TABS ON
TRAVEL TODAY
Incorporating Tabs on Travel

Friday 13 November 2026 Issue 5342



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Air NZ Increases For Asia & Americas



Air New Zealand is heading into 2027 with growth on its mind, as the carrier's new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners allow it to boost international capacity to destinations across Asia and the Americas.

The northern summer of 2027 will see the national carrier operate 4% more international capacity than the same time last year. NZ cco Scott Wilkinson says the carrier is being deliberate about where it grows, adding flights to destinations its customers want to visit.

This includes the Americas, with flights ex Auckland to Vancouver increasing from seven to nine per week over Jul, and daily 787 services being added to its Houston route from Sep, up from five 777 services.

In Asia, its AKL to Shanghai flights will increase to daily in Apr, Jul, Sep and Oct, Taipei will grow to five flights per week from late Sep, and the new Christchurch to Singapore route will continue year-round. Papeete services ex AKL will also be increasing to up to five flights per week during the Pacific Games in Jul and Aug.

. . . Dreamliners

Allowing for this growth is the arrival of two new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners last month. And NZ says a further two aircraft scheduled for delivery in 2027, all featuring NZ's new cabin experience, with an expanded premium offering with more business premier and premium economy seats.

Wilkinson says these new aircraft are a significant investment in the carrier's customers and its future.

"They're enabling us to grow our international network, offer more flights and bring our latest onboard experience to more customers."

The growing northern winter scheduled follows on from NZ's recently announced international network growth from Christchurch, including its year-round thrice-weekly Singapore flights, which are on sale now. See HERE.

Win A Sth Oz Trip



The South Australian Tourism Commission has a new trade competition celebrating the state's status as Australia's only Michelin-starred destination. It is offering agents who love their food and wine the chance to win a week-long South Australian culinary trip for two, guided by former *MICHELIN Guide* inspector Pina Belfiore.

To enter, agents are asked to submit a video of up to 60 seconds sharing why they are excited to experience Australia's first *MICHELIN Guide*-recognised food culture. The competition, also open to the general public, runs to 30 Nov. Find out more HERE.

Australia On Tour

Tourism Australia has advised it has opened a waitlist for the *Australia on Tour* roadshows, taking place in Queenstown, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland 23-26 Nov. Sign up to the waitlists available for each city, HERE.

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Friday 13 Fears

Travellers may notice airports are a little quieter than usual today, and that there's a little more space on the plane, thanks to Triskaidekaphobia, more commonly known as the fear of Friday the 13th.

Dr. Donald Dossey, a psychotherapist and founder of the Stress Management Center and Phobia Institute, told *ABC News* that as many as 21 million people fear the date, and it comes at a cost.

The outlet states that it is estimated that between USD800 million and USD900 million is lost in business each Friday the 13th because people won't travel, go to work and tend to business in general.

Italy Transport Strikes

Kiwis bound for Italy are urged to brace for travel delays, with strikes over the coming weeks expected to disrupt rail and air travel.

Major upcoming strikes, listed by *Strike Tracker*, include a 24-hour strike of ATM Group staff in Milan on 13 Nov, expected to affect the city's metro, trams, buses and trolleybuses. A nationwide general strike of all public and private sectors is also set for 20 Nov, expected to impact rail, public transport, airports and ferries.

There are separate rail strikes set 20-21 Nov, and an air traffic controllers' nationwide strike on 21 Nov, which may result in flight cancellations.



Bright Spots In Kiwi Sep Travel Review

Travel overseas by Kiwis dipped in Sep, but *Stats NZ* figures show some markets continue to perform strongly.

The number of those taking short trips was 3.06 million in the Sep year, a decrease of 14,000 from the previous 12 months. As the Kiwi dollar neared 24-year lows against some currencies, travel to the US was down 29,000 for the year and to Britain was down 11,000 to 105,000. But trips to Australia were up 11,000 to 1.28 million for the year. And there was record travel for any year to a number of destinations, including India (118,000) and Vietnam (41,000). Kiwi travellers also set records for a Sep year to some destinations, including China (172,000) and the Cook Islands (116,000).

. . . Sep Shift

The figures also show a dip in the Sep month with 260,300 Kiwis returning from trips, a decrease of 20,400 trips compared with Sep 2025.

