



## Orion II dumped from 2013 program

Orion Expedition Cruises' troublesome second vessel will be returned to its owners in Nov – but a replacement is on the horizon.

**RELEASING** its 2013 Calendar of Sailings this week, Orion has revealed that it will not be renewing its lease of *Orion II*.

Citing problems with the ship, the company's managing director Sarina Bratton said: "We have not been satisfied with some performance aspects, such as the fuel efficiency of the vessel, and therefore have decided to return the ship at the completion of the first charter term".

Bratton said she hoped to make an announcement regarding another vessel "soon", but it was unlikely to operate in 2013.

"We have managed to accumulate a great deal of local knowledge and pioneered some remarkable remote destinations across Asia through investments in resource, time and money – this knowledge will see us return as soon as possible," she said.

"In the meantime it is very much business as usual."

All scheduled 2012 *Orion II* voyages will go ahead, Bratton confirmed.

"But we do not anticipate having a replacement vessel in Asia during 2013, so if planning to visit these destinations, then 2012 is the year to do this," she said.

*Orion II* voyages for the balance of 2012 include expeditions to the Yangtze Delta (Kobe to Shanghai) and Shanghai to Tawau (Yangtze, Taiwan, Philippines), Java and the temples of Borobudur.

The original *Orion* will continue to offer voyages in 2013, in Antarctica, the Kimberley, Papua New Guinea, Melanesia, Borneo, New Zealand and the sub Antarctic Islands, with itineraries ranging from five to 20 nights.

There will be 15 opportunities for the 10-night Kimberley voyages (still to include a Bungle Bungle sightseeing flight for all clients), while other one-off expeditions are set to explore the Solomons and the Forgotten and Spice Islands of the Indonesian archipelago.

Prior to general release, the new inventory will be made exclusively to Orion's past guests until 30 Mar 2012.

2013 pricing has increased by an average 3%, but advance purchase options are available, with savings of up to 40% off published prices.

Additional incentives are offered for back-to-back voyages, see [www.orionexpeditions.com](http://www.orionexpeditions.com).

## Le Boat opens up 2013

**DUE** to unprecedented demand for self-driving cruise boats in 2012, Le Boat has opened sales for 2013.

Discussing the move, Le Boat's Mark Windsor, said the company also opened 2013 sales to avoid disappointing customers who may not have been able to secure 2012 reservations.

To sweeten the deal, Le Boat is offering all 2013 boats at 2012 prices (until the 2013 brochure is released), as well as 10% earlybird discounts on its 4 Anchor Boats, 12% discounts on its 3 Anchor boats and 15% discounts on its 2 Anchor boats, see [www.leboat.com.au](http://www.leboat.com.au).

## TODAY'S ISSUE OF CW

Today's trade issue of *Cruise Weekly* features four pages of cruise news and photos.

## Costa's public aftermath

**A RECENT** online survey by the internet's largest opinion-based community, [SodaHead.com](http://SodaHead.com), designed to gauge public feelings towards cruising in the wake of the *Costa Concordia* tragedy and the *Costa Allegra* fire, has found that 47% of people are less likely to cruise based on these incidents.

This represents a 20% jump in those not willing to cruise since SodaHead's last cruise perception survey two months ago.

Interestingly, the age of the respondent played a factor in the results, with those over 65 being more reticent to cruise now (65%) than their younger counterparts aged between 25 and 34 (31%).

## A&K cruise business booming

**ABERCROMBIE & Kent's** cruise business is the company's fastest growing segment, according to its managing director, Sujata Raman.

Speaking in the wake of *Queen Mary 2's* visit to Melbourne, where Abercrombie & Kent looked after a number of sightseeing tours for close to 500 of the vessel's passengers, Raman said that in order to appeal to the well-traveled cruiser, and in light of the vast increase in the number of visiting cruise ships and the number of Australian ports hosting them, the company is now "constantly developing new and innovative product".

"A&K has identified the desire for cruise passengers to experience more than the city their ship docks in," a statement from the company said.

"This has seen A&K moving away from the traditional 'panoramic' tour to offer instead regional visits and longer overland experiences which deliver a deeper experience of Australia," the company added.



