



2011-12 season comes to an end

The last international ship in Australia, Royal Caribbean's *Rhapsody of the Seas*, departed Sydney this morning.

RHAPSODY WRAPPED UP THE SUCCESSFUL SUMMER of sailing, ending her biggest ever season in the region.

In her fourth consecutive season based in Australia, *Rhapsody of the Seas* saw an increase of approximately 30% more passengers (more than 40,000) on the previous season.



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As the most frequent ship to visit Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal, *Rhapsody* completed 18 cruises and visited more than 40 ports of call.

"We offered our broadest ever range of destinations, including a return to South Pacific Island cruising, and we received a great response from our satisfied guests," said Adam Armstrong, commercial manager, RCC Australia.

"The success of this season reflects the growth and strength of the local cruise market, and these conditions have made us confident and excited about the coming season, where *Rhapsody* will be joined by *Radiance of the Seas*, Australia's largest and newest ship, making her debut in Sydney this Oct."

During the past six months, *Rhapsody* hosted over 4000 travel agents across Australia and New Zealand as part of a record-breaking ship inspection program.

The ship also welcomed her 100,000th cruiser down under.

Other special moments included five Camp Quality charity events and the first themed charter cruise from Aust, 'Blue Suede Cruise'.

The next local cruise season commences in October 2011.

Music and Compagnie

FRENCH CRUISE LINE, COMPAGNIE DU PONANT HAS announced it will host three musical cruises onboard its newest vessels *L'Austral* (which debuts this month) between Sep and Oct 2011.

Included in the line-up is an eight-day operatic journey titled 'Et vogue l'Opéra' from Venice to Athens departing on 13 Sep, and including performances from a host of opera stars (from \$4,183ppts).

Next up is the eight-day orchestral adventure 'Budapest Gypsy Symphony Orchestra' from Athens to Istanbul on 04 Oct, and including performances from leading violinists and cymbalists (from \$3,413ppts); followed by an 11-day symphony cruise from Marseille to Barcelona on 19 Oct with performances from 13 internationally renowned classical musicians (from \$4,500ppts).

For details see www.traveltheworld.com.au.

Cruise lines call on agents

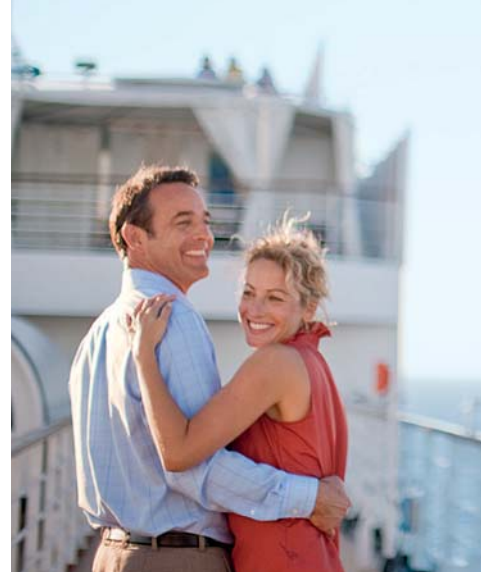
NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE IS REMINDING AGENTS that time is running out to take advantage of its super special Hawaiian cruise deals, see **page five** for details.

MEANWHILE MSC Cruises is encouraging agents to throw their support behind it in its bid to become Best Cruise Operator (International) at the 2011 AFTA awards- see **page six**.

TODAY'S CRUISE WEEKLY

Welcome to today's **Cruise Weekly** Trade edition featuring four pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from NCL (p5) and a full page from MSC (p6).

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Cruising the world

The recent launch of our 2010 reports on passengers from the Australian and New Zealand markets has certainly caused a stir with just about everyone who is close to the industry falling short on their prediction for what the end result was going to be.

With 466,692 Australians and 42,886 New Zealanders taking a cruise holiday in 2010 this region is officially the fastest growing cruise source market in the world – growth that every person reading this publication will have played a part in – well done!

With consumer awareness of cruising also growing, the launch of the latest cruise passenger statistics will play a valuable part in attracting even more potential cruisers looking to discover what all the fuss is about!

For our trade partners, the figures also provide a benchmark to assess their own performance.

In doing this you need to keep in mind that the growth is based on passenger numbers, not revenue.

Copies of the statistics reports are available from the ICCA website.

For Australia www.cruising.org.au and for NZ www.cruising.org.nz - then click on ICCA News on the left hand side.

As this issue of *Cruise Weekly* hits your inbox I will be joined by a group of ICCA retail members in Florida at Cruise3sixty.

