

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages, including our **Luxury** page, plus full pages from:

- Cruise Lines International Association
- Scenic
- FACTS Business Travel & Events Expo

WSI taxi cap plan

THE NSW Government has committed to undertaking a trial of capped taxi fares at Western Sydney International in a bid to lower the costs for passengers paying north of \$200 to travel to the city's CBD.

If a trial goes ahead, it would follow a similar scheme in place at Sydney Airport, which currently caps fares to the CBD at \$60.

No fare price has been agreed upon, with government officials waiting on more passenger data.

13cabs estimated the average fare between WSI and Manly to be \$267 and \$227 to Bondi. **AB**

Holiday parks hit by scam

HOLIDAY park operators are warning guests of phishing scams following a cybersecurity breach involving Australian booking software RMS Cloud.

Big4, Reflections Holidays and Summerstar Tourist Parks have all issued warnings to clients.

Scammers have stolen booking information, such as guest names and stay dates, to create fraudulent WhatsApp, SMS and email messages requesting payment or credit card details.

Many parks around the country have advised against clicking on suspicious links or providing any payment information.

"We have been made aware of a breach of a third-party platform which is used by some of the parks within our network, as well as a number of other accommodation providers and groups," a Big4 spokesperson told the **ABC**.

Meanwhile, a Reflections



Holidays warning email seen by *Travel Daily* told guests that they had been notified of phishing emails to future guests by RMS.

"Please do not click links or share payment details," it read.

Summerstar Tourist Parks has also issued a warning via social media, stating it too had been notified of fraudulent emails.

The post advises guests that their bookings are safe but to contact Scamwatch if they have clicked a link.

RMS has updated its website saying it was investigating activity and "taking steps to contain it".

"No payment card information has been exposed from RMS." **ZH**

BWH to the world

BWH Hotels will now be known as WorldHotels, with the rebrand set to be rolled out globally.

Despite the pivot, individual hotel identities, including signage and flags, will remain unchanged.

A new WorldHotels rewards program will launch Jan 2027. **JB**

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SUPER earlybird offers for Scenic's 2027 Europe river cruising season are available now.

See more info on **page nine**.

Get all the FACTS

AUSTRALIA'S largest corporate travel summit and business and events expo will return in Nov.

See more details on **back page**.



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Kill Maldives tax quickly

THE World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) has called on Maldivian authorities to repeal its 17% GST charge on inbound tourism products “without delay”, following news last week the levy was facing the axe (**TD** 22 Oct).

WTAAA CEO Otto de Vries also urged the Maldives Inland Revenue Authority to make refunds to travel agents as quickly and simply as possible with regard to tax collected since the impost went live on 01 Oct.

“Travel advisors have spent years building demand for the Maldives and they want to keep selling it,” de Vries said.

WTAAA also encouraged travel advisors to keep track of documentation relating to any payments made for Maldives

services since 01 Oct, adding that it stood ready to work with the Maldives Ministry of Tourism until the repeal bill was passed.

Alongside the Australian Travel Industry Association, WTAAA joined forces with the American Society of Travel Advisors, the Association of British Travel Agents and the European Travel Agents and Tour Operators Association to pen a letter asking for tax protection for sellers.

It included calls for a postponement, protection for existing bookings, and confirmation that agents selling on behalf of a tour operator would not have to register.

Reflecting on flagged plans to repeal the bill, de Vries said its members never disputed the Maldives’ right to tax tourism within its borders, but rather the need to register, file and remit a foreign tax under their own banking, tax and privacy laws. *AB*

Carriers paying more

AIRLINES spent \$24.5 billion on payments in 2025, with transaction costs rising faster than travel sales, according to new data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The global figure represents a 10.4% increase in total costs versus 2023, compared to a growth of only 7.7% in travel sales over the same period.

Eighty-four percent of the total was related to payment fees or the direct cost of completing each transaction, with cards accounting for the highest cost per transaction. *JM*

Princess goes big

PRINCESS Cruises has announced its 2028/29 Australia and New Zealand program, offering more than 90 departures across 72 itineraries.

The season will be highlighted by the inaugural 129-night ‘Grand World Odyssey’, the longest world cruise offered from Australia, featuring 61 ports of call spanning 31 countries.

All voyages go on sale 11 Nov - more details in *Cruise Weekly*. *JB*



Modern terminal for WA



PERTH Airport has unveiled a new set of concept designs for its new terminal (**pictured**), which is set to be the centrepiece of a broader multi-billion dollar One Airport transformation.

