

# CRUISE

WEEKLY

Tuesday 4 June 2013

## Lindblad to bring new competition

Expedition cruising in the Kimberley region of Australia is about to get some new, healthy competition, says Sven Lindblad.

**THE** founder of Lindblad Expeditions, Sven Lindblad says his purchase of the soon-to-be former Orion Expedition Cruises (**CW** 07 Mar), will add some new spice to the local market. Speaking to **Cruise Weekly** during a visit

to Australia last week, Lindblad said he had great respect for other companies operating in the Kimberley region but that his operation brought a new diverse option to the region.

Lindblad praised two particular operators but said he didn't look at other operations in the same way most would look at a competitor.

"Both Coral Princess and True North are really good companies. They offer something slightly different, True North being much smaller and Coral Princess being in the middle in terms of size and they have different emphasis on price points so that's good," Lindblad told **CW**.

Over the next year, Lindblad says he plans to closely study the Australian appetite for expedition cruising and that if there is a strong response to the products he offers, there was potential for a larger presence down under.

"If we can grow this market significantly, which I believe we probably can, then it would lead to expansion here. But I don't know yet".

The Lindblad Expeditions founder said passengers aboard his vessels would be aware of ocean conservation programs he supports along with the National Geographic Society.

"We're kind of zealous about education, conservation and exploration," Lindblad added.

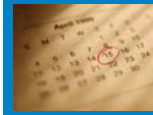
Together, the two organisations invest approx \$1m per year into a number of conservation activities and educational programs, including a teachers program where educators are invited to join Lindblad ships to participate in research and to learn about the environment.

"The *National Geographic Explorer* – our flagship – has an ongoing ocean health campaign that we work on and work together with scientists and raise monies towards things that relate to ocean preservation.

"The ocean is in real trouble on a global basis and as far as we're concerned, people who travel have two ways they can be of value.

"One is, they can understand the challenges better and become part of that conversation and the other is just to help with resources we need," Lindblad concluded.

## Cruise Calendar



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

SYDNEY	
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	Fri 07 Jun
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	Mon 10 Jun
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	Sat 08 Jun
PERTH	
<i>Dawn Princess</i>	Mon 10 Jun

## New Sail Capricornia vessel

**CHARTER** vessel company Sail Capricornia, who operate day cruises off the Capricorn Coast in mid-north Queensland has added a new ship to facilitate growth of the operation.

The newest vessel, which has been named *Grace II*, is a Seawind Resort Catamaran with capacity for 30 passengers at a time.

"As demand grows, we needed greater flexibility to take more people or groups out sailing," Sail Capricornia owners and operators Vicki and Anthony Lomasney said.

"*Grace II* is the perfect vessel to enable us to do this, being a catamaran we can cater to more people but still maintain our personal intimate hands on sailing experience that our guests enjoy".

The company is celebrating the launch of its newest vessel by releasing a "Bring a friend for free" limited offer - phone (07) 4933 6244.

## QR codes in new P&O guide

P&O Cruises has added a number of QR (quick-response) codes to its new 2013-15 brochure, which was released late last week.

By scanning the code with your smartphone, users will be able to access extra features and link to the firm's social media accounts.

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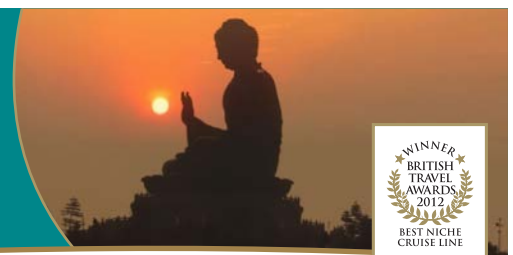
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## Tall ships seek guest crew members

Australians and New Zealanders are invited to sail on historic ships visiting the region as part of a global circumnavigation.

**FOLLOWING** the old trade routes of historic times, *Europa* (1911), *Tecla* (1915), the all-abilities *Lord Nelson* and the three-masted topsail schooner *Oosterschelde* will arrive in local waters in August.

Sailing buffs, with or without experience, can get aboard any of the vessels during voyages in Australia and New Zealand.

Resident crew will teach newcomers about navigation, rigging, sail hoisting and square rig sailing techniques.

The largest of the tall ships, the bark-constructed *Europa*, has a sailing capacity of 48 people, with two-person, four-person and six-person cabins, and this year offers seven voyages in the Australasian region.

*Oosterschelde*, which has already made a global circumnavigation since its restoration in 1992, can accommodate 24 people and is also operating seven local sailings.

The smaller, family-owned *Tecla* is a two-masted ketch with topsails, offering seven voyages.

Meanwhile, the *Lord Nelson* is designed for people with disabilities, with wheelchair lifts,

wide aisles, signs in Braille, joystick steering, a speaking compass and eight cabins suitable for wheelchairs.

*Lord Nelson* has ten voyages, including several between New Zealand ports.

While traditional on the outside, the four ships have modern conveniences below deck, with areas to relax in between the hands-on sailing.

Participants can also be part of a Tall Ships Regatta from Sydney to Auckland, the first ever sail training event in Australasian waters.

Youth prices apply for 15-25 year olds on *Tecla*, *Europa* and *Oosterschelde*.

For details, see [www.wildearth-travel.com](http://www.wildearth-travel.com).

### Eclipse passengers taken ill

**MORE** than 70 guests & five crew members aboard the *Celebrity Eclipse* contracted symptoms of the norovirus vomiting bug while on a two-week Mediterranean cruise in May.

Upon returning to its Southampton home port, the vessel underwent a deep clean process, with a company spokesperson saying the ship maintained high standards of health.