This is the world's largest cruise conference dedicated to the retail trade and is an annual event that attracts thousands of cruise focused travel consultants from all over the world.

Next week's column will include a wrap up of this exciting event.



Brett Jardine
Brett Jardine
General Manager
ICCA

Costa grows revenue and pax

The Italian line has reported growth of 12% in consolidated revenues and almost 17% in passenger days.

COSTA CROCIERE GROUP, COMPRISING COSTA Cruises, AIDA Cruises and Iberocruceiros, adopted the 2010 financial statements at the recent general meeting of shareholders.

Consolidated revenues reached just under AU\$4 billion (2.88 billion euros), up 12.1% from the previous fiscal year (2.57 billion euros).

Passenger numbers rose 18% to 2.15 million, compared to 1.82 million in 2009, and the ship occupancy rate was 105%.

Passenger days were also up 16.7% at approximately 17 million.

"The results obtained by our company last year are quite outstanding, especially given the difficult economic situation we were operating in," said chairman and ceo Pier Luigi Foschi.

Costa's latest growth has reconfirmed its position as the leading cruise line in Europe, Foschi added.

"In terms of total guests, the increase was almost double that of the European cruise industry as a whole," he said.

Fuel savings were also improved 3.1% per guest compared to FY 2009, with a consequent reduction in the amount of emissions produced.

The group emphasised its energy-saving measures on its recent ships, including the use of silicone-based coatings for the ship's hull; LED light bulbs; water flow reducers in bathrooms; and key-card holders that only turn on electricity in cabins when occupied devices can only be turned on when the cabin is occupied; and on all the faucets and showers, thus reducing shipboard water consumption.

Costa Crociere has 25 ships in service, with five new ships due for delivery by 2013.

Costa Favolosa debuts in July.

Hawaiian Celebrity

CELEBRITY CENTURY, CELEBRITY MILLENNIUM, *Celebrity Solstice* and *Celebrity Infinity* have all been scheduled by Celebrity Cruises to host the cruise line's 2012-13 Hawaii, Panama Canal and South America seasonal voyages.

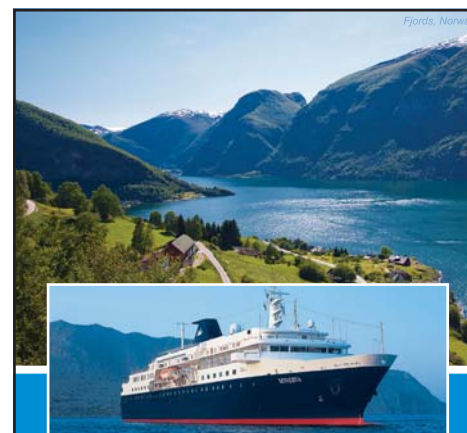
Between them the vessels will depart on 29 sailings ranging in length from 11- to 17-nights, calling at a combined total of 42 ports.

Celebrity Century will offer eight 15-night roundtrip Hawaiian voyages out of San Diego as well as four 15-night Panama Canal cruises between San Diego and Fort Lauderdale.

Meanwhile *Millennium* will offer two 15-night Panama Canal adventures between San Diego and Miami, as well as an 11-night Hawaiian voyage from Esenada, Mexico, to Honolulu; whilst *Solstice*, hot off her first Aust/NZ season, will feature an 11-night Hawaii sailing from Honolulu to Esenada (both *Millennium* and *Solstice's* 11-night Hawaii voyages feature an overnight in Lahaina and Honolulu).

Lastly *Infinity* will host one 17-night and four 15-night Panama Canal voyages between Fort Lauderdale and San Diego, as well as a series of 14-night 'Around the Horn' cruises between Valparaiso and Buenos Aires (two of which will be Antarctica cruises), a 15-night 'Double Holiday' voyage from Valparaiso to Buenos Aires and an early season 15-night Panama canal and South America cruise from Fort Lauderdale to Valparaiso.

For details visit www.celebritycruises.com.



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Follow Princess' drydock

CRUISE FANS HAVE BEEN GRANTED ACCESS TO *Grand Princess'* drydock transformation, via the launch of a daily video journal.

Hosted by *Grand Princess'* cruise director, Martyn Moss, the diary will chronicle the 24-day drydock with daily updates until 04 May.

The ship's transformation is taking place at the Grand Bahama Shipyard in Freeport, Bahamas, and involves around 1,400 workers who will install new features including a Piazza atrium (complete with the International Cafe and Vines Bar).

