

# CRUISE

WEEKLY

Tuesday 5 March 2013

## Un-Cruise Adventures adds new ship

The American expedition line has acquired *Sea Voyager* and renamed it *Safari Voyager* for year-round sailings in Mexico.

**THE** 64-passenger adventure yacht, which is currently undergoing renovation, is set to start operating in the Sea of Cortés from November 2013, replacing the 86-passenger *Safari Endeavour*.

Four different itineraries will be available from homeports of La Paz, Cabo and Guaymas.

In winter 2015, *Safari Voyager* is expected to move to Central America to spend winters exploring Costa Rica and summers in Belize, with transits of the Panama Canal in spring and autumn.

The *Safari Endeavour* will then return to sailing in the Sea of Cortés during the winter.

Purchased from the Bahamian owner of Sea Voyager Expeditions, UnCruises' newest addition to the fleet has 33 outside cabins including four suites and two single cabins.

During the renovation, a new library and massage room will be created and the top deck will be transformed into an open-air public space with fitness equipment and lounge chairs.

A swim step platform on the stern allows guests to access the water for included activities such as snorkelling, skiff excursions, kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding.

The *Safari Voyager* becomes the adventure line's eighth vessel - all with capacities below 90 berths.

The company has three expedition vessels sailing 'Active Adventures', three more yachts offering 'Luxury Adventures' and one replica Victorian-style steamer for 'Heritage Adventures'.

Current destinations include Southeast Alaska, Hawaiian Islands, Columbia and Snake Rivers, coastal Washington, British Columbia and Mexico.

Until a rebranding in January, Un-Cruise Adventures was known as Innersea Discoveries/American Safari Cruises.

Details for Central America deployment such as itineraries, will be made available in the next few weeks, see [www.un-cruise.com](http://www.un-cruise.com) for details.

## Solo Cruise N Groove

**SOLO** travellers looking for a groovy cruise will be excited to learn that Companion Cruising has purchased cabins on CruiseCo's exciting new 'Cruise N Groove' music cruise.

Departing on 05 October onboard *Rhapsody of the Seas* for seven nights to the Pacific Islands, the voyage will showcase music from the likes of The Temptations, The Supremes, John Paul Young, Leo Sayer and Marcia Hines.

Solo travellers willing to share a cabin on this sailing, will only pay the quad share rate (if booked before 31 March) priced from \$1,330.

Email [info@companioncruising.com.au](mailto:info@companioncruising.com.au) for info.

## Step onboard old world cruising with Blue Star's Titanic II

**SOME** call it bad taste, others call it inspired, but whatever people think, the point is they're all talking about the construction of *Titanic II*.

The brainchild of off-beat billionaire Clive Palmer, *Titanic II* looks like it will launch in 2016 following the conclusion of construction at China's CSC Jinling Shipyard.

According to newly released plans by Palmer, the replica ship will boast 10 steel decks which will allow guests to "experience the bygone eriod of ocean liner travel across the Atlantic".

"This magnificent vessel is to be constructed in memory of the heroic people who served on the ship, the passengers who sadly shared their fate and all those that survived the tragedy," Palmer said.

The ship will feature a Marconi Room, Grand Staircase, Smoking Room, Cafe Parisian, Pool, Squash Court and Gym, and there will also, as with the original *Titanic*, be a division of First, Second and Third Class guests, with specific First, Second and Third Class facilities (such as the First Class Lounge which will be decorated in Louis XV style and paneled in oak).

Guests will also be issued with special 1912-styled clothing befitting of their First/Second/Third Class status to swan around the ship in.

Lovers of technology beware though, Palmer has said that the ship won't feature phones, and may not feature computers or internet connectivity.

Despite this, whilst the ship will try to capture the Edwardian romance of *Titanic's* era, it's machinations will be modern, with a welded hull, diesel power generation, bow thrusters for increased maneuverability and a new hull form below the waterline providing greater stability

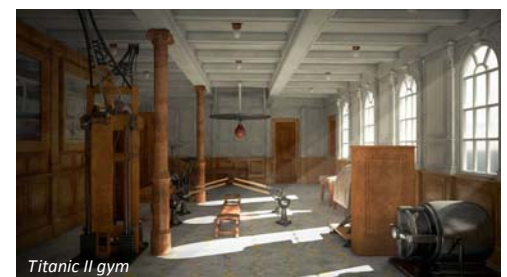


Titanic II Turkish Baths

and fuel efficiencies, as well as state-of-the-art 21st century technology, latest navigation and safety systems.

