

CDC finally drops risk advisory for cruise travel

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) finally ended its travel advisory warning system for COVID-19 on cruise ships at the end of March.

The system had been in place for the past two years as a way to warn people about the risk of contracting COVID-19 while on a cruise. It now allows “travelers to make their own risk assessment when choosing to travel on a cruise ship, much like in all other travel settings” the CDC said in a statement to media.

The CDC still warns that cruise ship travelers should be up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines before cruise ship travel and follow their cruise ship's requirements and recommendations.

The CDC's voluntary COVID-19 program for cruise ships

remains in place and the agency will continue to publish a color-coded rating for conditions on some ships that opt into a tracking system, based on the percentage of passengers who are vaccinated and the number of coronavirus cases reported on board.

Even though most ships currently require passengers to be vaccinated and provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test before boarding, ships are still reporting COVID cases among passengers, although from most reports, these are generally mild or asymptomatic cases.

Cruise Lines International Association applauded the move. “Today’s decision by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to altogether remove the Travel Health Notice

for cruising recognizes the effective public health measures in place on cruise ships and begins to level the playing field, between cruise and similarly situated venues on land, for the first time since March 2020.”

The CLIA statement went on to say: “From the onset of the pandemic, CLIA’s cruise line members have prioritized the health and safety of their guests, crew, and the communities they visit and are sailing today with health measures in place that are unmatched by virtually any other commercial setting.”

The CDC has also issued a number of welcome changes to the *Technical Instructions for CDC’s COVID-19 Program for Cruise Ships Operating in U.S. Waters*.

According to CLIA, the March 14 updates acknowledge the “effectiveness of the cruise lines in their ability to create an environment that provides one of the highest levels of COVID-19 mitigation and reflect the improvements in the public health landscape.”

Among the highlights of the most recent changes, cruise ship operators may resume interactive experiences such as galley tours and cooking classes; they may also allow close contacts identified within 36 hours before disembarking to quarantine in their own cabin (if they will be the only person in the cabin); and modified port agreements, removing ship and capacity limits at ports.

Carnival Cruise Line sees its highest booking week ever as travel restrictions ease

Carnival Cruise Line reported on April 4 that the one-week period of March 28-April 3 was its busiest booking week in the company's history, showing a double-digit increase from the previous record 7-day booking total.

With 22 of its 23 ships back in guest operations across all its year-round U.S. homeports, Carnival has led the industry in terms of restart and customer demand. Its final ship, *Carnival Splendor*, will return to service from Seattle on May 2, and then Carnival will welcome its newest ship, *Carnival Celebration*, to PortMiami in November. By year-end 2022, Carnival will have more capacity sailing (as measured by ALBDs – available lower berth days) than it was sailing in 2019.

In 2023, Carnival will put into service another new Excel-class ship, *Carnival Jubilee* from Galveston.

“The excitement of the industry's restart, our successful return of

our entire fleet, the guest reaction to *Mardi Gras*, our loyal guest response to our 50th birthday this year, the support of our travel advisor partners — and of course, the amazing work of our Carnival team — have all contributed to the strong demand we are seeing, and this record-breaking booking week,” said Christine Duffy, president of Carnival Cruise Line.

Duffy added that all sales channels, including Carnival.com, travel advisors, the Carnival guest contact center and personal vacation planners contributed to the record-breaking results.

With the restart of cruising in Australia now set, Carnival is finalizing plans for its return in Australia and will be announcing those details soon.

Wall Street reacted positively to the Carnival news, and at one point on Tuesday, April 5th, Carnival stock was higher by 8.9%. The easing of COVID-19 restriction is proving to be a boon for the rest of



Carnival Cruise Line’s *Mardi Gras*. With 22 of its 23 ships back in operations across all 10 of its year-round U.S. homeports, Carnival Cruise Line reached a record-breaking booking milestone which coincides with the company's 50th birthday celebration.

the cruise industry too, not just Carnival. Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Line stock also rose higher, although all three stocks had dipped somewhat by the end of the trading day, and fell lower on the next day due to rising costs, according to some analysts.

Nevertheless, the overall trend appears to be steadily up.

Brown-Forman names a new head of GTR and reinforces its commitment to the channel



David Rodiek has been named Vice President, Managing Director, Global Travel Retail replacing Aude Bourdier, who becomes Vice President, Managing Director Brown-Forman France/BeLux.

