

P&O Cruises pulls out of Poupou port

A 'tribal dispute' has been blamed for the decision to ditch the troubled South Pacific port for the rest of the year.

AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF CANCELLING CALLS AT Emerald Bay, in Poupou, New Caledonia, P&O Australia has officially dropped the destination from its 2011 South Pacific cruises.

The last time a P&O ship called at Emerald Bay was "late last year", a company spokesperson told **Cruise Weekly**.

However, the port has not been deleted from the company's website (www.pocruises.com.au) with booked passengers instead receiving an email to notify them of the change.

Emerald Bay is still listed on the P&O site as a destination on its four remaining 'Crystal Reflections' itineraries departing from Sydney in July and December 2011 as well as all 'Pacific Escapades', 'Week Magique' and 'Island Delights' itineraries in 2012.

"Over recent months P&O Cruises has replaced scheduled calls to Emerald Bay (Poupou) with other Pacific Island destinations, due to an ongoing tribal

dispute on the island," a spokesperson said. "P&O Cruises has now decided to extend this action until the end of the year and will be advising passengers accordingly."

Mystery Island or Santo in Vanuatu have been substituted for Emerald Bay on affected voyages on *Pacific Sun*, *Pacific Pearl* and *Pacific Jewel*.

On P&O's Facebook page last week, a passenger praised the line for its "decisive action".

P&O replied: "We're hoping that we will be able to revisit Poupou in the near future, as it's a beautiful destination."

"We are happy that our relationships and itineraries allow us to provide another destination which is equally as pleasing."


To have your say on these changes visit **Cruise Weekly's** Facebook page by clicking the Facebook icon  .



Poupou, New Caledonia

APT in Thailand/Mekong

APT HAS RELEASED A NEW 12-PAGE VIETNAM Thailand preview brochure today, which features additions to its Vietnam program such as Thailand land touring and Upper Mekong cruising in Laos.


For a copy, see your travel agent .

A princess in Europe

NEXT YEAR PRINCESS CRUISES HAS EUROPE covered, with seven vessels, 127 voyages and 116 destinations, the largest ever deployment by the cruise line to the continent.

New Princess destinations on the radar for 2012 include Korcula in Croatia and UNESCO world heritage listed Nessebar in Bulgaria.

Itineraries featured in the line-up include a seven-night Greek Interlude on the intimate 680-passenger *Ocean Princess* between Rome and Athens (from \$1,339pp); the popular 12-night Grand Mediterranean cruise on superliner *Ruby Princess* (from \$2,199pp) and the 16-night Land of the Midnight Sun cruises departing from London and visiting Norway and Russia (from \$4,179pp).


For a full break-down of Princess' 2012 European offering, see your local travel agent, or visit www.princess.com .

TODAY'S CRUISE WEEKLY

Welcome to today's consumer issue of **Cruise Weekly**, featuring four pages of cruise news and photos, plus a full page from Star Cruises (p5).

PNG sailings in 2012

ORION EXPEDITION CRUISES HAS SCHEDULED SIX eleven-night Papua New Guinea voyages onboard *Orion* and *Orion II* between March and October 2012.

For details see your local travel agent .

Take a friend for free!

CRUISING ASIA JUST GOT BETTER, WITH THE launch of Star Cruises' take a friend for free special onboard *SuperStar Libra*.

The special covers selected departures for *SuperStar Libra's* three-night roundtrip cruises from Penang to Phuket and Krabi, as well as selected departures of her seven- and eight-night cruise and stay packages from Phuket.


See **page 5** for details .

Enjoy P&O home-cooking

IF YOU CAN'T GET THE REMEMBRANCE OF A TASTY dish devoured onboard a member of the P&O Cruises fleet out of your head, then the remedy may be at hand, with the launch of P&O's first ever cookbook, titled *Holidays*.

The cookbook features more than 60 recipes from the Australian cruise line's culinary team, with tasty treats ranging from macadamia nut pancakes with mango and maple syrup to wagyu burgers and spatchcock with eggplant salad.

"It was hard to choose 60 for our book, but we have selected an array of our passengers' top dishes so that people can now enjoy our food at home as well as onboard our ships," said P&O Cruises Corporate Executive Chef Uwe Stiefel.

Holidays is priced at \$40, however you will have to book another cruise to get your hands on it as it is only available to buy onboard .



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CRUISE CALENDAR	
SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	Fri 29 Jul
<i>Sun Princess</i>	Sat 30 Jul
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Sun</i>	Wed 27 Jul
<i>Sun Princess</i>	Thu 28 Jul

2012 Russian river cruise

APT'S COMPLETE 2012 RUSSIAN RIVER CRUISING brochure is now available for perusal from your local travel agent.

