

CRUISE

WEEKLY

Tuesday 30 October 2012

'Frankenstorm' cancels US cruises

Hurricane Sandy has caused the cancellation of east coast departures and the rerouting of ships in the Caribbean and Bahamas.

THE Port of New York was closed down on Sunday night, delaying yesterday's scheduled arrival of NCL's *Norwegian Gem*, which remained at sea awaiting instructions from the United States Coast Guard.

Also based in New York, Carnival Cruise Line's *Carnival Miracle* skipped two ports of call to beat the storm back home and then delayed its next departure.

Carnival Fantasy spent Thursday at sea instead of visiting Freeport in the Bahamas,

and the delayed *Carnival Sensation* shortened its itinerary to only three days.

The company also cancelled the departure of *Carnival Pride* from Baltimore and *Carnival Glory* from Norfolk due to adverse weather conditions. But Carnival was quick to make up for the scratched seven-day Caribbean cruise on *Pride* and is now offering a two-day "cruise to nowhere" this weekend, priced from US\$99 per person.

Carnival's senior cruise director John Heald wrote in his popular blog: "I have to say I can't remember a storm that has affected so many ships and forced the closure of ports, and in the case of the *Carnival Glory* and *Carnival Pride*, the cancellation of two cruises."

Royal Caribbean delayed until today a departure of *Jewel of the Seas* that had been scheduled for Saturday.

NCL's Miami-based *Norwegian Sky* returned late from its last voyage and delayed its next sailing.

Holland America's *Eurodam*, was scheduled to dock in Fort Lauderdale on Saturday, but rough conditions forced the ship to pull into Jacksonville.

Eurodam departed Quebec, Canada, on 14 October and for the first time since Tuesday, the 2,100 passengers saw land on Friday afternoon.

Other ships that have shifted course and skipped ports include *Allure of the Seas*, *Monarch of the Seas*, *Majesty of the Seas*, *Norwegian Jewel*, *Gem* and *Pearl*, *Carnival Valor*, *Carnival Fascination*, *Disney Dream* and *Disney Fantasy*.

Cruise lines' private islands in the Bahamas were also damaged by the hurricane, which has killed people more than 65 people, mainly in Haiti.

Affected cruise passengers are being provided with refunds, future cruise credits, hotel accommodation and meals.

American meteorologists coined the nickname "Frankenstorm" because it is made up of different types of weather patterns and is due to reach the US just before Halloween.

Athena replaced by Delphin

CLASSIC International Cruises' Fremantle office has finally confirmed that its summer cruises will go ahead, but on a different vessel.

The German *MS Delphin* has been chartered to operate CIC's Australian season while the *MV Athena* remains under arrest in France for unpaid bills.

The good news is that the 16,214-tonne *Delphin* is younger, more spacious and higher rated - but the bad news is it carries only 520 passengers and the *Athena* was made for 640.

In a statement, CIC Australia said it was not affected by the financial issues that arose in Europe, and the *Delphin* was being chartered by UK-based Cruise & Maritime Voyages.

The *Delphin* has sailed in Australian waters before, as CTC Cruises' *Belorussiya*, from 1987 until 1992. The ship is now owned by Visual Cruises Put Ltd in Mauritius.

A message on the CIC website states that the new information will soon be updated.

"CIC Australia is currently loading the reservations system and commencing reberthing of the 7,000 bookings for the 2012/13 season.

"Because of the workload we will be communicating via email and not via our normal reservation telephone system.

"Additional staff are in the office to handle your enquiry," the company added.



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- Viking's customer satisfaction rating is 99.6% with many saying the cruises have met or exceeded their expectations.
- It has the largest river cruise fleet with 34 ships in 2013 with 14 being the new Longships designed by Yran & Stoorbraten, the team behind ocean cruiser *Seabourn*.

Swan Hellenic specials

SWAN Hellenic is promoting its 2013 European voyages, with cruises in the Baltic, British Isles, on the French coast and even Ireland on offer - for details see the **last page** of today's *Cruise Weekly*.

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Cruise Calendar

Cruise Weekly's cruise calendar details upcoming port calls of passenger cruise ships at various destinations in Australia.

SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	Sat 03 Nov
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	Sat 03 Nov
<i>Rhapsody of the Seas</i>	Sun 04 Nov
<i>Dawn Princess</i>	Tue 06 Nov
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	Sat 03 Nov
FREMANTLE	
<i>Sea Princess</i>	Fri 02 Nov
<i>Voyager of the Seas</i>	Mon 05 Nov
MELBOURNE	
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	Sun 04 Nov
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	Mon 05 Nov
<i>PacificJewel</i>	Mon 05 Nov

Sea Cloud to Caribbean

SEA Cloud Cruises is inviting Australian cruisers to experience the Caribbean and Central America between December 2012 and April 2013 aboard one of its luxurious windjammer yachts.

A series of voyages, priced from just \$2250, will see *Sea Cloud* and *Sea Cloud II* take in Costa Rica and Panama, Cuba, Belize and more - details from your travel agent or via the toll free number 1300 583 572.

Last Minute Deals

This weekly column highlights hot deals on cruises departing soon - ideal for our spontaneous readers.

Check out this week's cruise bargain:

14-night Adelaide to Sydney onboard *Sea Princess*

- From: \$1,259pp
- Departs: 06 November 2012
- Visits: Melbourne, Fjordland National Park (NZ), Wellington, Napier, Tauranga, Auckland and Sydney
- Includes: six-nights cruising and onboard meals and entertainment.
- Contact: ecruising.travel

More big cruise ships on horizon

Holland America and Carnival Cruise Lines have ordered new vessels, while Royal Caribbean moves closer to building another megaliner.

CARNIVAL Corporation has announced it has reached an agreement for the construction of a 99,000-tonne, 2,660-passenger HAL ship and a 135,000-tonne 4,000-passenger Carnival Cruise Lines ship.

Scheduled for delivery in 2015, the HAL vessel will be a new class for the line and its first newbuild to enter service in five years, since the *ms Nieuw Amsterdam* was launched in 2010.

The Carnival vessel, also a new class of ship, is due to debut in 2016, four years after the introduction of *Carnival Breeze*.

Micky Arison, Chairman and CEO of Carnival Corp, said the orders continued the company's strategy of introducing two to three ships per year across the corporation's 10 brands.

"We have strategically timed the introduction of these new ships to allow ample time for those brands to further grow their passenger base and absorb the new capacity while minimising revenue yield dilution in the remainder of their existing fleets," he said.

Carnival now has nine new ships scheduled for delivery - two for 2013, two for 2014, three for 2015 and two for 2016.

Cuba Clipper cruise bargain

STAR Clippers is offering discounts of 25% on two special voyages to mark its inaugural sailing season to Cuba.

The 170-passenger *Star Flyer* tall ship will operate the seven night bargain voyages from Cienfuegos on 16 and 23 Feb 2014, with prices starting at just \$2232 per person for bookings made by 30 Apr 2013.

The Cuba season will see *Star Flyer* split the 2013/14 winter between Costa Rica and the Caribbean.

There are four itineraries taking in Cuba, with *Flyer* positioning from Costa Rica to Cuba via the Panama Canal on an 02 Feb 2014 voyage priced from \$5445 per person plus port costs.

For reservations call your travel agent or Star Clippers on 1300 362 599.

Arison also noted that the additional "tonnage" is expected, to some extent, to replace existing capacity reductions from possible sales of older ships.

A memorandum of agreement has been signed with Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri and is subject to customary closing conditions, including execution of shipbuilding contracts and financing.

Meanwhile, Royal Caribbean Cruises revealed last week that it was involved in negotiations for the possible construction of an Oasis-type megaliner that would be delivered in late 2016.

The company has not yet entered into any agreement but it is "so close", said Richard Fain, RCCL chairman and CEO.

The new ship would cost less (on a per berth basis) than the similar and very popular *Oasis of the Seas* and *Allure of the Seas*, and would have better energy efficiency, he said.



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Cruise Tip

Weddings at sea

As the popularity of cruising continues to grow in the Australian market, so too has the popularity of cruise weddings. Couples can choose to have their wedding at sea, in port, or in some cases have their wedding onboard whilst in port - so that guests can join the wedding and reception and then disembark when it's time for the vessel and the newly-weds to sail away. However, as with all wedding planning, it is important to do research before booking to ensure you have the big day that you have been dreaming of. Here's just a few tips to help you along the way.

