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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today has six pages of news and photos, a front cover page for **Virgin Australia** plus full pages from:

- TMS Talent
- Tauck

## Virgin accelerate

**VIRGIN** Australia is today promoting its Accelerate program, encouraging growing businesses to sign up to receive access to its range of exclusive benefits.

Membership includes travel credits and discounts for businesses, as well as increased baggage allowance, Virgin Lounge access, and priority boarding for travellers.

To find out more about the program, see the **cover page**.

## Sri Lanka travel update

**THE** Australian travel industry has responded to the multiple bombings that took place in Sri Lanka on Sun 21 Apr, with several tour operators releasing updates on both existing and upcoming tours to the affected areas.

The blasts, which occurred across a number of hotels and churches in Colombo, Negombo and Batticaloa, claimed the lives of at least 290 people, with two Australians among the deceased.

While Smartraveller has upped the travel advice to the region, to "reconsider your need to travel", tour operators are addressing the situation on an individual basis.

Group CEO of Wendy Wu Tours Joe Karbo has reassured the trade that all guests currently in the region are "accounted for and in good spirits".

"We're extremely thankful no one on our tour or any of our FIT passengers were affected, and our ground staff are safe and sound," he said.

"When talking to members of the tour on the weekend they were all in good spirits and thankful for the immediate support Wendy Wu Tours offered and provided...our thoughts and prayers go out to victims and the people of Sri Lanka."

Tourists travelling with Intrepid have also been reported safe on the ground, with the travel company set to make decisions about future departures to the

country by tomorrow.

"In the meantime, if customers wish to cancel immediately and transfer to another departure later in the year, they can do so with no change fees," said Tara Kennaway, Regional Product Manager at Intrepid Group.

Customers booked on departures with Bunnik Tours and Small Group Touring Co in upcoming weeks will be able to continue their travel plans as normal, but are advised to expect possible small changes in itineraries due to "extra security arrangements", the company said.

Similarly, G Adventures has advised that its team is "monitoring this ongoing situation", confirming all 116 travellers currently in the region are safe and have been re-routed to avoid Colombo.

The company has also confirmed travellers with future bookings who would like to postpone their trips to a later date can do so with no change fees, saying it will determine if any itinerary changes will be necessary at a later date.

Colombo Int'l Airport remains operational, with pax encouraged to arrive four hours before their scheduled flights to allow for additional security measures.

Customers with Qatar Airways tickets will be able to waive change fees on tickets issued on or before 21 Apr for travel between 22 Apr and 30 Apr.

## TC appointment

**TRAVEL** Counsellors (TC) has welcomed a new face to its Melbourne team, with the appointment of Megan Larsen-Smith to the newly created position of Supplier Relations Manager.

Larsen-Smith, who brings over 15 years' experience in the tourism industry including roles in wholesale, corporate TMC, hotel and airline, will be in charge of building strategic partnerships.

## 2019 Tauck trips

**GUIDED** tour company, Tauck, is ramping up sales for its remaining 2019 itineraries, with a series of departures left for the year still available to book.

Tours include the Europe Exclusive Tours and Cruises selection of itineraries, as well as a range of Asia, Africa, South America and Exotic Journey departures.

For info, see the **back page**.

## Thomas Cook sale?

**TROUBLED** travel tour company, Thomas Cook, has reportedly received a number of bids to purchase parts of the business, and the company as a whole, according to an article by English news source, *BBC.com*.

The business, which put its airline up for sale in Feb (*TD* 11 Feb), last month said it would close 21 of its stores across the UK and cut several hundred jobs.

*Sky News* also reported that Chinese investment firm Fosun International, which runs a joint venture with the company in China, could be one of the travel company's key bidders, with insiders telling the global news source "it could be months before any formal offer is lodged", with "no guarantee one will be made".



