

## Royal: "strong demand environment"

**ROYAL** Caribbean Group is now seeing its booking levels exceed pre-pandemic 2019 records, with Chief Executive Jason Liberty (pictured) saying the company is encouraged by ongoing strong demand for cruising and a steady acceleration in booking volumes - despite the impact of Omicron earlier in the year and "the horrific conflict in Ukraine".

Speaking during a quarterly financial update late last week, Liberty said, "it is gratifying to see our ships and crew returning to our mission of delivering the best vacation experiences in a safe and responsible way".

Figures confirmed the huge turnaround experienced by Royal Caribbean Group, which recorded USD\$651,858 in passenger ticket revenues for the three months to 31 Mar across its five brands Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Silversea Cruises, TUI Cruises and Hapag-



Lloyd Cruises.

That was more than 32 times the USD\$20.8 million in bookings experienced across the group for the first three months of 2021.

Liberty noted that during the quarter the Group had returned 54 out of 62 ships to operation across the five brands, representing almost 90% of global fleet capacity.

About 800,000 guests were carried over the three month period, with record satisfaction scores and record total revenue per passenger cruise day.

"The group continues to make

progress towards profitability, with operating cash flow only slightly negative in Mar and turning positive in Apr," Liberty noted, while reporting a USD\$1.2 billion quarterly loss.

The group expects a return to net profit for the second half of this year, he said.

Ships that operated "core itineraries" in the first quarter achieved a 59% load factor.

"The group is now offering cruises in almost all of its destinations," Liberty said.

"Australia, one of the last countries to reopen, announced the resumption of cruising effective Apr 2022...the Group expects to return to Australia for the local summer season in the fourth quarter of 2022," he added.

China also remains closed due to ongoing lockdowns, but the Group "remains optimistic to capture long-term growth opportunities in that market".

## NCLH all back

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line Holdings is celebrating the return to service of the entire Norwegian Cruise Line, Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas (RSSC) fleet.

The final piece of the puzzle was the resumption of *Norwegian Spirit* which commenced a season in Tahiti over the weekend, meaning the full 17-ship Norwegian fleet is now sailing.

That's in addition to the six-strong Oceania fleet as well as the five RSSC vessels.

CEO Frank Del Rio said having the entire 28-strong fleet sailing was "one of, if not THE most important milestone in our Great Cruise Comeback".

## Walker joins RCI

**PHILIPPA** Walker has today commenced a new role as Partnerships Manager at Royal Caribbean International (RCI).

Walker's extensive industry career includes former roles with Fairfax Media/Nine as Head of Travel, as well as GM Marketing Australia with Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection.

## CDC eases vaccination requirements

**THE** United States' Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has revised its definition of "highly vaccinated" cruises, easing the threshold of fully vaccinated passengers from 95% to 90%.

The CDC's voluntary COVID-19 monitoring program currently covers almost 100 cruise ships, all in the "highly vaccinated" category.

The change effectively allows cruise ships to carry more families with unvaccinated children aged less than five, with the CDC saying the update is based on modelling data.

The organisation continues to strongly recommend vaccination for passengers and crew members as the best way to slow the spread of COVID-19.

## Hoffe promoted

**PAM** Hoffe has been named as President of Avalon Waterways, a promotion from her former Managing Director role, giving her oversight of global operations as well as sales.

## Cruise Weekly today

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

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**A SEAWEED** farm proposal for the New South Wales town of Eden is aiming to be Australia's first commercial kelp crop.

Those behind the plan told the ABC it would create a "brand new industry" and feed a growing appetite for the product.

Auskelp is proposing a 200-hectare lease at Disaster Bay, to grow kelp for food, cattle feed, and the pharmaceutical industry.

High in protein, kelp can be cooked like other greens or used in supplements - and could be the next great shore excursion experience for cruise passengers visiting the town!

## Carnival back in town



**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line has announced its first sailing out of Australia on 02 Oct, its first back in local waters in more than two years.

Departing from Sydney, guests will have the opportunity to reacquaint themselves with *Carnival Splendor* (pictured) on a three-day getaway cruise.

With more than 45 onboard activities to explore, including the exhilarating Green-Lightning thrill-slide, family-friendly shows, delicious dining experiences and more, *Splendor's* first local cruise in almost 1,000 days is the perfect sampler for Australians to reignite their love for cruising.

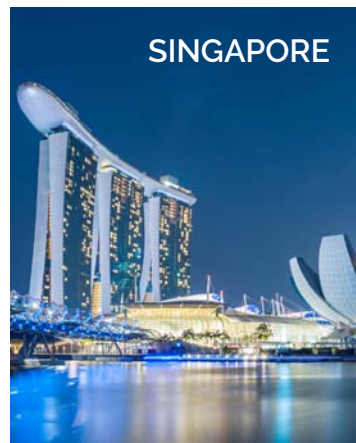
Vice President Kara Glamore said Carnival would be able to welcome guests back on board the ship earlier than expected thanks to a scheduling availability.

"*Splendor's* departure from Seattle earlier this week marked the restart of the entire Carnival Cruise Line fleet, so it's great that she will be kicking off our season in Australia ahead of our 10th Aussie birthday in Oct," she noted.

Fares start from \$437 per

person twin share.

For more information and bookings call 13 31 94.



## Fred. Olsen 23/24

**FRED.** Olsen Cruise Lines has unveiled a new hand-crafted program of cruising for 2023/24.

With more than 100 sailings across its fleet of smaller ships, the new program includes opportunities to witness Norway's famous Langfossen, explore the remote islands of the Azores, and visit Lapland in the northern summer months.

Durations range from two to 93 nights, with departures from Liverpool, Newcastle, Rosyth, Southampton, Dover, London, Belfast, and more.



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