Brown-Forman this week announced the appointment of David Rodiek as Vice President, Managing Director, Global Travel Retail (GTR) effective June 1, 2022. Rodiek replaces Aude Bourdier, who has been named Vice President, Managing Director, Brown-Forman France/BeLux.

"I would like to thank Aude who successfully led the Brown-Forman GTR division through the low points of the pandemic and the more uplifting recovery that is happening now. I feel optimistic about the opportunity ahead and the path that she and her team laid out," said Thomas Hinrichs, Senior Vice President, President, Emerging International, Brown-Forman. "Aude now moves on to an exciting new opportunity leading France and BeLux, key markets for Brown-Forman."

"The leadership change from Aude to David is done in the spirit of continuity with our strategy and plans for GTR, and it reinforces the commitment that we are making to the GTR channel and our customers for the long term. We are confident that we have the key strategies and initiatives in place to fully fuel that growth with David Rodiek at the helm," he continued.

Rodiek joined Brown-Forman in 2005 and most recently served as



Aude Bourdier takes a new role at B-F as VP/GM of France.BeLux.

Vice President, Managing Director, Developing Europe, where he led strategies to grow in the company's thirty European distributor markets. Rodiek gained leadership experience in commercial and marketing roles, including General Manager Southern/Eastern Europe; General Manager South Africa; Area Director Nordic/Baltics & Nordic Travel Retail; and Brand Director Finlandia Vodka CEE, Russia, CIS & MEA.

Prior to joining Brown-Forman, Rodiek worked in the spirits and consumer packaged goods industry at Unilever, Wella, Mars, and Bacardi. He studied in Germany and the UK, completing his education with a master's degree in business administration from INSEEC International Business School Bordeaux, France.

American Express Travel paints a bright picture for future of travel in its 2022 Global Travel Trends report

The American Express Travel: 2022 Global Travel Trends Report released in late March, paints a brighter picture for the future of travel. The report covers the latest trends shaping the industry backed by global survey data, American Express Travel proprietary booking data and insights from travel experts.

Spending on travel is outpacing pre-pandemic levels: 86% of respondents expect to spend more or the same on travel in 2022 compared to a typical year before the pandemic. Tourists also want to travel more frequently. In fact, 62% of respondents plan on taking 2-4 trips in 2022 and 76% of respondents agree they plan to travel more with family in 2022 than they did in 2021.

Looking at the motivations and considerations of travelers in Australia, Canada, Mexico, Japan, India, the UK and the U.S. as well as emerging trends shaping travel, the top themes to emerge were Impact Travel and Dream Destinations, and Experiential travel continues.

The Rise of Impact Travel- Highlights

- 78% of respondents want to have a positive impact on the community they are visiting
- 81% of respondents want to travel to destinations where they can immerse themselves into the local culture
- 81% of respondents want the money they spend while traveling to go back to the local community
- 81% of respondents want to have authentic experiences when traveling where they can meet and learn from locals
- 80% of respondents agree that in 2022 they want to be more thoughtful about the types of trips that they take and who they take them with

All Eyes on Dream Destinations - Highlights

- 49% of Millennials want to travel solo now to visit their dream destination
- 55% of respondents want to book a once-in-a-lifetime vacation in 2022, especially Millennials (67%) and GenZers (65%)
- 72% of respondents agree that the pandemic has made them appreciate lesser-known domestic travel destinations more than they used to
- 74% of respondents say they are willing to book a trip for 2022 even if they might have to cancel or modify it later
- 84% of respondents would like to visit destinations that have access to more than one scene (e.g., beach, city, mountain, desert, etc.)
- 65% of respondents would rather take their dream vacation than purchase a new car.

Experiential Travel will continue to develop, says American Express.

- 70% of respondents are interested in cultural immersion and taking a tour on an upcoming trip
- 56% of respondents held off on traveling for major entertainment events last year (e.g., concerts, sporting, cultural events), but have plans to return to these types of events this year.)
- 52% of respondents are interested in traveling for personal gatherings such as weddings, birthdays, graduations or holidays
- 38% of respondents are interested in traveling for cultural events
- 43% of respondents are interested in traveling for entertainment events

This Amex Trendex online poll was February 3-11th, 2022 among a national sample of 2,000 US and 1,000 travelers in Japan, Australia, Mexico, India, UK, and Canada with a household income of at least \$70K.

