

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 08 Dec 2016

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from AA Appointments.

NCL booking platform

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has added a new payment feature to make it easier for agents to make bookings in Australian dollars.

The eNett payment feature allows agents to move funds in either direction using credit, charge and debit processing and integrates accounts payable and receivable in one system.

To use the feature for booking, visit www.norwegiancentral.com.

To register for the portal, travel agents should email salesupportaunz@ncl.com.

Cuba approval bonanza

CUBAN authorities have granted approval for Royal Caribbean International, Azamara Club Cruises and all three of Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings' (NCLH) brands to begin operating cruises to Cuba.

Both will comply with current US regulation which allows US travel companies to transport approved travellers to Cuba with the purpose of offering "people-to-people" experiences.

NCLH said it will become the first US cruise operator to have its full portfolio of brands approved to sail to Cuba and plans to start cruising to the destination from PortMiami on Oceania Cruises' *Marina* on 07 Mar.

Frank Del Rio, president and chief executive officer of NCLH said "As a Cuban-American and founder of Oceania Cruises, I am incredibly proud that one of Oceania's vessels will be our company's first to sail to Cuba.

Select Caribbean itineraries will feature calls on Havana, including many multiple-day calls.

Regent Seven Seas' *Seven Seas Mariner* will call on Havana during two cruises in April 2017 and *Norwegian Sky* will offer four-day voyages that will overnight in Havana in May 2017.

Full itinerary details and on sale dates for voyages that call on Cuba will be available tomorrow for Oceania Cruises, later this month for Regent Seven

Seas Cruises and on 20 Dec for Norwegian Cruise Line.

RCL said it plans to announce its first Florida-Cuba itineraries "in the near future".

Richard D. Fain, chairman and chief executive officer of Royal Caribbean Cruises said "Our discussions with our travel partners indicate that Cuba is a destination that appeals to a new generation of travellers".

MEANWHILE, Carnival Corporation is yet to make an announcement on their request to sail to Cuba with other brands from Jun after revealing last month Fathom will hand back its only ship, *Adonia* to P&O Cruises UK next year (**CW** 24 Nov).

The *Wall Street Journal* is reporting Pearl Sea Cruises is also expected to obtain approval.

No Turkey for Cunard

CUNARD has decided to remove Turkey from all 2017 itineraries, "based upon various sources including advice given by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office".

The Turkish ports have been replaced with either Greek ports or Sarande, in Albania.

Earlier this year cruise lines including Crystal Cruises, MSC Cruises, Celebrity Cruises and Windstar rerouted itineraries which were scheduled to call into Turkey due to security concerns.

Princess shore thing

A **NEW** Best Price Guarantee has been introduced by Princess Cruises on thousands of tour options in ports the cruise line visits around the globe.

The initiative, rolled out across Princess Cruise' entire fleet, guarantees if guests find the same shore excursion elsewhere at a lower price, they will receive 110% of the difference back in the form of on board credit.

Guests who lock in an excursion pre-cruise and find an equivalent option at a lower price can email a request at least seven days prior to their voyage to have the tour assessed under the Best Price Guarantee criteria.

The policy is excluded from Asia, Southeast Asia and Japan ports and excludes private excursions.

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Princess cut short

A **GRAND Princess** sailing has been cut short after a tender platform opened “for reasons yet unknown,” 10 days into her planned 15-day itinerary.

The incident occurred while the Princess ship was at sea after departing from Maui, Hawaii.

The platform was damaged such that it could not be closed and the hull sustained minor localised damage, which was secured.

The captain confirmed the ship was safe and secure and *Grand Princess* returned to Honolulu to initiate repairs on 05 Dec.

Grand Princess will go into an already scheduled dry dock.

RCL’s big dividend

ROYAL Caribbean Cruises shareholders will be jolly these holidays, with the Board of Directors declaring a quarterly dividend of \$0.48 per common share, to be paid on 05 Jan to shareholders of record at the close of business on 21 Dec.

CMP larger ships

LARGER cruise ships will be able to call into the city of Malmö after the Swedish Maritime Administration gave the plan its tick of approval.

Previously ships exceeding 240m were not permitted to visit the port.