The project will see the construction of a 159,000m² terminal with 22 new contact gates that will be able to accommodate a variety of narrow- and wide-body aircraft.

Among the new gates will be a number of ‘swing gates’ which will be able to switch between servicing domestic and international flights, greatly improving efficiency.

Other highlight features include state-of-the-art baggage handling systems, call-to-gate initiatives, 10,000m² of retail dining and hospitality, and a focus on natural light and views from the terminal.

“A good airport moves passengers efficiently, but a great airport also gives them a sense of the destination they are in - this design delivers both outcomes,” Perth Airport chief executive

officer Jason Waters said.

“While the new terminal designs show one big new building, the design team has also considered the hundreds of small things that will add up to a better experience for everyone.”

“This multi-billion-dollar investment further strengthens Perth’s position as Australia’s Western Gateway, an important role given that 95 per cent of visitors to the State arrive by air,” Western Australia Premier Roger Cook said.

“My Government remains focused on growing aviation capacity and working closely with Perth Airport and airline partners to expand our tourism sector.”

The *ABC* reported that Jason Waters warned of interruptions to regular airport operations through the process, confirming the works would begin within the next year.

However, he was unable to confirm the duration of construction, nor the total cost of redevelopments. *ZH*



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Take a wander down Scandi back roads

EXCLUSIVE

NORWEGIAN Wonders founder Thomas Gjerde (**pictured**) is calling on agents to look beyond Scandinavia's best-known destinations, arguing lesser-visited parts of the region can deliver comparable experiences without the crowds.

The Norwegian-born operator said travellers could miss out on alternative destinations because successful marketing had concentrated demand around a handful of established locations, creating challenges for agents trying to secure accommodation and experiences.

Gjerde launched Norwegian Wonders earlier this month (**TD** 07 Oct 2026).

"People may not know of other alternatives and other options or other destinations that provide exactly the same experiences," Gjerde told **Travel Daily**.



"We can help them unlock those destinations and those experiences, perhaps less crowded and with similar or even occasionally lower price points.

Gjerde, who spent his first 24 years in Norway before moving to Australia, said the aim was to help agents deliver more authentic experiences while easing the pressure on popular tourism centres.

"You will not be fighting for space or fighting for accommodation and you'll have a more authentic, real experience, where locals actually welcome you, rather than look at tourism as a problem," he continued.

Northern Norway is central

to the strategy, with Gjerde drawing on his upbringing above the Arctic Circle and established relationships with accommodation and experience providers in the region.

Winter itineraries include opportunities to see the Northern Lights, alongside cultural and culinary experiences in Oslo, a stay at Sweden's Icehotel in Kiruna and a visit to Stockholm.

Gjerde said the appeal extended beyond winter, with summer journeys incorporating northern Norway and the Lofoten Islands, as well as independent itineraries offering alternatives to established routes such as 'Norway in a Nutshell'.

The business will offer a 15% base commission for agents and plans to help agents navigate complex tailor-made requests, particularly when preferred accommodation or experiences are unavailable. **ZH**

VA protected action

AUSTRALIAN Services Union Virgin Australia staff will begin protected industrial action today.

Until Thu, workers will wear union material whilst not wearing uniform ties and scarves as they fight the airline to provide a better enterprise agreement.

Virgin staff will also hand out ASU flyers and have a short chat with pax about the action. **ZH**

Royal raises guidance

ROYAL Caribbean Group has raised its full-year earnings guidance after Q3 results came in above its own forecast.

Chairman and CEO Jason Liberty said 2027 bookings are "pacing ahead of historical levels at higher rates".

Third-quarter revenue rose 9% year-on-year to US\$ 5.6 billion (A\$8.6 billion), while net income increased to US\$1.7 billion (A\$2.6 billion) and adjusted EPS is up around 10 cents. **ZH**



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TRAVELEX has partnered with NRMA to allow Australian travellers to organise International Driving Permits (IDP) before heading overseas.

Travellers can apply for an IDP online and collect it from participating Travelex locations in NSW and ACT, including at Sydney Airport, where departing pax can also apply for a same-day permit.

IDPs are recognised in more than 150 countries, are valid for 12 months from the date of issue, and must be used alongside a valid Australian driver licence.