The brochure covers seven voyages onboard the 212-passenger *ms AmaKatarina*, in her first full season of service, along the Volga, Svir and Neva rivers between St Petersburg and Moscow.

The 76-page brochure also features a selection of Golden Eagle rail journeys, as well as several cruise/rail packages.

GRAND SYDNEY TO ISTANBUL

\$11,270*

SYDNEY TO ISTANBUL
66 NIGHTS | FEB 10, 2012

BONUS
FLY HOME
FREE!

Step ashore in Porbandar – birthplace of Gandhi 'Father of the Nation'. Flavours from India to East Africa intermingle in Muscat enticing you to follow the Frankincense Trail. Lost cities of Ubar and Petra – the 'rose-red city half as old as time', capture the imagination. The exciting world of ancient Egypt beckons. A captivating blend of East and West infused with scents of the Orient, Istanbul beckons on this inspirational voyage melding the exotic, idyllic and iconic. Suez Canal – a wonder of the new. A crumbling Crusader castle adds to Fethiye's many charms and every time-worn stone of Ephesus holds clues to a glorious past.

Includes airport/ship transfers, meals, entertainment, port taxes, fuel supplement, government fees & gratuities.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO

Voyages of Discovery

*TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

www.voyagesofdiscovery.com

Silversea unveils 20 long cruises

The luxury line's 2012 'Grand Voyages' include up to US\$1500 to spend onboard.

FOR CRUISES FROM THREE WEEKS TO THREE months' duration, Silversea is offering generous savings and credits – up to US\$1500 per suite.

Destinations include Australia, Asia, Africa, Mediterranean, North Europe and South America.

The full 115-day world cruise, departing 6 January 2012 from Fort Lauderdale to Monte Carlo, will visit 45 ports in 27 countries with 13 overnight stays.

Best-available fares start at AU\$61,496 per person and include US\$2,000 onboard spending credit per double-occupancy suite, a US\$1,500 'Passport to Luxury' credit per suite, three shore excursions, invitations to exclusive events, free laundry and more.

Shorter and closer to home, a 24-day *Silver Shadow* voyage from Hong Kong to Sydney, departing 11 December 2012, has calls in Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia and Australia, including an overnight stay in Ho

Chi Minh City.

Best-available fares start at AU\$11,717 per person.

"Our Grand Voyages are perfectly suited to the traveller who has the time and passion to indulge in travel on a grand scale," said Karen Christensen, Silversea's director of sales and marketing and general manager for Australia and New Zealand.

"You can explore the most desirable ports of the Mediterranean for 27 days or visit Rio in time for Carnival on a 64-day circumnavigation of South America – and unpack only once."

Other options include a 53-day *Silver Wind* voyage from Cape Town to Istanbul, with calls in 15 countries including Mozambique and Morocco, which is priced from AU\$23,117 per person; and a month in Europe aboard *Silver Whisper*, with fares from AU\$19,006pp.

For details, see www.silversea.com or call 1300 306 872 (Aust).

Mediterranean Crystal

CRYSTAL CRUISES HAS UNVEILED THREE NEW PORT-packed Mediterranean voyages this year, including one six day cruise from Athens to Santorini, Kotor, Dubrovnik and an overnight in Venice departing 16 October.

The remaining two new seven-day itineraries include a 10 November voyage from Monte Carlo to Florence, Rome, Sorrento, Kusadasi, Mykonos and Athens and a 16 November voyage from Venice to Koper, Dubrovnik, Sicily, Naples and Rome.

For more details and pricing, see your travel agent, or visit www.wiltrans.com.au.

MEANWHILE Crystal has also announced that it will move its December 2012 14-day Holiday Cruise onboard *Crystal Serenity* from the Holy Land to the Caribbean.

According to the cruise line, the move is in keeping with demand.

The new itinerary will now see *Serenity* depart round-trip from Miami for Tortola; Barbados; St. Lucia; Guadeloupe; St. Maarten; St. Thomas; Ponce, Puerto Rico (maiden call) and Key West.

To facilitate the change *Serenity's* pre Holiday voyage is now a Barcelona to Miami Trans-Atlantic cruise on 09 December, whilst her post Holiday voyage will depart on 04 January round-trip from Miami to the Caribbean.