## EXPLORE SOUTHERN FRANCE WITH VIKING RIVER CRUISES

PORTRAITS OF SOUTHERN FRANCE  
CHALON TO AVIGNON  
8 DAYS / 6 GUIDED TOURS / 1 COUNTRY  
**FROM \$3,049 PER PERSON, TWIN SHARE\***

Call Viking at 1800 829 138.  
Visit [www.vikingrivercruises.com.au](http://www.vikingrivercruises.com.au)



THE WORLD'S LEADING RIVER CRUISE LINE...BY FAR®

\*Conditions: Price listed in Australian dollars and valid on 2012 sailings only. Must book and pay in full by 18 March 2012. Discounts combinable with Past Passenger Discount and valid for new bookings only. Price is based on 5, 12, 19 Aug 12 departure in Cat E stateroom. Visit [www.vikingrivercruises.com.au](http://www.vikingrivercruises.com.au) for full booking conditions.

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 08 March 2012

## JOB OF THE WEEK

- National Account Manager - Sydney  
- Cruise Wholesaler - Up to \$100K

Call 02 8705 5428 to apply  
or visit: [www.candmrecruitment.com.au](http://www.candmrecruitment.com.au)



The Travel Recruitment Specialists



## ICCA UPDATE

ICCA General Manager,  
Brett Jardine

### Consumer Survey

As part of our efforts to gain a greater understanding into facts and figures and consumer trends around the Australia and New Zealand cruise industry, we have recently launched an online cruise survey.

In conjunction with the launch of our new look website, the survey is only twelve questions and takes less than one minute to complete.

Areas of interest to us as an industry include:- age demographics, state of origin, cruise history, where people research their cruise options, where bookings are made, booking lead times, average spend and desired destinations.

This information will then be used to assist our members with future marketing efforts, will assist the retail trade in benchmarking their business against an industry standard and provide the ICCA with valuable information over time that will assist in growing further awareness of cruising through the media.

The survey is 100% anonymous and no personal data is asked for or maintained by ICCA in any way.

Your assistance in directing clients to this survey would be of enormous value to the ICCA, your cruise industry association, so if possible, please alert your clients to our quest for data.

A link to the survey can be found from the centre of our home page  
[www.cruising.org.au](http://www.cruising.org.au)  
– click on the survey icon.



## Concorde relaunches with JTG

Concorde Agency Network's Smart Cruises has been revamped to push a stronger focus on international cruise packaging.

**AUSTRALIA'S** largest independent professional travel buying group, CAN, has released its first-ever cruise catalogue and a new Smart Cruises website that creates a "one-stop shop" for its 410 agents.

For the first time, the program will allow agents to book international cruises, flights, accommodation and tours through the one supplier.

"We previously had an older version of Smart Cruises which was just a re-batch of Seven Oceans' product but we saw greater opportunities with our in-house supplier so we will now package it all out through JTG Cruise Holidays," CAN spokesman Nick Pearson told **CW**.

"We're pushing international cruise packaging, making it easier for our agents to add on pre- and post-cruise product, with all the information at their fingertips."

Pearson said the group had been "slow to jump on the cruising boom" and this initiative would bring it in line with the market.

"We didn't have enough focus on cruising in the past, and although all the information was on the website, the packaging component wasn't there so we needed to help our network of agents to access all the ship and cabin information, to be able to sell cruises more easily, and to put the right clients on the right ship," he said.

The updated Smart Cruises site contains additional product and is launching with earlybird savings of 40% on select Asia Pacific cruises and up to \$1500pp off some European

and Asian river cruises.

The CAN cruise catalogue, the first in the company's 20-year history, also lists cruise packages exclusive to Concorde agents.

Pearson said he hoped that the greater range of product and backing by a new supplier would drive cruise sales.

"Without a doubt, cruising has grown as a percentage of our business, and in the past three years it's been in line with the market, but I'd like to see it get more traction and keep growing over the next year," he said.

### Uniworld new in Italy

**NEXT** year Uniworld will offer cruising on Italy's Po River and the Venice Lagoon, exposing guests to the wonders of Venice, Florence and Rome.

