

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features six pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from AA Appointments.

Regent newbuild

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises overnight confirmed its second Explorer-class ship will be named *Seven Seas Splendor*.

The vessel is scheduled for delivery in the first quarter of 2020, with ceo Jason Montague saying the success of *Seven Seas Explorer* had “reinforced our decision to expand our fleet”.

The name was chosen from suggestions garnered from past passengers and Regent employees in a competition earlier this month.

A total of 2,600 unique names were entered by over 14,000 submissions.

Imagine Cruising buys Holiday Planet

IMAGINE Cruising’s acquisition of Holiday Planet (**CW** breaking news Wed) will give the company national coverage in Australia, Imagine Cruising’s development director Peter Shanks told **CW**.

Imagine Cruising yesterday revealed it would acquire Perth-based Holiday Planet, which offers products across Cruise Planet, Holiday Planet, Flight Planet and Seniors Planet.

Up until now, the Brisbane-based Imagine Cruising has marketed itself in NSW, SA, Vic and Qld.

“We thought that it would be a really good way to give us national coverage in Australia and Holiday Planet has such a strong consumer following in Western Australia, it seemed like a really good fit,” Shanks explained.

Imagine Cruising is 51% owned by Emirates’ offshoot Dnata and it plans to use this backing to invest



in growing Holiday Planet, while adding its cruise expertise, cruise line relationships and some of its unique products.

Imagine Cruising launched in Australia in Nov last year and has since grown its office from six to 40 staff, while Holiday Planet, has been operating in WA for 17 years and is led by its managing director, Alan Dodson.

“Alan and his team here at Holiday Planet are very experienced and we will bring

some more innovation, flair and product,” Shanks told **CW**.

The deal is expected to be finalised in coming weeks, following government approval.

Pictured are: Sarah McAllister, operations director Imagine Cruising; Alan Dodson, md Holiday Planet; Peter Shanks, development director Imagine Cruising; Michael Croy, operations director Holiday Planet and Craig Collingwood, finance director Imagine Cruising.

NORWEGIAN JEWEL HAS ARRIVED

We would like to thank our trade and industry partners for making Norwegian Jewel’s first Australian and New Zealand season such a success.



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On location aboard
Crystal Bach

Today's issue of *CW* is coming to you courtesy of *Crystal Cruises*, aboard the *Crystal Bach* currently cruising Germany's Rhine River.

CRYSTAL Bach arrives in Basel, Switzerland today, as the southernmost point of its Rhine River itinerary.

The vessel spends two nights here, allowing for extended shore excursions as well as dining at some of the city's top restaurants.

After our Basel sojourn the cruise wraps up with a full day of cruising back to Frankfurt, enabling passengers to view the Rhine in ultimate comfort. More from *Bach* on page 5.

Pandaw Sabei now under way

CONSTRUCTION of Pandaw River Expeditions' new *RV Sabei Pandaw* (*CW* 19 Sep) has commenced, with the ship set to debut ahead of schedule on 11 Nov 2018.

Plans have also been modified to include an extra two staterooms, bringing the total number to 14.

RV Pandaw Sabei is being built at the Loon Prasert shipyard in Laos, with the hull expected to be completed by Jan and the remainder of the build by the northern summer.

The ship will initially operate the 10-night Laos-Mekong itinerary, and from Sep 2019 it will move further along the Upper Mekong to China's Yunnan province to sail a 14-night Laos-China voyage visiting Laos, Thailand, Burma and China.

AMERICAN Cruise Line has revealed its first ship in its new Modern Riverboat Series will be named *American Song*.

The line promised the vessel would "bring a whole new dimension to river cruising in the US" & be wider, faster and quieter than other river cruise ships.

American Song will feature a four-storey glass atrium, spacious lounge areas and be designed to maximise views of the outdoors throughout the ship.

It will have large staterooms with private, furnished balconies, full-size bathrooms & amenities.

American Cruise Lines has declared the ship will be the most environmentally friendly in the industry, boasting it only contracts for brand new ships

"to maintain its reputation for premium quality & consistency".