BONUS ONBOARD CREDIT OF £100* per cabin

VENICE & THE ADRIATIC

15 DAY CRUISE DEPARTS 15 AUGUST, 2012

FARES FROM \$3,030*

PER PERSON

Valletta to Piraeus

SHORE EXCURSIONS INCLUDED

Cruise from Malta to the Adriatic, discovering walled cities that were once part of the Venetian Empire, evocative archaeological sites including Butrint in Albania and Delphi in Greece and enjoy scenic cruising as *Minerva* weaves her way through the islands of the Dalmatian Coast.

SWAN HELLENIC DISCOVERY CRUISING

*TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

WWW.SWANHELLENIC.COM.AU

Sunsail in Sydney

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT Sunsails sailing holidays and fleet offerings, the company will be in attendance at this year's Sydney Boat Show 28 July - 02 August.

In addition Sunsail will also have on display the largest monohull in its fleet, the Sunsail 53, and will be giving attendees the chance to win a five-day charter in the Whitsundays.

See www.sunsail.com.au.

P&O/Princess sale

THIS WEEK ECruising.Travel is hosting a seven day sale, for voyages onboard on *Sun Princess*, *Dawn Princess*, *Sea Princess*, *Pacific Jewel*, *Pacific Sun*, *Pacific Pearl* and *Pacific Dawn*.

As part of the sale guests who make bookings on select P&O or *Sun*, *Dawn* or *Sea Princess* sailings will receive bonus onboard credits, plus will only have to pay 50% deposit.

To be eligible bookings must be made before 01 August, call 1300 369 848.

2011 & 2012
THIS WEEK'S FEATURE CRUISES
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 BARCELONA TO ROME | APR 2, 2012
DELUXE OCEAN VIEW STATEROOM
 from **\$2,975*** per guest
 ONBOARD MARINA | 10-DAY VOYAGE

LEGENDS & WONDERS Rome to Venice Apr 12, 2012 10 Day Voyage onboard <i>Marina</i>	DELUXE OCEAN VIEW STATEROOM From \$3,230* per guest
PEARLS OF THE AEGEAN Venice to Athens Apr 22, 2012 10 Day Voyage onboard <i>Marina</i>	VERANDA STATEROOM From \$3,635* per guest

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Ship Review: Fred Olsen's *Balmoral*

by Louise Goldsbury

In an ocean full of trendy ships with fancy features, Fred Olsen's *Balmoral* epitomises tradition and comfort.

It has no casino, rock-climbing wall or Manhattan-style cocktail bars, but plenty of cosy nooks to relax with a book or meet other passengers.

While it suits the old-style cruiser, the interior has stayed fresh with a recent refurbishment of its lounges and modern touches in the cabins.

In 2008 a major refit lengthened *Balmoral* by 30 metres, adding a pool deck, more balcony cabins and a British pub.

Carrying about 1,300 guests, the mid-size ship has a noticeable sense of space in the public areas and corridors.

Most passengers are aged over 60 and 97% are British, but many Australians can be found on local departures.

Earlier this year I had an enjoyable dinner in one of the ship's formal restaurants with Fred Olsen's marketing director, Nigel Lingard, who has worked with the line for 23 years, and the local sales agent, Peter Marshall, director of Cruise Abroad.

Nigel was very candid about the facts and figures of the ship, revealing that only 65 Aussies had boarded the ship in Sydney, but 100 were on the waiting list.

Last year saw 350 Australians onboard "because there were more cabins available", he said.

It's so popular that anyone wanting to board *Balmoral* in Sydney will have to wait until 2013.

The crew is mostly Filipino, Thai and Indonesian and all demonstrated impeccable, friendly service during my evening onboard.

The menus have been revamped, there are no surcharges in the three restaurants, and the drinks prices are very reasonable.

An 'evening in' can also be arranged in your cabin, with a three-course dinner brought to your room – at no extra cost.

At night, cabaret and comedy shows are held in the Neptune Lounge, and the Observatory Lounge transforms into a lively dancefloor.

Other facilities include two pools (one is heated saltwater), Jacuzzis, library, ocean-view gym and golf practice nets.

Like all Fred Olsen ships, *Balmoral* has several single occupancy cabins, or solo passengers can ask to share a twin cabin with a stranger.

Gentleman hosts are hired to accompany female passengers on shore excursions and play card games, in addition to dancing.

The family-owned company has a very loyal following, attracting 53% repeat business each year.

Available cruises

To mark next year's centenary of the sinking of the RMS *Titanic*, *Balmoral* is operating a short cruise (priced from \$899 per person) that calls at the historic liner's UK ports.

The five-night roundtrip from Southampton departs on 3 April 2012 and visits Liverpool and Belfast, including tours of the shipyard where the *Titanic* was built and the new *Titanic* Belfast visitors centre.

