

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

QM2 set to host Jackman premiere

CUNARD and 20th Century Fox will bring a slice of Hollywood on board *Queen Mary 2* this week when the ship hosts the world premiere of Hugh Jackman's latest movie *The Greatest Showman*.

Cunard will broadcast the red carpet event live from the ship in New York, streaming to viewers via Facebook.

The stream will include live interviews with Jackman and co-stars Zac Efron, Rebecca Ferguson and Zendaya.

See www.facebook.com/cunard/ at 5:30pm Fri New York time (9.30am Sat Aust eastern daylight saving time).

Ovation arrives for Sydney season

THE largest cruise ship to sail from Australian waters made a spectacular arrival in Sydney this morning, kicking off an extended second season based in the harbour city.

The 168,666 ton *Ovation of the Seas* pulled into Circular Quay at dawn with 4,800 guests on board, completing a repositioning cruise that began in Singapore on 23 Nov and travelled via Fremantle, Adelaide and Hobart.

"The return of our billion dollar baby, *Ovation of the Seas*, marks a particularly special milestone for us at Royal Caribbean and for Australian travellers, because it also marks our 10th season down under," said RCL Cruises managing director Adam Armstrong.

"Ten years ago, our philosophy was to bring the world's most cutting-edge cruise product to Australia's doorstep.

"In 2007, we embarked on



a cruising revolution with the mighty *Rhapsody of the Seas* and today, we continue this proud tradition... with the groundbreaking, all-new *Ovation of the Seas*," he said.

At 348 metres in length and 18 decks high, *Ovation of the Seas* is the world's equal-fourth largest cruise ship with a capacity of 5,000 guests and 1,500 crew.

She will remain in Sydney until 6.30pm this evening when the

ship is scheduled to depart on a 10-night New Zealand cruise.

MEANWHILE, Royal Caribbean has confirmed embarking passengers may be delayed during boarding today while *Ovation* is cleaned before her next departure.

The ship was hit by an outbreak of gastrointestinal illness during its journey to Sydney, with 195 passengers affected over the course of the cruise.



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Catch up with Jennifer Vanderkreeke as Carnival celebrates 5 years in Australia in the December issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read *travelBulletin*

Experience Co expands



ADVENTURE tourism specialist Experience Co will expand in Far North Queensland after announcing plans to purchase two local cruise operators.

Cairns-based Big Cat Green Island Reef Cruises and Port Douglas counterpart Tropical Journeys are the latest in a string of acquisitions by Experience Co, which purchased Reef Magic Cruises and several other businesses earlier this year.

Big Cat offers full-day and half-day cruises to Green Island and twilight cruises from Cairns,

while Tropical Journeys provides snorkelling and diving excursions to the Great Barrier Reef as well as Daintree National Park tours.

"While Experience Co's existing tourism offerings in Far North Queensland are growing from strength to strength, our newest string of acquisitions will help us position so many more world class experiences to both domestic and international customers," said Experience Co ceo Anthony Ritter.

The purchases are expected to be finalised this month.

Crystal rewards

CRYSTAL Cruises will revamp its travel trade rewards program with added benefits for agents selling the line's ocean, river and yacht expedition cruises.

The Elite Partner Program is open to agents with qualifying revenue and includes incentive levels that boost commissions and provide travel rewards with increased sales.

New for 2018 are the provision of customised direct marketing campaigns and the ability to confirm complimentary reward voyages up to 60 days before departure date.

"We sincerely appreciate the valuable time and effort that travel professionals put into developing and growing their luxury business, and have designed the Elite Partner Program to reward these efforts and provide them with the necessary tools to help them," said Crystal senior vp of sales Carmen Roig.

Aqua summer deal

AQUA Expeditions has extended its 2018/19 summer deal on *Aqua Mekong* cruises, with 30% discounts on three-, four- and seven-night trips from 27 Apr to 14 Aug, 2018, and 03 May to 13 Aug, 2019.