Port operators had extensive simulations conducted this year to test whether it is possible for Malmö to receive larger ships, with very positive results.

Scotland record

SCOTLAND will achieve another record-breaking cruise season in 2017, with the destination more than doubling the number of cruise calls and passengers in less than a decade.

There are currently 808 ships booked to call in to Scotland in 2017, up 19.5% on 2016, with an anticipated 35% jump in the number of passengers to around 656,000, according to Cruise Scotland stats.

Alaskan Dream visits Oz



VISIT Anchorage and its Alaskan delegation were in Australia last week, joined for the first time by small ship operator Alaskan Dream Cruises.

The team zipped through Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, training around 140 agents before heading across the ditch to Auckland in New Zealand.

Marsha Barton, Visit Anchorage tourism sales manager told **CW** the increase in capacity in Alaska by lines (such as Princess Cruises) was due to strong demand.

“The cruise ships wouldn’t be coming and they wouldn’t be sending more ships if they didn’t think they could fill them...I think we can honestly say that judging

by all the ships that they’re sending, business is very good.”

The Anchorage season runs mid-May to mid-Sep, during which most of the lodgings are “pretty much at capacity.”

“We’d really like to see develop...late season into early winter and then late winter into spring travel,” Barton said.

Pictured in Brisbane at the Flight Centre office are: Corey Marshall, Canuckiwi (representing Visit Anchorage from 01 Jan); Lou Larsson, Infinity Xtra; Tia Froehle, Visit Anchorage; Heather Dudick, Alaska Railroad; Marsha Barton, Visit Anchorage; Michelle Glass, Alaskan Dream Cruises and Kyle McDonnell, Major Marine.

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Electricity demand

DEPUTY Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese has renewed calls for ship-to-shore electricity supply at Sydney's White Bay terminal following the introduction of new fuel regulations designed to reduce cruise ship pollution.

The Federal Government this month agreed to new limits on the sulphur content of fuels used by passenger ships in Sydney Harbour, responding to concerns from neighbouring residents.

Carnival Australia and Royal Caribbean both said they had been operating with low-sulphur fuels already, voluntarily.

However Albanese, whose electorate of Grayndler includes residents surrounding White Bay, called on the NSW Government to move further by providing a direct electricity supply.

"Ship to shore power, which can eliminate the need for ships to burn fuel at all while berthed, can and must also be implemented at White Bay," he said.

Celestyal fourth Cuba

CYPRUS-BASED Celestyal Cruises has reached its fourth year of operation in Cuba.

The company sails to Cuba year-round, embarking each Mon from Havana and Fri from Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Itineraries include two days in Havana, with calls also at Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba.

Crystal show biz

THE lineup for Crystal Cruises' Film & Theatre Festival sailing inspired by Barbra Streisand has been unveiled.

Sailing the 19-day Panama Canal Adventure departing Los Angeles for New York on 30 Apr, 2017, guests will be privy to performances by Streisand tribute artist, Sharon Owens and hear stories from industry producers, songwriters, musicians, costumers and photographers who have worked with the artist.

CLICK HERE for more.

Ovation's Aussie firsts



ROYAL Caribbean's *Ovation of the Seas* is cruising towards Adelaide after making a spectacular Australian debut in Fremantle on Tuesday.

The US\$1 billion megaliner was met by water cannons and hundreds of onlookers as it made its first call down under, staying overnight before sailing for the SA capital where it is due on Sun.

The superliner will arrive at its new homeport of Sydney on 15 Dec, marking the beginning of a season worth \$35 million to the Australian economy.

Ovation of the Seas is the fourth largest cruise ship in the world and the biggest to visit Australia. It becomes Royal Caribbean's

fifth locally-based cruise ship, joining sister ships *Voyager of the Seas*, *Explorer of the Seas*, *Radiance of the Seas* and *Legend of the Seas*, and making Royal Caribbean the single largest cruise line operating in Australia this season.

Carnival HRC score

CARNIVAL Corporation has received a perfect score from the Human Rights Campaign in the Corporate Equality Index, which rates US companies on their treatment of LGBTQ consumers, investors and employees.

It's the 3rd year in a row Carnival has been recognised by HRC.




