



Reindeer run sale end

ONBOARD credits of £200 and £50 reward gift cards for travel agents are still available through Hurtigruten's Reindeer Run Bonus Sale on selected 2014 Norway Classic Coastal Voyages by 28 Feb. Contact Discover the World Cruising for details - 1800 623 267.

Record month at MSC

MSC Cruises has reported a record high month of sales for the last 30 days, with more than 208,000 travellers making a booking on one of the line's ships. Among the most popular cruises booked were Caribbean, Northern Europe/Mediterranean and Baltic sailings aboard MSC ships *Divina* and *Lirica*.

Celebration of the Century

CELEBRITY Cruises has released more details about its upcoming deployment of *Celebrity Century* to Sydney for the ship's farewell southern summer season.

In addition to several new cruises never previously available, *Century* will also visit a number of Asian ports never before visited by the line.

A year of special offers and events have been planned by *Celebrity* to bring the curtains down on the 19-year old vessel.

The 1800-pax ship's deployment to Sydney marks the first time *Century* has been based in the NSW capital, with the ship to sail alongside sister *Celebrity Solstice*.

Century will offer *Celebrity's* first ever cruise combining Tropical Queensland with the South Pacific islands, as well as brand new Australian itineraries such as an eight-night South Australian cruise.

The ship leaves Sydney on a 14-night cruise to Singapore on 11 Jan 2015 to commence its last Southeast Asia program, which will include a newly introduced "President's 'Celebration of the Century' Cruise" with Michael Bayley, the company's president

and ceo, departing 08 Mar.

New Asia destinations include Manila and Boracay, Philippines; Bandar Seri Begawan (Muara), Brunei; and Yangon (Rangoon), Myanmar.

A special offer has also been released for the 22 Oct and 11 Nov departures from Sydney to South Australia, with fares from \$1,199pp for the 8-night sailing.

As part of *Celebrity's* 1,2,3 Go promotion, clients who book by 28 Feb 2014 receive a choice of either a free Classic Beverage package for two, free gratuities for two, or up to US\$200 onboard credit per stateroom.

All new bookings also receive an additional US\$50 credit per stateroom.

Fantasea day cruises

MARINE tourism operator Fantasea Adventure Cruising has launched two new day cruise experiences, taking passengers to historic Sydney highlights as well as to the famous Bondi Beach.

Both the Sydney Seven Wonders & The Bondi Boat tours are able to be booked via travel agents.

The six-hour Sydney Seven Wonders cruise takes guests to the site of Captain Cook's first landing, to the Royal National Park and more, including lunch in Bundeena before returning, and is priced from \$145 per adult.

Four packed pages

Today's issue of *TD Cruise Update* features four pages of all the latest cruise information.

AUCKLAND HOP ON, HOP OFF EXPLORER



The Auckland Hop On Hop Off Explorer bus stop is directly out front of the new Queens Wharf cruise ship terminal

[Click here for more details](#)

Pines tours cancelled

LOCAL land disputes at the site of the Natural Aquarium in the Isle of Pines have forced P&O Cruises to indefinitely cancel the operations of its Snorkel the Natural Aquarium shore excursion.

According to a passenger advice obtained by *TD Cruise Update*, the P&O notice says the popular site is "at the forefront of local land disputes".

Currently, this affects the line's nine-night Explore the Loyalty Islands sailing, departing 30 Apr aboard *Pacific Jewel*, however it is unclear how many other voyages have been affected by the issue.

P&O Cruises is discouraging pax from making their own way to the Natural Aquarium site until local land disputes have been resolved.



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Visit www.mycss.com.au for more information. Only open to AU & NZ registered travel agents aged 18+. Must take prize from 11/6/14 - 20/6/14. Ends 5pm AEDST 28/2/14. NSW Permit No. LTPS/13/09622, VIC Permit No. 13/2902, ACT Permit No. TP13/04454, SA Permit No. T13/2244. ^Flights/transfers to Japan not included



CRUISE NEWS & VIEWS

with Brett Jardine
GM, CLIA Australasia

Fitness at Sea

CRUISE lines are making waves with their fitness facilities, spas and wellness programs that today rival land-based hotels and resorts.

