

NCL announces Jul return plans

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has announced its return to cruising with voyages in Europe and the Caribbean beginning Jul.

NCL will restart operations at a reduced capacity, slowly increasing from 60%, aboard *Norwegian Gem*, *Norwegian Jade*, and *Norwegian Joy*.

Seven-day cruises to the Greek Isles on *Jade* from Athens will begin 25 Jul, while week-long island-hopping Caribbean itineraries are available from Montego Bay from 07 Aug on *Joy*, or from Punta Cana on *Gem* beginning 15 Aug.

Cruises are now open for sale, with President & Chief Executive Officer Harry Sommer telling **CW** all guests sailing aboard cruises embarking through to the end of Oct will be required to be fully vaccinated, and will be tested both prior to boarding and prior to disembarking at the end of the

cruise.

"We believe the combination of 100% vaccinations and extensive safety protocols, not one or the other, will cause this to be the safest leisure activity on the planet," Sommer said, adding a decision about health & safety protocols for cruises from Nov will be made at a later date.

Sommer detailed the comprehensive nature of the task of resuming operations, and how proud Norwegian was of the collaborations it has formed to help enable a restart.

The NCL President said the cruise line is happy to accept guests from all over the world, but believes early adopters will likely come from the United States, the United Kingdom and Israel, with Australia to hopefully follow later in the season.

"Those are three countries that have done well with vaccines,

and also have freedom to travel," Sommer explained.

"We're hopeful in the next 30-45 days the situation in the rest of Europe will vastly improve...if you look at all the models, it shows COVID data rapidly coming down by the middle to end of May, so by that time, guests from places like Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Belgium, France, Spain, the places we source a lot of our guests from normally, will come back as well.

"We're hopeful about Australia by Sep, by late summer or fall... it's always been a really strong market for us", Sommer said, adding Norwegian was heartened by the announcement of Australia and New Zealand's travel bubble earlier this week (**CW** yesterday).

Prior to resumption, crews will be put through their paces with the new health & safety protocols on two further-capped sailings.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Get Creative with Hurtigruten

CREATIVE Cruising has launched an exclusive upfront \$50 eGift card reward on Hurtigruten's 2022/23 Antarctica & Scandinavia voyages.

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Catch up on the news of the week

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RSSC Spotlight

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has unveiled a new collection of 13 Spotlight Voyages.

The sailings, departing this year and next, are filled with one-of-a-kind onboard and shoreside experiences.

The collection has been designed to appeal to enthusiasts of food & wine, history, Broadway & performance art, journalism and science.

Highlights include cuisine-themed voyages with accomplished chefs, wine tastings with renowned connoisseurs, and panel discussions on topics such as art and history.

The first sailing to depart will be the Spotlight on the State of Journalism, embarking 08 Dec from Miami aboard *Seven Seas Mariner* - 1300 455 200.

Viking to Bermuda, Iceland

VIKING is continuing its restart of limited operations with new Bermuda and Iceland voyages.

The new Welcome Back sailings will be available for vaccinated guests, as is the case with Viking's restart in the UK (**CW** 17 Mar), where two additional England's Scenic Shore sailings have also been added this week.

Beginning in Jun, the Bermuda Escape itinerary aboard *Viking Orion* will sail eight-day roundtrip itineraries homeporting in Hamilton, while the Iceland's Natural Beauty itinerary will also sail eight-day roundtrips, aboard *Viking Sky*, homeporting from Reykjavik.

The cruise line has been working closely with officials in the two countries for months, with Viking choosing the destinations specifically because of their popularity among guests, as well as their commitment

to welcoming cruise ships, and reviving their country's respective travel industry.

The small size of both *Orion* and *Sky* will also allow access to small and large ports in both countries.

Reservations for all the newly added voyages are open now, with Viking saying it is actively working on developing more Welcome Back sailings in a variety of other destinations, including Greece, Malta, and Turkey.

MEANWHILE, Viking's 2022-23 13-day Antarctic Explorer has been a hit, with a surge in demand seeing the line extend its limited time offer on the voyage.

Offering savings of up to \$6,000 per couple, the deal is now available until the end of the month, with Managing Director ANZ Michelle Black saying Viking has seen 30% of its total Antarctica sales come through in just a few weeks.

