

Cruise Weekly today

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

Coles into cruise

THE Flybuys loyalty program overseen by supermarket giant Coles has extended its travel reach into cruising.

Coles launched 'Flybuys Travel' last year (*Travel Daily* 06 Apr 2016), with the site powered by Corporate Travel Management's CTM Loyalty Travel offshoot.

The company has now expanded the offering to a new cruise.flybuystravel.com.au portal, with a range of launch offers such as bonus Flybuys points, on-board credit and cabin upgrades on participating lines including Carnival, Cunard, Avalon, Princess & Royal Caribbean.

€1.8b order for two new MSC ships

MSC Cruises has signed orders with shipbuilders Fincantieri for the construction of two new Seaside EVO ships at a cost of €1.8 billion (A\$2.8 billion).

The deal was formalised yesterday as the line took delivery of its new flagship *MSC Seaside*, pictured, the line's second new ship to enter service this year.

"*MSC Seaside* coming into service marks another key milestone in the history and future of our company, but she also embodies a pivotal moment for the industry," said MSC Cruises executive chairman Pierfrancesco Vago.

"She is the first ship of the fifth new prototype that we bring into service and introduces a wholly-innovative product that sets a new standard for the industry to follow," he said.

At 153,516 GRT, *MSC Seaside* has a capacity of 5,179 guests



and will home port in Miami for a series of cruises in the Caribbean.

She will be followed in six months by a sister ship, *MSC Seaview*, and forms the prototype to the two new Seaside EVO class ships ordered yesterday.

The first EVO vessel will enter service in 2021, followed by the second in 2023.

The as-yet-unnamed additions will be slightly larger at 169,380 GRT and will carry up to 5,646

passengers each.

They will offer more space, a larger Yacht Club and additional deck space, as well as operating new environmental technology including emissions control systems, exhaust cleaning and water treatment systems.

Vago said with the addition of two Seaside EVO ships to its investment plan, MSC was in an even better positioned to further extend its global footprint.

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CLIA's new Asia head

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) Asia has appointed Jiali Wong as its new regional manager for Asia, based in Singapore.

Wong will be responsible for growing industry engagement in the region and supporting the continued growth of cruising in Asia.

"This is a new dedicated position, designed to support our members as the cruise industry continues to expand across Asia," said CLIA Australasia and Asia managing director Joel Katz.

"We're looking forward to working with Jiali as we intensify our focus on advocating, educating, and promoting on behalf of the industry in the region.

"While the Asian



cruise market has grown tremendously over the past four years – it has the potential to catapult ahead of competing markets," he said.

With 10 years' experience in tourism, Wong, **pictured**, has been seconded from the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and most recently headed the organisation's Cruise Business Development team.



PLANS have been unveiled for Newcastle's \$12.7 million cruise terminal, set to open late next year at the city's Channel Berth.

Conceived by architects GHD Woodhead, the harbour-view building has been designed to offer "ease of movement, natural daylight and a generous sense of space greeting passengers."

The plans were revealed this week by the NSW Government and Port of Newcastle, with construction work to begin early in the new year.

"The new cruise terminal... will enable the Port to receive more and larger cruise ships in the future," said Port of Newcastle ceo Geoff Crowe.

"Importantly, it will position

Newcastle as a home port where ships can start and finish their (journey) in Newcastle."

Crowe said homeporting had the potential to deliver greater economic value from cruising and that eventually Newcastle would welcome cruises aligned with major events such as the V8 Supercars motor race.

"Unveiling the design is a significant step and it is only going to get more exciting from here," Crowe said.

"We look forward to welcoming the *Explorer of the Seas* on her maiden visit to Newcastle in February 2019 - the largest cruise ship to visit our port carrying 3,900 passengers."

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Emma scores Avalon



AVALON Waterways capped off its latest marketing campaign with a competition for travel agents, giving them a chance to win an eight-day European river cruise for two.