Whilst a number of cruise lines have claimed the largest, most elaborate (or best view) workout space at sea, the new benchmark in the fitness stakes is now markedly higher, with some lines forming partnerships with high-profile land-based fitness specialists.

This means guests can not only maintain their exercise routines whilst on board, they can also try out the latest fitness trends using the most advanced equipment.

Fitness classes have been a mainstay of cruising for many years - primarily to ease guilty consciences about those midnight dessert buffets!

However, today's classes at sea can keep even the most devoted fitness fanatic happy.

In many cases, cruise lines are introducing new, personally customised fitness programs that guests can undertake on board (under the guidance of a certified instructor) then take ashore to continue at home.

Guests that are devoted to pilates & yoga will find plenty of options on cruise ships today and to top this off, the spas on board also continue to evolve, further highlighting the focus on health and well-being whilst cruising.

I just hope writing and reading about on-board fitness is sufficient to keep those extra kilos away on my next cruise!



Agents predict price drop

THE consensus among Australia's leading cruise consultants is that fares will keep falling for the foreseeable future, according to a quick survey conducted by **TD Cruise Update**.

Jordan Dittloff, owner and manager of Ace Travel in Colac, Victoria, said: "Increased capacity and quality of capacity in the Australian and New Zealand cruise market will continue, forcing prices down through competition between newer cruise product such as Carnival and RCCL."

Diane Craig, CruiseManagers representative for Balgowlah, NSW, agreed that the industry's growth spurt would lead to further discounting.

"As there are more and more cruise ships being built all the time, it is natural that where cruise availability outpaces customer demand, then fares should go down," she said.

Judy Gillings, CruiseManagers representative for Bateau Bay NSW, believes pricing will remain "fairly steady" due to the high level of competition in the market.

"If a cruise company decides to bump up their prices then people will look for alternatives," she said.

John Gerken from Northside

Business Travel, acknowledged that overcapacity would continue to provide bargains, but he added: "Pricing cannot fall much further, and if the Australian dollar stays off then they will almost certainly go up."

"Keen cruisers often ask me to let them know when there is a good deal, but at the moment I just ask them to tell me where and when they want to go and in most cases, there is a great fare right here, right now," he said.

Cruise Master agents Robyn and Murray Sinfield said: "Pricing has never been so good. Even the drop in the US dollar to the Australian dollar has a little to no effect."

Cathi Burnett Cosgrove of Andrew Jones Travel in Hobart, seconded this theory.

"The dollar has been low in the past and I think Australians tend to take currency fluctuations in their stride. Clients simply seek value for their travel dollar."

Independence season

ROYAL Caribbean Int'l vessel *Independence of the Seas* will return to the Caribbean from its recent deployment in Europe for the 2015 summer, RCI has said.

WA river cruise expo

CLIA 2013 Agency of the Year Bicton Travel will host a dedicated river cruising, barge and boating holiday expo on 08 Mar.

The event will be held at Crown Perth, Great Eastern Highway, Burswood, from 10am - 4pm.

Representatives from 17 river cruise lines will be present at the show, with a variety of special offers, presentations and prize giveaways scheduled for the day.

Entry on the day will be free and for more details on the event, visit www.bictontravel.com.au.

CMV defends its ship

CRUISE & Maritime Voyages has staunchly defended its *Marco Polo* vessel against claims it was unseaworthy following a fatality caused by freak waves (**CU Tue**).

CMV said the vessel had been inspected by authorities just prior to its recent cruise season and given a green light to operate.

Jewels of Spain coast

WINDSTAR Cruises has released a new cruise package for golf fans wishing to combine a cruise with a few rounds of golf.

Sailing aboard *Wind Star*, the nine-day Splendours of Southern Spain golf package departs Lisbon, Portugal on 12 Sep 2014.

The cruise visits six Spanish ports en route to Barcelona, includes green fees for five rounds of golf, course transfers and more - phone 1300 857 437 for details.



Book a Hurtigruten 2014 Norway Classic Coastal Voyage with Discover the World Cruising and receive a \$50 Visa Gift Card and your clients receive GBP200 per cabin onboard credit.

