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COVER IMAGE: Hawaii. Picture courtesy Adobe Stock Images

Everyone's onboard as Explorer comes home

A water cannon salute seemed hardly apposite for such an occasion, the first time a cruise ship has entered "home" waters in more than two years. Jets should have been flying overhead, bunting displayed liberally and maybe even an appearance from someone from the House of Windsor.

For make no mistake, this was a significant moment, one that (hopefully) will see the local revival of a multi-billiondollar industry and bring a much-needed financial boost to thousands of Aussies, whose livelihoods were almost wiped out overnight by the COVID-related cruise ban.

Figures from Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) estimate that the suspension of cruising has cost the Australian economy more than \$10 billion since early 2020. That's a large chunk of cheese!

Not only that the suspension robbed millions of Aussies from enjoying the undeniable benefits and experiences available onboard a river or ocean ship. I know friends and acquaintances who still have thousands of dollars tied up in credits for voyages they didn't get to take.

No doubt travellers will be cautious initially, waiting to see what health and safety guarantees are in place before booking, or waiting for reports back from those who've bee onboard and returned to tell the tale.

These fears should be easily assuaged, however, as cruise lines have been in the vanguard of passenger safety

"While no setting is immune from COVID-19, the cruise industry's new protocols provide among the highest possible levels of prevention, detection and mitigation," said Joel Katz, CLIA Managing Director Australasia.

"With these measures in place, Australia now has an opportunity to begin a responsible recovery in an industry that has long been a vital part of our tourism economy."

Perhaps it was only fitting that a ship called Explorer was the first to return Down Under as we all prepare to venture out into the brave new world of travel.

* As usual, Traveltalk has its finger on the pulse of the travel industry so we've expanded our popular CRUISEtalk section to reflect the resumption of cruising. You'll find all the latest news from a host of cruise companies on pages 8 to 14.





TRAVELtalk

AN AUSTRALIAN is among a group of world-renowned photographers behind a new global initiative to bring equality to a branch of the travel industry.

Commissioned by Celebrity Cruises, the All-Inclusive Photo Project aims to change the face of travel imagery, addressing the under-representation of different groups, including minority ethnic, plus-size, LGBTQIA+ individuals and people with disability.

Aussie photographer, filmmaker and Survivor contestant Jarrad Seng has collaborated with contemporary big hitters, including Annie Leibovitz, to create the world's first diversityfocused, free-to-use travel image library.

Jarrad's contribution celebrates the diversity of everyday yet extraordinary

people who make up the face of Australia today. His subjects include Ash Penfold, a proud Aboriginal man, youth worker and Indigenous culture consultant, and Esther Onek, a family and domestic violence advocate who is currently studying Law.

Born in South Sudan, Esther made her way to Australia from a Kakuma refugee camp in 2003

Also included is Jaimen Hudson, a wildlife photographer who turned his hobby into a career following a motorcycle accident which left him a quadriplegic.

Celebrity Cruises will make dozens of the images available via an opensource online library for other travel brands and companies to use to encourage more inclusive travel marketing.

"For far too long, 'all-inclusive' in the travel industry has meant everything on your vacation is included in one price," said Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, Celebrity Cruises President and CEO.

"We set out to challenge this conventional thinking by imagining the phrase through the lens of others.

"What Annie and all of the talented artists involved in this project have captured so beautifully is that for vacations to really live up to the marketing moniker 'all-inclusive,' then they should start by using images that are inclusive of all, not just a few."

Celebrity Cruises launched the AIPP collection as a dedicated brand advertising campaign last month.



allinclusive photoproject.com





Reap your rewards

WENDY WU Tours has announced the launch of its most generous travel agent reward program - WU Travel Rewards.

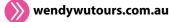
Agents can experience the company's most popular programs firsthand by accumulating points for every customer booked onto a Classic, Go Beyond or Private tour.

Points are accumulated over a two-year rolling period and can be redeemed towards one of the many eligible WU Travel Rewards land-only tours to Southeast Asia, Japan, China, India, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, Central Asia and South America. Points can also be used towards a free place for the agent's partner to accompany them.

To celebrate the launch agents can earn one bonus point for every passenger booked on eligible tours until June 30 with other exclusive bonus point offers promoted throughout the year.

"Free trips start from just nine points, making it incredibly easy," said Paul Dymond, Managing Director, Wendy Wu Tours.

"We want to get agents travelling and experiencing our award-winning tours firsthand."





PRIZE GUYS STRIKE GOLD

TEN LUCKY agents have won a spot on an overseas famil following a prize draw at 'The South Africa Show' held in Sydney recently.

More than 500 travel agents, South African operators and Australasian wholesalers attended the event, hosted by comedian Julia Morris.

Guests gathered within an immersive 10m high dome set up by South African Tourism in Martin Place, enjoying a guided virtual safari, drumming, dancing, wine, canapes and an interactive photo booth.

"It's been a challenging few years for everyone and our trade partners have been waiting patiently to welcome people back into South Africa with open arms," said Mosilo Sofonia, South African Tourism Hub Head of Australasia.

The winners were: Angie Arathoon, Helloworld Travel, NSW; Doris Salazar, Traveltours, NSW; Gayle Rowson, On the Road Again Travel, NSW; Jacinta Berle, Travel Associates, Rouse Hill, NSW; Rose Febo, Travel Managers, QLD; Samantha Mclean, Flight Centre Brookside, QLD; Terri Dillon, Travel Managers, QLD; Philip Van Dueren, The Outdoor Traveller, VIC; Sabine Absenger, MTA Travel, VIC; Tullie Seneca, Travel and Cruise Ceduna, SA.



southafrica.net

LUCKY AUSSIES **WELCOME A NEW DAWN**

TRAVEL AGENTS from Down Under have joined Silversea for the christening of their new ship Silver Dawn in Lisbon.

Those in attendance included John Williams (Our Vacation Centre), Gareth Evison (Imagine Cruising), Brett and Louise Dann (Hunter Travel Group), Aaron Collins (Andrew Jones Travel), Laurice Burke (Helloworld Eatons Hill & Kenmore) and Roland Howlett (Frontier Travel).

"Silversea has worked intimately with trade

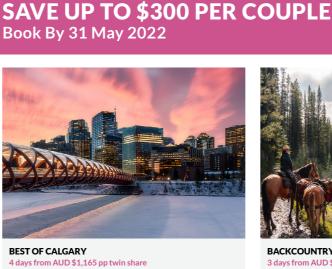
partners throughout this difficult time and the reciprocity of this relationship has upheld not only the survival of our industry, but also the integrity of Silversea," said Steve Richards, Director of Sales, Australia & New Zealand.

"To come together on this occasion with those who worked so hard to finally see this day was a profound moment for all who attended. The celebration was a way to thank them all for their continued support."

Silver Dawn departed on her inaugural voyage on April 1, sailing from Lisbon to Barcelona. She is scheduled to sail in the Mediterranean until November, when she will cross the Atlantic Ocean, via the Canary Islands, to unlock the Caribbean and Central America.







14 D



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Good call made on the Kimberley

SILVERSEA CRUISES has welcomed a decision by the government of Western Australia to allow cruising to return in coming weeks.

"This season is very close to being sold out and we anticipate a surge of interest this week," said Adam Radwanski, Silversea's Managing Director Asia-Pacific, when the decision was announced.

"The remote Kimberley region is best accessed by ship and these voyages unlock breathtaking natural wonders in places few people have been.

"Silversea's signature brand of ultraluxury elevates the experience, offering once-in-a-lifetime journeys for our guests."





THERE WERE more than a few tears shed onboard and on land as Pacific Explorer became the first cruise ship to return to Australia in more than two years.

Her arrival last month marked a 28-day voyage from Europe where the ship has been paused waiting to return home.

Sailing into Sydney Harbour she was greeted by a ceremonial water cannon salute and chartered boats carrying cruise suppliers, guests, travel agents and cruise line staff.

"It was always going to be an emotional homecoming for Pacific Explorer and her crew and this morning was a fitting celebration for her return to Sydney," said Marguerite Fitzgerald, President, P&O Cruises Australia.

Her return pre-empts the resumption of cruising in Australia and the rebuilding of the \$5 billion a year cruise industry.

Ms Fitzgerald said the first cruise carrying fare-paying guests would be on May 31, a four-night round trip from Sydney to Brisbane.





Chairman of the board is onboard

PONANT has released a new 13-night fly and cruise package for their upcoming Chairman's Cruise onboard Le Paul Gauquin.

Departing on June 3, the package features the 11-night itinerary 'The Society Islands & the Tuamotus'. The cruise will be hosted by Sarina Bratton, Asia Pacific Chairman of PONANT and Paul Gauguin Cruises.

Guests will visit Moorea and Bora Bora in the Society Islands with their rainforests and lagoons, and witness the beauty of Huahine with its distinctly recognisable volcanic silhouettes.