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## Mitsubishi planes

**MITSUBISHI** Aircraft Corporation expects to deliver the first of its 88-passenger MRJ planes by mid-2020.

The Mitsubishi Regional Jet (MRJ) will be the first Japanese-produced passenger aircraft since the 1960s, and will have a range of 2,000 miles.

The aircraft is set to become a rival for Airbus's A220, with reports saying Mitsubishi has orders for 407 jets.



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## Travel growth continues

**INBOUND** and domestic tourism continued to grow in 2018, with total overnight spending climbing 11%, Tourism Research Australia has revealed.

The latest National Visitor Survey reported domestic and international overnight visitor spend hit \$116.6b in 2018, with NSW again collecting the largest slice of the tourism pie - \$21.1b.

NSW also recorded the highest number of domestic visitors (34.6 million) up 9.4%, while spend jumped 13%.

NSW Minister for Tourism, Stuart Ayres said the growth reflected the success of the state's Destination Networks.

"Our Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan and increasing the various funding streams for regional events and marketing programs are paying off as we see our state realising domestic visitor growth more than double our nearest competitor, Victoria," he said.

Tasmania and Queensland topped the rankings in terms of proportional growth in overnight visitor spending, with both states

seeing a 16% increase in 2018.

Visitor spending in Tasmania jumped to \$2.7 billion, while Queensland saw overnight spending climb to \$18.3 billion.

Northern Territory Minister for Tourism, Sport and Culture, Lauren Moss said the 7% growth in visitor spending reflected the success of the territory's tourism campaigns.

"The Tourism Research Australia results for the year ending Dec 2018 reflect eight months of Turbocharging Tourism investment activity and we are continuing to see positive results," she said.

"We have exceeded our Turbocharging Tourism holiday visitor target with 57,000 extra holiday bookings."

While the ACT's visitor numbers remained static at 2.7 million, spend increased 15% to \$1.8 billion.

Victoria was the second most popular destination attracting 25.7 million visitors, while Western Australia and South Australia also recorded growth in visitors and spending.



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## Cuba restrictions

**THE US Govt** has outlined new restrictions on Cuba, including limiting nonfamily travel, the *New York Times* reports.

Details of the restrictions have not yet been released.

A spokesperson from Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings said the company was closely monitoring recent developments, but since no new regulations have been issued at this stage, itineraries would continue as scheduled.

## Journalist

### - Macquarie Park

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## TTF lauds Labor

**TOURISM** and Transport Forum has welcomed the Labor Party's \$150 million commitment to the tourism industry.

In the lead up to next month's Federal Election, Labor has revealed its strategy would include \$95m in grants to improve infrastructure around existing tourism attractions, \$30m to expand the range of tourism experiences in individual regions and \$25m for Tourism Australia to get more int'l visitors to Australia.

"The proposed investment will allow tourism businesses to create new experiences, improve service quality, expand in regional areas as well as further promotion of tourism on the worldwide market," said Tourism and Transport Forum Chief Executive Officer Margy Osmond.

## Viagogo breached ACL

**THE** Federal Court has found ticket reseller Viagogo in breach of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), following legal action by the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) against the reselling platform in Aug 2017.

The court has confirmed Viagogo misled consumers by claiming tickets to certain events were scarce, when the scarcity only referred to the tickets available on its resale platform and didn't include tickets available elsewhere.

Viagogo has also made false or misleading representations and misled the public when reselling entertainment, music and live sport event tickets.

"Viagogo's claims misled

consumers into buying tickets by including claims like 'less than 1% of tickets remaining' to create a false sense of urgency," ACCC Chair Rod Sims said.

The Court also found that Viagogo used the word "official" in its online advertisements, which was misleading as Viagogo is a ticket resale website and not an official site as the consumers were led to believe.

From 01 May 2017 to 26 Jun 2017, Viagogo's website claims drew consumers in with a headline price but failed to sufficiently disclose additional fees or specify a single price for tickets, with additional fees including a 27.6% booking fee which applied to most tickets.

"Viagogo was charging extraordinarily high booking fees and many consumers were caught out," Sims said.