As the Nov election loomed, the biggest changes were in Australia (down 9,100), the US (down 2,900), Britain (down 2500), Fiji (down 1600), Japan (down 1300) and Indonesia (down 1300). There was a 1900 boost in travel to South Africa, where the All Blacks toured.

While outbound travel eased, inbound tourist numbers were up 310,000 for the year to Sep, reaching 3.74 million, show the figures.

Off-season Spain

When it comes to travel in Spain, travellers are increasingly avoiding summer, as new data reveals 52.8% of tourist activity now occurs in Spain between May and Sep. By comparison, *The International Traveller that Transforms Spain* report by *The Data Appeal* shows Greece as seeing 72.7% of tourism activity over this time.

The report also shows the Canary Islands as a leading destination for non-seasonal tourism, also recording the longest average stays of all the regions analysed.

As for what's attracting international visitors to Spain over shoulder and low seasons, culture is the primary driver, with family tourism and active wellbeing also gaining momentum.

The report also notes that mid-to-high and high-end accommodation attracts around 40% of those visiting Spain during the low season, meaning this time of year has a higher economic impact per visitor. Check out the report HERE.

Gold Coast Rooftop Bar



European-inspired rooftop bar Charlie's has opened on the Gold Coast. It is a short stroll from the recently opened Mermaid Beach light rail stop, and serves Mediterranean-style share plates such as prawn handhelds and smoky butter corn ribs, as well as signature cocktails including a Cherry Ripe espresso martini and chilli-guava margarita. See HERE.

JQ's Oct Numbers

Jetstar has revealed its on time performance for Oct, with the month seeing 78.1% of flights on its New Zealand domestic network depart within 15 minutes of schedule, this rising to 85.4% for trunk peak time services. This brings the carrier's New Zealand domestic on time performance through 2026 year to date to 77%. Looking to New Zealand domestic reliability in Oct, 98.3% of its scheduled flights operated.

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Sail Spain & Portugal



Viking's eight-day *Spain & Portugal Discovery* voyage from Lisbon to Barcelona or vice versa, departing 06 Dec 2027 is on sale, priced from AUD6795pp in a veranda stateroom until sold out.

The itinerary takes in Lisbon, Seville, Málaga, Palma de Mallorca, Tangier (*pictured*) and Barcelona with visits to the Alhambra Palace, Jerónimos Monastery, Gaudi's Cathedral, Las Ramblas and Gibralfaro Castle.

Viking's Flights On Us also applies, offering economy airfares of up to AUD2800pp on voyages departing between 2027 and 2028. See more details HERE.

Heritage Adventure Arrives In Auckland







Yesterday was a 'very exciting day on board' the Heritage Adventurer, says Wild Earth Travel's Sarah Porter.

The ship arrived Auckland Harbour from Vanuatu and gave agents and other members of the trade a chance to have a look around the vessel, and highlight the differences Heritage brings to the expedition market.

The Kiwi-owned and operated fleet of expedition ships aims to bring passengers into 'biologically rich' regions, such as Melanesia and Indonesia (where the ship had been weeks prior).

The fleet also operates in a way that brings guests into more of 'the most wild, least-explored' regions, with specialists in their fields on board ships, enhancing the experience.

. . . Responsible Travel

Heritage Expeditions holds a focus on 'responsible travel' and with many of its team having a background in biology and ornithology, it comes naturally.

The liner works with the locals 'as well as helping deliver resources to lots of these communities', says Porter. Heritage makes ongoing contributions to conservation initiatives, funding for endangered species, supplies for villages across the Pacific. Read more about their efforts HERE.

. . . Pictured

1. Operatunity's Ian Jowsey is pictured on the Heritage Adventurer 0with Sarah Porter from Wild Earth Travel, Travelwise's Andrea Walter and Renee Lomas from Shore Travel. *2.* Susan de Alwis from Bucket List Travel, Envoyage's Sarah Jamieson and Cherryl Brown from Cruise World. *3.* Bon Voyage Travel and Cruise's Janice Geard is pictured with Fiona Miller from Heritage, Chimaera Incentive's Lesley Aldridge and Michelle Downey from Bucket List Travel.