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Ms Hanseatic stays

HAPAG-LLOYD'S expedition ship, *Ms Hanseatic* will now remain in the line's fleet for an extra six months until Sep 2018.

The extension largely bridges the gap before the German cruise line introduces its two new expedition ships in Apr 2019 and Oct 2019.

Oceania tapas menus

NEW evening tapas menus are being introduced in Oceania Cruises' Terrace Café.

More than five-dozen dishes are on the reworked menus including seafood tapas, crudités and small dishes served in tasting spoons.

The offering was created by the line's culinary team.

ATAC team on the Irrawaddy



TOP-PERFORMERS from the Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) joined a cruise on Myanmar's Irrawaddy River recently, hosted by Buffalo Tours and The Strand Hotel and its new ship *The Strand Cruise*.

Pictured from left are: Kenneth Morgan, Two's a Crowd; Susan Ritter, Travel Plus; Leanne Russell, Colac Travel; Georgina Randall, ATAC; Janene Rubens, The Travel Store; Gillian Mills, Maleny Travel; Andrew Mevissen, Cruise Express; Jemma Doidge, Meridian Travel; Matthew Edwards, Buffalo Tours and Virginia Paton, National Warrnambool Travel.

Jamaica arrivals

JAMAICA welcomed a combined total of six cruise ships this week in the ports of Falmouth, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Kingston.

The arrivals were a boost for the island's cruise industry and is only the second time in the past four years it has had so many cruise ships call in during one week.

Falmouth hosted *Harmony of the Seas*, *Thomson Dream* & *Aida Amar* sailed into Montego Bay, Ocho Rios welcomed *Norwegian Epic* & *Coral Princess* & Kingston saw the arrival of *Monarch*.



Standing Ovation

Exciting news for our industry and membership as we welcomed *Ovation of the Seas*, the largest, newest and most technologically advanced cruise ship to visit Australia, when she sailed into Fremantle on Tue.

Not only will *Ovation's* visit inject funds into the local Fremantle economy via passenger and crew spending and port costs but this visit is part of a larger picture for Western Australia where cruising is recognised as a vital part of their \$9.6 billion tourism industry. Last financial year the sector contributed \$275 million to the state's economy via 121 cruise ship visit days, a 198% increase on the year before.

This story will be repeated as *Ovation* completes her first Adelaide, Hobart, Sydney itinerary and more importantly stays in the country for the entire summer season.

The arrival of this first superliner is also a window into the future of our industry with 62% of cruise vessels arriving into the Australian market expected to be over 270 metres in length by 2020.

Our Association members including the port authorities, STOs and ground handlers for example have worked closely with Royal Caribbean to ensure our ports are ready to receive this superliner and to help organise welcome ceremonies and immersive shore excursions to greet the ship's 4,606 passengers and 1,500 crew. These mega ship arrivals require a whole of industry approach to ensure we are ready for these vessels and we are working with our members to support them as they plan for the future.



COSTA Cruises has made the highly-coveted claim to fame of being the "first company in the world to produce real Italian mozzarella directly on board".

While the buffalos and cows responsible for the curd will remain in the Italian province of Salerno, a machine on board will produce stretched curd, which is then rolled into a ball to create mozzarella or moulded by cheesemakers to become buffalo mozzarella.

Guests will be able to sink their teeth into the delicacy at Pummid'oro pizzerias.

The new service is already on *Costa Diadema* and *Costa Favolosa* and in the next few months will also arrive on six other ships.



The Auckland Hop On Hop Off Explorer bus departs from outside Princes Wharf.

(Next to I-site information centre)

[Click here for more details](#)

Cruise Weekly is Australia's leading travel industry cruise publication. An industry-focused PDF edition of *Cruise Weekly* is published every Tue and Thu, and there's also a consumer-facing email newsletter published each Wed - sign up free at www.cruiseweekly.com.au.

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

Street address: Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd, Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia

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

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Publisher/Editor in chief: Bruce Piper

Editorial: info@cruiseweekly.com.au

Managing Editor: Jon Murrie

Contributors: Guy Dundas, Jenny Piper, Nathalie Craig, Bonnie Tai, Jasmine O'Donoghue

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan, Melanie Tchakmadjian advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au

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

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