

CRUISE

WEEKLY

Tuesday 22 October 2013

Seabourn orders 'ultra luxury' ship

It's official: a new Seabourn vessel will be built and delivered in three years.

SPEAKING to media at a lunch in Sydney last Thursday, Seabourn's director of sales, Tony Archbold, hinted that big news was on the way. "We're waiting for an announcement – all I can say is the company is profitable and it's growing, so watch this space."

The next day, from Seattle, came word that a Letter of Intent had been signed with Italian shipyard Fincantieri for the construction of a vessel to debut in the second half of 2016.

"We are pleased to be moving forward with the plans we announced earlier this year to build a fourth ship similar to the highly regarded new design we introduced with *Seabourn Odyssey*, *Seabourn Sojourn* and *Seabourn Quest*," the line's president Rick

Meadows said following the announcement.

The exact cost and size were not divulged except to say the new ship would "replace the capacity that is leaving the Seabourn brand" with the recent sale of *Seabourn Pride*, *Spirit* and *Legend* to Windstar Cruises.

The combined capacity of these three departing vessels is 624 passengers.

The line's newer *Odyssey*, *Sojourn* and *Quest* each carry 450 passengers.

Meanwhile, Archbold said Seabourn was appealing to "a wider range" of Australians, who trailed only the British as the line's biggest international market.

"We'll catch the UK next year – that's my prediction," he said.

Seabourn Odyssey will spend two months in local waters this summer, while *Sojourn* will visit a record 18 ports in Australia and NZ.

The company's first-ever season in Antarctica starts in three weeks.

MEANWHILE, Seabourn preceded the announcement of its new vessel by launching its 2014-15 Cruise Collection brochure, with the guide featuring voyages ranging in duration from 7-116 days.

Several new ports will be visited for the first time during the season, including stops in the Philippines archipelago and the African coast.

The latter ports feature as part of a new cruise which sees guests visit Morocco, the Canary Islands, Namibia, Madagascar & more.

Seabourn's Extended Explorations also make their debut in the new guide, offering time-rich guests the ability to seamlessly link voyages together to create a journey of up to 116 days.

A second season of sailings in Antarctica will also be available, with six options on offer, while *Seabourn Odyssey* will sail between Australia and New Zealand from Dec next year until Feb 2015 as part of a local deployment.

For more details, see www.seabourn.com.

New destinations for Aurora

AURORA Expeditions has launched its new 2014/15 brochure, featuring journeys to ports in several new regions.

A total of 19 itineraries feature in the guide, with new destinations including Ecuador, Cape York, Arnhem Land, the Galapagos Islands, Alaska, Bhutan & Patagonia in South America.

Among the new itineraries is a new Ecuador in Depth expedition taking visitors into the country's Amazon Basin, and a sailing allowing guests to follow the migratory progress of humpback whales in Alaska's Inside Passage.

"The exciting addition of adventure treks and the expansion of our expedition cruise program is in response to the high level of demand for respectful travel to hard-to-reach destinations," Aurora Expeditions chief executive officer Lisa Bolton said.



Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY

<i>Celebrity Solstice</i>	Wed 23 Oct
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	Wed 23 Oct
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	Tue 24 Oct
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	Fri 25 Oct
<i>Sea Princess</i>	Sat 26 Oct
<i>Oosterdam</i>	Sun 27 Oct
<i>Rhapsody of the Seas</i>	Mon 28 Oct

BRISBANE

<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	Tue 22 Oct
<i>Volendam</i>	Tue 22 Oct
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	Sat 26 Oct
<i>Sea Princess</i>	Sat 26 Oct
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	Mon 28 Oct

FREMANTLE

<i>Dawn Princess</i>	Mon 28 Oct
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CAIRNS

<i>Volendam</i>	Sat 26 Oct
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DARWIN

<i>Ocean Princess</i>	Sun 27 Oct
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BURNIE

<i>Sea Princess</i>	Tue 22 Oct
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HOBART

<i>Sea Princess</i>	Tue 22 Oct
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AUCKLAND

<i>Sun Princess</i>	Wed 23 Oct
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Happy Anniversary to Spirit

CARNIVAL Spirit late last week celebrated its first year of operation from its Sydney home and the 90,000 Australians who travelled aboard the vessel in its first year here.

At the time of arrival on 17 Oct 2012, *Spirit's* deployment to Sydney marked the first time a Carnival ship was based outside the US.

