

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features ten pages of the latest industry news, including our **Luxury page**, plus a special feature from **Travel Agent Finder** and a full page from **Scenic**.

Laver exits Scenic

SCENIC Group general manager sales & marketing Anthony Laver has departed the company, as revealed by *Travel Daily's* sister title **Cruise Weekly**.

Laver's exit is linked to a restructure of Scenic's leadership team, with the company thanking him for his nine years of service.

Scenic also announced the appointment of well-known executive Adam Armstrong as its new chief commercial officer, effective from next month (**TD** breaking news).

Armstrong will lead Scenic's global commercial organisation from its Zug office - **CLICK HERE** to read today's issue of **CW**. **MS**

Connecting for expansion

EXCLUSIVE

STRONG corporate growth in recent years from Connections Travel Group has led the company to examine acquisition opportunities to further propel the expansion of its events and leisure divisions.

Speaking with **TD** about its acquisitive mindset, Connections Travel Group founder Gary Reichenberg and chief business officer Andre Moten said that while the company is keen to support its thriving corporate division, its appetite to purchase was not about pursuing growth for the sake of growth.

"We are looking for opportunities where there is a cultural alignment, that is more important than revenue size, headcount or even geography in some respects," Moten said.

Regarding opportunities for its Edge Connections agency, the business is focused on

acquisition targets in the luxury leisure space, ideally located in Melbourne, as that is where the division is currently centred.

Connections Travel Group is also on the hunt for suitable purchases in the events space for its Totem Connections division, with the sweet spot being businesses that follow the incentive line, such as study tours and corporate conferences.

While Connections Travel Group does have rough criteria regarding the size and profitability of these targets, more important factors include taking on a business with a strong ethos of entrepreneurialism and a sense of hyper customer care.

Reichenberg and Moten also made clear they are looking to retain the leadership of any acquisition to drive its strategy.

Interested parties can reach out at andre.moten@connectionstravel.com.au. **AB**

Maldives delays tax

THE Maldives Govt appears to have delayed the implementation of a controversial tourism tax on foreign travel agencies, tour operators and offshore booking platforms until 01 Apr 2027, according to local media.

While local reporting suggested that Tourism Minister Mohamed Ameen confirmed the news during a national tourism day event, there is yet to be formal confirmation of the move, which would alter the 01 Oct date. **AB**

Luxe Emerald deals

LUXURY European river cruising earlybird offers with Emerald Cruises are available now - head to **page 11** for more.

A great connection

GET the right match with the right client at the right moment with Travel Trade Connect - see **page 12** for details.

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New Nordic specialist born

EXPERIENCED aviation and hotel account manager Thomas Gjerde (**pictured**) has founded his own business focused on creating memorable Norwegian and wider Nordic travel experiences.

In announcing the formation of Norwegian Wonders, Gjerde said he would combine the knowledge he gained growing up in Norway with his many years of experience working alongside Australian trade partners to make the new venture a success.

The operator will run hosted small-group tours, as well as tailored itineraries and private and premium experiences.

"Norwegian Wonders was born from my passion for travel and for connecting people with the authentic experiences, food, culture, history and scenery of the Nordic region," Gjerde said.

A major part of the business plan will be to act as a "genuine partner" to the Australian travel



agency community, with Gjerde pledging to reward advisors for their partnership through industry-leading commission structures and support.

"I have enormous respect for the amazing travel agents and agencies I've worked with over the years, and I'm looking forward to working even more closely with you," he said.

The business will also offer representation services on behalf of Nordic travel businesses in Australia and New Zealand.

Contact Gjerde on 0452 223 434 or email [HERE](#). **AB**



Pay for the Apostles

TOURISTS will soon have to pay to visit the Twelve Apostles on Great Ocean Road, with the Victorian Government set to introduce a booking system next week (**TD** 12 Mar 2026).

The move aims to ease overcrowding at peak times, while the money collected from the entry fees will go towards visitor infrastructure and environmental projects.