First cruise ship returns to Canada after two years

Holland America Line will be the first cruise line to return to Canadian cruising following a more than two year industrywide pause due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Holland America Line's *Koningsdam* will call at Victoria, British Columbia, Saturday, April 9, restarting the cruise industry in Canada. The following day the ship will end its current seven-day cruise at Port of Vancouver, its homeport for the summer Alaska season.

Koningsdam's call at Victoria marks 905 days since a cruise ship has visited the port, and it also will be a maiden call for the ship.

To mark the milestones, Gus Antorcha, president of Holland America Line and local government officials will be on hand in both Victoria and Vancouver to celebrate the return to Canadian cruising and address the importance Canada and Alaska to Holland America Line.

In 2022, six Holland America Line ships will call at Victoria and Vancouver for the Alaska cruise season. In total, the six ships will make 45 calls at Victoria and bring nearly 75,000 guests to the port, and 76 cruises begin or end at

Vancouver, welcoming approximately 140,000 guests.

For Canada and New England cruising on the East Coast, two ships return in May and cruise between Boston, Massachusetts, and Quebec City or Montreal, Quebec. *Nieuw Statendam* and *Zaandam* offer itineraries ranging from seven to 24 days to more than 12 Canadian ports.

In total for 2022, Holland America Line operates 141 cruises on eight ships in Canada with more than 250,000 guests visiting both coasts.

"We are thrilled to be the first cruise line back into Canada after such a long absence, and we look forward to celebrating a great moment for everyone who loves to travel and for those in Canada and Alaska whose livelihoods depend on tourism," said Gus Antorcha, president of Holland America Line. "Holland America Line has a robust schedule of cruises that explore Canadian ports on both coasts with Alaska, Hawaii, transatlantic and Canada and New England itineraries."



Holland America Line's *Koningsdam* will be the first ship to call in Canada in more than two years when it arrives in Victoria, BC on April 9, 2022.

Spirit Airlines to begin discussions with JetBlue Airways, but Frontier deal is still on the table

The drama around the consolidation of U.S. low-cost carrier Spirit Airlines with one of its rivals heats up as Spirit received a second bid in an unsolicited proposal from JetBlue Airways to acquire Spirit in an all-cash transaction for \$33.00 per share on April 5.

This is a higher bid than Spirit received from Frontier Airlines, which was announced on February 7, 2022. At that time, Spirit entered into a merger agreement with Frontier Group Holdings, Inc, parent company of Frontier Airlines, under which Spirit and Frontier would combine in a stock and cash transaction.

Under the terms of the merger agreement, Spirit equity holders would receive 1.9126 shares of

Frontier plus \$2.13 in cash for each existing Spirit share they own.

As of April 7, after consultation with the Company's outside financial and legal advisors, Spirit Airlines' board of directors announced that it would start discussions with JetBlue Airways over its offer, which is based in Miramar, South Florida.

The decision to start negotiations does not mean the company's merger agreement with Frontier Airlines is void, however. In a statement, the company said:

"Spirit remains bound by the terms of the merger agreement with Frontier, and Spirit's Board has not determined that JetBlue's proposal in fact constitutes a Superior

Proposal as defined in the merger agreement with Frontier. In addition, Spirit notes that there can be no assurance that the discussions with JetBlue will result in a transaction. Spirit shareholders do not need to take any action at this time, and Spirit's Board has made no change to its recommendation that its shareholders adopt the merger agreement with Frontier."

Should JetBlue win out over Frontier, both airlines would fly under the JetBlue brand and be based in New York City, according to local media reports.

Both deals are subject to customary closing conditions, including shareholder and regulatory approvals.

DFWC Academy Certificate Duty Free & Travel Retail

Pre-registration is now available for the Duty Free World Council Academy's new Certificate in Duty Free and Travel Retail. DFWC is offering a launch special 10% saving on all pre-registrations.

The engaging and content-rich course is designed for those wishing to develop their careers in the industry: retail sales professionals, individuals from brand and industry support agencies and organizations who are either new to the industry or wish to further deepen their knowledge, as well as commercial executives from the aviation, maritime and other duty-free and travel retail industry channels.

The development of the Certificate Course was guided by an Academic Advisory Group comprising representatives of leading industry retailers: ARI, Dubai Duty Free and Lagardère. Multi-category brand expertise is provided by representatives from Brown Forman, Duty Free Global, Imperial Brands plc., Lacoste, L'Oréal and Mondelez.

TFWA and the DFWC provided broader industry perspectives.