There will also be a large store of lifeboats.

Check out more *Titanic II* pics on [Cruise Weekly's Facebook page](#).



Titanic II gym

## TODAY'S ISSUE OF CW

**Cruise Weekly** today features four pages packed full of cruise news.

**Helen Wong's TOURS**

**YANGTZE WONDERS**

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## Royal WOW sale on now

ROYAL Caribbean's 'WOW Sale' is offering guests onboard credits of up to US\$200 per cabin and half price deposits for bookings made between 03 and 06 March 2013.

The offer applies to all worldwide sailings departing from 1 May 2013 until April 2014.

See your travel agent for details, or visit [www.royalcaribbean.com.au](http://www.royalcaribbean.com.au).



## Cruise Calendar

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

**SYDNEY**  
*Radiance of the Seas* Wed 06 Mar  
*Queen Mary 2* Thu 07 Mar  
*Pacific Pearl* Fri 08 Mar  
*Diamond Princess* Fri 08 Mar  
*Caledonian Sky* Sun 10 Mar  
*Rhapsody of the Seas* Mon 11 Mar

**BRISBANE**  
*Queen Mary 2* Tue 05 Mar  
*Radiance of the Seas* Fri 08 Mar  
*Pacific Dawn* Sat 09 Mar

**MELBOURNE**  
*Diamond Princess* Wed 06 Mar  
*Caledonian Sky* Wed 06 Mar  
*Celebrity Solstice* Thu 07 Mar  
*Caledonian Sky* Thu 07 Mar  
*Caledonian Sky* Thu 07 Mar  
*Marina* Mon 11 Mar

**ADELAIDE**  
*Voyager of the Seas* Tue 05 Mar

**FREMANTLE**  
*Costa Deliziosa* Fri 08 Mar  
*Voyager of the Seas* Sat 09 Mar

**DARWIN**  
*Balmoral* Fri 08 Mar  
*Seabourn Odyssey* Sun 10 Mar

**HOBART**  
*Pacific Pearl* Wed 06 Mar  
*Marina* Sat 09 Mar

**CAIRNS**  
*Seabourn Odyssey* Tue 05 Mar  
*Pacific Princess* Thu 07 Mar

## Luxury cruisers urged to use agents

Australians have much to gain from the services of Virtuoso, an elite group of travel advisors.

LUXURY travel network Virtuoso has appealed to Australian travellers to work with its 'in-the-know travel advisors' when planning a holiday involving a cruise.

Speaking with *Cruise Weekly*, Albert Herrera, senior vice president, global product partnerships, said: "Each trip from Australia is a long trip, so a cruise is always combined with something else, such as a rail adventure, a beach resort or an extended stay in a villa."

"The experiences we curate are truly best handled by a knowledgeable advisor, especially for the savvy cruiser looking for something unique, something special."

Herrera said the main trends in luxury cruising were a growth in river cruising, "particularly experiential cruises, such as the Amazon", extended families booking adjoining staterooms and earlier bookings to secure preferred suites.

The company is set to launch a new "participative" website that connects travellers

## CMV cancels first cruise

CRUISE & Maritime Voyages, the company bringing Astor to Western Australia at the end of the year, has been forced to cancel the inaugural sailing of its other recently acquired vessel, *Discovery*, after passengers had already boarded.

According to reports by British media, the ship was detained by the UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency following an inspection in Portland, Dorset.

MCA said the detention notice would remain in place "whilst the owners and crew undertake revisions to their safety management system".

*Discovery* was supposed to set sail on a 15-night cruise to the Northern Lights, in Norway, but the 657 passengers have been sent home.

The last-minute change comes after an earlier hitch when the departure was delayed and switched from Avonmouth in Bristol, apparently due to bad weather in the Bay of Biscay.

According to CMV, passengers on the cancelled cruise will receive a full refund, £250 compensation and a 40% future cruise discount.

After the "technical issue" is addressed, *Discovery* is expected to sail its next scheduled cruise on 15 March.

with the most relevant local advisor.

"It will be a collaborative tool that allows people to look through our product catalogue and then look through our advisor catalogue to see who matches what they want," Herrera said.

