

The Goldman Group plots Cruise Centre growth

THE Goldman Group has today announced the acquisition of The Cruise Centre, with the company saying it expects to take the Brisbane-based brand into other states in the near future.

Goldman Group joint managing director Anthony Goldman told **Cruise Weekly** he was thrilled at the move, which continues a strongly cruise-focused leisure strategy for the company, which also operates the Sydney-based Goldman Travel Corporation and Travel Phase, Melbourne's Travelcall, Quintessentially Travel Australia and the Smartflyer home-based network.

"A couple of years ago we decided to concentrate on cruise," he said, with the fast-growing sector seen as offering strong opportunities for the business.

The vendor of The Cruise Centre is Savenio, and the deal will also see the eight-consultant agency

switch to Helloworld Travel from its current affiliation with Travellers Choice.

Joint managing director at The Cruise Centre, Elizabeth Clarke, will join Goldman to ensure a seamless transition of the business from Savenio.

Goldman Group exec chairman Tom Goldman said "with Australia currently the fifth largest source market for cruises globally, building upon our cruise business was a priority for the group this year, alongside increased marketing and sales activity across all our travel businesses."

"This acquisition will position us as a major player in the premium and luxury cruising space, adding in-depth expertise and invaluable first hand cruising experience of The Cruise Centre's consultants," he added.

Goldman said the company was looking forward to rolling



out The Cruise Centre brand in both Victoria and NSW in the near future "and to servicing and growing our cruise clientele nationwide".

The acquisition includes The Cruise Centre brand itself, which has been trademarked, Anthony Goldman told **Cruise Weekly**.

He noted it was a strong fit for the company, with both businesses part of Virtuoso.

The Goldman Group has been awarded top Virtuoso agency in Australia and NZ for the last three years, while The Cruise Centre

is "widely respected as one of Australia's leading boutique cruise agencies," Goldman said.

The expansion into Brisbane will also provide a Queensland base for Goldman's strong corporate business, he added.

Anthony & Tom Goldman are pictured with David Goldman, joint managing director.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features six pages of all the latest cruise industry news.



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Aurora giveaway

AURORA Expeditions is giving away a trip for two this week on board one of its 2018 expedition departures worth up to US\$21,200.

The lucky winner will have the choice between an 18-day In Shackleton's Footsteps itinerary, departing 07 Mar or a 15-day Sub-Antarctic Safari leaving on 24 Mar.

See **page six** for details.

Lindblad Sth Pac 2018



LINDBLAD Expeditions is this week launching its French Polynesia and South Pacific 2018 program to the Aussie trade, offering one- and two-week voyages from Mar-Aug.

In Australia to launch the new brochure, Lesa Bain vp of sales Nth America, Lindblad Expeditions, said the five itineraries were designed to provide "a very different experience" of the region, striving to "get people out of the normal".

Key to this was Lindblad's ability to "go off script", allowing its guests the flexibility to explore a little atoll, or take the time to experience a rare wildlife sighting, should they be presented with the opportunity, she explained.

A highlight of the new additions is the 18-day Easter Island to Tahiti: Tales of the Pacific, which includes exploration of the difficult-to-access Pitcairn Islands, where passengers can meet the residents and hike in the virtually untouched Henderson Island.

Each itinerary has been designed for the 102-passenger *National Geographic Orion*, which will have two divers in residence, allowing for daily dives from

the ship, as well as a National Geographic photographer.

Bain said the ship's technology and equipment, including a glass-bottom zodiac, "open up a 360 degree view of the places".

"We understand we're sitting on a huge living organism and we want people to understand that."

Rodriguez Ponant

PONANT has nabbed Crystal Cruises' former ceo and pres, Edie Rodriguez, naming her as its Americas brand chairman & corporate special advisor.

Rodriguez will be tasked with increasing Ponant's brand awareness in the Americas, especially with professional networks including travel agencies, media, influencers, and prospective passengers.

She will also work to increase sales and with Ponant's corporate headquarter teams "on several new projects".

"I am proud to help the Ponant brand achieve recognition and realise its ambitions for growth in USA and the Americas at the level it deserves," Rodriguez said.

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Jewel open for 2018/19



Eclipse incentive

SCENIC is offering 17 agents the chance to be among the first in the world to experience *Scenic Eclipse*.

A spot on the ship's seven-night South America Coastline Cruise from Guayaquil in Ecuador to Valparaiso in Chile, dep 16 Nov 2018 will go to the 10 Aussie and Kiwi agents who make the highest deposited sales across all Scenic products between 01 Jul 17-30 Jun 18.

They will be joined by the top seven *Scenic Eclipse* sellers - one from NSW/ACT, Qld, Vic, Tas, SA/NT, WA and NZ.

Scenic national sales manager Rob Kalembe said "this is a great opportunity for agents who may not have previously had reason to sell Scenic, or who are already specialists in ocean cruising, to look deeper into the unique offering which is *Scenic Eclipse*."

Queen Elizabeth '19

CUNARD has launched a series of Alaskan voyages for *Queen Elizabeth* in 2019.