With 165 staterooms and suites, Le Paul Gauquin was designed to sail in Polynesian waters, her shallow draught allowing her to get in close to shallow

The package is priced from \$12,350 per person and includes economy class flights from Sydney to Papeete with Air Calin.







BONUS OFFER BRINGS SOME JAPANESE JOY

CRUISE TRAVELLER is offering an onboard bonus for early bookings on a new luxury itinerary in and around Japan.

The 11-night 'Luxury Japan Joy' cruise and stay package showcases the traditions, customs, gardens, cities, temples, shrines and palaces that make the country one of the world's most fascinating destinations.

Guests will fly to Tokyo on April 8, 2023, for a night in the Japanese capital before boarding Silver Whisper the next day. The 382-guest ship boasts a panoramic lounge, pool, four restaurants, library, show lounge, wellness spa and butler service for all suites.

Whisper will circle Japan's main island of Honshu during her 10-night journey, visiting five local ports and the South Korean city of Busan.

Destinations include the hot springs and shrines of Kobe, the famous rerisen Second World War atomic bomb city of Hiroshima, the ornate gardens of Kanazawa, the sake breweries of Akita and the city of Hakodate.

Fares are available from \$11,700 per person twin share in an ocean view suite. A bonus \$US400 (approx. \$AU550) per couple onboard spending credit is offered for bookings made by May 31.



CruiseTraveller.com.au/SSjapan



OSCAR WINNER Gwyneth Paltrow will make a special appearance aboard a suitably named ship for an exclusive wellness at sea retreat.

The actress will join guests on the new vessel Celebrity Beyond when it sets sail from Barcelona on September 24.

Ms Paltrow is also the founder of lifestyle brand goop and wellness practitioners from the company will hold sessions onboard the nine-night Italian Riviera and France sailing.

Further extending the partnership between the companies that began in early 2020, a selection of goop's signature products, including the GOOPGLOW and GOOPGENES collections, will now be available onboard.

"goop is the perfect partner for us to collaborate with to capture this therapeutic essence of the ocean in a really relevant and meaningful way for our target audience," said Michael Scheiner, Chief Marketing Officer, Celebrity Cruises.



celebritycruises.com/au

goop founder Gwyneth Paltrow Picture courtesy Toby Leston

WHAT A GREAT VIEW

AVALON WATERWAYS have christened their 14th Suite Ship in Europe at a ceremony in Slovakia.

Acclaimed American broadcaster Meredith Vieira did the honours in Bratislava, welcoming Avalon View to the fleet.

Through the 2022 cruise season, the 166-passenger Avalon View will sail the Danube River on several itineraries including 'Taste of the Danube', 'Danube Symphony', 'Active & Discovery on the Danube' and 'Gone Girl!' (a storyteller series cruise with celebrity host, Gillian Flynn).





CRUISEtalk

8 | WWW.TRAVELTALKMAG.COM.AU



Katy Perry and Harry Sommer, NCL President and CEO. Picture courtesy Dimitrije Curcic

PRIMA IS PERFECT FOR POP PRINCESS

POP STAR Katy Perry will serve as godmother to Norwegian Prima when the ship makes her debut later this year.

Katy will perform at a ceremony in Reykjavík on August 27 when the NCL vessel will become the first major ship to be christened in Iceland's capital city.

"My most favourite way to vacation with my family is on the water," said the American Idol judge. "Every morning that you wake up, you get to experience an incredible new view.

"I love that I get to christen her with my good vibrations and I'm so excited for this new, beautiful, high-end, high-tech ship to take the seas and provide once-in-a-lifetime vacations for so many families."

The first of six vessels in the Prima Class, the new ship will offer inaugural voyages to Northern Europe from Southampton, Amsterdam and Reykjavík, beginning August 12.

Bermuda sailings from New York will begin on October 6 with Caribbean itineraries from Galveston and Miami beginning October 27.

Onboard guests will enjoy Ocean Boulevard, featuring multiple infinity pools, Indulge, the brand's first upscale international dining open-air marketplace, and The Concourse, featuring an outdoor sculpture garden boasting installations by famed artists David Harber and Alexander Krivosheiw.



QUEEN WELCOMES AUSSIE ROYALTY

GUESTS WILL get to see the 'crème de la crème' of Australian culinary royalty on a voyage with Cunard

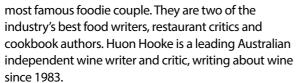
Top chef Matt Moran will be headlining the cruise line's inaugural 'Great Australian Culinary Voyage', a five-night itinerary setting sail from Sydney on

Cruisers aboard Queen Elizabeth will be treated to a robust itinerary of food and wine experiences including bespoke dinners, exclusive menus, talks, interviews, cooking master classes, wine tastings and curated onshore excursions.

Joining Moran will be fellow chef Mark Olive, who has made a name for himself through his work with

Australian indigenous and native ingredients. Darren Purchese, owner of cult favourite B&P Sweet Studio in Melbourne, is one of the most respected pastry chefs working in Australia today.

Also aboard will be Terry Durack and Jill Dupleix, touted as Australia's



Terry Durack

and Jill Dupleix

"We've handpicked every one of them, ensuring there's an amazing experience to suit all guest tastes quite literally," said Katrina McAlpine, Commercial Director at Cunard Australia and New Zealand.

The sailing takes in three of Australia's culinary hotspots, sailing to Melbourne and Burnie (Tasmania), before arriving back in Sydney on February 2. Fares start from \$1,349 per person in a twin share Inside Stateroom.



BOOST TO THE COFFERS

CARNIVAL AUSTRALIA has unveiled plans that should be worth an expected \$165 million to the Queensland economy.

With the return of cruising on the horizon the line is preparing for its ships to make about 140 calls to Queensland ports this year.

In addition, the organisation's homegrown cruise line, P&O Cruises Australia, is poised to lead the cruising comeback in Brisbane, which has the

only purpose-built cruise terminal in Australia with the new Brisbane International Cruise Terminal (BICT).

P&O Cruises Australia's first voyage 90 years ago included Brisbane and it is fitting the cruise line's Pacific Explorer is scheduled to make the inaugural call to the new BICT on June 2.

Two weeks later, Princess Cruises Coral Princess (pictured) will begin her maiden Australian deployment in Brisbane, setting sail on June 16 with a

three-night cruise, the first of 21 cruises from the Queensland capital in 2022/23.

P&O Cruises Australia will also base its latest ship, Pacific Encounter, in Brisbane for her first season Down Under on August 20, sailing on 24 cruises in 2022.

"Not only do Queenslanders love to cruise, the State has a fantastic selection of ports that are among our domestic and international quests' favourite destinations, from Cairns in the north to Moreton Island in the south," said Marguerite Fitzgerald, Carnival Australia President.



carnival.com.au







ship filled from bow-to-stern with unforgettable holiday experiences.



CRUISE 8 NIGHTS FROM \$949

Health and safety protocols, quest conduct rules, and regional travel restrictions vary by ship and destination, and are subject to change without notice. Due to evolving health protocols, imagery and messaging may not accurately reflect onboard and destination experience offerings, features, or itineraries. These may not be available during your voyage, may vary by ship and destination, and may be subject to change without notice. *Cruise from \$949 per person is in AUD, based on Quantum of the Seas 8 night sailing departing? February 2023 or 15 February 2023. Price is for the cruise only, based on double-occupancy, is subject to availability, includes all applicable discounts and is correct as of 3 May 2022. General terms: \$100 AUD per person service fee applies to changes to NRD (Non-refundable deposit) bookings. Deposits made toward Guarantees and Suites are non-refundable and are subject to NRD Booking Terms. Offers apply to new, individual and named group bookings confirmed at prevailing rates. Changes to the booking may result in removal of the offer. Prices and offers are subject to availability and change without notice, capacity controlled, and may be withdrawn at any time. Royal Caribbean International reserves the right to correct any errors, inaccuracies or omiss time without prior notice. Refer to http://www.royalcaribbean.com/aus for complete terms and conditions. ©2022 Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Ships' registry: Bahamas



QUANTUM CALLS BRISBANE HOME

IT'S BEEN more than two years in the making but Royal Caribbean is celebrating a milestone with cruising's highly anticipated return to Australia.

Adventurers of all ages can experience the region's beauty on varying itineraries that range from two-night getaways to 19-night adventures.

Guests can visit multiple destinations of 38 gems of the Southern Hemisphere, including locales along the coasts of Australia, the Land of the Long White Cloud and the postcard-perfect beaches of the South Pacific.

Starting in October, the cruise line returns Down Under with two awardwinning ships, Quantum and Ovation of the Seas, sailing from Brisbane and Sydney.

Headlining the line-up is Quantum, returning for an encore after its first summer season sailing from Brisbane in 2022.

Ouantum will make her home at the new \$177 million Brisbane

International Cruise Terminal. Her arrival will mark the first time Royal Caribbean will be homeported in the Sunshine State, showcasing all the best Queensland and the Pacific Islands has to offer.

