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AUSTRALIA'S PIONEERING CRUISE LINE

CRUISE

WEEKLY

On location in
Palermo, Sicily

Today's issue of CW is coming to you from the Sicilian city of Palermo courtesy of Silversea Cruises.

THE Fincantieri shipyards in Palermo provided the stage for a spectacular show of maritime engineering on the weekend as Silversea Cruises completed the task of cutting its *Silver Spirit* in two.

International guests were able to witness a complex manoeuvre as a new 15m section was inserted into the middle of the ship, and have been able to explore some of the sights of the city between enjoying the palatial halls and gardens of the waterfront Grand Hotel Villa Ignea.

Silversea extends its *Spirit* and appeal

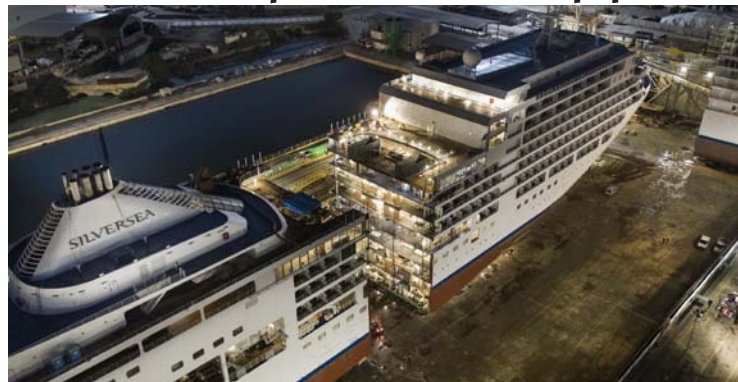
SILVERSEA Cruises is aiming to broaden its appeal among Babyboomers with a US\$70 million overhaul of its *Silver Spirit*, now undergoing a complex extension process in Sicily.

The line hosted international media and guests at the Fincantieri shipyards in Palermo on the weekend to see the ship cut in two and a new 15m section inserted into its middle.

The operation (pictured) will allow the addition of 34 new suites and four new dining concepts, while lifting the ship's capacity from 540 to 608 guests.

Silversea chief marketing officer Barbara Muckermann told **Cruise Weekly** the extension of *Spirit* was part of a strategy to strengthen the luxury line's appeal among Babyboomers.

"The most important thing for them is choice, luxury is really about choice," Muckermann said.



"That's why we're increasing the number of restaurants, we are increasing the variety of cabins to be able to accommodate all of their desires, and through the addition of ships we will increase the range of itineraries we can offer," she said.

Silver Spirit's complete refurbishment is designed to emulate the style of the line's flagship *Silver Muse*, which launched in Apr last year.

Muckermann said *Spirit* and *Muse* would become part of a trio of similar high-end ships with the launch of *Silver Moon* due in Jul 2020 - more on **page two**.

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features five pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a front cover wrap from **Coral Expeditions**.

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CRUISE



Tuesday 13th March 2018

Cruise Centre home move



THE Cruise Centre is making a move into the home-based space today revealing it would hire home-based cruise experts.

The boutique cruise agency was acquired by The Goldman Group last year (**CW** 24 Oct).

Goldman Group is planning to expand the Brisbane-based brand into Sydney and Melbourne, touting the recruitment of home-based consultants as “a pillar of this expansion”.

“Offering flexible work conditions enables The Cruise Centre to tap into cruise experts

regardless of where they are based,” explained Anthony Goldman, joint managing director of Goldman Group.

“When we acquired the brand, our goal was to expand in the near future, so we can service and grow our cruise clientele nationwide,” he added.

The company said cruise specialists would “work on their own terms but have the backing of the Goldman Group’s industry expertise, connections and buying power, without the need for a bricks-and-mortar shopfront”.

Crystal takes delivery of fourth river ship

CRYSTAL Cruises has taken delivery of its fourth river cruise ship, *Crystal Debussy* (render pictured), in a handover ceremony in Wismar, Germany.

The 106-guest ship will offer seven- and 10-day itineraries travelling along the Rhine and Moselle rivers, visiting Switzerland, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium.

Crystal Debussy’s maiden voyage will be a roundtrip from Amsterdam beginning on 09 Apr.

Crystal launched its river cruise experience in 2016 and will welcome another ship to the fleet next month called *Crystal Ravel*.



Unpack all of Carnival Australia’s recent announcements in the March issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin



Silver Spirit’s Sicilian slice



THE task of slicing *Silver Spirit* in two took just four days, but the construction of an entirely new 15m section of ship has been underway since Oct.

On Sun the new 1,000 tonne section was manoeuvred into position using a sophisticated system of computer-controlled jacks and rollers.

The ship will now be welded back together and given a bow-to-stern refit in time for its return to service on 06 May when *Spirit* will begin a seven-day cruise from Civitavecchia (Rome) to Barcelona.

