

Riviera deals

A NEW fly, stay and cruise package in Europe has been released for next year with Riviera Travel River Cruises.

Offering free spending money of €500 and a river cruise only for solo travellers with no single supplement, those booking by the end of the month through Travel The World can receive the package.

To book or for more information, call Travel The World on 1300 857 437.

Cruise Weekly today

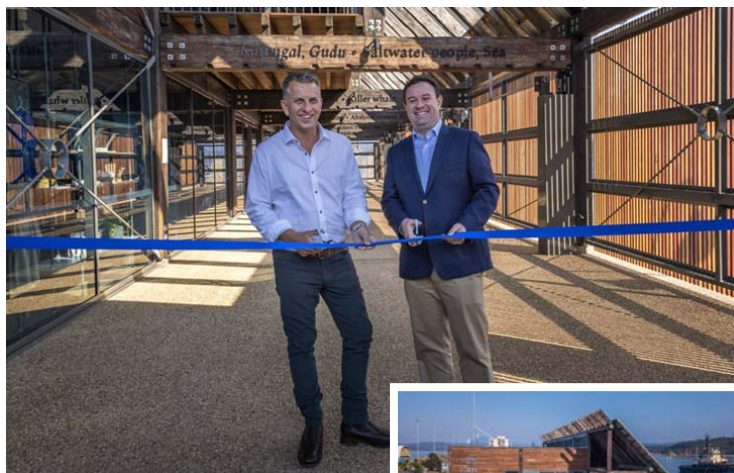
Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

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Eden Welcome Centre opens



THE Eden Welcome Centre (inset right), located by the New South Wales town's Cruise Wharf, officially opened on Fri, a moment the Port Authority of NSW called "the beginning of a new era for tourism in Eden and the Sapphire Coast".



The two-storey building is the new home of the Eden Visitor Information Centre, and will showcase the region's attractions, promote local businesses and offer local arts, crafts and produce to the town's tourists.

The approximately 1,000m² Eden Welcome Centre was officially opened by the New South Wales Minister for Transport and Member for Bega Andrew Constance, and Minister for Tourism Stuart Ayres.

The ground floor will be for visitors, market stall-holders and amenities, and the first floor will be used for office space.

Cruise Lines International Association Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz, who was on hand for the opening, told

Cruise Weekly his organisation was continuing to engage with the Government of NSW on a carefully managed resumption of local cruising, and was encouraged by the presence of two senior NSW Ministers at the opening of the new infrastructure, as well as their comments that they are keen to see ships back as soon as they possibly can in the state.

Port Authority of NSW Chief Executive Officer Philip Holliday said Eden is an increasingly popular cruise destination, and gives cruise ships travelling between Sydney and Melbourne the perfect gateway to the Sapphire Coast.

"Together with the Eden Cruise Wharf, the Eden Welcome Centre strengthens the region's place on the Australian cruise map and will further help bring the economic benefits of cruise tourism to its shores," he said.

More than 100,000 cruise passengers are expected to visit the region each year.

Pictured, Constance and Ayres cut the ribbon on the Eden Welcome Centre, and **inset left**, Katz and Australian Cruise Association Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel at the opening.

MSC health & safety

MSC Cruises is strengthening its health and safety protocol with the rollout of a fleet-wide coronavirus vaccination program for its crews.

The first vaccines have already been administered, with the program to prioritise the 10 ships planned to return to the sea during the northern summer (**CW** 16 Apr).

MSC Bellissima Captain Giuseppe Maresca and his crew received their vaccinations yesterday, as the first step in the program.

"Our aim is of adding a further level of protection for both themselves and the guests they will welcome," said CEO Gianni Onorato.



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Coral WWII tour

BATTLEFIELD tour leader Peter Spring will lead a Travelrite International cruise exploring some of the Pacific's iconic World War II military sights in Jan 2022.

