

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 23 Mar 2017

## Cruise Weekly today

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

## Lindblad sales appt

LINDBLAD Expeditions is boosting its national sales force, appointing Justin Southern as sales manager for Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia.

He brings to the role 20 years' experience in the travel and hospitality industry, including nine years of experience as a state sales manager for Travelcube Pacific and experience as an account manager for United Airlines.

Southern (pictured) has led groups to destinations such as Alaska, Turkey and Borneo.



## Crystal's river ship delay

CRYSTAL Cruises will fully compensate passengers and agents affected by the delay of its next new river cruise vessels, *Crystal Bach* and *Crystal Mahler*.

Guests who had already booked on the newbuilds, which have been bumped back until Aug and Sep, will be reimbursed for the cruise and their airfare cancellation fees.

It is the second time these vessels have been delayed, as they were originally planned for deployment in France from Jun and Aug.

They will also receive a free cruise and "generous credit" towards future Crystal experiences.

Travel agents' commissions will be "fully protected" & the cruise line said agents would "also receive sailing privileges on select Crystal River Cruises voyages".

*Crystal Bach* and *Crystal Mahler*

will now sail their maiden voyages along the Rhine and Danube rivers on 13 Aug and 30 Sep, respectively.

The line backed off plans to enter France last year (CW 02 Aug), citing the "general geopolitical climate" and redeployed the ships, allowing a 25m extension in their length.

In a statement, Crystal said it had determined "more time is needed to prepare the vessels for our guests".

"While we are eager to welcome guests aboard these unique vessels, the focus must remain on ensuring seamless delivery in the celebrated six-star level of luxury service for which Crystal is known," Crystal said.

The Rhine class river yachts are being touted as Europe's only all-balcony, all-suite river ships & will feature glass roofs & retractable sunroofs over public spaces.

## Oceania Cuba 2018

TEN new journeys to Cuba with Oceania Cruises have been revealed for 2018.

Sailing roundtrip from PortMiami, the new cruises on *Sirena* range from seven to 10 days in length and will depart from 04 May-26 Oct 2018.

Bob Binder, president & ceo of Oceania Cruises said the new voyages would give "an insider's view of Cuba" by immersing passengers in the "culture and everyday lives of the people".

All of the new journeys call into Havana, Santiago de Cuba and Cienfuegos and some of the longer itineraries also include Norwegian Cruise Line's private island in the Bahamas, Great Stirrup Cay, along with Punta Cana, Dominican Republic; Port Antonio, Jamaica; Nassau, Bahamas and Cozumel, Mexico.

Oceania Cruises is offering a total of 20 departures sailing to Cuba through to 26 Oct.

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## CLIA Masters Conference

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia has announced its 2017 Masters Conference will take place on Dream Cruises' *Genting Dream*, cruising from Hong Kong.

Scott Koepf will return to lead this year's conference sessions, which will focus on how the cruise industry is evolving and how consultants can take advantage of the sector's growth.

This year's conference starts in Hong Kong on 16 Sep, with agents enjoying one night pre-cruise accommodation before boarding *Genting Dream* for a five-night cruise which will include visits to Naha and Miyakojima in Japan.

CLIA Australasia md Joel Katz said he expected the Masters Conference to be very popular.

"The opportunity to sail on one of the most exciting new ships to be launched in Asia should make this year's Masters event particularly memorable."

Katz urged agents to register early due to limited space.

CLIA's Master Conference will involve intensive training sessions, while attendees gain firsthand cruise experience.

After completing the course and a post-conference assignment, agents will enter the CLIA Cruise Masters' ranks.

*Genting Dream* features Bistro by Mark, the first restaurant at sea for Australian Chef Mark Best, as well as the first Johnnie Walker tasting bar at sea and wines from the Penfolds Wine Vault.

The conference is open to all consultants who hold CLIA Ambassador level accreditation and are employed by a CLIA member travel agent.

Participation fees for the 2017 event are \$1,880 per person twin share single and non-delegate rates are available.

For more details or to book, visit [www.cruising.org.au](http://www.cruising.org.au).

## MSC dining concepts

MSC Cruises has revealed *MSC Meraviglia* and *MSC Seaside* will offer greater dining flexibility when they come into service later this year.

Guests will be able to dine as they want, when they want, and choose from a wider range of specialty restaurants and international dining venues.

There will also be more dining packages that can be booked at any time prior to boarding and while on board.

## Ecruising's new site

**ECRUISING'S** consumer website has a new look, featuring a clearer layout and mobile-friendly design.

Founding chairman Brett Dudley said the new website was easier to use, with the addition of filters to the search function making it easier for users to narrow down search results.