The collection begins in May 2019, when the vessel will sail from Japan to Alaska and then remain in the region through to Jun.

Queen Elizabeth will then sail down the West Coast of the United States, through the Panama Canal to New York, on to Iceland and the British Isles.

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has opened bookings for the 2018/19 Australia/NZ season aboard *Norwegian Jewel* which will be back in local waters for her second season, fresh from a multi-million dollar upgrade.

The 2018/19 season includes a 19-day trans-Pacific voyage from Vancouver to Tokyo via Alaska and Russia; a 19-day cruise to Australia from Singapore via Bali

and Komodo Island; and a new 13-day South Pacific itinerary.

There will also be a series of sailings in and around Australia and New Zealand, including a seven-day Tasmania cruise in the days leading up to Christmas.

The *Jewel* refurbishment is part of the 'Norwegian Edge' revitalisation program.

For more information or to book call 1300 255 200.

Royal incentive

ONLY one week remains to take part in Royal Caribbean Cruises' mega agent incentive.

Agents who register their eligible fully deposited bookings for Royal Caribbean Int'l, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises by 31 Oct will go in the draw for some great prizes - **CLICK HERE**.

Beyond launches new Russia Cruise site

BEYOND Travel is showcasing its range of river cruises in Russia via a new dedicated website, with the aim of assisting agents with client enquiries and bookings.

The site is now online at www.cruise-russia.com.au, and has been created following the success of Beyond Travel's other niche Cruise Croatia & India & Beyond websites which launched earlier this year.

The Cruise Russia site offers three categories of cruises - Deluxe, First Class and Standard - with most itineraries between the Russian capital of Moscow and St Petersburg, or on the Lower Volga river from Moscow to the Caspian Sea.



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Viking 6th ocean keel



THE official start of construction on Viking Cruises' sixth ocean vessel was marked with a keel laying ceremony at the Fincantieri shipyard in Ancona, Italy, last week.

As part of the event, the first building block, weighing 380 tonnes, was hoisted into a dry dock (pictured) where the

remainder of the 47,800 tonne vessel will be built.

Scheduled for delivery in 2019, the vessel will be in the small ship segment and will accommodate 930 passengers in 465 cabins.

A further two ships will follow the sixth vessel, for delivery in 2021 and 2022 respectively.



LINDBLAD Expeditions is officially launching its Explorations 2018/19 brochure to the Australian market this week, packing in seven new itineraries.

Among the new additions are the Tropical Andes and the Galapagos, Belize to Tikal: Reefs, Rivers & Ruins of the Maya World.

The brochure includes a "teaser" for Lindblad's plans to head to the Russian Far East and northernmost Alaska for the Jun-Sep season in 2019, with the team currently conducting "exploratory work".

Speaking to *Cruise Weekly*, Lesa Bain, vp of sales Nth America, Lindblad Explorations said there would probably be several different itineraries on offer.

Also in the program is Lindblad

Expeditions' new ship, *National Geographic Quest*, on Alaska itineraries, and the fresh addition in the Galapagos Islands, *National Geographic Endeavour*.

The ever-popular destination of Antarctica is also included.

Bain told *Cruise Weekly* expedition cruising had "really grown" over the last two years, adding that it was being reflected in "really strong growth" in sales.

She said the expedition cruising pax had diversified & urged agents to pitch it as an option to clients.

"Also have a look at clients that have an interest in things like photography or maybe they've done an African safari," she said.

Lindblad's Explorations & French Polynesia & South Pacific brox is being mailed to agents this week.

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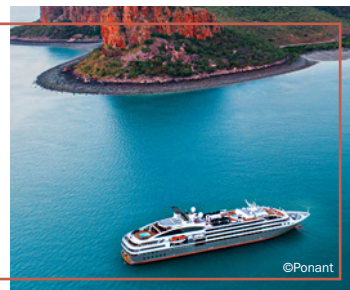
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Find out what changes to the law might mean for the cruise industry in the October issue of *travelBulletin*.

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Uniworld, Crystal on Odysseus



ODYSSEUS Solutions has announced new integrations with Uniworld Boutique River Cruises and Crystal Cruises, with inventory from both operators now connecting directly with the Odysseus platform via an API.

Distribution partners now have immediate access to Uniworld, U by Uniworld, Crystal Cruises, Crystal Yacht Cruises and Crystal River Cruises, bringing the Odysseus platform to a total of 28 cruise lines along with thousands of hotels and airlines which can be dynamically packaged.

Odysseus also offers live flight and hotel bookings via connections with all three major GDS as well as Expedia Affiliate Network & Tourico.

Odysseus founder Monish Luthra, who recently showcased the platform to Australian travel consultants in Sydney during the CLIA Australasia Cruise360

conference, said there had been a fantastic response to the product.

"We've talked with a lot of people recently and shown them the booking engine, what it can do, how easy and fast it is to use.

"It does a lot of things that others don't, and there's serious interest from a number of travel companies in Australia and Asia, which is where we've focused our sales efforts this year," he said.

Luthra said the company was gearing up to meet the demand, with the addition of twenty more software developers and support engineers taking total staff numbers beyond 100.