Bookings must be made by 28 February and only the first 40 agents to book receive the Visa Gift Card!

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NCL praise Breakaway

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line chief executive officer Kevin Sheehan has lauded the addition of the new *Norwegian Breakaway* into its fleet, saying the boost has led to a 12.9% increase in revenues. Net yields were also up 4.3% due to higher fares and higher pax spending levels onboard. Sheehan said the launch of *Breakaway* would "undoubtedly be remembered as one of the seminal years in Norwegian's 47-year history".

A second ship in the class, *Norwegian Getaway*, was formally christened earlier this month (**CU** 13 Feb) in Miami.

Two more Breakaway class ships - *Escape & Bliss* - will join the fleet over the next three years.

Gauguin Aussie tours

PAUL Gauguin Cruises has released its collection of exotic shore excursions available to pax aboard three 14-night itineraries between Australia and Singapore. The sailing visits Thursday Island and Darwin, with pax able to visit the refurbished Torres Strait Museum and Green Hill Fort. Activities in Darwin include a Jumping Crocodile Cruise, a visit to the Crocodylus Park or a trip to the Litchfield National Park.

Tauck Godmothers

TAUCK has announced its first four female cruise directors will collectively act as Godmothers to its two new riverboats *MS Inspire* and *MS Savor*, launching this year.

Mixing spirits on Carnival Spirit



RARELY is the name of a cruise ship so appropriately in tune with an activity.

Carnival Cruise Lines' global vice president of beverage operations Eddie Allen is currently visiting Australia to learn more about the drinking habits and preferences of Australian cruise travellers.

The native Texan mixing-master this week invited a select group of media aboard *Carnival Spirit* in Sydney to introduce some of the creations Aussie cruisers are able to enjoy both on *Spirit* and sister vessel *Carnival Legend* - which cruises into Sydney this Sep.

Joining the occasion, Carnival Cruise Lines' vice-president Australia Jennifer Vandekreeke told **Cruise Update** drink menus would be aligned on both ships.

Allen shook and stirred a pair of concoctions (pictured below) which are sure to become raging favourites with Aussie passengers.

The two drinks sampled on the day - Cucumber Surprise and a Spicy Pineapple Martini - are soon



to be introduced to the ships and expected to price around \$10.50 - more than worthwhile as both would cost approx \$17 on land.

Allen said he believed there

was a fine art in the making of a quality cocktail, both in the showmanship but also in the presentation and in ensuring the right balance is maintained with the ingredients, as it was easy to spoil a drink with too much of a particular inclusion.

"Beverage is my passion" said the 18-year industry veteran, who holds an advanced diploma from the American Sommelier Association.

Allen's drink design pedigree is extensive - he has crafted menus in some of the world's most glamorous restaurants, bars and nightclubs in cities including Las Vegas, Miami and New York City.

He paid glowing tribute to Australia's wine industry, praising the quality labels coming from wine regions all over the country, adding that wine was such a big part of the Australian culture.

In addition to studying Australia's cruise ship drinking styles, Allen said he was also here to refine drink menus as part of *Legend's* 'Aussification'.

Eddie Allen and Jennifer Vandekreeke are pictured above aboard *Carnival Spirit*.

For more photos from the event, **CLICK HERE.**



Abercrombie & Kent

CRUISE EXPANSION – Melbourne and Sydney based roles

Here is an exciting opportunity to join the Inbound Cruise Division of the Australasian Head Office of international travel company, Abercrombie & Kent. With unprecedented growth in the Cruise sector we now have a number of opportunities based both in Sydney and Melbourne.

NSW Regional Supervisor (Sydney based)

The successful candidate for this role will display a mature attitude, be hands-on and able to work in a high pressure environment. You will have the ability to manage all aspects of a Turnaround Call from pre-planning, staffing and operations. Building relationships and attention to detail are essential, together with lateral and creative thinking with a passion for exceeding client expectation. Knowledge of the cruise industry is essential.

Administration Consultant, Land Programs (Melbourne based)

The successful candidate for this role will also display a mature attitude, be hands-on and able to work in a high pressure environment. Ability to handle the behind the scenes operational requirements of Turnaround Calls and attention to detail are a must.