"Along with the new layout design, guests can check out the latest offers and promotions from all major cruise lines in one place on the main page," Dudley said.

"There is also a section where consultants pick their favourite packages to offer readers some expert opinions".

Check out [www.ecruising.travel](http://www.ecruising.travel).

## RCI European 2018

**ROYAL** Caribbean International has opened bookings for its 2018 European cruise season, which will be headlined by the new world's largest ship *Symphony of the Seas*.

RCI will also introduce Holyhead on the Isle of Anglesey, Wales as a new port of call, plus will return to Flam, Molde, and Skjolden in Norway and Isafjordur, Iceland.

*Symphony of the Seas* will spend her inaugural season sailing the Western Med on seven-night cruises from Barcelona.

She will spend the summer visiting Palma de Mallorca, Spain; Marseille, France; Florence/Pisa, Rome and Naples/Capri, Italy.

In Northern Europe, *Brilliance of the Seas* will sail 12-night itineraries from Amsterdam visiting the Baltics, Norway and the British Isles.

RCI will have seven ships in Europe for the season.

## Lindblad inclusions

**LINDBLAD** Expeditions have moved towards a more inclusive experience, confirming the cruise line will cover guests' bar tab and all tips for the crew on all *National Geographic Explorer* and *National Geographic Orion* voyages from Apr.



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## Journey's white send off



**YESTERDAY'S** departure of *Azamara Journey* on her final Australian cruise for the season was marked with a white party at the Park Hyatt in Sydney.

*Azamara Club Cruises'* managing director Adam Armstrong, and *Azamara Journey's* Captain Johannes Tysse hosted more than 70 travel agents, media and staff at the event.

Tysse shared with attendees some memories from his many years as Captain of the ship, including cruising with Roger "James Bond" Moore, personally arranging a delivery of fresh crabs from his uncle to the ship in Norway and the time he stopped the ship at a cheese shop near Flam in Norway to purchase some famous Norwegian Gold Cheese.

The vessel is sailing on an 18-night Sydney to Singapore itinerary, with Aussies and Kiwis making up a third of guests on the voyage.

During her inaugural season, *Journey* carried almost 2,600 guests from the USA, UK, Canada, Germany and Australia, injecting

an estimated \$2.85m into the local economy in pax spend.

"It's been wonderful introducing *Azamara Journey* to Australia for the first time. She has been incredibly well received and completely booked out," Armstrong said.

"She's clearly impressed Australians - half of her staterooms for next year's season are already booked."

Armstrong is pictured with Justine Sealey from Ramsgate Travel (left) and Meg Hill from Cruise Express.

## Silversea special

**NEW** bookings by 30 Jun for Silversea's *Silver Spirit* sailing featuring TV food personality, Lyndey Milan will receive a signed copy of her cookbook & DVD set.

The cook will depart Lisbon, Portugal on 07 Jul as part of a 10-day voyage through Spain, Italy, Malta and Greece before finishing in Venice, Italy.

Cruise and air packages start from \$9,450pp in a Vista Suite.

## Beyond's cruise brand

**BEYOND** Travel Group today launched Australia's only dedicated Croatian cruising holiday brand, Cruise Croatia.

General manager of business growth Peter Smith said the new addition was prompted by an increase in modern purpose-built deluxe ships in the region and a huge demand from agents and clients over the last four years.

"With the massive growth we were and still are seeing, it was time to create a unique and separate brand and allow it to champion the destination in a way that has never been done

before in Australia," Smith said.

The new division is already offering over 60 cruises broken up into the styles of Deluxe, First-Class, Traditional or Themed cruises and visiting Hvar, Korcula, Plitvice Lakes, Zagreb & more.

Smith said Cruise Croatia will show travellers around on a small ship, allowing "VIP access to the harbours, islands and inlets as well as mooring right where you want to be in the historic towns of Dubrovnik and Split".

See [www.cruise-croatia.com.au](http://www.cruise-croatia.com.au).

## Seabourn Alaska sale

**SEABOURN** is marking its return to Alaska for the first time in 15 years with a sale.

Until 03 Apr, bookings on select sailings between 01 Jun and 21 Sep will attract on board spending money of up to US\$1,000 per suite and air credit to the value of AU\$500 per person.

Also up for grabs are complimentary upgrades from ocean view suites, with upgrades also available up to three veranda suite categories higher, depending on availability & fare paid.

## Oceania promotes

**STEPH** Armengol has been promoted from senior director of hotel operations for Regent Seven Seas Cruises to vice president of Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises.

He will continue to report to Franco Semeraro, senior vice president of hotel operations for Oceania and Regent.