Emma de Vos from Cruiseabout in Mount Eliza, Victoria, was the lucky winner of the \$12,000 prize, having

correctly answered a series of multiple choice questions relating to Avalon Waterways.

She also explained in 25 words why Aussies should choose to travel with the line.

Pictured is de Vos, left, receiving her award from Alexandra Morton, area sales mgr Vic for Avalon Waterways.

CELEBRITY Cruises will deploy three ships in Alaska over the northern summer of 2019, with *Celebrity Eclipse* joining its sister ships *Celebrity Solstice* and *Celebrity Millennium*.

Together the ships will offer a range of itineraries to 13 different destinations, with 40 extended port visits designed to bring guests "up close and personal to Alaska's must-see wonders".

Eclipse will sail itineraries from Los Angeles, San Diego and Vancouver, ranging from seven to nine nights.

They include round-trip sailings from Vancouver through the Inside Passage to Ketchikan, Juneau, Hubbard Glacier and

other Alaskan points.

The ship will also offer Pacific coastal sailings visiting Monterey, Santa Barbara and San Francisco.

The soon-to-be renovated *Millennium* will sail further into the Alaskan wilderness, offering alternating open-jaw cruises from Vancouver and Seward.

Solstice will sail round-trip from Seattle, visiting Victoria, Ketchikan, Skagway and Juneau, and will traverse the scenic Tracy Arm Fjord (**pictured**).

The cruise line will also offer its range of Celebrity Alaska Cruisetours, allowing guests to combine a cruise with guided land tours ranging from nine to 13 nights.



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CLIA river cruise conference information

FURTHER details were released today in relation to the upcoming Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) river cruise conference, as exclusively revealed by *Cruise Weekly* last week (*CW* 23 Nov).

The Inaugural Asia River Cruise Conference and Destination Forum will take place in Ho Chi Minh City from 10-15 Apr 2018.

Participation is available to CLIA member travel agents only, with all delegates to receive a total of 60 CLIA points for attending.

Tickets are available on a first in, first served basis - cruising.org.au.

Princess Europe season



PRINCESS Cruises overnight released details of its 2019 Europe season, which will include the longest ever series of itineraries sailing out of Southampton.

Highlights include the line's return to Greenland with *Pacific Princess*, as well as new departures from Dublin, Ireland, on the popular British Isles itineraries aboard *Crown Princess*.

A total of five Princess vessels will sail in Europe in 2019, covering 130 destinations from the corners of the Mediterranean to the northernmost tip of the

continent, the company said.

A total of 85 unique itineraries are on offer, with 211 departures visiting 37 countries.

"Europe is a destination our guests want to come back to year after year," said Jan Swartz, Princess Cruises and Carnival Australia group president.

In addition to the ocean-based itineraries, Princess Cruises is offering four 'cruisetours' in Europe in 2019 including the Ring of Kerry, Classic Italy and Imperial Treasures land based add-ons, with the addition of a new Highlights of Spain trip.

Aranui to Pitcairn



ARANUI Cruises will take passengers to one of the most remote islands of the Pacific in 2019, with Pitcairn Island featuring in one of 20 voyages across the region.

The 2019 program is a major departure for the Tahitian adventure cruise line, which for the first time will offer a different itinerary from its regular roundtrip journey from Papeete to the Marquesas, Society and Tuamoto Islands.

The 125m-long *Aranui 5* mixed cargo and passenger vessel (**pictured**) will start the year with a 13-day return voyage from Papeete to Pitcairn Island, departing on 10 Jan 2019.

Priced from \$7,280 per

person twin share, the one-off voyage will also see maiden calls in Anaa and Amanu in the Tuamotos; Mangareva and Aukena in the Gambiers; and Raivae and Rapa in the Austral Islands.

Upon arrival in Pitcairn, cruisers will be guided around the island by descendants of Bounty mutineer Fletcher Christian - and will also receive a highly sought-after Pitcairn stamp in their passport.