- The first thing you need to do is decide on the location: do you want to get married in Australia, the Pacific Islands, Europe, Alaska, the Mediterranean, Africa etc...
- Next up, you'll want to have a look at the cruise lines which offer voyages in your destination at the time of year that you would like to get married
- Once you have a list of possible cruise lines it is important to check which ones actually offer wedding packages, to get you started here's a list: Carnival Cruise Lines, Celebrity Cruises, Costa Cruises, Holland America Line, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Cunard, Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, Regent Seven Seas, Azamara Club Cruises, Pullmantur, Windstar Cruises, Disney Cruise Lines, and P&O Cruises
- Once you have a shortlist, it's time to decide whether you want your wedding onboard or in port. Not all cruise lines offer both options
- If you still have a few choices after this process, do a bit of research on the ships that you are looking at, i.e. what is the ship's demographic (does this fit with you)? What are the entertainment options outside of the wedding? How many guests can you bring? How many guests can the venue hold? And how long will you have the venue for?
- Another important factor that you will need to consider is: what does the wedding package actually include. Couples have been known to be caught out paying for a whole bunch of extras last minute, or worse yet during the voyage, which they thought were included in their package. To avoid this, make sure you ask for a full list of inclusions in writing, and check out if things like the services of a photographer, and hair and make-up are part of the deal. Also, make sure you know whether guests can board in port or if they have to join the entire cruise
- Finally, make sure you can have a chat to the cruise's wedding planner or the person responsible for organising the details of your big day, before you lay your cash down, to ensure that you are both on the same page about arrangements, and to avoid any difference in expectations.

Cunard 2014 World Voyages

CUNARD Line has released its 2014 World Voyage program, which will see the line's three Queens cruise the globe, spanning six continents and almost 80 destinations.

In an Australian first, all three Queens will visit the country during their world voyages, with *Queen Elizabeth*, *Queen Victoria* and *Queen Mary 2* making a total of 17 calls at Australian ports.

Queen Victoria will make an extended trip around South America, while *Queen Elizabeth* will make her maiden visit to Japan and the programs also include *Queen Mary 2*'s second circumnavigation of Australia.

Carnival Australia appoints

CARNIVAL Australia has announced the reappointment of IDNZ to manage its tour operations in New Zealand.

NZ is a major destination for cruises operated by several Carnival brands including P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises and Carnival Cruise Lines, with the vessels scheduled to make over 250 calls to ports on both the North and South Island this cruise season.

Heritage heading for hot spot

NEW Zealand-based Heritage Expeditions is excited to report that NASA satellite images indicate a volcanic eruption on remote Heard Island - which its *Spirit of Enderby* is set to visit next month on a 'South Indian Ocean' voyage departing Fremantle on 08 Nov.

Heard Island is about 4000km southwest of Australia, with Heritage returning to the wildlife-rich uninhabited subantarctic island for the first time since 2002.

South East Asia with a Swan

A NEW 21-Day 'Kingdoms of South East Asia' cruise is on offer from Swan Hellenic, priced from \$6,480 per person twin share.

The voyage departs from Hong Kong and calls at Halong Bay, Haiphong, Danang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, Sihanoukville in Cambodia, Bangkok and Ko Samui in Thailand and Singapore.

A tailor-made program of shore excursions is complemented by talks from eminent guest speakers, while the fare also includes all meals and entertainment on board plus all gratuities and relevant cruise taxes and fees.

For more information see your travel agent or call Swan Hellenic on 02 9959 1382.



THE composer of the theme song for Dr No - the first ever James Bond film - has taken a "license to cruise" by embarking on Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* this week.

The melody from Monty Norman's iconic musical creation, which debuted fifty years ago in 1962, has featured on 25 Bond films since then - so he's probably a bit sick of it by now!

He's pictured with his wife Rita at the premiere of the latest Bond film, *Skyfall*, at London's Royal Albert Hall last week.



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Islands made for cruising. Part One

by: Roderick Eime

Sicily for food and wine

Sicily is one of the best Mediterranean island destinations, even if you don't consider it a gastronomic attraction. You'll enjoy fabulous food with lashings of rich history and culture against a stunning natural backdrop. Strolling through any of the local food and produce markets is an experience in itself as you are confronted with beautifully presented fish, fruit, vegetables and even packaged delights. Sicilians love their food and wine and you'll find their passion translates into the many restaurants, cafes and bars.

Acclaimed food and wine author, Sally Hammond, author of "Just a Little Italian" explains why she loves Sicily.