Armengol joined Regent Seven Seas Cruises in 2000 as a sommelier on *Navigator*.

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## A peek at *Cloud's* public spaces



**SILVERSEA** Cruises has released more renders detailing what to expect on board *Silver Cloud* after her conversion into an ice-class expedition ship between Aug-Oct.

The new images zone in on the public spaces, highlighting La Terrazza, The Restaurant, Observation Lounge, Panorama Lounge, and Venetian Lounge.

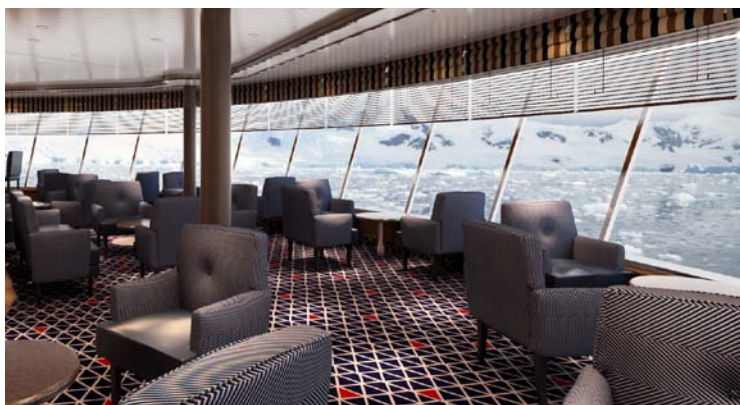
Under the refurbishment, The Observation Lounge (pictured below) will be created, new teak flooring, upholstery and lighting

will appear in La Terrazza and The Restaurant (above) will receive new carpet and upholstery.

A new gym with Technogym equipment will also be added.

*Cloud's* hull will also be strengthened to allow her to venture to polar waters.

"As the first ship in our fleet, *Silver Cloud* has a special place in Silversea's history, and we're delighted to reveal further details of her refurbishment," said cmo, Barbara Muckermann.



## Crystal's local TV push

**CRYSTAL** Cruises has embarked on a local television campaign promoting its river cruise product, *Cruise Weekly* can reveal.

Airing on Channel 9 during the *Today Show*, the ad touts Crystal's river cruises as an "all inclusive, truly exclusive experience that's in a class by itself".

Spearheading the commercial is Edie Rodriguez, Crystal's ceo who narrates the experience and makes a guest appearance.

The creative is based on a similar commercial that screened on US television last year (*CW* 08 Nov 16) and highlights "state of the art river yachts" with a butler service for guests staying in suites.

A discount of US\$400 per person is offered when booked by 30 Apr and the ad includes a trade-friendly call to action prompting customers to call their "travel professional."

Television is a firm favourite of river cruise lines with Channel 9 also attracting Scenic, while APT opts for Channel 7 and Viking and Avalon Waterways appear on SBS and Channel 10 respectively.

### Cruising's rich club

**AMERICAN** business magazine *Forbes* has released its list of top billionaires for 2017 with the cruise industry producing its fair share of the mega rich.

Micky and Shari Arison, the children of Carnival Cruise Line co-founder Ted Arison, are among the super wealthy with a reported combined wealth of US\$13 billion.

Other cruise heavyweights to make the list are Arne Wilhelmsen of Royal Caribbean with US\$2.8 billion, Peng Jianhu of Century Cruises with US\$1.4 billion and entering the list for the first time Torstein Hagen of Viking Cruises with US\$1 billion.

On land, the top aviation, travel and hotel casino billionaires include Richard Branson with US\$5 billion courtesy of the Virgin empire, Sergio Mantegazza the head of Swiss tour operator Globus with US\$3.1 billion and casino and hotel barons James Packer (US\$3 billion) and Steve Wynn (US\$2.5 billion).

**CLICK HERE** for the list.

### Oceania specials

**OCEANIA** Cruises' Best of Europe 2017 offers end 31 Mar.

Specials are available on 36 voyages and include free internet plus free shore excursions or a beverage package or shipboard credit, for more information, see [www.oceaniacruises.com](http://www.oceaniacruises.com).