NRMA members will also benefit from Travelex foreign exchange offers, including preferential in-store exchange rates. JM



Tastier history in Virginia

EXCLUSIVE

VIRGINIA is promoting immersive experiences that combine American history with food, wine and outdoor activities, positioning the state as offering more than traditional museums.

Colonial Williamsburg (pictured), described by Virginia Tourism Corporation associate director of global media relations and marketing and director, global markets Christi Braginton as “the largest living history museum in the world”, allows visitors to engage with historical trades and daily life, from traditional printing to colonial-era medicine and beyond.

“You are not just coming to learn at a museum...you are going to Colonial Williamsburg,” she told *Travel Daily*.

The approach extends beyond heritage attractions, with visitors able to combine wine tasting with outdoor pursuits, including



kayaking on Chesapeake Bay.

“You do not just go wine tasting, you go kayaking out on the Chesapeake Bay, and you kayak to the winery, and you taste wines, and then you kayak back.”

“Lots of overlapping, layered experiences is what we have in Virginia,” Braginton continued.

The strategy offers travellers opportunities to combine several interests in one itinerary, rather than treating history, food and outdoor adventure as distinctly separate experiences. ZH

Image credit:

ColonialWilliamsburg.org - A Revolutionary Year Awaits.



Window Seat

AIRPORT blunders are nothing new, and here at **TD**, we have been waiting with bated breath for a fresh batch of mix-ups following the opening of our newest airport.

Many pax have mistaken Austria for Australia, or got their Sydneys mixed up, but one Kiwi traveller may have just claimed the gaffe throne.

A passenger on flight NZ165, the first international flight into the new WSI, told reporters he thought he was landing in Western Australia.

“I saw Western Sydney [on the ticket] and I thought it was Western Australia, and I’m meant to be in Perth.”

We are not sure how much the mistake cost him but we are sure it wasn’t cheap - at least he was part of history.

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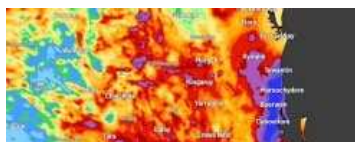
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Weathering the storm

THE Queensland Touring Industry Council (QTIC) has announced it will form its own panel of specialist insurance brokers to provide dedicated advice for tourism and events operators around the state.

The move comes after South East Queensland was lashed by heavy rain last week, with more wild weather expected as the



official storm and cyclone season kicked off on Sun.

QTIC CEO Natassia Wheeler said that despite ongoing conversations with the Australian and Queensland governments, operators could not afford to wait any longer for change.

The organisation made 21 recommendations to both governments in Jul via QTIC's *Insurance Affordability and Availability: Advocacy Report & Action Plan* and has "raised them repeatedly since".

"The weather isn't waiting for a policy cycle, so industry is getting on with what we can deliver ourselves," Wheeler said.

"This panel won't fix premiums on its own, but it gives operators a short, vetted list of brokers who know their sector, and it gives us a direct line to educate the broking market on how well-run tourism businesses manage risk."

Applications are now open for the brokers to join the panel. JM

Newy-Hobart is back

A SEASONAL Jetstar service linking Newcastle and Hobart has taken off (TD 02 Sep 2026).

The budget carrier will operate three flights a week on Tue, Thu and Sat, running through to 24 Apr 2027. JB

Guiding Beyond

ANDBEYOND has teamed up with Approach Guides, a partner-led demand generation platform that gives agents a new way to inspire clients, personalise the client journey and convert interest into bookings.

The partnership has launched with a co-branded andBeyond website ([HERE](#)) and a collection of 10 content experiences ([HERE](#)), which advisors can personalise, co-brand and instantly share.

"We are not simply offering destinations; we are inviting people into moments that feel rare and deeply personal," andBeyond chief marketing officer Nicole Robinson said.

"What andBeyond's partnership with Approach Guides does is allow travel advisors to carry that invitation forward in a way that feels intuitive and true to the experience itself."

To support the launch, andBeyond and Approach Guides will host a live webinar tomorrow (29 Oct) - sign up [HERE](#). JM



Entire does classic BC



CREDIT: Richelle Marie Photography/Erin Valley Riding Stables.

EIGHT Australian travel advisors have returned from a seven-night British Columbia famil hosted by Canada Travel, powered by Entire Travel Group.

The bucket-list travel experience was delivered in partnership with Air Canada and Destination British Columbia.

