

Cruise Weekly today

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

HK cruise pax up

A REPORT released by travel data company air4casts has revealed the number of pax serviced by Hong Kong's two major cruise ports in 2017 were up 4.4%.

More than 1.7 million pax passed through the Kai Tak and Ocean terminals, with 700,000 of these travellers "homeporters", beginning and ending their holiday from the same terminal.

Indian nationals were also revealed as the fastest-growing non-Chinese nationality homeporting out of Hong Kong, showing a 255% growth in 2017, compared to the same period in 2016.

Silversea launches Project Invictus

A MULTI-YEAR initiative to upgrade Silversea Cruises' ultra-luxury offerings has been announced by the brand, accompanied by news its acquisition by Royal Caribbean Cruises (RCL) has been finalised.

Project Invictus will aim to deliver Silversea an enhanced range of product upgrades and ship revitalisation programs.

"Our intent is to solidify our already strong leadership position with an exciting array of upgrades that thrill our guests," said Silversea's chief executive officer Roberto Martinoli.

The first phase of improvements will begin rolling out this month, with *Silver Muse* (pictured) to offer upgraded Champagne and caviar to guests from 19 Aug.

The culinary upgrade will then be rolled out across Silversea's entire fleet soon after.

Further improvements have



been flagged for *Silver Whisper* in Dec 2018, which will include a partial refit of all guest cabins.

Silver Wind is also scheduled to enter a dry dock renovation in Dec 2018, to redesign the vessel in line with a "Musification" blueprint, taking inspiration from the design of the cruise line's flagship, *Silver Muse*.

RCL finalised its two-thirds acquisition of Silversea this week after receiving final approval from its regulators.

"We are proud to officially welcome Silversea's industry-leading team to the RCL family," said Royal Caribbean Cruises chairman and chief executive Richard Fain.

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Norwegian Joy will join her sister ship, Norwegian Bliss, in Alaska from April 2019.

VIEW SAILINGS



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Find out what it's like to cruise Alaska with Oceania in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read **travelBulletin**

Cruise plan hailed

THE NSW Govt's recently released Cruise Development Plan (**CW** 31 Jul), which advocates for a passenger facility in Botany Bay rather than Sydney Harbour's Garden Island, has been welcomed by the industry.

"We are delighted that the Cruise Plan has been delivered...ensuring Sydney can accommodate the most modern cruise ships in the world is key to unlocking tourism potential," said Royal Caribbean Cruises ANZ md Susan Bonner.

Norwegian's md Asia Pacific Steve Odell also responded by saying the plan was "definitely a positive step forward to achieving greater certainty and a platform for growth", while Carnival Australia released a response stating "Now the Fed Govt has taken Garden Island off the table, we will continue to work constructively with the NSW Government in exploring the feasibility of Port Botany."

NCL extends Hawaii

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has extended its Free at Sea offer on seven-day roundtrip cruises from Honolulu, departing from Sep 2018.

Guests now have until 14 Aug to book a cruise and take advantage of the deal which includes a selection of offers such as a free pre-cruise hotel or specialty dining package, US\$500 of on board credit, or a reduced deposit fee.

The cruise features overnight stays at the Hawaiian islands of Maui and Kauai.

Viking incentive

VIKING has announced a new trade incentive for the travel agent who sells the most Viking river cruises between 01 Aug - 30 Nov.

The lucky winner who deposits the most bookings will go on an eight-day Lyon and Provence river cruise for two - **CLICK HERE** for more.

Tauck revels in upturn



LUXURY small ship cruise operator Tauck says it has "more new product coming into the market than ever before", thanks to the rebound of many important global cruise markets.

The company has witnessed a significant increase in Aussie sales for European river cruises in 2018, experiencing "double-digit growth" in the category.

"Places where we saw some disruption we are now seeing people travelling back to - France for example is stronger than ever," said vp, global sales and partner relations Steven Spivak.