Holidaymakers can choose from three- to 13-night cruises to explore Queensland's coast, including destinations such as Airlie Beach and Cairns, or discover the beauty of the South Pacific by visiting places like Port Vila, Vanuatu, and Noumea, New Caledonia.

"We are delighted that cruising has the green light to resume in Australia and we can't wait for even more guests to create a lifetime of memories on their holidays with Royal Caribbean as soon as October," said Gavin Smith, Managing Director of Australia and New Zealand, Royal Caribbean International.

"Around the world, more than a million guests have sailed with us since 2020, marking a successful cruise comeback. Now, we look forward to

bringing the magic back to Australia."

Ovation, one of the most techforward ships, will set sail on its fifth season in the region.

Travellers can choose from a mix of 20 cruises, including nine- to 11-night sailings that visit destinations along New Zealand's coastline like Milford Sound, Wellington and Bay of Islands.

Guests can also pick from a series of three- to nine-night getaways around Australia to visit Hobart, Adelaide and Eden, as well as cruises to the South Pacific islands.

Both Ovation and Quantum will deliver signature adventures and memorable holiday experiences against the picturesque beauty of Australia's coastline this summer.

Travellers can take in the sights from North Star - a world-recordholder as the highest viewing deck on a cruise ship – or the RipCord by iFly skydiving experience, both taking adventure to new heights.

From catching a wave on the FlowRider surf simulator to scaling the rock-climbing wall or enjoying bumper cars, a full-size basketball court, roller-skating rink and more at SeaPlex - the largest indoor activity complex at sea – holidaymakers of all ages can get their adrenaline pumping.

FlowRider surf simulator

To wind things down after an action-packed day, travellers can kick back at the Vitality Spa or enjoy quality family time at the Splashaway Bay kids' aqua park.

Guests can also delight their palates with a world of flavours at a variety of restaurants, like American steakhouse Chops Grille, the Asian-inspired Izumi and family-style favourites at Jamie's Italian, before catching the cruise line's original theatre entertainment.

For those travelling within Australia, guests can relax and unwind at the Vitality Spa, found on Ovation and Quantum, which boasts acclaimed products, bringing one of the most advanced spa services to the sea.

For a night cap, the Bionic Bar onboard Quantum will shake up your night with its two robotic bartenders. These mechanical mixologists can create an almost endless combination of cocktails, from classic cosmos to custom-crafted sips.

Available on all Quantum class ships, the Royal Loft is a one of a kind, expansive two-floor contemporary suite that can sleep up to six and there's even a private whirlpool tub on your balcony.

The Royal Genie acts as your personal assistant to take care of all vou could ever wish for onboard from front-row seats to your favourite show, or an intimate gourmet adventure at Chef's Table.

They'll also manage your in-room dining requests and any other needs - from laundry, pressing and shoeshining, to luggage handling and unpacking.

If you book an Interior cabin on Royal's Quantum class, its kitted out with a Virtual Balcony that displays real-time sights and sounds of the sea through 80-inch LED screens, ensuring every stateroom has a view. It's a helpful hack to know if its sunny outside without having to go up on

The new cruise season also welcomes a debut in Australia with the arrival of Enchantment of the Seas, touting new destinations and itineraries from Sydney.

Highlights of Enchantment's inaugural season in Australia include new destinations for Royal Caribbean: Kangaroo Island and Gladstone, Australia.

Guests can escape to the South Pacific on eight- to 11-night sailings and visit Raiatea, French Polynesia; Isle of Pines, Mare; and Lifou, New Caledonia.

A series of special cruises are also on deck, including an 11-night Christmas cruise that features visits to locales along Australia's Top End and West Coast, including Darwin, Exmouth and Fremantle.

Guests looking for a longer holiday can choose a circumnavigation cruise that explores both Australia and New Zealand, a combination of two itineraries that can be booked



for a 34-night adventure.

Enchantment's debut will also offer guests a wide range of accommodation options and the ship is ideal for those who enjoy a more intimate cruise experience alongside destination-rich itineraries.

"It's thrilling to welcome back two Quantum Class ships Down Under, demonstrating Royal Caribbean's commitment to the region," added Mr Smith.

"We look forward to even more guests, their loved ones and families creating memories while holidaying with us in several of the most spectacular places on earth."



y royalcaribbean.com



ONE OF the secrets to a great holiday is picking the right time to travel.

For many, the Mediterranean quiet season of October, November and December is an ideal time to explore the region.

With fewer travellers, visitors can explore historic landmarks and hidden local treasures at an easy-going pace and have more opportunities for meaningful interactions with locals.

Viking has extended its 'Explore Europe for Less' campaign to include limited-time reduced fare offers on six 2022 Mediterranean voyages during this period.

FEATURED VOYAGES INCLUDE:

- * 15-day 'Ancient Mediterranean Antiquities' from Rome to Istanbul (or vice versa) and priced from \$5,445 per person cruise only in a Veranda stateroom
- * 15-day 'Mediterranean Antiquities' from Athens to Barcelona (or vv) and priced from \$5,445 per person cruise only in a Veranda stateroom
- * Eight-day 'Iconic Western Mediterranean' from Barcelona to Rome (or vv) and priced from \$2,995 per person cruise only in a Veranda stateroom
- * Eight-day 'Journey to Antiquities' from Athens to Rome (or vv) and priced from \$2,995 per person cruise only in a Veranda stateroom.

With just 930 guests and all veranda staterooms, Viking's award-winning, state-of-the-art ocean vessels are intimate yet sophisticated, with no kids and no casinos.

A Viking ocean voyage includes all meals, with no fee for alternate dining venues, complimentary beer, wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, 24-hour room service, an excursion in every port and unlimited Wi-Fi.

For those guests who prefer river journeys, Viking has also released limited offers on three of its most popular cruises.

The reduced cruise-only fares are available for selected departures between now and November 2022.

FEATURED ITINERARIES **INCLUDE:**

- * 15-day 'Grand European Cruise' from Amsterdam to Budapest (or vv) and priced from \$3,995 per person cruise only in a Standard stateroom
- * 23-day 'European Sojourn' from Amsterdam to Bucharest (or vv) and priced from \$7,445 per person cruise only in a Standard stateroom
- * Eight-day 'Rhine Getaway' from Amsterdam to Basel (or vv) and priced from \$2,695 per person cruise only in a Standard stateroom.

FIRST EUROPE NOW THE WORLD

Viking has extended its offers on their 2023-2024 World Cruises for new bookings until June 30.

Due to the popularity of this voyage, Viking will offer a choice of two departure dates for the 2023-2024 Viking World Cruise, which will span 138 days, 28 countries and 57 ports, with overnight stays in 11 cities.

Guests may choose to sail on Viking Sky, which will depart on December 20, 2023, from Ft. Lauderdale - or on Viking Neptune, which will depart Ft. Lauderdale on December 23, 2023; both ships will sail the identical itinerary in parallel.

From Florida, guests will journey to Central America, before transiting the Panama Canal and sailing up the West Coast of North America.

A shorter 121-day Viking World Journeys itinerary is also available, allowing guests to join in Los Angeles and cross the Pacific Ocean to call in Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand, before exploring ports of call in Asia and the Middle East.

Finally, the ships will journey through the Mediterranean and conclude the voyage in London.

Guests who book before June 30 will receive an additional \$US2,000 (approx. \$AU2,700) per person in shore excursion credit for any optional land programs and \$US1,000 (\$1,300) per person in shipboard credit which can be used toward optional tours, spa services, onboard shops and beverages.



vikingcruises.com.au



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ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN ANTIQUITIES

ISTANBUL - ROME or vice versa 15 DAYS | 9 GUIDED TOURS | 3 COUNTRIES SET SAIL Select 2022 departures

From \$5,445pp in Veranda stateroom



MEDITERRANEAN ANTIQUITIES

BARCELONA - ATHENS or vice versa 15 DAYS | 11 GUIDED TOURS | 6 COUNTRIES

SET SAIL Select 2022 departures From \$5,445pp in Veranda stateroom



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FIYINGINIO BRIGHT FUTU

Air Canada has emerged from the global pandemic in great shape, with a revamped fleet, customer loyalty and healthy balance sheet.

Here we speak to Vic Naughton, General Manager, Australia & New Zealand, about the airline's exciting plans for the future.

Q: How did Air Canada cope with the effects of the COVID pandemic?

A: We focused on four key areas: cost control, maintaining customer service, reducing our network and optimising potential revenue streams, for example by scaling up our global cargo operation.

We also concentrated on projects we identified as critical to our business moving forward.

For instance, in late 2020 we unveiled our revamped customer loyalty program, Aeroplan, which offers a raft of new benefits and rewards.

We also embarked on a fleet renewal program that saw the retirement of older aircraft – as a result, we now boast a younger and even more fuel-efficient fleet.

