

### Cruise Weekly today

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

## High-profile exits

**HOLLAND** America Line President Orlando Ashford and Seabourn President Rick Meadows have both announced their retirements overnight.

Both men will leave the Carnival Corporation brands at the end of May, with Meadows leaving after 35 years with Carnival.

Ashford has held his position since 2014, and Meadows since 2011, when Seabourn moved its headquarters to Seattle from Miami.

Meadows also served as President of Cunard North America from 2014 to 2016.

## Norwegian gives boost of positivity

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line (NCL) has opened sales on a large range of new "wish-list worthy" sailings through to 2023.

The voyages travel to each continent, including Antarctica, with over 20 new destinations for the line.

*Norwegian Star* will become the first in the fleet to visit Fortaleza and Salvador de Bahia in Brazil, during a 15-day South America sailing departing from Rio de Janeiro, and will also make the brand's debut in Greenland with calls to Nanortalik, Nuuk and Qaqortoq during two back-to-back northern European sailings from Reykjavik.

*Star* will also undertake her first voyage to Antarctica, when she sails from Buenos Aires for a season of 14-day journeys, sailing by Deception and Elephant Islands for the first time in NCL history, and visiting five ports of



call across Argentina, Chile, the Falkland Islands and Uruguay.

*Norwegian Jade* will also offer an NCL first, as she embarks on a roundtrip sailing from Cape Town, visiting Durban, Luderitz and Walvis Bay, featuring overnights in Cape Town and Richards Bay.

*Norwegian Sun* will make her Asia debut, becoming the cruise line's first ship to visit destinations such as Beppu, Coron, Himeji, Kampot, Kota

Kinabalu, Manila, Melaka, Muara and Nagoya.

Despite the new cruises beginning in 2021, CEO Frank Del Rio expects NCL's ships to sail later this year, he told CNBC.

"We believe that together we'll be able to demonstrate to the [Centers for Disease Control] and other government officials that cruising is indeed safe and not all cruise lines are created equal," he added.

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## Greg saga over

**GREG** Mortimer's crew has finally disembarked in Uruguay after more than a month of COVID-19 lockdown.

The crew will quarantine in a hotel, after more than 100 passengers from Australia and New Zealand were flown home last month (**CW** 27 Apr).

"Citizens can trust that the operation is being carried out with the maximum health guarantees for all," said Uruguay's Ministers of Foreign Relations Ernesto Talvi, adding the disembarkation was a "moment of joy".

At least 35 of the more than 80 crew members have tested positive for COVID-19.

*Greg Mortimer* will stay moored in a closed port area, before it is assessed whether it can continue onto its final destination of the Canary Islands.

## Viking email learning

**VIKING** is inviting travel agents to become an expert on Viking Expeditions with a dedicated training email beginning Mon.

Agents can register to receive the seven weekly emails, in which they will learn about what Viking's two purpose-built expedition ships (**CW** 17 Jan) will offer to their clients, and the benefits of booking one.

The cruise line also plans to run a similar series for its newly launched Viking Mississippi river cruises.

"Our bespoke Viking Expeditions trade training email program is perfect for agents who are looking for opportunities to up-skill while spending more time at home," said Viking ANZ Trade Marketing Manager Erin Kramer.

"By boosting your expertise in this increasingly popular category, you maximise your opportunities to increase your commission too.

"With departures in 2022 and 2023, all backed by our risk-free, Viking offers your clients peace of mind to plan in advance."

The company's first purpose-built expedition ship is the 378-guest *Viking Octantis*, due Jan 2022, and slated to sail voyages to Antarctica and North America's Great Lakes.

The second expedition vessel, *Viking Polaris*, will debut in seven months later in Aug, sailing to the poles.

The ships will boast industry-firsts, such as two complimentary underwater submersibles, which are launched from an enclosed, in-ship marina called The Hangar; and an onboard laboratory, where resident scientists will conduct important research which guests can take part in as part of Viking's Cultural Curriculum.

**CLICK HERE** to register for the emails.

## Virgin Oz support

**VIRGIN** Voyages has launched a Facebook group and a webinar series, both dedicated to Australian agents.

Virgin's three webinars will be run over the next few weeks, with the first focused on introducing the cruise line.

