder Survey.

QTIC is aiming to help ensure skills shortages are accurately reflected at a national level - [CLICK HERE](#) to complete.

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## CORPORATE UPDATE

### Corporate NDC uptick

**CORPORATE** NDC bookings and volumes distributed via GDS surged 168% and 162%, respectively, year-on-year in Q4 2025 compared with Q4 2024, showed new data from modern airline retailing software, Accelya.

The uptake reflects rising confidence in IATA's NDC among corporate buyers, travel sellers and airlines, according to the company, which expects momentum to continue throughout this year.

In Jan 2026, Accelya recorded multiple highest-ever single-day NDC volume records across its global airline customer base.

The software company has also seen some airlines operating on its FLX NDC platform include

a paid ancillary in up to one in three (31%) NDC bookings, contributing up to \$12 in additional revenue per ticket.

Additionally, data from BCD Travel shows that its percentage growth in NDC bookings processed via Accelya-connected airlines quadrupled year-on-year.

"These results show that NDC is moving decisively from experimentation to scale," said Tye Radcliffe, chief customer success officer at Accelya.

"Airlines are now using NDC to deliver richer offers across corporate, agency, and direct channels, while maintaining operational stability and control," he added.

"That combination is what turns modern retailing into real commercial value today and creates a credible foundation for the industry's transition towards Offers and Orders." JM

### More PPG in Turkiye

**PLAZA** Premium Group (PPG) has announced the opening of a new domestic lounge at Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport, marking the company's fourth lounge at the hub.

The opening coincided with PPG's fifth anniversary in Turkiye, where it is eyeing "further growth opportunities" after recording a 32% increase in passengers across its lounges, fast track and meet-and-assist services in 2025.



### Vietjet's biz appeal

**VIETJET** has launched 'Wings for Leaders', a marketing campaign showcasing its premium offerings for Australian business travellers.

SkyBoss fares start from A\$550 one-way (including taxes and fees), while business fares start from A\$900 one-way (including taxes and fees), with both classes enjoying dedicated check-in counters, priority security screening, boarding, and access to premium lounges.

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### Serving a good time



**APT** Travel Group partnered with Emirates recently to deliver an Australian Open experience to 20 of its guests who have collectively been on more than 200 trips with the group over the past decade.

Attendees were able to watch the matches from Emirates' five-star courtside marquee, alongside APT Travel Group's CEO David Cox and COO Lorna Heyward.

Cox said the event aimed to give back to loyal customers as well as build meaningful partnerships within the industry.

"This experience is a celebration of loyalty," he explained.

"Our guests are at the heart of everything we do and partnering with Emirates to deliver something truly memorable recognises the extraordinary relationship we have built with many of them over the years.

"It also speaks to our aligned commitment to luxury,

experience-led travel." The initiative marked the first time the airline has collaborated with a river cruise company to create a bespoke Australian Open hospitality experience. JB

### QR sets a high bar

**QATAR** Airways has unveiled a brand-new signature cocktail menu for passengers flying in first and business class.

Curated by renowned mixologist Lorenzo Antinori, offerings include innovative drinks such as The Aviator, G&Tea, Golden Delilah, and Havana Punch.

Each respective premium cabin also features an additional three cocktails exclusive to that cabin, with a mocktail/non-alcoholic selection also available.

The cocktails are now available on all flights from Australia and New Zealand to or via Doha, as well as the 380 inflight lounge.

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## SPECIALS

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- Discovery Parks** is offering a 20% discount on 2026 stays at all its holiday parks until 31 Jan, including Forster, Rockhampton, and Carnarvon. Travellers who book before this date will also be in the running to have their trip fully refunded. More details can be found [HERE](#).
- Trafalgar** has launched offers on its 'Best of the Danube' river cruise for bookings made by 27 Feb. Bookings on 2026 sailings will receive a bonus two-night extension in Prague, while 2027 sailings will receive a cabin upgrade from Classic to Deluxe C. Find out more [HERE](#).
- Regent Seven Seas Cruises** is offering a free two-category suite upgrade on select sailings when booked before 28 Feb. Itineraries include 'Western Africa and Isles of Wonder' from \$25,160pp, 'Heaven Across The Seas' from \$11,025pp, and 'Panama City to Papeete' from \$34,220pp. Learn more [HERE](#).
- Voco Gosford** has launched a series of Valentine's Day packages. The 'Love at First Stay' bundle includes overnight accommodation in a King Premium Bay View Room with dinner for two at the Astra Rooftop Bar from \$899 per couple - find out more [HERE](#). The hotel is also offering the 'Cherry on Top' six-course degustation dinner at Astra from \$275pp - the offer can be viewed [HERE](#).
- On Foot Holidays** has released a sale on its six-night journey through France's Northern Province, with bookings made before 28 Feb to receive a 5% discount. The trip is usually priced at \$2,305pp twin share, which includes local transfers, accommodations, all breakfasts as well as select lunches and dinners. Full info on the trip can be found [HERE](#).
- MSC Cruises** is having a flash sale until 04 Feb, in which all cruises across its entire program are available for 10% off. Bookings can be made [HERE](#) and the discount can be redeemed using the code 'AUSDAY'.
- Contiki** has launched a worldwide sale on all of its Spain and Portugal trips for 2026. Bookings will also put customers in the draw to win a Canon PowerShot G7X camera. The sale ends 01 Feb, [HERE](#).
- Until 12 Feb, **Batik Air** is offering discounted flights to Bali for travel until 31 Oct. One-way fares start at \$262 from Sydney, \$212 from Melbourne and \$222 from Brisbane. The offer also includes Perth to Kuala Lumpur from \$162. Bookings can be made [HERE](#).
- National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions** is commemorating 60 years of expedition travel with savings of up to 20% on select voyages as well as a 50% reduction on the deposit when booked before 09 Feb. Voyages include the 'Panama Canal, Pearl Islands and Darien Jungle' from \$8,261pp; 'Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea: Coastlines and Archipelagos' from \$10,290pp; as well as 'Alaska to Japan: Ring of Fire to Ainu Culture' from \$45,646. Find the full offerings [HERE](#).

## A new home at 25



**HELLOWORLD** Travel Mentone has marked its 25th anniversary with the opening of a new store in Melbourne's south-east bayside area. Originally located in Parkside, the new branch is set in a prominent section of Mentone's shopping district with high foot traffic. "A new store is a fitting way to celebrate the 25th year of the agency business," said owner Selena Luscombe (pictured with Julie Pratt, national sales manager, Branded & Associate networks). "While we are sad to have moved from our original location in Parkdale, Mentone is a vibrant community, and this location gives us the opportunity to serve our customers even better. "After four decades in the travel industry, I'm as passionate as ever about helping people

plan unforgettable journeys," Luscombe added. Nick Sutherland, HLO general manager retail networks, extended his congratulations on the achievement. "This milestone is a testament to their commitment to exceptional customer service and their ability to adapt and thrive in a dynamic industry." JB

## Air India orders 30

**AIR** India has finalised its purchase of 30 Boeing 737 MAX jets, expanding its order book with the manufacturer to nearly 200 planes. The order consists of 20 737-8s and 10 737-10s, and will help boost the airline's continued expansion across India and the South Asia region.

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