

Big CH cruise month

ONE year since taking control of Creative Cruising from Adventure World, Creative Holidays has chalked up its biggest month of sales through its online portal.

The cruise offshoot of The Travel Corporation wholesaler Creative Holidays recorded a 2,000% year-on-year sales jump for Jul.

Creative Cruising gm Peter Forsyth said the brand's goal in the last year has been to restore the faith of agents as its preferred partner, which has translated into 400 new signups in Jul alone.

"Our goal was to deliver a simple and efficient booking process that when combined with the support of our experienced team would return Creative Cruising to its former status as the cruise specialists," he said.



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New NZ levy to hit cruise

THE New Zealand cruising sector is likely to be heavily impacted by a new "border clearance levy" which is proposed for introduction on 01 Jan 2016.

Cruise New Zealand general manager Raewyn Tan (pictured) told delegates at the recent Cruise Down Under conference in Darwin the measure, announced during the NZ budget in May, aimed to fully recover the cost of border clearance and would impact both passengers and crew.

Cruise will be particularly hard hit because the levy will apply at each port visited, meaning total government costs per head could be as high as NZ\$62.62.

While Cruise New Zealand is lobbying hard against the changes, indications from the government are that it is determined to recover the costs, so even if crew are exempted the impost would simply be shifted to a higher rate for passengers.

Tan said the impost is likely to significantly hit the growth rate of cruise tourism in New Zealand which is a growing contributor



to the country's economy.

Other key issues facing the NZ cruise sector include infrastructure, with the current average ship visiting the country having a length of 261m.

However the advent of vessels such as Royal Caribbean's *Ovation of the Seas*, at around 350m, poses particular challenges.

Ovation is set to visit Auckland in her debut season, with the NZ harbour city not having facilities large enough to handle the vessel meaning the 4200+ passengers will have to be tendered to shore.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from: (click)

- AA Appointments jobs

HAL discounts flights

RETURN Economy class fares to Europe priced at \$999 have been dangled by Holland America Line in conjunction with bookings on 37 European sailings in 2016.

The fare is valid for departure from SYD, BNE, MEL, ADL and PER on bookings of Verandah Stateroom categories or above.

Sweetening the deal further are the inclusion of a HAL Signature Beverage Package, a Pinnacle Grill dinner for two, taxes, fees & port expenses and a 50% deposits.

Bookings must be in by 31 Oct - more info on 1300 987 321.

Princess Prez visits Sydney team



AHEAD of Princess Cruises' biggest ever summer season in Australian waters, the line's global president Jan Swartz dropped in from the US to pay a visit to her Sydney-based team.

Five ships will make up the Princess Cruises Australia offering this year, with capacity boosted by two Grand Class ships in *Golden Princess* and *Diamond Princess*.

The two seasonal mega-liners will complement the year-round presence of Aussie favourites *Dawn Princess*, *Sun Princess* and *Sea Princess*, newly returned from

a 104-night circumnavigation of the globe via the Baltic which took in 41 ports in 28 countries.

During her visit, Swartz thanked the tireless efforts of the Sydney team for building the Princess brand into a household name in the Australian market.

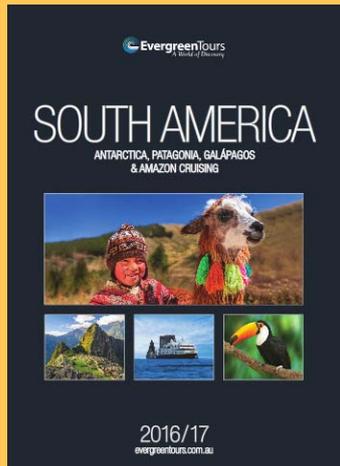
In addition, the team were briefed about exciting elements to the 2017 winter program which will see another Australian first in a round-world cruise to the Arctic Circle from Sydney.

Swartz is pictured above with the Sydney-based Princess team.



Brochure Spotlight

Evergreen Tours South America 2016/17



EVERGREEN Tours is showcasing the incredible diversity of South America in this new program which includes Amazon river cruises aboard the luxurious *Aqua Amazon*.

Itineraries also include Galapagos cruising, partnering with the region's best operators on board the *Santa Cruz II* which launches next month as well as the boutique *Isabella* and the *Galapagos Legend*.

Land programs visit iconic sites such as Machu Picchu and Iguazu Falls, the Atacama Desert, the Andes Mountains and the Brazilian coastline.

New destinations for 2016/17 include the northern highlands of Ecuador, Bolivia's commercial capital La Paz as well as Bariloche and the Lake District of Argentina.

To view the new Evergreen South America 2016/17 brochure [CLICK HERE](#).

New Whitsunday cats

WHITSUNDAY Rent a Yacht has added two new easy-to-skipper sailing catamarans to its fleet, which are now both on offer to bareboat charterers.

