



FC on the hunt for cruise purchases

EXCLUSIVE

FLIGHT Centre has flagged its keen interest in undertaking acquisitions in the cruise sector as the company seeks to accelerate its growth trajectory over the coming years.

Speaking at the opening address of the Travel Associates National Product Showcase event in Brisbane over the weekend, Global MD - Luxury and Independent Brands, Danielle Galloway (**pictured**), confirmed the continued boom in cruise sales over the last 12 months has made the segment a clear target for strategic growth.

"There are so many businesses that don't exist anymore due to COVID - especially in the cruise space - and we all know this is a huge opportunity and continues to be an opportunity for us to really be present in that cruise space and to grow it even



further," she explained.

"The growth of luxury independent agents will also be looking for cruise growth, so we'll be looking for independent agencies, etc, to potentially acquire, so long as they've got the right people within those businesses," she added.

Speaking to **CW** on the sidelines of the event, Galloway added that Flight Centre would be "crazy not to invest" in the cruise segment.

"The strength of the market is really significant and also there

isn't one strong player in the marketplace at the moment, because COVID depleted the industry, in particular there were so many boutique cruise agencies that existed that now aren't servicing with the same specialisation that they were previously," she said.

The bullish ambition followed a strong report card for Flight Centre's luxury Travel Associates division, which recorded a significant growth in cruise TTV and revenue over the last year.



On location in Christchurch, NZ

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Ponant, which hosting guests on board *Le Commandant Charcot* as she docks in NZ.

EXCITED guests are arriving in Christchurch today ahead of joining Ponant Chairman Asia Pacific, Sarina Bratton, on board *Le Commandant Charcot*, the world's only luxury icebreaker.

Le Commandant Charcot will make a triumphant entrance to Lyttleton this afternoon on her inaugural visit to New Zealand, where she will be docking between her two Antarctic semi-circumnavigation voyages this season.

Congratulations

Our personal travel managers, Rose Febo from Hawthorne, QLD and Karryn Bartlett from Bulahdelah, NSW - Mobile/Home-based Agent of the Year Finalists at the 2022 Cruise Industry Awards.

Rose and Karryn have each built their own successful travel business in partnership with TravelManagers and share their passion for cruising with their clients.

Join our award-winning network of personal travel managers across Australia.





APT relaunches VIP agent program

APT Travel Group (ATG) has relaunched its VIP program for travel advisors.

The newly enhanced Partner Recognition Program will see advisors receive increased rewards and recognition for their valued contribution to the APT, Travelmarvel, and Botanica brands.

Qualifying agencies will receive enhanced rewards, including increased marketing budgets, VIP customer service, and self-famil access.

ATG has also announced its Consultant Rewards benefits, which will give advisors the chance to earn bonus commission when booking selected APT and Travelmarvel trips.

Each quarter, ATG will nominate certain products which are eligible for its VIP advisors to book, which will see them earn \$100.



The more bookings and deposits placed, the more money advisors can earn.

From now until the end of next month, APT and Travelmarvel products valid for the incentive are this year's European River Cruising departures, as well as APT Kimberley Cruises on *Le Soleal* and *Le Laperouse* in 2023.

APT has also waived air surcharges for new bookings on European river cruises this year

(CW 20 Jan).

In addition, advisors will have access to discounted travel on selected itineraries this year.

"We are more than excited to relaunch our VIP Program, bigger and better than ever," General Manager Sales Scott Ellis enthused.

"Our Agency Recognition program is focussed on driving sales through reinvesting in our agent partners.

"Increased Consultant Rewards recognises the critical role consultants play and thanks agents for their recommendation."

Ellis said ATG would also love to see as many advisors as possible experience its product on a self-famil.

"Offering famils is a great way to reward agents whilst investing in their knowledge," he added.

More details [HERE](#).

New RCG exec

ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) has named Palle Laursen as Executive Vice President Marine.

Laursen will join RCG from May, from shipping company Maersk, where he most recently served as Chief Fleet & Technical Officer.

In his role at Maersk, Laursen was responsible for the company's fleet of more than 750 container ships, including 400 chartered vessels and 350 owned vessels.

He led Maersk's effort to deploy a fully carbon-neutral fleet by 2040 - with climate safety a key tenet of RCG.

Laursen was also responsible for chartering, technical management, crew management, safety and compliance, newbuilding activities, and engineering services.



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Travel Associates cruises into 2023

THE world's key luxury cruise brands were among participants at this year's Travel Associates Product Showcase, which saw more than 200 advisors from the Flight Centre Travel Group's upmarket brand across

Australia and New Zealand participate in workshops, networking events and updates on everything that's new and hot in the world of cruise.