A 'Rainforest to Rockies' itinerary showcased the Canadian province's diverse landscapes, wildlife, outdoor adventures, food and wine experiences and mountain resort communities.

"Famils play an important role in helping travel advisors build genuine destination knowledge and confidence," Entire Travel Group sales and marketing director Greg McCallum said.

Flying with Air Canada to Vancouver, the group explored highlights including the Adams River salmon run and Wells Gray Provincial Park, alongside scenic helicopter flights, horseback riding and several expert-guided outdoor activities.

"Every stop in Canada brought something different, from

breathtaking scenery and adrenaline-filled adventures to unforgettable experiences and special moments along the way," advisor Maria Piliouras said. ZH

Sun shines on Hunt

SUN Island Tours has appointed Craig Hunt as its new business development manager for Victoria and Tasmania, which will see him provide product training, educational resources and sales support across agencies.

Hunt brings more than 50 years of experience in the travel industry to the table, and joins the company as Melbourne-based BDM Bianca French takes on more time within Sun Island Tours' reservations team.

"Craig brings valuable experience and strong relationships to our team, and we are very excited about the opportunities that he will no doubt create for our important trade partners," John Polyviou, Sun Island Tours joint chief executive officer said. JM

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Broadbeach dining

ANDAZ Gold Coast will introduce four dining and drinking venues when the country's first Andaz hotel opens in Broadbeach this Nov, with the collection of venues offering a different reason to visit throughout the day.

Executive chef Matthew Bentley and Nove chef de cuisine Rafael Dias will lead the culinary offering, with almost 70% of produce sourced from Australia, particularly Queensland and the Northern Rivers.

Venues include Med-inspired signature restaurant Nove, Vista Lounge for coffee and all-day dining, share plates at Andaz Pool Club, and Verde Bar for cocktails and sunset views. ZH

AGENTS TO GO FORTH IN SOUTH AFRICA

LUXURY Africa travel specialist Forth & Wonder has teamed up with Relais & Chateaux to create an exclusive, invite-only educational journey to South Africa, giving Aussie advisors the chance to go beyond familiar luxury brands and experience a collection of hidden gems across the region.

Taking place in May 2027, the itinerary will showcase four Relais & Chateaux safari properties: Morukuru Family, Few & Far Luvhondo, Jabulani, and Silvan Safari, each highlighting different landscapes, wildlife encounters and styles of hospitality.

Forth & Wonder founder Steve Crisp said the partnership supports the company's commitment to enhancing Australian advisors' knowledge of Africa's luxury offerings.



"Australian advisors are familiar with some of Africa's leading luxury properties, but there is an incredible depth of product that remains less well known in our market," Crisp explained.

"We are thrilled to partner with Relais & Chateaux to showcase this diversity and give advisors first-hand experience of exceptional properties they may not otherwise have considered for their clients."

Tamara Kobiolke, Relais & Chateaux Representative for Australia and NZ, added: "One of the greatest strengths of Relais & Chateaux is the extraordinary individuality of our properties."

"By experiencing these remarkable places firsthand, advisors can discover the depth and diversity of our collection and...share those stories with their clients with genuine knowledge and confidence." JM

Grand Nile on Ra open

VIKING has opened bookings for its new 19-day 'Grand Nile Journey', launching in 2028 and featuring a 14-night sailing between Cairo and Aswan aboard the 52-guest *Viking Ra*.

The itinerary includes four hotel nights in Cairo and 17 guided tours covering landmarks including the Great Pyramids of Giza as well as Middle Egypt alongside lesser-visited archaeological sites.

The voyage expands Viking's Egypt footprint, which currently consists of 10 vessels. ZH

Aman announces Amangati's Caribbean season

AMAN at Sea has expanded its inaugural Caribbean season, adding 12 winter 2028 voyages of five to eight nights aboard its luxury yacht, *Amangati*, with itineraries running from 21 Nov 2027 to 20 Mar 2028.

The new sailings will extend the season of the yacht's previously announced Mediterranean voyages (TD 23 Jan 2026).

The itineraries will cover the Leeward Islands, Windward Islands and Dutch Caribbean,



including Aruba and Bonaire, alongside stops at secluded cays and smaller island ports.

Amangati will accommodate 94 guests across 47 suites, with four restaurants, a 1,190m² spa and a marina offering water sports equipment. ZH

South coast Spa-ing

TASMAN Holiday Parks Racecourse Beach has installed four private hot tubs, adding a new luxury edge to the South Coast holiday park.

