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WINNER 2015

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Awarded Best Cruise Operator - International Deployment
at the 2015 AFTA National Travel Industry Awards.

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Tuesday 21 Jul 2015

Online Cruise Week

ANNUAL consumer promotion Cruise Week will include a new, interactive online magazine designed to help agents push cruising to their clients, CLIA Australasia has announced.

The promotion each year sees travel agents actively encouraged to develop their own cruising promotions to send to clients with backing from CLIA and a host of offers from cruise operators.

CLIA Australasia general manager Brett Jardine said it made sense to take Cruise Week into the digital space this year.

"Our new e-zine will be a fantastic way for the industry to attract prospective passengers as it will enable readers to experience life onboard a wide range of ships through content, images and video designed to immerse them in the magic of cruising," Jardine said.

Cruise Week 2015 has been scheduled to run from 07-14 Sep.

NTIA recognises cruising

THE cruise industry's best, both from a retail and product delivery perspective was recognised for a year of ongoing outstanding achievement at the 2015 National Travel Industry Awards in Sydney over the weekend.

Mingling with the travel industry as a whole, it was cruise-heavy agency Bicton Travel from WA which took out two major gongs.

Sponsored by Royal Caribbean, the award for Best Travel Consultant - Retail went to Bicton Travel's Phil Smethurst.

Bicton was back onstage minutes later as agency owner Carole Smethurst accepted her own glassware as winner of Best Travel Agency - Retail Single Location.

The two accolades cap off a momentous period for Bicton and add to the Gold Agency of the Year Australia title won at the CLIA Cruise Industry Awards earlier this year (**CW** 03 Mar).

For suppliers, the headline of

the night was APT retaining its industry endorsement as winners of three categories.

The McGeary-owned firm took home Best Tour Operator - Domestic and Best Tour Operator - International as well as a new title as Best River Cruise Operator.

Rob McGeary joined a host of team members in attendance to celebrate the awards, with chief marketing officer sending her congratulations from the Flight Centre Global Ball in Las Vegas.

"Receiving these accolades is no easy feat and it can only be achieved through exceptional relationships, service, product and delivery from all parts of our business around the globe."

The champagne was flowing too for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, which took home the awards for Best Cruise Ship - Domestic Deployment for *Celebrity Solstice* and Best Cruise Operator - International Deployment.

RCL Cruises commercial director Australia & South East Asia Sean Treacy sounded out travel agents as key to the company's success.

"It is a great honour that the high quality of cruise offering from Celebrity Cruises and Royal Caribbean International has been recognised and we are truly grateful to the industry for their ongoing support."

Royal Caribbean has opted to show its gratitude to the trade on the **front cover** of today's issue.

See **page 4** for more coverage.

Massive NTIA issue!

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news, a page of photos from the **2015 NTIA Awards**, plus a front full page from **Royal Caribbean International**.

Ecruising China split

BRETT Dudley, founder and chairman of online cruise portal Ecruising, has reassumed full control of the company in Hong Kong after amicably splitting from his business partners.

As part of int'l expansion plans, Dudley sold 49% of a Hong Kong offshoot of the Australian firm to two locally based business people along with a license for the name.

A search for new opportunities in the city is now underway.

The move does not affect any of the Australian operations, now being managed by Alastair Fernie.

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GlobalCARS is secure

INDUSTRY car rental firm globalCARS has sought to clarify its position after last Thu's story about available internet domain names up for sale (**CW** 16 Jul).

Among the list of portals was www.globalcars.com, while the globalCARS organisation operates www.globalcars.com.au.

Director Andrew Morgan said globalCARS is an ATAS Accredited firm and is not linked in any way.



Cruise Calendar

This week's port calls of cruise ships at various destinations around Australia.

SYDNEY	<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	25 Jul
BRISBANE	<i>Pacific Dawn</i> <i>Pacific Jewel</i>	25 Jul 26 Jul
FREMANTLE	<i>Dawn Princess</i>	25 Jul
GERALDTON	<i>Dawn Princess</i>	24 Jul



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Christmas in July

NCL jacks up charges

FIVE months after the last increase, Norwegian Cruise Line will further boost its onboard service charges to encompass an additional staff gratuity.

Effective for new bookings made after 31 Jul, service charges will climb from US\$12.95pp per day to \$13.50 for all staterooms up to a mini-suite, while suites will see fees raised to \$15.50pp per day, up from the previous \$14.95.



Brochure Spotlight

A NUMBER of maiden calls around the Scottish Isles are on the drawing board for Hebridean Island Cruises



in 2016, all detailed in the small ship line's newest brochure.

Sailing onboard its single ship *Hebridean Princess*, the elegant style of cruising will come to Lunga on the Treshnish Isles in 2016 along with Stroma Island, located in the Pentland Firth.

On land, passengers will enjoy a range of new walks to explore the old-style villages, heritage relics and picturesque scenery in addition to existing favourites.

Food & drink themed voyages will return in 2016, with no less than three Michelin-starred restaurants, while other themes will focus on whisky, gardens, nature and wildlife, heritage, classical music and many more.