Departing from Brisbane, the WW2 Military History of the Pacific tour, aboard *Coral Princess*, will visit Aotau, Kitava Island, Rabaul, Kiriwina, and the Conflict Islands from 27 Jan to 08 Feb 2022.

The 13-day tour is inclusive of all meals, entertainment, and gratuities aboard *Coral*, sightseeing tours, entry to museums, at-sea lectures, one night's accommodation in Brisbane with breakfast, a farewell dinner, port & handling charges with cruise taxes, and more.

Further information or a booking form can be obtained by contacting 1800 630 343.

Texas cruise rally



CARNIVAL Breeze and *Carnival Vista* have arrived in Galveston for a cruise rally today (pictured).

The two Texas-based ships will be present for the assembly, which will discuss the economic impact of the cruise pause.

Carnival President Christine Duffy and Galveston Mayor Craig Brown will be among the speakers at the event, that will be

hosted by the Federal Maritime Commission, which itself will be represented by Commissioners Carl Bentzel and Louis Sola.

Also on hand will be Galveston port and community officials, as well as local business leaders.

The Port of Galveston is the fourth most popular cruise homeport in North America and the only cruise port in Texas.

Northern Europe cruise tool

CRUISE Baltic has partnered with Cruise Norway on a new tool for cruise lines, which is set to make planning in the region easier.

The Itinerary Planner allows cruise lines to check availability and plan itineraries in the region, and builds on Cruise Norway's Cruise Calendar, introducing a new design that incorporates the entire Baltic Sea.

Cruise lines can create a draft of their preferred itinerary, check availability, and avoid congestion.

"The fact that two cruise associations are joining forces to create a common product that provides greater accessibility to the region is really a strength," added Cruise Baltic Director Claus Bodker.

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A GIPPSLAND fisherman has faced off with a tiger snake in his tinny, while it was anchored more than 10 kilometres from the shore in the middle of Lake Wellington.

With no way to retrieve the anchor, the man occupied the boat with the metre-long snake until it let its guard down, at which point he covered it with his jumper.

"That gave it a fright," the man explained, "enough to get it hiding down the side of the boat, so I was able to get to the anchor and pull it up."

The two then set off on the half-hour trip back to shore, where a snake-catcher was waiting.

The reptile was later released in the nearby Heart Morass wetland.

Given the man was well into his eighties, he was lucky the fright didn't send him into cardiac arrest.

Love finds a way with P&O



LOVE conquers all, even in a pandemic, as P&O Cruises Australia shipmates Julie McEwen and Leeron Lungo (pictured) recently showed.

McEwen, from New Zealand, and Lungo, from South Africa, first met working on *Pacific Explorer* in 2018, before McEwen was transferred to *Pacific Dawn* 10 days later.

However, it seems the stars were aligned for the couple, when they again met on *Pacific Explorer*, this time for a longer contract, with Lungo as sports coordinator and McEwen as entertainment host.

After spending three months on board together during the pandemic - a challenge that would prove tough for any couple - McEwen said she knew she had found the one, and Lungo agreed.

With the couple now based on the Gold Coast, Lungo surprised his partner earlier this month with a beach picnic, where he popped the question.

Hot off their engagement, the

two will soon also host a four-night Virtual Short Break Cruise, which will feature a regular lineup of events - facebook.com/pocruises.

NCLH makes \$1m donation to Sitka

THE City and Borough of Sitka in Alaska has accepted a US\$1 million donation from Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH).

City Administrator John Leach told the Sitka Assembly NCLH is offering the money to ease the economic effects of Alaska's ongoing cruise suspension.

He added NCLH plans to make similar donations to other Alaskan communities but did not specify where.

Sitka has not yet decided where to spend the money, and there is no set timeline for when the donation is to be received.

Princess update on MedallionClass

PRINCESS Cruises has released a video highlighting MedallionClass, featuring its creator, John Padgett.

The video shows what the Princess team has been working on during the pandemic, and aims to simplify what MedallionClass can be used for - [CLICK HERE](#).



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