The Course examines long term and recent industry developments and benefits from the most up to date insights from industry research providers, Generation Research, mIndset, Pi Insights and Forward Keys, and is richly illustrated with images supplied by the Moodie Davitt Report.

The Course is delivered via the ACI World Online Learning Center. Available 24/7, the certificate allows students to take steer their career development at their own pace and provides insights on sales-driven strategies that deliver exceptional customer experiences.

To use the special preregistration offer: Follow this [link](https://www.olc.aero/cart/) (<https://www.olc.aero/cart/>) Apply the promo code DFWCA10 Click 'Checkout' and enter your enrolment details. On the day of course launch, your e-learning account will be sent to you. For corporate registrations, cpntact: gerard.murray@dfworldcouncil.com



Summit of the Americas gains momentum

It is just a few days now until the travel retail industry celebrates the first in-person gathering of 2022, when the IAADFS Summit of the Americas takes place in Palm Beach, Florida. The opening cocktail will take place on Sunday evening, and the Association has put together a relevant program of education sessions throughout the two days of the event, which takes on a new, abbreviated hybrid structure in light of COVID.

TMI hears of more people who will be attending the show every day, looking to take advantage of the many networking opportunities available. And, due to demand, the Association opened additional space for exhibitors, as well as setting aside areas for networking.

Meanwhile, here are just a few of the highlights that attendees should be sure to visit:

Worldclassbrands.

Lenny DiCrisofano and his partner, Martin Lovatt of Magnify Brands, return to the show with a full assortment of watches and jewelry that are proving successful in travel retail. Worldclassbrands is also introducing two new categories with unique and relevant offerings, Beauty & Wellness (including a men's makeup line, biodegradable face treatment masks, UV detectors, and more) and Eyewear/Sustainability, with Formula 1 sunglasses and electronics with the highest sustainability rating in the industry. See them at Stand 250.

Wella/OPI. OPI will be making one of its first appearances in travel retail since it became part of the new Well Group of companies. One star of the new portfolio is a line of all natural products. Well-known Liz Taylor of Premier Global Trading is working with the brand for travel retail. See them at Stand 201.

CITRA. Bart Collins' distribution company has some interesting unique new products in four categories, from Forceflex Eye ware, which is used by many US military personnel to Hylux low sugar flavored Vitamin Water that comes in a Blue bottle made of aluminum, and is 98% recyclable. CITRA is showing at 202.

The liquor companies are making a strong showing and major confectionery companies **Mars Wrigley, Mondelez World Travel Retail, Nestle ITR and The Hershey Company** will be on hand. Make sure to stop by the **Tito's Handmade Vodka bar** as well.

And don't forget to check the schedule for the workshop sessions. See you in Palm Beach!



MONARQ Group signs distribution partnership with Uncle Nearest

Uncle Nearest, Inc. and MONARQ Group are pleased to announce they have entered into an exclusive regional distribution agreement for Mexico, the Caribbean markets and USA Duty Free.

Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey honors the world's first-known African American master distiller, Nearest Green. The portfolio is the Most-Awarded American Whiskey or Bourbon of 2019, 2020 and 2021, with over 380 awards and accolades since the brand's 2017 launch, including 46 Best in Class honors.

"We are pleased to have a like-

minded distribution partner for this part of the world," said Katharine Jerkens, Chief Business Officer for Uncle Nearest, Inc. "MONARQ has a proven track record of building premium alcoholic beverage brands in this diverse region, and we are looking forward to joining forces to introduce Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey and the legacy of Nearest Green to even more drinkers around the globe."

Robert de Monchy, founder and Managing Director of MONARQ Group, added: "The Uncle Nearest brand is a wonderful addition to our portfolio of leading premium alcoholic beverage brands.

"The history of Uncle Nearest is truly amazing and the brand coincides perfectly with our business strategy, building distinctive premium drinks brands across the region. We are very much looking forward to working closely with the Uncle Nearest team and to achieve our mutual expectations."

Uncle Nearest is currently available in all 50 states and 12 countries, and is sold in more than 25,000 stores, bars, hotels, restaurants, as well as at its 323-acre distillery in Shelbyville, Tenn.

MONARQ will be exhibiting in suite 1H at Summit of the Americas.



Tairo International

has an immediate opening for an

AREA MANAGER

Job Description:

Your responsibilities include, but not limited to:

Working with marketing to plan and executing visual merchandising initiatives; training and working with sales staff; monthly sales reporting and analysis; forecasting; maintaining promotion calendar including store level events; assist field in opening of new doors, etc.