MEANWHILE, Carnival Australia has welcomed Holland America Line's *Volendam*, the first of 20 ships arriving for a local season or a visit between now and Apr next year.

Gold Coast terminal moves forward

Councillors have voted to continue with the controversial project to build a cruise ship terminal.

A **SUPERMAJORITY** of the Gold Coast City Council decided last week to back the Broadwater Marine Project which, if it goes ahead, would comprise a new cruise facility at either The Spit or Wave Break Island.

A vote was demanded by Queensland's Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney after several councillors raised concerns about the proposed development, including its location and lack of community consultation.

Mayor Tom Tate told **Cruise Weekly** yesterday that the council and government were both dedicated to the joint initiative.

"Support for the Queensland cruise industry is stronger than ever and, seeing the assistance

afforded to Brisbane and Cairns, I'm confident the State will not let down the Gold Coast."

Tate said the development would provide short-term professional and construction jobs as well as long-term tourism jobs.

"And with more locals choosing a cruising holiday, they know first-hand what benefits a city enjoys when thousands of holidaymakers come ashore."

The proposed Broadwater Marine Project is "more than just a cruise ship terminal", Tate said, "it is a distinctive and world-class tourism destination.

"On that basis I'm confident City of Gold Coast residents will be proud and supportive of the project and the cruise ship terminal."

Tate also dismissed concerns about the two bidders who withdrew from the tender process, allegedly because of pressure to include a casino.

"Featuring a casino has always been entirely up to the proponents, and if the two remaining proposals do feature a casino, I'm sure they will take heart from the State's announcement a further three licenses will be granted," he said.

The two remaining bidders – ASF China Property Consortium and ACPI Consortium – last week submitted their detailed proposals, which will be evaluated to determine the preferred proponent.

An announcement is expected in early 2014.

Cheering for the new Getaway

CHEERLEADERS for the Miami Dolphins NFL team will serve as the official Godmothers to the newest Norwegian Cruise Line vessel *Norwegian Getaway* at a ceremony on 07 Feb.

The designation follows an announcement by Norwegian Cruise Lines that it had signed a partnership with the NFL side which will see a backdrop of the ship displayed at future Miami Dolphins home games.

Norwegian Getaway will become the largest ship to permanently homeport in Miami.

Daily newspapers on Silversea

OFFLINE digital daily newspapers will be made available to passengers aboard Silversea Cruises following a partnership between the line and NewspaperDirect.

Publications from around the world will be on offer to guests, refreshed every evening to ensure the latest issue is available, and will be downloadable to guests' personal devices.



WIRELESS internet is never far away these days, but imagine if you could access the world wide web whilst underwater?

It may not be as far-fetched as it sounds, especially after researchers from the University of Buffalo in the US successfully tested a wi-fi network underwater.

There is a purpose for the deep-sea wi-fi though, as scientists are developing the system to assist with tsunami detection, offshore oil and natural gas exploration and monitoring levels of pollution.

Soundwaves and acoustic waves were found as being capable of transmitting data while underwater, connected using a network of sensors, the researchers found.

Although we're sure deep sea divers want nothing more to be able to whip out their smartphone and check-in on Facebook while exploring the depths of the ocean.

Clean seas behind Europa 2

HAPAG-LLOYD newbuild vessel *Europa 2* has been certified as one of the world's most energy efficient & cleanest cruise vessels by ship classification firm Germanischer Lloyd under the Energy Efficiency Design Index.

The line said *Europa 2* is fitted with an SCR catalytic converter which allows it to cut its carbon emissions by up to 95%.

"The *EUROPA 2* does not only set the highest, 5-star-plus standards in terms of its design, accommodation and dining facilities, its technical features are also first rate, ensuring that resources are conserved as much as possible," Hapag-Lloyd Cruises chief executive officer Karl Pojer said.

Tragedy at New Orleans port

A **CREW** member of the *Carnival Conquest* working in a cherry-picker has been crushed to death in an accident at the Port of New Orleans in the United States over the weekend.

According to a statement from Carnival Cruise Lines, the worker was performing maintenance duties when he became wedged between the picker and a platform holding one of the lifeboats on the ship.

Medical personnel attended to the worker, whose identity was not released.


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Crew Profile

This week **Cruise Weekly** speaks with **Royden John Pereira, Butler Manager** onboard **Silversea Cruises' Silver Spirit**.

How long have you been working on cruise ships for?
Four years.

