



Decade of excellence

TENTH anniversary celebrations later this year will mark the occasion for Cunard flagship *Queen Mary 2*, who chalks up the momentous milestone in 2014.

Formal festivities will take place at the vessel's Southampton homeport beginning on 09 May when the line's three Queens will all arrive together for a special salute complete with fireworks.

During *QM2*'s first decade in service, the vessel has completed 419 sailings, 200 transatlantic crossings and has visited more than 180 ports in 60 countries.

Along with sister ships *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Victoria*, the three will visit Australia during the year, with *QM2* the first to make landfall in Fremantle on 12 Feb.

Shokalskiy freed from ice

NEW Zealand's Heritage Expeditions is expected to proceed with next week's Ross Sea voyage on the *Akademik Shokalskiy*, which has spent the past fortnight stuck in Antarctica.

The Russian icebreaker, along with China's *Xue Long*, has reportedly broken free of pack ice and no longer requires the assistance of the Australian-led rescue mission.

David Bowen, general manager, Heritage Expeditions, which also operates the *Akademik Shokalskiy*'s sister ship, *The Spirit of Enderby*, told **TD Cruise Update** he was hopeful that both vessels would sail as scheduled.

"This year we planned to

operate two ships in the Ross Sea, and if the *Shokalskiy* returns to service prior to our planned departure date of 17 Jan, then we will go ahead," Bowen said.

In an email to booked passengers, the company stated: "If the ship has sustained no damage and remains in service, then the *Shokalskiy* will make her way directly back to Bluff for the start of the Heritage Expeditions Ross Sea voyage.

"If there is a small delay in her arrival to Bluff, this should not impinge on the voyage as we factor in a few contingency days into the Ross Sea voyage itinerary."

The 30-day trip starts with a pre-cruise stay at the Kelvin Hotel, Invercargill, New Zealand's southernmost city, before sailing from the Port of Bluff on the evening of 18 Jan.

The planned route also includes Subantarctic Islands, The Snares, Auckland Islands and Macquarie Island.

"Current maps for the Ross Sea indicate that the ice conditions in the Ross sea region are looking very promising for this time of year," Bowen said.

The Spirit of Enderby is scheduled to depart Bluff for the Ross Sea on 11 Jan.

Silversea special sale

EXCLUSIVE Silver Suite fares have been released by Silversea Cruises on three Mediterranean sailings aboard the 540-passenger flagship *Silver Spirit*.

The reduced fares are available for sale until 31 Jan and are priced from \$10,687ppts for a 14-day Barcelona round-trip leaving on 05 May and visiting ports in France, Italy and Spain.

Sale fares also apply to a 17-day Venice to Istanbul sail, departing on 11 Jul and travelling via the Greek Islands, Croatia and Turkey, priced from \$15,047ppts.

"The Silver Suites are a favourite among our Australasia market, providing these guests with the ultimate luxurious experience whilst on board Silversea," Karen Christensen, general manager and director of sales/marketing Australasia said of the savings.

The third eligible departure is a 14-day cruise from Istanbul back to Venice, departing 29 Aug and priced from \$13,594ppts.

Phone 1300 306 872 to book.



ROYAL EARLYBIRD CRUISE SALE

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Like to win Lindblad

LINDBLAD Expeditions has launched a Facebook competition in which it is giving away a 10-night expedition aboard the soon-to-be-rebadged *National Geographic Orion*.

The grand prize of a Kimberley voyage aboard the luxury vessel is valued at over \$21,960.

The winner may take their prize on any sailing between May and Aug 2014, with entry available by liking the line's Facebook page.

CLICK HERE for more details.

Cruise Consultants required for leading Inner Western Sydney Agency



Due to expansion cruise specialist Cruise Express has two opportunities for cruise consultants to join their experienced and enthusiastic team.

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Canal expansion delay

EXPANSION of the Panama Canal locks to accommodate new and larger cruise ships will be delayed until at least Apr 2015 due to a funding dispute.

Management for the consortium overseeing the works are seeking an additional US\$1.6b on top of the original \$3.2b budget due to delays associated with heavy rain and other unforeseen problems.

Talks between the two parties yesterday have seen both sides propose a joint financing deal, according to *Reuters*, with prior threats of a suspension of work likely to now be averted.

New locks being developed at the canal, known as "Panamax", will allow ships of 426m in length & 54m in width to pass through.

Passenger cruise operators who use the canal are keeping an eye on progress, with many of the world's newest ships unable to pass through due to the height of the Bridge of the Americas.

