



## Cruise Shipping APAC

**HONG** Kong will serve as the host city for the fourth annual Cruise Shipping Asia-Pacific trade show and conference, which will take place from 20-21 Nov.

The two-day event will look at major topics relating the world's fastest growing cruise market, with panel discussions to feature industry experts and executives from the world's biggest lines.

New cruise IT systems, food and beverage, entertainment, refurbishment, ship design and destinations will also feature.

In addition, the second annual Rama Rebbapragada Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Cruise Industry in Asia will be awarded to a deserving winner.

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## Uniworld expands in Europe

**UNIWORLD** Boutique River Cruise Collection is set to unleash two new ships and six new itineraries across Europe, with significant savings offered on early bookings for 2015.

Previously unannounced, the SS *Josephine* is slated for the Seine River in northern France in 2016, while the SS *Maria Theresa* (a sister ship to the SS *Catherine* launched last week) will provide additional capacity on the Rhine, Main and Danube next year.

Speaking to **TD Cruise Update**, John Molinaro, general manager Australia, said: "We build them one at a time, and each ship is different – no cookie cutters."

Releasing the 2015 Europe & Russia preview brochure, he said the six new "six-star, all-inclusive" itineraries would offer new-to-Uniworld destinations and a wider variety of shore excursions.

Among the changes is a second cruise/tour on the Douro River, which adds three nights in Madrid and stops in the Portuguese towns of Armante and Lemego.

Another new highlight is the 'Eastern European Explorer' that cruises from Budapest to Bucharest over ten days.

"There are many interesting little towns along this stretch of the Danube and we wanted to be

## Tauk names Inspire

**THE** first of two new Inspiration-Class river cruise vessels, named *Inspire*, has been christened and welcomed into the Tauk fleet in a ceremony in Basel, Switzerland.

*Inspire* was named by four of its river cruise directors (**CU** 20 Feb) Bridget Ashton, Lynn Hardcastle, Mary Pierik and Eszter Pusztai.

The 130-passenger vessel introduces a new lower-level loft-style design stateroom featuring a small staircase to an elevated and well-lit seating area with window.

able to provide access to these," Molinaro said.

The company is set to create an epic 22-day 'Ultimate France', combining its Bordeaux cruise with its 'Paris & Normandy' and 'Burgundy & Provence' itineraries.

The European shore excursion program will also be enhanced with options such as a vineyard tractor ride in Nierstein & guided cycling in the Wachau Valley.

As an added bonus for booking a suite, guests will receive a complimentary in-room massage.

Pay-in-full savings of up to \$2,400 per couple are available before 31 Jul 2014, or up to \$1,000 per couple with early booking savings when depositing at the time of reservation on both existing and new 2015 itineraries.

For more information, see [www.uniworldcruises.com.au](http://www.uniworldcruises.com.au) or contact your local sales manager.

## Pax living on the Edge

**P&O** Cruises has announced it will roll out its innovative new P&OEdge adventure park at sea to the rest of its fleet, with *Pacific Dawn* next to be fitted.

The line said the P&OEdge range of activities has been a huge hit with passengers, with more than 25,000 participants recorded trying the equipment in its first six months of operation.

The collection of activities was launched aboard *Pacific Jewel* last year (**CW** 10 Oct) & offers options such as Funnel Climb, Laser Tag, Segway Challenge and more.

According to P&O Cruises, more than 140 activities per day have been used on average per day, with Flying Fox the most popular.

"We look forward to seeing more of our passengers take up the opportunity to climb, swing, race and jump their way around our ships," P&O Cruises senior vp Tammy Marshall said.

## Cruiseabout hit by Google penalty

**FLIGHT** Centre's Cruiseabout specialist cruising operation is not appearing prominently in Google search results after the firm was hit with a penalty due to Search Engine Optimisation issues.

It is understood the issue relates to a new policy by Google which downgrades the use of so-called "guest blogs".

According to online technology website *TravelTrends.biz*, the [www.cruiseabout.com.au](http://www.cruiseabout.com.au) site was hit from about 20 Mar, meaning that searches for terms such as "cheap cruising" do not list any Cruiseabout content until about the sixth page of results.

A Cruiseabout spokesperson told *TravelTrends* that the penalty was "a result of historical SEO activity, much of which dates back several years".