While tourists will need to book ahead from 16 Oct, the entry fee will not come into effect until Apr 2027, and will not apply to local residents and traditional owners.

Federal Transport Minister Catherine King said a new visitor centre would support sustainable tourism along Victoria's south-west coastline. **JM**



Support for reversal

THE Federal Coalition has announced a commitment to reverse caps and ballots for second- and third-year Working Holiday Maker (WHM) visas in order to encourage backpackers to live, work and travel in Australia.

The Coalition also proposed increasing WHM visa fees across the three-year pathway, while exempting backpackers from the increase when they fulfil relevant regional work requirements.

It follows the Federal Government's planned changes to the WHM program last month (**TD** 18 Sep 2026), which would see visa numbers cut by close to 40,000 places annually.

The NSW Tourism Association, which advocated against the caps, welcomed the Coalition's announcement, with CEO Natalie Godward stating the move would restore "the incentive to travel into our regions, work in our businesses and spend in our communities". **JM**

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Growing Air India fleet opens Oz options

AIR India's ongoing fleet expansion could pave the way for the carrier to fly to new Australian destinations including Perth and Western Sydney International, with up to 55 aircraft due to join its fleet each year from 2027.

Global head of sales Manish Puri (pictured) told a media group yesterday that the airline had almost 600 aircraft on order, with deliveries set to accelerate from next year.

"We expect deliveries of between 50-55 planes," Puri said. "It is a mix of narrowbody and widebody aircraft, but from 2027 through to 2032, the deliveries of aircraft will ramp up and there is a lot of capacity which will start coming in," he added.

The Indian airline is also progressing its US\$400 (A\$572 million) retrofit program, with the narrowbody transformation largely complete and its 787



Dreamliners now undergoing their phase of upgrades.

Air India expects its entire narrowbody fleet to have been retrofitted by the end of 2026, while almost 75% of its widebody fleet will be either new or retrofitted by the end of 2027.

Puri said Australia was one of the key markets considered when Air India placed its widebody orders, alongside Europe and the US, with the carrier seeing opportunities beyond its existing SYD and MEL operations.

Once the business between the two capital cities matures, Puri said the option of opening new hubs remained on the table as its fleet expands, although the

airline's immediate priority was to strengthen the network it currently serves.

"Obviously we would like to find more cities in this part of the world to add more destinations," he said.

Air India currently operates 11 weekly services each from Melbourne and Sydney to Delhi, with Puri describing Australia as a "very strategic market" given its sizeable Indian diaspora, leisure, education and connecting traffic.

Puri also confirmed Air India is preparing to launch a direct portal for Aussie advisors who do not have their own booking website or NDC capability.

"We have launched a direct portal for travel partners, who do not have their own website and probably are not able to or want to work on an NDC platform," he said, adding that travel partners remained "very integral" to the airline's ecosystem. ZH

Sell like the Wind

WINDSTAR Australia is offering retail travel advisors a \$100 gift card for every cruise booking of seven nights or more deposited through Travel the World during Oct's Cruise Month.

Each qualifying booking will also enter advisors into a draw to win a Windstar yacht cruise for two on selected European sailings in Jan 2027.

The offer runs until 31 Oct, with the winner drawn early Nov. ZH

Hapag-Lloyd exit

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises global MD Isolde Susset will retire at the end of 2026 after 30 years with the cruise line.

Susset played a key role in developing its expedition fleet, including *Hanseatic Nature* and *Hanseatic Inspiration*.

Salika Kebschull will take over as MD from 01 Jan 2027 after a two-month handover alongside Susset who served as MD from 2024. ZH

Jetstar NATIONAL ROADSHOW

Join us for the opportunity to meet Jetstar's industry leaders in person as we bring our National Roadshow to a city near you. Enjoy an evening of drinks, nibbles and great conversation while hearing the latest updates from the Jetstar team and our destination partners. When you register, you'll have the option to enter the draw for your chance to win some fantastic prizes!*

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The people speak

SIX travel businesses have been named finalists for the 2026 National Travel Industry Awards (NTIAs) People's Choice Award after attracting 3,634 nominations from Australian travellers.