Q: What shape is the airline in as international travel returns?

A: Air Canada emerges from the pandemic with a strong balance sheet and an even stronger position in key areas such as customer loyalty and fleet.

At the same time, we've been helped by the fact that Canada itself had a relatively positive COVID

journey, with a comparatively low number of cases.

That allowed it to open up to the world in September 2021 and it has just now announced the removal of PCR tests, making it a particularly easy country to travel to and from.

Q: Why is Australia such an important destination for Air Canada?

A: Six years ago, we began expanding our direct services to Australia and in doing so we elevated Canada to a major year-round destination for all Australians.

At the same time, we established Vancouver International Airport as a major gateway to North America, which offers easy connections and easy entry to the U.S. for Air Canada passengers due its unique transit facilities.

The cultural bonds between Australia and Canada run deep, which is why we are determined to re-build our pre-pandemic network and why we have had such overwhelming support since our services returned.

Q: How do you see airline travel evolving in a post-COVID world?



Vic Naughton, General Manager, Australia & New Zealand

A: For airlines it will take time to rebuild networks, flight frequencies and airport operations. From a customer perspective, I think people will continue to place a high priority on convenience, efficiency and health and hygiene.

That's why Vancouver is now even better positioned as a North American

Unlike when you transit through a U.S. airport, Australians flying Air Canada can enter the U.S. or continue on across Canada without needing to re-check in bags or waste time in long customs queues - that translates to a faster journey with fewer touchpoints.

Q: Can you reveal any exciting plans you have in the pipeline?

A: We've just announced our return to Brisbane from July and Auckland in November, plus the expansion of our Sydney service from seven to 10 flights a week between June and

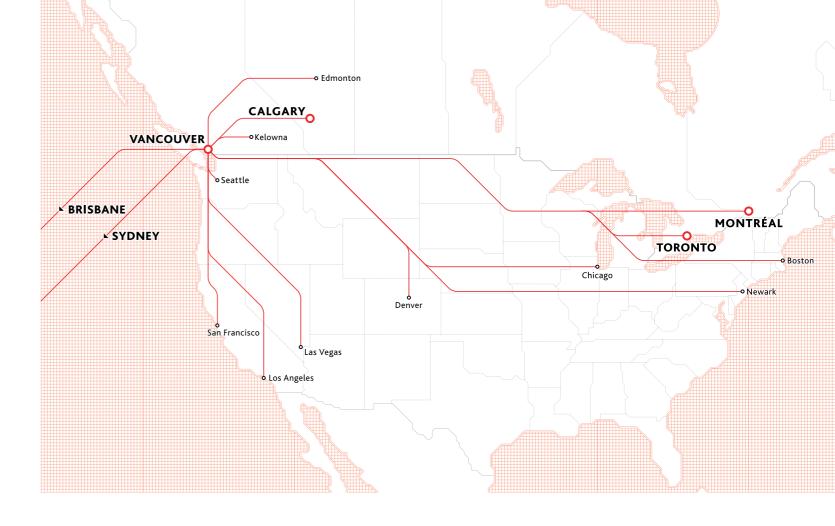
Melbourne is not yet back on the map, but hopefully will be sooner rather than later!

Q: Finally, what is your favourite holiday spot in Canada?

A: I love British Columbia's ski resorts! Whistler is great if you're spending time in Vancouver and want a worldclass ski resort close by.

Another brilliant option is to take a short flight from Vancouver to Kelowna or Kamloops and head to Sun Peaks, Big White or Silverstar resorts. Huge terrain, amazing slopes and hardly ever crowded.







NON-STOP TO VANCOUVER IS JUST THE START

Enjoy the comfort and convenience of Air Canada's non-stop flights from Sydney and Brisbane to Vancouver.* Explore the bustling West Coast seaport city and take advantage of seamless connections to more than 50 destinations across Canada and more than 40 destinations across the U.S.

Learn more about where we fly at aircanada.com





*Sydney-Vancouver service available daily as of May 2022. Brisbane-Vancouver service recommences on July 3, 2022. Flight schedule is subject to change based on COVID-19 trajectory and government restrictions



QANTAS ARE launching a new direct route from Dallas Fort Worth and significantly increasing flights from Los Angeles.

From December 2, the national carrier will operate four weekly return flights between Melbourne and the major U.S. hub with its Boeing 787 Dreamliners.

This is the first direct flight by any airline between the two cities and follows the success of Qantas' longstanding Sydney-Dallas Fort Worth route.

Dallas Fort Worth offers seamless connections between Australia and more than 200 cities across the U.S., Canada, Mexico and South America. Fares are on sale starting from \$2,128.

The Flying Kangaroo has also added another four weekly return flights between Melbourne and Los Angeles to meet strong demand on the route.

The airline's refurbished A380s will resume operating some of these flights to LA from December, marking the return of Qantas' superjumbo and reintroduction of first class to Melbourne.

Meanwhile the airline has launched four new routes across its domestic network, boosting connectivity between regional centres and capital cities.

The new routes – Adelaide-Newcastle, Brisbane-Wagga Wagga, Darwin-Townsville and Darwin-Cairns – provide direct connections and reduce travel time for customers.



qantas.com



Local love from Aussie newby

THE NEW kid on the airline block is already making news with an announcement that only Australian produce will be served onboard Bonza flights.

The low-cost carrier says its menu will consist of 100 per cent Australian snacks, meals and beverages as part of its commitment to being "here for Allstralia".

"We know Australians love their tucker and we also know Australia produces some of the world's best - so why wouldn't we support locals and give Bonza customers the chance to enjoy an all Aussie menu onboard?" said Carly Povey, Chief Commercial Officer at Bonza.

Bonza is due to begin operating in mid-2022 with destinations still to be announced



flybonza.com

IN BRIEF///

* Emirates has launched a second daily flight on its served by its flagship A380 aircraft. Starting May 1, the airline will offer customers 14 weekly services from Dubai to Melbourne. The additional daily frequency between the two will grow Emirates' seats to more than 1,000 a day totalling 700,000 a year between the airline's global Dubai hub

* Singapore Airlines (SIA) has marked the Emerald anniversary of continuous service to Australia. It was April 5, 1967, when Perth and Sydney became the first destinations outside South East and North Asia to join the airlines' network. Currently SIA operates 100 passenger flights a week from seven destinations in



singaporeair.com

* Etihad have unveiled their new 'sustainability50' inaugural flight to Paris. The aircraft is the first A350 to be operated by a UAE airline and the first of five A350s set to join Etihad's fleet over the coming months. The A350s will be used as flying test beds of and technologies to reduce



etihad.com

* Air Tahiti Nui has moved up its relaunch of flights Islands of Tahiti to May 5. The flights were originally planned to restart at the beginning of July but with the borders opening sooner to New Zealand, the South Pacific destination is set to welcome Aussie travellers via ex-Auckland direct flights from May onwards.



airtahitinui.com





THIS FAMOUS NAME SETS SIGHTS ON OZ



ONE OF the world's most famous hotel brands has announced its debut in Australia.

The Waldorf Astoria Sydney is due to open in 2025 in Circular Quay, offering views of the Opera House and Harbour Bridge.

The new 28-floor, 220-key luxury hotel will join six Waldorf Astoria properties in the Asia Pacific region.

"As the first Waldorf Astoria property to debut in Australia, Waldorf Astoria Sydney signals Hilton's commitment to expanding our luxury portfolio to the world's most sought-after destinations," said Nils-Arne Schroeder, Vice President, Luxury & Lifestyle, Asia Pacific, Hilton.

"Our highly personalised, elegant service and iconic environments are at the heart of every hotel and we look forward to delivering unforgettable experiences to our guests in Sydney."

The hotel will have 179 rooms and 41 suites, two restaurants, a rooftop bar and Peacock Alley, a signature space for Waldorf Astoria properties around the world.



hilton.com

Much ado in the Maldives



OUTRIGGER HAS acquired the newly renovated five-star Maafushivaru Resort in the Maldives, adding another premier beach property to its global portfolio.

The luxury resort will be renamed Outrigger Maldives Maafushivaru Resort and is located on a private island in the pristine South Ari Atoll region, a 25-minute seaplane from Malé.

The resort is comprised of a collection of

81 luxury villa styles including beach, pool and duplex accommodations, as well as coveted overwater bungalows. It has seven restaurants, bars and cafes which offer a mix of food and beverage offerings.

Signature experiences include underwater dive adventures with the resident marine biologist to view manta rays at the nearby coral reefs and boat excursions around the South Ari Atoll.

"There are few destinations that evoke higher levels of relaxation, elegance and seclusion than the Maldives," said Jeff Wagoner, President and CEO of Outrigger Hospitality Group.



Outrigger.com

VINTAGE HOUSE IS BORN AGAIN

PROPERTYta

IT'S TAKEN seven years but a guesthouse dating back to 1892 has finally been restored to its former glory and is once again open for visitors.