The event - taking place for the first time in four years - took place at Brisbane's W Hotel, with about 70 supplier partners showcasing their wares - more on **page one** and in today's issue of **Travel Daily**.



SOME of the Travel Associates leadership team including FCTG Global Brand & Marketing Director - Luxury Anna Burgdorf; Travel Associates GM Australia Rachel Kingswell; Global Product Leader Shannon Fogarty; and National Events & LSM Manager Lisa Wright.



FLIGHT Centre Travel Group Global MD Luxury & Independent, Danielle Galloway; Regent Seven Seas Cruises VP Asia-Pacific Lisa Pile; and Travel Associates Global Product Leader Shannon Fogarty.



THE NCLH team out in force: Scott Graham, Regent Seven Seas; Craig McLaurin, Norwegian; Elsa McLean, Regent; and Jason Worth & James Sitters, Oceania Cruises.



ANASTASIA Kotanidis and Jennifer Compton from Seabourn Cruise Line with Travel Associates friends including Becky Kent-Perchalla, Perchalla & Turner Travel Associates SA.



LOOKING glam in gold!



KAREN Newbury, APT; Regent Seven Seas Cruises' Elsa McLean; and Julie Rogers from Ponant get on their bike.



A RECENT episode covered in porthole in which three men were found clinging to a cooler for dear life off the coast of Albany (CW 03 Feb) has taken a dark turn.

The Australian Federal Police has now been called in to investigate, after "suspicious packages" were found aboard the vessel when she was hauled to shore by a marine rescue group.

The boat washed up in Peaceful Bay, and following its recovery, the AFP became involved.



ACA hosts WA workshops



THE Australian Cruise Association (ACA) last week staged two "cruise ready" workshops in Geraldton and Broome.

Both events were well-attended by local tourism operators, with ACA holding meetings with the local industry, and visiting some of the experiences on offer in both ports.

Pictured are Abercrombie & Kent Cruise Account Manager Jayne Mathews; Carnival Corporation Director Destination Management Australia Michael Mihajlov; Tourism WA Cruise Manager Christine Cole; ACA Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel; Kimberley Ports Authority Chief Executive Officer Luke Westlake; Cruise Broome Chair Shayne Murray; Broome Visitor Centre Manager Mel Virgo; InterCruises Shoreside & Port Services Commercial Development & Quotations Executive Joanne Brown; and Australia's North

West Tourism Trade & Industry Relationships Manager Nicky Bexley.

Ponant savings

SAVINGS for solos and couples are available on a rare luxury voyage through Micronesia with Ponant.

The all-inclusive luxury voyage next year is being offered with a saving of \$4,960 per couple and \$11,590 for solo travellers for earlybird bookings by 30 Apr through Cruise Traveller.

The 'Micronesia & So Much More' fly, stay, and cruise package features an exotic, 16-night expedition voyage from New Caledonia to Guam in Mar 2024 aboard Ponant's 264-guest *Le Soleal*.

The package includes flights from Australia to Noumea with a night's stay in New Caledonia - **CLICK HERE**.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Oceania Regatta</i>	13 Feb
MELBOURNE	<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Noordam</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	14 Feb
	<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	14 Feb
GEELONG	<i>Viking Neptune</i>	13 Feb
AIRLIE BEACH	<i>Europa 2</i>	13 Feb
TOWNSVILLE	<i>Europa 2</i>	14 Feb
HOBART	<i>ms Zuiderdam</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Le Soleal</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Celebrity Eclipse</i>	14 Feb
BURNIE	<i>Noordam</i>	14 Feb
PORT ARTHUR	<i>Coral Discoverer</i>	14 Feb
AUCKLAND	<i>Viking Orion</i>	13 Feb
CHRISTCHURCH	<i>Silver Whisper</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Commandant Charcot</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Coral Princess</i>	14 Feb
WELLINGTON	<i>Coral Princess</i>	13 Feb
DUNEDIN	<i>Viking Mars</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Silver Whisper</i>	14 Feb
FIORDLAND	<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	13 Feb
	<i>Nat Geo Orion</i>	14 Feb
	<i>Norwegian Spirit</i>	14 Feb
	<i>Seabourn Odyssey</i>	14 Feb
NAPIER	<i>Viking Orion</i>	13 Feb

Stamos to join Beach Boys cruise

AMERICAN actor John Stamos is set to join The Beach Boys Good Vibrations Cruise, which sails next month.

Stamos will join the second sailing of the Good Vibrations Cruise, and in addition to The Beach Boys, the lineup will also feature The Isley Brothers, The Temptations, The Righteous Brothers, and more.

The cruise sails from 03-08 Mar, embarking from Miami and visiting Harvest Caye and Costa Maya aboard *Norwegian Pearl* - **CLICK HERE** for more.