"But the hottest destinations right now are Spain, Portugal, Ireland and Scotland - these markets have been record-breaking," he added.

Besides the external factors, Spivak also attributes the strong year in Australia to some important points of difference between Tauck and rival small ship luxury cruise brands.

"We offer experiences that no other brand can get access to, like going to The Louvre in Paris or Italy's Sistine Chapel after they're closed to the public...and that's all included," Spivak said.

"Australians like to travel well... it's our second biggest market in



the world, it's bigger than Canada and it's bigger than the United Kingdom, second only to the United States," he added.

The cruise line boasts a strong repeat customer base, with more than half of its sales comprised of guests who have travelled with the company in the past, this year securing "85% of business from repeats and referrals".

Tauck plans to capitalise on its current growth trajectory by continuing to invest in important trade initiatives in Australia.

"We do events in partnership with travel agents, educational programs, we also have something called the Tauck Academy Program, where we actually take agents to the destinations," Spivak said.

For further info on 2019 European cruises, **CLICK HERE**.

Pictured: Tauck vp, global sales and partner relations Steven Spivak (**top**), and (**inset**) a selection of the company's 2019 brochures.

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Triumph turns to Sunrise



Seabourn returns

SEABOURN is returning to Australasia with *Seabourn Encore* and *Seabourn Sojourn* over the 2018 - 2019 season.

The ships will offer multiple cruises around Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific with selected itineraries headed into boutique ports, sheltered coves and hidden harbours, while enjoying excursions such as 'Shopping with the Chef' and special deck events, dance parties and Movies Under the Stars.

Along with regular favourites, both ships will also have new itineraries and extended voyages including the 16-day New Zealand's Splendours on board *Seabourn Encore* and the 22-day Landfalls of Captain Cook and 36-Day Holiday Australia Exploration on board *Seabourn Sojourn* - [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

Endeavour sailings

CRYSTAL Yacht Expedition Cruises yesterday unveiled the itineraries for its newest vessel, *Crystal Endeavor*.

Setting sail from Aug 2020 through to Jan 2021, she will sail voyages of 12 to 22 days to destinations such as Japan and the Russian Far East, New Zealand, Australia and Antarctica, along with the Philippines and Bali.

Itinerary highlights include the 16-day Philippines, Borneo & Indonesia Quest, sailing between Taipei & Bali on 29 Sep 2020, where pax will get to explore Taroko Gorge, and Borneo's Kinabatangan River.

Another key trip is the 22-day Antarctica & The Ross Sea Expedition, Christchurch to Hobart, leaving 28 Jan 2021.

Bookings for Crystal Society guests opens on 09 Aug and to the public on 23 Aug.

CARNIVAL Cruise Lines has announced a multimillion dollar refurbishment is scheduled in 2019 for *Carnival Triumph* that will see the ship emerge from its dry dock renamed *Carnival Sunrise* (pictured) and sporting a host of new features.

The \$200 million makeover will take place in Cadiz, Spain, from 01 Mar, where it will spend two months being refitted before re-entering service with a series of five- to seven-day voyages departing from Norfolk, Virginia, USA from 29 Apr 2019.

The update will include the redesign of two Captain's Suites offering floor-to-ceiling windows and extended balcony suites, while all other Staterooms will be refreshed with island-inspired

interiors in bright colours inspired by the line's Caribbean itineraries.

Other new features include eight new restaurants, four new bar and lounge areas, three new recreation and sporting areas, an expanded Cloud 9 Spa, larger retail spaces and a selection of new kids activity areas.

"Carnival's investments are part of an overall plan that is raising the bar on ship amenities and features, itineraries and offshore excursions that our guests are loving," said Gus Antorcha, chief operating officer for Carnival.

Carnival Sunrise's first round of itineraries departing from Norfolk, New York and Ft Lauderdale are now open for reservations - for more information, [CLICK HERE](#).