Osborn House is a curated collection of 22 suites set on a heritage property between Bundanoon village and Morton National Park, just two hours from Sydney and Canberra.

Founding Director Adam Abrams spent two years searching for the perfect spot and a further five years bringing it to life.

"At Osborn House, we take our guests on a magical journey which imparts new experiences, ideas and memories," said Adrian Levy, General Manager.

"Osborn House really does manifest its own time and place in the world, making it a truly special offering in Australia."

Guests can enjoy the wellness facilities which include a 25m lap pool with a retractable roof, a luxury spa with four treatment rooms, a sauna, steam room and cool plunge, as well as a fully-equipped gym.

Two dining experiences await, with Dinah's restaurant and George's bar both offering indoor and outdoor terrace spaces with views over Morton National Park.

Rates start from \$660 per night for suites to \$1,045 per night for cabins, inclusive of full breakfast and complimentary mini bar (non-alcoholic).



osbornhouse.com.au

emirates.com



EVERYONE'S A WINNER

Malaysia is compelling and alive. With its rich heritage but modern outlook, it offers visitors an ideal blend of the old and the new. Here we look at three different regions where travellers can mix tradition with contemporary.

MELAKA

Visiting Melaka is like a time warp that transitions you back 500 years ago when Portuguese, Dutch and English settlements controlled the once greatest trading port in Southeast Asia.

Its meticulous preservation is attributed largely for being crowned as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008.

Modern Melaka is fantastic for visitors to experience the bustling weekend night market at Jonker Street for souvenirs, clothing and local Melakan delicacies like cendol a shaved iced dessert topped with rice flour jelly, coconut milk and palm sugar syrup.

If local markets aren't your interest, then a stopover at Café 1950 or The

Baboon House are excellent dining spots.

Other noteworthy attractions/ activities in Melaka include Melaka Zoo, Melaka River Cruise, Cheng Hoon Teng Temple and Melaka Sultanate Palace Museum.

For history buffs, surround yourself within a backdrop of traditional redpastel coloured Dutch buildings at Dutch Square.

Centred in Dutch Square are the Stadthuys (built by the Dutch in 1650), housing traditional costumes and artefacts from all ages of Melaka, making it the region's premier museum.

Further along is A Famosa, a Portuguese fortress that is among the oldest surviving European architectural remains in Southeast Asia.

Continue your historical exploration at Baba-Nyonya Heritage Museum in Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock, a dedicated living museum to Chinese migrants that intermarried with local Malays that adopted some of their local customs, hence introducing the Peranakan culture.

Established in 1896, the museum houses artefacts from Baba-Nyonya/ Peranakan Chinese descendants and displays Dutch, Portuguese, Malay and Colonial influences.

tourismmelaka.com

Peranakan culture in Malaysia can also be found in Penang – yet Penang Peranakans differ from their Melakan counterparts in numerous ways.

A notable difference is the Peranakan style of cooking, which fuses Thai with Chinese and Malay elements, bringing in the sweet and sour edge that differs from the Melakans.

From rituals, cuisine, dressing to language, the Peranakan Chinese have created a fusion of cultures that stands as a true hallmark of Penang's rich multi-cultural diversity.

The Pinang Peranakan Mansion in George Town embodies the Peranakan way of life for visitors to discover. Showcasing a life of luxury within its interior décor, clothing and jewellery, as well as presenting workshops that educate visitors in creating beaded shoes.

Aside from houses and temples, you can hop on a funicular train and journey through a 130-million-yearold forest to the top of Penang Hill.

Here you can discover nature trails, the Curtis Crest treetop walk and a thrilling zipline ride across the treetops. If you're daring to embrace heights, then step atop the 249-metre KOMTAR Tower, home to the Rainbow

Skywalk, the highest glass skywalk in Malaysia, and The Gravityz, the world's highest rope course.

Back on the ground, make sure you wander the streets of George Town to see fabulous artwork adorning the walls and buildings.

Armenian Street is a particularly popular spot, with murals aplenty, along with temples, cafes and authentic stores. Local traders peddle their wares, making it the perfect place for a genuine souvenir. The area is particularly busy every Saturday night when it hosts the Armenian Street Market.

Finally, gourmands will be licking their lips at the myriad of truly Asian dishes on offer. Enjoy meals along the streets at hawker stalls, duck into quaint cafes or dress up for a fine dining outing....one thing you can be sure of, it's all good!



mypenang.gov.my

TERENGGANU

Despite rapid development and modernisation, Terengganu retains its rustic charms, making it different from many other tourist destinations.

Home to a diverse yet closely-knit society, the state is endowed with rich natural beauty, tropical rainforests and a coastline that stretches for more than 240 kilometres.

In Terengganu, the traditional way of life still remains. Malays earn their living in fishing and farming industries, where visitors can still see the traditional art of boat making, as well as fishing catches brought in for sale.

The state is famous for heritage houses that are built with Malay hardwood. These structures are raised nearly two-and-a-half metres off the ground to prevent damage from flood water during the annual monsoon

The Perhentian Islands and Tenggol Island in Terengganu are some of the most stunning islands in the world!

Imagine island hopping among emerald hue islands, cozying under swaying palm trees and scuba diving among schools of fish, sea turtles and whale sharks.

Perhentian Islands

Perhentian Islands are accessible

via speed boat at Kuala Besut Jetty, approximately a 40-minute ride. The islands are popular amongs tourists because of their natural attractions and variety in accommodation (luxurious resorts to simple lodges).

The Perhentian Islands comprise of two main islands: Perhentian Kecil and Perhentian Besar. Perhentian Besar is popular with families, while Perhentian Kecil is a backpacker favourite.

Activities range from strolling along beautiful beaches, snorkelling or scuba diving at the Terengganu Marine Park or jungle trekking among the local dragon lizards and dusky leaf monkeys.

Tenggol Island

On the other hand, Tenggol Island offers a more secluded island experience for visitors.

Now a protected marine park, you'll inhabit an exotic and mostly untouched jungle with pristine white sandy beaches on a three-kilometrelong isle.

Previously uninhabited, Tenggol has now become one of the preferred tourists' destinations in Terengganu after it was developed with accommodations and facilities to welcome visitors.

The island is gifted with pristine, clear water conditions and abundant sea life, so it is one of the best dive locations in Malaysia. There are around 20 dive sites around the island, making it a haven for snorkellers and

Here you'll discover soft and hard corals, batfish, nudibranchs, the famous clownfish and shipwrecks.

Tenggol Island can only be reached via speed boat or fishing boat at Kuala

Dungun Jetty. The speed boat will take about 45 minutes to reach the island while the fishing boats will take around two hours.

WHERE TO STAY

Since Tenggol Island is only recently developed compared to other islands in Terengganu, there are currently only three resorts open (Tenggol Coral Beach Resort, Tenggol Island Beach Resort and Tenggol Resort).

Tenggol Coral Beach Resort is an exclusive beachfront resort for scuba divers and snorkellers, the only PADI five-star dive resort on the island.

The resort's rooms are modern and designed around double, twin sharing or group accommodations. There's a dive centre, BBO area, mini market and a restaurant.

Tenggol Island Beach Resort features classic wooden chalets that nestle harmoniously with the lush greens fringing the beach.

It boasts a full-facility divers' base, oxygen kits for emergencies, quality equipment and a well-designed divers' kit-up area. There is also the Sun Aroma Cafeteria where you can enjoy aromatic, authentic Malaysian cuisine.

Tenggol Resort is lesser known than the other two and is positioned more as a budget resort that offers the fundamental experiences of Tenggol.

Serving delicious Malaysian cuisine and access to fantastic dive sites, your experience won't be hindered!



malaysia.travel







WHAT'S NEW ON OAHU?

With COVID-19 restrictions over across Hawaii now is the perfect time to start planning a trip to this everpopular destination. Here we look at what's coming up on Oahu.

OVER THE past few months, plans have been put in place with the goal to rebuild, redefine and reset the direction of the island's tourism over a three-year period.

Oahu's Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) also aims to reduce tourism's negative effects to enhance the visitor experience and improve quality of life for residents.

"Our island is pleased and eager to continue welcoming travellers," said Noelani Schilling-Wheeler, Executive Director, Oahu Visitors Bureau.

"This is a unique opportunity to promote and advance DMAP's core values of regenerative and mindful tourism that will generate purposeful bonds with new travellers and reconnect with those who previously had to reschedule or cancel their vacation plans."

ACTIVITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

Beyond Monet: The Immersive

Experience is a showcase of more than 400 of French painter Claude Monet's most iconic works of impressionism, coming to the Hawaii Convention Center from June 15 through July 31.

Notable Monet artworks, including his Water Lilies series and Impression: Sunrise and Poppies, will be part of

the display, along with a musical score, projections and set pieces.

monethonolulu.com

At its newly opened location on the third floor of the Ala Moana Center, No'eau Designers provides native Hawaiian and Hawaii-based artisans a place to showcase their products to both locals and visitors.