American Song's inaugural season will begin in the northern autumn 2018 on the Mississippi River and then continue to the West Coast in 2019, for American Cruise Lines' Columbia and Snake River itineraries.

It will join another ship to be introduced in 2018, bringing American Cruise Line's fleet to 10 - the largest modern fleet of small cruise ships, modern riverboats, and authentic paddlewheelers in the country.

The company sails along the coastal and inland waterways of Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, the Mississippi River region, the Southeast, and New England with over 35 itineraries.



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Thursday 16th November 2017

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

Cruising backs YES



THE Australian cruise industry heavyweights have moved to express their support for yesterday's results of the same sex marriage survey.

Ahead of the announcement, Princess Cruises' *Golden Princess* sailed into Sydney Harbour yesterday morning with a huge rainbow flag covering the front deck (pictured) above.

The brand's parent company, Carnival Australia said it looked forward to all Australians having marriage equality.

"Carnival Australia joined with other organisations in advocating a 'yes' vote in the survey because we saw marriage equality as the right thing to do and a matter of fundamental fairness," said Carnival Australia executive chairman Ann Sherry.

Sherry said Carnival Australia's lines whose ships currently host onboard weddings will "soon be able to offer these ceremonies to all Australians with full equality under

marriage laws".

Last month Celebrity Cruises began offering same-sex marriage at sea following a vote in the line's flag state of Malta (CW 12 Oct).

Celebrity Cruises Australia & NZ md Adam Armstrong said the line was "absolutely thrilled" with the results.

"The resounding yes from Australia is inspiring, and Celebrity Cruises is celebrating with all the Australians who took a stand for the LGBTI community these past few months," he said.

Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) also voiced its support, after backing the yes vote in Oct (CW 10 Oct).

"Just as NCLH encourages equal rights and opportunities for all our employees and customers, we also believe in equal rights for the entire community, irrespective of their gender, age, sexual preference, nationality or religion," said Steve Odell, svp and md Asia Pacific for NCLH.

Celebrity Sail Beyond



There are seven continents. Seven seas. But we'd argue, more than seven wonders.

Celebrity X Cruises SAIL BEYOND

A NEW brand campaign from Celebrity Cruises has launched in Australia and New Zealand, beckoning travellers to "sail beyond" traditional notions of cruising by highlighting the line's holiday experiences.

The push includes a 30-second TV commercial on SBS and Foxtel, to be followed by a mix of press, digital and social content.

"Sail Beyond invites our guests to open themselves up to the world, to the beauty and diversity that it has to offer," said Kathryn Valk, director of sales and marketing, Celebrity Cruises, Australia and New Zealand.

"The merged-worlds technique used throughout the creative encourages viewers to explore the possibilities that travelling with a globally immersive travel brand like Celebrity Cruises can offer," she said.

The campaign is a localised version of Celebrity's international positioning and was created by the brand's creative agency partner, Hulsbosch.

Hans Hulsbosch, executive creative director at Hulsbosch, said "Sail Beyond communicates a desire to go beyond the ordinary, beyond the expected..."

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Discover where the next hot spots are in the November issue of *travelBulletin*.

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Tourism Australia/True North Cruises

Port Everglades upgraded



PORT Everglades Cruise Terminal 2 has emerged from a multi-million dollar redesign and upgrade undertaken by Carnival Corporation.

The terminal is exclusively used by the corporation's Princess Cruises brand and has been designed to streamline departure and provide interactive experiences, a movie theatre and more comfortable pre-boarding areas.

The space has been fitted with Carnival Corporation's xIoT (Experiential Internet of Things) network, which is activated by the Ocean Medallion.

This allows guests sailing on Medallion Class ships to

take advantage of expedited boarding and a more personalised arrival experience.

Travellers will be able to interact with their Ocean Tagalong digital companions on an LED screen in the Ocean Portal area, which guests will enter after clearing the security and check-in area.

Ocean Tagalongs can be created and personalised using the SocialOcean app and will appear on the Ocean Portal screen as the avatars of guests in the immediate area.

The terminal has been fitted with MedallionNet wi-fi, allowing passengers to play the company's mobile games.