"Sicily has been over-run and colonised by many nations over its long history. Ancient Greeks and Romans, Goths, Vikings, Turks, Spanish and North Africans have all had a hand in the mixing pot which now constitutes Sicilian cuisine.

"So in western Sicily you'll see signs announcing couscous is being served that day, in the south, it's almond granita (a flaky ice) and a sort of brioche for breakfast, and some of the best chocolate, while everywhere there are food markets that would be at home in the Middle East.

"In the countryside expect to see prickly pear laden with red fruit on the roadside and olive and orange groves. Sicily is a fragrant, colourful, absolutely delicious island."

Palermo and Messina are the popular ports, but cruises also stop at Catania. Well serviced by all the major cruise lines like MSC, Costa Cruises, Regent Seven Seas, and NCL.

Official tourism site: www.italia.it/en/discover-italy/sicily.html.

Réunion for dramatic scenery

Characterised by an aggressive, still active volcanic landscape, Réunion is the Hawaii of the Indian Ocean with towering, thickly wooded peaks and a couple of decent beaches.

Almost overlooked by its better publicised Indian Ocean neighbours, Mauritius and Madagascar, Réunion is small enough to be romantic and civilised enough to offer a comfortable, European style experience. After all, it is part of France, yet with a sultry and tropical Creole flavour.

Réunion's interesting, predominantly French colonial history, serves as a fascinating counterpoint to the jaw-dropping terrain on this 2500 square kilometre island. A 'must-do' among the serious trekking community, it is mentioned in the same breath as the Himalayas and New Zealand, with the three "cirques" (natural amphitheatres) providing stunning venues for energetic strolls. The Cirque de Salazie, the Cirque de Cilaos and the Cirque de Mafate each evolved from the original Piton des Neiges volcano (3000m) that formed the island. There is also fascinating hiking around the still-active Piton de la Fournaise, a shield volcano on the eastern end which rises more than 2631 metres.

Most of the population is arranged around the coastal perimeter, but three tiny villages form superb little micro-destinations on their own; Cilaos, Salazie and La Nouvelle (in the Cirque de Mafate), which is only accessible only by foot or helicopter.

There are around thirty cruise visits to the island annually with P&O, MSC and Silversea the most regular. The main port is Pointe des Galets. Official tourism site: www.reunion.fr/en/.



Serious seafood in Palermo



Spectacular Reunion



Fancy a tippie? Palermo

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Destinations Beyond imagination



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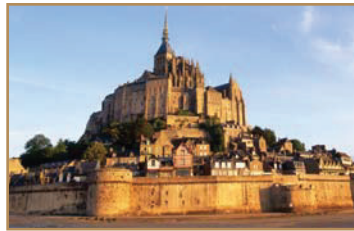


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Departs	Cruise	Days	Itinerary	Fare \$AU
Aug 29	A MEDITERRANEAN SUMMER	15	Portsmouth, Viana Do Castelo, Lisbon, Malaga, Cartagena, Cagliari, La Goulette, Lipari, Castellammare Di Stabia, Civitavecchia (Rome)	\$3,265pp
Sep 12	ADRIATIC ACCOLADE	15	Civitavecchia (Rome), Brindisi, Ravenna, Venice, Pula, Korcula, Dubrovnik, Kotor, Sarande, Cornith Canal, Piraeus (Athens)	\$3,830pp
Sep 26	EMPIRES of the BLACK SEA	15	Piraeus (Athens), Canakkale, Sinop, Trabzon, Batumi, Yalta, Sevastopol, Odessa, Nessebur, Istanbul	\$5,560pp
Oct 10	AEGEAN ODYSSEY	14	Istanbul, Kusadasi, Kas, Antalya, Gythion, Santorini, Nisyros, Nauplion, Paros, Piraeus (Athens)	\$3,210pp
Oct 23	ITALY and the DALMATIAN COAST	14	Piraeus (Athens), Cornith Canal, Kotor, Dubrovnik, Split, Venice, Ravenna, Salerno, Naples	\$3,185pp

For more information or to request a brochure contact your Travel Agent or call

02 9959 1382
www.swanhellenic.com.au



TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Fares listed are in AUD, per person twin share based on lowest available cabin as at 30 October 2012 and include non-commissionable port taxes, government fees and gratuities. Subject to availability, are capacity controlled and can be withdrawn without prior notice. Full terms and conditions can be found in the Swan Hellenic November 2012 - January 2014 brochure.