Aranui's local representative, Laurent Wong, said *Aranui 5* offers a truly unique experience "and we can't think of anything more thrilling than taking our guests on the ultimate seafaring adventure to remote Pitcairn Island" - 03 9449 3778.

Crystal offers local cruising in 2018

CRYSTAL Cruises has released a series of "Crystal Getaways" aboard *Crystal Serenity*, comprising abbreviated voyages derived from longer existing itineraries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Cruises range from six to 24 days in length and include a 17-day Pacific Sojourn Getaway from Honolulu to Sydney departing on 30 Jan next year, with veranda stateroom fares starting at US\$8,901pp.

For those who only have time for a short break, there's a six-day Far East Vistas Getaway between Ho Chi Minh City and Singapore departing 22 Mar 2018, priced from US\$3,221 per person, providing the opportunity to "discover new cultures and adventures without having to travel too far from home," according to Crystal md for Australia/NZ, Karen Chistensen - more details 1300 059 260.



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NCL Godfather

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has named US radio personality Elvis Duran as godfather of *Norwegian Bliss*.

Duran, who has been on air in New York since 1996, will name the vessel in Seattle next May.



Membership swells

AS WE near the end of another exciting 12 months in the cruise industry, we are delighted to announce that our 10th new member has joined the Association.

Plaza Premium Group (PPG), which operates airport services including guest lounges, hotels, meet and greet services and dining facilities across the world, has signed on to support our cruise passengers as they arrive or depart from key gateways in Australia.

In this region, PPG currently operates the Plaza Premium Lounge in Brisbane and the Skyteam Lounge in Sydney.

A Premium Lounge is also scheduled to open in Melbourne in Feb 2018.

To celebrate their joining, PPG has extended an offer exclusive to *Cruise Weekly's* readers.

Any passengers with a valid cruise ticket can receive 25% off the usual \$55 walk-in rate to enjoy the services offered in their lounges.

We are excited about the diverse range of members which have joined this year including destinations, ports, attractions and even Mirvac Real Estate, reflecting the importance of retail outlets to cruise passengers.

I believe this diversity recognises the growth and opportunity currently being seen in the cruise industry. It also reinforces what we have been saying as an Association for a long time which is the impact of the cruise industry is far reaching and goes way beyond passengers spending a few nights at sea on a cruise ship.

Our industry is well and truly coming of age and we look forward to that bright future continuing.



SINGLE supplements certainly aren't a problem for an adventurous 90-year-old British woman, who recently booked a luxury cruise with a total stranger, shortly after meeting him in a pub.

Vera Burrell stopped in for a bite in Winchester, where she started chatting to 91-year-old "John" who was also in the pub.

Conversation turned to holidays and John, who didn't want his last name published, asked Vera if she'd ever been on a cruise - and suggested it was about time that she did.

The smooth talker took her to a nearby travel agent and together they booked a £3,700 P&O UK Mediterranean cruise.

Two weeks later the couple met again - in Southampton, where they were shown to their shared cabin before setting sail on the 11 night trip.

John said there was no romance, but enjoyed Vera's companionship and has reportedly even asked her if she would like to join him on an upcoming Caribbean voyage.

Seabourn farewells Farrugia

THE Seabourn Cruises team in Sydney recently bid Bon Voyage to Roslyn Farrugia, who is sailing off into a well-deserved retirement after nearly 25 years of service with various Carnival Corporation brands.

Farrugia (pictured) has represented Costa, Cunard, P&O UK, Holland America

Line and Seabourn during her stellar industry career, but is best known in the industry as the face (and the voice) of Seabourn.

"Her elegance, sincerity and grace made her a wonderful ambassador of Seabourn, and she will be missed by colleagues, guests and travel



professionals alike," said Holland America Line & Seabourn marketing manager Brendan Wall.

"Seabourn and the Carnival Australia family would like to wish Roslyn all the best in her well deserved retirement and thank her for her hard work and dedication," Wall added.



WIN!

A spot on the
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