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CRUISE



WEEKLY



Thursday 03 Aug 2017

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a front cover page from **HAL**.

Costa sells neoClassica

COSTA Cruises has confirmed *Costa neoClassica*, one of its longest-serving ships, will leave the fleet after it concludes its schedule of cruises between India and the Maldives on 10 Mar.

Costa neoRiviera will replace *Costa neoClassica* from Jun, offering one-week Greek Island sailings homeporting from Bari.

The cruise line said it would "protect" guests already booked on the vessels.

MEANWHILE, *Costa Victoria*, which has been operating mainly in China since 2012, will return to regular Med cruises in the northern summer next year.

Costa is awaiting arrival of four new ships, starting from 2019.

Victory finalises Cuba

VICTORY Cruise Lines (VCL) has finalised its berth arrangements in Cuba and will begin sailing to the destination in Feb.

The new player in the cruise market has released 13-, 14- and 15-night cruises including circumnavigations of the country.

Victory Cruise Lines' *Victory I* will operate six Cuban cruises this upcoming season and will embark on its inaugural sailing to the Caribbean country on 08 Feb.

The 14-night maiden itinerary includes overnight calls at Havana, Santiago de Cuba and Trinidad, with day calls at Cienfuegos and Maria la Gorda.

Bruce Nierenberg, president and ceo of Victory Cruise Lines said no cruise product had as many multiday stops in Cuba as *Victory I*.

"What also distinguishes Victory Cruise Lines from other operators in Cuba is our intimate, classically

furnished *Victory I*, which offers the finest dining and highest service levels in the market," Nierenberg said.

"Add to that our immersive shore excursions and creative port experiences and our guests will have an unmatched opportunity to really get to know the culture and people of this undiscovered region and largest country in the Caribbean."

VCL's voyages will sail roundtrip from Miami and end the season with an 11-day Cuba and Colonial America repositioning cruise which starts with a flight from Miami to Havana and sails to Portland, Maine.

It will be followed by another 11-day voyage from Portland to Toronto for a summer season between Toronto and Chicago.

VCL recently announced it had acquired a second ship, to begin sailing in May 2018 (**CW** 27 Jul).

Cunard weddings

CUNARD is now accepting wedding bookings for same-sex couples after a Supreme Court ruling enabled same-sex marriages in Bermuda, where Cunard's ships are registered.

Couples can book a Cunard Wedding at Sea package, where ceremonies will be performed by the ship's Captain & the marriage license will be issued by Bermuda.

The move makes Cunard one of the first British cruise lines to be able to conduct same-sex wedding ceremonies at sea.

P&O Cruises UK will also offer same-sex weddings, with seven of its ships registered in Bermuda.

P&O's first same-sex marriage will reportedly take place in Jan.

P&O Cruises Australia confirmed to **Cruise Weekly** that it was unaffected by the change, as it was bound by current marriage legislation in Australia, which currently does not allow for same sex marriage.

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Learn what's on the horizon for river cruising in 2018 in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin



RCL's smashing Q2 result

IT'S smooth sailing at Royal Caribbean Cruises according to the company's latest results, which brought in its highest second quarter earnings.

Royal Caribbean Cruises reported a net income of US\$369.5m for the quarter ending 30 Jun, up a whopping US\$139.6m on the same period last year.

Jason T. Liberty, executive vice president and cfo said "Demand has remained strong, and we have captured the related revenue opportunity".

Liberty said the demand trends and "continued cost discipline" had put the company in position for another record year.

The company's booked position for the remainder of 2017 continues to set new records and it said bookings for the next 12 months were strong, up on both rate and volume, versus the same time last year.

During the quarter, the company's capacity dipped 4%, with overall capacity changes for full year 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 expected to be -1.9%, 3.3%, 6.6%, 3.9% and 7.9%, respectively.

The better-than-anticipated results prompted an upgrade full year adjusted EPS guidance to US\$7.35-\$7.45, up \$0.30 at the midpoint on previous guidance.

GC terminal plans

THE Gold Coast Council has confirmed the Queensland Premier's termination of the proposed ASF development on the Gold Coast Spit on Mon are separate to its plans for a Gold Coast Cruise Terminal.

"We are building a business case now that we hope to present to the State Government in early 2018," a spokesperson for the City of Gold Coast told **CW**.

Scenic Middle East

SCENIC has released its first tours dedicated to the Middle East since 2013 in its new Ancient Wonders of Egypt and Jordan 2018/2019 brochure.

The 11-day Treasures of Egypt packs in a four-night private charter on the 36-pax *Sanctuary Sun Boat III* from Luxor to Aswan.

The 10-day Kingdom of Jordan Unveiled can be completed as a standalone tour, or combined with Egypt as the 20-day Essence of Egypt and Jordan.

To view the brochure online, **CLICK HERE**.

U Guardian Angel

U BY Uniworld has done away with a traditional "godmother" for a ship and named model and philanthropist Petra Nemcova as the brand's "Guardian Angel".

The Czech model founded the Happy Hearts Fund after she survived the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, and U by Uniworld will support the non-profit ahead of the brand's launch.

Fiona Dalton, managing director of Uniworld Australia said "rather than following the traditional 'Godmother' path for each ship, we've decided to pave our own way and it's a concept that will make history".