These opportunities are well suited to self-motivated high achievers who enjoy working in a small team environment.

Email your CV to Anthony Brent at cruisejobs@akorndmc.com or send to Level 3, 290 Coventry Street, South Melbourne VIC 3205, by no later than Friday 28th February.



QM2 crew a cast of characters



Photo: James Morgan

DRAPED in the background by the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the 10th birthday of Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* was marked with a history-making photo taken on the ship's bow.

The world-first composite image was staged using more than 120 crew representing every service aspect available on the ship.

Celebrating all of the individual contributions each crew member makes to the successful operation of *QM2* was a key message behind the staging of the image.

Queen Mary 2 was launched in 2004 and made her first visit to Sydney three years later, with today's journey through the heads being the vessel's ninth.

The mega-liner's early morning arrival yesterday was its first visit to Sydney of the season by one of the three Cunard Queens, which is on its second circumnavigation of Australia which will see it visit seven ports over 23 nights.

Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Victoria* will also make their own visit to Sydney at

different stages of the season.

"Australia has become *Queen Mary 2*'s home away from home and I can't think of anywhere more special than Sydney to celebrate her tenth birthday and in such spectacular fashion," *QM2* Captain Kevin Oprey said.

A spectacular time-lapse video has been prepared showcasing the elaborate set up and staging of the momentous photo - to view, **CLICK HERE**.

Regent 2015 summer

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has released its schedule for the 2015 northern summer season, with 68 voyages to be offered.

The schedule features visits to 27 new ports for the line including Walvis Bay, Namibia; Almeria, Spain; Tyne, England; Izmir, Turkey and Malmo, Sweden.

Voyages in the Mediterranean, Alaska/Canada, Northern Europe and the Caribbean have all been scheduled to be operated by the 700-pax *Seven Seas Mariner*.

Malay sea destination

A **NEW** purpose-built luxury development being dubbed the "Asian Manhattan", has attracted financial backing from Royal Caribbean International.

The cruise line has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to assist in the development of a tourism destination to be built across three Malaysian islands, to be known as Melaka Gateway.

A cruise terminal will feature as part of the complex, which when completed by 2023, will also feature multiple hotels and attractions including theme parks, restaurants, museums & beaches.

Authenticity by Louis

GREEK cruise line Louis Cruises will operate a series of traditional Greek-themed cruises this year in a focus on delivering authentic local experiences to travellers.

The line will visit nine brand new island destinations including Milos, Samos, Kos and Syros as well as the more popular Rhodes, Santorini, Mykonos and more.

Sailings will look at Greek history including song, dance, mythology and some local customs that have been practiced for centuries.

Boosted shore tours

CRYSTAL Cruises has continued to expand its European portfolio of ports, adding nine destinations to its 2014 voyage selection.

New ports include Londonderry, Oban, Santander, Ibiza, Ferrol, Skagen, Galway, Alta, St Hellier / Jersey and many more.

Itineraries in the 2014 European range for Crystal Cruises vary from five to sixteen days in length.



FOR lovers of all things lobster, American Cruise Lines has announced it will again offer its lobster-theme on all Maine-coast cruises this season.

When too much lobster is not enough, dining options on the cruises will include lobster bake, and more peculiarly, lobster flavoured ice-cream.

Lobster boat excursions are an optional activity along with being able to ride along with the crew for their daily catch.

The sailings will be operated by the 49-pax *American Glory* and the 104-pax *Independence*.

Other items for lobster-lovers to enjoy are lobster tail, whole steamed lobster, lobster pot pie, lobster risotto, lobster omelettes and more.

Discounts on Volga II

EASTERN European wholesaler Beyond Travel has released its first itinerary for the newbuild Russian river cruise ship, *Volga Dream II* (**CU** 13 Feb).

Staterooms on a 13-day sailing from Moscow to St Petersburg are priced from \$4,840pts.

Sales are now open, with earlybird discounts available for bookings made before 30 Apr.

Beyond Travel marketing manager Bryce Crampton said the company was excited to be able to offer the forthcoming luxury vessel to the Australian market, with the new vessel to begin operations from next year.

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