Pandaw debut shallow ship

PANDAW River Expeditions' new *RV Kalaw Pandaw* has launched in Myanmar, unveiling a design draft of only 80cm which will enable it to operate in the region's notoriously low water conditions.

According to a statement from the company, the ultra shallow draft vessel "will be able to go where no other river cruise ship can go in Burma".

While other ships struggle to access the upper Chindwin and Irrawaddy rivers at certain times of year, the new K Class *Kalaw Pandaw* is expected to allow year-round access in these less congested areas.

The 20-cabin two-deck ship is also smaller than the rest of Pandaw's Myanmar fleet, except for a yacht available for private charters.

A sister ship, the *Kindat Pandaw*, will be launched from

the Sinmalike shipyard in Yangon in three weeks.

Both traditional-style teak and brass vessels, built locally as exact replicas of the 1920s Irrawaddy Flotilla Company ships, offer a choice of indoor or outdoor bistro-style dining.

Outfitting will be completed by May in time for deployment upriver in Jul.

The company said: "Pandaw is going back to how they started nearly 20 years ago, offering real river recess, utterly pioneering experiences into areas that have never seen tourists before."

All credit to Azamara

AZAMARA Club Cruises has launched an Onboard Credit sale, with US\$1,000 per stateroom for shore excursions or onboard for bookings from a range of 36 Asian or Europe sailings made by 31 Jan.



PORTHOLE

A GROUP of New Zealand researchers searching a hut in Antarctica have uncovered a collection of photo negatives from explorers of the region estimated to be 100 years old.

The find comes as part of a conservation project for historic sites on the frozen continent by the Antarctic Heritage Trust.

After painstaking restoration, the negatives have revealed a team of explorers consisting of a photographer, a scientist and eight other men.

The group were estimated to be part of the Ross Sea Party, who were sent to the continent to set up supply stops for the famed Sir Ernest Shackleton Trans-Antarctic expedition of 1914-1917.



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CRUISE NEWS & VIEWS

with Brett Jardine
GM, CLIA Australasia

Cruising in 2014

HAPPY New Year from everyone at CLIA – we hope that 2014 is a big year for your cruise business!

The local cruise season hasn't stopped over the holiday season with all CLIA Member Line ships operating in excess of their lower berth capacity and no doubt plenty of hard earned commission is now flowing through.

Looking at the year ahead, we already know there is more capacity heading our way (*Celebrity Century* and *Carnival Legend*) that will add to our local offerings.

When you look at historical trends, local capacity growth has always been utilised so we are certainly looking forward to a strong year for pax growth.

Aside from this local growth, what else can we look forward to in 2014?

There is certainly no slowing the demand for Europe River Cruise bookings, with all CLIA Members already boasting record numbers.

According to Seatrade Cruise Review, there will be five new large ships launched in 2014 with close to 18,000 berths being added to global capacity.

And most importantly, CLIA is hosting the inaugural Cruise360 conference on the 7th Feb followed by a sell-out cruise industry awards dinner on the 8th Feb.



Carnival summer sale

DISCOUNTS of up to \$800 off brochure fares are available in a Super Summer Sale launched this week by Carnival Cruise Lines, valid for sailings on *Carnival Spirit*.

Half price cruise deposits are also applicable on select voyages, with deals including balcony cabins on an 11-day Vanuatu and New Caledonia cruise priced from \$1,650 twin share or \$1,280 quad. Cabins are on sale until 27 Jan.

New port takes shape

CONSTRUCTION of a new US\$85 million cruise terminal capable of handling ships with up to 6,000 passengers has begun at Port Canaveral (**CW** 12 Nov).

The new facility will allow pax to walk directly from the ship to nearby restaurants and entertainment facilities as well as a 1,000 vehicle carpark.

To be located on the southern side of the harbour precinct, early plans are for the new terminal to be ready by Nov this year.

Fireworks from water

PARTY plans for New Year's Eve 2014 are already underway at Crystal Cruises, with *Crystal Symphony* set to ring in the next new year in Hong Kong harbour.

Docked for a two-night stay, guests on the ship will have prime fireworks viewing as part of a 15-day round-trip departing 21 Dec.

Beatrice treats agents to luxury



NINE top-selling Aussie agents were recently treated to an eight-day European river cruise from Passau to Budapest.

The group was hosted to the trip by Uniworld Boutique River Cruises and sailed the Enchanting Danube itinerary aboard the exquisite *River Beatrice*.

