

Cunard drydock video

CUNARD has released a four-minute video showcasing sizeable upgrades installed on the *Queen Elizabeth* (CU 20 May) during the ship's recent drydock in Hamburg. **CLICK HERE** to view the clip.



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Crunch time for cruise plan

THE production of a 10-year Cruise Development Plan, announced last week, was one of three ways recommended almost two years ago to the NSW State Government to improve the cruise industry (CW 12 Aug 2012).

The 2012 report by the Visitor Economy Taskforce also identified cruising's two other priority issues as the urgent need to expand cruise berthing capacity within Sydney ports (including Garden Island) and to address economic loss from provedoring constraints at the Overseas Passenger Terminal (OPT).

Basel driving growth

GROWING numbers of Australian river cruise passengers in Europe have contributed to a double-digit rise in visitors to Basel and other Swiss cities, according to Switzerland Tourism.

The organisation's Australia and New Zealand director Evelyn Lafone said the port city of Basel alone saw an 11.2% year-on-year leap in Aussie overnights in 2013.

Lafone added the convenience of the Swiss Pass was combining well with river cruise passengers to open up more of Switzerland.

"We will continue to work closely with cruise providers to further promote the use of the Swiss Pass pre and post cruises from Basel," she added.

The move to commence work on the plan is expected to be widely welcomed by the industry, many of whom expressed their frustrations at this month's release of the 2013 Cruise Industry Report.

Carnival Australia ceo Ann Sherry reiterated her commitment to lobbying for improved infrastructure, saying she had "not given up" on Garden Island.

MEANWHILE, the state's ports are set to introduce the controversial new site occupation charge next week.

From 01 Jul, NSW's "head tax" will increase to \$25 per passenger, adding between \$50,000-\$75,000 to the cost of docking overnight in Sydney, which already costs as much as \$100,000 at the OPT.

Sunlover whirlybirds

NORTH Queensland scenic cruising operator Sunlover Reef Cruises has announced a new deal with Nautilus Aviation for scenic helicopter flights for Moore Reef pontoon guests.

Nautilus has recently purchased a new EC130 seven-seat chopper which it will deploy on five and ten-minute sightseeing flights of the Great Barrier Reef for guests.

Three packed pages

Today's issue of **TD Cruise Update** features three pages of all the latest cruise information.

Cruise New Zealand

NAPIER will serve as the host city for New Zealand's second annual conference dedicated to the cruising industry, for which registrations have now opened.

Cruise New Zealand 2014 will take place on 08 Aug at the Museum Theatre Gallery and will feature Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines' associate vice-president global deployment and itinerary planning Chris Allen, who will deliver a keynote presentation.

Crystal Cruises' vice-president land programs John Stoll will also deliver a keynote speech, with Napier Port ceo Garth Cowie also among the speakers list.

More information on the event at www.cruisenzeland.org.nz.

Cruise back in time

HOLIDAYMAKERS looking for a different sailing experience are being invited to join the crew of James Cook's *HMB Endeavour* replica on sectors along the east coast of Australia this year.

The Australian National Maritime Museum said applications for the 2014/15 voyage program, to start from Sep, are open now.

Forty paying crew members to assist the 16 full time crew are accepted for each voyage, priced from \$275 per person per day.

Themed sailings between Sydney & Newcastle will take place, along with visits to Eden & Tasmania - see endeavourvoyages.com.au.



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Cash card for cruises

AURORA Expeditions has launched a new agent incentive offering a \$250 cash card for each passenger booked on two 2014/15 Antarctica expeditions.

The promotion is valid on the 'Spirit of Antarctica' departure, which runs from 06-17 Dec 2014 and 'The Shackleton Spirit' sailing from 09-28 Mar 2015, both of which operated by *Polar Pioneer*.

Cash cards earned will be paid on top of regular commission.

New Europa 2 guide

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises has launched its 2015/16 brochure for *Europa 2* in time for the first birthday of the line's latest vessel.

The guide details the season of global sailings for departures from Apr 2015 - Apr 2016, with Africa visited for the first time.

P&O opens naming rights

PACIFIC *Fairstar*, *Pacific Paradise* and *Pacific Dream* are among the most popular names suggested for P&O's two ex-Holland America ships set to join the fleet in Nov next year.

For the first time, the line has invited Australians to choose its ships' names, with the winner to also receive a free cruise on one of the inaugural sailings.

Several days before the contest officially started yesterday, Australians were already posting their suggestions on the line's Facebook page.

Although most of the early birds have included "Pacific" as part of a two-word name, matching the present fleet of *Pacific Dawn*, *Pacific Jewel* and *Pacific Pearl*, the latest ships do not have to follow the same pattern.

"We're looking for names that are modern and fresh and capture the spirit of a cruise holiday," said P&O Cruises Australia senior vice-president Tammy Marshall.

"Ideally there'll be some connection between the names of the two ships, but we'll wait to see what Australia comes up with."

Marshall said it was fitting for a local to do the honours, given that Australian travellers' passion for cruising had made P&O the nation's most popular cruise line.

"We've been cruising from here for more than 80 years and we carry hundreds of thousands of Australians on holidays every year, so we think the time has come for Australians to put their stamp on our ships by choosing their names," she said.

Australian residents can submit their ship name ideas through www.facebook.com/POCruises, with the successful names to be announced on 09 Jul.