MSC double milestone



MSC Cruises has announced that its first Meraviglia-Plus class ship will be named *MSC Grandiosa*, with exec chairman Pierfrancesco Vago revealing the title at the STX France shipyard in St Nazaire yesterday.

The cruise line celebrated both the coin ceremony for *MSC Bellissima* and the cutting of the first steel for its first Meraviglia-Plus class ships, which Vago said marked the "first time that key shipbuilding milestones for two different ships are celebrated on the same day".

MSC Grandiosa's name signified "magnificence and grandeur, a fitting name for this even richer, ultra-modern mega-ship," he said.

The vessel will feature a host of innovations including hybrid power systems, state-of-the-art waste management and emission-reducing energy and heat recovery systems.

On board facilities will include what is being promoted as the

first fine art museum at sea, while *Grandiosa* will also feature a Carousel Lounge, custom-designed to host Cirque du Soleil at Sea.

During the event, two commemorative coins were placed into one of *MSC Bellissima's* blocks and welded (**pictured**) as a sign of blessing and good fortune for the ship and her crew.

Bellissima is scheduled to enter service in Mar 2019, while *Grandiosa* will launch in Nov of the same year.

Sales are already available for *MSC Bellissima's* inaugural season and bookings for *MSC Grandiosa* will open soon.

The new ships are part of MSC Cruises' €9 billion 10-year investment plan, which will see six of a total of 11 new ships come into service between Jun 2017 and Nov 2020, resulting in a doubling of the MSC Cruises fleet capacity in three and a half years.

Hong Kong extension

HONG Kong's Ocean Terminal has opened a new Observatory Deck called "Ocean Terminal Deck".

The new attraction (**pictured**) is open to the public for free and offers 270-degree panoramic views of Victoria Harbour.



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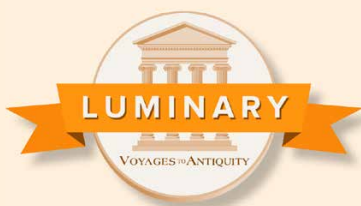
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Brochure spotlight Ponant 18/19



PONANT has released its new brochure, covering cruises over the period Oct 2018 through to May 2019.

The new release details 71 sailings comprising of a combination of small ship cruising and luxury expeditions (28 polar and 18 tropical expeditions).

Voyages include the inaugural season of new Explorer yacht, *Le Laperouse* in Australian and NZ waters (CW 13 Oct), along with visits to the Seychelles, New Caledonia, Sri Lanka, Costa Rica and Antarctica.

The brochure provides details on its four new Explorer yachts, including their features such as the Blue Eye, "multi-sensory underwater lounge" located within the hull below the water line.

Disney Magic reno

NEW entertainment options for all generations will be available on Disney Cruise Line's *Disney Magic* from Mar next year.

A new family restaurant, teen gaming facility and adults' cafe are among the new attractions to be fitted on the Disney Cruise Line ship.

The new eatery themed to "Tangled" will feature an array of music and live interactions with characters from the Disney story, while the new teen space for those aged 14-17 will boast virtual reality and movie-making facilities.

Vard delisting plan

VARD Holdings has flagged its intention to voluntarily delist from the Singapore Securities Exchange following a bid from Fincantieri.

The proposal requires a minimum of 75% approval by shareholders to pass.

Novelist on HAL

AS PART of its ongoing partnership with *O, The Oprah Magazine*, Holland America Line has revealed novelist Joan Juliet will join a motivational panel on board a *Koningsdam* cruise to the Caribbean.

The 11-day voyage will take place 29 Nov 2017.

FACE-2-FACE: Walter Littlejohn



Managing director and vice president, Crystal River Cruises

Cruise Weekly caught up with cruise fanatic Walter Littlejohn in Europe this week and he gave us some fascinating insights into his life and career.

1. What motivates you in your career?

I have a huge passion for cruise ships and the travel industry in general. At the age of 14 I decided I wanted to be an executive in the cruise business, and everything I have done has been working towards that goal.

2. Most common assumption people make about your job?

Like anyone in travel, people assume I lead a glamorous life - there's a certain mystique about it. However at the end of the day exceeding guest expectations is not easy, with a lot of hard work behind it that people don't usually see.