Soaking up the onboard six-star splendour, the group immersed themselves in the experience, enjoying the line's unique touches including nightly turn-down gifts such as birthstones, branded bracelets & designer body lotions.

Shore excursions were also on the agenda, with highlights including an organ recital at the 900-year old Benedictine Melk

Abbey and a wine tasting session at the Nikolaihof wine estate.

Pictured above at the ship's lobby area in the back row from left is Nicky Bevan, St Ives Travel; Pip Livesey, Andrew Jones Travel; Jo Koffmann, Jetset Toorak and Fiona James from Broadway Travel & Cruise Centre.

Middle row: Nola Melamet, Uniworld; Daniel Addicoat, Cruiseabout Canterbury; Diane Roach, Tour de Force Travel and Alan Halliwell of The Travel Centre Coffs Harbour.

Front row: Glenda Halliwell, The Travel Centre Coffs Harbour; Alisha Lynch, Uniworld and Mikhaila McCormack from Cruiseabout Cottesloe.

Community Coordinator required for leading Inner Western Sydney Agency (part time role)



Do you love social media? Are you a 'whiz' on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn?

This newly created position will coordinate communications inside and outside the company across various social media platforms & PR by:

- Managing the social media content & marketing process from development of ideas, approvals, publishing, promotion analysis & reporting.
- Communicating through the company's 'Yammer' network to share company objectives, milestone celebrations, coming events and generally keeping everybody on the same page!

A premium salary package will be negotiated for the right candidate based on experience. This position will suit a lively and enthusiastic person with excellent social media skills.

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Face to Face: David Courage General Manager, Product & Operations, APT

Welcome to Face to Face, where we chat to cruise industry leaders.

Where do you see yourself/APT in five years?

Continuing to lead the river, expedition and small ship cruise sectors, offering even more outstanding products and destinations, and exceeding expectations with our exclusive inclusions and high levels of customer service.

What is your favourite destination, and why?

One of the most extraordinary cruises I have taken was from Mandalay to Yangon on the Irrawaddy River on a fact finding mission to develop our new Burma program. Sailing through what I can only describe as a real 'slice of local life' was fascinating. It's a really special place.

What was your most memorable moment on a cruise?

I loved the huge contrasts of sailing the Mississippi – passing from New Orleans, through the vibrant working part of the river and then onto the peace, tranquillity and natural beauty that lay beyond to Memphis.

What is the next "hot spot" in cruising destinations?

Cruising in Russia is proving really popular and we expect this to continue to increase. The Douro in Portugal is becoming a 'must-cruise' destination for Australians. Burma is also going to be highly sought after.

What do you think is the most underrated aspect of cruising?

It's a totally stress-free form of travel. On an APT cruise everything is taken care of, so you simply turn up, unpack (once) and that's it. You've got nothing else to worry about. Total peace of mind – just as it should be on a holiday.

What is something you wish more agents/consumers knew about cruising?

For river cruising I think it's the intimacy of the experience. Not only do you get to see and experience the destination in much more detail than other forms of cruising, you're also travelling with just 150 other people. Therefore it's easier to meet people, bond and make new friends.

Describe your perfect cruise in 25 words or less.

Relaxing but adventurous, calm but cultured and easy going but exciting. It needs to include friends, fabulous food & wine and loads of laughter.

What is your prediction for the future of cruising?

As the sector continues to grow, so too will its diversity and the volume of destinations. With increased popularity comes increased responsibility though, and an important consideration for operators will be ensuring the right balance between delivering fresh and exciting product while also safeguarding the local environment, communities and cultures they come into contact with.

What advice would you give other people who want a job like yours?

Whether you start out as a Tour Manager with Contiki, as I did, or you take a job on a cruise ship, gaining a detailed knowledge of products and destinations through the eyes of both guests and the travel industry is invaluable in a role such as mine. That and a real thirst for finding new and exciting places for people to explore.



David's Cruise Favourites!

Ship: Our newest ship, the *AmaReina*

Ship Activity: Wine tasting

Shore Excursion: A private champagne soiree at Vienna's City Palace, with waltzing, opera and a performance by the Mozart Boys Choir

Region: Italy

Port: Amsterdam

Onboard Food and Drink: Wiener schnitzel washed down with a lovely French Bordeaux

Perk of the Job: I love travelling with and talking to our guests, getting feedback directly from the people that matter the most.

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