Ponant lends a hand


THE Ponant Foundation has laid the first stone for a school in the Bissagos Islands, located in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of the African nation Guinea-Bissau.

To be set in Anipoc on Caravela, the Ponant Foundation is working closely with local association ESCama in the building of the school.

The new 'Mantchacade' will be built along with housing for the teachers, which will provide the only sanitation facilities in the village.

The result will be a kindergarten and the four levels of primary education required by the country's schooling system.

The Ponant Foundation has been involved with local communities on the Bissagos for several years to support education on Caravela.



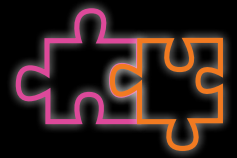
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A THREE-METRE alligator has been found under a parked car at an apartment complex in Florida.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's deputies, as well as the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, were summoned to the vehicle under which the reptile was sleeping.

The sheriff's office said there were no injuries to humans or alligators during the rescue, and the beast was rehomed in an alligator farm.

It's not the only animal to wind up somewhere it shouldn't, with the NSW State Emergency Service called to remove a cow stuck in a backyard pool earlier this week (pictured).

Reports were the cow wouldn't moo-ve.



Dining afloat: Moderno Churrascaria



SHIPS: *Norwegian Breakaway, Norwegian Dawn, Norwegian Epic, Norwegian Escape, Norwegian Gem, Norwegian Getaway, Norwegian Jade, Norwegian Jewel, Norwegian Pearl, Norwegian Star, Norwegian Sun and Pride of America.*

DO YOU love eating meat? Do you love eating meat while cruising? Then make a date with Moderno Churrascaria, Norwegian Cruise Line's authentic Brazilian steakhouse.

Available on board a wide selection of NCL's ships, this is one restaurant that will wow from entree to dessert.

Start with an impressive salad bar of imported cheeses, olives, cured meats, ceviche and specialty salads, but be sure to save room for the delicious skewers of slow-roasted meats including beef, pork, lamb and chicken - all carved tableside by the authentic "Pasadores", or meat waiters.

As with traditional Brazilian

barbecue establishments, diners are given two-sided colour cards to communicate with their waiters - green says "more meat please," and red tells them "no thanks, I'm full!"

Popular meats include Costela De Carneiro (rib lamb chop), Frango (chicken leg marinated in lime juice, sea salt and garlic) and Linguica (Portuguese sausages flavoured with herbs and garlic).

A meaty experience, make no mis-steak.

DON'T MISS: No meal at Moderno Churrascaria is complete without sipping on Brazil's national cocktail, the Caipirinha.

INCLUDED IN FARE: An additional cost of US\$39pp plus a 20% gratuity and service charge applies.

RESERVATIONS: Bookings are recommended.

DRESS: Smart casual.

HOURS: Moderno Churrascaria is open nightly between 5.30pm and 10pm.



NZCA UPDATE

with Kevin O'Sullivan
CEO, NZCA



Positive news for travel

TWO weeks ago I wrote (hopefully) two-way quarantine-free travel between New Zealand and Australia (by air) could become a reality late in Apr.

Yesterday the New Zealand Prime Minister announced that the trans-Tasman bubble would indeed happen with flights beginning on 19 Apr.

Excellent news even with a word of warning that, if there is a lockdown at either end, then you're on your own and don't expect any help.

Although the airlines and travel agents have been inundated with booking requests, the first wave of visitors on both sides of the Tasman will be friends and family flying in to see people with whom COVID has denied close contact.

When ski fields open we will see visitors arriving in even greater numbers as Australians make up around 70% of international ski vacationers.

Phased returns are important because we must make sure we are ready for the cruise recovery too.

We can't just switch on an industry that has been paused for more than a year, and we are planning with operators, communities, local and central governments for a carefully phased return to business.

New Lindblad CEO

LINDBLAD Expeditions has appointed Dolf Berle President & Chief Executive Officer.

Berle succeeds Sven-Olof Lindblad, who will become Co-Chair of the board with current Chair Mark Ein.

Berle most recently served as Chief Executive Officer of Topgolf Entertainment Group.



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