The award is the only NTIA category decided entirely by consumers, with nominations limited to ATIA-accredited travel agencies, tour operators and cruise lines.

The stories behind the finalists include Jamison Travel & Cruise helping one client work towards visiting 100 countries, and Trafalgar sharing major milestones with another traveller from their 21st to 80th birthdays.

World Expeditions, Home Travel Company, Sisterhood Women's Travel and Your Holidays also feature among the finalists, with nominations highlighting personal service and destination expertise.

The winner will be revealed at the NTIA gala dinner this weekend in Melbourne. ZH

Four's a crowd for Cunard

IN A major shake-up of hardware for Carnival Corporation, the cruise giant has revealed that Cunard's *Queen Anne* will be transferred to its P&O Cruises UK brand, reducing the royal-inspired line to a three-ship fleet in 2029.

Queen Anne will only be five years old when she exits Cunard, marking a reversal of a previous strategy to grow the fleet.

"The change will give Cunard a more closely unified fleet centred on *Queen Mary 2*, *Queen Victoria*, and *Queen Elizabeth*, with each having a deeply established identity that embodies the timeless style, heritage, and sense of occasion that guests most closely associate with Cunard," Carnival UK, P&O Cruises and Cunard president Paul Ludlow explained.

"*Queen Anne* was created as a bold and contemporary expression of Cunard,



[embodying] its hallmark service.

"Those qualities give her a natural affinity with the modern P&O Cruises holiday experience."

Ludlow was also keen to dispel any perceptions the move meant Carnival was reducing its investment in Cunard, stating the company would continue to enhance its ships, services, itineraries and experiences.

Meanwhile, in exchange for adding a refurbished *Anne* to its fleet, P&O Cruises UK confirmed its *Arcadia* vessel will be transferred to Holland America Line (HAL) after Aug 2029.

The move marks a return to HAL of sorts, which was originally built for the line before being deployed to P&O Cruises. AB

Marriott inks KS deal

MARRIOTT International has signed an agreement with KS Hotels and Resorts for two new hotels in Thailand's Khao Lak, including the country's first Apartments by Marriott Bonvoy.

Moxy Khao Lak Memories Beach, the first Moxy in Southern Thailand, will feature 160 rooms, a swimming pool, Moxy Bar & Restaurant, pool bars, gym and beachfront events lawn.

Matalay Khao Lak Apartments by Marriott Bonvoy will offer 60 two-bedroom apartments with full kitchens and washer-dryers, targeting longer-stay guests, families and digital nomads.

Both properties will form part of the new 200-hectare Matalay development, which will include 1.4km of beachfront, lakes, rainforest and a 3km jogging and cycling track.

Both hotels are expected to be located approximately 75 minutes' drive from Phuket International Airport. ZH

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Beyond Borders sells out in third year

THE Australian Travel Industry Association's (ATIA) Beyond Borders Travel Summit has officially sold out ahead of the event this Fri at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, with about 480 attendees registered to attend.

Now in its third year, the industry thought leadership gathering has become a fixture on the travel calendar, bringing together retail agents, independent advisors, tour operators, wholesalers and travel management companies.

"Selling out Beyond Borders shows how much the industry values being in the room," ATIA CEO Dean Long enthused.

"Travel businesses want to hear first-hand from the regulators and policymakers making the decisions that affect them, and to work through what's coming with their peers," he added.

The one-day program will cover



the outlook for 2027, traveller expectations, distribution, technology, talent, aviation, government policy as well as consumer behaviour.

Long will open proceedings alongside ATIA chair Christian Hunter for a session examining lessons from 2026 and the year ahead, before moderating a leaders' panel featuring Helloworld Travel executive director Cinzia Burnes, Flight Centre Travel Group global leisure chief executive James Kavanagh, CATO chair Sean Martin and ATMC chair David Goldman.