The Court will determine penalties and orders against Viagogo at a later date.



## Window Seat

**THEY** say love makes the world go round, and for one American couple, it's more than just a cheesy phrase.

Michelle Belleau and Ron Peterson, who first locked eyes across the baggage carousel at the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, tied the knot at the very same place they met 12 years ago - baggage claim number six.

According to *Cleveland.com*, the couple met when Belleau's boss asked her to pick up a client from Los Angeles at the airport - that client turned out to be Peterson, and they've been together ever since.

"I couldn't think of anywhere more perfect," Belleau said of her nuptials.

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## Helloworld donation

**HELLOWORLD** CEO Andrew Burnes has landed in hot water once again, following reports that a "private company co-owned by the Liberal Party's federal Treasurer" donated \$200,000, two weeks into a Government tender accommodation contract.

According to *The SMH*, the 2016 "gift" was followed by a payment of \$120k made by Burnes for tickets to a Liberal dinner in 2017.

## Virgin tops on time

**THE** Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport & Regional Economics has released its Mar on time performance data, with Virgin Australia taking home the crown for the highest on time arrivals among Australian domestic airlines at 79.4%.

Qantas came in second at 78.4%, closely followed by Jetstar at 77% and Tigerair Aus at 69%.

Virgin also achieved the highest on time departure rate at 81.5%, followed by Qantas at 80.2%.

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## italktravel & cruise Bendigo



**EXPRESS** Travel Group has opened italktravel & cruise Bendigo Central, its third store in three months.

As existing members of Express Travel Group under

the Independent Travel Group umbrella for the past few years, the agency recently made the decision to convert to the fully branded franchise option of italktravel & cruise.

“Our decision to convert to a franchise partner allows us to provide a better shopping experience for our customers with a new retail space, as well as taking advantage of the advanced technology and exceptional preferred partner deals that the italktravel & cruise franchise can provide us,” said Store Manager, John Fitzpatrick.

Express Travel Group Executive General Manager Ari Magoutis said the group continues to seek out like-minded travel partners to join the italktravel & cruise family.

**Pictured** are the new italktravel & Cruise Bendigo Central staff: Michelle Barabarino, Kerrie Henkel, John Fitzpatrick, Janelle Jeffrey, and Hannah Pollard.

### Trafalgar plastics

**TRAFALGAR** is set to remove all single-use plastic (SUP) water bottles from its coaches this year, as part of its commitment to being SUP-free by 2022.

“The war on plastic is essential and needs to happen now,” said Trafalgar CEO, Gavin Tollman.

The brand has also released the Agents Guide to Making a Difference, which features the fundamentals of sustainable tourism and has simple tips and small changes travel advisors can make that can have a big impact.



**NRL  
R6 WINNER**

Congratulations

**BERNIE  
FREYLING**

from Toowoomba Cruise and Travel

Bernie is the top point scorer for Round 6 of *Travel Daily's* NRL footy tipping competition. He's won \$100 travel credit courtesy of Expedia.



Travel Daily NRL tipping competition is sponsored by Emirates, with the top tipper for the season winning flights to Europe.



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## BROCHURES

**WELCOME** to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Tuesday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to [brochures@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:brochures@traveldaily.com.au).



### A&K - Australia & New Zealand 2020

Abercrombie & Kent has released its new collection of journeys around Australia and New Zealand. New destinations for 2020 include South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula, where guests explore McLaren Vale, Wirra Wirra's Old Barrel Hall, and have the chance to enjoy the d'Arenberg Cube wine sensory room with an 11-course degustation lunch. Another new addition is New Zealand's Waiheke Island, featuring a two-night stay as part of A&K's eight-day Connoisseur's North Island private journey, which is priced from \$10,995 per person.



