

CRUISE

WEEKLY

Tuesday 17 September 2013

Princess to provide visa assistance

Information on the individual visa requirements for different countries will now be available through a new service to be offered by Princess Cruises.

CONCISE and consistent information and advice concerning the varied visa requirements to enter different countries relevant to a passenger's cruise itinerary will be accessible

by passengers to review upon booking of their cruise.

The information will be available to view via the Cruise Personaliser section of the Princess Cruises website, with the service to also send reminders automatically to passengers if the information is not accessed prior to departure.

Brett Wendorf, Princess Cruises' head of sales Australia and New Zealand said making these important details available to passengers complemented the line's reputation as the destination expert, adding it was a "natural progression" to offer the new service.

"The visa service is an extension of our role as the consummate host and has been designed to provide agents and their clients with the most up-to-date information, all in one place, allowing them to focus on the exciting task of planning the cruise rather than spending hours researching visa options," Wendorf said.

Cruise Personaliser can be accessed with the use of the unique booking number provided once your booking is complete, either online or through a travel agent.

"By offering this as part of cruise personaliser it will be easier and more efficient to research visa requirements and make informed decisions about what is best for the individual traveller," he concluded.

Concordia now off rock shelf

UPRIGHTING of the *Costa Concordia* off the coast of Giglio, Italy, continues painstakingly but so far successfully, salvage crews have said.

The wreckage of the ship has been moved off the rock shelf on which it has been lying for the last 18 months, progressively revealing its rusty and dirty water-lined starboard side.

Once the ship reaches a tilt of 24 degrees, towers bolted to its port side will right the ship.

Concordia is still loaded with tonnes of rotting and preserved food, drinks and alcohol, and fears the load which has remained with the ship during its partial submersion would spill out have not yet been realised, officials said.

Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY

Pacific Jewel (WBCT)

Wed 20 Sep

Pacific Pearl (WBCT)

Thur 21 Sep

BRISBANE

Pacific Dawn

Sat 21 Sep

DARWIN

Coral Princess (WBCT)

Thur 19 Sep

Quantum consults celebrities

CELEBRITY experts in fields such as interior design, sport & fitness, entertainment & more will advise on developments in the onboard features of Royal Caribbean International's upcoming vessel *Quantum of the Seas* and soon-to-follow sister ship *Anthem of the Seas*.

The line has launched the Quantum Experience Advisors program, with American television personality and interior designer Genevieve Gorder to work with RCI newbuild design teams to influence decor and furnishings guests will experience on the ship.

"It's exhilarating to work with Royal Caribbean, a brand known for pushing the envelope in ship design and innovation," Gorder said of her new cruise ship assignment, on which she has been working since May.

As part of her engagement, Gorder has been participating in collaborative design sessions, reviewing fabrics, carpets and furnishings for both passenger staterooms and common areas.

Royal Caribbean has produced a special video looking at the contributions Gorder has made to Quantum-class interiors, which will be the first of several episodes featuring further celebrity advisors in other aspects of ship design - to see the video, **CLICK HERE**.



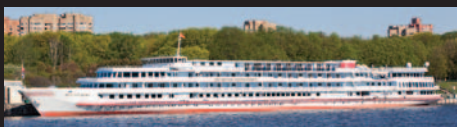
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Tahiti touted as the next hot spot

The region is set for a bumper season as cruise lines expand their presence in Tahiti next year.

INCREASING numbers of ships in the South Pacific has seen the Tahitian islands emerge as the latest must-see cruise destination.

Windstar Cruises returns for the first time since 2005 to offer 28 seven-day itineraries from May next year.

Australians can also cruise from their doorstep to Tahiti with Princess Cruises' *Ocean Princess* offering a new departure of its 16-day voyage from Sydney in February 2014, including calls to Papeete and Moorea.

Pacific Princess will also move to the South Pacific to operate three additional departures of the popular 10-day Tahiti and French Polynesia itinerary.