The ACCC's David Cranston and Tony Hilton will tackle airfares, delays, cancellations, airline competition, codeshares and Western Sydney International Airport, followed by an aviation outlook discussion with Long.

Other sessions will examine Canberra's policy agenda, Australian travel spending and booking behaviour, and the touring and wholesale sector.

Practical sessions include an ATIA complaints masterclass and a session on non-credit-card payment options following new surcharging rules.

"Beyond Borders gets bigger and better every year, and that's because the industry keeps backing it," Long said.

"We look forward to welcoming a full house in Melbourne on Fri.

The summit will lead into the Viking NTIA finalist celebration on Fri evening and the sold-out NTIAs on Sat. ZH

Rail it through SL

RAILBOOKERS has launched two new independent rail holidays in Sri Lanka, combining the island nation's cultural landmarks, wildlife and beaches with its scenic railways.

The nine-day 'Highlights of Sri Lanka' itinerary visits Colombo, Kandy, Ella and Galle, including the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, a tea plantation and historic Galle Fort.

Meanwhile, the operator's longer 13-day 'Best of Sri Lanka' trip adds Negombo, Sigiriya and Yala, with visits to Sigiriya Rock Fortress, Dambulla Cave Temples and wildlife safaris.

Both itineraries feature the Kandy-to-Ella rail journey through Sri Lanka's hill country, tea plantations and valleys.

"Sri Lanka is exactly the kind of destination that demonstrates why rail belongs at the heart of an unforgettable holiday," Railbookers product development director Gareth Jones said. ZH



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Jetlag app lands

FLINDERS University sleep experts have developed a new app to help combat jetlag using a science-based model.

The Jetlag Fix builds a plan for each trip from a traveller's flights and usual sleep times, offering personalised guidance on when to seek and avoid light, and when to try to sleep.

The launch follows a partnership between oneworld and the Timeshifter app (**TD** 09 Sep 2026), which also aims to curb jetlag. *JM*

FCM compliance tool

FCM Travel has launched Proactive Analytics, a new compliance tool that helps account managers quickly address costs and compliance gaps.

It monitors a travel program around the clock and sends in-depth analysis directly to both customers and FCM account managers, reducing the need for manual reporting. *JM*

QTIC data refutes WHM plan

QUEENSLAND Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) is stepping up its campaign against the Federal Government's planned working holiday visa ballot, after a survey found tourism operators are struggling to recruit local staff.

The survey of 38 businesses across 11 regions in Qld found that every operator which had advertised locally received insufficient applicants, while four in five said they would cut trading hours or close without working holiday maker employees.

More than 800 working holiday makers were employed by the businesses surveyed over the past year, with two in five relying on them for more than half their peak-season workforce.

QTIC CEO Natassia Wheeler (**pictured**) said that while operators had advertised through traditional channels, applicants were currently hard to find.

"They used job boards,



community pages and recruitment agencies - the applicants simply weren't there," Wheeler said.

"In Cooktown, on K'gari or out west, there is no local workforce waiting to be hired, and if these workers do not come, the doors do not open," she added.

The government announced in Sep that eligible working holiday makers completing regional work would enter a ballot for second and third-year visas.

QTIC is calling for the ballot to be scrapped, existing visa holders to retain current pathways and workforce settings to support regional tourism. *ZH*



Window Seat

OFFERING the perfect excuse for travellers to plan their next road trip, Australia's list of Big Things may soon expand to include a bright pink slug.

The northern NSW town of Narrabri has proposed turning the endangered Mount Kaputar pink slug into a larger-than-life roadside attraction along the Newell Highway.

The eye-catching land mollusc can only be found in the high-altitude subalpine forests of Mount Kaputar, an extinct volcano around 50km east of Narrabri.



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*Sale ends 11.59pm (AEDT) 8 October 2026, unless sold out prior. Select routes, travel dates and conditions apply.





SpongeBob ahoy

ROYAL Caribbean is set to debut *The SpongeBob Musical* on its new ship *Hero of the Seas* when she enters service in Aug 2027.