### African Wildlife Safaris - Egypt 2019/2020

African Wildlife Safaris has released a 36-page Egypt brochure for 2019/20. The brochure features high-end Nile cruise boats, itineraries and a range of luxury accommodation in Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Oman, the UAE and Morocco. Travellers with AWS will also have the chance to explore the ancient sites of Egypt, including the Pyramids of Giza, or the desert mountain landscapes of Oman and Jordan. A program highlight is the 15-day Egypt and Jordan tour which features an Egyptian cruise down the Nile from Luxor to Aswan.

### CWT appoints

**CWT** has appointed David Holmes as VP of Payments.

Holmes joins from airline-owned payment network UATP, where he most recently led the global commercial strategy.

He will bring almost 18 years' of travel payments and travel FinTech experience to the role.

Holmes will be based in Miami.

### EagleRider private

**MOTORCYCLE** rental and travel company EagleRider has introduced Private Group Travel to its portfolio of travel options.

Groups of four or more will now be able to book their trips together by choosing flexible departure dates.

The groups will have access to the new 2019 model motorcycle rentals, motorcycle-friendly hotels and the EagleRider support package.

“Private Group Travel is another way we're enhancing the flexibility of our travel options and giving riders a more convenient way to book together,” said Chris McIntyre, Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of EagleRider.

For more information on the new option, **CLICK HERE**.

### Anchorage training

**VISIT** Anchorage is offering live online training for Australian and New Zealand travel agents.

The Anchorage Wild Expert training will take place online on 09 May at 9.00am Sydney time and 11.00am Auckland time.

To learn more about Anchorage and Southcentral Alaska and to register for the online training, **CLICK HERE**.

### Akaryn expansion

**THAILAND'S** luxury boutique hotel specialist AKARYN Hotel Group is preparing to move into international markets for the first time, with the launch of properties in Indonesia and Vietnam.

The 50-room Aleenta Retreat Bali, will be located an hour's drive from Ubud and feature outdoor yoga area and a fitness centre, along with a range of restaurants and the pool bar.

Also opening in 2019 will be akrya Hoi An, a waterfront resort between Hoi An's town centre and golden China Beach.

The property will contain 110 rooms and pool villas, two restaurants, a pool bar, an Ayurah Wellness centre, infinity pool and fitness centre.

## Qantas boosts Bris biz lounge



**QANTAS** has expanded its Business class lounge at Brisbane airport by 25%, now offering travellers a three-level space with capacity for close to 400 people.

The new area, located on the ground level, is equipped with its own kitchen offering a "premium hot and cold buffet", Quench hydration station, full bar and barista and is open in the peak period between 7.30am & 11am.

The new seasonal menus have been designed by Qantas Creative Director of Food, Beverage and Service, Neil Perry.

Other lounge features include a business centre, wi-fi, TVs with Foxtel, shower suites and a Sofitel service experience.

The fresh lounge area is **pictured** above.

### Vasco da Gama sale

**CRUISE & Maritime Voyages** is marking the inaugural departure of *Vasco da Gama* from Singapore to London today, by offering Australian travellers \$222 free onboard credit in Oceanview cabins on select 2019/20 sailings.

The ship, which is due to arrive in Sydney in Dec, will make a series of calls to South Australia, Tasmania and the north-west coast, as well as sailings to south east Asia.

Book by 06 May, more **HERE**.

## AFTA UPDATE

from Jayson Westbury



**AS THE** Australian economy and travel industry return to a more full on work environment this week after

the break, I wanted to take this opportunity to send a message for the Easter weekend that has just passed and for Anzac Day which is set for this Thu 25 Apr.

Easter is a wonderful time for all, and regardless of one's religious beliefs, it is the first real moment in the calendar when many get to pause and take a break after what has been a quick step start to the year.

The Easter break the world over is a time in which so many of us stop and take a breath. For all of those in the travel industry who do celebrate Easter in whatever way that may be, I trust that the long weekend has been full of family, friends and good times.