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Scenic embraces Vietnamese artists

SCENIC has tapped into a rise in popularity of contemporary South-East Asian art by installing more than 30 hand-picked pieces on board its *Scenic Spirit*.

Guests travelling on the Mekong River cruise ship can take a guided tour to view the works while

learning about the artists and their inspiration.

Scenic's 2019/2020 South East Asia brochure is out now.



Ecruising launches best of Japan tour

FROM Mar 2019, Ecruising is offering travellers a new 22-night cruise and land tour that explores a range of Japan's highlights.

Beginning in Hong Kong on 17 Mar, guests spend one night in the city before boarding Holland America's *ms Westerdam* and cruising

through Shanghai, Qingdao, Tianjin & arriving in Yokohama 31 Mar.

Following a three-day city tour guests visit Kyoto & Osaka before returning to Australia on 07 Apr.

Call 1300 369 848 for information.



Helloworld Travel cruise stars



HELLOWORLD Travel's wholesale division last weekend celebrated its top achieving agents on Hamilton Island, including this group who were named as the Cruise Star finalists for 2018.

The consultants were evaluated on their sales across the Cruise Team and Seven Oceans Cruising portfolio, with Lisa Carter from Capricorn Travel taking out the top award as Helloworld's National Cruise Consultant.

Next year the cruise incentive is being separated from the company's FIT brands, with the

Cruise Stars to head off for a week-long Alaska voyage courtesy of Crystal Cruises (**CW** 31 Jul).

Pictured above with Helloworld Travel executive director Cinzia Burnes are, from left: Angela Kaluzyn, Skilled Travel; Brian Bennett, Travel 7 Cruise Professionals; Gemma Smith of City Beach Travel; Richard Schouwen of Kawana Waters Travel; and Lisa Carter of Capricorn Travel.

The other finalist was Catherine Bell of the Hunter Travel Group's Cruise Travel Centre Green Hills, who wasn't able to be there.

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Cruise child-free

CARNIVAL Cruise Line is offering a Honeyboomers Sale on twin cabins for bookings made by 06 Aug.

Couples can enjoy a child-free holiday & save up to \$800 - call 13 31 94 & quote RD7.

Viking Xmas cruises

VIKING Cruises is reminding agents it still has a number of places on a range of its Christmas cruises in 2019.

Journeys include an 18-day South America and the Chilean Fjords exploration departing Argentina's capital Buenos Aires for Santiago.

The trip is priced from \$9,995 per person in a Veranda stateroom and departs 21 Dec 2019.

Another cruise option is the 10-day Portugal's River of Gold cruise setting sail from Lisbon to Porto on board the *Viking Helgrim*.

The journey is priced from \$3,895 per person for a Standard stateroom and departs 21 Dec 2019.

For further information on Viking's list of Christmas cruises, [CLICK HERE](#).

P&O ad complaint

P&O Cruises has had a complaint brought against one of its advertising campaigns dismissed by the Ad Standards Community Panel.

Ad Standards received complaints against the cruise brand regarding its "ship yeah" and "a shipload of fun" television commercials.

The Panel determined the ads "did not use strong or obscene language" & therefore were not inappropriate.



P&O Cruises recently celebrated Vanuatu Independence Day on 30 Jul on board the *Pacific Explorer* along with its many Ni-Vanuatu crew members.

Amidst the party and national pride was Joanna Toka (**inset centre**), one of P&O's longest serving Ni Vanuatu crew members who is a bar steward on board *Pacific Explorer* and has been sailing with P&O since 2002.

Toka's husband Jemson (**inset right**) and son Junior (**inset left**) are also employed by P&O, making the day of celebration very much a family affair.

Jemson is a well respected member of the onboard Ni Vanuatu community, working as a stateroom steward after joining P&O in 2004.

Toka's son Junior is the newest

member of the family to join the crew, making his parents proud and working hard in *Pacific Explorer's* galley.