Inspired by the Tony award-winning Broadway show, the family-friendly production will bring Bikini Bottom to life in the Royal Theatre. *JM*

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Wickham reps Aussie gems



ADELAIDE-BASED tourism marketing specialist Blair Wickham has unveiled Australis Representation, his premium travel representation agency.

The new business aims to "connect exceptional Australian travel experiences with the travel trade, here in Australia and around the world", Wickham shared on LinkedIn.

"The relationships and experience I've built in the travel trade space since 2018 now come together under one business."

The brand's first founding client is the Australian Bespoke Collective, which includes Sequoia Lodge, Mount Lofty House & Estate, and The Reef House Adults Retreat Palm Cove.

Exceptional Kangaroo Island has also come on board as a founding client, with more operators expected to join in time.

Wickham said he will continue

to support the Italian-based Lux World Representative team, which he has been a part of for more than four years as sales and marketing manager, Oceania.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside the wonderful Francesco Pucci, and more recently Carolina Ceccotti, and have had the honour of representing some of the finest independent hotels and DMCs in Italy and Greece to the Australian and NZ market," he said.

"I will continue to support the Lux World Representative team, with Francesco and Carolina leading the day-to-day."

Wickham has also worked with Australian Wildlife Journeys and Exceptional Kangaroo Island for almost a decade. *JM*

See Australis Representation's new website **HERE** or reach out to Wickham via blair@australisrepresentation.com.au.

SL gets creative

SRI Lanka Tourism has appointed GTI to manage its PR and trade marketing in Australia, while Circul8 will lead the DMO's local creative strategy.

The agencies will work together to drive Aussie visitation to the country, highlighting its landscapes, culture & cuisine. *JM*

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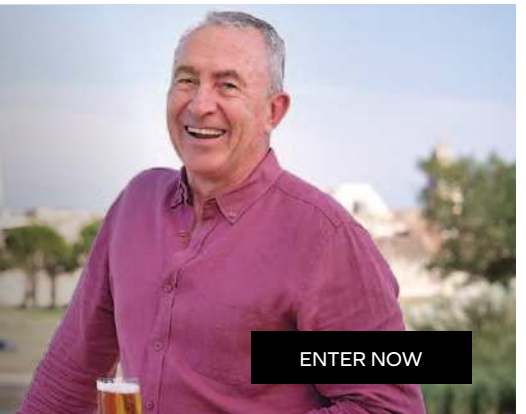
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Making flying safer

IATA has called for stronger integration of people, technology and global standards to drive further gains in aviation safety.

Speaking at the IATA World Safety and Operations Conference in Istanbul, IATA Director of Safety Mark Searle said fatal accident rates had improved from one per 3.5 million flights a decade ago to one per 5.6 million.

Searle added that knowledge transfer, safety culture, resilient technology and consistent standards would be key to reducing future risk. ZH

No fines for carriers

THE United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) has closed its review of airline data privacy practices without imposing penalties, finding no violations among the 10 largest carriers despite lawmaker claims that they failed to safeguard and misused information.

The Biden-era investigation examined how airlines collect and use passenger information, amid concerns from lawmakers over alleged misuse.

In Aug, US diplomats claimed the Drug Enforcement Administration paid airline staff large sums of money for pax data.

A US DOT memo said US airlines should avoid setting pricing based on individual data and reminded airlines of ongoing responsibilities to safeguard data, adhere to published privacy policies and abstain from dynamic pricing. ZH

The luck of the agent



EIGHT travel agents from Australia and New Zealand have enjoyed a tour of Ireland on a famil hosted by Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland.

The itinerary covered Northern Ireland, Mayo, Galway and Dublin, showcasing the scenery, heritage, food and hospitality that make the destination.

Highlights included the *Game of Thrones* studio tour, Titanic Belfast, the Giant's Causeway, Cuilcagh Boardwalk Trail, Kylemore Abbey, Ballynahinch Castle and EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum.

The group also experienced local food tours, a Connemara oyster farm, distillery visits, a water taxi tour and activities including clay pigeon shooting.

