



Connected Travel

## SENSE OF ADVENTURE REQUIRED

# NEWSLETTER

MAY 2026

WHERE COMFORT MEETS CURIOSITY, AND TRAVEL IS DESIGNED TO FEEL AS GOOD AS IT LOOKS.

## Welcome to Sense of Adventure Required

### The Soft Adventure Edit

This is where I share destinations I know deeply, journeys I'd confidently send my own clients on, and the thoughtful details that turn a trip into something that stays with you. Expect considered advice, personal perspective, and travel ideas for those who want a sense of adventure, without rushing, roughing it, or ticking boxes.

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## WHAT IF YOUR NEXT TRIP FELT LIKE IT WAS DESIGNED JUST FOR YOU?

This May, I'm seeing a clear shift in the way people want to travel. It's no longer about how much you can fit into a trip, it's about how deeply you can experience it.

Travellers are slowing down. Choosing fewer destinations. Staying longer. And prioritising moments that feel meaningful rather than rushed. Think:

- A long morning in a Tuscan hill town café
- A scenic rail journey through breathtaking landscapes
- A quiet ryokan stay in Japan where time feels different

This is what I call soft adventure travel, where comfort, curiosity, and connection come together.



It's not about doing less.

It's about experiencing more of what actually matters.

If you're starting to feel like you want your next trip to feel more intentional, more immersive, and more you, I'd love to help you design it. Let's start planning your next journey

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## SOFT ADVENTURE TRAVEL HACK

### DESIGN YOUR TRIP AROUND MOMENTS, NOT DESTINATIONS

One of the biggest shifts I'm seeing right now is this: Travellers are no longer asking "Where should I go?" They're asking... "How do I want to feel when I'm there?" And that's where this simple soft adventure hack comes in:

#### **Start with the Moments, Not the Map**

Instead of building your trip around a list of destinations, start by choosing 3–5 meaningful experiences you truly want to have. For example:

A slow morning in a Tuscan hill town café

A scenic rail journey where the landscape becomes part of the experience

A peaceful stay in a traditional ryokan in Japan

Then, build your itinerary around those moments.

#### **Why This Changes Everything**

When you plan this way:

- ✓ Your trip feels more personal
- ✓ You naturally slow down
- ✓ You avoid overpacking your itinerary
- ✓ Every experience has intention behind it

Instead of rushing from place to place, you're creating a journey that flows—and feels like it was designed just for you.

#### **The Soft Adventure Difference**

This is the essence of soft adventure travel:

Comfortable, immersive, and deeply connected experiences that prioritise quality over quantity.

It's not about doing less.

It's about experiencing more of what actually matters.

#### **Try This for Your Next Trip**

Before you choose your destination, ask yourself:

What are the moments I want to remember?

Because those moments will shape your journey far more than any checklist ever could.

# A PEACEFUL STAY IN A TRADITIONAL RYOKAN IN JAPAN

## ABURAYA RYOKAN - YUDANAKA

Our stay at Aburaya Tōsen in Yudanaka was nothing short of exceptional. This elegant ryokan seamlessly blends traditional Japanese hospitality with modern luxury. From the moment we arrived, we were warmly welcomed by the attentive staff and guided to our beautifully appointed room which featured stunning views of the mountains and river.

The tatami-matted floors, low wooden table with floor cushions, and futon beds neatly laid out on the ground created a warm, minimalist space that felt both peaceful and deeply rooted in tradition. Sitting cross-legged for tea and sleeping close to the floor added to the quiet charm of the experience, a gentle reminder that comfort doesn't always need luxury.

[Click Here to Read More](#)



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## CHAOS IN THE SKIES CREATES GOLDEN ERA FOR TRAVEL ADVISORS

Australians still want to travel but the increasingly chaotic airfare market is turning travel advisors into problem-solvers rather than simple booking agents, Complex Travel Group managing director Mark Trim says.

At a media briefing in Sydney last night, Trim said demand for business class travel over the next six months remains strong despite rising fares, reduced availability and increasingly complex airline pricing models. But it's "solving problems, not selling the dream", he said.