Explora F1 Sales



Explora Journeys has opened sales for two premium Formula 1 hospitality experiences, which will feature aboard Explora I during the Formula 1 Louis Vuitton Grand Prix de Monaco in Port Hercule 02-07 Jun 2027. *F1 Paddock Club VIP Hospitality* packages are available and priced from AUD59,634pp.

The *Monaco Triple Crown Paddock Club Hospitality* starts at AUD64,468pp, both including five nights aboard Explora I.

Note that *The F1 Paddock Club VIP Hospitality* also includes three-days behind the scenes access, including the Aramco Formula 1 Pit Lane Walk and a Paddock Tour; while the *Monaco Triple Crown Paddock Club Hospitality* includes access to Gordon Ramsay at F1 La Terrasse, F1 Paddock Club Yacht and the F1 Paddock Club Suite. Places are limited—find more HERE.

Sword-making Tour



Tapping into the trend of more fantastical tourism experiences is the Kikyo Hayamitsu Japanese Sword Factory in Aioi, Hyogo Prefecture. The tour includes a visit to a forge where clients will learn about the traditional sword-making process, before attempting it themselves, creating a small knife. See more HERE.





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Intrepid Grants



Communities in Spain, Cambodia, Tanzania, India, Morocco, Türkiye (*pictured*), Indonesia, South Africa, Australia, Vietnam, Honduras and Thailand all benefited from The Intrepid Foundation's Impact Grants program in 2026.

A total of AUD643,596 has been distributed, this drawn from travellers who donate 1% of their trip cost, which is matched by Intrepid Travel.

One EUR30,000 grant went to Casa Caridad for its Espai DONA program, which provides resources and a safe space for homeless women in Valencia.

The *Travellers' Choice*, voted directly by Intrepid clients, went to the Cambodia Rural Students Trust for its Project B initiative, which seeks to build permanent bicycle repair stations across Siem Reap, ensuring students who have to cycle can get to school.

A record 2000 customers had their say on that recipient, notes Intrepid, while the company own team helped determine the other 11 winners.

"The annual Intrepid Foundation Impact Grants allow us to provide targeted, meaningful support for projects important to our Foundation partners' standard fundraising," says foundation gm Biheng Zhang. See more HERE.



Where To Go Via Rail Over Winter

With winter descending upon the northern hemisphere, Rail Europe is highlighting its top Alpine escapes, with each option having recently become more accessible via rail.

In first place is the French Alps, with Eurostar Snow returning to the destination on 19 Dec, offering trips from the Netherlands and Belgium to stations such as Moûtiers, Aime-la-Plagne and Bourg-Saint-Maurice.

For those already in France, Rail Europe advises of additional TGV INOUI services, including up to seven special trains from Paris to Bourg-Saint-Maurice on peak days.

Innsbruck also makes the cut. Geared to those who want a city break with mountains on the doorstep, the Austrian city is now accessible thanks to a new daily direct ICE connection from Hannover launching 13 Dec.

. . . Advanced Options

For the serious skier, agents can recommend Austria's St Anton am Arlberg, famed for its challenging slopes.

Clients can get there on a new ICE connection travelling ex Frankfurt, operating every Sat, with the return service on a Sun. Austria features again with Kitzbühel, home to skiing as well as winter walking routes, with a seasonal ICE Großglockner connecting Hamburg and Hannover directly with the resort, operating over selected weekends from 18 Dec.

Switzerland rounds out the list, courtesy of upgraded Nightjet sleeper trains that will operate from 13 Dec, allowing clients to fall asleep in Amsterdam and



wake up in Basel and Zurich, from which they can journey onwards to the Swiss Alps to ski. For more on these destinations and rail journeys, see HERE.

Aqua-Aston Whales



Aqua-Aston Hospitality and the Pacific Whale Foundation have partnered to offer guests who stay at its Maui properties (Nov-Apr) a 10% discount on whale-watching tours with the Maui-based non-profit. See more details HERE.

New Zealand Tours



Travelmarvel has now released its 2027/2028 New Zealand collection, including select departures now available as small group Journeys, and the ability to tailor trips with its Enhance Your Journey experiences.

Itineraries include the 17-day *New Zealand Getaway* and 17-day *Incredible New Zealand*, both of which now feature an extra stay in Wellington and Christchurch, and the 15-day *New Zealand Rail Adventure*. See more HERE.