3. What is the key to building great relationships with travel agents?

I spent 14 years as a travel agent myself with the aim of really understanding what is involved in cruise distribution. Having been an agent and being able to empathise is a huge benefit for me. The key needs of a travel agent are simple - they need partners they can rely on and good products to deliver to their clients. If we can do those things well, the rest is easy.

4. Biggest challenge facing the industry?

I hate to use the term 'Fake News' but I believe there is a danger for the industry if our audience doesn't get the right facts. If our message about services or destinations is miscommunicated, customers are likely to have the wrong expectations.

5. What was your best fam trip?

The cruise I'm on (*Crystal Bach Jewels of the Rhine*) and the next one I'll be taking - I just love cruising!

6. What is your favourite cruise destination?

Actually I really like being on board. As a kid I used to take lots of "cruises to nowhere" out of New York just to experience the ship. It really is a utopian vacation experience.

7. Name a celebrity you'd like to cruise with?

I'd love to cruise with Heidi Klum. Actually it might happen one day - maybe she could become the godmother to one of our ships? I have made some overtures...

8. Favourite thing to do in port?

I like to eat some of the authentic local cuisine, experience the destination like those who live there.

9. When you're not at work how do you spend your time?

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Easter with Murray

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises is offering a special three-night *Murray Princess* Easter cruise getaway departing 30 Mar.

The sailing will include on board Easter fun, such as an Easter Egg Hunt.



Changing passengers

SINCE I was appointed CEO of the Association some fourteen years ago, it has been exciting to see the changes that have taken place in the cruise industry.

Naturally the ships have changed in their size and their offerings and the port infrastructure around the country is also changing dramatically to meet their needs.

But one of the biggest changes has been in the cruise pax themselves.

Once a group of travellers mostly focused on shipboard life, we have now seen cruise passengers travelling more for the destinations they will visit and the experiences they will enjoy onshore.

This has been reinforced by the announcement this week by Viking Cruises who will debut in Australia early in 2018. They are offering passengers a range of cruise extensions to their 15-day Australia/NZ itineraries including options to visit Port Douglas and the Great Barrier Reef; Melbourne, Alice Springs and Uluru or Auckland and Tongariro National Park.

Initiatives such as these mean that cruise lines are giving travellers the opportunity to not only explore the cities & near surrounds in which they disembark but are also encouraging them to travel further afield to experience iconic destinations.

Most importantly it also means that cruising is just one segment of their overall holiday itinerary, which is great news for our tourism economy.

ACA applauds moves like this by the cruise lines and we look forward to seeing more extensive pre- and post-cruise touring options into the future.

Lindblad's new addition



DAN Coleman has stepped into the role of sales mgr for NSW, Qld and NZ at Lindblad Expeditions.

Bringing over 10 years' experience in the travel industry to the role, Coleman was most recently sales executive for G Adventures for eight years.

"We're excited to have someone

of Dan's calibre to help grow and expand the Lindblad Expeditions brand here in the Australian market, providing even more support to our Australian agents," said Adventure World managing director Neil Rodgers.

Adventure World is Lindblad's GSA in Australia, NZ and Asia.

European Waterways "back-to-back"

EUROPEAN Waterways will operate a new "back-to-back" cruise option in France between mid-Jun and early Jul.

The two-week sailing will allow wine lovers to visit Champagne and Burgundy aboard the *Panache* hotel barge in Champagne and *L'Impressionniste* in Burgundy.

It includes exploration, education and wine tastings, along with a free night's stay at the Hotel Westminster in Paris.



IF IT wasn't enough to build one *World Dream*, Dream Cruises has gone ahead and built two.

The cruise line has released images of its completed large-scale replica of its new ship, *World Dream*, made from LEGO (*CW* 12 Oct) ahead of the christening on Fri of the 151,300 GT ship.

The replica stands 1.53m tall and is 8.44m long and took two months and over 2.5 million LEGO blocks to build.

It was unveiled at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in Hong Kong yesterday & declared the largest LEGO ship by an official Guinness World Records adjudicator.

The massive feat (**pictured**) weighs over 2,800kg and will be on display at Kai Tak Terminal.



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