Fares are all-inclusive onboard as well as offering coach travel to and from the ship.

Four offshoots for Crystal

LUXURY mid-size cruise line Crystal Cruises is set to launch its biggest ever brand expansion, with three new ocean ships to come along with a river cruise operation, yachting venture, air cruising and residences at sea.

The announcement was made by Crystal Cruises president and ceo Edie Rodriguez with new owner Genting Group's chairman Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay during the line's annual President's Cruise.

First to change for Crystal is the imminent launch of the line's first yacht style vessel, with the *Crystal Esprit* due in Nov this year, launching just prior to Christmas.

The Crystal Yacht Cruises arm of its business will see the vessel sail the Seychelles Islands, Dubai, Eastern Mediterranean and Adriatic Coast through early 2018 on itineraries of up to seven days.

Passengers will have access to "extreme" features including a two-person submarine, zodiacs for shore excursions, small yacht for boating excursions, water skis, kayaks, fishing and scuba gear.

Crystal Esprit will cater to 62 passengers per sailing in an all-suite accommodation style.

Members of the Crystal Society loyalty program have exclusive booking rights for the new yacht through until end of next month.

Crystal Cruises' core business of luxury cruising will be significantly expanded with three new "Exclusive Class" vessels signed for construction by the Lloyd Werft shipyard in Germany.

The first ship is due for delivery in the latter half of 2018.

Each of the three new ships will be a venture into the expedition realm of cruising, with capacity

for 1,000 guests and an increased space ratio for pax, with a one-to-one staff-to-pax ratio.

Ocean cruising also forms part of the next new venture, with Crystal Residences able to be purchased outright and situated on the ships' top decks.

Forty-eight "homes" will start at 600 square feet in size and range upward to 4,000 square feet.

Occupants will have access to their own private restaurant, reception and exclusive facilities.

For temporary passengers, each suite will offer 400 square feet - nearly double that of the line's two current ships *Crystal Serenity* and *Crystal Symphony*.

Elsewhere, Crystal Cruises has decided to tap into the growth of river cruising, bringing an ultra-luxury element to the cruise model from early in 2017.

Details on whether the ships will be newbuilds and exactly where Crystal will deploy are yet to be announced.

Undoubtedly the biggest change to the Crystal business model is the introduction of holidays by air, which will join the company's product range from 2017 when it takes delivery of a Boeing 787 *Dreamliner* aircraft.

Normally seating up to 300 pax, the Crystal jet will be fitted with 60 Business class seats, operating 28-day itineraries to 10-12 cities around the world and including accom at five-star hotels.

"It has been a personal mission of mine since joining Crystal to see that this incredible company reach new potential - and thus, new luxury travelers from all over the world," Rodriguez said - see www.crystalthenextchapter.com.

Micro directs to trade

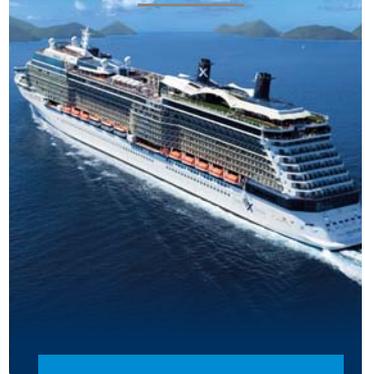
NICHE small-ship wholesaler Micro-Cruising has added a travel agent directory to its website to help funnel direct enquiries to book through their nearest agent.

Currently, consultants registered to receive the company's monthly newsletter have been added to the online directory.

Visitors can use the feature by entering their postcode, city or state to find an agent nearby.

Agents can also add their details to be included - **CLICK HERE**.

Australia's Best Cruise Ship 2015 Celebrity Solstice



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Single Guest:	from \$15,995*

*CONDITIONS APPLY

APT group workshops

TRAVEL agents keen to expand into or grow their groups business further are invited to attend a series of workshops being hosted by APT and Travelmarvel.

Each event will showcase how the two brands' charter offerings can be used to incentivise local community groups or companies to invest in a charter departure of a European or Asia river cruise or an APT small-ship ocean voyage.

Group and charter packages include unique pricing & booking incentives on many destinations.

Events are free of charge to attend and will take place around Australia, kicking off with two sessions in Sydney on 04-05 Aug before moving on to Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.

CLICK HERE to register a place.

QM2 lights up New York Harbour



ABOVE: Cunard has wrapped up its 175th anniversary celebrations with a glittering light show in New York Harbour late last week.

Queen Mary 2 sailed in under the early morning light escorted by a fleet of historic ships and US Coast Guard vessels, ending its celebratory transatlantic crossing.

Events of the day saw Captain Kevin Oprey ring the ceremonial closing bell on the New York Stock Exchange.

The day in New York wrapped up with a spectacular light show off Battery Park (**pictured**), which featured the history of Cunard and the future ahead for the line.

No Dynamic retrofit

ROYAL Caribbean International has reversed its stance on fitting its Dynamic Dining concept across its fleet of Oasis-class ships, opting not to add it to *Allure*, *Oasis* and *Harmony of the Seas*.