An invitation to *Te Arai*.

An extraordinary New Zealand escape. An invitation from WEKA.

Just north of Auckland, Te Arai offers a remarkable combination of coastal beauty, exceptional hospitality and experiences worth travelling for. WEKA is inviting one lucky travel advisor and their guest to discover it firsthand.

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Submit qualifying quotes by 30 November 2026 to enter the draw. Every quote that becomes a confirmed booking earns an entry, even when the booking is confirmed after the deadline.

Terms and conditions apply. Prize experiences subject to final confirmation.

Inaugural Caribbean



Reservations are open for the inaugural Caribbean season of Amangati from Aman at Sea, sailing Nov 2027-Mar 2028.

The collection includes five- and eight-night sailings across the Antilles exploring the Caribbean, calling at the Dominican Republic, Martinique, Guadeloupe and the Grenadines, as well as voyages through the Leeward, Windward and Dutch Caribbean islands.

Reflecting what Aman says is its signature approach to 'considered, immersive travel', the journeys feature late departures, overnight calls and secluded anchorages, and bespoke cultural, culinary and naturalist-led experiences.

Launching in May next year, Amangati will carry 94 guests across nine decks in 47 ocean-facing suites (*pictured*) with private terraces. There will be four restaurants and the Aman Spa, which it says is the largest of its category in luxury yachting.

At the close of the Caribbean season, Amangati sails back across the Atlantic, departing Saint John's on 20 Mar 2028 arriving Madeira 31 Mar 2028. See more HERE.

Envoyage's Icons Take On Vietnam



The top-selling members from Envoyage gathered last week in Vietnam as Hoi An played host to *Icons 2026* (02-06 Nov), a five-day event celebrating those who have performed exceptionally over the past 12 months.

Envoyage gm New Zealand Jason Buckley says each year the Icons raise the bar for what's possible, adding that the event is 'our way of celebrating that contribution'.

Fifty members attended, with partners Intrepid Travel, the Globus Family of Brands, Room-Res.com and Cover-More Travel Insurance. Highlights included exploring the city with Intrepid, visiting the UNESCO-listed Old Town, the ancient Cham sanctuary of My Son, and social enterprise Reaching Out Teahouse and networking opportunities. The event wrapped up with a lantern dinner, complete with dancing dragons and live entertainment, with first-time attendee Richard Brewer saying it felt like a genuine reward trip.

"I loved connecting with members from other regions and learning how they run their businesses—these moments of connection were definitely the highlight."

He adds that what Intrepid showcased in Hoi An was such an authentic way to be rewarded. "Icons really does drive me and helps me set the goals for my business, and I'm excited to strive for next year."

. . . Going Forward

Next year's event will be held in Italy's Bologna with the key partner the Globus Family of Brands.

Pictured (l-r): Jason Buckley, Peter and Angela Manase, Dave Chappell, Mia Lomas, Stephen and Nichola Edgecombe, Josh Nicholson, Kim Dickinson, Andy Eames, Larissa Dunn, Niki Davies, Tori Keating, Bruce Fowler, Vincent George, Leanne Sharp, Lisa Nauer, Hashika and Nigel Samuel, Kelly Bowater and Grant Bokser.

ATE Applications

Tourism Australia says applications for the 47th Australian Tourism Exchange 2027, taking place at ICC Sydney 16-20 May, are now open.

Further details and links can be found HERE.

Gobi Dinosaurs



World Expeditions' new 12-day, small-group *Mongolia: Fossils, Landscapes & Lost Worlds with Sally Hurst* departs 23 Aug.

Hurst is an Australian palaeontologist and archaeologist who will guide guests into the Gobi Desert, home to some of the world's extraordinary dinosaur discoveries, including the celebrated Fighting Dinosaurs fossil, the skeletons of two dinosaurs who died locked together in combat.