New features will also include a Leaves Tea Lounge and Library for patrons to read whilst they enjoy a tea blend, as well as a new nightclub One5, Alfredo's pizzeria and the line's signature Crown Grill.

The renovation will also see the removal of the iconic Skywalkers Nightclub (a move which Princess says will improve the ship's operational performance), as well as the addition of seven new suites, a remodeled casino and art gallery, and enhancements to the Horizon Court, Lotus Spa and chapel.

Grand Princess is scheduled to return to service on 05 May in Fort Lauderdale where she will embark on a transatlantic crossing before arriving in her northern summer homeport of Southampton.

See www.princess.com/granddrydock.

Fiji goes gangbusters for Captain Cook Cruises

LAST WEEK CRUISE WEEKLY WAS ABLE TO SNATCH Captain Cook Cruises' executive director, Jackie Charlton, from her full dance card at ATE to have a chat about the success of the cruise line's latest Fiji release.

"The new Fiji program is doing really well," she said, adding that Australian and Kiwi cruisers have shown a lot of interest in the new product and itinerary offerings.

"The response to our new one bedroom Tabua suites has been good," she said, elaborating that the addition of separate bedroom and lounge areas has proved to be a very popular selling point for travel agents.

The larger suites are also drawing significant interest from overseas guests, according to Charlton.

In terms of the Captain's Murray River cruising program, Charlton confirmed that last month was the "biggest March since 2002".

The mega month also saw the Captain score itself its biggest ever percentage of international guests.

Charlton in part credited the increase in international interest to regular sales trips to Europe aimed at breaching the EU market.



Jackie at the CCC ATE stand

True North guest list

NORTH STAR CRUISES HAS LINED UP AN IMPRESSIVE guest list for its 2011 *True North* sailings including landscape artist Jacinta Bayne (Apr), art teacher Mark Norval (late Apr), pianist Sarah McKenzie (May), bronze sculptor Linda Klarfeld (Aug), and musician Phil Ceberano.

Ms AmaVerde launch

APT HAS LAUNCHED ITS SECOND CONCERTO CLASS vessel, the 161-passenger *ms AmaVerde*.

Combining the popular attributes of APT's Aria Class ships with revolutionary twin balcony suites, *ms AmaVerde* is now scheduled to sail the popular 15-day itinerary between Budapest and Amsterdam.

For more details see next Tue's **CW**.

EASTER SPECIAL

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<p><i>Mediterranean Rhapsody</i> October 15, 2011 14 day voyage onboard Insignia Istanbul, Kavalla/Philippi (Greece), Ephesus (Kusadasi), Rhodes, Santorini, Taormina (Sicily), Amalfi/Positano, Rome (Civitavecchia), Florence/Pisa/Tuscany (Livorno), Monte Carlo, Provence (Marseille), Barcelona</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0e68c;">FROM \$4,690 PER GUEST</p>	<p><i>Legacies of Antiquity</i> October 21, 2011 12 day voyage onboard Marina Rome (Civitavecchia), Florence/Pisa/Tuscany (Livorno), Bonifacio (Corsica), Cagliari (Sardinia), Sorrento/Capri, Palermo (Sicily), Valletta, Athens (Piraeus), Volos, Ephesus (Kusadasi), Istanbul</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0e68c;">FROM \$3,965 PER GUEST</p>	<p><i>Splendid Escapes</i> October 25, 2011 10 day voyage onboard Nautica Rome (Civitavecchia), Monte Carlo, Florence/Pisa/Tuscany (Livorno), Olbia/Porto Cervo (Sardinia), Amalfi/Positano, Taormina (Sicily), Katakolon, Nauplion, Ephesus (Kusadasi), Athens</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0e68c;">FROM \$3,220 PER GUEST</p>	<p><i>Venetian Radiance</i> October 29, 2011 14 day voyage onboard Insignia Barcelona, Provence (Marseille), Monte Carlo, Portofino, Florence/Pisa/Tuscany (Livorno), Sorrento/Capri, Rome (Civitavecchia), Amalfi/Positano, Taormina (Sicily), Corfu, Bari, Dubrovnik, Venice</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #f0e68c;">FROM \$4,690 PER GUEST</p>
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Costa Favolosa itinerary

COSTA CRUISES HAS RELEASED DETAILS OF COSTA Favolosa's inaugural season, which will kick-off on 04 Jul with her three-day debut Vernissage voyage from Venice.

In the northern summer the 15th member of the Costa fleet, Favolosa, will offer eight-day Mediterranean cruises before heading to Dubai where she will homeport for a series of eight-day 'Arabian Nights' voyages during the northern winter season 2011/12.