When did you join Silversea Cruises?
June 2009.

What is the best thing about working for Silversea Cruises?

Working on a small ship allows you to get to know your guests and colleagues, which helps to deliver a high standard of personalised service. The professional crew, coupled with our friendly guests, creates a family atmosphere, and it's this reason that I'm still with Silversea.

What is your favourite cruising destination?
The Mediterranean & Caribbean. The sun, sand and outstanding cuisine are all second to none.

Briefly explain what your job entails and what passengers can expect from your services on board.

The Silversea way of life is unique. Every suite is provided with Butler service. It's my job to provide outstanding service to guests and to ensure expectations are met. I also train, coach and lead staff to the Silversea standard of performance, as well as perform admin duties.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I have seen a number of our guests cry upon disembarkation because they will miss their Butler so much. It is inspiring to see how much they have enjoyed their journey and to realise that I have been a part of it.

What is the most interesting request you've received from a passenger?

The preparation of a champagne bath and a gluten-free kosher pork schnitzel. From dietary requirements to suite adjustments, we strive to meet all our guest requests.

Do you have any embarrassing cruise stories you can share with us?

There are certainly moments when you feel embarrassed, however a Butler can never reveal his or her secrets.

How do you spend your holidays/vacation when you return home?

When I'm back on dry land I spend most of my time with friends and family. Beach, barbecues and playing cricket in the summertime, but most of all, I make time to relax and unwind!



Regal Princess to debut early

PRINCESS Cruises' soon-to-debut liner *Regal Princess* will launch earlier than originally expected, with the ship's first voyage now set to take place on 20 May instead of 02 Jun.

Two new itineraries of seven and six days, cruising between Venice and Athens have been released for sale, with both able to be combined into a 13-day return voyage.

Guests originally booked on the 02 Jun inaugural sailing will be duplicate booked on the ship's new maiden voyage on 20 May and have until 15 Nov to decide whether to cruise on the new debut or keep their original sailing.

Executive vice president of Princess Cruises Jan Swartz said she was pleased construction of *Regal Princess* was ahead of schedule.

"We know that this beautiful new vessel will impress passengers just as much as her sister ship, *Royal Princess*, has this year," Swartz said.

Alaska Dream 2014 sailings

NATIVE-OWNED small-ship cruise company Alaskan Dream Cruises will operate 45 departures next year, the firm has announced through their official 2014 schedule release.

Increasing interest among guests for cruises into the more isolated Alaskan communities along with a spike in bookings has seen the three-year old firm increase its departure frequencies for next year.

Highlights of the company's new sailing year will include three departures of a nine-day "Point Adolphus, Frederick Sound & Stephens Passage Explorer," operating on 15 & 16 May and the third departure on 11 Aug.

Specialist family-themed departures return in 2014, with a roundtrip Alaska Family Cruise departing from Sitka on 19 Jul.

Details at www.alaskadreamcruises.com.

Silver Galapagos sets sail

SILVERSEA has formally christened and commenced operation of its newly refurbished expedition ship *Silver Galapagos*, with the first voyage setting sail late last month.

The 100-guest vessel was formerly known as the *Galapagos Explorer III*, with refurbishment works carried out on the ship including a refit of all public spaces.

Guest suites have been fully redesigned with new upholstery, carpets and curtains along with fully renovated bathrooms, which now offer walk-in rainforest showers and fittings.

Wi-fi connectivity has been installed through the entire ship, with guests able to stream entertainment to view on their own devices.

Largest cruise ship in Asia

STAR Cruises has placed an order with the Meyer Werft shipyard in Germany for what it has described as the "largest ship to be permanently homeported in Asia".

The 150,000-tonne vessel, scheduled for delivery in 2016, will be capable of carrying 4,500 passengers and is being designed to exclusively cruise in Asian waters.

Other features of the ship will include a theatre, water park, retail zones and 33 food and beverage outlets.

Disney Magic return delayed

INCLEMENT weather conditions in testing the latest upgrades to Disney Cruise Lines' vessel *Disney Magic* have forced the vessel's return to service to be slightly postponed.

The vessel entered a Spanish shipyard for a dry dock renovation project in Sep and was due to resume service from Florida this week, operating a five-night cruise that was due to depart from Miami on 25 Oct.

Works carried out on the ship included the removal of its Mickey Mouse pool, which was replaced with a kids water park & water slide.