Holidays of Australia & the World

BOOK BEFORE 29 DEC 2017 = SAVE \$600 per booking + REDUCED DEPOSIT \$1000 per person

MSC Meraviglia to sail from New York City

MSC Meraviglia will commence its inaugural season in North America by docking in New York City for the first time in 2019 according to its owner MSC Cruises.

Calling in on the Big Apple on 07 Oct, 2019, the ship will offer passengers three sailing opportunities with two 10-night round trips to Canada and New England and a third 13-night cruise through the Caribbean, terminating in the warmer waters of Miami.

MSC Meraviglia is marketed as having cutting-edge features such as 24-hour digital sky displays & modular connected staterooms.

Seabourn choccie

SEABOURN will introduce K+M Chocolate aboard its ships, produced by Michelin-starred chef Thomas Keller and Italian olive oil producer Armando Manni.

Six chocolate flavours have been created for Seabourn, hand-made in the Napa Valley.

Sun Princess

Best of the Top End

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2017 CRUISE GUIDE The most comprehensive source of information on leading cruise lines. **CRUISE WEEKLY travelBulletin** Get your copy now Travel Daily

Royal's \$10,000 prize



ROYAL Caribbean Cruises cut a cheque for a whopping \$10,000 for one lucky travel agent this week as part of the cruise lines biggest ever trade giveaway coinciding with 10 years of cruising to Australia.

Brunella Carchidi of Flight Centre Leichhardt in Sydney was handed the cheque having pipped nine other agents that were all in the running for the top prize of \$100,000.

Peter McCormack, head of sales at Royal Caribbean Cruises Australia & New Zealand remarked, "this incentive is the perfect way to thank our agents for all their support. We couldn't have done it without them, and we look forward to working together in the future."

The top ten agents are **pictured** above with \$10k winner Brunella Carchidi third from left in the top row.

Celeb Caribbean release

CELEBRITY Cruises has released details of its 2019/20 Caribbean cruise season, with six ships to visit 25 different destinations across the region.

The new season will involve visits to 19 countries by *Celebrity Edge*, *Celebrity Equinox*, *Celebrity Infinity*, *Celebrity Reflection*, *Celebrity Silhouette* and *Celebrity Summit*, including a total of 245 extended port calls.

The new *Edge* will again offer seven-night Eastern Caribbean and Western Caribbean itineraries, while *Equinox* will emerge from a major renovation to offer sailings from Fort Lauderdale to islands including St



Thomas and Grand Cayman. *Infinity* will offer shorter four and five-night sailings from Fort Lauderdale, while *Reflection* and *Silhouette* will offer longer cruises of nine to 12 nights.

Summit will have had a make-over in time for the 2019/20 season and will sail between New England and Bermuda on 10 and 11-night sailings.

The new Caribbean cruises are on sale from today.

Coin ceremony for Nieuw Statendam

HOLLAND America Line's latest ship *Nieuw Statendam* has moved a step closer to completion with a coin ceremony held at Fincantieri's Marghera shipyard in Italy yesterday.

A member of Holland America Line's President's Club, Anne Marie Bartels, was chosen to help weld a Dutch guilder to the mast of the ship as a token of good fortune, using a coin minted in 1898 - the year Holland American Line's first *Statendam* came into service.

"The coin ceremony is one of the most time-honoured traditions in the building of a ship, and having Anne Marie, one of our most valued guests, serve as Madrina makes the celebration all the more special," said Orlando Ashford, president of Holland America Line.

The 99,500 ton ship will be fully floated on 21 Dec and moved to a pier for outfitting, ahead of its scheduled launch late next year.

New videos for Sydney cruise terminals

THE Port Authority of NSW has released two new videos to help passengers navigate Sydney's cruise terminals.

The videos profile the Overseas Passenger Terminal at Circular Quay and the White Bay Cruise Terminal to the west of the city centre, guiding passengers through the cruise check-in process from start to finish.