Miami-based Odysseus currently generates over 55,000 cruise and 300,000 flight bookings each year, with volume growing at a rate of 30% annually.

The Australian sales office for Odysseus is headed up by travel industry IT veteran Dave Upton.

Viking Alaska ext

VIKING Cruises has released two new cruise extensions for its Alaska & the Inside Passage ocean itinerary.

The first addition is the eight-day Canadian Rockies, which ventures to Banff National Park & includes a visit to Johnston Canyon, priced from \$5,339pp.

The second fresh offering is the seven-day Pristine Alaska, where guests will take a tram ride to the summit of Mt. Alyeska, stopping in Anchorage for a brief city tour and includes a jet boat ride.

It is priced from \$4,939pp.

MSC world cruise

MSC Cruises has unveiled its second world cruise, which will set sail in 2020 on *MSC Magnifica* and visit a total of 43 destinations.

The 116-night sailing offers four different embarkation ports of Civitavecchia/Rome, Genoa, Marseille and Barcelona on 04, 05, 06 and 07 Jan.

It will visit 23 countries, with its calls in Australia including Darwin, Sydney, Cairns, Hobart and Wollongong.

Sales for the world cruise will open 24 Nov.

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Aqua Mekong deal

AQUA Expeditions is offering a 30% reduction on selected *Aqua Mekong* voyages in 2018 and 2019.

The promotion is valid for three-, four- and seven-night itineraries from 01 May-27 Jul 2018 and 03 May-30 Jul 2019.

Prices start at US\$2,835pp for a three-night Discovery sailing.

Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY	
<i>Golden Princess</i>	25 Oct
<i>Carnival Legend</i>	26 Oct
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	28 Oct
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	28 Oct
<i>Explorer of the Seas</i>	29 Oct
<i>Celebrity Solstice</i>	30 Oct

MELBOURNE	
<i>Noordam</i>	24 Oct
<i>Golden Princess</i>	27 Oct

BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	27 Oct
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	28 Oct

CAIRNS	
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	24 Oct
<i>Maasdam</i>	27 Oct
<i>Sun Princess</i>	29 Oct
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	30 Oct

DARWIN	
<i>Sun Princess</i>	26 Oct

FREMANTLE	
<i>Voyager of the Seas</i>	28 Oct

HOBART	
<i>Noordam</i>	26 Oct
<i>Golden Princess</i>	29 Oct

Inspiration's keel laid

THE keel has been laid for *Hanseatic inspiration*, the second of two new expedition ships for Hapag-Lloyd Cruises currently under construction.

The cruise line's ceo, Karl J Pojer, placed a specially produced coin in the first steel block of what will become the ship's hull during a ceremony at the Vard shipyards in Romania last week.

Inspiration is expected to be handed over for her maiden voyage in Oct 2019.

She will be able to carry up to 230 guests or 199 guests on Antarctic cruises.



Hapag-Lloyd Cruises will launch the maiden brochure for *inspiration* in Jan 2018.

Pictured are Hapag-Lloyd Cruises ceo Karl Pojer and Vard snr vp and yard director general department Tudorel Topa.

Win an Aurora Expeditions cruise



This week, Aurora Expeditions is giving readers the chance to win a free trip for 2 onboard a 2018 expedition worth up to **US\$21,200** per person. You can choose from one of the below expeditions:

- 18 day "In Shackleton's Footsteps" 7-24 March 2018 – Wedell Sea, South Georgia & Falklands
- 15 day "Sub-Antarctic Safari" 24 March-7 April 2018 – Falkland Islands & South Georgia

To enter, tell us in 25 words or less why Aurora Expeditions is the perfect choice for your clients wanting an authentic, small ship expedition cruise to the Polar regions. The winner will have the most creative entry. Send your entry to auroraexpeditions@traveldaily.com.au

To improve your entry, here are some helpful research tools:

- Visit the website - auroraexpeditions.com.au
- Order your copy of the 18/19 expedition guide from Tifs - tifs.com.au



CCL Caribbean

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has released dates for its return to the remaining ports it hasn't visited since the Caribbean's recent hurricanes.

Visits to Grand Turk will resume 01 Nov with *Carnival Ecstasy*, while *Carnival Conquest* will be the first back in San Juan on 30 Nov.

St Thomas will welcome *Carnival Glory* on 09 Jan and *Carnival Sunshine* will call into St Maarten on 15 Jan.

Homeport operations from San Juan will kick off on 18 Feb when *Carnival Fascination* concludes its FEMA charter.



CARNIVAL Cruise Line's *Carnival Victory* has been swamped with cat ladies for the annual the Meow Meow Cruise, which departed from Miami, Florida yesterday.

The cruise is a gathering on water for cat lovers who could bear to leave their loved one at home, with cats not allowed on the ship.

Activities part of the sailing include Meow Meow Meet & Greet, Meow Meow Mixer, Meow Meow Group Dining, Meow Meow Trivia, and Meow Meow Scavenger Hunts.

To top it all off, the cat lovers all have T-shirts that include an image of their cat on the front.

The four-night sailing will visit Key West and Cozumel.