



Priciest drinks at sea

ONLINE cruise discussion forum Cruise.co.uk has carried out a study into which cruise lines are the cheapest and most expensive for a variety of drinks onboard.

The study found that while not the deciding factor in which cruise should be taken, the grand total over the course of a voyage can add up to a considerable sum.

Items surveyed range from a cup of coffee through to wine, beer and mixers, with a number of surprises uncovered - **CLICK HERE**.

Mel Cup excursions

CARNIVAL Australia has released details of its range of shore excursions available on its 7-night Melbourne Cup sailing which departs Sydney on 02 Nov.

The cruise spends nearly three full days in the Vic capital from 04-06 Nov, with the first day spent at the Flemington racecourse.

Tours include sports and horse racing adventures, a trip to the Carlton & United Brewery, a tramcar lunch and city tour and a day out in the Dandenong and Yarra Valley with Puffing Billy ride. Shore prices start at \$89.99pp.

Carnival price guarantee

CARNIVAL Cruise Lines has announced an industry-first best price guarantee on all shore excursions.

Clients who book a CCL excursion and find a comparable tour at a lower price will receive an onboard credit of 110% of the difference.

Valid fleet-wide, the offer is only available on ships sailing from North America, which rules out Australian departures of *Carnival Spirit* and *Carnival Legend*.

"Many of our repeat guests who have booked Carnival shore tours previously are already knowledgeable on the outstanding value our tours provide," Mico Cascais, Carnival

Cruise Lines' vice-president of tour operations said.

The guarantee is available for excursions booked prior to or during a cruise and must be on the same date as the tour purchased from Carnival.

If passengers pre-book an excursion, then find a comparable tour advertised online at a lower price, they can complete an online form up to seven days prior to the cruise to invoke the guarantee.

Guests can also complete a form during the cruise either before or after their excursion has taken place.

Jennifer Vandekreeke, CCL's vp Australia, told **Travel Daily Cruise Update** that the deal was "under future consideration" for the Australian market.

"Most of the destinations to which we sail, particularly those in the South Pacific, are not as developed as the Caribbean," she advised.

"For those destinations, our core focus is developing compelling shore tours for our guests that allow them to truly experience the best of the destinations in an authentic way.

"For that reason, we did not feel that the Best Price guarantee was necessary at this point," Vandekreeke explained.

Tall Ships on Aus Day

SYDNEY Harbour Tall Ships has released a 20% discount offer to be aboard the *Southern Swan* or the *Soren Larsen* ships for the Australia Day tall ships regatta.

Bookings made this week will also be eligible for a free mast climb, valued at \$50.

Phone 1800 825 574 for details.



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Area Sales Manager – NSW South & ACT

Cruise Office is a boutique sales and marketing office representing Oceania Cruises, the American Queen Steamboat Company and Voyages to Antiquity.

Due to continued growth, we are seeking an Area Sales Manager to cover our key accounts in the CBD and the southern suburbs including the ACT. This position is 3 days a week and requires your own vehicle. The person we are looking for has cruise sales experience with great presentation skills.

Training our agency and wholesale partners, hosting client functions and developing strategies to increase sales with cruise specialist agencies is an essential part of this position.

Forward your resume to our Director of Key Accounts, Craig Owens - craig@cruiseoffice.net

Applications close 20 January 2014.

Icebreaker to thaw

THE Akademik Shokalskiy, which was freed from pack ice in Antarctica last week, has arrived in port and will undergo provisioning and required inspections after clearing into New Zealand.

Heritage Expeditions has been informed by the ship owners that the intention is to continue with the planned itineraries the ship is chartered to perform after all inspections and provisioning are completed.

RCI Earlybird specials

SAVINGS of up to \$2,100 per person are available on a range of Royal Caribbean International cruises departing from Fremantle & Sydney in the 2014/15 season.

Deals include a 14-night cruise to Fiji & New Zealand ex Sydney on 05 Feb 2015, with staterooms priced from \$1,499ppts - booking must be in place by 28 Feb 2014.

Onboard credit of up to US\$400 are also available on all cruises worldwide of 6 nights or more (excluding *Quantum of the Seas*).