In describing a market where consumers are highly motivated to travel, particularly to Europe, but are being forced to rethink how they get there, Trim said travellers are increasingly open to extra stopovers or flying with less familiar carriers if it means better value. "There's no 'one size fits all' approach, which is making booking with a true expert more valuable than ever," he said.

Trim said traditional one-stop routings through Asian hubs are under pressure, with Singapore Airlines and Cathay Pacific heavily booked or charging premium prices for the upcoming northern summer.

"The era of easy Asian gateway bookings is largely gone for the upcoming Northern summer season," he said. Instead, he pointed to Turkish Airlines as a standout value option, alongside Oman Air, Vietnam Airlines, Asiana Airlines and Korean Air.

Trim said the rise of AI makes human advisers more valuable, not less.

"The market is quite literally a game most consumers are playing without knowing the rules," he said with advisors able to access live inventory, understand booking classes, prevent costly mistakes and package airfares with tours or cruises to unlock better value.

# SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT

## G ADVENTURES



If you're looking for travel that feels authentic, immersive, and just a little bit different, G Adventures is a name worth knowing. They specialise in small-group journeys that go beyond the surface, connecting you with local cultures, communities, and experiences in a way that feels real and meaningful.

What I love about them is their approach to responsible travel. Through their strong local partnerships and community-focused initiatives, your journey doesn't just take you somewhere, it gives back along the way. And while they're known for adventure, many of their trips align beautifully with soft adventure travel:

- Comfortable, well-paced itineraries
- Unique, off-the-beaten-path experiences
- The ease and connection of travelling with like-minded people

Whether it's exploring vibrant markets, discovering hidden landscapes, or sharing moments with local communities, G Adventures offers a style of travel that feels both enriching and effortless.

### Why travel with G Adventures

## Six reasons you'll love us



### Guides so good we call them CEOs

Our Chief Experience Officers have local smarts, big energy, and serious skills to make your trip unforgettable.



### Small groups, lots of passports

Small groups mean big connections. And with travellers from all over, every trip feels globally inspired.



### As ungrouped as it gets

The safety of a group, with freedom to explore on your own terms.



### Immersive experiences are how we roll

Get hands-on with culture, food, and local life. No sidelines, just full-on adventure.