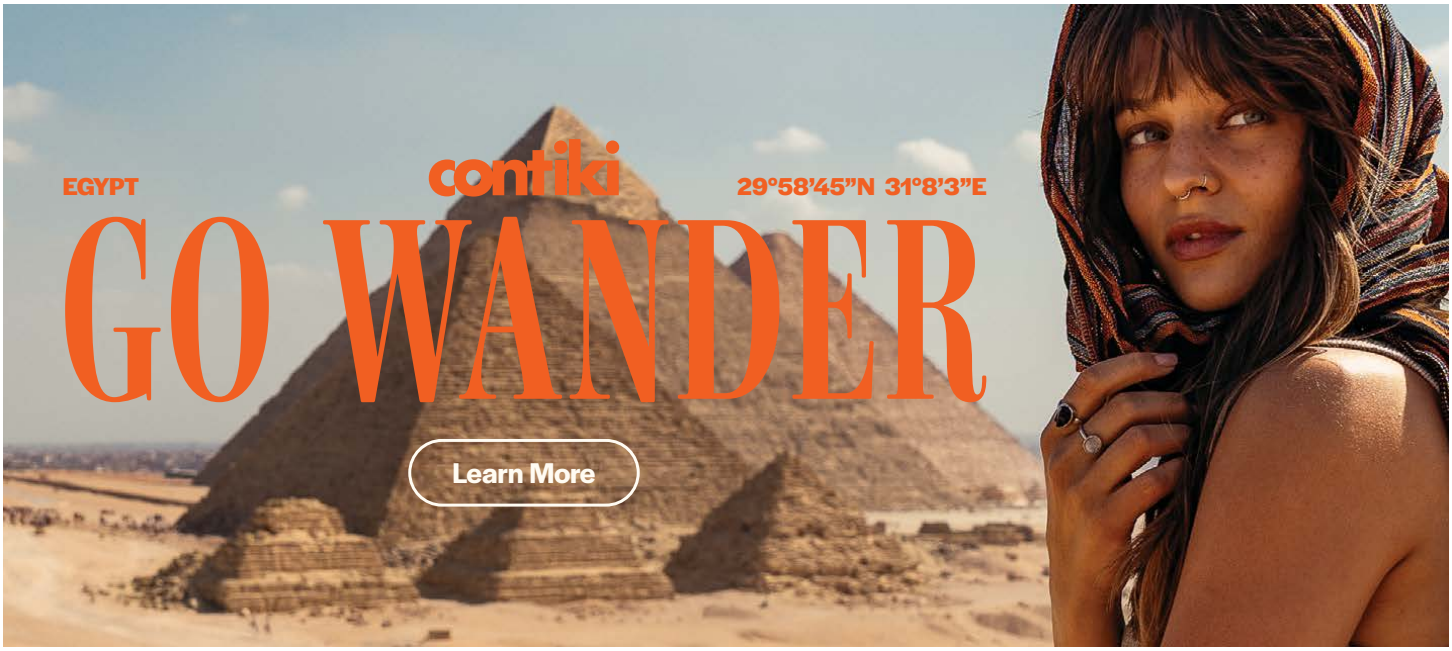
The round trip ex Ulaanbaatar takes in the Gobi canyons, Khongoriin Els dunes and Mongolia's nomadic culture. Cost is from AUD7490pp t/s and for those 18+. See details HERE.

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Christmas Cruises



Royal Caribbean is spotlighting its close-to-home Christmas cruises ahead of the festive season.

Its departures over this time feature experiences such as gingerbread decorating, carol singing, and holiday movie nights under the stars, as well as visits from Santa himself.

Itineraries on offer include a nine-night *New Zealand Christmas Escape* ex Sydney on 19 Dec, from AUD3099pp for a balcony stateroom. The eight-night *South Pacific Christmas Adventure* ex Brisbane on 20 Dec is priced from AUD2500pp for a balcony stateroom. See more details HERE.

Queen Mary 2's New Look & Milestone

Cunard has revealed further details of the refurbishment of Queen Mary 2, to take place in 2027, and her new look has been labelled 'Cunard Deco'.



The vessel's interiors will be inspired by both Hollywood's Golden Age and the grandeur of Cunard's regal lineage, with hints of British style.

Cunard president Paul Ludlow says the focus is on protecting and celebrating everything that makes Queen Mary 2 so special, while making considered enhancements that will further elevate the onboard experience.

"We are confident these improvements will ensure Queen Mary 2 continues to set the standard in luxury ocean travel for years to come," adds Ludlow.