Each tub measures 3.5m in diameter and provides a chance for guests to further sink into coastal experience.

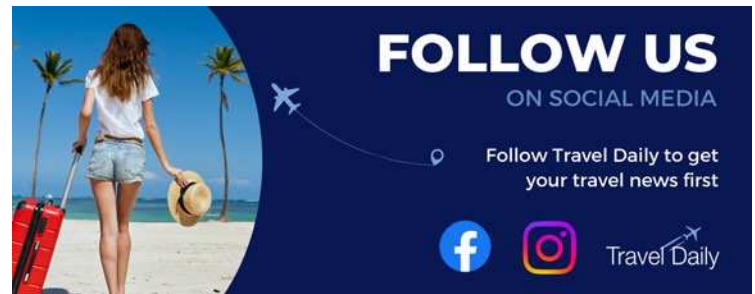
"[The new spa precinct gives] guests more ways to relax and recharge," Tasman Holiday Parks chief exutive Nikki Milne said. ZH

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Paul Gauguin
CRUISES



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PARKROYAL Parramatta has completed the second and final stage of its transformation. The latest refurbishment introduces a new lobby area, meeting and events spaces, in addition to a premium executive suite. Highlighting its new MICE features is the Governors Ballroom, introducing what the hotel claims is the first permanent LED wall in Western Sydney. Furthermore, the 116m² Parkroyal Suite has been renovated, accommodating up to six guests.



Trinity St. Kilda will reopen its doors on 27 Nov, following a \$2 million makeover. As part of the upgrade, outdoor music will now run until 1am, in addition to expanded food options and a capacity of 450 people. Additionally, the Trinity Terrace has been completely overhauled, with a clear glass roof and wall along Chapel Street and offers both sit-down dining and stand-up events catering for up to 200 guests.



Brass Boer, the signature dining venue at Bonaire's **Delfins Beach Resort, Tapestry Collection by Hilton** in the Caribbean Netherlands, has undergone a major renovation, offering Dutch-designed beach huts (known as palapas) and a new waterfront lounge. Designed in the Netherlands, the palapas provide asymmetrical rooflines, rising at different heights over the waterfront terrace. There is also now a walk-in wine cellar.



Construction has begun on **Punthill Oakleigh Central** in Melbourne, a 55-key apartment hotel on 45-49 Portman Street. Developed by BNG Group, the property will offer 38 studios, 14 one-bedroom apartments and three two-bedroom apartments, all of which are designed for both short-term and extended stays. The property also includes a gym, conference spaces & laundry.



Work has commenced on **Bundaberg's first hotel development in over 20 years**. Developed by MVP, the new property will be located opposite Bundaberg Airport, with 97 rooms across three storeys. The development has also been funded by MyState Limited which says the hotel will generate 50 ongoing jobs. Construction is set for a mid-2027 completion.

Connections up north



CONNECTED Travel hosted its second annual Connecting the Collective conference in North Queensland's Palm Cove recently, bringing together independent travel advisors, the leadership team and key industry partners.

Across the three days, delegates enjoyed several learning experiences highlighted by an AI workshop, in addition to practical workshops covering sales, commission, yield & profitability.

The conference also celebrated the achievements of the Connected Travel team with recognition awards handed out such as Business Breakthrough and Making Waves.

"Connecting the Collective isn't just about our advisors - it's our suppliers, tourism partners, hotels and everyone who contributes to what we do," explained Marissa Papas, founder and director of Connected Travel.

"We take our businesses seriously, but we also love having fun together.

"And when you manage to get an entire boat dancing, I think you've taken connecting to a

whole new level."

Beyond the formalities, delegates took part in a series of networking events such as cocktail making at The Reef House, as well as exploring the Kuranda area, enjoying a hosted dinner at Sheraton Mirage Port Douglas and jumping on a sunset cruise around Palm Cove. *JB*

TUI ship damaged

TUI Cruises' Mein Schiff 3 collided with two container ships as she departed Bremerhaven, Germany on Sun, leaving her with significant damage.

The incident happened during stormy weather and strong winds, with no injuries occurring among the 2,428 passengers and 922 crew on board.

Following an inspection once the ship was safely returned to Columbuskaje under tugboat assistance, TUI Cruises cancelled the three-week Canary Islands cruise for urgent repair work.

The cause of the accident and the extent of the damage are still under investigation. *JM*



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