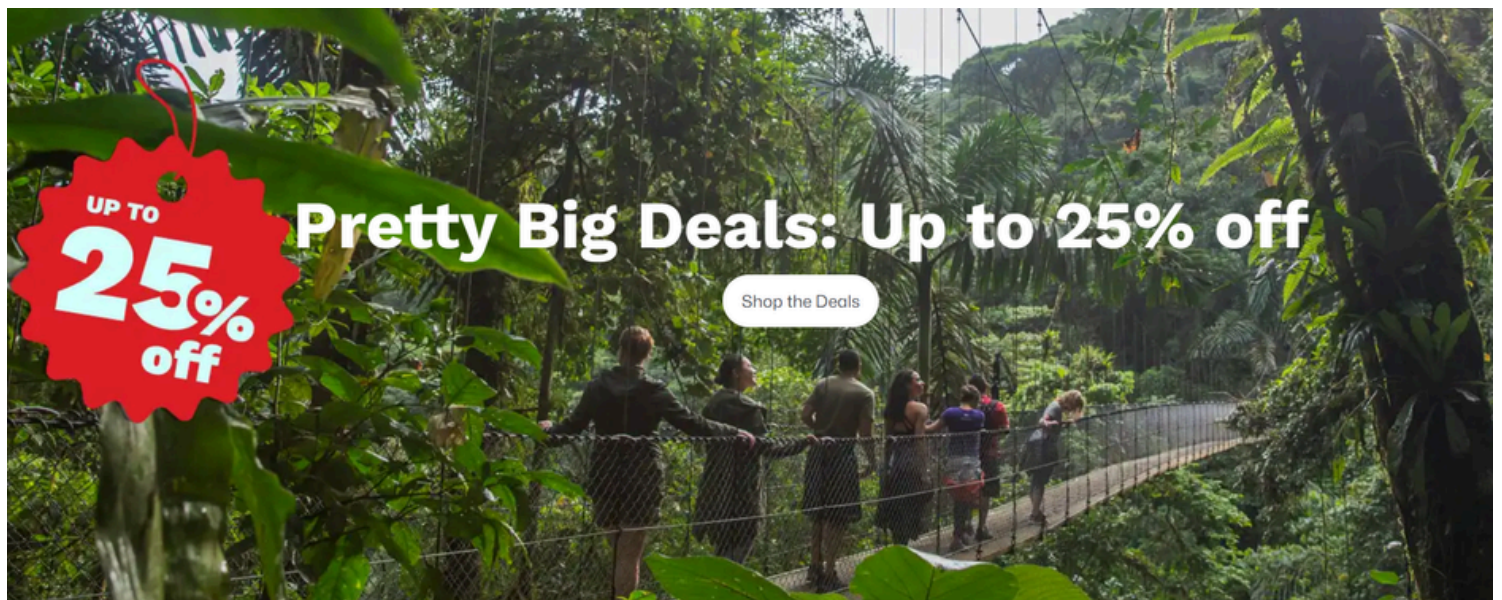
### Doing good has never been so fun

Travel that helps people, places, and the planet – powered by our Community Tourism model.



### Book with all the confidence in the world

No stress here. Flexible policies, guaranteed departures, and support whenever you need it.



# EXPLORE WORLDWIDE LIMITED-TIME CAMPAIGN

## THE \$1 DEPOSIT CAMPAIGN

Explore Worldwide has launched a limited-time campaign offering travellers the opportunity to secure their next adventure for just \$1, applied to hundreds of global tours. The campaign provides an accessible way for customers to confirm future travel plans at today's prices. Available on bookings made until 28 May 2026.

With travellers planning international trips for 2026 and beyond, the campaign offers an accessible way to secure preferred departures at today's prices with a minimal upfront deposit. From exploring Europe in the quieter autumn months to discovering Central America's landscapes later in the year, the offer provides flexibility for those looking to plan ahead without committing full payment upfront.

The beauty of this offer is that it removes a key barrier to book. Travellers can secure their preferred itinerary and departure date now, while keeping plans flexible and spreading the cost over time.

Aussie's continue to show strong intent for international travel, with Asia, South America and Europe leading destination interest in the second half of the year. The \$1 deposit campaign leverages this momentum, lowering the barrier to entry and giving travellers greater flexibility to start planning trips for 2026 and beyond with confidence.

## HERO TRIPS

### **Amalfi Coast Walking – Agriturismo (7 nights from \$3,210 per person)**

Stretching along the south-west coast of Italy, the Amalfi Coast is a delightful patchwork of postcard-perfect seaside towns and lush rural landscapes. Walk the ancient stone stairways, limestone cliff paths and old mule tracks that link Campania's picturesque villages and discover Italian icons from Ravello to Positano and Capri. At the end of the day, relax with organic wine and farm-to-table food at our rustic agriturismo.



### **Greek Island Wanderer (13 nights from \$4,790 per person)**

Go island hopping in Greece on this two-week tour of the Cyclades. Land in Athens, Greece's historic and cultural capital, before boarding a ferry to get to grips with island life. From Syros to Paros and Naxos to Santorini, tick off ancient ruins, bustling harbours, and serene beaches on this tour of Greece's island highlights.



### **Simply Japan (13 nights from \$8,750 per person)**

Traverse Japan on this tour from Tokyo to Kyoto. Travel through history, visiting temples and castles that remain unchanged from the days of the Shogun and learning about the sombre past of Hiroshima. Along the way, stay in a Buddhist temple lodging, spot snow monkeys and free-roaming deer, hop on and off bullet trains and sample famous snacks like takoyaki octopus balls.



### **Sri Lanka in Depth (14 nights from \$4,600 per person)**

Discover the Pearl of the Indian Ocean on this two-week tour of Sri Lanka. From ancient cities to gilded Buddhist temples and wild national parks, our itinerary ticks off the island's icons and more. Climb Lion's Rock at sunrise, explore 'Little England' and the surrounding highlands and wind up on the beach in Koggala. Along the way, get a taste of Sri Lankan cuisine, sampling fragrant curries, fresh seafood and more.

