

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 28 Apr 2016

## Cruise Weekly today

*Cruise Weekly* today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news and photos, plus a full page from **Blue Lagoon Cruises**.

## Azamara refreshed

**AZAMARA Quest** has emerged refreshed from her two week dry dock in Singapore's Sembcorp Marine Admiralty Shipyard.

The entire ship was refitted with refreshed restaurants, lounges and furniture.

All staterooms were redone with two new Spa Suites added while The Club World Ocean and Owner's Suites have also been fully redesigned.

The Pool Grill area has been transformed into a sit-down al fresco dining venue.

*Azamara Quest's* identical sister ship, *Azamara Journey* underwent the same extensive make-over earlier this year.

## Cruise industry to grow

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) in North America has published its second quarterly Travel Agent Cruise Industry Outlook Report, revealing the sector is positioned for strong growth with 76% of agents expecting to see their cruise business expand this year.

The report, based off a survey of 700 North American travel agents, was conducted earlier this year with CLIA saying it is agents who "have their finger on the pulse of consumer attitudes".

Factors agents cite for the positive forecast include lower airfares making it more affordable to travel to and from cruise ports.

Around 30% of agents say that favourable currency exchange rates are making cruising more attractive for customers travelling on cruises overseas.

The rise in popularity of river cruising is another aspect driving

the cruising industry forward with more than 60% of travel agents agreeing river cruises offered the most potential for growth this year.

Cruise customers are reportedly focused on value, with nine out of 10 agents saying that "cost" and "the overall cruise experience" are crucial in driving purchasing decisions, with itineraries and promotions also playing an important role.

Stateroom comfort and dining options are considered the most important amenities for customers followed by stateroom categories and entertainment options.

The anticipated expansion of the cruise industry appears to be particularly strong in destinations in or near the US with agents expecting to see considerable growth in Alaska, the Caribbean, Hawaii and New England.



## 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.

**THIS** week's APT Diamond VIP trip included special guests Lynne and Luke Nguyen. Nguyen is a Sydney and Saigon restaurateur who hosts MasterChef Vietnam and Luke Nguyen's Vietnam.

The APT ambassador shared his time & insights with many a selfie taken.

The trip wraps up today in Frankfurt before APT's Platinum agents join the voyage onwards to Budapest.



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## Agents on fire for APT



**THERE'S** no smoking on board APT's European river cruise ships, but that didn't stop this trio from pretending to light up aboard the *MS AmaVenita* this week during the APT Diamond VIP achievers cruise from Amsterdam to Mainz. They were among the 80-odd participants who pulled out all stops to dress up for a Roaring 20s night on the second last night

of the voyage - including the APT ladies on board who wore fabulous identical beaded dresses. **Pictured** smoking them up are, from left: Karen Newbury, APT state sales manager Queensland; Marty Byrne, National Seniors Travel Brisbane; and Elaine Spence, RACQ Travel. Lots more pictures from the night at [facebook.com/traveldaily](https://www.facebook.com/traveldaily).

## Scenic class action heard

**CLASS** action against Scenic by Somerville Legal started in the NSW Supreme Court on Tue with 1,265 passengers demanding compensation. The passengers had their European river cruises between May and Jun 2013 disrupted by extensive flooding. In a court testimony, passengers said instead of a "luxury once-in-a-lifetime experience" what they got was more like a "backpackers' Contiki Tour", according to a *Fairfax* report. A total of 13 tours are included in the case (**CW** 07 Apr 15) with two of the tours allegedly losing 11 out of 15 days of cruising while other trips lost between one and 10 cruising days. Instead of visiting cities via the river and spending nights on board their luxury ship pax claim they experienced long bus rides and in some cases stayed overnight at "low-budget hotels".

Not all affected pax joined the class action, with some accepting a Scenic apology and an \$1,000 future cruise credit as compensation. Scenic's barrister, Gregory McNally, said the company made every effort to ensure pax experienced as much of their planned trips as possible. Scenic has also put forward the argument that in the standard terms and conditions of the contract they were eligible to make changes to itineraries including for reasons relating to weather conditions. Somerville Legal says Scenic breached the Australian Consumer Law by not delaying or cancelling the cruises or offering an alternative/ warning people of the expected disruptions, particularly pax who were travelling from Australia to Europe for their trip. The hearing continues.