Tourism Ireland Australia and New Zealand manager Sofia Hansson said the visit would leave agents "even more enthusiastic

about the destination", helping secure a greater share of their business for Ireland and inspire more Australian and New Zealand travellers to visit from 2027.

"Seeing really is believing," Hansson continued. ZH

Southwest plugs in AI

SOUTHWEST has launched a new plug-in partnership with ChatGPT that will hand the AI search engine direct access to its flight inventory.

A first for any US airline and the platform, the connection crucially will not see travellers make bookings directly via the well-known AI platform.

Information designed to aid the travel and flight search process delivered by ChatGPT, having been sourced directly from Southwest's systems, before being directed to the Southwest.com site for purchase. ZH

Choice opens 600

CHOICE Hotels International has opened its 600th extended-stay hotel, strengthening its position in the economy and midscale segment.

The milestone property, Everhome Suites Denver Airport, offers studio and one-bedroom suites with full kitchens and flexible living areas.

Choice said its extended stay portfolio is up 13% year-on-year to Q2 2026. ZH

Hawaii's Kauai open

KAUA'I is continuing its recovery following Hurricane Lowell, with most accommodation, restaurants, tours and activities now open.

Some communities and outdoor areas remain affected, with travellers urged to check closures and local guidance before visiting.

Visitors are encouraged to support locally owned restaurants, retailers and tour operators as tourism resumes. ZH

Godmother search

TRAFALGAR has launched a search for the godmother of its newest river ship, *Trafalgar Dreamer*, ahead of its Seine debut in Apr 2027.

Previous guests are invited to submit a Trafalgar travel memory by 29 Oct for the chance to christen the ship and sail its inaugural voyage.

A complimentary place on the sailing is also on offer to a winning travel advisor. ZH



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A Home in Japan

THIRDHOME has officially entered the Japanese market, as the private travel club approaches its 100,000th booking.

The company already offers a collection of residences in Japan in destinations such as Niseko, Hakuba and Hakone, and will now significantly increase its nationwide portfolio following its official Japanese debut on 29 Sep.

It expects to focus on exclusive urban apartments in major cities like Tokyo and Osaka, ski-in, ski-out residences in Hokkaido and the Japanese Alps, cultural retreats in Kyoto, and beachfront villas in Okinawa.

Bhutan your way

FIVE-STAR wellness resort Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary is relaunching with a new concept called Bhutan A La Carte.

Rather than fixed, packaged itineraries, the new concept builds each journey around the traveller's own interests and pace, spanning culture, wellness, nature, food, arts, fashion, spirituality and mindfulness.

Playing directly into Bhutan's 'High Value, Low Volume' tourism philosophy, the concept offers a genuinely personalised alternative to the country's traditional set-route itineraries.

The resort is set in Bhutan's serene Neyphu Valley. *MS*

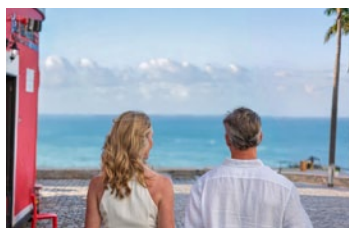
SILVERSEA UNVEILS VOYAGE COLLECTION

LUXURY cruise line Silversea has revealed new itineraries in its Voyage Collection 2028/29, highlighting some of the world's most vibrant cultural events.

Highlights will include Carnival in Venice and Rio de Janeiro, Lunar New Year in Hong Kong, Japan's cherry blossom season or New Year's Eve in Funchal and Sydney.

Other new features in the collection include SALT Culinary Voyages featuring wine and truffle sailings across Italy and Spain on board *Silver Dawn*, with truffle-hunting excursions, guided vineyard tours and more.

Asian market sailings are scheduled aboard *Silver Muse* through Singapore and Hong



Kong, including shore excursions such as chef-led market tours, street food destinations and hawker stall visits.