Held on 19 May at 4pm AEST, agents can register for the webinar **HERE**, and **CLICK HERE** to join the Facebook group.

## Carnival tragedies

**TWO** Carnival Corporation crew members, aboard *Carnival Breeze* and *Regal Princess*, have died recently.

A 39-year-old woman fell from *Regal* yesterday, while the ship was docked in Rotterdam, while a male crew member died Sun aboard *Breeze*, with no further details provided.

# We can't wait TO WELCOME YOU ON BOARD AGAIN

Just like you, we're dreaming of seeing new shorelines on the horizon. Experiencing new cultures and savouring new flavors. Meeting people far and wide and realizing we aren't so different after all. And the moment these dreams can become reality, we'll be ready to welcome you back. Until then, the world is changing, and we're changing with it. We're taking every step to ensure you and our crew stay healthy and safe when we set sail. That's our top priority—so that enjoying your holiday can be yours.

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IT'S not been a happy few months for the cruise industry, and unfortunately, and it's not been too much better on Australian rivers.

Historic paddle vessel *Amphibious* sunk on the weekend at Echuca (pictured).

Apparently, the 143-year-old vessel sprung a leak, but there is hope; the ship sunk once before in 1978, before being recovered and restored.

It was the second-oldest wooden vessel in Australia.



**NO-ONE** enjoys being quarantined; well, almost no-one.

A French couple stuck on a boat in the Caribbean probably have a better quarantine situation than most.

Christian and Renee Commenge live in the French overseas region of Guadeloupe, and were sailing around the nearby island of Martinique when French President Emmanuel Macron announced his country's lockdown, including its overseas regions.

The Commenges are still in lockdown on their 12-metre sailboat; they are able to go for a swim from their boat, as they are at anchor and not in port.

Not the worst situation.

## Dining afloat: The Grill by Thomas Keller



**SHIP:** Fleetwide with Seabourn

**RESTAURANT:** The Grill by Thomas Keller

**CHEF:** Thomas Keller

**OLD** world charm meets new world glam for guests dining at this stylish onboard restaurant complete with its own jazz band.

Michelin-star Chef Thomas Keller brings to life his "farm-to-table" philosophy with a variety of fresh dishes, most of which are prepared table-side for a unique dining experience.

The Grill places an emphasis on reinventing the classics, with high-quality ingredients selected from Keller's favourite providers, including medallions of Elysian Fields farm lamb, rib eye of Snake River Farms beef, and thick cut prime New York strip steak.

For those with a sweet tooth, don't miss the seven layer coconut cake - or for a burst of citrus, try the Meyer lemon meringue tart.



**SIGNATURE DISH:** A variety of reinvented classics, such as Lobster Thermidor and Caesar salad made table-side.

**WINE:** A blend of domestic and old-world labels personally selected by Chef Keller is on offer for guests, and is designed to complement the menu.

**INCLUDED IN FARE:** Yes.

**RESERVATIONS:** Bookings are required and can be made online up to 15 days before sailing. Guests are permitted one reservation per voyage.

**DRESS:** Formal wear.

**HOURS:** The Grill is open nightly for dinner only.



### Tourism moves to recovery

**THE** Prime Minister has announced a three-stage re-opening plan and the states are winding back restrictions. It feels like the light is starting to shine back through the cracks this week.

On the weekly Tourism Australia (TA) webinar, BDA research shared findings from their Travel Sentiment Tracker. "While caution exists around future domestic travel for many, 60% are positive about travel and 27% are keen to travel straight away." One quarter of respondents are also thinking/dreaming about their next holiday but will exercise caution around the way they travel choosing holidays closer to home, being more aware of social distancing and requiring confidence around hygiene practices.

TA is developing exciting campaigns to grow the demand to "holiday here", a movement commenced after the devastating bushfires earlier the year.

The cruise sector can play a critical role in helping to reinvigorate tourism and supporting the regional economies around Australia. Last year cruise contributed over \$163M in ship, crew and passenger spend to our coastal communities.

We know there are still concerns around cruise but we are seeing the bookings return and I believe that once the restrictions have been lifted and we can socially integrate and travel, people will get back out to sea especially with the extensive new onboard health and hygiene measures being explored by cruise lines.