

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Tuesday 23 Sept 2014

Massive issue today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news & photos.

Sip. Savour. Sail away.

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises has launched a new travel agent incentive, offering a luxury river cruise for the winner and a travel companion in Europe.

The winner will be the agent who makes the highest number of bookings for 2014 and 2015 departures deposited by 31 Oct, with an eight-night 'Bordeaux, Vineyards & Chateaux' cruise on the new S.S. *Catherine* awaiting.

Six bottles of Perrier-Jouet Belle Epoque french champagne will be awarded to a runner up and a \$500 Restaurants of Australia gift card for the agent in third place.

APT expo on the road

AGENTS are being encouraged to sign up their clients to attend one of a series of roadshows next month covering APT, Travelmarvel and Botanica itineraries.

The series will begin on 08 Oct at the Hilton Sydney, continuing to The Langham, Melbourne on 09 Oct; at the Rydges Southbank in Brisbane on 16 Oct and ending on 22 Oct at Crown Perth.

Destination information and product overviews will be on offer at each show, with all bookings made on the night referred back to travel agents - to register, visit www.aptouring.com.au/expo.

Legend-ary season begins

HUNDREDS of agents are today boarding *Carnival Legend* in Sydney Harbour for the "One Legend-ary Night" trade event before its first revenue cruise departs tomorrow evening.

Legend-themed costumes have been packed for the welcome ceremony, involving the ship's new Hasbro Game Show, which kicks off at 7pm after the sailaway.

Carnival Cruise Lines ceo Gerry Cahill and senior vice-president operations Mark Tamis have flown in from Miami to join the line's vice president Australia Jennifer Vandekreeke in celebrating the second CCL ship to call Australia home.

Tonight's special occasion follows yesterday's maiden arrival of *Carnival Legend*, which saw the biggest chorus at sea ringing in the beginning of Australia's biggest ever cruise season.

The Australian Girls Choir performed a medley of Aussie

tunes and the American and Australian national anthems, with 3000 guests & crew singing along.

Singing the praises of the "legendary" start to the wave season, Vandekreeke said Australians and New Zealanders had shown a great affinity for CCL since it deployed *Carnival Spirit* in 2012, with more than 190,000 pax carried on local cruises.

"It's because of this great fit that we decided it was time for an encore, bringing *Carnival Legend* out to join sister ship *Carnival Spirit*," she said.

Carnival Legend - which will offer 22 cruises from Sydney over the next seven months - is the first international ship to arrive in Australia for the 2014-15 summer season, set to feature a record flotilla of more than 35 different ships sailing making more than 600 calls to Australian ports, and injecting hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy.

CDU life membership

CRUISE Down Under founding member and recently retired Treasurer Glenn Stephens has been bestowed with honorary life membership of the organisation.

Nominated by Port of Melbourne Corporation, Stephens is only the second life membership recipient.

It's time for the **Royal Summer Clearance Sale**

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Keel laid on Escape

CONSTRUCTION has begun on what will become the largest ship in the Norwegian Cruise Line fleet - the 4200-pax *Norwegian Escape*. As part of the ceremony, ceo Kevin Sheehan laid the traditional "lucky coin" in the building dock. *Escape* will be ready in Oct 2015.

Contiki boosts cruise options

TWO new cruise and sailing options have been introduced to Contiki's European line-up in 2015/16, as the youth specialist recognises growth in the sector as showing no sign of abating.

The new island hopping offerings are both nine days in duration and set out from Athens with Contiki's Greek cruise partner, Celestyal Cruises.

Guests on 'Island Cruising and Santorini' sail to Mykonos, Crete, Patmos, Rhodes and Kusadasi in Turkey, spending three nights on

a cruise ship and five on the land, with the trip priced from \$1,843.

The 'Eastern Mediterranean' itinerary is more ship-bound, with seven nights spent on cruise ships while venturing to Samos, Milos, Syros, Cesme, Kos, Ios and other ports, priced from \$1,687.

Each voyage is accompanied by an experienced cruise rep.

Managing director Katrina Barry told **CW** last week that demand at Contiki for cruising was strong.

"We all know cruising is experiencing incredible growth across the mature age bracket, so our cruise boats are not quite as big and we've chosen something that is a lot more suited to our demographic."

"We already have eight itineraries cruising or sailing around the Greek Islands or the Turkish Coast & islands and we've seen so much demand - they always sell out," she told **CW**.

Barry said Contiki's cruise and sailing product has achieved "extremely high referral and NPS (Net Promoter Scores) rates, so we added two more".