Minimum Qualifications:

- bachelor's degree in business or related field
- Minimum 2 years' experience in a TR sales position
- Ability to travel 50% of the time

Required Skill Sets

- Project Ownership; relentless attention to detail; speed in execution; passion for the brands; analytics; ability to organize and prioritize workload; excellent verbal and written communication, organizational, multi-tasking, attention to detail, and problem-solving skills.
- Also: Proficiency with Outlook; proficiency in Excel/PowerPoint/Word; Strong presentation skills; Fluent English & Spanish written and spoken; Ability to travel.

Salary:

- Pay commensurate with skill set and relevant experience level.

- Job Type: Full-time

Benefits: Full scope of excellent benefits

Please send resumes to:
Rosane Garcia at
Rosane@tairo.com

Epeexx Digital Virtual Retail Display: New technology for Cruise and Travel Retail

Katherine Sleipnes of IBBI (International Brand Builders Inc) and Ron Razzegi will be available at the Summit to talk about **epeexx**, their patent pending Digital Retail Display solution that offers a next level digital shopping experience with the convenience and ease of in-person retail browsing.

Epeexx is a full-service touch screen monitor (ranging from 42" to 65") that has the capability to display, sell, advertise and educate cruise and airport passengers on various product lines. It is designed to expand the retail hours and offer more brands onboard ships or at the airport or other travel retail stores with no risk to the retailer.

According to Razzegi, Founder/President of **epeexx**, the concept expands the shopping experience, allowing the customer to browse through a wide selection of options presented to them in a way that is more intuitive "Real and Visual" than the typical online experience.

"This is a solution where cruise and airport passengers can shop outside the store hours at their leisure, when the ship is stopped at the port or after Duty Free shops closing hours at airports, and in airline lounges. It offers more options and products without the worry and trouble of physically carrying those products/bottles through the airports," said Razzegi.

"Epeexx is launching the travel retail version in Fall 2022 and currently testing with select retailers," said Sleipnes, who is Travel Retail Director for the new company.

The system is completely self-sufficient, requiring zero maintenance and upkeep with no needs for an attendant in order to operate, she tells *TMI*.

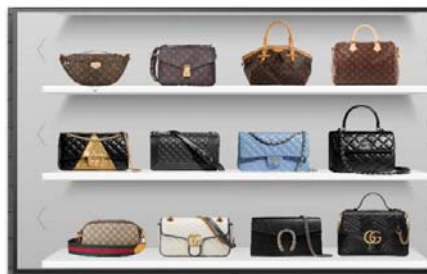
It also allows retailers to sell products while the ship is at port or outside of duty free shops hours at the airport. Because it requires no added inventory on the part of the retailer, it enables them to carry a broader selection of products.

"As a digital ordering system, passengers buying good from the **epeexx** system avoid the hassle of carrying purchases home from a

trip and enjoy fresh and authentic products conveniently and professionally shipped directly to their home," she adds.

"**epeexx** is a 21st century virtual retail game changer! We are first to market' nothing like this is currently offered (Patent Pending)," said Razzegi.

To learn more about the new system, contact Sleipnes at 954-557 8638 or Razzegi at 1-833-epeexx 0 (1 833 373 3990)



Mockups of the epeexx digital monitor onboard cruise ships, or in downtown shops selling high-end designer handbags to perfumes in all sizes and frequencies. Products shown are for display only.

UK glow brand ICONIC London launches in the Americas Region, and TR through IBBI

International Brand Builders Inc. (IBBI) announces that it is partnering with UK-brand **ICONIC** London, a beauty brand that is best known for its glow-giving products.

After successful launches in Sephora and Ulta in the U.S. and Canada, the six-year-old brand will be expanding into LATM with launches planned in Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, among others in 2022, as well as Travel Retail Americas through IBBI.

With its innovative and unique formulas and luxe gold packaging, **ICONIC** London has a strong following from professional makeup artists, celebrities, and influencers and 2 million combined social media followers.

Star products in the **ICONIC** London makeup portfolio start with the best-selling Illuminator and Prep-Set-Glow and its hybrid skincare/makeup heroes include Radiance Booster (dewy skin tint with hydrating properties) and Lip Plumping Glosses.

Prices range from \$26-\$62 and all the products are Vegan and Cruelty Free.