Two itineraries are featured in the Italian line up, including a new 13-day Splendors of Italy cruise/tour from Venice to Rome, taking in Venice for three days, before travelling to Serravalle (Ravenna); Polesella (Bologna); Polesella (Verona), Chioggia; and back to Venice where guests will disembark for touring in Florence and Rome.

The second new itinerary, titled Venice and the Po River, follows the exact same route as the 13-day voyage, cruising roundtrip from Venice for eight days, spending three days in Venice, before travelling to Serravalle (Ravenna); Polesella (Bologna), Chioggia; and Polesella (Verona), before returning to Venice for two days.

The Splendors of Italy itinerary and the Venice and Po River itinerary will both kick-off next year on 07 Apr, with the last sailing scheduled to depart on 10 Nov.

The voyages will take place onboard Uniworld's the newly remodeled *River Countess*.

 The Cruising Specialists

### Cruising Specialists - Rose Bay, Mosman, Mona Vale & Lane Cove

Cruiseabout has an amazing opportunity for hard-working, fun-loving and team-oriented Cruise Specialists to join their vibrant Rose Bay, Mosman, Mona Vale & Lane Cove teams.

Contribute significantly to the growth of an organisation that is truly going places, in the fastest growing tourism sector. With a focus on developing a cohesive team culture, there is plenty of room for career progression for those go-getters who are hungry for success.

Enjoy a competitive remuneration package, as well as fantastic awards and recognition!

<http://applynow.com.au/jobF146279>

## Carnival changes *Destiny* for *Sunshine*

Carnival Cruise Lines has unveiled an ambitious project to transform its 15 year-old *Carnival Destiny* into *Carnival Sunshine* in 2013.

**COSTING** a whopping US\$155 million, the project will commence with 49-day drydock at the Fincantieri shipyard in Italy scheduled to kick-off in Feb next year, which will see *Destiny* transformed into *Sunshine*.

The major overhaul will include the installation of several of the line's 'Fun Ship 2.0' dining, bar and entertainment features, and will see the vessel's layout reconfigured, the addition of a partial deck, as well as the expansion of two other decks within the ship's forward section.

*Sunshine* will also be fitted with 182 new

cabins, and new public areas including: the first three-level Serenity adults-only retreat, a SportSquare open-air recreation complex, a WaterWorks 'splashtastic' top-deck attraction, and Carnival's Seaside Theatre which will offer guests a selection of nightly 'Dive in Movies'.

*Sunshine* will also be fitted with a new tropical-themed Havana Bar, a full-service restaurant inspired by the line's Mongolian wok venues, a new elegant Sunshine Bar, a new Cigar Bar, a new Comfort Kitchen eatery and a newly designed coffee bar.

Carnival will also add fleet favorites such as Guy's Burger Joint, RedFrog Pub, BlueIguana Cantina, Cucina del Capitano, Alchemy Bar, EA Sports Bar and The Library Bar, whilst *Destiny's* main dining rooms will also be completely renovated and all staterooms will be revamped with new tropical decor.

Following her transformation, *Sunshine* will sail Mediterranean itineraries in Europe from Apr to Oct 2013, before repositioning to New Orleans for year-round Caribbean voyages commencing in Nov.

For details see [www.traveltheworld.com.au](http://www.traveltheworld.com.au).



### P O R T H O L E

**EBAY** a cruise.

Princess Cruises is showing its charitable side by auctioning off a cabin on the inaugural 16 Jun 2013 sailing of *Royal Princess*.

The eBay auction, under the eBay Giving Works program, also offers cruise lovers the chance to make Princess Cruises history by becoming the very first passenger to book a cabin onboard *Royal Princess*.

All proceeds from the sale will go to the Princess Cruises Community Foundation, which supports causes around the globe.

To get the ball running, and give everyone hope of securing the spot, Princess opened the bidding at a mere \$1, with the prize including – a seven-day, four-port Iberia sailing from Southampton to Barcelona calling at Vigo, Lisbon, Gibraltar and Malaga, staying in Princess' new class of accommodation debuting on *Royal Princess*, a deluxe balcony stateroom.