The trips feature in Contiki's new Europe Summer brochure - **CLICK HERE** for more details.

Six of Lindblad's best

LINDBLAD Expeditions has launched a range of new voyages for 2015 sailing aboard *National Geographic Orion* and the *National Geographic Explorer*.

Six new expeditions will debut on *NG Orion*, with voyages from Palau to Bali and the Solomon Islands, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Tahiti and Easter Island, ranging in length from 10-17 days.

NG Explorer will operate largely in the Northern Hemisphere, with new voyages ranging from 8-19 days taking in the Azores, the British Isles, Morocco, Canada, Greenland and also visiting South America and the polar regions.

Colombia will be one of many destinations to be visited for the first time by *NG Explorer*, with guests on a journey through the Panama Canal to Peru to be joined by former Colombian president César Gaviria.

Cruise Calendar	
The Cruise Weekly cruise calendar details upcoming port calls of cruise ships at various destinations around Australia.	
SYDNEY	
<i>Carnival Legend</i>	23 Sep
<i>Carnival Legend</i>	24 Sep
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	25 Sep
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	28 Sep
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	28 Sep
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	29 Sep
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	27 Sep
<i>Sea Princess</i>	29 Sep
PORT DOUGLAS	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	24 Sep
YORKEYS KNOB	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	23 Sep
<i>Sea Princess</i>	26 Sep
DARWIN	
<i>Coral Princess</i>	26 Sep

Pandaw India branch

LUXURY expedition line Pandaw has launched a new eight-day itinerary in north-east India sailing on the Brahmaputra River aboard the 23-suite *MV Mahabaahu*, starting Mar 2015.

New pre and post-cruise stays in five star hotels in Delhi and Kolkata will also be available as part of the new product range.

MEANWHILE, Pandaw has said it will become the first expedition line to operate on the Red River in Vietnam, with a new 10-day cruise which also stops in Hanoi.

CRUISE TO THE MELBOURNE CUP ONBOARD CARNIVAL SPIRIT



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Just one click away from keeping up to date with all the *Cruise Weekly* breaking news as it comes to hand



Rousing Ovation for new vessel



TRADITIONAL keel laying formalities have taken place at the Meyer Werft Shipyard in Germany for the third and so far, final of Royal Caribbean's Quantum-class mega-liners.

The first block of *Ovation of the Seas* was lifted into the building dock late last week, with the ship due for completion in around two years from now.

Like its sister ships *Quantum of*

the Seas and *Anthem of the Seas*, *Ovation* will offer capacity for 4,180 passengers on twin share basis over its sixteen decks.

Along with Virtual Balconies in interior staterooms, the North Star capsule, indoor skydiving simulator RipCord by iFLY, bumper cars, robot bartenders and much more will all feature onboard.

Meyer Werft & Royal Caribbean executives are **pictured** above.

Future RCI ship labels

VANTAGE of the *Seas*, *Passion of the Seas* and *Pulse of the Seas* have been identified as possible future names for upcoming Royal Caribbean International vessels.

Only one more RCI ship, a third Oasis-class vessel, is currently confirmed for construction, according to the official RCI blog.

Aurora cruise to wild

AFRICA will become part of Aurora Expeditions' program in 2015, with a single 14-day African Cruise Safari itinerary on sale.

The central point of the itinerary is a three-night river cruise on the Chobe River aboard the *Zambezi Queen*, allowing opportunities for close wildlife viewing.

Elements of the tour will also take place aboard a bus and jeep with multiple safari excursions.

Two departures of the tour will be run, leaving from Cape Town on 16 Apr and 23 Apr, with a maximum 28 pax per departure and priced from \$7,990ppts.



WONDER if he reconsidered?

A loved-up man is seriously evaluating his decision to pop the question to his girlfriend aboard a paddleboat packed full of their friends and family.

According to the *Huffington Post*, the man named Shane surprised his love with a ring along with the question, helped by some mates on the shore in a carefully orchestrated event.

Unfortunately, in her obvious glee & excitement, the intended bride playfully hits him and accidentally knocks the ring into the water to everybody's shock.

Naturally she, along with her friends are stunned as he jumps into the shallow water to try and recover the precious stone.

Of course, a video of the event is doing the rounds on YouTube.

CLICK HERE to view the video.

New player in the Mekong

FRENCH company Mekong Cruises has appointed Melbourne-based Jane Basiuk to handle the growing level of inquiries from Australia.

According to the line, which operates cruises in Laos as well as a boutique resort in the World Heritage town of Luang Prabang, its 34-metre purpose-built barge is "luring record numbers from down under".