### **Botswana Wildlife Safari (13 nights from \$8,480 per person)**

Travel through Botswana's remote wilderness to track Africa's wildlife. Spot elephants, big cats, hippos and more on game drives exploring several African greats, from Chobe National Park to Moremi Game Reserve. At night, drift off to the sound of the bush, wild camping beneath the African sky. Finish up with a two-night cruise on the Okavango River before soaking in the wonder of Victoria Falls.

### **Costa Rica Wildlife Tour (14 nights from \$6,060 per person)**

For a tiny country, Costa Rica packs a huge wildlife punch. Containing 5 per cent of the world's biodiversity, its thick forests teem with life, from brightly coloured toucans to slow-moving sloths. With adventure and beautiful beaches to boot, this two-week trip won't disappoint.



**[CLICK HERE TO SEE EXPLORE WORLDWIDE TOURS](#)**

## A BOATLOAD OF REASONS YOU'LL LOVE G ADVENTURES SAILING

### No transit days. Just adventure days.

On a boat, your hotel moves with you. No packing up, no hotel changes, and zero wasted days. Just wake up somewhere new and do it all again — there's no better way to keep the adventure going while you island-hop.



### Always small. Never boring.

No cruise crowds or buffet lines here — we keep our sailing groups small for maximum adventure and connection. Cabins are shared, meals are communal, and strangers become friends you share stories with.



### Not just a skipper. Your local insider.

Your skipper isn't just steering the boat — they're local experts who know the hidden coves, quiet anchorages, and ports that don't appear on any tourist map.



# THE WHOLE MED IS WAITING



## Croatia

Swap the tour bus for the tide. Navigate the walled cities of the Dalmatian Coast and the underexplored paradise only small boats can reach.

[Explore Croatia](#)



## Montenegro

Fewer tourists, more discovery. Snorkel in crystal-clear waters, explore ancient coastal fortresses, and spend nights anchored in harbours that feel like they're still keeping secrets.

[Explore Montenegro](#)



## Greece

Pristine beaches, ancient ruins, and more islands than you can count. Explore coastal villages where history and myth combine — this is Greek sailing done right.

[Explore Greece](#)



## Italy

From the floating streets of Venice to the dramatic cliffs of the Adriatic, Italy's coastline is endlessly surprising. Enjoy delicious fresh seafood, wander towns most travellers fly straight over, and live la dolce vita on the water.

[Explore Italy](#)

# YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY CRUISE-CURIOUS



**F**rom expanded fleets and fresh destinations to new competitors heating up the market, the river cruise sector is booming right now - and plenty of untapped opportunities still remain.

"River cruising has been growing in popularity but it's still a niche area of cruising and holds a huge amount of potential," Cruise Lines International Association MD for Australasia, Joel Katz told *Cruise Weekly*.

One of the major growth areas of the industry lies in encouraging non-cruisers to consider river cruising, with its ability to allow guests to immerse themselves in multiple destinations and spectacular scenery at a relaxed pace.

"We often hear of guests who might have insisted they weren't suited to cruising, but came back from a river cruise as a convert," Katz said.

"Younger generations are increasingly cruise-curious, and river cruise lines cater to them well with more active excursions and experience-led itineraries. At the same time, repeat factors are very high in river cruising, which presents great opportunities

to suggest new rivers, new destinations and new regions to past cruisers."

Of course, it is often an easy sell when persuading ocean cruisers to switch to sailing on some of the world's greatest rivers, especially for those looking for new travel experiences.

Meanwhile, whether you're a foodie, history buff or classical music enthusiast, river cruise lines like Avalon Waterways and Uniworld are leaning into specialist itineraries, adding cultural depth to their sailings.

Another white space in the river cruising market is families and kids, a demographic that new entrant Trafalgar has its eye on. Unlike its ocean counterparts with plenty of kids' clubs, onboard programs and rollercoasters galore, there are not many itineraries and experiences suitable for kids of any age in river cruising - until now.