"It's fantastic that we have two generations of the one Ni Vanuatu family working together on *Pacific Explorer*," said Carnival Australia & P&O Cruises Australia president Sture Myrmell.

"It shows in the most emphatic way that cruising represents a very real opportunity for island communities," he added.



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THE donkeys on the Greek island of Santorini have some advice for the cruise industry - stop allowing obese passengers to ride on our backs!

Christina Kaloudi from the Santorini Animal Welfare Association believes in the last 10 years, the number of overweight tourists arriving via cruise ships from America, Russia and the UK has "trebled", and that the donkeys are now overworked and can't handle the much heavier loads.

"The holiday season on the islands is now a lot longer than it used to be, meaning that the donkeys are pretty much in work the whole year round," Kaloudi told the media.

The animals have traditionally been used on the island to transport people over hilly areas which vehicles cannot access, however, during the peak months of May to Oct, up to five cruise ships a day dock in Santorini, bringing 1,200 tourists who ride the donkeys to Fira.

Thankfully, most owners follow the regulations and don't allow tourists over a certain weight to take a ride.

Talk about having the weight of the world on your shoulders!



FACE-2-FACE: Lisa Pile

VICE President Sales AU/NZ
Regent Seven Seas Cruises.

1. What motivates you in your career?

I truly love what I do. I know we are not saving lives, but I very much hope we are enhancing many. I do jump out of bed each morning!

2. Most common assumption people make about your job? It's all fun!

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

Being available, honest, understanding their requirements as well as those of their clients, providing a quality product/service which they can sell with confidence and never undermining them.

4. Biggest challenge facing the industry?

Capacity and port access. It is predicted that the cruise industry will carry 40 million passengers by 2027. Australia has a huge opportunity to benefit from this, but growth of the industry in this country is dependent on our ports being able to accommodate more capacity – the problem is especially acute in Sydney.

5. Advice for up-and-comers?

It's a cliché I know, but you have to really love what you do. We spend a lot of time at work. If you love what you do, you'll have great energy and want to



continue to learn and develop.

6. What was your best fam?

In Aug 2016, we took 50 of Australia & New Zealand's top travel agents on the inaugural voyage of *Seven Seas Explorer*; the most luxurious ship ever built, sailing from Barcelona to Lisbon. It was the most fantastic experience, the people make the memories all the more special.

7. My next cruise will be...

In Nov on *Seven Seas Explorer*. I love the Mediterranean outside of the traditional peak period. I will celebrate my birthday in Rome - does it get much better?

8. Favourite cruise destination?

The Mediterranean is fun.

9. Celebrity you'd like to cruise with?

Clive James, Barry Humphries.

10. Favourite thing to do in port?

Walk the city and find a fabulous place to eat and experience local food and wine whilst people watching.

11. When not at work, how do you spend your time?

Catching up with my beautiful family and friends.



Taking a National Outlook

THERE has been much discussion this week around the ongoing berthing issues in Sydney.

ACA will continue to work with all parties on the studies around developing Botany Bay as the next feasible port solution.

Most importantly, we need to recognise in any discussions around Australia's growth in the cruise industry globally, that all our ports are intrinsically linked and it is inappropriate for us to look at any one destination in isolation.

SA for example recently delivered its cruise strategy and it includes a target of 100 cruise ship visits by 2020 - an economic injection of \$200 million into South Australia's economy.

This is more than doable if everyone works together.

On a local level, regional ports like Kangaroo Island and Port Lincoln need to work with the major capital city hub in Adelaide.

To implement successful multistate itineraries, we need to ensure all the states across southern Australia - Victoria, WA and Tasmania – are working cohesively with South Australia.

And most critically, for long-haul itineraries to work, Australia's gateway ports like Sydney need to function effectively.

So when we sit down at future meetings to discuss berthing issues in Sydney we need to understand that this has a huge flow on effect around Australia being considered as a viable cruise destination.

I am confident we can solve this current challenge so we can support our national cruise industry to succeed well into the future.