MEANWHILE, sister company Celebrity Cruises has launched its annual sale for next season, which will see *Celebrity Century* arriving to partner *Solstice*, with lead-in fares starting from \$899ppts for departures from Sep 2014.



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CRUISE NEWS & VIEWS

with Brett Jardine
GM, CLIA Australasia

New Cruisers

THE next few years are going to be quite interesting for the cruise industry as we identify new source markets.

With a number of new builds already on the ship-yard order books, you can bet cruise line bosses have already identified markets they're keen on.

Success in the Australasia region over recent years has been rewarded with many newer ships being deployed here & significant capacity growth.

The traditional source markets for cruise (North America and Europe) are by no means history but with softer economic conditions prevailing in these areas, chasing further growth is a constant challenge.

We are seeing some extraordinary innovations being delivered to appeal to returning cruise passengers but cruise lines of all types are constantly looking to attract those "new to cruise".

Locally, we have a very strong distribution channel through cruise specialist travel agents so it is critical that cruising is part of every conversation.

Even a small comment along the lines of..."did you know that many cruise lines report in excess of 50% first timers on board"... This is a fact, and with cruising able to deliver such a high repeat factor, you would do well to ensure you are not missing out!



Windstar unveils Star Pride

WINDSTAR Cruises has revealed its "stern-to-stern" renovation plans for public spaces, suites and restaurants aboard *Star Pride*, which will commence immediately after taking delivery of the former *Seabourn Pride* in Apr.

The first of Windstar's 2013 purchase of three Seabourn ships, *Star Pride* (CW 21 Feb) will be transformed into a private yacht in Barcelona before its inaugural voyage on 5 May 2014.

"The main theme is a casual elegant ambiance, with a warm contemporary style," said Hans Birkholz, CEO, Windstar Cruises.

"The look and feel of the renovations will align with our sailing fleet."

Windstar is working in partnership with Alan McVitty and Trimline Interiors, both of whom were involved in Windstar's recent US\$18m fleet-wide renovation, to renovate public spaces, restaurants and all 106 suites.

Planned changes include updated décor, new furnishings, upholstery, lighting, wall coverings and carpeting, with a colour palette combining sand and marine shades.

The indoor observation area



on the top deck will become a café, the club space will turn into Windstar's popular Compass Rose, and an outdoor Star Bar will also be added for casual drinks during the day and a venue for star-gazing by night.

All dining experiences will be complimentary, and the line's signature Deck Barbecue gala will take place one night per voyage.

Itineraries include Europe, Arabia, India and south-east Asia.

Windstar's next two yachts are due to be launched in Apr and May next year.

New Lindblad voyage

LINDBLAD Expeditions has released a new itinerary to South Georgia and the Falkland Islands, with a 16-night journey on 08 Mar.

Highlights include viewing of the native king penguins, seals and hiking on albatross-filled ledges. More details on 1300 361 012.

Insight Anzac itinerary

A FIVE night sail from Istanbul to the Greek Islands aboard Louis Cruise Lines is included in a 22-day tour from Insight Vacations specially developed to incorporate the 100th anniversary of the Anzac landing at Gallipoli.

The tour includes transfers to the centenary Dawn Service for successful Federal Government ballot ticket holders, while others will be able to enjoy other events in the Anzac Cove area during the commemorative ceremonies.

Silversea Med season

MORE than 50 sailings ranging in duration from 7-14 days from Mar to Nov 2014 feature in the newly released Mediterranean brochure from Silversea Cruises, along with deck plans & onboard features for the three Silversea vessels cruising in the region.

Barcelona's Epic year

NORWEGIAN Cruise Lines has announced it will commit its 4,100-passenger *Norwegian Epic* cruise liner to serve the Barcelona market year-round from Apr 2015.

Citing strong ongoing interest among European passengers, the deployment means *Epic* will no longer spend its winters cruising in the Caribbean market.

Epic will now become the largest ship based year-round in Europe.

Significant Seabourn

REDUCED cruise rates and onboard credits are available via Seabourn's 2014 Signature Savings Event, released last week.

Complimentary upgrades to verandah suites are also available on a 10-day cruise from Athens to Monte Carlo on 23 May and a 10-day Barcelona to Athens sailing, departing on 10 Oct 2014.

Deals apply to selected sailings departing in 2014 and 2015 on any of the line's six vessels.