Meanwhile, on *Silver Nova* and *Silver Ray*'s sailings through the Caribbean, guests will now have the opportunity to enjoy a full day at Canouan, a secluded island within St Vincent and the Grenadines, as well as a Carnival welcome with local dancers and a

beachside soiree with live music.

Lastly, a Grand South America round-trip circumnavigation on *Silver Nova* will take place in 2029

The 75-night voyage will include a Panal Canal transit, a scenic cruising of the Antarctic Peninsula and overnight stays in Manaus, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Callao (Lima) and Cartagena.

Passengers will enjoy three exclusive events, including a sunset reception in St Barts, VIP viewing of Rio's Carnival along the parade runway and a private rooftop event at Cartagena.

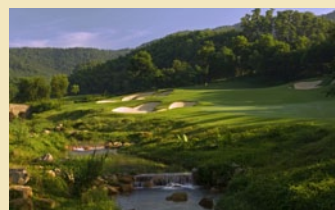
"These moments are what allow our guests to experience each destination at its most authentic," president Bert Hernandez said.

Azamara chips in more value for golfers

AZAMARA Cruises has revealed details of its eight dedicated golf cruises across 2027/28 in partnership with Premier Golf (*TD* 29 Jun 2026), combining rounds at renowned courses with the line's destination-focused cruising.

The collection spans Ireland, Scotland, the British Isles, Northern Europe, the Pacific Coast, Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand across all four Azamara ships.

Golfers can choose between Classic and Leisure collections, with packages offering three to five rounds, plus transfers, carts or caddies, lunches and



welcome and farewell events.

Highlights include Royal Portrush, Torrey Pines South and Cape Kidnappers, while the British Isles sailing also includes a walking tour of iconic St Andrews' Old Course.

Golf packages range from \$2,050 to \$6,995 per golfer, plus cruise fare, with travel advisors receiving a commission of 10%. *ZH*

Crystal feelings

CRYSTAL has released a new global brand campaign, 'That Crystal Feeling', which taps into the emotions and sensations of travelling with the cruise line.

AKTG's chief brand officer Peter Chipchase said the initiative focuses on the line offering guests the "freedom to slow down, to wander without a plan, to linger a little longer and to let the world unfold around you".

The campaign is running across the world from now until 30 Sep 2027 through TV, digital and online advertising, print, DOOH & social media.

DISCOVERY SESSIONS



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The **Ritz-Carlton Naples, Tiburon** has unveiled the results of its multi-million-dollar transformation, introducing a refreshed lobby, residential-style accommodations, an elevated Club Lounge, Swaying Palm event space and three new culinary concepts: Palmera, Fenrose, and Cafe Fenrose. Redesigned guest rooms feature earthy textures and nature-inspired patterns with opulent finishes.



As the hotel marks its 125th anniversary, **Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi** has debuted its newly refurbished Opera Wing. The transformation has breathed new life into the wing's corridors, lift landings and accommodation across its premium and grand premium rooms and prestige suites. The design incorporates lighter palettes, refined fabrics, renewed furnishings and enhanced in-room comfort, as well as new carpets and curtains.



MGallery Collection has announced the opening of **Nirema Hotel & Spa Samos**, a new seafront retreat located at the entrance of Vathy Village on the Greek island of Samos. With views of the Aegean Sea and the Ampelos mountains, the hotel features 72 rooms, including eight suites with private pools and expansive terraces. Guests can access a private beachfront area, dine at the on-site a la carte restaurant and gather at the mixology-focused pool bar.



Jumeirah Marsa Al Arab has unveiled 1206, a contemporary dining destination opening on 30 Oct, and the new resort's final venue to be revealed. The restaurant offers an ingredient-led dining experience accompanied by views of Jumeirah Burj Al Arab and Burj Khalifa. The menu is rooted in traditions of British cooking, with French, Mediterranean and Scandinavian influences.



This Christmas, **Paradise Resort Gold Coast** will welcome guests to its new adults-only pool and bar precinct, Oh Shun Blu. The area will feature a heated 25-metre swimming pool with built-in spa jets, landscaped surrounds, poolside lounging and a swim-up bar, exclusively available to Paradise Resort guests aged 18 and over.

