

MSC firms up newbuild contracts

MSC Cruises has signed a firm contract with shipyard Chantiers de l'Atlantique for the construction of the line's third and fourth LNG-powered World Class ships, scheduled to join the fleet in 2025 and 2027.

The new construction contract represents a capital investment by MSC of more than €2 billion, and adds to the existing build of two vessels in the same class, with the first ship currently being built at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard and due to enter service in 2022.

MSC Cruises also extended an agreement with the shipyard for the development of a new prototype class of LNG-powered cruise ships to operate under the MSC Cruises brand.

The focus will be on developing emerging environmental technologies to meet The International Maritime



Organization's sustainability vision for 2030 and 2050.

The cruise line has also green-lighted an agreement to investigate an "innovative prototype ship class concept", which will explore the avenues of wind power and other advanced technologies to see what they can offer the cruise sector.

"The three agreements signed today extend our investment plan up to 2030," said MSC's Executive Chairman Pierfrancesco Vago.

"They also confirm this industry's commitment to environmental sustainability, in this case helping the French national industry further position itself as a world leader in the development of next-generation technologies," he added.

Pictured: Chantiers de l'Atlantique General Manager Laurent Castaing and MSC Cruises Executive Chairman Gianluigi Aponte sign the new contract extensions in Paris, France.

Cruise Weekly today

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

CMV soups up sales

CRUISE & Maritime Voyages (CMV) has added some extra thrust to its sales team in Australia and New Zealand, appointing Damien Wolff and Greg Morris to key sales roles in Qld and South Australia.

Morris will start his role early Feb as a Business Development Manager (BDM) dedicated to Queensland, while Wolff will commence as a BDM based in Adelaide at the end of this month.

MEANWHILE Faye Larrarte will step down from her role as CMV's Business Development Manager NSW and Qld at the start of next month.

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AraMana in the spotlight



ARANUI Cruises has revealed further details about its upcoming ship (*CW* 06 Sep 2019) during a tour of its *Aranui 5* mixed cruise/freight vessel in dry dock at Garden Island in Sydney.

Updates on the new \$100 million vessel, which is scheduled to launch in 2022, included its name, *AraMana*, as well as a range of amenities such as an observation lounge, a spa, a dance floor area, two restaurants, a swimming pool, an amphitheatre, and 11 cabin categories - 95% of which will feature balconies.

Aranui Cruises Regional Representative Australia and New Zealand Laurent Wong said the new vessel marks the first time the company has designed a ship exclusively for cruising, with predecessors being hybrid cargo/passenger ships.

"The 280-guest *AraMana* has been designed solely with cruising in mind," he said.

"There are some similarities to

Aranui 5 in terms of the layout of the ship but *AraMana* is our first foray into leisure cruising so the new ship will be about comfort and relaxation," Wong added.

Wong also noted that when she launches in mid-2022, it will be the first time the cruise line has two ships in operation at once, presenting an opportunity to explore new destinations in Polynesia.

AraMana is scheduled to sail itineraries to French Polynesia's Tuamotu, Gambier, Society and Austral Islands, the Cook Islands and the Pitcairn Islands.

See more renders of the *AraMana* on *Cruise Weekly's* Facebook page [HERE](#).

MEANWHILE the cruise line has added three new itineraries to its *Aranui 5* 2021 program, featuring 11 new island destinations.

Highlights include a maiden visit to the Cook Islands, the first dedicated Society Islands cruise, as well as an expanded Pitcairn Island itinerary.

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Travel Daily



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Raconteurs at sea

SEABOURN has added a range of new expert speakers to its lineup for the 2020 season, recruited to inform and entertain guests and complement its onboard enrichment initiative.

Forming part of the line's Seabourn Conversations program, the newly revealed speakers include Academy Award-winning American film director Bryan Fogel, English author Tim Rice, British diplomat Alan Collins, and respected travel photographer Alison Wright.

To view Seabourn's full list of speakers, [CLICK HERE](#).

Hurtigruten helps

HURTIGRUTEN has launched a fundraising appeal to help aid the recovery of wildlife & communities affected by recent bushfires.

Funds will be sourced from the sale of designated Bushfire Appeal cabins, a combined value of \$250,000, with the proceeds distributed by the Hurtigruten Foundation.

"We believe it is important that we all take part in the global and local effort to support Australia's recovery," said Hurtigruten MD Asia-Pacific Damian Perry.