Phone 132 402 for more details.



Leisure Travel Consultant

Are you looking for a new challenge? Do you have excellent customer service skills and an ability to close the sale? DBT Cruisescene requires an experienced Leisure/Cruise consultant for our busy boutique corporate agency in North Ryde. Must have excellent knowledge of the cruise market and GDS experience. DBT has been in business since 1987, we pride ourselves on delighting our customers with fantastic service and have long standing client relationships. Benefits include free on site parking, in house gym and incentive scheme.

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PTMs all aboard to inspect Astor



CRUISE & Maritime Voyages' MV Astor continues to impress the ocean-going Australian public with its onboard luxury from its summertime home in Fremantle, with this group of home-based Personal Travel Managers recently seeing it for themselves.

The group were in attendance at a special "Welcome to Port" ceremony at the WA dock, which was also attended by WA Tourism Minister Liza Harvey, Fremantle Mayor Brad Pettitt and a number of other high-profile dignitaries.

Following a site inspection of *Astor's* onboard splendours

and some of its 620 cabins, the TravelManagers PTMs enjoyed an overnight stay on the ship.

Their evening included a cocktail function, dinner, seats at a spellbinding show & a deck party that took the group into the wee hours of the next morning.

Cruise sales for TravelManagers business is up 52%, boosted by the ongoing success of the dedicated CruiseManagers brand.

"Having the ability to experience first-hand the *MV Astor* makes all the difference. The crew were outstanding and I can now talk about the facilities and on-board amenities with confidence," TravelManagers representative for Bayswater Michelle Nikolich said.

Season 2014/15 will be the first of at least three *Astor* will make its summer home in Fremantle, operating sailings around Australia and also to Indonesia.

Pictured above aboard *Astor* while docked in Fremantle port from left are Personal Travel Managers Kristen Rayson, Bonnie Malam, Lesley Cavill, Alison Hill and Michelle Nikolich.

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Speciality dining limit

CRYSTAL Cruises will impose a limit on the number of times passengers can reserve a table at its Prego and Silk Road speciality restaurants, effective this week.

On sailings of 14 days or under, each passengers will be entitled to book a table for one occasion, while cruises of more than 14 days will allow two bookings each, with no additional charge.

Speciality dining fees will be waived for world cruises.

Further reservations at either restaurant over the allotted limit will incur a US\$30 fee per person.

The line says the restriction has been introduced to ensure each passenger is able to experience all onboard dining options.

Spirit of Queenstown

NEW Zealand tour operator Southern Discoveries have begun operating tours to the remote Mt Nicholas High Country Station, with tours including a cruise on the *Spirit of Queenstown* ferry.

Three products including the 4WD Musterers Safari and High Country Walk are available, taking passengers to the remote back country of the NZ south island.

Norfolk get Glory back

CARNIVAL Cruise Lines will next year resume operations from Norfolk, Virginia only six months after relocating its *Carnival Glory* vessel to Miami (CW 04 Jul).

Officials from the line agreed to again operate from Norfolk after successful lobbying by State Governor Terry McAuliffe.

Up to 12 Caribbean voyages will be operated over the season.

Ama French art cruise

BUDDING artists are invited to hone their talents while enjoying the sights of north-west France on an seven-night Art Illumination Cruise to be run by AmaWaterways from 14-21 Aug.

Sailing from Paris aboard the *AmaLegro*, guests visit inspirational sights rich in art history including Monet's gardens in Giverny and Van Gogh's former home in Auvers-sur-Oise.

Complimentary painting sessions hosted by US art teacher Elizabeth Grebler will take place on the ship's Sun Deck, with paint, easels, canvases and brushes all provided by the cruise line.



MORE than a century since she sunk, *Titanic* clearly still lures a crowd with her mystique and aura - just ask Clive Palmer.

The latest venture looking to cash in on the drawcard is a new Chinese theme park based on the fabled ocean liner set to be built in Daying in the Sichuan province which will feature a life-size *Titanic* replica.

But unlikely Palmer's cruising venture, this version will become an amusement park ride which will simulate the actual sinking of the ship by safely flooding it.

Construction of the full size *Titanic* replica is expected to last for two years, with the park tentatively set to open in 2016.

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