Emirates serves it good



THE Emirates Force for Good initiative brought its Move. Breathe. Belong. program to Sydney recently, inspiring local youth with a tennis clinic held by former grand slam champion Casey Dellacqua.

Hosted in partnership with the Australian Tennis Foundation, the initiative uses trauma-informed coaching to build confidence, well-being, and connection among young people facing barriers to education.

Students from trauma-informed schooling provider MacKillop Education enjoyed the first of weekly structured tennis coaching sessions, helping support kids from backgrounds of trauma, anxiety and school refusal.

Dellacqua, the program's ambassador, joined other tennis coaches on court for the day, where she led drills, mentored participants and shared the benefits of physical activity.

The initiative is part of Emirates' five-year, \$2.25 million commitment to support vulnerable youth through tennis across Australia.

A total of 14 tennis-based projects will be delivered in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide under Emirates' Force for Good initiative, which is now in its second year.

"Emirates Force for Good is about making sport accessible and giving young people a safe environment to stay active, build trust, and connect with their peers," Dellacqua said.

"Watching them gain confidence, support each other through every drill and enjoy the session speaks for itself."

The airline's regional sales manager, Leonie Brennan, added: "Emirates is passionate about ensuring our commitment to Australia extends well beyond the flights we operate into Sydney.

"For us, the Force for Good program is an opportunity to give back to the communities we serve by supporting young people who need it most."

The program reached more than 2,000 children in its inaugural year, creating more than 6,500 opportunities to play tennis. *MS*

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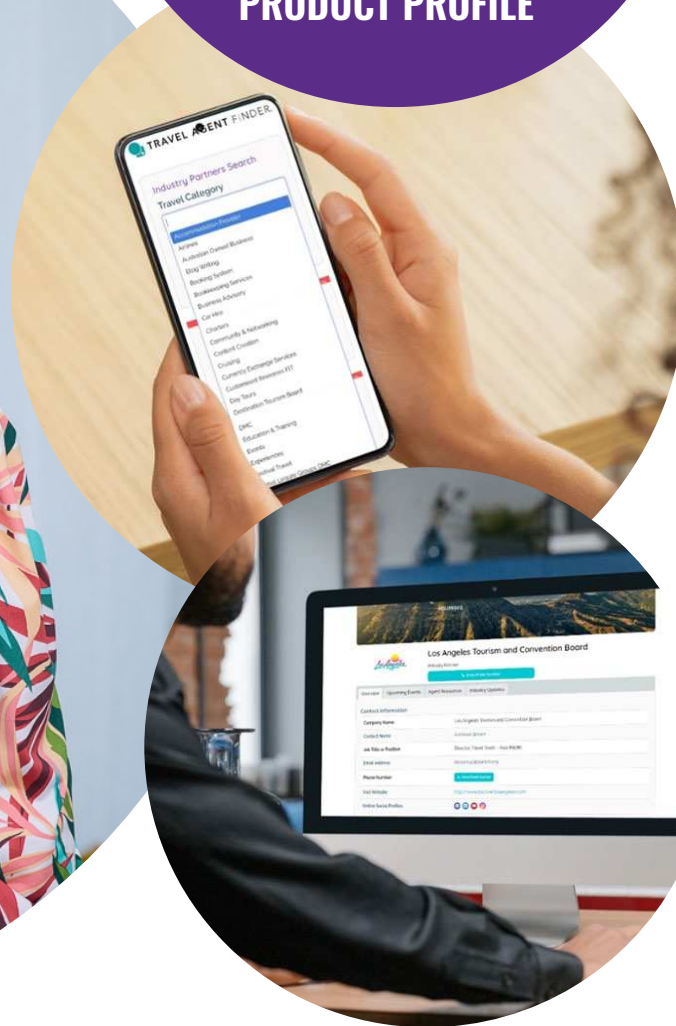
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