Paul Gauguin Cruises' small luxury ships and Aranui's freighter ships are continuing year-round regular trips around the Society Islands, Tuamotus and the Marquesas archipelago.

Oceania Cruises, Silversea, Regent Seven Seas and Royal Caribbean will also visit the region.

"Tahiti is made up of pristine archipelagos and cruising is undoubtedly one of the best ways to island-hop," said Tahiti Tourisme Australia director Robert Thompson.

"Cruising is also a fantastic way to sample Tahiti's different islands and atolls with shore tours offering the chance to explore Bora Bora's blue lagoon, stroll Papeete's picturesque harbour, discover black pearls on Huahine or taste tropical wine on Rangiroa."

For more details, see www.tahitinow.com.au.



AS FAR as medical emergencies go, this must have made the Captain a little angry.

The *Thomson Spirit* required the assistance of the Coast Guard while in Strangford Lough, off the coast of Northern Ireland, after a female passenger suffered a nosebleed.

Despite routine medical assistance from the onboard doctor, the passenger insisted the problem was sufficient enough to have ruined her cruise and she wanted to get off...now.

After the matter continued to escalate, the doctor reluctantly agreed and called for the Coast Guard, who met the vessel, transporting the woman to Dublin Airport.

The woman was then moved on to Dublin Hospital by ambulance, where the nosebleed was quickly treated and stopped.

Carnival offers money back

CARNIVAL Cruise Lines has pulled out a whopper of a guarantee for passengers who are not completely satisfied with their holiday.

A new money-back guarantee allows guests to end their voyage early and receive a 110% refund plus free flights home (and hotel accommodation, if necessary), along with a US\$100 shipboard credit for a future cruise.

Valid only for American and Canadian residents, the 'Great Vacation Guarantee' applies to all three- to eight-day cruises to the Bahamas, Caribbean, Mexican Riviera, Alaska, Canada and New England departing through 30 April 2015.

Passengers must notify the ship's guest services desk within the first 24 hours of the voyage to receive the money-back deal.

Gerry Cahill, Carnival president and CEO, said: "The 'Great Vacation Guarantee' is designed to provide an assurance to those consumers who may be considering a cruise that we stand behind our product and, if they are dissatisfied for any reason, they have a simple and hassle-free means for receiving a full refund and more."

New voyages for Compagnie

ICELAND & the Russian Far East will feature in the 2014 northern summer sailing season by French line Compagnie du Ponant.

The company's *L'Austral* vessel will depart the Norwegian port of Longyearbyen on 22 Jun for a cruise to Spitsbergen and Reykjavik, Iceland, before repositioning to Alaska for the sailing to the Russian Far East, departing from Nome on 16 Sep 2014.

Testing one, two for Tutu

FORMER Cape Town Archbishop Desmond Tutu will serve as a special guest lecturer during a portion of Holland America Line's 2014 Grand World Voyage on *MS Amsterdam*.

The 81-year old former Nobel Peace Prize winner will join the sailing from Durban to Cape Town and will conduct two guest lectures on his life's work forging paths for racial equality, respect and peace worldwide as well as conducting a question and answer session.

Link up sailings on Seabourn

TIME-RICH travellers looking to spend more time cruising can now take advantage of a new range of linked itineraries from Seabourn.

The line has launched a new Extended Explorations range of voyages, which consists of linked sailings ranging from 28 days through to a mammoth 116 days, with further savings of 10% available on combined itineraries.

Departures under the new range have been released for next year and 2015, available in Africa, Asia, South America, Antarctica and the South Pacific.

"A lot of travellers prefer a long, leisurely voyage, and they also love the idea of really exploring a particular part of the world," Seabourn senior vice president of marketing and sales John Delaney said.

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Bauer first to go from RCCL

THE first major scalp identified as a casualty in the consolidation of Royal Caribbean Cruises Limited has been named as global sales and marketing boss Lisa Bauer.

The eleven-year company veteran confirmed her exit from the company late last week.