Book a Bushfire Appeal cabin on 1300 322 062 in Australia or 0800 005 201 in NZ.

Crystal A\$ website

CRYSTAL Cruises has debuted a new local website which includes voyage pricing in Australian dollars.

The site at crystalcruises.com.au urges online to ring the local call centre on 1300 059 260 or to contact their travel advisor.



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In seventh heaven

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has added seven new luxury Pacific Rim voyages to its 2022 program, sailing aboard *Seven Seas Mariner*.

The new cruises launched include an 18-night San Francisco to Tahiti sailing departing 05 Jan 2022, a 14-night voyage from Auckland to Sydney leaving 08 Feb 2022, and a 16-night Singapore to Hong Kong cruise setting sail on 15 Mar 2022.

The seven new itineraries also boast multiple overnight stays in ports such as Sydney, Auckland, Ho Chi Minh City, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tokyo, and are accompanied by optional Overland Program experiences to iconic sites such as the Great Wall of China or Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

For further info on the seven new options, **CLICK HERE**.

A very colourful makeover



FOLLOWING a three-month renovation, Heritage Line has unveiled the redesign of the public areas and accommodation on board *Violet*, a boutique cruise ship which sails the waters of Ha Long Bay in Vietnam.

The vessel received a "complete overhaul" during the refurbishment, with its two Junior Suites and four Imperial Suites having their interiors remodelled

in line with keeping the ship's special art deco style.

Touch-ups include restored or replaced furniture, curtains, fabrics, textiles, tiles, wooden flooring, and decorations, as well as updated room amenities such as modern televisions.

Furniture and fittings have also been replaced in the vessel's restaurant and bar areas.

Pictured: A new Imperial Suite.

Cruisewatch co-op

HAVING recently launched in Australia (*CW* 16 Jan), cruise price comparison website Cruisewatch has been in contact with "several" travel agencies to discuss potential cooperation, Chief Executive Officer Markus Stumpe revealed to **Cruise Weekly**.

The Cruisewatch chief and co-founder claims customers can save up to 70% via the platform's price drop notifier, if they are slightly flexible with cabin categories.

"This also helps customers to check if the already-booked rate is still attractive or if they should contact the cruise lines to try to get the difference as an onboard credit," he said.

"The next step is to use our advanced analytics to give the customers additional information about future price movement, like in the US."

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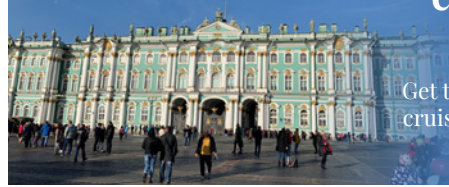
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Portal correction

A NEW agent portal launched by Hurtigruten is currently only available in the United States, not in Australia as was reported by **CW** on Mon.

Silversea appoints

SILVERSEA Cruises has promoted Leanne Fonagy to the role of Director Communications, Events & Partnerships - Asia Pacific. Fonagy has been with the company since Dec 2013, and was previously a Senior Account Director with Ink Publicity before that.



FOR those who are often able to find the funny side of cruising, a new HBO series called *Avenue 5* might just be your ticket.

From the creator of acclaimed political satire *Veep* and starring the comedic chops of Hugh Laurie, the show tells the story of a giant cruise ship in space that gets knocked off course, sending its 5,000 plus passengers and crew on a sailing much longer than anticipated.



FACE-2-FACE: Shane Riley

Director of International Sales,
Virgin Voyages



1. What is your favourite part of your job?

I am very fortunate to have bagged my dream gig, combining my love of cruising with the incredible Virgin brand. My favourite part of my job is the reaction of our First Mates (travel agents) to our new way of taking to the seas.

2. What attracted you to a career in the cruise industry?

I was lucky enough to experience cruise holidays at a young age and I was always keen for other people to give it a try. There are so many misconceptions about cruises, I just wanted to help more people experience it.

3. What is the key to success in the cruise industry?

Ensure we match the right customer to the right ship/brand. There are so many options available and it's important to listen to customers' needs and make recommendations on what is best for them.

4. What is the biggest challenge facing the industry?

Personally, I think the biggest challenge (or opportunity) is to ensure we don't leave anything in our wake. At Virgin Voyages, we are committed to delivering the cleanest fleet at sea. We've set ourselves on a course to deliver an "Epic Sea Change" for all, this extends

to our sailors, our crew, our communities and the oceans.