As for Anzac Day before us, this is another most important public holiday for the nation as we all do stop to pay respects and remember so many who have given of themselves for the country. Anzac Day has truly become a day of recognition in so many ways and as it has modernised and adapted to current day thinking, it has

transcended generations to include people of all ages.

For myself, the day will commence with a visit with the family to our local cenotaph for the morning service. While I am personally very lucky not to have had a direct family member involved in a war, my children want to take part, and understand more than I realised the significance of remembering. It may well be a sign that the school curriculum is teaching values that mean something, and it is for me with great feeling and pride that I will attend the dawn service and remember with my kids.

For the travel industry, Anzac Day has become more and more important to the fabric of the industry as people of all ages continue to want to travel back to times and places of remembrance if not for their own personal experience, but to learn and feel the meaning of national pride and values which comes from the sacrifices made by so many men and women who have defended Australia all over the world.

War is a dreadful thing, and remembering those who have been involved must be a basic value for all good democracies like Australia.

Lest we forget.

### Skal Perth function

**TRAVEL** industry in Western Australia are being encouraged to attend the Skal International Perth "Dress for Success" charity networking event, taking place at 12.30pm on Thu 09 May at the Shoe Bar.

Tickets are \$55 for members and \$69 for non-members, and includes a two-course lunch with a drink on arrival.

For more information and to secure a space at the event, **CLICK HERE**.

### Viking Mozambique

**CREW** and guests on board Viking Cruises' *Viking Sun* have donated US\$50,000 worth of food, clothing, shoes, linen and supplies to the victims of Cyclone Idai in Maputo, Mozambique.

A total of 15 pallets were unloaded and presented to Red Cross workers on 11 Apr, which included hundreds of baby hats knitted by cruise guests.

### Italy driving update

**SMARTTRAVELLER** has added new information about winter and summer driving rules, including reminders that snow chains are mandatory in some mountainous areas.

During summer, only residents can take their cars to the islands of Capri, Ischia and Procida.

To see all of the updates on Italy, **CLICK HERE**.

### Int'l Rail milestone

**INTERNATIONAL** Rail is celebrating its 10,000th booking on the International Transfer global booking system.

The system, which launched 18 months ago, caters for a broad range of pick-up points including railway stations, cruise terminals and private addresses, as well as hotels and resorts.

"Figures for 2019 so far will see us reach double the volumes booked in 2018," said Managing Director Jonathan Hume.

**SUPER RUGBY**

**SUPER RUGBY  
R10 WINNER**

Congratulations

**GEOFFREY  
HARVEY**

from *Europe Travel  
Centre*

Geoffrey is the top point scorer for Round 10 of *Travel Daily's* Super Rugby footy tipping competition. He's won \$100 travel credit courtesy of Expedia.

**Expedia TAAP**

*Travel Daily* Super Rugby tipping competition is sponsored by Emirates, with the top tipper for the season winning flights from Sydney to Christchurch.



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## Botanica solo deal

**LONE** travellers with green thumbs can save up to 50% off Botanica World Discoveries' single supplement for bookings on 2019/20 cruises or two Australia and NZ short breaks in 2019, if booked before 31 May.

## Adv Canada savings

**ADVENTURE** Canada and Cruise Traveller are offering discounts of up to US\$11,000 for trips through the Northwest Passage.

The deal applies to select 17-day cruises between Greenland and Canada on the 198-passenger eco-friendly *Ocean Endeavour*.

The first cruise departs Kangerlussuaq, Greenland on 21 Aug 2020, with the return cruise leaving Kugluktuk, Canada on 06 Sep 2020.

Supplement-free solo fares start at US\$15,100, a saving of US\$10,835 if booked by 31 Oct.

## MK lands A330neo

**AIR** Mauritius has taken delivery of its first A330-900 neo.

The airline will operate the aircraft on routes to Europe, India, South East Asia, and a number of regional routes.

Air Mauritius is the first A330neo operator based in the southern hemisphere.