"We don't open the books on *Royal Princess* until 15 March, but we know many passengers are eager to reserve their stateroom," said Princess' evp Jan Swartz,

"This auction will give someone the unique opportunity to be the very first passenger booked aboard the ship's maiden voyage while at the same time supporting the worldwide charities that benefit from the work of the Princess Cruises Community Foundation," she added.

Bidding closes on 12 March 2012, and is open to anyone in the world with an Ebay account.



WELCOME TO AUSTRALIA'S

# Flagship

## SALE

Hurry, ends soon!



**Last chance!**

**Book by 10 March\* and receive**

**US\$100 onboard credit\***

**Half price deposits\***

[\\*Click here for more](#)

### Cat to christen the *Riviera*

**OCEANIA** Cruises has selected American TV chef, Cat Cora, to christen its newest liner, *Riviera*, at a ceremony in Barcelona on 11 May.

Cora's resume includes stints on Iron Chef America, and she is soon to co-host a new TV show titled *Around the World in 80 plates*.

### Celebrity's free upgrades

**GUESTS** will be able to take advantage of Celebrity Cruises free double upgrade offer on six of *Celebrity Solstice's* maiden season Australian cruises, due to an extension of the offer by the cruise line.

The deal offers guests who book an interior cabin on selected *Solstice* sailings a "double upgrade" to a balcony cabin, if booked by 31 Mar 2012.

As an added incentive, the cruise line is also touting earlybird booking savings off several of the "double upgrade" cruises, including reductions of up to \$1,550 for *Solstice's* 17-night cruise from Perth to Sydney departing 15 Feb 2013.

Prices for the double upgrade cruises start at \$1,915 for a 12-night cruise from Sydney to Auckland in Mar 2013.

For more details visit Celebrity's website at [www.celebritycruises.com.au](http://www.celebritycruises.com.au).

### Book a theme to get credit

**AMERICAN** Safari Cruises is offering guests who book any one of six themed cruises onboard *Safari Endeavour* this year, a \$518 travel credit per couple (when booked between 01 Mar and 18 May).

Designed to celebrate the vessel's 18 May inauguration in Seattle this year, the promotion is available for the following week long cruises: 24 Jun, Among Giants with Flip Nicklin; 08 Jul, Found: John Muir's Alaska; 22 Jul, Seeing Beyond the Obvious; 29 Jul, Smooth Sailing-Smooth Jazz; 05 Aug, Travel Photography; and 19 Aug, Napa Valley Reds- Wine and Culinary. See [www.innerseadiscoveries.com](http://www.innerseadiscoveries.com).

## MSC for less than \$70 a night

MSC Cruises is offering a two-for-one deal on its 11-night 22 May 2012 *MSC Magnifica* sailing.

Priced from \$1,512 per couple (just under \$70 per guest per night), the cruise includes port calls in Bari, Tunis, Gibraltar, the Portuguese capital of Lisbon, Vigo in Spain and Zeebrugge in Belgium.

The price includes all onboard meals, entertainment, invitations to the Captain's Cocktail Party and gala dinners, use of the children's club (for families) and port charges.

See [www.msccruises.com.au](http://www.msccruises.com.au).

## Paul Gauguin announces 2013 sailings

Paul Gauguin is offering a sneak peek into what's instore next year, as it prepares to finalise plans for the 2013 season.

**THE** 2013 itinerary preview sees *Gauguin* sail voyages ranging from seven to 14-nights around Tahiti, Polynesia, Fiji and the South Seas, taking in destinations such as the Society Islands, Bora Bora, the Cook Islands and Moorea.

According to the preview itinerary, *Gauguin's*

2013 season will kick-off on 05 Jan with a seven-night Tahiti & Society Islands voyage, and will run until 28 Dec with the final 2013 cruise to be a seven night Tahiti & Society Islands Holiday.

Three additional itineraries are also featured in the year-round line-up including: an 11-night Cook Islands & Society Islands voyage; a 10-night Tuamotus & Society Islands cruise; and a 14-night Marquesas, Tuamotus & Society Islands adventure.

The cruise line also said it will host its popular new 11-night 'Chairman's cruise' titled Whale- Australs & Society Islands, on 21 Sep 2013 to coincide with prime viewing of humpback whales.