Built entirely in Italy, the 3,800-guest 114,000-tonne Favolosa features interior design by architect Joseph Farcus, who drew his inspiration from world's masterpieces, grand palaces and museums.

Onboard highlights include an art collection of over 6,000 pieces, as well two outdoor lidos and an open-air Acqua Park water playground.

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MSC Yacht Club deal

PASSENGERS WHO BOOK A SUITE IN MSC CRUISES' Yacht Club prior to 31 May will receive a \$1,000 per couple credit towards their airfare to Europe.

The deal is applicable on a selection of MSC Fantasia and MSC Splendida Mediterranean voyages which depart between Sep - Dec 2011.

Fares start from \$2,189ppts for a week-long roundtrip Splendida voyage from Genoa departing on 17 Dec and calling at Barcelona, Casablanca, Gibraltar and Marseille.

For details visit www.msccruises.com.au.

Agents discover Amabella



A GROUP OF LUCKY AGENTS WERE RECENTLY hosted onboard the Concerto Class *ms Amabella* by APT from Nuremburg to Budapest.

Whilst on their river adventure the Aussie agents enjoyed a Freedom of Choice Tour to the ancient UNESCO World Heritage listed Czech city of Cesky Krumlov, as well as a leisurely bike ride from Melk to Durnstein, and a fascinating medieval tour of Bratislava.

Pictured above dressed for dinner on *Amabella* (front row from left) is: Robyn Charlesworth, Jetset Travel Port Macquarie; Renetta Coutman, Travelworld Tamworth and Jessica Segota, APT; (middle row from left) Sandra Cahill, APT Business Development Manager NSW/ACT; Anne Sheinbar, Travelworld Hornsby; Andrew Wellington, Travelworld Coffs Harbour; Karen Conlon, State Manager NSW/ACT Jetset Travelworld and Cathy Schroder, Jetset Southlands; and (back row from left) Greg Higginbottom, Travelworld Raymond Terrace and Voytek Lasek, Travel by Design.



SINKING ISLAND?

Developers of the man-made collection of islands titled 'The World' in Dubai, have hit back at claims their watery archipelago is sinking, saying the problem is just "minor erosion".

The accusations, made by Penguin Marine who worked for the developers of The World, include the claim that the 300 islands are "gradually falling back into the sea".

The developers however have said that the erosion currently occurring would result in no more than minor un-noticeable changes to the shapes of the islands.

DON'T SMOKE ON SHIPS.

A Court in Bermuda has fined a cruise passenger, John Molinari, US\$3,000 for possession of marijuana whilst on a port call to the Island nation.

According to reports the wacky weed was discovered rolled up in cigarettes in Molinari's cabin safe by Bermuda customs officials and their sniffer dogs.

COUGARS ON CRUISES.

Royal Caribbean is preparing to let a pack of cougars loose onboard *Liberty of the Seas* this week, as part of 4th international Cougar Cruise organised by Singles Travel Company.

The five-day Apr 16-21 voyage sails from Barcelona around the Mediterranean and includes extras like co-ordinated single get-togethers, dancing and socialising every night within the Singles group and room-mate matching.

GOING ON A CRUISE WOULD HELP GAIN WEIGHT.

Donna Simpson (pictured below) has set her sights on the prestigious goal of becoming the world's heaviest woman.

To achieve her goal the 274kg Simpson eats around 49,200kjs per day, often eating 70 pieces of sushi in one sitting.

Simpson however is always looking for new ways to pack on the pounds, and CW suggests the all you can eat buffets hosted by cruises may be just the ticket!



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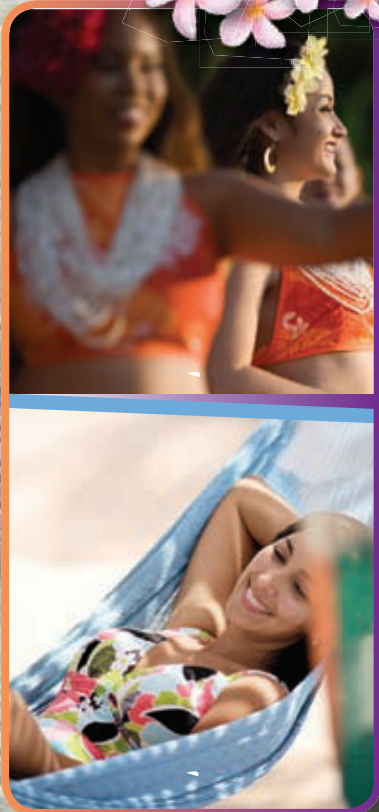


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