The next Australian departure with availability is from Sydney on 26 February 2013.

Ports of call include Brisbane, Hamilton Island, Darwin, Komodo (Indonesia), Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) and Bangkok (Thailand).

Other destinations include Europe, Arctic, Caribbean, South America, US/Canada and the Red Sea.

For details, see www.fredolsencruises.com or call Cruise Abroad on 02 9900 7200.



The *Silhouette* of a new Celebrity sparkles at sea

CELEBRITY CRUISES CELEBRATED THE CHRISTENING of its new Solstice-class vessel, *Celebrity Silhouette*, last week at a ceremony hosted by *Silhouette's* cruise director Nick Weir.

Attended by shipping greats including Bernard Meyer (of the Meyer Werft shipyard), and streamed live on Facebook, the ceremony included musical performances from the 'Celebrity Silhouettes' - comprised of Celebrity crew members, as well as the Greek National anthem, sung with gusto by *Silhouette's* Captain Dimitrios Kafetzis, along with fellow crew.

The vessel was formally christened by her godmother, top US travel executive (and breast cancer survivor (as have been all Solstice-class Godmothers), Michelle Morgan, who cut the pink ribbon and smashed the bottle of bubbles to welcome *Silhouette* to the waves.

The ceremony was concluded with a two night naming ceremony voyage for 1,800 guests down the River Elbe.

The 2,886-guest *Silhouette* herself, measures in at 122,400-tons and 1047ft long, with highlight features including a Lawn Club (replete with real grass and a Lawn Club Grill) and the Art Studio (where guests can learn to draw, make jewellery and even create mosaics).

To learn more about *Silhouette* see www.celebritycruises.com, or to watch a video of her christening ceremony [CLICK HERE](#).



Celebrity Silhouette

Oslo dropped by Costa

AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE COSTA MAGICA HAS dropped a call into Oslo, Norway this week, following the tragic terrorist attacks on the city.

Instead *Magica* is heading to Kristiansand, Norway.

"The safety of our guests and crew members is our highest priority," said a Costa statement.

"The company will evaluate any additional itinerary modification if required by the circumstances and will promptly inform all guests accordingly," the statement added.

It is not yet known whether other vessels scheduled to arrive in Oslo over the coming week, including *Seabourn Sojourn*, *Emerald Princess*, *Celebrity Constellation* and *Eurodam*, will follow suit.

Look and then book

ONLINE CRUISE TRAVEL AGENT, ECRUISING.TRAVEL has unveiled a new booking system that allows cruisers to make their own bookings in six steps which take around two minutes.

The online service will offer guests access to live availability, cabin and deck plans and discounted prices which are updated daily.

Ecrusing.travel has also introduced a virtual merchant facility which allows immediate payments to be charged.

See www.ecrusing.travel.

Marina's La Reserve

LOVERS OF TAPAS AND WINE LOOK OUT, OCEANIA Cruises' *Marina* now offers an exclusive tapas and wine tasting event onboard *Marina* between 12-2pm for as many days as possible during the voyage.

No bookings are needed for the tapas and wine tastings, however the two-hour experience does come with a US\$15 plus service charge fee per person.

See www.OceaniaCruises.com.au.

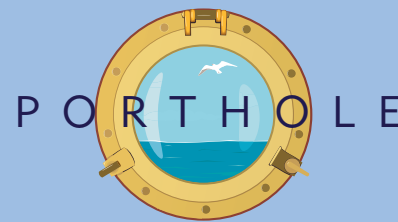
Looking for Xmas ideas?

THIS SILLY SEASON SILVERSEA CRUISES IS HOSTING four festive voyages, including a 15-day Sydney to Auckland cruise departing 21 December, priced from AU\$9,843.

The remaining three voyages include a 17-day Santiago to Fort Lauderdale adventure onboard *Silver Whisper* departing 20 December (from \$9,893pp); a 14-day *Sliver Spirit* Fort Lauderdale Caribbean roundtrip (from \$9,839pp); and a 16-day *Silver Cloud* cruise from San Diego to Fort Lauderdale departing 22 December (from \$7,433pp).

To sweeten the Christmas spirit Silversea is also offering guests onboard spending credits of up to US\$1,000 per suite for these voyages.

See your travel agent for details.



WASTE TIME LIKE A VIKING.

Viking River Cruises has delved into the Facebook revolution with gusto, offering visitors to its site Friday Fun Facts which allow viewers to feel a little less guilty about wasting time on the internet, and a little smarter for what they have learned.