The company is attempting to rectify the problem, and the site-wide penalty has been lifted although some pages are still impacted due to "remaining unnatural links," the report said.

It is believed that some other FC brands were also affected.

## Three pages today

Today's issue of **TD Cruise Update** features three pages of all the latest cruise information plus a full page from: **(click)**

- AA Appointments jobs

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## Cruise3sixty USA

LAST week in Fort Lauderdale, our USA office delivered the 10th annual Cruise3sixty North America.

Whilst a long way to go for a four day cruise conference, having an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of how the world's largest cruise market is travelling can be a valuable experience!

The opening industry leaders panel featured the head of each of the four major global brands and interestingly, the comments from all of them follow a similar pattern.

"How do we attract more new people to cruising?"

Throughout our market, the cruise industry has a very strong travel agent distribution model which means the influence of much of this opportunity lies in your hands.

It is critical to get the right people cruising on the right brand and if you can add your passion for cruising into the sales process then you may find plenty more life-long clients.

Each cruise line already has its own brand that has been developed over many years and evolved with customer feedback. So now it is over to you to keep up to date at every opportunity with industry and brand training to ensure you are at the top of your game when it comes to promoting cruise to those yet to be convinced.

Remember, the cruise lines will **always** need strong travel agent distribution.



## New APT ship for Mekong

**HOT** on the heels of its announcement of the new *MS Anastasia* in Russia, and with three ships launching this year in Europe and Myanmar, APT has revealed plans to expand its Mekong fleet.

To be named *MS AmaDara*, the 62-cabin vessel is due to debut next year.

APT's general manager marketing and sales, Debra Fox, told **TD Cruise Update**: "We are thrilled that due to the continuing demand for the high APT standard of cruising on the Mekong River, we are able to build another luxury vessel."

The addition of the *AmaDara* will see APT operate three ships in Vietnam/Cambodia in 2015, alongside the *AmaLotus* and sister brand Travelmarvel's *La Marguerite*.

Similar in design to the *AmaLotus*, the four-deck *AmaDara* will feature a swimming

pool, restaurant, twin balconies on every cabin and no cabins on the lower deck.

Fox said the company's growth was "due to the combination of its innovative ship design, luxury features and the all-inclusive experience, including once-in-a-lifetime moments".

Further details about the itineraries for "the newest and most luxurious ship on the Mekong River" will be available soon, she said.

## Cruise Agent Goddess

**ECRUISING** group wholesaler Cruise Agents has signed a new partnership agreement to provide cruise content for high-end luxury consumer site Vacation Goddess.

The exclusive arrangement will see a range of upscale cruising product promoted on the site including large, small & river ship sailings aboard luxury lines such as Cunard, Azamara Club Cruises, Seabourn, Oceania and more.

Cruise Agents chairman Brett Dudley said the luxury partnership complemented both parties.

## Avalon set for Vienna launch



**THERE** was some real star power at the official unveiling of Avalon Waterways' 2015 River Cruise program this week in Sydney, with media personality Deborah Hutton in attendance.

Hutton is the cruise line's latest celebrity ambassador and will be heading to Austria along with a contingent of Aussie travel agents next month where she will officiate at the naming ceremony for *Avalon Illumination*.

The Austrian National Tourist Office is participating in the event, which will take place in Vienna.

The 2015 Avalon Waterways brochure highlights the expansion of the line, particularly in France where it will double its presence to four vessels, while the program also features a new Mekong vessel and Avalon's first

departures in Myanmar.

In Europe, the program includes Avalon's biggest ever selection of 'Suite Ships', each of which offer two entire decks of all-suite accommodation and "30% more cabin area than the average competitor".

Earlybird savings of \$1000 per couple are available on select voyages on the Seine, Rhone, Moselle, Rhine, Main and Danube rivers, with voyages priced from just \$1,882 per person for the eight day *A Taste of the Danube* sailing between Budapest and Vienna.

Hutton is **pictured** above right with Astrid Mulholland-Licht from the Austrian National Tourist Office and Globus Family of Brands marketing manager Christian Schweitzer.

## Sydney Harbour guide

**CAPTAIN** Cook Cruises has released its new Sydney Harbour brochure, with the 20-page guide detailing the comprehensive range of available experiences.

Content covers the line's range of 13 cruises and 10 ferry products including the popular Coffee Cruises, Hop-On-Hop-Off Explorer Cruises and whale-watching sailings, ferry and attraction combo tickets as well as dining cruises for breakfast, lunch, dinner and high tea.

