



Cruise fares increasing, says RCC

The greater number of ships in Australia will not lead to a fall in prices, according to Royal Caribbean.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN LAST WEEK ANNOUNCED FULL

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details of its biggest-ever Australasian season in 2012-13, which includes the arrival of Australia's first megaliner, *Voyager of the Seas*, and the return of *Radiance of the Seas* and *Rhapsody of the Seas*.

In the same season, the company's upmarket sister brand, Celebrity Cruises, will also base *Celebrity Solstice* in Sydney for the first time.

The four ships have a combined capacity of almost 11,000 passengers, to be filled almost every week, compared to 2,435 passengers last season when only *Rhapsody* was homeported here.

But this fivefold increase in supply is unlikely to cause fares to drop, Adam Armstrong, commercial manager, RCC Australia, told **CW**.

"Our experience in 2011 is that prices have increased, despite Royal Caribbean and Celebrity each adding a ship to the market," he said.

"Generally, Australians already pay lower prices for cruises than they do elsewhere in the world, and as the quality of ships improves down under, then we would actually expect pricing to increase."

Armstrong said "late deals" may be offered on some cruises, but booking early was the best way to save.

"For summer 2012-13 we have reduced our launch pricing by up to 10% to reward and encourage early bookers; however, discounts will then be reduced as cruises fill," he said.

Earlybird savings of up to \$1000 per person off brochure fares are available until 30 Dec 2011.

These special fares start at \$295pp for a one-night sampler cruise, \$975 for a seven-night Tasmania cruise, and \$1,795 for a 14-night NZ cruise on *Voyager of the Seas*.

Voyager kicks off its first Australian season in Sydney on 23 Nov 2012, offering 12 cruises.

Rhapsody and *Radiance* will return in mid-Oct 2012.

Discuss this story at



TODAY'S CRUISE WEEKLY

Welcome to today's **Cruise Weekly** Trade edition featuring four pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

Welcome baby onboard

HAPAG-LLOYD CRUISES IS TAKING CARE OF PARENTS travelling with babies and toddlers with its new Baby Welcome Package.

Completely free of charge, the package is available from 20 Jul onboard *Europa* and includes baby care products such as nappies, lotion, baby food, bibs and changing mats.

The initiative allows parents to pre-order their personal Baby Welcome Package by filling in an order form (which allows for size and quantity selection) prior to departure.

Parents can also request to have items such as a baby-phone, Maxi-Cosi, baby travel cot, high chair and infant bath tub installed in their cabin prior to embarkation.

In addition fares onboard *Europa* for youth are really competitive, with children up to three-years of age who are sharing a cabin with their parents or grandparents free of charge, whilst the rate for children aged between four to 15 is €65 per night (approximately AU\$85 per night).

For more info see www.hl-cruises.com.



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A visit to Scandinavia is not complete without experiencing the magnificent and world famous fjords of Norway.

A unique landscape complete with iridescent glaciers, deafening waterfalls, secluded gorges and endless days.

This is an area that is part of the rugged and generally inaccessible west coast of Norway ideally explored by cruise ship.

A fjord is a work of art in its own right, formed when the glaciers retreated and valleys left behind were flooded by the oceans.

Norwegian fjords are generally quite narrow but very deep with steep cliffs and numerous waterfalls created by melting snow.

At more than 1,300 metres below sea level, Sognefjord is not only the longest but also Norway's deepest.

Given the depth, this is an area that is easily navigated by ships of all sizes allowing passengers to experience the beauty at close range.

Two of the most popular fjords in Norway are Naeroyfjord and Geiranger – both included on the UNESCO World Heritage list and referred to by National Geographic magazine as part of the best unspoiled travel destination in the world.

Gudvangen and Geiranger, the two innermost villages of these two fjords are among the most popular cruise ship ports.

A range of shore excursions can be experienced in Norway – from outdoor activities to culture and Viking heritage, this is an area that will attract a variety of potential clientele.



Brett Jardine

Brett Jardine
General Manager
ICCA

CCC announces Renmark cruises

Captain Cook Cruises will operate two rare Murray River cruises this year.

SUITABLE RIVER CONDITIONS HAVE ENABLED CCC TO plan ahead for two seven-night Renmark cruises aboard the *PS Murray Princess*.

The first cruise will depart from Mannum on 02 Dec 2011 and the second cruise from Renmark on 09 Dec 2011.

The voyages pass through Portee Bar, Kingston On Murray, Cobdogla and Moorook, and passengers will visit Burk Salter Vineyard at Blanchetown, the Morgan Museum and the historic towns of Waikerie, Berri and Loxton.

Taking in over 420km of the Murray River, the experience includes five locks from Mannum to Renmark, near the Victorian/NSW border.

A Renmark cruise only occurs when the river conditions are right, according to CCC.

Following in the trail of 19th-century pioneers, the *Murray Princess* will negotiate massive sandbars, hidden reefs and submerged forests on a journey that has taken months to prepare.