With more than 100 vendors both in-store and online, No'eau Designers is a great way to give back to the community on your visit to Oahu.

NoeauDesigners.com

Celebrating its 150th anniversary, the King Kamehameha Celebration Floral Parade honours the reign of the Kingdom of Hawaii's first monarch, who united the Islands under his rule.

As is its tradition, the parade on June 11 will feature brightly decorated floats, energetic marching bands and traditional horseback $p\bar{a}'\bar{u}$ riders representing the Hawaiian royal court. A ho'olaule'a (celebration) follows the parade.

■ Hawaii.gov/Kamehameha

The 45th annual **Prince Lot Hula Festival**, named in memory
of the monarch who ruled as King
Kamehameha V from 1863 to 1872,
honours his contributions to Hawaiian
culture.

This year's virtual event will bring together native Hawaiian hula

practitioners, craftsmen and educators from across Hawaii to share their mana'o (knowledge) and hula.

■ MoanaluaGardensFoundation.org

At the largest annual gathering of ukulele players in the world, top musicians, casual players and beginners are invited to share and celebrate their love of the globally famous instrument.

Hosted virtually this year, the 52nd annual Ukulele Festival Hawaii on July 17 will run for five-hours and will include workshops, concert showcases and conversations with performing 'ukulele masters and players.

UkuleleFestivalHawaii.org

After cancelling its slate of 2020 and 2021 events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **Duke's OceanFest** returns to Waikīkī Beach for ocean competitions honouring legendary Hawaii waterman, Olympian and festival namesake Duke Kahanamoku.

The week-long festival from August 20-28 will feature a diversity of water sports competitions including long board surfing, surf polo, swimming, stand up paddling and other skills.

OceanFest activities culminate with a lei draping ceremony of the Duke Kahanamoku statue in Waikiki on the anniversary of his birthday.

■ DukesOceanfest.com Information courtesy Hawaii Tourism Oceania.



gohawaii.com/au



IF THERE'S one destination in the world that's ideally suited to the concept of sustainable tourism then it has to be Hawaii.

All pictures courtesy Hawaii

Tourism Authority

With a history and culture centred on caring for the community and the natural environment it's a nobrainer that the islands should warmly embrace this new and very 'on-point' travel concept.

Little wonder then that Hawaii Tourism is promoting *malama* (to care for and protect), where visitors can get involved in all sorts of ways to "pay it forward", including beach cleanups, native free planting...even restoring a historic battleship.

The concept was lauded and endorsed at a function held in Sydney recently and hosted by the Australian branch of Hawaii Tourism Oceania.

Industry figures, travel agents and

media were in attendance to hear the plans for 2022 and beyond as the world slowly edges towards a return to normality for international travel.

"2022 is a new era for travel to Hawaii,' said Jennifer Gaskin, Account Director for Hawaii Tourism Oceania.

"During COVID there was obviously a dip in tourism and the local people and the tourism board had a think about how they want to see tourism moving forward.

"What they want from visitors, how they want to interact with people and how they want to present the islands."

The result is the new *malama* initiative, encouraging visitors to take a holiday while giving back and developing a deeper connection with Hawaii.

"Through the *malama* program there are a number of activities that

visitors can take part in on all of the islands," added Ms Gaskin.

These include a helicopter ride to take part in the reforestation of native trees, join locals on a beach cleanup on Maui and restore one of the world's most famous battleships at the Battleship Missouri Museum.

"There's a range of activities across all of our islands to suit every interest and activity level and ones that are great for families as well.

"We've made an effort over these past two years to find new experiences that help connect visitors with local people and the local culture. We're all about trying to have a deeper connection with the real authentic side of Hawaii."



gohawaii.com

You can get involved in a lasting legacy

Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach has partnered with the Hawaiian Legacy Rainforest Initiative and is committed to planting 100,000 native trees.

As a guest at 'Alohilani Resort, you can visit Gunstock Ranch and plant your own native Hawaiian tree.

You can then track your tree through a chip that records the tree's health and other information like its genetic makeup throughout its lifetime. alohilaniresort.com Visitors can help restore a native Hawaiian fishpond through the Mālama Loko Ea Foundation on Oahu.

The aim of this exclusive cultural tour is to educate each participant on the history and significance of this important space. You'll hear stories, myths and legends from staff members and also get your hands dirty by caring for the land.

This is a perfect opportunity for families and friends to work together

to help give forward, build the dream of Loko Ea and provide for the local community. *lokoea.org*

Finally, help restore one of the world's most famous battleships by joining the volunteer program at the Battleship Missouri Memorial.

The memorial is an American icon that stands watch over the *USS Arizona* in Pearl Harbor. Volunteer work includes cleaning, sanding and painting. *ussmissouri.org*

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JENNY EVANS rekindles some cherished childhood memories during a family holiday on the water.

IF YOU'RE looking for a quintessential English holiday, canal boating is it.

Think caravanning but at just six-kilometres-an-hour, in the fresh air and without the need to bolt everything down.

We have had a narrow boat in our family for most of my life and I have many memories of travelling the manmade canals of England. We used to spend every summer holiday on the boat. In fact, I didn't go overseas for the first time until I was 14.

As a child, I enjoyed what seemed like endless days and sibling bonding. Later, and as a couple, it provided a romantic getaway from the world while still enjoying the comforts of life.

Now with my family it provides screen free, outdoor activities in a unique environment that we don't encounter in Australia, as well as plenty of time in pubs!

Pubs provide the perfect

are many canal-side pubs that you can moor alongside as well as nearby rural watering holes that can be walked to.

For example, our recent weekend on the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal involved 30 locks, 16 kilometres and two pubs.

Locks enable boats to go up and down hills. They can be hard work and are great for putting the children to good use.

Over the years we've had our share of mishaps. The most common being losing windlasses (the tool used for lock paddles) into the canal and falling in, a necessary requirement for all boaters at least once, but not frequently.

Luckily the fact that most narrow boats are steel has meant that the odd bump has done no damage... and there has certainly been the odd

Steering an 18-metre-long boat

time to slow down) on winding canals and through narrow bridges does take some skill.

There are 7,600kms of navigable canals and rivers in the UK. They meander through the countryside, passing near ancient castles, stately homes, historical market towns and cities. They can be found in the centre of many towns. In fact, Birmingham is a city with more canals than Venice.

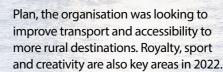
It has a 160 kilometres of canal network running through the city centre, enabling boaters to easily enjoy the sights without the worry of hotels and parking.

In London, the Regent's canal starts in Little Venice and ends in the Docklands. It offers the chance to see a side of London that is often missed by others.

While we are lucky enough to have our own boat, there are many hire companies in the UK making this type of holiday available to all. You don't need a licence and you can rent boats for as short as a day trip or for weeks at a time. Prices start at around £1,000 (approx. \$AU1,7000) for a week. Tuition is provided.

It takes a certain amount of organisation to prepare for the boat but once aboard it is simple to unplug, enjoy each other's company and unwind. Your days shrink down to a simple objective of getting to the next pub by nightfall.

For us, no trip to the UK is complete without some time on the boat.



"We know there is pent up demand for travel and intentions to visit Britain are strong," said Tricia Warwick, VisitBritain Director of APMEA, China & NE Asia.

"Inbound tourism is a critical industry for our economy and we're competing hard for international visitors who contribute so much to the UK's visitor economy."

To this end, VisitBritain launched a \$17 million global tourism promotion, entitled 'Welcome to another side of Britain', in February. It is the first such campaign in more than two years.

Ms Warwick said it was important to restore consumer confidence in international travel, drive back demand and a return to previous spending levels.

"We are targeting visitors with the greatest commitment and intent to visit Britain this year, with the spotlight also on our cities which have been hit very hard by the absence of inbound visitors.

"We are telling the stories of our renowned heritage, our iconic city attractions – but with a modern twist - our buzzing contemporary culture and our innovative food and drink scene."

Specific tourism highlights this year include the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, Queen's Platinum Jubilee and UNBOXED, a UKwide celebration of creativity.

"Britain's cities are buzzing with excellent culture and attractions and 2022 is a great opportunity to discover a new side to the destinations we know and love."

Ms Warwick also revealed that almost two thirds of international travellers surveyed by VisitBritain said they were thinking more about sustainability and the environmental impact when planning future holidays.

"We know that amid the global challenges of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, sustainable and responsible tourism has risen as a priority.

"VisitBritain has been hosting inmarket round tables to support the travel trade and to promote sustainable tourism as well as launching new sustainable tourism itineraries.

"We want to support visitors and our global travel trade partners to find products and experiences that will enrich their stay.

"Britain really is packed full of fresh and exciting experiences to come and enjoy right now."







#lovegreatbritain



We're doing our bit for Britain

battered inbound tourism market recover from the effects of the worldwide pandemic.