"Petra is the perfect representative of our new brand; she's smart, ambitious and has a kind adventurous spirit."

Nemcova will be on board the "sneak peek" U sailing in Oct.

Pacific Eden's new look



P&O Cruises' *Pacific Eden* will sport two refurbished entertainment venues when she begins her Cairns cruise season.

The vessel is currently undergoing a 12-day dry dock in Singapore and her Marquee Show Lounge is receiving a fresh black, white and emerald-green colour scheme, custom wallpaper and artworks (render pictured below).

The Dome is also being fitted with a nautical theme with dark navy blue and white hues, drapes and soft lighting (above).

Select mini-suites and balcony cabins will receive new carpets and outdoor furniture while the cinema, spa, gym and HQ and HQ Plus will also be revitalised.

Eden will emerge from dry dock on 10 Aug.



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STX nationalised

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron has nationalised the country's biggest shipyard at St Nazaire to prevent its takeover by Italian firm Fincantieri.

The STX shipyard, builder of the world's largest cruise ship *Harmony of the Seas*, has been under a cloud since last year's collapse of its Korean owner.

Viking 20 years sale

VIKING Cruises has launched a two-month celebration sale to mark its 20th anniversary.

Until 30 Sep, options include the 13-day In Search of the Northern Lights itinerary from \$7,995ppts, the 15-day Viking Homelands from \$10,295ppts, & the 21-day Passage to India from \$11,095ppts.

Hunter Travel grows

HUNTER Travel Group (HTG), operator of Cruise Travel Centre (CTC), has expanded its retail footprint and purchased a 75% stake in Helloworld Travel's seven wholly owned retail outlets.

The stores are Maroochydore (Qld), Knox Westfield and Toorak (Vic), Eastgardens and Paramatta Westfields (NSW), Canberra City (ACT) and Bunbury (WA).

HTG ceo Brett Dann told **CW** there were no plans to convert any of the seven stores to CTCs.

Helloworld Travel has also purchased a minority shareholding in HTG.

HTG already operates two CTCs and seven fully branded Helloworld Travel stores in the Hunter and surrounding areas, along with a CTC in Hobart and eight Royal Automobile Club of Tasmania (RACT) travel outlets.

Carnival's ice cream

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has introduced new frozen treats aboard *Carnival Vista* to mark the United States' "National Ice Cream Sandwich Day" and will add them to *Carnival Horizon* when it debuts next year.

The hand-made ice cream sandwiches are available in the Cherry on Top shop.

MEANWHILE, Carnival is offering a last-minute deal on its four-night Moreton Is itinerary on *Spirit* departing Sydney 17 Aug, with reduced fares and up to \$200 on board credit per cabin.

Crystal Skye debuts

CRYSTAL has extended cruising into the upper atmosphere with the addition of Crystal Skye to its fleet - a specially fitted Boeing 777-200LR aircraft to operate its Crystal AirCruises.

The aircraft is the largest privately owned tour jet in the world and will be christened on 12 Aug before its deployment on luxury charter services.

Handed over at a ceremony in Seattle on Tue, the plane has 88 lie-flat seats, a 24-seat lounge and stand-up bar, plus "the largest wine cellar in the sky".

Aurora earlybird

AURORA Expeditions is offering savings of up to 20% on its newly released 2019 programs.

Valid across 2018/19 Antarctica, European Arctic Scotland and Kimberley Coast itineraries, the deals are available on select departures when booked by 30 Sep, 2017.

Further bonus offers are available for passengers who book back-to-back cruises.



CLIA Exec Partner update

WE are delighted to welcome Wendy Wu on board as a CLIA Executive Partner, and we are looking forward to working with them to open up their products to Australasian cruise specialists.

Wendy Wu joins 335 global Executive Partner members who have seen the value of a strategic partnership with the cruise industry.

Our growing industry provides extraordinary opportunities for suppliers and service providers, and the Executive Partner programme is an excellent forum for those companies seeking opportunities to build relationships with cruise line decision makers and/or with CLIA travel agency and individual agent members.

For more information on the CLIA Executive Partner programme visit www.cruising.org.au.

Last Cruise360 Tickets

Since my last column two weeks ago we have seen unprecedented demand for Cruise360 tickets, and we are approaching the maximum number of delegates we can accommodate. If you are planning to join us at the Hyatt Regency Sydney on 25 Aug and don't yet have your ticket, you should visit cruising.org.au and book your ticket now. Whether you're new to the industry and looking to improve your cruise sales skills, or a veteran looking to take the next step, don't miss out!



PORTHOLE

P&O Cruises' Pacific Explorer had a pair of stowaways to contend with yesterday when a couple of unexpected guests arrived on the bridge.

Two colourful lorikeets bypassed check-in and security procedures to join Captain Roger Bilton (**pictured**) at the helm ahead of the ship's departure, but later decided a life at sea wasn't their thing.

HAL choc surprise

HOLLAND America Line is taking a fresh approach to the dessert buffet, having introduced a new "chocolate parade" on the last gala evening of its cruises across its fleet.

The nearly hour-long offering will see waiters parade through the Promenade decks with trays of chocolate desserts (**pictured**).

Menu items include chocolate cones with lemon curd, bittersweet chocolate and butter cream and chocolate macaroons.