Now, the feature will only appear on ships designed to accommodate the concept, which currently only includes the three Quantum-class vessels *Quantum*, *Anthem* and *Ovation of the Seas*.

However, Dynamic Dining has been partially installed on *Oasis of the Seas* during its recent drydock prior to setting off for Europe, with three single-level restaurants now in operation.

The RCI concept involves four separate culinary offerings being fitted to the main dining room, with fixed times for dining also eliminated in favour of a 'come as you please' seating style.

Ponton back on deck

FITNESS and healthy living guru Shannan Ponton has returned to Carnival Cruise Line for the first of two special appearances running on-deck workouts at sea.

The celebrity workout leader saw hundreds of cruisers join him on deck for a mass fitness session on a recent nine-night *Carnival Spirit* sailing to New Caledonia.

Ponton will run the same fitness schedule and seminar program on another eight-night cruise scheduled to depart on 04 Nov, priced from \$949pp twin share.

MSC loyalty rebrand

REGULAR and first-time guests of MSC Cruises are invited to apply for membership of the line's new-look loyalty program, now dubbed MSC Voyagers Club.

The scheme replaces the former MSC Club and is designed to offer rewards before, during and after a passenger takes a cruise holiday.

First-time guests can join at a "Welcome" level upon making their first booking, with Classic, Silver, Gold and Black tiers open to progress to after more cruises.

Points are accrued at different rates depending on the category of suite and experience booked (Bella, Fantastica, Aurea or MSC Yacht Club), and are also awarded based on onboard spend levels.

Personalised membership cards will be issued depending on the tier assigned upon application.

Rewards will include discounts of 5% on all future sailings as well as access to special member sales offering up to a further 15% off.

Higher-tier members will also receive onboard credits as well as invitations to cocktail parties, in-cabin amenities and more.



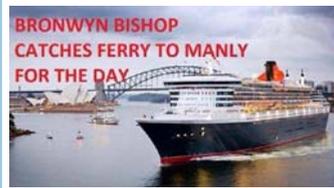
TRUST in the internet to make light of even the most serious of matters, especially politicians appearing to rort entitlements.

Amid the current saga of federal Speaker Bronwyn Bishop claiming what most people would consider to be excessive in the way of polmie perks in her \$5,000 one-hour chopper ride to a fundraiser, jokers on social media have attempted to brighten the whole situation.

Bestowed with the hashtag of #choppergate, a number of "memes" have appeared joking about other ridiculous expenses which could be next for Bishop.

One such meme includes Cunard's *Queen Mary 2*, which carries the message implying Bishop chartered the luxury ship for a cruise in Sydney Harbour.

Search #choppergate for more.



Win with Royal Caribbean International

To celebrate the launch of *Ovation of the Seas*' Australian itineraries, **Royal Caribbean International** is giving readers of *Cruise Weekly* the chance to win an *Ovation of the Seas* prize pack. Three lucky agents will win a voucher to iFLY Indoor Skydiving, so you'll be a pro by the time the ship arrives, a Jamie Oliver cookbook to try before you dine at his restaurant at sea, and a limited edition Royal Caribbean cocktail glass.



For your chance to be in the running, simply answer the following questions and have the most creative answer to the final question. Send your answers to royalcaribbean@cruiseweekly.com.au

**Flights and accommodation are not included in the prize for iFly voucher.



3. How high above the sea does the North Star viewing capsule rise for 360° views?

Need a hint? **CLICK HERE.**

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Cruise industry shows how it's done at annual NTIA night of nights



LEFT: Nobody was left green with envy here as Scenic's Cherie Bowman snaps a celebrity selfie with Robert 'Milly' Mills, happy to oblige as one of the star entertainers for the occasion.

BELOW: Greece and Mediterranean Travel Centre managing director Halina Kubica shines alongside comedienne and television personality Wendy Harmer, invited as a special guest.



ABOVE: The team from Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd chalked up wins for Best Cruise Operator - International Deployment and for *Celebrity Solstice* as Best Cruise Ship - Domestic.

BELOW: Carole Smethurst and Michael Middleton from Bicton Travel won Best Travel Agency - Retail Single Location, presented by Dale Woodhouse from Singapore Airlines.



BELOW: APT cleaned up at NTIA, retaining the Best Tour Operator - Domestic and Best Tour Operator - International awards as well as becoming the inaugural winner of a new category as Best River Cruise Operator.



RIGHT: Alison Mead and James Cartmell from Collette enjoyed the tour and cruise operator's first presence at the NTIA Awards since relaunching a local office in Australia earlier this year.



LEFT: Sissel Way, of World's Leading Cruise Lines presented Lisa Tjandi, Helloworld Hunter Travel Group with Best Travel Agency Manager Retail - Multi Location.



RIGHT: Glammed up for the night is Helen Eves, Holland America Line; Helen Courias, Princess Cruises; Sharon Hando, Travel the World and Craig Owens from Cruise Office.



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