. . . Upgrade Details

The redesign will cover all accommodation, from Britannia staterooms to the Grand Duplex Queens Grill Suites, as well as the Princess Grill and Queens Grill restaurants and the Grill Suites Lounge.

The ship will also receive new Grill Suites accommodation and an upgraded wellness offering. Details of the 'new' Queen Mary 2 come as the vessel sails its 450th transatlantic crossing, with Cunard saying it is the only ship in the world offering regularly scheduled voyages between Southampton and New York. The ship will enter dry dock at Damen Shiprepair Brest in France on 31 Mar, returning to service on 09 May. Keep up HERE.

EK Family Pause

Emirates advises agents that it will pause its My Family program from Jan as it undergoes an enhancement, with a new version to go live at year's end.

While it is paused, clients will be unable to create or cancel My Family accounts or add or remove family members, with Skywards Miles pooling and spending from My Family accounts to be temporarily unavailable as well. As such, any Skywards Miles remaining in My Family accounts will be transferred to the Family Head's individual Emirates Skywards account, and any Skywards Miles earned over this time will remain in individual Emirates Skywards accounts. Keep up to date HERE.

Intrepid New Zealand

Intrepid Travel has partnered with Māori-owned tourism business Hinemaia to offer guests more opportunities to connect with local culture.This includes a visit to Morero Marae featured on its New Zealand *Northern Trail* itineraries. See more HERE.



INDUSTRY DIARY

e-mail news@traveltoday.co.nz

NOVEMBER

Emirates/Dubai Tourism Roadshow
Christchurch: Mon 16, Novotel Christchurch Airport, 0730-0930. **Auckland:** Mon 16, Grand Millennium, 1830-2130.

Scenic Cruises River & Yacht Info Session
Remuera: Tue 17, Remuera Golf Club, 1000 & 1200. **Rotorua:** Thu 19, Rydges Rotorua, 1800.

Emerald Cruises River & Yacht Info Session
Remuera: Tue 17, Remuera Golf Club, 1400. **Rotorua:** Thu 19, Rydges Rotorua, 1400.

Australia On Tour Trade Roadshow
Queenstown: Mon 23, The Cargo Collective, 1800-2100. **Christchurch:** Tue 24, Novotel Christchurch Airport, 1800-2100. **Wellington:** Wed 25, Foxglove Ballroom, 1800-2100. **Auckland:** Thu 26, Tote on Ascot Ellerslie, 1800-2100.

Tourism Ireland Roadshow
Auckland: Mon 23, JW Marriott Auckland, 1630.

Land, Rail & Sea: Wendy Wu, Journey Beyond, Viking
Tauranga: Wed 25, Bay Park Suites, 1830.

FEBRUARY 2027

Travel Agents Reunion
Auckland: Sat 20, 1100-1300. Formal dinner 1900.

Air New Zealand/Cruise World Agent Bring Client Roadshow
Timaru: Mon 22, Trust Aoraki Tennis Centre, 1030. **Dunedin:** Mon 22, Dunedin Leisure Lodge, 1800. **Invercargill:** Tue 23, Kelvin Hotel, 1745.

MARCH 2027

Dream WA Roadshow
Auckland: Wed 10. **Christchurch:** Thu 11. Venues TBC.

Visit Sunshine Coast Roadshow
Auckland: Tue 16, **Christchurch:** Wed 17. **Dunedin:** Thu 18. Venues TBC.

World Journeys Roadshow
Christchurch: Tue 16. **Napier:** Wed 17, **Auckland:** Thu 18. Venues TBC.

MAY 2027

Land, Rail & Sea: Wendy Wu, Journey Beyond, Viking
Hibiscus Coast: Tue 04, Wainui Golf Club, 1030 & 1830. **Auckland:** Wed 05, Maritime Room, 1030 & 1830. **Christchurch:** Tue 11, Chateau in the Park Double Tree by Hilton, 1030 & 1830. **Lower Hutt:** Thu 13, Boulcotts Farm Golf Club, 1030 & 1830. Morning tea, drinks and canapes provided for events.

JUNE 2027

Land, Rail & Sea: Wendy Wu, Journey Beyond, Viking
Napier: Tue 01, Napier Conference Centre, 1030 & 1830. **Auckland:** Thu 10, Fairway Event Centre, 1030 & 1830. Morning tea, drinks and canapes provided for events.