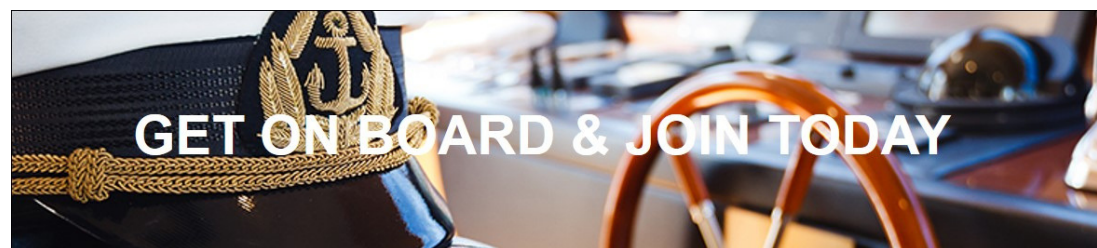
### Cunard blooms

**FILM** and TV florist, Jenny Tobin will be on board Cunard's first Festival of Flowers voyage in Jun.

*Queen Victoria's* special sailing will travel around the Atlantic Isles, exploring six floral destinations, including Madeira.

During the 14-night itinerary, Tobin will impart her knowledge, tips and insight into her career.

**For more info, CLICK HERE.**



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**THE** global cruise industry is in deep shock this week, after human headline Sir Richard Branson didn't appear in person at a steel cutting ceremony for the first Virgin Voyages vessel.

Instead Branson led a countdown by video for the event at Fincantieri's Sestri Ponente yard in Italy.

The first of three ships is scheduled for handover in early 2020, with capacity for 2,800 passengers - or "sailors" according to Virgin parlance.

Fortunately, despite the absence of Branson himself, the event featured an array of hunky blokes dressed in Virgin-red overalls and construction helmets (**below**), satisfying eye candy needs.

However the Virgin founder is expected in person at the keel laying ceremony in Nov.



## Singapore refunds

**SINGAPORE'S** electronic Tourist Refund Scheme (eTRS) facilities at cruise terminals will be removed after 31 Aug.

The Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore has advised that passengers departing from cruise terminals will only be able to claim the GST refund for purchases made before 01 Jul and if they submit claims by 31 Aug.

For details head to [iras.gov.sg](http://iras.gov.sg).

## CLIA's trade chair

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) in the United States has appointed Vicki Freed, svp sales, trade support and service for Royal Caribbean International, as chair of the CLIA Trade Relations Committee.

Freed oversees Royal Caribbean Int'l's sales force - the largest in the cruise industry, prior to which she worked for Carnival.

She will take over from Ken Muskat, who left last year.

## Aranui special 2018

**SAVINGS** of up to \$900 per cabin are available on four select Aranui Cruises 2018 departures.

The Tahitian cruise line is offering 10% off all cabin categories on *Aranui 5's* 13 Jan, 29 Mar and 12 Jun departures.

*Aranui* is a 125m-long mixed cargo and passenger vessel which launched in 2015 and offers 19 departures a year.



## ACA on the global stage

Medcruise, Cruise Baltic, Cruise Norway and Cruise Britain.

The goal was to share information and experiences which would help our regions deliver best practice outcomes for the cruise lines, work with destinations to develop their onshore offerings to meet cruise passenger requirements and provide representation to governments to deliver outcomes which will continue to strengthen the cruise industry.

This year, I was also proud to represent ACA on a panel which looked at the future of cruising in the region. Along with Jan Swartz, Princess Cruises; Harry Sommer, NCL and Gavin Smith, Royal Caribbean we looked at the opportunities and challenges that face us going forward.

Seatrade again allowed us the opportunity to reinforce the importance of our region as a cruising destination for international guests and left us feeling excited for the future.

**OUR** delegation has returned from another successful year at Seatrade Cruise Global in Florida with the team representing Australia, New Zealand, PNG and New Caledonia.

We kicked off with our Chair, Stephen Bradford signing a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cruise New Zealand which updates our commitment to jointly developing the cruise shipping industry in the Australasian region.

The agreement, first signed 11 years ago, has seen our organisations work successfully together on co-operative marketing opportunities, information sharing, representations to industry and government and joint participation at international trade shows.

ACA also participated in a meeting of cruise destinations and port associations including Cruise NZ, Cruise Europe,

## Panama Canal system

**THE** Panama Canal Authority has selected a new system it says will "transform how the Panama Canal plans and schedules transit operations".

Provided by Quintaq, the program will allow the canal to execute a completely integrated operating plan and provide improved situational awareness and data to inform better decision-making.

It will also help reduce costs by optimising the way in which resources are used.

## Whale watching sale

**CAPTAIN** Cook Cruises (CCC) is offering 50% off whale watching cruises off the Sydney heads between 20 May-30 Jun for \$39 instead of \$79 per person.

The open cruise takes passengers past The Sydney Opera House, Fort Denison and the eastern suburbs before passing the Harbour headlands.

There's a 95% whale watching success rate on board CCC but if there's none spotted, passengers can cruise again free.

Book before 19 May.

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