

CRUISE



WEEKLY



Tuesday 26 Apr 2016

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on location on Germany's

Rhine River

Today's issue of *Cruise Weekly* is coming to you courtesy of APT as we take part in the exclusive VIP cruise for APT and Travelmarvel top selling agents.

APT is this week carrying a boat load full of top achieving agents down the Rhine from Amsterdam to Mainz, with the trip a reward for its Diamond sellers who have each sold more than \$1 million in APT and Travelmarvel product in the last twelve months.

The trip is the first part of the popular Magnificent Europe itinerary, and after the Diamond agents alight on Thu their cabins will be taken by another group, the APT Platinum agents who have sold \$500,000 in APT product during the year.

On board the Diamond trip is none other than APT founder Geoff McGeary, along with other senior APT staff including head of sales and marketing Deb Fox, national sales manager Susan Haberle and channel strategy manager Damian Borg.

The trip has seen stops so far in Amsterdam, Cologne and Andernach, where a gala dinner on Sun night celebrated the group's excellence in true Royal Signature style at Burg Namedy, the stately castle home of Princess Heide von Hollenzollern, godmother of *MS AmaReina*.

Expedition "next big thing"

APT founder Geoff McGeary has likened the massive rise of river cruising over the last decade to the travel revolution heralded by the arrival of the jumbo jet.

Speaking to guests on board APT's VIP Diamond top achievers ship aboard the *MS AmaVenita* in Europe this week, McGeary said "in my lifetime in travel I've never come across anything as fantastic as these river ships" which he believes, just like the Boeing 747, have irrevocably changed the way people travel.

APT is commemorating ten years in the river cruise sector, having formed a joint venture with Amawaterways in 2006 which has since seen the fleet expand to 27 vessels, about half of them owned by the company.

McGeary also gave an insight into APT's collaboration with

British small ship operator Noble Caledonia, saying he believes the expedition sector also has strong potential for the industry.

He revealed plans for Noble Caledonia's third ship, the *MS Sea Explorer* (CW 10 Jun 2014), which will undergo an \$8 million refit and then rejoin the fleet as *Hebridean Sky*.

This ship, as well as sister vessels *Island Sky* and *Caledonian Sky* carry about 110 passengers, with McGeary saying he believes such ships are the ideal size but are "uneconomic to build" from new.

The makeover for *Hebridean Sky* will see a range of works undertaken including upgraded bathrooms for all cabins.

McGeary said popular itineraries for the small ships included the Antarctic, the Baltics and the Mediterranean as well as circumnavigation of the UK while Australia's Kimberley coast is always a top seller.

More from the APT Diamond VIP cruise on **pages 2 and 3**.

Cuban policy change

CARNIVAL Corporation's new Fathom brand will debut its first voyage to Cuba as scheduled on 01 May, after officials in Cuba confirmed they would relax requirements previously banning Cuban-born Americans.

The 704-passenger *Adonia* will sail every two weeks to Cuba, the first time a cruise ship has been able to operate to the country in more than 50 years.

Hurtigruten orders

NORWEGIAN cruise operator Hurtigruten has announced an order for two new ships to be delivered in 2018 and 2019 plus options for a further two vessels.

The 600 passenger ships will be built by Kleven Verft, while the company's fleet renewal program will also see the refurbishment of four of its existing vessels.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news and photos.

New Carnival CMO

CARNIVAL Cruise Line in the USA has named Kathy Mayor as its new chief marketing officer.

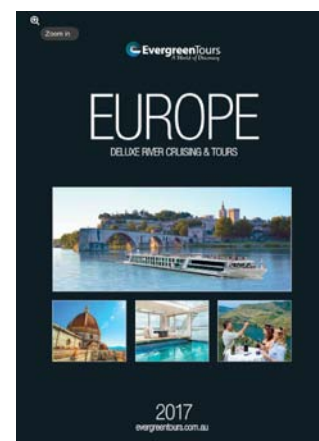
Mayor was formerly a senior executive with Nevada-based Las Vegas Sands Corp, where she has worked since 2008.

In her new role Mayor will report to Carnival president Christine Duffy, with responsibility for driving Carnival Cruise Line's strategy across digital marketing, e-commerce, advertising, guest loyalty and public relations.



Brochure Spotlight

Evergreen 2017



EVERGREEN Tours' full 2017 European River Cruise brochure is out now, with a "worldwide exclusive" 15 day three rivers voyage linking seven night cruises in France and Portugal.

A range of offers are available including fly free, business class from \$3995pp, no single supplements and early payment discounts worth \$800 per couple - details 1300 383 747.

HKG cruise guide

THE Hong Kong Tourism Board has issued its first cruise "e-guidebook" which aims to demonstrate the unique experience of Hong Kong cruising.

Dubbed 'Cruise Companion' the guide is described as "an essential tool for first-time cruisers," with four modules including Cruise Basics, Get Planning, Before You Board and Explore Ashore.

Available in English and Chinese, the guide is available online at www.discoverhongkong.com.



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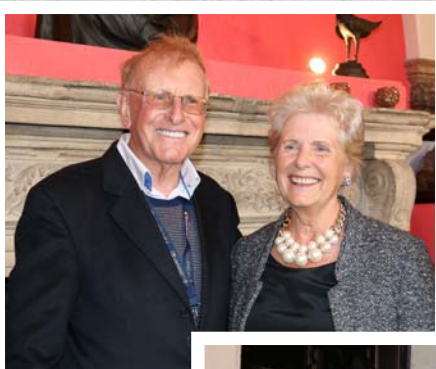
APT agents shine bright

APT'S key travel agent supporters were treated to a night of celebration in Germany over the weekend, as part of the VIP Diamond top achievers cruise which stopped in Andernach on the Rhine River for the evening event at Burg Namedy, the home of *MS AmaReina* godmother Princess Heide von Hollenzohern.