## New 2017/2018 ITINERARIES

Our new season has now launched. Explore the world with Oceania Cruises - a total of 173 sailings, including 109 NEW itineraries plus 41 extended journeys.

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\*Bonus 5% commission valid for new bookings made and deposited from 1 April 2016 to 30 April 2016. Valid for all sailings on Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises.

## Escape en route

**NEW** Zealand cruise line Island Cruises has confirmed its ship *Island Passage* is en-route to her new cruise destination of French Polynesia.

Satellite feedback advises she crossed the international dateline Tue evening and is travelling at good speed, estimated to arrive in Papeete early next week, allowing enough time for some local industry functions and stocking up for her inaugural 10-night Tahitian Affair departure to Bora Bora on 12 May.

Last minute specials are still available for 29 May and 26 Jun departures of NZ\$3,950 pp.

Space is limited, head over to [www.islandescapecruises.com](http://www.islandescapecruises.com) for more information.

## Avalon Fly free deal

**AVALON** Waterways is offering a Fly Free deal with 2017 itineraries on board its new Asian river cruise ships *Avalon Siem Reap* and *Avalon Myanmar* which sail between Vietnam and Cambodia and in Myanmar.

From now until 31 May, book any 2017 cruise on either of the new ships to receive free return Economy flights from Australia.

Travellers who prefer to arrange their own flights can opt for an \$1000 saving per person off the cruise price.

Itineraries include the 13-day Fascinating Vietnam, Cambodia & Mekong River tour between Ho Chi Minh City and Siem Reap, including the Cu Chi Tunnels, Phnom Penh and the iconic temples of Angkor Wat.

Prices start from \$6159 ppts. call 1300 230 234 to make a booking.

## Scenic Amber christening



**SCENIC** Amber has been christened by her Godmother, US cruise consultant Angela Turen, at a special ceremony in the Austrian town of Passau on ANZAC Day.

The ceremony was attended by media and travel industry leaders from Australia, New Zealand, UK and North America.

The 85-cabin vessel is the sister ship to *Scenic Jasper* and *Opal* which both launched last year.

The vessels are the first in the fleet to feature a heated vitality pool plus the largest suites on the rivers - the 44m<sup>2</sup> Royal Panorama Suites and the Royal Suite which boasts 33m<sup>2</sup> of space.

Scenic Founder and Chairman Glen Moroney, as well as representatives from the specialist river cruise shipyard Den Breejen and Austrian dignitaries and tourism officials all attended the event.

Angela christened *Scenic Amber* with the customary breaking of a

champagne bottle over the bow as she officially named the ship.

"We are proud to launch our third next-generation Scenic Space-Ship on Europe's waterways," Moroney said.

**Pictured** is Godmother Angela Turen together with Captain Laszlo Somlovary.

**MEANWHILE** *Scenic Sapphire*, *Diamond*, *Ruby* and *Pearl* have all been refurbished to be brought up to same standard as the line's next-generation Space-Ships.

Space-Ships *Scenic Jasper*, *Opal* and *Amber* feature new reception areas with more space, marble fittings, new staircases and refreshed artwork.

The air-conditioning, ceilings, exhaust systems and sound insulation have also been updated as part of stage one of the refit.

Stage two of the upgrades is set to take place at the end of the river cruising season and will see the bathrooms refitted.



**WOULD** you still be captivated by a sinking *Titanic* without the romantic drama of Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet attached to it?

Just when we thought every possible angle attached to the *Titanic* sinking had been covered a new animated video has been released on YouTube showing the entire sinking of the ill-fated ship in real time.

It takes a while for a ship of her size to sink with the clip stretching over a period of two hours and 40 minutes.

Eerie, largely silent and strangely mesmerising, viewers are commenting they couldn't look away and watched the lengthy video in full.

The animation is narrated only by the occasional fact written across the screen or the harrowing cries of passengers.

Just before the ship fully submerges at 2:20am the *Titanic* snap in half while passengers scream.

The brains behind the work is gaming company Titanic Honor & Glory which plans to use virtual reality to create a video game set on board the *Titanic*.

More than six million people have watched the animation. You can check it out **HERE**.



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## Pacific Eden officers march



**P&O Cruises' Pacific Eden** captain Gavin Pears and the ship's senior officers participated in Fremantle's ANZAC Day Parade on Mon, joining the local community in commemorating the ANZAC tradition of service and sacrifice during the ship's day in port.