AUSTRALIANS ARE helping Britain's

That was the encouraging message from ExploreGB 2022, the UK's annual flagship travel trade event, which was held virtually across key global markets recently.

In an update to delegates, Richard Nicholls, Head of Research and Forecasting at VisitBritain, said flight bookings to the UK were currently 30 per cent behind 2019 levels.

"Flight bookings from Oceania were pretty low several months ago but recently in the last few weeks it has really come back into business. We are starting to see some green shoots from Australia in particular," he said.

Mr Nicholls also revealed they were predicting more than 21 million people would visit the UK this year, which is 52 per cent of the 2019 level.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Sally Balcombe, CEO of VisitBritain, declared Britain open for business and said 2022 would be a "truly unique and special time to pay us a visit.

"In the wake of the pandemic we also want to build back better as an industry. More accessible, resilient and sustainable."

Ms Balcombe said that as part of the **UK government's Tourism Recovery**

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A NEW partnership has been formed to host an 'insiders' tour of Japan's most exclusive and impossible-to-book sushi restaurants.

Plan Japan and Melbourne sushi boutique Uminono have joined forces as gourmet travellers eagerly await the re-opening of Japan's borders.

Running from September 25 to 30, the inaugural 'Luxury Sushi Discovery Experience' will offer a gastronomy tour of Tokyo, the world's sushi capital.

It will be guided by Rachel Lang, Plan Japan culture connoisseur, and Arnaud Laidebeur, Uminono's sushi chef who is known for his mastery of traditional Omakese dining experiences.

Featured venues include the two Michelin-starred Sushi Amamoto, an exclusive eight-seater boutique owned by acclaimed chef Masamichi Amamoto, as well as the Sugita restaurant, which heroes traditional Edomae skills and is beloved by renowned chefs and epicureans alike.

"Unlike many countries, money and fame cannot grant you access to the best restaurants in Japan," said Rachel Lang, Plan Japan founder and bespoke Japanese travel expert.

"Instead, Japan's owners and chefs value honour, trust and tradition – and choose to take reservations from people they know personally, or have built a history with."

In addition to the 'Luxury Sushi Discovery Experience', Plan Japan will also launch a series of bespoke premium travel experiences from September, spanning extended food tours, golf, horse racing, seasonal adventures and bucket list items.





TRAVELMARVEL HAS launched its Egypt, Jordan & Israel 2022-24 program, with itineraries covering the highlights of the historic and culturally rich Middle East.

The company's most popular tour is 'Treasures of Egypt & the Nile with Hidden Jordan', a 15-day journey from Cairo to Amman priced from \$6,995 per person twin share.

Highlights include a four-night Nile cruise from Luxor to Aswan aboard the MS Royal Lily, visits to the Giza Pyramids and Sphinx, as well as flying to explore the temples of Abu Simbel.

In Jordan, travellers see historic Petra, have a chance to float in the Dead Sea and spend a night in an evocative desert camp at Wadi Rum.

Guests can add Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Tel Aviv and more to their journey on the 19-day 'Treasures of Egypt & the Nile, Hidden Jordan & Israel'.

Priced from \$10,495 per person twin share, the tour includes an exploration of Jerusalem and Bethlehem's key religious sites, as well as the moving Yad Vashem Holocaust museum.

Earlybird savings of up to \$2,000 per couple and an early payment discount of up to \$600 per couple are available.



travelmarvel.com.au



CHECK OUT THIS BENCH MARK DOWN

BENCH AFRICA is offering significant savings on one of their best-selling tours. Travellers can save \$1,355 per person on the company's 13-day 'Deluxe South Africa Safari'.

Begin the adventure with five days exploring Cape Town before moving on to Franschhoek for three nights to sample the area's landscapes, gourmet

The journey concludes with five nights on a luxury safari in a private game reserve near Kruger National Park, offering up the chance to see the Big Five.

The package is priced from \$5,540 per person twin share based on travel between May and August 31.



benchafrica.com.au

Take a historic walk on the wilderness side

A NEW seven-night walking journey has just been launched giving guests the chance to explore one of Australia's greatest landscapes.

The wilderness trail takes walkers through the 24,000 hectare Arkaba Conservancy in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia.

Carrying all their own equipment, food and water and being led by experienced wilderness guides, walking groups will follow dry riverbeds, trace the eons through ancient rock strata and traverse cypress covered hills.

Guests will carry a provided kit which includes a comfortable self-inflating mat and a quality sleeping bag with a liner to bed down in for the night.

Walkers will be asked to turn off all mobile phones, cameras and other smart devices during the adventure.

"We're hoping people will see a real value to getting back to nature to feel at one with the country and to gain some peace for themselves after the turbulent few years we have all been through," said Charles Carlow, General Manager, Wild Bush Luxury.

Prices for the 'Arkaba Wilderness Trails' start from \$3,200 per person self-drive, including two nights of swag camping and five nights of backcountry camping. The price is \$3,500 per person with return road transfers from Adelaide.

The three group departures this year will be May 22 to 29, September 12 to 19 and October 10 to 17. The maximum group size is 10 plus two guides.



arkabawalk.com



Time for a refreshing change

DOMESTIC TRAVEL

ABERCROMBIE & KENT have just launched a refreshed portfolio of Australasian small group journeys for 2022/23.

Itineraries include the six-day 'Red Centre: Outback Wanderings', which departs from October 17-22 and May 8-13, 2023, and is priced from \$7,355 per person twin share.

Guests will take a sunrise hot air balloon flight over the McDonnell Ranges, explore Kings Canyon with scenic rim walk and the Garden of Eden, then admire the ever-changing colours of Uluru from their luxury accommodation at the celebrated Longitude 131°.

Across the ditch, explore the South Island of New Zealand on the eightday 'Alpine Winter Wonderland' itinerary. Among the many highlights are Christchurch, Queenstown, Milford Sound, Mt Aspiring National Park and a Big Sky Stargazing experience.

Departures are from July 25 to August 1, August 22 to August 29 and August 30 to September 6. It is priced from \$7,995 per person twin share.



abercrombiekent.com.au



ENJOY A TASTE OF HIST

ANCIENT PRODUCE with a modern twist will be on the menu when one of this country's premier Indigenous food and culture festivals kicks off this month.

A Taste of Kakadu will be staged across the famous Top End National Park from May 20 to May 29.

Over nine days, visitors can embark on guided foraging walks where 'super' foods and delicacies such as Kakadu plums can be tasted.

They can experience Kakadu staples such as crocodile, barramundi and buffalo cooked in traditional style in-ground ovens.

There will be nightly cruises on crocodile-filled billabongs where guests can enjoy bush tucker inspired canapes.

In addition, the first 'Kakadu Dreaming Dinner under the Stars' will be staged at the Warradjan Cultural Centre at Cooinda. A highlight of the evening will be a guided stargazing session that will provide both European and Indigenous interpretations of the night sky.



kakadutourism.com

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Cradle Mountain, Wineglass Bay, Freycinet National Park. These are all famous tourist attractions in Tasmania. But what about the lesser-known spots that many visitors might not know about?

On a recent trip around the Apple Isle, JON UNDERWOOD uncovered some of the more weird and wonderful offerings in this exceptional Aussie destination.

"EXCUSE ME, but you're blocking my driveway."

I'd just pulled our Apollo campervan into a quiet street in New Norfolk, about a half hour drive from Hobart, in search of a mid-morning snack.

After offering my profuse apologies, the lady in question imparted some invaluable local knowledge, directing me to an establishment I'd never have found without her recommendation.

The Quilted Teapot is a charming cafe in the grounds of St. Mathews Church, one of the oldest in Tasmania. As the name suggests, it is a quilter's paradise but also a hidden gem where you can get delicious produce served by welcoming locals.

It was the perfect start to our motoring adventure and typical of the welcome we would receive around the whole island.



thequiltedteapot.com

TOY STORY

You know you're entering a somewhat different establishment when they offer you a detailed map of the store on entry. I say "store" in the loosest possible sense: I'm still not sure just what this bizarre place is actually supposed to be!

Part toy shop, part magic show, part funfair attraction, **Reliquaire** in Latrobe is simply unique, a family-owned business that's been operating since

You've got dinosaurs, a Tardis, Harry Potter, Game of Thrones and Alice in Wonderland – all surrounded by candles and skincare products, handbags, jewellery and even hardware.

Make sure you put this on your itinerary if you're ever up north. It's a treasure trove that will delight young and old alike.

reliquaire.com

MONKEY BUSINESS

According to a recent survey, Launceston is the best town to visit in Australia this year. Whether that's true or not I don't know – but it certainly offers a few surprises.

The Gorge Scenic Chairlift travels more than 450 metres over Cataract Gorge, offering unique views of the river basin and parkland beneath. But what I didn't expect to see in a Launceston park was Japanese macaques.