Lots more photos from the trip at facebook.com/traveldaily.



ABOVE: The group lined up in the Burg Namedy courtyard.



LEFT: APT founder Geoff McGeary with Princess Heide von Hollenzohern.

BELOW: Some of the huge Phil Hoffmann Travel contingent who took out the Most Outstanding Multi Location Agency award: Mary-Anne Guest, Michelle Ashcroft, Lorien Everett, Camille Helm, Darian Foot, Peter Williams and Michelle Mickan.

LEFT: APT ambassador, celebrity chef Luke Nguyen with his partner Lynne and Tom Hardy of Thomas Hardy Wines.



ABOVE: Megan "Xena the Warrior Princess" Matrakis from Flight Centre Garden City with APT's Damian Borg.



LEFT: Kevin Sharp from Our Vacation Centre, winner of the Most Outstanding Online Agency award with Travelmarvel national sales manager Susie Coughlin and Carly Obryan of Travel & Cruise Belrose.



ABOVE: The always fabulous Deb Fox and Susan Haberle from APT.

BELOW: Helen Kiloh and Natalie Schembri from Sylvania Travel & Cruise, winner of the Rising Star award.



ABOVE: Kyrin Francis from helloworld Charlestown; Brett & Louise Dann, Hunter Travel Group; and Cassi Stokes of RACT Launceston.

Ann Sherry on fathom



CARNIVAL Australia Executive Chairman Ann Sherry was one of the guests aboard the historic first cruise by the company's new

fathom experiential brand to the Dominican Republic.

The 704-passenger *Adonia* which will also cruise to Cuba from 01 May (see p1) arrived last week in the Dominican Republic, with passengers working alongside local residents in existing programs which focus on improving the lives of children, families and communities.

Sherry is pictured above centre in front of *Adonia* after its arrival in Amber Cover in the Dominican Republic with fathom president Tara Russell and Carnival Corporation ceo Arnold Donald.

Tempo two for one

TEMPO Holidays has launched a two for one sale across a range of 2016 European river cruises booked before 30 Jun.

Options include the eight-day *Classical Rhine* travelling from Basel to Amsterdam at the North Sea from \$2,201 for two departing 2 Jun, 5 Sep & 27 Oct.

Prices for the 15-day *Across Europe* cruise from Budapest to Amsterdam start at \$5,072 for two departing 10 Jun, 08 Jul then in reverse on 25 Jun.

To book call 1300 362 844.



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

SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	26 Apr
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	26 Apr
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	28 Apr
DARWIN	
<i>Legend of the Seas</i>	23 Apr
<i>Insignia</i>	26 Apr
FREMANTLE	
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	29 Apr
<i>Sun Princess</i>	01 May
BUSSELTON	
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	01 May
GERALDTON	
<i>Sun Princess</i>	02 May
AUCKLAND	
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	27 Apr

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EUROPA 2 in Cuba

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises'

EUROPA 2 will make its debut in Cuba on two cruises in Oct and Nov when the luxury ship calls in at Havana, Santiago de Cuba, Cienfuegos and Isla de la Juventud.

The vessel's 12-day cruise from La Guaria, Costa Rica to Havana sails between 24 Oct to 06 Nov with prices starting from US\$8,870pp.

Tickets for a 13-day tour from Havana to Colon from 05 Nov to 19 Nov start from US\$9,470pp.

CLICK HERE for more info.

Paul Gauguin offering

PAUL Gauguin Cruises has expanded its land-and-sea packages, giving guests a choice of two-nights at the InterContinental Tahiti Resort & Spa or the InterContinental Moorea Resort & Spa combined with a seven-night Tahiti and the Society Islands sailing.

The package also includes roundtrip airfare between Los Angeles, Calif and Papeete, Tahiti.

The cruise sails to Huahine, Bora Bora and Moorea with a day spent at Paul Gauguin Cruises' private islet off the coast of Taha'a, Motu Mahana.

Prices start from US\$4,485pp, see www.pgcrises.com.

Sirena entertainment

OCEANIA Cruises has unveiled the entertainment offerings on board *Sirena*, the line's newest ship set to debut this week.

The vessel will feature four musical spectacles using the entertainment team from Norwegian Cruise Line: tuxedo featuring a nine-piece orchestra; cabaret cinema; acoustic sessions with a live-band and get on the floor and dance, a tribute to dance music.

The shows which are set to be on offer by Spring 2017 will be performed evenings throughout the voyage.

MEANWHILE the ship will also feature two new speciality restaurants Tuscan Steak and Jacques Bistro.



APT certainly takes the wine seriously on its European river cruises.

This week's Diamond top achievers voyage (see p1) features a special guest in the form of Thomas Hardy, owner of South Australian boutique winemaker Thomas Hardy Wines.

That meant a special wine tasting session, with the lucky agents on board experiencing seven different wines including Hardy's "201" - a very special creation in honour of cricketer Jason Gillespie's double century in a test match against Bangladesh in 2006.

The Hardy wines will also feature later this week along with the gala farewell dinner from the cruise, as well as during the following days as *MS AmaVenita* voyages onto Budapest with APT's Platinum agents on board.

Hardy confessed that it was quite difficult getting the wines all the way to Europe in time for the trip, with a number of APT staff secreting some of the 150 bottles required in their luggage.

Of course all that wine tasting also requires lots and lots of glasses - so many, in fact, that APT chief marketing officer Deb Fox, told **CW** an entire cabin on the cruise has been put aside to hold the requisite glassware, with the ship's official manifest simply saying the occupant of the stateroom is "Wine Glasses".

Fox and Hardy are pictured below with one of the vintages.



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