Royal Caribbean last week confirmed to **CW** it was evaluating its land-based operations in the countries it currently maintains an office, with 11 call centres to be downsized to three and operated by an external partner (**CW** 10 Sep).

Among Bauer's many accomplishments are successful launches of *Oasis of the Seas* and *Allure of the Seas*, currently the world's two largest ships operating worldwide.

She has held roles in hotel operations, product development and execution, sales and marketing & also designed the latest advertising campaign "Designed for WOW" in her time with the company.

A corporate spokesperson for the company said that less than 2% of land-based positions around the world would be eliminated.



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P&O features in a modern day 'Love Boat'

A LOVE of cruising developed into true love for Nicole Tucker, the groups and marketing leader at Harvey World Travel in the western Sydney suburb of Blacktown, and her husband Wayne.

P&O Cruises will always have a soft spot in their hearts, with the line having played a prominent role in three of the couple's most significant life moments.

For it was, back in 2003, that the pair first met while aboard the line's *Pacific Sky* vessel while cruising the Pacific Islands - true love was born.

"I was with my sister, a cousin and a girlfriend and on the first night of the cruise we met Wayne and his friends," Nicole recalls.

"Wayne invited me on one of the day tours to Amedee Island in Noumea and we just spent a lovely day together".

The next step in their relationship came four



years later, when Wayne dropped to one knee and popped the question to Nicole, this time while aboard P&O's *Pacific Dawn*.

Completing the trifecta, the couple celebrated the 10th anniversary of their meeting this year aboard *Pacific Pearl*, enjoying a romantic lunch at Luke Mangan's onboard Salt Grill restaurant.

From here, the pair will soon introduce their two boys Hugh and Dylan to cruising, which is sure to become a new love for the family.

Windstar extra nights bonus

TWO free bonus hotel nights valid in nine different European cities will be granted to guests booking a selection of Windstar Cruises departing in 2014, the line has announced.

Windstar's Sail & Stay promotion also offers a number of 2-for-1 cruise fares, with staterooms available to book by 31 Oct.

Free hotel nights can be used either at the start or end of a voyage in London, Rome, Dublin, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Stockholm, Istanbul, Athens, Lisbon or Barcelona.

Cabins are priced from \$2,499 per person twin share - phone 1300 804 522 to book.

Broadway previews on MSC

PREVIEW performances of upcoming New York City Broadway theatre shows will be showcased on three MSC ships this month.

Scenes from contemporary music and dance shows *ArtsLab Onstage*, *Belcanto: The Luciano Pavarotti Heritage* and *T'Ammore, the Spirit of Naples* will play in the main receptions of MSC *Divina*, *Splendida* and *Preziosa* until 22 Sept.

Orion's world of PNG on TV

PASSENGERS unable to secure berth space on the *National Geographic Orion* vessel for its 2013 Papua New Guinea expedition season will be able to see what they have to look forward to via a two-part documentary series to be screened on digital channel 7TWO.

Two one-hour episodes will screen on 14 and 21 September, airing as part of the Travel Bug program at 5:30pm AEST.

Initially, only a single program was to be produced, however Orion Expedition Cruises said producers gathered too much material and expanded the show to a two-part series.

For next year's season, limited cabins are still available for sale on a 21-night Papua New Guinea and the Islands of Vanuatu and Solomons itinerary, departing on 21 Mar 2014.

Two for one PNG expeditions

TRUE North Cruises Australia has released a special two-for-the-price-of-one offer on an upcoming expedition to the Louisiade Archipelago in Papua New Guinea, site of ruins of Japanese Zeros planes that crashed during World War II.

The five-night voyage is scheduled to depart on 12 December and will give passengers the opportunity to explore many remote, isolated islands and PNG villages, with return flights from Cairns to meet the sailing also included.

For more information, see your travel agent.

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Carnival's environmental goal

SYSTEMS to reduce carbon emissions from cruise ships will be installed on Carnival Cruise Lines' fleet, the line has announced.

The line will commit US\$180 million to the project, which consists of the installation of exhaust gas cleaning technology via the use of scrubber systems in restricted spaces.

