

EUROPE

TEQ EU

18 March Update

- The nationwide lock down in Germany now also affects retail travel agencies which had to close their offices.
- European travel associations push for more flexibility regarding the very strong European travel law for wholesale tour operator cancellation policies. Italy could be an example here: the government allowed to issue vouchers for cancelled trips instead of cash.
- Based on today's ATE cancellation, all participants of our 4 VIP pre ATE famils from pan-european markets were informed that the program is unfortunately postponed. The respective product managers expressed great understanding and hope for a new invite in the new fiscal year. The same applies for our 2 agents famils with Boomerang Reisen, unfortunately. We are in touch with their management to determine an alternative opportunity as soon as this crisis situation allows.
- The TEQ Europe team will participate in a "digital forum" around COVID-19 and impacts/strategies of tourism tomorrow, organised by the German Travel Association. We want to understand the bigger picture and use this data and information when applying our activities responding to the crisis.
- In Germany officials report that by now 50% of all employees work from home.

And finally some good news:

- The Italian TA office has scheduled a webinar for this Friday with 200 travel agents registered ... this amazing result shows the huge interest and demand for training the trade.
- As we are preparing our social media awareness strategy, pls help us with great story hooks, awesome images and video footage so we can feed this into our communications calender over the next couple weeks and start to paint a more promising picture.

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17 March Europe Update Corona Crisis

EUROPE has now shut down. Borders are closed. Some airlines are fully grounded. France, Italy, Spain and Austria have released an exit ban (widespread containment measures) where people are only allowed to leave their homes to do grocery shopping or go to the chemist or gas station.

The German government is warning to travel abroad for tourism/leisure reasons. Increasing difficulty returning home, strict international quarantine measures and limitations in all aspects of public life are

However, the good news are:

- We commenced working on an a dedicated awareness and inspiration strategy for social media in our hero market Germany – we create a virtual roadtrip for QLD destinations along the GBR and ANC. Day by day we will create posts highlighting the must-dos and hidden gems in Queensland which are most appealing to our target audiences.
- Another goal is to be well prepared for the time after the crisis. So we started working on a communications strategy of quirky story hooks. We want to help shape long term consumer desire to visit Queensland. As soon as our pan-european media is willing again to report about tourism destinations and travel experiences, we will commence our intensified press release program to stipulate the European market.
- Furthermore we look into opportunities to conduct frequent webinars with our key distribution partners. As soon as the crisis allows, we want to be first in market to prominently train the trade on our Australian Sunshine State of Queensland. We work hand in hand with TA to schedule both education formats. This will be done on pan-European bases. If possible, we will conduct two training opportunities with trade from France (2 April) and Nordic (21 April).
- We identified a potential alternative date for our indig culture group press fam to TNQ, which SQ unfortunately cancelled: 5-15 November 2020
- We supported TA in their efforts to re-schedule their Australia On Tour Roadshows in Germany, Italy and Nordic for fall 2020.

You can help us by providing us with great story ideas, quirky images --- anything aspirational which will create positive attention and engagement! Thanks a million for your support!!!

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16 March Europe Update Corona Crisis

- European Commission will push for a travel ban from non-EU nationals into the Schengen free travel area for at least 30 days that can be extended "as necessary".
- The German government has implemented a shutdown of most shops in Germany, similar to Italy and Austria as it toughens up its response to the coronavirus pandemic. The government also stipulated that hotels should no longer offer overnight accommodation "for touristic purposes". Restaurants will only be allowed to stay open till 6pm.
- Almost all major European wholesale tour operators are cancelling their travel programs for the next 3-4 weeks. FTI cancels until end of March. TUI cancels even until further notice.
- European travel law indicates that tour operators are obliged to pay back all deposits to their clients if they have to cancel their clients journeys. A pandemic is not catered for by insurances so European operators bound by EU law need to cover the cost that they have to reimburse to their customers while they do not get reimbursed by Australian stakeholders.
- Consequently, BOTG has adjusted their cancellation policy within their contracts with suppliers:
 1. *Waiver of all cancellation costs for our guests in the event of an official travel warning and/or an entry ban to the final and/or transfer destination.*
 2. *Up to 14 days before the start of the trip, free rebooking to a later travel date within the next 18 months for all existing and new bookings.*
 3. *For all new bookings from 09.03.2020 to 30.06.2020 (booking date – travel date also beyond), free cancellation up to 30 days before the start of the trip.*
- Most of the Tourism Industry staff (TA, STOs; TOs, airlines) are working from home