More than 450,000 hours of labour will have gone into the project.

Pictured from top: *Silver Spirit* sliced in two at the Fincantieri shipyards in Sicily; workmen make the final cut; the new 15m section alongside the ship; and the new piece being inserted into the ship’s middle.



Two new Explorer ships in 2020, *Le Bellot* & *Le Surville*, will bring the PONANT fleet to 12 ships in 2021!

WATCH THE VIDEO ▶

AC's Aussie adventure



ECO-CRUISE company Adventure Canada is amidst its most extensive promotional visit to Australia.

This month the company will host a total of over 400 agents and their clients at Arctic travel seminars in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sydney.

Adventure Canada expedition leader and business development director MJ Swan told **Cruise Weekly** the company has witnessed

a "massive uptake" from Australian travellers in the past three years.

Swan attributed the boost to the company visiting "exciting destinations", including the "final frontier" of the Northwest Passage (pictured above) and the tendency for Australians and Canadians to travel well together.

Close to 70% of Adventure Canada's travellers are Canadian, and 10% are Aussies.

Montague drops by Oz



ITINERARIES for Regent Seven Seas Cruises' new ship, *Seven Seas Splendor* will be released next month, the line's president and ceo Jason Montague told **Cruise Weekly** yesterday.

Seven Seas Splendor will launch in Feb 2020 and be a sister ship to *Seven Seas Explorer*, but the pair will not be identical.

Montague explained that *Splendor* will have "some of her own look and feel".

"On *Splendor* we're taking a bit more of a lighter tone on the design so a bit more on the feminine side," he said.

The vessel will spend its maiden season venturing from Europe to explore the East Coast and West Coast of the United States, before heading back to Europe for the summer season of 2020.

"It gives us an opportunity to

look at one of our newer ships to potentially come over to these waters so that's something we could look at in the future."

Regent has drastically increased its presence in local waters since only spending two nights in the region in 2016, compared with a current schedule for 90 nights this year.

Montague attributed the increase to the opportunity the line is seeing in Australia.

Heaping praise on the Australian team and travel trade partners, he highlighted strong growth in the local market and a lot of demand for travel to Australia from other int'l source markets.

Pictured are: Jason Montague, Lisa Pile, vp sales Australia and New Zealand and Steve Odell, svp & md Asia Pacific Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings.

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SEABOURN®



U by Uniworld for all



U BY Uniworld's decision to remove its 21-45 year-old age restriction (**CW** Thu) was due to the company's commitment to listen to its consumer and agent base - not due to a lack of sales, and Fiona Dalton told **CW**.

"There are so many brands out there whose success has been completely reliant on their ability to evolve and innovate and that's exactly what we're doing at U by Uniworld," she explained.

"We have people knocking on our door that are 47 years of age that want to travel with us, that have a millennial mindset. Why would we not respond to that?"

Dalton said the cruise line had a "fantastic Feb" for sales.

U by Uniworld was initially sold as "the world's first millennial river cruise", but last week Dalton said the lifting of the age restriction had not resulted in cancelled bookings and the response was instead "overwhelmingly supportive".

"I'm thrilled that it has happened six weeks before we set sail, we've been able to make this decision now rather than halfway through the season," she said, acknowledging there had been pressure around the age limit "for some time".

Dalton identified the "late 20s to 50" as the "sweet spot" for passengers who will be travelling with U by Uniworld.

She noted many couples booked don't have kids and are both working or have young children

and have the opportunity to get away for a short time.

The sailings have also been popular with honeymooners and those on "girls trips".

Dalton said the removal of the age limit doesn't change the positioning of the line as the experience is unchanged.

"What we are offering on the rivers is so fundamentally different to everyone else today," she said.

"Originally U by Uniworld was really specific about defining our target market but we learned along the way that it's less about a number and more about attracting a whole new generation of adult travellers to river cruising."

Dalton said everything the line set out to achieve, from its experience through to its marketing was not changing, "we've just made a decision to lift the gated age restriction".

The cruise line will kick off its inaugural season next month, with a naming ceremony for its second ship, *The A*, which will cruise along the Rhine, Main and Danube rivers.

U by Uniworld held a preview sailing on its ship cruising on the Seine, *The B*, in Oct.

MEANWHILE, U by Uniworld has announced the opening of Nibugaun School in Nepal, following a US\$50,000 donation from the cruise brand to support the charity of the line's "guardian angel" Petra Nemcova.

Pacific Jewel's new look



P&O Cruises' Pacific Jewel has begun a 10-day makeover at Sydney's Garden Island which will introduce new features and furnishings.