The person who provides the best names, along with a theme and a reason for their choice, will win a cruise for two on the inaugural cruise of one of the ships, and will also be a special guest at the naming celebration.

The deployment represents P&O's biggest ever fleet expansion and will see the line operating the largest fleet of ships home-ported year-round in Australia, with five ships under its flag.

Work is already underway to develop itineraries and home-porting arrangements for the expanded fleet, with details to be announced in coming months.

Cruise Calendar	
<i>Travel Daily Cruise Update's</i> calendar details upcoming port calls of cruise ships at various destinations around Australia and New Zealand.	
SYDNEY	
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	25 Jun
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	27 Jun
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	29 Jun
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	28 Jun
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	29 Jun
CAIRNS	
<i>Paul Gauguin</i>	25 Jun
DARWIN	
<i>Paul Gauguin</i>	30 Jun
AUCKLAND	
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	25 Jun

ECruising heads to RCL opening

FIGURES from the Australia cruise industry were in attendance as Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd opened its first office in Hong Kong.

Royal Caribbean's new presence in Hong Kong marks a major expansion of the line in Asia, with *Voyager of the Seas* now set to call the city home when not in Australia.

Company heavyweights including president and chief operating officer Adam Goldstein was also on hand for the event, along with many of the line's new local staff.

Starting from Jul 2015, *Voyager* will spend its northern summers



operating from Hong Kong, with 22 voyages in its first season.

Pictured above from left in Hong Kong is the ecruising.travel team, Loretta Chow, Brett Dudley, Ingrid Leung and Philip Yu.



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MARITIME history and salvage experts at Texas A&M University about to start work on trying to identify whether an anchor found at the bottom of Puget Sound belongs to one of the oldest ships ever to sail the region.

Local media in Seattle believe the anchor belonged to the *HMS Chatham* Royal Navy survey brig, which was part of a fleet of ships charting the US West Coast in 1792.

The anchor was found by a local Seattle diver six years ago off Whidbey Island, but was only recently brought to the surface for examination and verification.

Whether it is the anchor lost from the *HMS Chatham* 222 years ago remains to be seen.

Le Boat releases app

A NEW smartphone app has been launched by European boating holiday operator Le Boat.

The app includes interactive maps, a cruising warning system for approaching locks, moorings and points of interest, how-to videos and contact information.

Free to download, the app is available from online stores now.

MEANWHILE, earlybird deals for 2015 European boating holidays through Le Boat have now been released, with varying discounts up to 15% based on boat gradings.

Some exclusions apply, with bookings required before 31 Aug.

Halong Gay cruise

PARADISE Cruises will celebrate "admirable progress" made by the Vietnamese Government in the legal recognition of same-sex couples by launching the first ever "Halong Gay Cruise".

Departing 24 Aug and coinciding with Viet Pride month, the LGBT themed sailing will feature a host of events designed to celebrate same-sex couples in the country.

Voyage highlights will include a Beach Gala Dinner with guests able to witness same-sex weddings officiated on the beach.

For details, call (02) 8096 8781.

US cruise hubs linked

ALASKA Airlines has launched a new daily round-trip flight service linking two major US cruise port cities in Seattle and Tampa.

The carrier said the service will also benefit travellers wishing to mix Alaskan & Caribbean cruising.

Olsen Grand Voyages

SEVENTY ports in 42 countries will be visited as part of two Grand Voyages to be operated by Fred Olsen Cruise Lines in 2016, with a brochure detailing both sailings released late last week.

The guide promotes *Boudicca's* 76-night voyage south & around the Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean and a 115-night Around the World itinerary, which also takes in the South Pacific.

The voyages depart on 05 Jan and 08 Jan 2016 respectively.

Boudicca will make maiden calls in Zanzibar and Luanda as part of its sailing, with Maputo and Tuticorin featuring as part of *Black Watch's* circumnavigation.

P&O ships show state allegiance



LAST week's pivotal second State of Origin rugby league game once again divided both states north and south of the Tweed.

Fierce state loyalties extended also to the P&O Cruises fleet, with *Pacific Jewel* & *Pacific Dawn* once again at loggerheads over

whether NSW would wrap up its first series in eight years or if a Brisbane decider would be staged.

With passengers onboard both ships able to view the game live via satellite on top deck screens, it was *Pacific Jewel* (pictured above) claiming bragging rights.



Dolphins on Getaway

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has hosted the official unveiling of the 2014 Miami Dolphins NFL cheer squad on *Norwegian Getaway* ahead of the upcoming season which kicks off in a few months.

The event was also the first time the 44 cheerleaders, who are all Godmothers to the newest NCL cruise liner, had visited the ship and inspected its facilities.

HAL back to Bermuda

HOLLAND American Line will operate six week-long cruises to Bermuda in the 2015 northern summer, departing from Boston.

The voyages will be operated by the 1,350-passenger *MS Veendam* and will offer three days and nights in port at Hamilton.

Pax can combine Bermuda with New England or Panama Canal cruises to extend the voyage.

Travel Daily is Australia's leading travel industry publication. Produced each weekday since 1994, the newsletter is first with the latest industry news and is available by paid subscription to people within the travel industry. Sign up for a free 14 day trial subscription at www.traveldaily.com.au.

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Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

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