Captain Pears thanked the city of Fremantle and the Fremantle RSL Sub Branch for inviting the *Pacific Eden* contingent to be part of the commemoration in the city where the ship is homeported for a three-month season.

"Participation in the Anzac Day commemoration is an opportunity to remember in particular the service of members of the merchant navy, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice in keeping shipping routes open at a time of great peril at sea," captain Pears said.

Anzac Day was marked on all

five ships in the fleet with a Dawn Service held on each, including the sounding of the Last Post, a minute's silence & casting a remembrance wreath on the sea.

**Pictured** above P&O *Pacific Eden* captain Gavin Pears salutes as he marches in Fremantle.

## New dining on QM2

**CUNARD** will be introducing new dining options as well as refreshing the liner's existing restaurants during *Queen Mary 2's* major refit in Jun.

A new Carinthia Lounge will feature on board the vessel serving breakfast and lunch options plus coffee.

Menus in the existing Britannia Restaurant, Golden Lion pub and the afternoon tea at the Veuve Clicquot Champagne Bar, will all be refreshed.

## Sirena's christening

**OCEANIA** Cruises officially welcomed its newest ship, *Sirena* into the fleet yesterday with a christening ceremony in the Port of Barcelona where the ship's godmother Claudine Pépin cracked champagne over the hull.

The 684-passenger ship has four gourmet restaurants, six lounges and bars, the renowned Canyon Ranch SpaClub and 342 suites and staterooms.

Before entering service, the ship underwent a \$50m refurbishment to renovate all public spaces and accommodation.

## Conservation cruise

**RENOWNED** scientist and conversationalist Dr Biruté Mary Galdikas will guest lecture on *Silver Discoverer's* 18 Oct expedition cruise.

The 11-day voyage from Balikpapan to Singapore sails via Indonesia stopping at Tanjung Puting National Park and Camp Leakey operated by Dr Galdikas' non-profit Orangutan Foundation International.

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## Princess Cairns berth

**PRINCESS** Cruises' three Australian-based ships – *Sun Princess*, *Sea Princess* and *Dawn Princess* will dock at Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal from 08 Jun.

It comes after new simulator exercises showed the vessels can safely navigate the channel to the city's harbour.

Passengers can now access Cairns without transferring by tender boats from Yorkeys Knob.

*Dawn Princess* will be the first to dock there followed by a further 16 calls between Sep 2016 and 2017.

## ACA Update



Jill Abel - CEO



## Creative packages

IT'S always exciting to see our members coming up with creative ways to work with cruise lines resulting in a win for everyone. Great Southern Rail (GSR) is a terrific example of how land & sea activities can successfully come together as evidenced in their recent announcement to package a fly-cruise- rail-and- stay holiday which offers the Ghan from Darwin to Adelaide before a 12-nigt cruise on *Celebrity Solstice* to New Zealand.

Damien Wolff, from GSR said "Journeys aboard The Ghan & Indian Pacific, where dining, beverages and touring are all-inclusive, match seamlessly with the "unpack-once" cruise experience."

This recent package fits into an overall cruise partnership strategy adopted previously by GSR seeing the company actively pursuing innovative opportunities with the cruise lines which in turn provide new itineraries.

"With our three trains either beginning or ending their journeys in Perth, Darwin, Adelaide, Melbourne or Sydney, rail travel offers a fun and convenient pre or post cruise connector. And as ACA advocates for the growth of regional ports, so the opportunities broaden," Wolff added.

We are hoping this model will inspire other companies to follow suit. Destination/cruise partnerships will be on the agenda for the ACA conference this year which will be held in Sydney in September.

The theme is "Celebrating 20 years of member contribution to the cruise industry" with registrations open late May.

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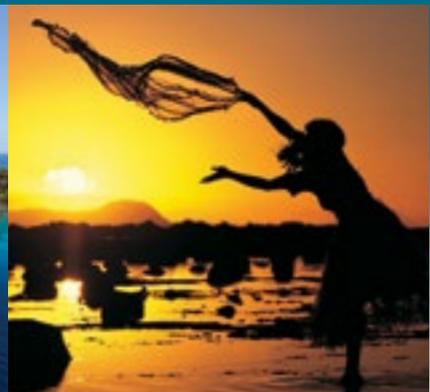
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