The guide covers enhancements made to the line's fleet including the installation of free wi-fi and the rollout of a new wine list.

"We offer 13 amazing cruises and 10 ferry packages, most operating daily, so there is definitely an option for everyone," SeaLink and Captain Cook Cruises head of sales and marketing Richard Doyle said.

The new brochure is available to download in full - **CLICK HERE**.

## Emerald Waterways sets sail

**SCENIC** Tours Group managing director & founder Glen Moroney yesterday accepted delivery of the firm's newest ship trading under the Emerald Waterways banner, the 182-pax *Emerald Sky* (pictured left).

The ship contains an array of new 'mod-cons' previously never seen before on river cruisers, including an indoor swimming pool (below) which can be converted to a cinema at the flick of a switch, and indoor balcony cabins complete with decked area and a clever open air system which sees one glass pane drop and descend behind the other to let fresh air in.

Moroney told **TD Cruise Update** in Amsterdam that Emerald Waterways' (available exclusively



to Evergreen Tours) major point of difference from Scenic Tours' 'Space Ships' was inclusions, but not at the expense of quality.

In Layman's terms, "Emerald Waterways is a 5-star product but with 4-star inclusions," Moroney described.

To view a gallery of exclusive images from aboard *Emerald Sky*, see our Facebook page - **CLICK HERE** for more.



## Cuba Cruise success

**CANADIAN** cruise operator Cuba Cruise has reported its debut 15-week 2013/14 season operating circumnavigation sailings of Cuba as a huge success.

Preparations are well underway for a second season, due to run from 22 Dec to 30 Mar 2015 and operated by the *MV Louis Cristal*.

The week-long voyages take travellers to the beaches of Punta Frances & Montego Bay, visiting Cuban villages and a range of colonial townships.

## These Cats like water

**ROYAL** Caribbean has licensed enduring Broadway production *Cats*, with the long-running Andrew Lloyd-Webber show to make its debut aboard the *Oasis of the Seas* liner later this year.

## NCL crew tragedy

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Lines has cancelled port visits to Roatan in Honduras for the next week after a *Norwegian Pearl* crew member was killed in a botched robbery.

## World Cup onboard

**FOOTBALL** fans on Norwegian Cruise Lines will not miss out on catching the blockbuster matches at this year's FIFA World Cup in Brazil, with the line signing a deal with SPORT 24 to screen many matches onboard.

Games will be screened in multiple venues onboard in the month-long tournament.

## WA boosts Geraldton

**OFFICIALS** from the Federal and WA State Governments have formally opened new foreshore facilities and community areas along a new Esplanade at the WA port of Geraldton.

Federal MP for the region Melissa Price said the revitalised area would be a draw for growing numbers of tourists and cruise ship passengers to the town.

Federal funding of \$400,000 was provided for the \$4.9m project, which included new landscaped walkways and a 360° viewing platform, with additional funds from the WA Govt, Geraldton Port Authority and the Geraldton Local Council.

## Quantum food advice

**AWARD** winning chef Michael Schwartz has been named as the Quantum Experience Advisor for Culinary aboard Royal Caribbean's much-anticipated *Quantum of the Seas* and *Anthem of the Seas*.

Schwartz will help design and influence the food and beverage experiences on both vessels and follows the recent revealing of the line's Dynamic Dining offerings, including the first Jamie's Kitchen restaurant at sea.



**AVALON** Waterways launched its 2015 programs earlier this week (see **pg 2**) with a distinctly French flair.

The event, held at Sydney's Cheese & Wine Room, included champagne tastings paired with some delectable cheeses.

The offerings included Will Studd Brillat cheese from Savarin in France, which went beautifully with Gatinois Grand Cru Tradition Brut Champagne.

That was particularly because of the characteristic creaminess of the cheese, which attendees were told must, by law, contain at least 75% butterfat.

The delightful dairy product is **pictured** below, prior to its demolition by guests at the launch who clearly agreed with the tasting notes which said it had "a luscious palate that is at once creamy and addictive".

In keeping with our commitment to keeping the travel industry informed, **TD Cruise Update** also tucked in to the white blend, and we can confirm that it was indeed delicious despite the heavy coating of cholesterol it deposited on our arteries.



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