The Leopard 38 meets the demand for a four-cabin vessel, while the Seawind 1160 sleeps six - 1800 075 000.

Norwegian Escape's new boutiques

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has announced more details of the on-board retail offering aboard its new *Norwegian Escape* which will make her maiden voyage this coming Nov.

LACOSTE and Carolina Herrera boutiques will feature on the ship - the first at sea for each brand, as well as being the first boutiques to be designed specifically for a Norwegian Cruise Line vessel.

"These exclusive boutiques from two legendary fashion industry icons add further glamour to one of the most exciting cruise ships ever built," said Norwegian Cruise Line's president and chief operating officer, Andy Stuart.

He said LACOSTE and Carolina Herrera would offer guests a shopping experience unlike any at sea - alongside other on-board brands including Hublot, Bvlgari, Tissot and Uno de 50.

Stuart said *Escape* would be the first to introduce Ulysses Nardin watches, as well as a "hand-picked collection of Columbian Emeralds".

Fred. Olsen cafe

FRED. Olsen Cruise Lines has announced the fleet-wide rollout of a new Bookmark Cafe on-board "coffee and luxury chocolate shop".

The relaxing, sociable area was introduced on *Balmoral*, *Braemar*, *Boudicca* and *Black Watch* during dry-docks in recent years, with the Bookmark branding reflecting their location adjacent to the ships' libraries.

The Cafes serve a selection of specialty coffees and teas from Taylors of Harrogate as well as hand-made chocolates such as pralines and Champagne truffles.



eCruising's Sail Away Friday



ABOVE: The eCruising.travel team celebrated CLIA Cruise Week last Fri with everything you want in a cruise - a free buffet lunch, sail away drinks with tropical cocktails - and of course lots of loud shirts!

Hamburg cruise days

TOURISTS in Hamburg, Germany were mesmerised over the weekend by the Grand Hamburg Cruise Days Parade, an aquatic extravaganza which saw a fleet of cruise ships docked in the port before making their way down the River Elbe.

Last Fri the *Costa neoRomantica* and the *Amadea* arrived, followed by *Mein Schiff 4*, *MS Europa* and *AIDAbella* the next day.

On Sat evening hundreds of thousands of cheering visitors gathered on the banks of the Elbe for the parade, with *AIDAbella*, *Mein Schiff 4* and *MS Europa* making their way escorted by "countless barges, sailing vessels and passenger ships".

Yesterday the festival continued with the arrival of Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* and *MSC Splendida* which both left the port together in the evening to wrap up the event.

Korean cruise plan

KOREA'S Hyundai Merchant Marine is understood to be close to purchasing a second-hand cruise ship, according to the *Korea JoongAng Daily* newspaper.

The company is looking to sail the vessel between China and South Korea as well as other destinations, with the price listed at about US\$166 million.

The report says the vessel will have a "foreigners-only" casino on board as well as a K-Pop concert and visits to destinations on Jeju Island where famous Korean TV shows were made.

A US hotel management company is also expected to join the venture as an investor.

Princess is so sweet

PRINCESS Cruises has announced the expansion of its partnership with master chocolatier and pastry designer Norman Love.

A range of new chocolate products have been developed in the wake of the success of the cruise line's signature "Chocolate Journeys" experience, with additions including breakfast treats and a chocolate cocktail.

Princess Cruises vice president Australia and NZ, Stuart Allison, confirmed that the indulgent offerings would be rolled out across the fleet from Nov, including on the line's Australian based ships.

He said a recent Princess Cruises survey had revealed that 40% of Australians eat more chocolate while on holiday.

The options include new pastries and cakes designed by Chef Love, chocolate souffle available on the main dining room dessert menu on selected evenings, and savoury breakfast items featuring touches of premium chocolate in the Horizon Court.

See chocolatejourneys.com.

Carnival US comm

CARNIVAL Cruise Line will revamp its remuneration structure for US travel agents, reducing the number of sailed cabins required for each tier to create "significantly greater earning opportunities".

Applicable to new bookings within the USA from 01 Jan 2016, the new structure is the brainchild of Adolfo Perez, recently named CCL vice president of trade sales.

Do you have the *Cruise Weekly* app?



Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	17 Sep
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	17 Sep
<i>Dawn Princess</i>	18 Sep
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	20 Sep
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	21 Sep
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	15 Sep
<i>Sun Princess</i>	16 Sep
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	19 Sep
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	19 Sep
DARWIN	
<i>Coral Princess</i>	17 Sep
FREMANTLE	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	21 Sep
GERALDTON	
<i>Sea Princess</i>	20 Sep

Pacific strategy underway

IN-COUNTRY consultations and workshops are being conducted by the South Pacific Tourism Organisation to help Pacific Island nations develop a framework for cruise tourism Best Practices.