Other Carnival Corporation brands to receive the systems will include Cunard, Princess Cruises, Holland America Line and Princess Cruises, with the move backed by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

In addition to cleaner exhausts, the move will also see Carnival Corporation reduce its fuel consumption and curb rising fuel costs.

Carnival Corporation has said it will explore the possibility of installing the technology on the remainder of its fleet, with numerous other brands operating around the world.

Cool feature on new Getaway

NORWEGIAN Cruise Lines soon-to-debut vessel *Getaway* will boast an ice bar, like its sister ship *Norwegian Breakaway*.

Named the Svedka/Inniskillin Ice Bar, it will offer guests seating, glasses and a bar made entirely out of ice, able to accommodate 25 guests at a time, donning hoods and gloves.

New Arctic wilderness voyage

HURTIGRUTEN expedition vessel *MS Fram* will operate a pair of brand new Arctic wilderness adventures in June 2014, exploring the north-west waters of Greenland.

The itinerary is available as both an 11-day and 14-day voyage, with new harbours and points of disembarkation available to guests including the wildlife-rich port of Upernavik.

Bookings of the new itineraries include return flights from Copenhagen to the embarkation port of Kangerlussuaq, with onboard credits available for bookings made before 31 Oct.

Phone 1800 623 267 for more information.

Cruise ship stranded in Korea

LUXURY Chinese cruise vessel *Henna*, under operation by Star Cruises on behalf of Chinese owners HNA Tourism Cruises, was stranded in the South Korean port of Jeju for more than a day due to an undisclosed legal dispute whilst in the middle of a six-night cruise from Tianjin.

According to the BBC, the ship has been detained by local authorities upon a request from a Chinese shipping company prior to it being able to head to its next port of Incheon.

Tempo to explore frozen land

SEVEN-DAY fly/cruise Antarctica itineraries have been released by Tempo Holidays as part of its new Latin American brochure release.

Aimed at time-poor travellers, the itinerary includes air travel to King George Island, before boarding the *MV Ocean Nova*, priced from \$11,404pp twin share - ph 1300 362 844.

Thousand dollar APT discount

SAVINGS of up to \$1,000 per couple are now available on an 11-day Bella Italia itinerary on the *MV Variety Voyager* through APT, priced from \$6,495pp twin share, booked by 30 Nov.

Departing from Rome, the cruise sails the Amalfi Coast and visits a number of traditional Italian villages - phone 1300 278 278 for details.

Voyages to Antiquity maidens

AN INAUGURAL visit to East Africa as well as a return to India and Southeast Asia highlights the new Winter 2014-2015 program, released by Voyages to Antiquity last week.

Three-day Kenyan safaris with game drives in the Tsavo and Amboseli National Parks will feature in the line's African itinerary.

The return to Southeast Asia is particularly significant for the company, as its inaugural visit to the region in the 2012-13 winter was heavily affected and disrupted by severe ocean conditions, forcing a return in 2013-14 to be cancelled entirely (**CW** 16 May).

Now, following a restructuring of the line's offerings in the region for 2014-15, Asia will return to the range, with India and Thailand to feature in the company's Asian cruise range.



Recipe of the Month

Wagyu Strip Steak, Shiitake Bacon, Celery Root Cream and Demi-glace (serves six)

This week's recipe comes from Royal Caribbean International



Ingredients

(Wagyu Steak)

- 3 (1 pound) (450 g) Wagyu or Kobe strip steaks
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) vegetable oil

(Shiitake "Bacon")

- 5-ounce (140 g) shiitake mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup (90 ml) canola oil
- Salt

(Celery Root Cream)

- 1 pound (450 g) Idaho potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1/2 pound (250 g) celery root, peeled and cubed
- 2 tablespoons (30 g) butter, cubed
- 1 cup (240 ml) heavy cream
- Salt and freshly ground white pepper

(Red Wine Demi-Glace)

- 1/4 cup (60 g) butter
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) red wine
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) veal demi-glace

(Garnish)

Chervil sprigs • 1/4 bunch basil, finely chopped

Preparation

Preheat oven to 165°C. To make the **Chimichurri** for the shiitake bacon, place mushrooms in large glass or stainless steel bowl. Add oil & salt, mix well. Transfer on a baking sheet lined with silpat and spread evenly. Bake for 30 mins or until crisp. Place potatoes in stockpot with enough cold salted water to cover them by 2-inches.