Viewers are shown what to do and where to go after they arrive, and how to follow the luggage drop-off process before boarding. To see the videos **CLICK HERE**.



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RCCL doubles Cuba

ROYAL Caribbean

International will double its Cuba program next northern summer with two ships sailing to the Caribbean island nation - *Majesty of the Seas* and *Empress of the Seas*.

The line has introduced the new ports of Santiago de Cuba and Cienfuegos on the island's south-east coast as part of an expanded program of four- to eight-night cruises.

Cruises are on sale now, with *Empress* departures from Miami and *Majesty* sailing from Tampa and Fort Lauderdale.

Support for Vanuatu



LOCALS on the Vanuatu island of Ambae are still feeling the effects of Oct's volcanic eruption, with many families still displaced from their homes.

Those who have returned still feel the impact of acid rain and ash on their crops, as well as contamination of water sources.

P&O Cruises has responded with a \$50,000 contribution to Save the Children Australia, through

the line's Pacific Partnership community program.

The funds will be used to provide access to clean water and sanitation as well as to create child-friendly play spaces at the island's evacuation centres.

The Manaro volcano forced the evacuation of 11,000 Ambae residents in Oct, and although the eruption ended soon after it continues to show minor activity.

Carnival cup cruise

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has taken an early lead in preparations for next year's Melbourne Cup, announcing several racing identities to join a 04 Nov *Carnival Spirit* sailing.

Sports broadcaster Damian Kelly will join the cruise as master of ceremonies, along with jockey Darren Gauci who will give guests a glimpse of racing life behind the scenes.

Wendy Green, the owner of 1999 winner Rogan Josh, and race caller Greg Miles will also join the Sydney-Melb cruise.

Norwegian app

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has released a new app for its guests, designed to be a companion from their time of booking until sailing.

The app will allow passengers to manage aspects of their cruise including previewing and booking shore excursions, making dinner and entertainment reservations and purchasing dining and beverage packages.

The app can be used for *Norwegian Sky* sailings and will extend to other ships in 2018.



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Cruise Industry Award Nominations Open

AS WE approach the end of 2017, planning for the 17th annual Cruise Industry Awards, The CLIA's, is in full swing.

Each year the cruise industry awards night gets bigger and better in line with the booming local cruise industry.

As the biggest night on the Australasia cruise calendar, the CLIA's are a spectacular opportunity for our industry to recognise the outstanding achievements of agents who have been making waves in the industry, with a total of 20 awards up for grabs.

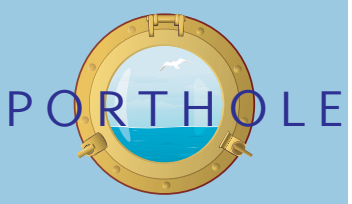
CLIA agents are invited to visit www.cruising.org.au and nominate their entries for the following categories:

- Agent Promotion of the Year Australia
- Agent Promotion of the year New Zealand
- Network Promotion of the Year
- Plan a Cruise Month Agency Award.

An independent panel will judge nominations.

This year's event will see 500 travel agents and cruise line executives dressed in their finest to celebrate the best of the best, and those who are lucky enough to be in possession of a ticket are once again going to be treated to a surprise world-class performance.

To attend this fabulous celebration, visit www.cruising.org.au to secure your tickets.



WHEN a shipping container carrying 7,000 plastic ducks fell overboard in the Arctic Ocean in 1992, few could have imagined the novel spill would still be causing controversy more than 25 years later.

Yet producers of the BBC program *Blue Planet 2* are under fire for planting hundreds of ducks in the sea as a re-enactment of the mishap.

The ducks had been set free near Costa Rica during filming for a segment on pollution, but viewers took to Twitter to question the ethics of adding yet more plastic to the ocean.

The Independent says the BBC assured all ducks were retrieved after the shoot.

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