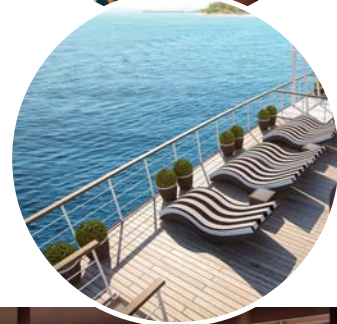
The ship will soon sport an outdoor barefoot lawn bowling green, similar to that introduced on *Pacific Explorer* last year (**right**).

Seafood, grill and vegetarian venue *Shell & Bones* will be added, and public areas will receive a contemporary look.

Connexions Bar will be fitted with a summer-inspired pub theme with printed fabrics and botanical patterns similar to *The Explorer Hotel* on *Pacific Explorer* (**above**).

Pacific Jewel's cafe will be given a light, bright and beachy feel (**middle right**) and *The Oasis* will feature new lounge-beds (**right**).

The Atrium will also be revamped (**below**) and she will receive Southern Cross livery.





Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY

<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	13 Mar
<i>Sea Princess</i>	14 Mar
<i>Noordam</i>	15 Mar
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	15 Mar
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	17 Mar
<i>Sun Princess</i>	17 Mar
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	17 Mar
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	18 Mar
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	18 Mar
<i>Explorer of the Seas</i>	19 Mar

MELBOURNE

<i>Explorer of the Seas</i>	14 Mar
<i>Golden Princess</i>	15 Mar
<i>Carnival Legend</i>	16 Mar
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	17 Mar
<i>Carnival Legend</i>	19 Mar

BRISBANE

<i>Seven Seas Voyager</i>	13 Mar
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	16 Mar
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	17 Mar

CAIRNS

<i>Azamara Journey</i>	13 Mar
<i>L'Austral</i>	15 Mar
<i>Seven Seas Voyager</i>	16 Mar
<i>Sea Princess</i>	18 Mar

DARWIN

<i>Queen Mary 2</i>	17 Mar
<i>Azamara Journey</i>	18 Mar

ADELAIDE

<i>Golden Princess</i>	17 Mar
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HOBART

<i>Pacific Eden</i>	14 Mar
<i>Explorer of the Seas</i>	16 Mar

AUCKLAND

<i>Diamond Princess</i>	13 Mar
<i>Sun Princess</i>	13 Mar

RCI releases Europe '19



ROYAL Caribbean International has revealed its 2019 Europe sailings, which suggest *Explorer of the Seas* (pictured) may not return to Australia in Nov 2019.

Instead of its usual northern summer home of Alaska, *Explorer of the Seas* will replace *Navigator of the Seas* sailing from Southampton, England during the period, before heading to Miami on 05 Nov.

The move will see the vessel operate a World Journey between Sydney and Southampton.

Ovation of the Seas will take *Explorer's* place in Alaska, sailing seven-night itineraries out of Seattle, Washington.

Last year RCI announced it would base only three ships in Australia in 2018/19 due to port

congestion, down from five in the 2016/17 season (**CW** 27 Apr).

Royal Caribbean told **CW** there are no plans to reduce the size of its Australian fleet in the 2019/20 season, when compared with its 2018/19 deployment.

This indicates RCI will have at least three ships in local waters in 2019/20.

The line currently has slots booked at Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal for *Explorer of the Seas* from 28 Nov 2019, along with spaces for *Ovation*, *Radiance* and *Voyager* during the season.

RCI's 2019/20 local season will be announced next month.

During the 2019 season *Independence of the Seas* will continue to call into Southampton, England.

Viking launches 2019 river cruise brochure

VIKING Cruises has released its river cruise brochure for 2019, covering Central Europe, France, Portugal, Russia, China, Southeast Asia, Ukraine and Egypt.

Two new itineraries in the program include the eight-day Rhone Explorer, roundtrip from Lyon, and the 10-day Holland and Belgium in Bloom, from Amsterdam to Antwerp or vice versa.

Following feedback from agents, the brochure now features extra space for more in-depth itineraries and a stronger focus on Viking's range of pre- and post-cruise extensions.

For more information, see vikingrivercruises.com.au.

Fremantle upgrade

THE West Australian Government has revealed the Fremantle Passenger Terminal will undergo a \$3m upgrade.

The facility will receive a new central canopy, repainted facade, updated signage and new flagpoles and banners.

Upgrades to the inside of the terminal will include refurbishing the ground floor foyer, new security screens and fresh furniture for the transit area in the first-floor function hall.

Works are expected to begin this month with completion in time for the 2018/19 season.



THE grandson of legendary French naval officer and author Jacques Cousteau has been giving lectures on why we should all care about exploring the depths of the ocean.

Fabien Cousteau (pictured) said that although water covers more than 70% of the Earth's surface "it actually represents over 99% of the world's living space when you take the third dimension into account".