One-off Hurtigruten in Lapland

HURTIGRUTEN has opened sales on a new 12-day itinerary exploring Norway's fjord coast combined with a tour of Finnmark's interior.

Commencing in Bergen, a single departure running from 25 Mar is currently available for sale, with a two-day land tour bookended by several nights sailing on the *MS Midnatsol*.

Cabins on the voyage are priced from £1,855 per person twin share - phone 1800 623 267.

MEANWHILE, earlybird discounts of 25% off 2014 Classic Norway Voyages with Hurtigruten close for sale on 31 Oct, the line has advised.

Bonus onboard credits of £120 are also on offer for eligible bookings made before 31 Oct.

Fly free to Vietnam with APT

ALL-INCLUSIVE tour operator APT has released new Fly Free deals valid for passengers booking itineraries of 12-days or more including river cruises on the Lower Mekong River from Saigon to Siem Reap before 31 Jan.

Celebrity chef Luke Nguyen will again serve as the Ambassador for Vietnam & Cambodian itineraries, with guests enjoying a three-course banquet designed by Nguyen on the 12-day Vietnam & Cambodia Highlights tour.

The itinerary is priced from \$4,395pp twin share and sails aboard the RV AmaLotus vessel.

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Sunset at Sea

by: Louise Goldsbury

I AM writing today from *Sea Princess*'s Topsail bar, savouring my favourite part of any cruise – a sundowner champagne watching the sunset over the sea.

This bar on Deck 14, at the main mast, is the next best thing to the "crow's nest", a old term for a ship's lookout point.

According to naval legend, before the days of radar, Viking sailors would bring onboard a crow, which was kept in a cage attached to the upper part of the ship's tallest mast.

The land-loving bird was used to help determine the best direction to sail to shore, especially when visibility was poor. Released from its cage, it would head straight toward land, allowing the navigator to plot the course "as the crow flies".

Other naval scholars, however, suggest the term was coined in 1807 when it was used to describe Arctic explorer William Scoresby's lookout platform, which was a barrel attached to the mast and apparently resembled a crow's nest in a tree.

Nowadays, the term can refer to the highest point of a building or tower. Crow's Nest Lounge is the name given to the highest bar on Holland America Line ships, offering the best views for passengers.

According to *Eurodam* Captain Henk Keijer, you can see 12 nautical miles from the Crow's Nest on Deck 11 compared to seven nautical miles from Deck 3.

But despite its good vantage for gazing at the horizon – a common remedy for seasickness – a ship's crow's nest is not actually a suitable place for queasy passengers in rough seas.

Traditionally, it was always positioned far away from the vessel's centre of mass, rendering it prone to exaggerated swaying.

Indeed, to be sent to the crow's nest to keep watch was considered a punishment for sailors.

Seamen from Spain knew this better than others. The Spanish word for crow's nest, *carajo*, also means "curse".

Fortunately, on a modern ship with sturdy stabilisers, it's one of the nicest areas to relax.

Best sunset bars for Aussie cruisers

After much research, these are my favourite spots for a sundowner on ships based in Australia.

Volendam/Oosterdam – Crow's Nest Lounge

- Deck 9, forward, enclosed, with 180-degree wraparound windows.

Sea Princess – Seaview or Topsail

- Deck 14, aft, outdoors, overlooking the hot tubs and the pool.

Celebrity Solstice – Sunset Bar

- Deck 15, aft, outdoors, behind the Lawn Club.

Carnival Spirit – Serenity

- Serenity deck, aft, outdoors, adults only, with a hot tub.

Radiance of the Seas – Concierge Club

- Deck 11 (enclosed), serving free drinks for guests in suites and Crown and Anchor Society Diamond and Diamond-plus members.

Pacific Pearl – swim-up bar

- Stay in the pool and cool off with a coldie on a bar stool in the water.

Cheers!



Pacific Pearl's swim-up bar



Celebrity Solstice's Sunset bar



Sea Princess' TopSail

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PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710

Phone: 1300 799 220 Fax: 1300 799 221

Advertising and Marketing: Christie-Lee Lachance, Magda Herdzik and Lisa Martin
Email: advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper

Email: accounts@traveldaily.com.au

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Publisher/Managing Editor: Bruce Piper
Editor: Louise Goldsbury

Production Editor: Matt Lennon

Contributors: Roderick Eime, Guy Dundas and Olivia Archbold

Email: info@cruiseweekly.com.au

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