"Because it can be as much fun to plan a trip as to take one, people like to engage with someone, talk about their aspirations and work together to come up with the best possible personalised holiday."

Meanwhile, in a survey of Australia-based travel advisors, Myanmar was named 2013's must-see destination, followed by South America, Morocco and Bhutan.

Virtuoso's network comprises more than 7,200 travel specialists, including 31 member agencies in Australia and New Zealand, who work closely with luxury lines such as Seabourn, Silversea, Regent Seven Seas, Crystal Cruises, Paul Gauguin Cruises and APT/AMA Waterways.

To find an advisor, see [www.virtuoso.com.au](http://www.virtuoso.com.au).

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## Crew Profile

This week *Cruise Weekly* speaks with **Skip Lyons, Cruise Director** onboard *Carnival Spirit*.

How long have you been with Carnival Cruise Lines?

I've been with Carnival Cruise Lines since 1997. Over 15 years!

How long have you been onboard *Carnival Spirit*?

I've been onboard *Carnival Spirit* for the last two months.

What do you love most about your job?

That's a very easy question. I love interacting and dealing with our guests. Watching them as they board for the first time; everyone is so excited. It's great to see them partaking and interacting with everything we have available onboard.

What's your favourite place onboard *Carnival Spirit*?

My cabin. Just kidding! Being in the entertainment area, I love a lot of areas on the ship. I think the dining room offers such an incredible menu, and it also brings a smile to everyone's face. It's always great to walk through the dining room. I also like walking through the lounges and watching people laugh at all the entertainment we have on offer. If I had to choose, I'd be bias and pick the lounge – from the shows and bands to the punchliner comedy club – it's the best place to be!

What do you love about Australia?

Being Australian, I love the fact that I'm now working out of home, on an aussified ship and dealing with the Aussie public.



## Sail warmer waters cheaply

AS if you need more reasons to escape to warmer waters, MSC Cruises has discounted voyages on its Mediterranean 2013-2014 program by up to \$200, for bookings made by 30 April 2013.

Under the earlybird deal, guests can snap up a seven-night Mediterranean cruise from \$449pp, and a 22-night Grand mediterranean voyage from \$1,398pp.

For more details, see your travel agent, or visit [www.msccruises.com.au](http://www.msccruises.com.au).

## Bunnik cruise and tour

BUNNIK Tours has, in conjunction with Holland America Line, launched a selection of unique holiday experiences combining small group touring and ocean cruising.

As such, the new 44-page '2013/14 Cruise and Tour' brochure features fifteen itineraries to South, Central and North America; Egypt; the Mediterranean; and Asia, including a 37-day Iguazu, Carnival & the Amazon cruise and tour departing 22 February 2014, led by Marion Bunnik and priced from \$15,995pp twin-share (including international airfares, accommodation, a 26-night Holland America Line cruise, many meals and more).

See your travel agent for details, or visit [www.bunniktours.com.au](http://www.bunniktours.com.au).

## Go trekking with Aurora

AURORA Expeditions has released new trekking adventures for 2014- **CLICK HERE** for details.

## Breakaway gives the world a glimpse of what's to come

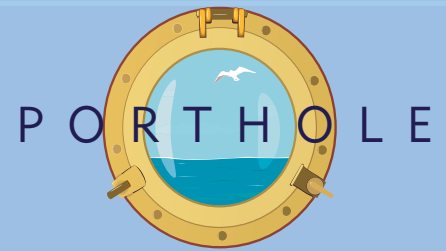
THE largest cruise ship to ever be built in Germany, *Norwegian Breakaway*, was floated out of the Meyer Werft shipyard last Tuesday to the clapping of enthusiastic cruise fans who lined the waterway to get a peek at what NCL has in store.

The 146,600-ton ship has been under construction since September 2011, and features signature hull artwork designed by pop icon Peter Max.

The first ship to depart bow first from the building dock in Papenburg, *Breakaway* has an overall length of 324 meters and is 39.70 meters wide.

Onboard highlights will include a high-energy indoor Flywheel Sports cycling studio, a Carlo's Bake Shop (of Cake Boss TV fame), and an Aqua Park and Recreation Area (including a ropes course and rock climbing wall).

It is expected the ship will debut in April 2014.