Prices start from \$1599pp/ts and include accommodation, all meals, guided nature

Silhouette's Godmother

CELEBRITY CRUISES HAS FAVOURED THE TRAVEL industry in its selection of Godmother for Celebrity Silhouette, Michelle Morgan, president and CEO of Signature Travel Network.

"We are thrilled and honored to have a woman of Michelle's caliber serve as Godmother of this exceptional ship," said Richard D. Fain, Chairman of Celebrity Cruises.

"Her achievements in business are remarkable, and her personal life is as inspiring as her professional life," he added.

Morgan will preside over *Silhouette's* christening, in Hamburg, Germany, on 21 Jul.

walks and eco-excursions, onboard presentations, use of ship's facilities, the captain's dinner and cocktail party, live entertainment, coach transfers from Adelaide or car parking in Mannum.

See www.captaincook.com.au for details.

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Cruising Consultants - Queensland Stores

Cruiseabout is on the lookout for a fun-loving and team-oriented Cruising Consultants to join their vibrant Queensland teams, with positions available in Brisbane, Noosa and regional areas.

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Thai river cruise launch

HOLIDAYMAKERS CAN NOW ENJOY A DIFFERENT perspective on Thailand, via travel on the nation's vast array of waterways, canals and rivers, courtesy of the newly launched Anantara Cruises.

Described as the lifeline of Thailand, the country's waterways provide a unique insight into the history, culture and everyday life of the nation.

Anantara's fleet includes two fully restored one hundred year old teak rice barges, *Anantara Song* (accommodates up to four couples) and *Anantara Dream* (accommodates up to two couples).

Featuring old-world charm coupled with modern comforts the duo host a selection of one- and two-night itineraries.

Prices start from \$2,144 per cabin for a two-night *Anantara Song* Adventure, including all meals, non-alcoholic drinks, touring, an English speaking guide and admission fees, as well as private roundtrip limo transfers.

For more details see next Tue's **CW** and visit www.bangkok-cruises.anantara.com.



MYSTERIES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

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Agents get app-y with Complete Cruise Solution



demonstrating and explaining its features including access to the image libraries and videos, and how to take advantage of the calendar featuring a list of all upcoming cruise itineraries and departures, maps and pricing guides.

The team from Cruisemart Nundah is pictured above learning about the app (from left) Helen McMullen, Rachael Moore and Jennifer Bishop from Cruisemart with Complete Cruise Solution's Helen Mezzzen.

COMPLETE CRUISE SOLUTION'S SALES teams hit the streets recently, armed with iPads and a determination to help agents understand P&O Cruise's new brochure app.

The iPad app, launched last month and so far has been a huge success, with P&O reporting hundreds of downloads by both consumers and travel agents.

During their agency calls, the CCS sales team members gave agents a crash course in the new app,

Extra room service cost

THIS MONTH NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE WILL START charging a \$3.95 surcharge for room service orders taken between midnight and 5am onboard its eight US based ships.

The policy will be rolled out to its European based *Norwegian Jade* and *Norwegian Sun* in Aug.

Russian river tragedy

AS MANY AS ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY PEOPLE are believed to be dead, after the two-deck Russian river ship *Bulgaria* sank in around ten minutes, 3km off the shore of the Volga River in Tatarstan, Russia, during a storm on 10 Jul.

According to reports at the time of its sinking the *Bulgaria* was carrying between 188 and 209 passengers and crew (including some unregistered guests), 79 of which survived the disaster with the aid of another river cruiser, *Arabella*.

So far sixty-six bodies have been recovered from the wreck, which is lying 20 metres on the bottom of the Volga.

This week a criminal case has been opened against senior staff members of ArgoRechTur, which operated the 56-year old *Bulgaria*, and Yakov Ivashov of the Kama branch of the Russian Register of River Vessels.

Charges include rendering unsafe/inferior services that led to the death of two or more persons due to negligence, and have a maximum penalty of ten years imprisonment.

According to local media, ArgoRechTur failed to meet security requirements onboard *Bulgaria* which had a maximum capacity of 140 people, but was carrying far more, and had a malfunctioning engine, and according to prosecutors did not have a passenger licence.

Charges have also been laid against the captains of two cargo ships, the *Arbat* and *Dunaisky 66*, which did not stop to provide assistance to passengers who were calling for help as *Bulgaria* went down.

Russia's president, Dmitry Medvedev has also called for a full review of all of the country's registered passenger vessels.

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Safari in Hawaii

AMERICAN SAFARI CRUISES HAS EXPANDED ITS 2011/12 cruise catalogue to include new itineraries in the Hawaiian Islands.

Commencing in Nov, the 36-pax *Safari Explorer* will sail new seven- and 10-night inter-island itineraries between Maui and Hawaii taking in Maui, Moloka'i, Lana'i, Molokini and the Big Island.

See www.americansafaracruises.com.