The step is the latest in the SPTO's efforts to implement the Pacific Cruise Tourism Development Strategy, under the framework of the European Union's Pacific Regional Tourism Capacity Building Program.

Workshops will assess business ideas proposed during the recent Pacific Cruise Development forum which took place in Melbourne earlier this year (*CW* 02 Jun).

Working with stakeholders from each market, initiatives to help each nation prosper from cruise ship visits will be formulated, which will in turn lead to greater investment in infrastructure and other tourist-friendly attractions.

Consultations have already begun, with Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Tahiti having

already met with SPTO about their own objectives, with Fiji and Kiribati to come later this month.

SPTO chief executive officer Ilisoni Vuidreketi said each nation would have their own ideas to best suit each destination.

"This strategy will target prioritised regional needs in cruise tourism, taking into account the varying stages of cruise development in our member countries," Vuidreketi said.

RCCL deal extension

ROYAL Caribbean Cruises Limited has extended the booking period for the CLIA Cruise Week deals of its three brands - Royal Caribbean, Celebrity and Azamara - which are now on sale for a second week, closing on 19 Sep.

Across the lines, deals range from onboard credit of up to US\$300 per stateroom to reduced deposits on selected departures.

A trade incentive offering a top prize of a Mediterranean cruise onboard *Harmony of the Seas* for every booking made during Cruise Week has also been extended until tomorrow.

Sunlover by Starlight

GREAT Barrier Reef touring firm Sunlover Reef Cruises has unveiled its new product allowing guests the chance to sleep under the stars off the coast of Cairns.

The 'Sunlover by Starlight' experience takes guests 41km to the Moore Reef Pontoon on a two-day/one-night Reef stay inclusive of all meals onboard and a swag in which to sleep.

A maximum of 18 guests can book the experience each day.

'Sunlover by Starlight' is priced from \$499 per person per night.

Liberty back to normal

REGULAR scheduled service has resumed onboard *Carnival Liberty* after an engine fire in St Thomas saw the ship cancel a cruise.

The ship departed yesterday from its San Juan, Puerto Rico home port on its next scheduled sailing after receiving permission from the US Coast Guard.

Approx 1,500 passengers opted to remain onboard the ship while others took charter flights home.

Quarter off Lindblad

LINDBLAD Expeditions National Geographic is offering savings of 25% on the 19-day "Rounding the Cape" expedition which cruises Chilean Patagonia and Argentina's Staten Island.

Priced from \$20,980ppts the offer is valid for departures ex Santiago, Chile through until 22 Oct - au.expeditions.com.

New Miami terminal

TALKS are underway between Royal Caribbean Cruises and city officials in Miami, Florida in relation to the construction of a new US\$100 million terminal to accommodate Oasis-class ships.

The cruise line is seeking a berth of 400 metres capable of handling the vessels by the end of 2018.

According to the *Miami Herald*, a preliminary vote on the proposal is set for tomorrow, US time.

If approved, Royal Caribbean would have rights on the terminal for between 20 and 60 years.

When based in Florida, both of RCI's existing Oasis-class ships *Allure of the Seas* and *Oasis of the Seas* sail from Fort Lauderdale.



NOW that's some well-travelled Scotch whisky.

Lark Distillery in Tasmania is currently preparing and bottling what it claims to be "the world's best-travelled whisky", with the brew having been carried on over 400 Bass Strait crossings onboard *Spirit of Tasmania I & II*.

Loaded onboard the line's two vessels over two years ago inside two 20-litre Australian fortified wine barrels, the whisky has now travelled 172,887 kilometres to and from the Aussie mainland.

The final product will be released in limited edition 500ml bottles and will be sold onboard the two *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels, retailing for \$145 each.

Bottling of the high end spirit has been timed to coincide with the Bass Strait line's annual Flavours of Tassie promotion, which treats passengers to some of the state's best food and wine offerings from local producers.

"We are convinced that the barrels we loaded on to *Spirit of Tasmania I* and *II* more than 12 months ago will deliver a rich, intense, luscious malt influenced by Bass Strait," Lark Distillery owner Bill Lark commented.

Seatrade Asia dates

A SECOND attempt at hosting the Seatrade Cruise Asia forum in Busan, South Korea will now take place from 12-14 May 2016.

The event, to have been hosted by the Busan Port Authority, was cancelled at the eleventh hour earlier this year (*CW* 11 Jun) due to travel restrictions imposed by Korea because of Middle-East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

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Postal address: PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia

Street address: 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia

P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) F: 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

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Editor: Bruce Piper info@cruiseweekly.com.au

Contributors: Guy Dundas, Jenny Piper, Jasmine O'Donoghue, Matt Lennon

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan and Magda Herdzik ads@cruiseweekly.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper accounts@cruiseweekly.com.au

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