### EPIC fail!

Cruise authorities at the Port of Nassau were left red faced after they double booked a port for one of the world's largest cruise ships, *Norwegian Epic*.

According to reports, *Epic* was unable to pull up a pew in Nassau on 22 February due to a "scheduling error by the Nassau Port Authority".

Due to the double booking when *Epic* arrived to pull into her spot, it was already taken by another ship, forcing *Epic* to abort a call to the largest city in the Bahamas, and return to the sea, leaving guests and local businesses a little cranky.

"This is one of the biggest cruise ships in the world," said one business owner.

"How can they just allow it to be turned away?," the owner added.

### THE grass IS greener?

If you have recently cruised to China and noticed that the grass is slightly greener there than in Australia, you may be right!

Locals in Chengdu, located in China's Sichuan province, were surprised to awake recently to noticeably greener and lush grassed parks, but became suspicious however when some of the green came off the grass and onto their shoes.

## Aussies get 24-hour Spirit

CARNIVAL Cruise Lines has announced that it will keep its call centre for *Carnival Spirit* open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We know Aussies lead busy lives and we also know holiday inspiration can strike at any time," said Jennifer Vandekreeke, Director Carnival Cruise Lines Australia and New Zealand.

"For these reasons, and as part of our ongoing commitment to quality customer service, we will now be available for guests and agents whenever they need us," she added.

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## Port Review: Christchurch, New Zealand

by: Louise Goldsbury

Christchurch residents have endured more than 11,000 quakes and aftershocks since the magnitude 7.1 earthquake in September 2010.

The most devastating occurred on 22 February 2011 causing extensive damage to the region, including the Port of Lyttelton, and the loss of 185 lives.

Two years on, the city is slowly rebuilding but many of the streets and attractions remain cordoned off.

I visited last month when *Crystal Symphony* docked in Akaroa - the alternative port used by most cruise lines.

At first, Crystal Cruises' shore excursion staff tried to change my mind.

"It's really depressing - it still looks like the earthquake happened last week," she said.

But I took the bus anyway - a 90-minute drive away.

As warned, the amount of destruction was shocking.

Several blocks are out of bounds; formerly busy streets are shut down. The sound of cranes and bulldozers fills the air, with construction happening all around.

The half-collapsed cathedral and mounds of rubble give the appearance of a modern-day equivalent of Roman ruins.

Tourists wander around taking photos, posing, smiling.

It's an unsettling experience: a mix of morbid curiosity and pity.

However, there are many positive signs of progress.

The best outcome is a new area called the Re:START Mall, where shipping containers have been converted into cafés and shops.

Much better than it sounds, this is a funky, innovative, car-free arcade buzzing with life.

On the weekend, it appears to be the hot spot for locals to meet for a coffee, have lunch and read the papers.

Live bands play outdoors, while street performers entertain passing

shoppers.

Fortunately, many of Christchurch's most beautiful attractions and Gothic Revival buildings are standing strong.

The Botanic Gardens, one of the world's largest city parks, is open all day.

Easy to stroll around independently or take a tour, the gardens feature more than 10,000 specimens of plants, towering 19th-century trees and fountains.

The Avon River is as lovely as ever, especially by punt, which enhances the city's English ambience.

Punting is possible from the historic Antigua Boatshed, built in 1882 ([www.boatsheds.co.nz](http://www.boatsheds.co.nz)).

The café attached to the shed is an ideal venue for lunch with the nicest view in town.

Picnic baskets can also be purchased to enjoy along the river.

Canterbury Museum is next door to the i-SITE Visitor Centre (on Rolleston Avenue, where the buses drop off and pick up), which provides free city maps with self-guided walking tours.

Everything is accessible by foot; no public transport required.

Meanwhile, it will be many years until the rest of the city is completely rebuilt.

The total cost to insurers has been estimated at NZ\$15 billion, making it by far New Zealand's most expensive natural disaster, and the third-costliest earthquake (nominally) worldwide.

Cruise passengers can do their part by spending at the local restaurants, stores and attractions.

For more information, see [www.christchurchnz.com](http://www.christchurchnz.com).

To book Crystal Cruises itineraries in New Zealand, go to [www.wiltrans.com.au](http://www.wiltrans.com.au).



Re:START Mall Cafés



Christchurch ruins



Punting

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