

Cruise Weekly today

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

Avalon's new ship

AVALON Waterways has revealed plans for a new suite ship, which will debut in 2020.

Avalon View will mark the cruise operator's 14th Suite Ship in Europe and its 16th worldwide, and is set to feature two full decks measuring 18m², as well as the industry's only open-air balconies.

Avalon View will offer guests a range of accommodation options, including two Royal Suites, 65 Panorama Suites, and 16 staterooms.

She will sail on itineraries along the Rhine River.

For more info, call Avalon Waterways on 1300 230 234.

CMV confirms \$2.4m in alleged theft

FORMER Director of Cruise & Maritime Voyages Australia Susanne Hunter is facing court after being charged with misappropriating more than \$2.4 million from the cruise company.

The revelation regarding the wife of former CMV Chief Executive Grant Hunter was aired by *Seven News* this week, with the report detailing alleged acts of fraud and money laundering involving hundreds of money transfers from the company to Susanne Hunter's bank account over a three- to four- year period.

CMV has since issued a statement confirming that an "internal investigation into accounting irregularities uncovered some concerns regarding the handling of company funds while the business was under the management of Mr Grant Hunter, CEO and his wife, Mrs Susanne



Hunter, Passenger Service & Office Manager between 2013 and 2017.

"The matter was referred to police and is now the subject of a formal criminal investigation, on which Cruise & Maritime Voyages is unable to comment further."

No charges have been laid against Grant Hunter in the current investigation, and there is no suggestion he has done anything wrong.

Cruise Weekly understands Susanne Hunter had commenced a brief stint in the customer service department of another cruise company in Sydney just this week, however was terminated yesterday when news of the criminal charges became public.

Grant and Susanne Hunter have not been involved with CMV since Sep 2017, when Dean Brazier was appointed as Managing Director.

Pictured: CMV's *Columbus*.



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CLIA salutes support

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia has welcomed news that Infrastructure Australia has formally recognised the important economic contribution of a new Sydney cruise terminal.

The independent statutory body yesterday released the 2019 Infrastructure Priority List which outlined the serious capacity constraints faced in Australia's largest cruise port.

CLIA Australasia Managing Director Joel Katz said Sydney's lack of berthing options would hamper growth in Australia's annual \$5 billion cruise sector.

"Sydney's existing cruise facility at Circular Quay is at capacity during Australia's peak summer cruise season," Katz said.

"This has knock-on effects for other destinations around the country, so it is important that this issue has been recognised at the national level," he added.

CTM adds Bhaya

VIETNAM'S Bhaya Cruise Company, which operates on the Ha Long Bay River, has signed a partnership agreement with Complete Travel Marketing (CTM) that aims to boost the brand's presence across Australia & New Zealand.

CTM will be responsible for raising the profile of the cruise company through a "strategic combination" of sales and marketing activities.

Celebrity's V-Day

TO CELEBRATE Valentine's Day, Celebrity Cruises is offering \$25 deposits per person and up to \$300 savings on select bookings by 19 Feb.

The deal is valid on eligible departures between Jun 2019 and Apr 2021 - **MORE HERE.**

A&K committed to Ponant



THE new owners of Abercrombie & Kent, billionaire Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio and A&K CEO Geoffrey Kent (**pictured**) say it's business as usual for the luxury touring company, after this week announcing the acquisition from Chinese group Zhonghong Holdings Group.

Lefebvre sold a two-thirds stake in Silversea Cruises to Royal Caribbean last year for US\$1b, and remains the line's Chairman.

However the purchase of A&K is a "separate and unique investment" by his Heritage Group, and does not involve Silversea, Lefebvre told **CW.**

However he noted that there had always been a close relationship between A&K and

Silversea, including a range of pre- and post-cruise packages.

Abercrombie & Kent also works closely with Ponant, including an upcoming offering in the Kimberley aboard *Le Laperouse* complete with an on-board A&K expedition team.

"A&K's relationship with Ponant continues, and of course we are always looking for opportunities for increased cooperation with other cruise lines including Silversea," Lefebvre said.

Kent, who will hold 15% of A&K, noted strong similarities between cruising and the A&K philosophy of owning a global DMC portfolio - currently comprising 56 offices - which "allows us to control every aspect of the client experience".



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Refresh of the *Millennium*

Off to a dream start in Syd



DREAM Cruises recently celebrated the upcoming launch of its new *Explorer Dream* ship by kicking off a series of information events about the vessel in Australia.

The *Explorer Dream* trade events were held concurrently in Sydney, Perth and the Gold Coast this week, with plans to run more sessions in major cities in Australia and New Zealand in the coming weeks.

Dream Cruises Vice President Brigita Devries shared renderings and details with attendees at the Sydney event.

"Tonight, we celebrate this milestone and also celebrate you – our industry partners for your ongoing support and for making our new cruise brand a success," she said.

Pictured: Melanie Carrazza, Leonie Fraser, Brigita Devries, Aaron Eilers, & Andrew Loving.