## Journese CAR plans

**LUXURY** travel brand, Journese, is providing two "cancel for any reason" travel insurance policies which provide 100% commission protection for agents.

Travellers can choose between a "cash back" option and a lower-priced voucher option, which provides travel credit that can be redeemed against a future Journese trip.

Journese Brand Director Amy Comparato said the inclusion of commission protection for agents would "ensure their service and efforts are rewarded".

# AFL

## AFL R5 WINNER

Congratulations

### ADAM BARWICK

from *Virgin Australia*

Adam is the top point scorer for Round 5 of *Travel Daily's* AFL footy tipping competition. He's won \$100 travel credit courtesy of Expedia.

Expedia TAAP

Travel Daily AFL tipping competition is sponsored by Emirates, with the top tipper for the season winning flights to Europe.



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15. True or False – Mount Kilimanjaro is Africa's highest peak.  
Hint: [CLICK HERE](#)

## Hilton Maldives

**THE** Hilton group's Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi resort is now taking bookings, ahead of its scheduled opening on 01 Jul.

Boasting 122 villas, the resort is spread over three private islands and is 30 minutes from Male International Airport.

## Swiss PAL deal

**MEMBERS** of Philippine Airlines' frequent flyer program, Mabuhay Miles, are now able to earn miles when staying at Swiss-Belhotel properties following a deal between the two companies.

The new partnership will enable all Mabuhay Miles members, regardless of tier, to earn 250 miles per night for two-night min stays at 17 participating Swiss-Belhotel International properties.

These include all Swiss-Belhotel, Swiss-Belresort & Swiss-Belsuites.

## Lefay Virtuoso

**VIRTUOSO** agents will be able to offer clients the opportunity to access complimentary benefits, if available, at the 88-suite Lefay Resort and Spa Dolomiti in Italy.

Perks include a 50-minute massage, early check-in and late check-out.

The north Italian resort opens on 01 Aug.

## Delta Earth Day

**DELTA** Air Lines has offset the carbon emissions of 300,000 passengers' domestic flights to mark Earth Day.

The airline offset the environmental impact of its flights to and from New York, Boston, Seattle, LA, Raleigh-Durham and Atlanta, yesterday.

Delta purchased 50,000 carbon offsets to benefit the Guatemalan Conservation Coast project.

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## Search Jobs

### **Account Manager TMC - Melbourne \$100K to \$110K + super**

Fantastic opportunity for an experienced Account Manager to provide strategic account mgt services to key corporate travel clients. Supplier or account management experience & a thorough knowledge of the industry required. [VIEW JOB](#)

### **Groups Travel Consultant - Melbourne \$55K to \$60K + super**

If you love organising groups and events but aren't fond of face to face sales, then this is the role for you. Our client is a specialist conference, incentive, event and group travel business. Sabre and groups exp required. [VIEW JOB](#)

### **Senior Luxury Travel Designer - Sydney \$80K + super + commission**

Tailor make luxury travel experiences across Australia for discerning travellers. You must be accessible to work with clients whenever the need arises in return for flexible hours, remote working options and great commission! [VIEW JOB](#)

### **Reservations Consultant - Sydney \$45K to \$55K + super**

Fantastic opportunity to work close to home for an experienced Ski & Snowboard enthusiast residing in the Sutherland Shire. You will focus on selling ski packages to Japan, USA and Canada. Great famil opportunities on offer! [VIEW JOB](#)

### **Cruise Reservations Consultant - Sydney \$45K to \$50K + super**

As a cruise specialist, you will sell a variety of cruise ships of all sizes to impressive destinations around the globe. Growing, stable company with an excellent product, great team, low staff turnover & lots of on board famils offered. [VIEW JOB](#)

### **Sales & Guest Services Consultant - Melbourne \$50K + super**

A rare opportunity to join a national hotel group's corporate head office as a Sales & Guest Services Consultant. Fast paced environment suitable for a sales-driven individual! Accommodation industry knowledge is an advantage. [VIEW JOB](#)



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