Although Paul Gauguin has said that it is still in the process of lining up special onboard guests for next year, it has confirmed that it has secured oceanographer and environmentalist Jean-Michel Cousteau, (creator of the *Gauguin's* Ambassadors of the Environment Youth Program), who will host lectures on his work, as well as several dives from the 332-passenger ship.

Special saving cruise fares for the 2013 season start at US\$3,134 for the seven-night Tahiti & Society Islands sailings.

The 2013 preview release follows *Gauguin's* multimillion dollar renovation in Jan, which included new furnishings and decor in all public areas, suites and staterooms; improved signage and lighting; an expanded casino; new dance floors; and a new integrated display case for books and art.

See [www.wiltrans.com.au](http://www.wiltrans.com.au) for details.

## QM2: The largest ship to ever berth at Sydney's OPT

**WEIGHING** in at a healthy 151,400-tons, Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* has made history this week, becoming the largest vessel to berth at Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal.

Arriving yesterday, *QM2* turned the heads of Sydneysiders as she stretched 345 metres along the waterfront of Circular Quay and rose 62 metres above the water line (just five metres short of the Sydney Opera House's highest point, and ten metres above the 52-metre navigational clearance for the Sydney Harbour Bridge road deck).

The call also marks the first time *QM2* has stayed overnight in Sydney, and is the final stop on her monumental 30-day Royal Circumnavigation of Australia.

*QM2's* overnight call was also a huge boon to Sydney, generating an estimated \$1m to the economy, with 1,900 guests pouring out into the city in the morning, followed by a further 1,900 in the afternoon.

Her stay at the OPT was made possible by the installation of a new anchoring point by the Sydney Ports Authority, which allows for the catering of larger ships at the OPT.

**MEANWHILE** Ann Sherry, CEO of Carnival Australia, used the event to push for an upgraded OPT, saying that "while *Queen Mary 2's* use of the Overseas Passenger Terminal adds a new chapter to Sydney's maritime



history, the harbour still needs a 'three berth solution' with one berth west of the bridge and two in the eastern harbour including shared use of Garden Island during peak periods".

"During the current cruise season, a number of cruise ships have had to moor mid harbour because they were too big to sail under the bridge and no suitable berth was available," she said.

"Having to be ferried ashore on tender vessels is not the welcome to Sydney international visitors would expect.

"*Queen Mary 2* at the Overseas Passenger Terminal provides a glimpse of the flexibility and growth that will result from Sydney Harbour having appropriate port facilities to support the industry's increasing economic contribution," she added.

## Silversea hopes to trim down

**SILVERSEA** is hoping to shave 3% off the fuel costs of *Silver Shadow* and *Silver Whisper's* long distance voyages via the installation of a real-time dynamic trim optimisation technology which continually measures the vessels' trim, and informs crew of the best trim to maximise fuel efficiency.

*Cruise Weekly* is Australia's favourite online cruising publication. In production since 2007, *Cruise Weekly* is published each Tuesday, with a further travel industry update each Thursday.

*Cruise Weekly* is free and is sent to subscribers via email as an Adobe Acrobat PDF document.

Sign up for a free subscription at [www.cruiseweekly.com.au](http://www.cruiseweekly.com.au).

PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710

Phone: 1300 799 220 Fax: 1300 799 221

**Publisher/Managing Editor:** Bruce Piper

**Editor:** Louise Goldsbury

**Assistant Editor:** Amanda Collins

**Contributors:** Roderick Eime, Chantel Long and Guy Dundas

Email: [info@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:info@cruiseweekly.com.au)

*Cruise Weekly* is part of the **CRUISE** WEEKLY Travel Daily Group:

**Advertising and Marketing:** Christie-Lee Lachance, Lisa Martin and Magda Herdzik  
Email: [advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au)

**Business Manager:** Jenny Piper

Email: [accounts@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accounts@traveldaily.com.au)



*Cruise Weekly* is a publication of *Cruise Weekly* Pty Ltd. All content fully protected by copyright. Please obtain written permission to reproduce any material. While every care has been taken in the preparation of *Cruise Weekly* no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions. Information is published in good faith to stimulate independent investigation of the matters canvassed. Responsibility for editorial comment is taken by Bruce Piper.