Some 10 macagues were gifted to the city by the good folk of Ikeda in Japan, the twin city of Launceston. They live in City Park and are clearly enjoying their Aussie home as their numbers have now swelled to 20.

You'll take hundreds of photos of the baby monkeys as they cavort with their elders, clearly oblivious to the fact they are a long, long way from home...



launceston.tas.gov.au

GETTING MY GOAT

You simply can't come to Tasmania and not try their wine: it would be like going to Japan and not trying sushi. Fortunately, our route took us through the Tamar Valley, renowned for its cool climate wines.

With more than 20 wineries to choose from, visitors are spoilt for choice but thanks to a recommendation from a friendly waiter in Launceston, we stopped at **Goaty** Hill in Kayena.

A touch isolated but well worth the trouble to find, they've been in business for 25 years and are committed to organic agricultural practices.

The wines are superb, the Gourmet Vineyard Platter is one of the best I've ever tasted and all served up with verdant views of the vineyard.

The clientele isn't too bad either we spotted ex-Australia cricket captain Ricky Ponting enjoying some of the local fare. As Ricky has his own wine business, he was clearly checking out the competition – or maybe a future partner? You read it here first!



goatyhill.com

BRFW WHO?

Now I don't want you to think that all I did during this trip was go from one winery to another...there were breweries too!

Adjacent to the White Sands Estate resort on Tasmania's majestic east

coast is the IronHouse Brewery. Here they sow, grow, brew, distil

and mature everything they need to make top quality craft beer, southern climate wine and spirits such as whisky, brandy, vodka and gin.

The proof, of course, is in the tasting and visitors can try a range of the products before purchasing, served up on elegant wooden platters. You can sip to your hearts content while looking out over the Tasman Sea.

My tipple of choice was their East Coast Pale but with several varieties on offer there's something for every palate...just make sure you're not the one holding the car keys!



ironhouse.com.au

YOU LITTLE DEVIL

Just as you can't come to Tassie and not try their wine, you can't head south and not see a Tasmanian Devil. I'm not a big fan of animals in cages but fortunately we were able to find a place where, once again, they are trying to do things a little differently.

Tasmanian Devil UnZoo in

Tarana claims to be a global leader in shaping the way zoos will evolve in the 21st century. Here, it's all about experiencing animals in their natural habitats – without a barrier or cage anywhere in sight.

So at UnZoo, you will see Tassie Devils up close and personal, along with wallabies, kangaroos and pademelons. There's plenty of native birdlife as well, with the feeding demonstration particularly hands-on.

If this is the future of animal-human interactions, sign me up.



tasmaniandevilunzoo.com.au

RECHARGE YOUR BATTERY

After more than 2,000ks on the road, it was time to relax and Hobart is a great city to unwind in, centred around its buzzing harbour. What's more, you can still find quaint little pockets where the crowds don't always go.

Battery Point is a short walk from the city centre and has myriad attractions, including a sculpture trail, historic 19th century houses (check out Narryna) and Jackman & McRoss, a Hobart institution, with pastries, bread and all kinds of delicious treats baked on the premises. Grab a table outside and just watch the world go by.

We also stumbled across Preachers. Set in a heritage listed cottage dating back to 1849, it is a trendy bar serving craft beers, cocktails, burgers and assorted pub delights.

But what sets it somewhat apart is the old bus parked in the courtyard in which you can enjoy your purchases. Sadly, the bus won't take you home after a sunny afternoon of imbibing, but it's a great place to mix with the locals and reflect on all Tasmania has to offer.



tasmania.com





AUSTRALIANS HAVE been holidaying in Hawaii for decades and now their international borders are open, it will be right at the top of most wish lists.

Thanks to Hawaiian Airlines and Outrigger Resorts we're offering one lucky reader the chance to win a trip for two to Oahu.

Hawaiian Airlines – Hawaii's hometown carrier

Now in its 93rd year of continuous service, Hawaiian Airlines has a proud history of bringing travellers from around the world to the Hawaiian Islands.

Hawaiian's flights from Australia operate five times weekly from Sydney direct to Honlulu.

The overnight flights take off at 9.40pm, deliberately timed so that guests can land in Honolulu midmorning, transfer to their hotels and be on the Waikiki sand by mid-afternoon.

Flight HA452 operates non-stop from Sydney departing at 9:40pm every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, arriving in Honolulu at 11.30am.

Flight HA451 returning to Australia operates five times weekly from Honolulu non-stop to Sydney, departing at 12.55pm every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, arriving in Honolulu at 7.45pm.

Hawaiian's friendly crew welcome guests with warm and generous hospitality and the airline proudly showcases Hawaii through islandinspired complimentary meals, beers and cocktails and inflight entertainment selections include insights into the people, culture and attractions of Hawaii.

Because Aussies love to shop, Hawaiian also offers an industryleading free checked bag allowance of 64kilos per passenger (2 x 32kilo bags). Many Aussie visitors arrive with empty bags, heading home with bargains from Honolulu's shopping malls and factory outlets.

First-time visitors to Hawaii often spend their time discovering Waikiki and the laid-back North Shore of Oahu, before taking a domestic flight to one of the neighbour islands.

Hawaiian Airlines makes it easy to explore, operating more than 130 flights a day, serving airports on four major islands.

With Hawaii's borders open again and flights operating after a nearly

two-year hiatus, the fauna, flora and natural beauty of the Hawaiian Islands is flourishing, and Hawaiian Airlines is encouraging visitors to 'Travel Pono' - to experience the islands safely and respectfully.

Travel Pono means to explore with care, offering one's kōkua (help) to preserve Hawaii's natural resources, cultures and communities.

Onboard transpacific flights, a specially produced a 'Travel Pono' video message features five Hawaiian Airlines crew members who also play a role in preservation, as a firefighter, volunteers for search and rescue operations and marine mammal protection, and a cultural practitioner.

Together they share expert advice on ocean and hiking safety, conservation of endangered species and the environment, and cultural and community best practices.

Around the world, wherever Hawaiian lands, the airline's distinctive white, purple and silver livery stands out. From the tail of the aircraft, maiden Pualani – known as 'the flower

of the sky' with her welcoming smile and proud gaze -looks out over the aircraft.

Even a maile lei, the lei used for important occasions, wraps around the body of the aircraft to symbolise the warm welcome Hawaiian Airlines extends to guests.

Flying with Hawaii's hometown carrier, Hawaiian Airlines' guests experience the warm and genuine Aloha Spirit of the Hawaiian Islands, long before they reach their destination.



hawaiianairlines.com.au

A contemporary beachfront retreat rooted in Hawaiian culture

Experience Waikīkī as it should be

Discover the fully reimaged Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. This iconic place of healing and renewal is complemented by the latest amenities, a focus on wellness, unmatched hospitality and authentic guest experiences that honour its voyaging legacy.

Your voyage begins at arrival from the impressive canoe-hale experience lit by traditional fishing basket lanterns to the open-air Herb Kane lobby lounge experience leading way to the golden sands of Waikiki beach.

The fresh energy resort design emulates an elegant Hawaii beach house, warmly welcoming guests home.

The authentic presence of Hawaiian culture is weaved throughout the property and guest experience through unique art installations and life-size murals by local artists, curated in-room art galleries and an array of enriched signature guest activities at the A'o Cultural Center from hula dancing, lei making and 'ukulele lessons to beachfront Hawaiian Vow Renewal.

Enjoy live music nightly at the locally-loved KaniKa Pila Grille the home of Hawaiian music and best place to see award-winning contemporary Hawaiian performers in an intimate backyard setting with delicious food and beverage.

Newly renovated guest rooms and suites have an upscale, modern Hawaii residential feel, with spectacular views and detailed amenities that share

an in-room story guests are sure to discover unique.

The Ocean Tower provides breathtaking views directly overlooking Waikiki Beach, idyllic for those who wish to keep close to the waves. The Pacific Tower, the taller of the two towers, is set back from Waikiki beach offering terrific views of Fort DeRussy, Waikiki, the city of Honolulu and resort grounds.

The Navigator's Floor is a collection of freshly renovated luxury suites named in honor of Hawaii's navigators who sailed the Pacific Ocean in a voyaging canoe, guided only by signs from nature - such as the ocean currents, wind and stars.

It is comprised of a cluster of four suites totaling 350-square-metres of space that sleeps up to 18 people. It also offers the largest private lanai in Waikīkī at 370-square-metres. This experience is ideal for multigenerational families and small groups.

Discover the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. Discover where local culture meets world-class hospitality.



outrigger.com





HOW TO ENTER











We've hidden FIVE icons throughout the pages of this issue, related to Hawaii.

You're looking for a pineapple, a lei, surf board, ukelele and a canoe. All you have to do is find all five, head to our website and tell us which pages they are on.

All correct entries will go into a prize draw for two return economy class tickets with Hawaiian Airlines and three nights at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort.

Terms and conditions apply, see our website for details. **Good luck!**