### Seven continents by Seabourn

**ANTARCTICA** has become the final continent added to the Seabourn range, with the firm releasing four cruises to the frozen region aboard *Seabourn Quest*, available 20 Nov.

The luxury liner's Antarctic itineraries consist of three 21-day journeys and one 24-day tour, each including five days in the region, priced from between US\$14,999 and \$82,000pp, depending on the stateroom category booked.

Itineraries also include sailing along the coast of Chile and a number of nearby islands, and also visit Uruguay and the Falkland Islands.

### Grandeur six-week repair job

**VOYAGES** departing Baltimore on Royal Caribbean's *Grandeur of the Seas* for the next six weeks have been cancelled following the fire at the rear of the ship (**CW** 28 May).

Initially, the company cancelled a voyage due to depart on 31 May, however a thorough examination of the damage revealed further repair work would need to be carried out.

The official cause of the fire has not yet been made public.

Affected passengers will receive a full refund of the cruise fare paid as well as a 25% discount on their next Royal Caribbean Cruises booking.

*Grandeur of the Seas* is expected to return to service for a departure on 12 Jul.

### Finnish designers for Titanic II

**ECCENTRIC** billionaire Clive Palmer's Blue Star Line has hired Swedish interior design firm Tillberg Design to handle the interior of his much-hyped *Titanic II* cruise liner project.

The layout of First class through to Third Class staterooms, lounges, smoking room, grand staircase and outdoor features will all be handled by Tillberg, with the ship currently on schedule for its maiden Southampton to New York voyage in 2016.

### Fore off the decks of Crystal

**A GOLF** themed cruise has been released by Crystal Cruises, travelling from Boston to Montreal aboard *Crystal Symphony* - the first time the ship, and the itinerary has visited the region in three years.

The 10-day voyage will be hosted by golfing legend Billy Casper and will offer players with an opportunity to play a number of exclusive courses up the east coast of the US & Canada.

All-inclusive fares for the 16 Sep voyage are priced from \$3840pp if booked by 28 June.

## P O R T H O L E



**SLICKS** of oil that have been spotted near a collection of small islands in Newfoundland, Canada, could be coming from a ship that sank near the area more than 20 years ago, the Canadian Coast Guard has said.

The *Manolis L*, a Liberian ship, sank in the Notre Dame Bay in Jan 1985, with radar images taken by a small submersible showing the overturned hull has been cracked and is now leaking small oil patches.

Federal maritime agencies have since made repairs to the vessel and are now looking at recovering more than 450 tonnes of oil that is still onboard the vessel.

Period checks for the remainder of the month will be carried out to ensure no more oil is leaking from the ship's hull.

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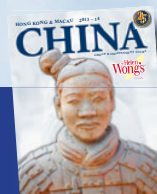
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## Ship Review: *Viking Aegir*

by: Louise Goldsbury

**IN TERMS** of spanking new ship-hot launches, 2013 belongs to Viking.

This year has seen the announcement of Viking Ocean Cruises (the first new cruise line with newbuilds in nearly a decade), as well as the christening of a Guinness record-breaking 10 river vessels.

*Viking Aegir*, one of these identical longships, is named after the Norse god of the sea but operates on Europe's rivers.

According to Nordic legend, *Aegir* was known for hosting lavish parties for the gods, and his namesake ship continues this tradition with banquets, an open bar and concierge service.

Even the house wine is special, as Viking is the only cruise line with its own wine-maker, thanks to a partnership with a vineyard in Austria's Wachau Valley.

Shore excursions, wireless internet, lectures, live music, cooking demonstrations and tipping are also included in fares.

The ship was designed by Yran & Storbaten, the same team behind Seabourn's yachts, so it's sleeker than the usual river vessel.

*Aegir* and the nine sisters certainly make an attractive family, glowing with a typically Scandinavian complexion – white, bright, clean, smooth.

There's lots of natural light, shiny surfaces and neutral colours, and the two-deck atrium guarantees a glamorous welcome (especially on a sunny day).

One of the innovations is an asymmetrical corridor, shifted one metre over, which allows more space for full-size verandas on the cabins on one side (without losing any interior space), and on the other side, suites have a veranda off the living room as well as a French balcony in the bedroom.

These two-rooms suites stand apart from other river cruise lines where a suite is simply one big room.

Two even larger Explorer suites, at the stern, have wrap-around balconies and double bathrooms.

Energy efficiency is also a main consideration. *Aegir* is equipped with solar panels and a hybrid engine that minimises vibrations, providing a noticeably quieter sailing. In fact, it's one of the quietest ships I've ever been on.

In-cabin amenities include heated bathroom floors, L'Occitane toiletries and Sony HD televisions. The beds are big and comfy, with luggage storage underneath.

*For great views and a summery vibe, my favourite spot is the Aquavit Terrace, an indoor/outdoor dining area with unbeatable views.*

You can take your morning coffee in the fresh air, enjoy a drink outside on a sunny afternoon, or have a casual meal while viewing the scenery.

The new *Viking Aegir* and its sister ships (*Atla, Bragi, Embla, Forseti, Jarl, Rinda, Skadi, Tor* and *Var*) are sold out for 2013 and have limited availability for 2014.

Itineraries include the Grand European Tour (15 days, Amsterdam-Budapest); Tulips & Windmills (10 days, Amsterdam-Antwerp-Amsterdam); Passage to Eastern Europe (11 days, Budapest-Bucharest); Romantic Danube (8 days, Budapest-Nuremberg); Danube Waltz (8 days, Passau-Budapest) and Rhine Getaway (8 days, Amsterdam-Basel) - contact a travel agent for more information.



Exterior of the Viking Aegir



Relax dining on the Aquavit Terrace



The spacious Aegir Atrium

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