

Get in front of customers - Millmore

TRAVEL The World (TTW) Managing Director Andrew Millmore is urging the cruise industry to focus on promoting 2022 offers to clients, with the company already seeing strong demand as customers look to when travel resumes.

"Agents need to get on the front foot," he told **Cruise Weekly**, with a plethora of offers in the market and generous cancellation conditions meaning customers have "nothing to lose".

Millmore said while his own business, like everyone else's, had been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, he had taken a conscious decision to focus on next year rather than obsessing over the minutiae of day-to-day border changes.

"That way anything we get for 2021 is a bonus - and we already know 2022 will be massive."

Millmore said while lobbying efforts to seek government support remain very important, in the end what will save the industry is increased consumer confidence.

He suggested travel agents collectively send a message to clients that future travel will return and they are the best place to book given the new world we are living in.

"There are billions and billions of dollars in savings in the economy - if agents don't get in front of their clients with some

of the great offers out there, the customers will spend their money with someone else," he said.

Millmore cited the recent addition of Riviera Travel River Cruises to the Travel The World portfolio as a prime example of a great opportunity for the industry.

Riviera, which is now being promoted by TTW's BDM team across the country, is aggressively trying to dispel negative perceptions and attract new business through its "holiday happiness guarantee" (**CW** 12 Feb) which as well as offering fee-free changes up to 45 days before departure also promises full refunds and facilitation of return flights if customers are unhappy by the second day of their cruise.

"Agents need to increase communication giving their clients reasons to book with them, reassuring customers of their expertise and experience."

"If we can help provide support or tools, please contact your TTW sales manager who would welcome the chance to assist."

Millmore said more than ever, travel will require the assistance of expert advisors, and the industry should be touting its readiness to assist, keeping messaging to government separated from consumers in order to maintain confidence in existing distribution channels.

He suggested "Navigate 2022

with your travel agent expert" or "Love your travel agent" as new industry taglines, rather than ongoing pleas to consumers to "save the travel industry".

"In this new world in which we now live, more than ever consumers will get a benefit from booking with an expert," he added, urging travel advisors to have confidence in their own abilities and make the time to engage with customers to secure bookings.

Swan Hellenic jobs

SWAN Hellenic will be among the first cruise lines to require a coronavirus vaccination for its ships' crews.

The cycle will be carried out at recruitment centres or in the home countries of crew members in accordance with current local guidelines and approved medical protocols.

The measure is a part of Swan Hellenic's suite of health measures, and has been taken to "protect staff and guests".

Cruise Weekly today

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

Celebrity cans Can

CELEBRITY Cruises has placed all sailings with an embarkation or port of call in Canada on hold, with the country's Government having recently announced the continued port closures for all cruise ships through to the end of Feb (**CW** 05 Feb).

The cruise line said it was working to determine if it may be possible to operate Canadian sailings without a call to a foreign port.

"Until a decision has been rendered in this matter, these sailings will remain closed," Celebrity said, with all reservations to be held.

Offers include keeping their reservation until a final determination on the status of the sailing can be made.

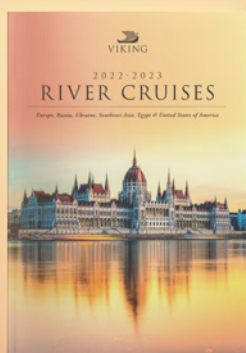
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SOME people are absolutely desperate to be out on the water.

A 70-year-old Briton recently became the oldest to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

Frank Rothwell's trip took him nearly two months across the 4,800 kilometres.

Rothwell completed his challenge as part of the annual Atlantic Rowing Race, which sees participants navigate from the Canary Islands to the Antillean island of Antigua, where he arrived after 56 days, two hours and 41 minutes.

The grandfather finished fourth out of eight, and was racing for charity, having set up a Just Giving page for Alzheimer's Research UK, which has received £883,000 thus far.

Rothwell met his wife of 50 years at the finish line, where his only complaint was the exercise was "boring" - we're not sure what you were expecting Frank!

Molto bene, Carnival



CARNIVAL Cruise Line has revealed additional details about its Italian-themed La Piazza zone, on board its new *Mardi Gras*, set to debut in May.

The cruise line chose last week's National Pizza Day to showcase La Piazza, which will be home to a variety of new food & beverage outlets, as well as expanded versions of longtime Carnival favourites.

Designed to resemble a red brick Italian courtyard, La Piazza features street lights, ornate iron

and tile work, as well as murals of famous Italian piazzas, such as those located in Rome, Venice and more.

New spaces include Bar della Rosa (**pictured**), inspired by Italy's prepossessing cafes, with classic Italian wines, beers, and cocktails all available, such as the Aperol Spritz.

Espresso and cappuccinos will also be served, made with Lavazza coffee.

Also featuring in the new area will be Piazza Panini, serving up hand-pressed sandwiches such as Salumeria served with capicola, prosciutto, salami, provolone, roasted peppers, mortadella, mozzarella, tomatoes and spicy olives, as well as a number of deli favourites and desserts.

La Piazza also features "Instagram-worthy" touches like a Vespa scooter and a Fiat (**inset**), both from 1972 - the year of Carnival's founding with the original *Mardi Gras*.



Pandaw quiz

THINK you know Asia well?

With coronavirus vaccines rolling out across the world, and the re-start of travel picking up pace, Pandaw is helping tempt travellers back onto its ships with credit toward a future cruise.

The line is quizzing travellers on how well they know the countries it operates in, with first prize a voucher of US\$300 for a future cruise, second prize \$200 and third prize \$100.

Terms and conditions apply, and to enter the quiz, **CLICK HERE**.

Derby of deals

AMERICAN Queen Steamboat Company has released a new river cruise package to the 2022 Kentucky Derby.

Including VIP tickets to the races and complimentary onboard drinks, the paddlewheeler journey aboard the newly launched *American Countess* travels along the Ohio River roundtrip from Cincinnati.

The seven-night cruise will also see travellers turn contestants, in one of the Kentucky Derby's favourite sideshows - the 14-mile Great Steamboat Race.

Starting on 02 May, the journey begins with a hotel stay in Cincinnati, before guests board the *American Countess* on their way to Madison, Brandenburg, Augusta and Louisville.

To book, **CLICK HERE**.

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