Bring to boil & cook for 5 mins. Add celery root and simmer for 15 mins or until vegetables are tender. Drain well and push through a food mill fitted with the medium size disk into a saucepan. Stir in butter & heavy cream. Season with salt & pepper and keep warm. For steaks, preheat broiler for 5 mins over high heat. Broil seasoned steaks to desired degree of doneness, about 10 mins for rare & 14 mins for medium.

Transfer to warmed platter, tent loosely with aluminum foil. Let stand for 10 mins. For sauce, in a small saucepan over medium heat, melt 1/2 tablespoon (7.5 g) butter and sauté onion for 3 mins. Deglaze with red wine and reduce by half. Stir in veal demi-glace and simmer for 10 mins. Remove from heat and whisk in butter a little at a time. Cut steaks diagonally in thick slices and place atop celery root cream. Top with shiitake bacon and finish with a spoonful of red wine demi-glace & fresh chervil.

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Rail and Sail

by: Louise Goldsbury

SWITZERLAND may be landlocked, but it's also the source of two major rivers, the Rhine and the Rhone, with many river cruises boarding or disembarking in Basel.

Another great way to see the country is by rail, as the train system runs like clockwork – as famously reliable as a Swiss watch, and as punctual as the local residents.

Combining these modes of transport provides a diverse and more interesting trip, offering two types of experiences and perspectives - perfect for the couple who can't agree how to see Europe!

Best of all, a Swiss Rail Pass will get you to and from the airport by train, as well as allow travel on buses, trams and even some boats, plus entry to museums – all included on the one ticket.

It also includes scenic train rides, such as the Glacier Express or Bernina Express through the Swiss Alps. Then, you can catch a train to Basel and switch to the tram (or a 15-minute taxi) to get to the cruise port.

Alternatively, do your river cruise first. Or do it my way. I travelled around Europe by train, ending up in Amsterdam, and then took a Scenic Tours river cruise towards Switzerland.

I flew in and out of Zurich, starting my train adventure with a week around Switzerland, then up to Holland via Germany, and cruised back down to pick up my return flight from Zurich.

I never walked more than five minutes from a train station to a hotel. It was all so easy and seamless.

I also enjoyed the similarities between rail travel and river

cruising: smoothly gliding along through big cities and small towns, watching the scenery go by, having lunch onboard (served at my table by a waiter on the Glacier Express), and visiting a new destination every day.

Switzerland's high-speed trains are arguably the best in Europe – ideal for a river-cruiser who appreciates the finer things in life.

And of course, the Swiss alps, lush valleys and villages are breathtakingly beautiful.

Tips for a cruise-train combo trip:

- Buy a Swiss Pass (online, before leaving Australia) to keep things simple and cost-effective.
- Don't miss the Glacier Express (eight hours) between St Moritz and Zermatt, home of the famous mountain, the Matterhorn.
- Take the boat from Weggis to Lucerne to explore its charming Old Town.
- From here, it's only an hour to Basel, where river cruises depart. Catch the number-18 tram to the port.

Swiss Pass: www.raileurope.com.au

River Cruise: Basel to Amsterdam, from \$3,450 per person; see www.scenictours.com.au for more information.

Hotels: Alex Schlosshotel in Zermatt (www.alex-schlosshotel.ch); Hotel Park Weggis (www.parkweggis.ch) or Art Deco Hotel Montana in Lucerne (www.hotel-montana.ch).

Airline: www.swiss.com

Tourism Info: www.myswitzerland.com



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