

Cruise Weekly today

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

WA targets cruise

THE West Australian Govt has committed to “actively pursuing three new cruise lines to add WA ports to their itineraries” under a two-year action plan to boost the number of visitors to the state.

The strategy also aims to establish Broome as a “desirable and accessible circumnavigation port,” and a WA touchpoint destination for new lines once dredging has been completed in 2019.

The plan also involves working with industry to develop new customised shore-excursion experiences and across government on solutions for port infrastructure issues in Exmouth.

Viking and HLO feud extends to NZ

HELLOWORLD Travel’s boycott of Viking Cruises extends to the New Zealand market, despite Viking Cruises allowing the group to keep its contract with its NZ wholesale arm, GO Holidays.

Viking Cruises md Australia and New Zealand Michelle Black said HLO “made it very clear that the GO Holidays contract would not be mutually exclusive and it was “all in or all out”, adding that Viking respected HLO’s right to make that business decision.

“We no longer have any wholesale-only contracts in New Zealand or Australia,” Black said.

“All our strategies are founded on putting our relationship with the agents & their clients first, and our focus is to work with the travel partners who want to work with and support Viking.”

Helloworld Travel executive director and head of wholesale & inbound Cinzia Burnes told



CW on Mon “we are working as a united group and I am not going to accept having something done in NZ which is different to Australia, so we’re going to stop selling it completely”.

In an email to members of the Helloworld Group (CW Tue), Burnes emphasised “Viking is not a Preferred Supplier of the Retail network, nor will it become one”.

“Should there be an approach or should they have thought there was going to be an approach for them to become a

preferred of Helloworld’s retail, there would be no way that would be allowed,” Burnes said.

When asked why a retail agreement hadn’t been pursued in the past, Burnes said “the smaller cruise lines are normally quite happy to sell just through the wholesale division, knowing that they get to all of our retail”.

On Tue, Black told **Cruise Weekly** Viking approached Helloworld Travel Group last year regarding a retail agreement and “they were not interested”.

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Thursday 22nd March 2018

Youth eye polar regions

MORE younger travellers in their 20s and 30s are booking trips to Antarctica, Polar Latitudes director global sales Sunniva Sorby told *Cruise Weekly* on a visit down under as part of Wild Earth Travel's Polar Travel Expo.

"People who I imagine couldn't afford to do a trip like this, afford to do a trip like this," she said.

The increase was coming from young, active travellers who might be taking a year off to travel and seemed to be "finding their way to Antarctica," she said.

"It's the active traveller, which we hope to attract because it's an active trip."

On the other end of the scale, Polar Latitudes was also witnessing more "typical cruisers", including those who are less mobile.

"I'm seeing an increase in travellers with limited mobility where one of the partners is



okay with not really getting in the Zodiac and going ashore... but wanting to travel there and see the place but maybe with the option of sitting and watching from their cabin," Sorby said.

Wild Earth Travel marketing and bdm - Australia, Neil Saunders said the company was also seeing a boost in family groups over the last three to four months, in particular parents in their 50s and 60s travelling with children in their teens to 20s.

More on the Wild Earth Travel Polar Expo on **page three**.

Pacific Eden's new title



CRUISE & Maritime Voyages has revealed the maiden sailing and new name for P&O's *Pacific Eden* when she joins the CMV fleet in Apr 2019.

In keeping with the line's tradition of honouring explorers in the names of its ships, *Eden* will be re-named *Vasco da Gama* after the famous Portuguese explorer and navigator.

The name was chosen by members of CMV's loyalty scheme, Columbus Club, and trade partners, who had the choice of voting for Pytheas, Vasco da Gama, Henry Hudson or Amerigo Vespucci.

When voting closed earlier this week, CMV chairman and ceo Christian Verhounig said

"from the thousands received, the winner is Vasco da Gama with 46% of the total vote".

Vasco da Gama's maiden voyage will depart from Singapore on 24 Apr 2019 on a 46-night adventure visiting South East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Egypt, Jordan, transiting the Suez Canal, Israel and the highlights of the Mediterranean before arriving in London Tilbury, Amsterdam and Bremerhaven, Germany.

More details of *Vasco da Gama's* maiden voyage will be released in May.

P&O Cruises announced earlier this month that it had sold *Eden* (pictured), under plans to renew the fleet over time (**CW** 08 Mar).



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Ovation's sea trials



SEABOURN *Ovation* has completed her final round of sea trials in the Mediterranean off the coast of Italy.

The new ultra-luxury vessel for Seabourn departed the Fincantieri shipyard in Genoa on 14 Mar for four days at sea.

During the trial, a team of officers and engineers tested the ship's technical and mechanical systems.