CELEBRITY Cruises has announced the return of its 2,138-passenger *Celebrity Millennium* after undergoing a multimillion-dollar refurbishment.

Her bow-to-stern renovation began 02 Jan, 2019 at the Sembawang Shipyard in Singapore where the vessel spent 35 days receiving treatment.

The ship now boasts completely refurbished staterooms and suites, upgraded restaurants and bars, a renovated spa and casino, as well as the installation of The Retreat - an exclusive new sundeck and lounge area.

"This is such an exciting moment for us as we finally

get to share the new *Celebrity Millennium* with the world," said Celebrity Cruises President and CEO Lisa Lutloff-Perlo.

"She has been transformed from top to bottom...and I can't wait for our guests to experience this revolution in travel for themselves," she added.

Further enhancements include faster wi-fi, a range of new fashion boutiques, a wellness-focused Spa, and a Persian Garden thermal suite.

Celebrity Millennium is the first of seven ships to be revitalised by 2023 and is part of a fleet-wide modernisation program.

Pictured: Refreshed staterooms.

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Viking's new ocean

VIKING Cruises has introduced four new ocean cruises to its portfolio.

New offerings include a 30-day Mumbai to Mediterranean Passage; a 28-day Australia, Indonesia & Asia journey; a 26-day Jewels of Southeast Asia itinerary, & a 22-day South America & Around Cape Horn trip - more info on 138 747.



HIGHLIGHTS for travellers on a Polar cruise usually include polar caps, penguins and much-anticipated sightings of the famous polar bear - but what if you didn't have to leave your house to have a "wild" encounter with one of these furry white polar natives?

Residents in the tiny remote town of Belushya Guba in the Russian archipelago of Novaya Zemlya were both terrified and delighted by a group of new and uninformed residents after more than 50 polar bears ditched their icy homes and headed inland to find food and shelter.

Regional authorities in Russia were forced to declare a state of emergency after the bears were spotted peering into homes, entering buildings and enjoying leftovers from a garbage dump outside the town.

Police are currently asking residents to "bear" with them as plans to relocate the wayward animals get underway.

Virgin reveals Beach Club



VIRGIN has announced that all of its cruises will feature a visit to The Beach Club, a relaxing and fun experience located in Bimini, Bahamas.

The attraction offers Virgin's sailors the opportunity to enjoy a beach day and explore the island's flavour and culture.

The Beach Club will also boast a line-up of original events and gigs developed by an array of prominent directors, producers and artists, with Grammy-Award-winning artist Mark Ronson named the foundation star of the

The Club resident-Sea program.

Other confirmed performers include: Jenny Gersten, Randy Weiner, Sam Pinkleton, Ani Taj, PigPen Theatre Co, The 7 Fingers, Roslyn Hart and Alfredo Guenzani and the Spark Cooperative.

In further news, founder Richard Branson has announced he will celebrate his birthday bash among celebrity friends and fellow Virgin pax aboard a four-night Havana After Dark voyage departing 15 Jul, 2020.

Pictured: The new Beach Club area in the Bahamas.

Wild Earth launch range of new charters

WILD Earth Travel is offering a new charter cruise of Scotland led by its General Manager Aaron Russ, exploring the Inner and Outer Hebrides, St Kilda, The Orkney & Shetland Islands.

Available departures sail between 27 May and 08 Jun 2020, inclusive of 10-nights of accommodation on board *MS Serenissima* and is priced from \$7,495 per person (A\$10,552pp).

The cruise line has also launched a hosted charter experience journeying through the most popular attractions in Sicily.

Two departures are on offer, one leaving 21 Sep and a reverse voyage on the 28 Sep 2019.

Cabins for the trip is priced from A\$5,295 per person.

Oceania world sail

OCEANIA Cruises has revealed details for its new 180-day Around the World cruise departing 2021 and taking place aboard *Insignia*.

The voyage will sail more than 72,000 nautical kilometres across three oceans and 44 seas, and make 100 ports of call in 44 countries.

Departing Miami on 09 Jan, 2021 and culminating in New York City on 09 Jul, 2021, the cruise will also take in 125 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and offer additional overnight stays in destinations such as Bora Bora, Cairns, Hong Kong, Saigon, and Bangkok.

Oceania lists many inclusions on board such as pre-cruise accommodation, choice of 70 shore excursions, luggage delivery, internet, and gratuities (up to US\$8,200).

"This is a landmark itinerary for Oceania Cruises...guests sail the world with us to experience extensive and all-encompassing itineraries," said Oceania Cruises President and CEO Bob Binder.

View the Around the World 2021 brochure **HERE**.

Carnival upgrades

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has extended its free cabin upgrade offer until 01 Mar.

The deal is part of the cruise line's "Funbelievable" sale and includes savings of up to \$800 per person on select South Pacific cruises and shorter Fun Size getaways.

For more info **CLICK HERE**.