A sample to tickle your funny bone, is last week's Fun Fact: "The French take their food & wine very seriously — both are officially recognized as national cultural treasures!

"And for 1 week each year, schoolchildren, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture, go on field trips to three-star restaurants in order to taste foie gras, Bresse chickens, Roquefort cheese & other famous French products".

NCL PLACES ITS BABIES IN THE HANDS OF STRANGERS.

Norwegian Cruise Lines has partnered with the media giant USA Today in a bid to find the names for its two Project Breakaway ships, due for delivery in April 2013 and April 2014 respectively.

Under the partnership USA Today is now running a naming contest dubbed 'Norwegian's Cruising for Names', which calls for readers to submit names for the Breakaway ships which reflect NCL's brand and the feeling of a "break at sea".

"We know how passionate cruisers are about new ship launches, so it seems only fitting that we look to them to help name our two Project Breakaway ships," said Kevin Sheehan, Norwegian's Chief Executive Officer.

EUROPA'S OPERATIC TURN.

It was a battle of the operatics at this year's Stalla Maris Vocal Competition, held for the seventh consecutive year onboard *Ms Europa*.

Seven up-and-coming classical music talents (each nominated by the world's most renowned opera houses) took to the stage to politely battle it out for the top prize of €15,000, provided by Hapag-Lloyd Cruises.

Through the competition guests were treated to four evenings of top-notch opera, with Nadine Sierra from the San Francisco Opera taking out the top prize.



SuperStar Libra

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PENANG - PHUKET - KRABI

3 Night Cruises from Penang

Selected departures from May - Dec 2011
Penang, Phuket, Krabi, Penang

Inside Cabin	\$464
Window Cabin	\$562
Deluxe Oceanview	\$604

7 Night Cruise & Stay from Phuket

Selected departures from May - Dec 2011

Phuket, Krabi, Penang (4 x nights own arrangements in Penang), Penang, Phuket

Inside Cabin	\$469
Window Cabin	\$567
Deluxe Oceanview	\$609

8 Night Cruise & Stay from Phuket

Selected departures from June - Sept 2011

Phuket, Krabi, Penang (4 x nights own arrangements in Penang), Penang, Krabi, Phuket

Inside Cabin	\$622
Window Cabin	\$752
Deluxe Oceanview	\$810

Cruises include all meals^ and entertainment onboard plus port and fuel charges.



For bookings & further information contact your preferred Wholesaler

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*CONDITIONS APPLY: All prices are cruise only, AUD, per person twin share and subject to change and availability. Price for Inside Cabin based on Cat DC category, Window Cabin based on CC category & Deluxe Oceanview based on BB category. Single passengers must pay a single supplement. Prices include port charges and fuel surcharge. ^Meals included in selected restaurants. 2011 departure dates 7 NIGHT CRUISE ex Phuket - 30 May, 6 & 27 June, 4 July, 5 & 12 Sept, 3, 7, 10, 17, 24 & 31 Oct, 14, 21 & 28 Nov, 5 & 12 Dec 2011. 8 NIGHT CRUISE ex Phuket 13 June, 11 & 25 July, 8 & 22 August, 16 Sept 2011. Own arrangements in Penang is at passengers own choice & expense. 3 NIGHT CRUISE ex Penang May 01, 08, 15, 22 & 29, Jun 05, 12, 19 & 26, Jul 03, 10, 17, 24 & 31, Aug 07, 14, 21 & 28, Sept 04, 11, 18 & 25, Oct 02, 09, 16, 23 & 30, Nov 06, 13, 20 & 27, Dec 04, 11, 18 & 25. # 2 for 1 DEAL - 2nd pax cruise for free, PLUS 4th pax also cruises for free if 2 adults & 2 children (under the age of 12 years & below) 4th pax must be 12 years or under. Offer & pricing is valid until 30 Sept 2011. FREE passenger pays all relative port taxes & fuel surcharges - 4 Night ex Phuket PHC = \$70pp, Fuel Surcharge = \$32pp, 3 Night ex Phuket PHC = \$55pp, Fuel Surcharge = \$24pp, 3 Nights ex Penang PHC = \$50pp, Fuel Surcharge \$24pp. Holiday surcharge imposed on peak sailings. Strict cancellation fees apply. Please note that a surcharge may be imposed on credit card transactions. A service fee will be charged. Every effort is made to ensure advertisement accuracy, however Star Cruises cannot be held responsible for printing or typographical errors or errors arising from unforeseen circumstances. Pricing correct as at 20 July 2011. Pricing valid until 31 August 2011 & can be withdrawn at any time without notice. SCS 25944