Basiuk, proprietor of Global Hotels and Marketing Australasia, described the cruise product and Luang Say Residence as "a wonderful addition" to her portfolio of properties in Thailand,

Malaysia, Indonesia and France.

To celebrate the appointment, the company has announced a 'stay three nights, pay for two' offer at the five-star resort, valid until the end of Nov.

Mekong Cruises offers two experiences on the river - a three-day Vat Phou cruise departing from Pakse, and a two-day or three-day Luang Say cruise from the Thai border, aimed at visitors in Thailand looking for easy access to Laos, with guests spending one night in a waterfront bungalow.

For more information, check out www.mekong-cruises.com.

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Viking debut on Seine

VIKING River Cruises longships will debut on France's Seine River next year with the *Viking Rinda* to operate the eight-day 'Paris and the Heart of Normandy' itinerary.

The journey from Paris to Rouen and return starts on 23 Mar 2015.

Boockvar in charge

CIRCLE Line Sightseeing Cruise operator New York Cruise Lines has appointed Daniel Boockvar as its new chief executive officer.

Ahead of the line's 70th birthday next year, Boockvar will continue to drive sales of Premium Class.

Win with Carnival Cruise Lines

Over the next few weeks *Cruise Weekly* and *Carnival Cruise Lines* are giving away a seven-night roundtrip cruise from Sydney to Melbourne for this year's **Emirates Melbourne Cup**. Departing Sydney on 2 Nov, the cruise includes accommodation for two people in a balcony stateroom, general admission and transfers to Flemington Racecourse, plus onboard meals, entertainment and activities.

During *Carnival Spirit's* inaugural **Melbourne Cup** cruise, guests can get into the racing spirit with sweepstakes, virtual betting and high tea on every sea day. Racing identity Richard Callander and stylists Campitelli Clarke will also be on hand to share race and style tips ahead of the event. *Carnival Spirit* will return to the Emirates Melbourne Cup next year on an eight-night cruise departing Sydney on 30 Oct, 2015.

The subscriber with the most correct answers to all of the questions and the most creative answer to the final question will win.

Send your entries to: carnivalcomp@cruiseweekly.com.au



Q3: How many passenger decks are there on *Carnival Spirit*?



Solomons eye Cairns cruise hub



A CRUISE hub in Cairns may prove to be the catalyst for new cruise itineraries incorporating the Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands Ports Authority director of corporate services Glyn Joshua made the remark to *Cruise Weekly* in Sydney last week, admitting the destination is outside the catchment of typical South Pacific voyages from east coast Australian ports.

Currently, common South Pacific itineraries from Brisbane and Sydney include stops in New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Fiji and are usually either eight to 14 days in length, or five to seven days.

"An itinerary is too long if a ship intends on visiting Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji," Joshua said.

"We feel if Cairns was used as a base there would be greater opportunities to explore the Solomons," Joshua told *CW*.

"A shorter cruise base would work better for us," he added.

At the moment, the Solomon Islands are outside the fringes for sailings ex Brisbane of 800 nautical miles or 40 hours sailing.

However, Honiara and the port of Gizo - the capital of one of the Solomon's nine provinces - are both within range ex Cairns.

Joshua said he was pleased with talks between a high-level tourism delegation from the Solomons and Carnival Australia, Ponant, Royal Caribbean Cruises and Lindblad Expeditions last week.

While large ships bring in volume to Honiara, the smaller vessels such as Lindblad spread the tourist dollar further afield as they stay longer and spend more, Joshua commented.

Joshua added that teaming up with Papua New Guinea as a tag-on destination may be a solution to lure more ships to the 992 islands of the Solomon Islands.

Talks between the Solomon Islands Ministry of Tourism and Visitors Bureau and PNG Government are ongoing.

MEANWHILE, construction of a second multipurpose wharf in Honiara is expected to commence next month and take two years.

The new wharf will be located 100m from the current dock and in future years will enable the interim cruise terminal (*CW* Thu) to be replaced with a more permanent structure.

"We will look to rebuild the existing wharf and we may look at extending it or putting extra wharfs so we can cater for longer cruise ships in the future," he said.

Pictured in Sydney last week from left are Josef Mamau, Solomon Islands Dept of Tourism; Josefa Tuamoto, ceo Solomon Islands Visitor Bureau; Barney Sivor, director Solomon Islands Dept of Tourism; John Wasi, permanent secretary to the Solomon Islands Ministry of Culture & Tourism; Savita Nandan, deputy director Dept of Tourism and Glyn Joshua, Solomon Islands Port Authority.

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