While there are currently no dedicated childminding facilities on Trafalgar, the line offers kid-friendly entertainment, interconnected staterooms and flexible onboard spaces to appeal to its youngest passengers. It will be interesting to see the flow-on effect this accessible approach may have on other river cruise lines in the future.

Beyond new guests and itineraries, the sector's continued growth increasingly depends on venturing into new waterways. AmaWaterways' pioneering efforts on the Magdalena River come to mind. In 2025, the cruise line finally launched the river's first ever luxury cruise ship, after three years of collaborating with Colombia's communities and private and public sectors on the project.

My colleague Myles Stedman recently returned from a famil with Avalon Waterways, where he chatted with

for river cruising to grow.

**"YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY CRUISE-CURIOUS, AND RIVER CRUISE LINES CATER TO THEM WELL."**

president Pam Hoffee, who urged the wider industry to begin conversations around finding new ports.

"I think there are a lot of opportunities in Europe to go beyond the itineraries that exist and with so much more capacity coming, I think that's a reality of what we need to do as an industry," Hoffee told *Cruise Weekly*.

"There are communities that already have enough business from the river cruise industry and they're happy with what they have. We have to develop with communities that want to have river cruise ships coming, and there are tons of charming places that nobody's going to."

It is this kind of energy and sense of opportunity and innovation that is currently driving the thriving river cruise sector - and one that will see it reap plenty of benefits for the industry in the future. ••

**Jo-Anne Hui-Miller**  
Special Report Editor/  
Associate Publisher  
*Travel Daily & Cruise Weekly*





VIKING

# INDIA

*Viking's first river voyage in India*



TAJ MAHAL, INDIA

## NEW DEPARTURES RELEASED

Following the sell-out success of our new *Wonders of India* itinerary, we have released new departures across 2028 and 2029.

We will also welcome a second all veranda ship, *Viking Ganges*, sailing on India's Brahmaputra River from 2028. An identical sister ship to *Viking Brahmaputra*, *Viking Ganges* offers the same intimate onboard experience, hosting just 80 guests.

Built specifically for the Brahmaputra River and featuring the signature Scandinavian design for which we are known, our newest vessel the *Viking Ganges* along with the *Viking Brahmaputra* blend the elegance of our river fleet with regional influences.



## WONDERS OF INDIA

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### Under-35s cruise bookings up

Younger Australians are fuelling a growing appetite for cruise holidays over the next 12 months, according to new data from the Tourism & Transport Forum Australia. Around 44% of Aussies aged under 35 said they plan to book a cruise over the next year, a solid increase on the 35% recorded just two years ago. The younger demographic spurred the overall rise in cruise sentiment, with one in three Aussies now indicating a desire to take a cruise in 2026. While under 35s showed the biggest growth trajectory, interest also remains strong among 35- to 44-year-olds - a key demographic for families - with 42% mulling a cruise this year. This cohort was also found to be one of the most interested in booking a local cruise.



### Missed Something Recently?

If you've missed any of my recent blogs, you can catch up via the links below. I share longer-form stories, destination insights, and thoughtful travel reflections there.

### Holi in Vrindavan, India – A Journey Beyond Colour

### Is It Time to Travel Differently?

### Why Japan Captures the Hearts of Travellers Around the World

Never miss a blog, subscribe to have them delivered straight to your inbox

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### Soft Adventure Travel Tips - Choosing the Right Ryokan

#### 1. Choose the Experience You Want

Not all ryokan are the same. Some are traditional and simple, others are more luxurious. Decide if you want a cultural, authentic stay or a more comfort-led experience.

#### 2. Don't Skip the Kaiseki Dinner

The multi-course kaiseki meal is a highlight of staying in a ryokan. It's not just dinner, it's part of the experience and often the most memorable moment.

#### 3. Check the Onsen Style

Many ryokan have hot spring baths (onsen), but they vary, private vs shared, indoor vs outdoor. Choose what makes you feel most comfortable.

If this newsletter stirred something, a memory, a curiosity, or the sense that it might be time to plan a journey of your own, I'm always happy to help shape it. Thoughtfully planned, well connected, and designed around how you want to experience the world.

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