5. What was your best fami?

My favourite trip was hosting 15 travel agents on board a cruise - none of them had sold cruise and they all had many misconceptions. We all had an amazing time and many of them have since moved into the cruise industry.

6. Advice for up-and-comers?

Educate and differentiate! All cruise lines have education tools that you should make the most of. Then, find a way to make your business stand out and give your customers a reason to come to you and not your competitors. This doesn't mean the cheapest price, it means adding value through the experience you create.

7. How do you wind down after a busy week?

I have a three-year-old son and I love spending quality family time together. Weekends consist of soccer tots, swimming or if I'm feeling really brave, a trip to a play centre!

8. When not at work, how do you spend your time?

Lots of family fun and lots of holidays. Living in the UK, I need to travel to find the sun. The Maldives is my favourite, I've been lucky to go twice.



AUSTRALIAN
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with Jill Abel - CEO

The way back

THIS week's visit by *Sun Princess* into Kangaroo Island, the first ship to return since the fires swept through the destination, was a beacon of hope for the tourism industry as we started the new year.

The Captain's words from the bridge, "It is an honour and a privilege for all of us - guests and crew alike - to have this opportunity to show our respect to the community of Kangaroo Island", signalled the important role the cruise sector will play in helping rebuild local economies.

These stories of hope will continue with *Norwegian Jewel* calling into Eden on Fri, bringing welcome passengers back to the hard-hit NSW south coast.

We have often spoken of the important role that regional communities play in the growth of the cruise sector, providing fascinating stop off points in cruise itineraries beyond the traditional city gateways and giving passengers the opportunity to delve deeper into the history and culture.

Working together with CLIA and the national and state tourism bodies, ACA is committed to supporting these communities to help get them back on deck.



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- 7-night cruise aboard *Le Boréal*, accompanied by onboard naturalists who share their insights
- Two on-tour charter flights Shore Excursions to Arctic Norway's islands guided by expert naturalists, ornithologists, or oceanographers
- Two nights at Grand Hotel Oslo or Hotel Bristol in the heart of the city World War II



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Venice & the Dalmatian Coast

10 days from Venice return
Departing 9, 16 & 23 September 2020 onboard *Le Lyrial*. 2021 departure dates available!

Starting from **\$11,150*pp** twin share |
\$15,615*pp solo travellers in Deluxe Stateroom

TAUCK VALUE INCLUDES

- In-depth shore excursion choices including visits to five UNESCO World Heritage Sites – Venice, Dubrovnik, Sibenik's Cathedral, the walled city of Kotor, and Diocletian's Palace in Split
- Seven-night cruise aboard the yacht *Le Lyrial*
- Tauck's private shore excursions and distinctive inclusions valued at AUD \$3,027
- Private Moreska sword dance presentation and folkloric presentation
- Wine tasting of fine Croatian wine along the Dalmatian Coast



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The Rhine and Moselle - Northbound

13 days from Basel to Amsterdam
Departing 16 Jun; 2 Aug; 23 Sep & 12 Oct 2020
onboard *ms Grace*
2021 departure dates available!

Starting from **\$8,720*pp** twin share |
\$12,210*pp solo travellers in Cat. 2 Ruby Deck

TAUCK VALUE INCLUDES

- **TAUCK EXCLUSIVE** – Dinner at the historic Schloss Ehreshoven in Germany
- Insider tour of the Gothic-Renaissance Heidelberger Schloss, a cable car ride and lunch at a popular local restaurant
- Wine tasting at a family-owned winery in Cochem
- Shore excursion to De Hoge Veluwe National Park and the Kröller-Müller Museum to view world-famous art
- Visit to the Rhine Falls in Switzerland
- A scenic cruise along the canals of Amsterdam



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*Prices are per person in Australian dollars correct as at 20 January 2020. Prices are subject to availability and seasonal surcharges. Land Tours & Small Ship Cruises have other dates available for 2020, however price per person may differ than what is advertised. Prices for Venice & the Dalmatian Coast is based on Deluxe Stateroom, Deck 3 onboard *Le Lyrial* for all departure dates. Prices for The Rhine and Moselle - Northbound is based on Category 2, Ruby Deck onboard *ms Grace*, departing 12 October 2020. International airfares from Australia are not included. Special offers are valid for new bookings only. Change and cancellation conditions apply and will be advised at the time of booking.