Rugby cruise discounts

IN A BID TO DRAW IN FAMILIES PLANNING TO TRAVEL to NZ for the rugby World Cup, Adventure World has launched a father/son package onboard *ms Volendam*, priced from \$3,499 per adult, with half price fares for children.

The package includes six-nights cruising departing 10 October 2011, Category B match tickets to quarter-finals one and three, a one way airfare from Wellington to Sydney, Rugby coaching clinic for kids of all ages, and all meals and entertainment onboard. Call 1300 412 568.

AUSTRALIA & THE INDONESIAN ISLANDS

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Cruise from Sydney to Singapore and along the way discover all that tropical Queensland has on offer. Darwin is the gateway to the untouched wilderness of UNESCO listed Kakadu National Park while Singapore, a melting pot of cultures, offers some of the most intriguing cuisine in the world.

Includes airport/ship transfers, meals, entertainment, port taxes, fuel supplement, government fees & gratuities.

Voyages of Discovery

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www.voyagesofdiscovery.com

Princess connects guests

GUESTS TRAVELLING ONBOARD PRINCESS CRUISES fleet of vessels will be able to connect with each other before and after their cruise via a new Princess Roll Call section on the company's Facebook page.

The Roll Call section was installed at the request of site visitors and guests, and is organised by ship and date.

Once in their specific Roll Call section, guests can chat with fellow cruisers, ask questions and make plans pre-cruise, and can keep in touch and share stories with fellow pax post-cruise.

Upcoming sailings in Dec 2011 are currently available in the system - see, www.facebook.com/PrincessCruises

Crystal's marketing gun

CRYSTAL CRUISES HAS APPOINTED JACK ANDERSON as its new senior vice president of marketing and sales, effective immediately.

In his new role, Anderson will oversee Crystal Cruises worldwide marketing, sales and PR efforts.

Anderson comes to the role with 30 years of cruise industry experience, having most recently held the position of senior vice president, worldwide marketing, sales and public relations at The Yachts of Seabourn.

Return of Stena Express

EUROPEAN FERRY GIANT, STENA LINE, HAS announced the return of the *Stena Express* Fastcraft to the Fishguard, Wales, to Rosslare, Ireland, route between now and 04 Sep.

Catering for 520 guests and 120 cars *Stena Express* was enlisted on the route to cope with heavy summer demand.

Russian prices released

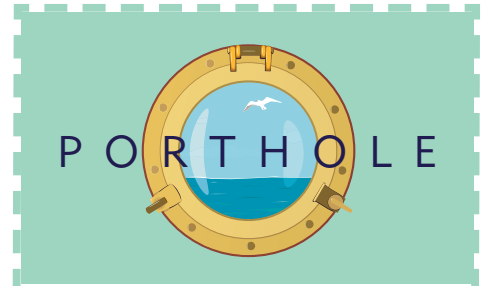
2012 PRICING IS NOW OUT FOR RUSSIAN WATERWAY cruises onboard the motor ship *Furmanov*.

The type 302 vessel underwent a renovation in 2011, and from May to Sep 2012 will feature 10 day itineraries from Moscow to St Petersburg as well as an 11 day itinerary from St Petersburg to Moscow.

Lower deck prices start from \$1,381pp twin share or \$1,275pp triple share and Boat deck suite prices start from \$3,186pp twin share.

Prices include accom, all onboard meals, Captain's Welcome Cocktail, gala farewell dinner and a sightseeing program.

See www.russian-gateway.com.au.



BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU LEAVE YOUR UTENSILS after eating in the vessel's buffet.

A woman in China has had a 6cm piece of chopstick removed from her eye socket after complaining of eye pain.

The woman, Ci Yang, contacted doctors in Chengdu, to try to find the cause for her persistent swollen red eye.

Doctors gave Ci a CAT scan and discovered a 6cm object in the right corner of her eye.

Immediately after the scan surgeons operated and removed the chopstick.

Later it was discovered that the utensil got into her eye 11 years ago after she slipped and hit her head on the table, causing what was thought to be temporary eye damage, which cleared up with anti-inflammation medication.

According to Cy, since then her eye flared up periodically but was calmed with anti-inflammatory drugs.

Doctors have since told her that she was lucky that the chopstick lodged in the gap between her eye and her socket, otherwise she would be blind.

Successful caring

CRYSTAL CRUISES'S FREE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES for guests, launched at the beginning of the year, have proved very successful.

"We've already seen incredibly positive ripple effects in peoples' lives, and we can't wait to continue our efforts through the year," said Thomas Mazloum, senior vice president operations.

Billed as a way to give back to local communities, whilst providing an alternative to traditional shore excursions, upcoming volunteer experiences include preparing vital winter items for homeless/low-income children, from schoolbags to warm coats and shoes in Boston; helping out in a kitchen of a housing community that assists less-fortunate locals and resettling refugees in New Brunswick; and feeding, cleaning, and/or walking stray animals in Antigua.

Cruise Weekly Australia/New Zealand

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