Ovation returned to the shipyard on 18 Mar for some final touches and the delivery of the vessel is on schedule to take place on 27 Apr.

Seabourn's fifth ship will begin her maiden season on 05 May with an 11-day inaugural voyage from Venice, Italy to Barcelona, Spain and she will be named in a ceremony on 11 May in Valletta, Malta.

Wild Earth's big push



WILD Earth Travel is in the midst of its biggest Polar Travel Expo, packing in events in Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane, all in the space of five days.

The expo is covering the offerings of Heritage Expeditions, Adventure Canada and Polar Latitude and marks the first time Wild Earth Travel has brought big players in the polar regions into Australia for a roadshow.

This week the team will meet with a total of around 200 agents across events and visits to agent stores for educational sessions.

The delegation also took the time to drop by the **CW** office.

"Everybody's loved the fact that they're learning about a new destination and product, which is so foreign to Australians in the

first place – the polar regions," Neil Saunders, marketing & bdm Australia Wild Earth Travel said.

Saunders said the visit had been coordinated with "the right time" to book the 2019/20 season.

"You can't leave it until the last minute to go, because there is no room, they will be full.

"Small ships fill well in advance, very quickly," he said.

The expo has also marked the launch of the 2019/20 brochures from Polar Latitude and Adventure Canada.

Pictured are: Neil Saunders, marketing & bdm - Australia Wild Earth Travel; Sunniva Sorby, director global sales Polar Latitudes; Nicci Foulsham, bdm Wild Earth Travel & MJ Swan, business development director Adventure Canada.

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Back-Roads, Silversea & Tauck together



LAST night a lucky group of Melbourne-based My Travel Group agents were treated to a “triple indulgence” event featuring Silversea Cruises, Tauck and Back-Roads Touring.

Hosted at the RACV Club, the night included an exclusive “behind the scenes” cooking experience with the venue’s head chef, along with a captivating surprise opera performance which truly evoked the upmarket style of the three brands.

More than 50% of Back-Roads Touring guests book their travels in conjunction with a cruise, and 85% of the company’s clientele are from Australia and NZ, said Emma McInnes from Back-Roads.

And it’s not all about land, with Back-Roads also offering several European barge departures, exploring the “back waterways” of the continent, she said.

Anastasia Kotanidis from Silversea Cruises spoke about the huge boom in business for the

company’s expedition cruising offering, while Silversea is also seeing strong demand for its free air offers to Europe, along with \$3,998 Business class upgrades.

Canada & Alaska are strong for Silversea, with a 60% increase in demand, while multi-generation travel to the Galapagos is “going crazy,” Kotanidis said.

Tauck’s Rachel Javier said bookings had gone “through the roof” in the last two years since the company released A\$ pricing, with popular river cruising innovations including no single supplement options, triple cabins and “loft cabins” with elevated indoor balconies

Pictured above from left are tenor Brenton Spiteri; Rachel Javier from Tauck/Travel the World; Michelle Ruiz, My Travel Group; Captain Dennis Basham of Back-Roads Touring; Anastasia Kotanidis, Silversea Cruises; musician Dermot Tutty; & Emma McInnes, Back-Roads Touring.

Unpack all of Carnival Australia’s recent announcements in the March issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin



FACE-2-FACE: Kyle Duffield

FORMER national account manager Bentours/Hurtigruten, Cox & Kings.



1. What motivates you in your career?

I’ve always loved the travel industry, it’s a passion. I’ve made great friends over the years and I enjoy working in partnership to create new products, launch campaigns, motivate and train my clients.

2. Most common assumption people make about your job?

That my work is one big junket! It has its benefits, however it’s anything but. Family see the hours of administration and the preparation that goes into my work.

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

Being professional and available. I’ve always followed up on issues, answered my phone and have been honest and empathetic when dealing with agents. If you support your clients then this is returned twofold. Always make your sales call effective, I don’t want to waste each other’s time.

4. Biggest challenge facing the industry?

Technology. Rapidly changing shifts in how people connect with travel products means that we need to stay up to date with

the latest trends. The public are very well informed and have access to knowledge at one click. Wholesalers especially need to specialise and provide high levels of service to remain relevant.

5. Advice for up-and-comers?

Listen and learn. The industry is in constant change and advice from successful operators can be invaluable. Ask questions if you don’t know the answer and educate yourself. Also enjoy yourself, this is a fantastic industry to be a part of.

6. What was your best fam?

That’s a hard one, I’ve had so many great trips over the years. It would be a toss between the Maharaja’s Express in India or Norway and Denmark for the opening of the Christmas Markets.

7. My next cruise will be...

Definitely Antarctica on Hurtigruten. I’d love to be a passenger on the new ship *Ms Roald Amundsen*. The idea of travelling through the Antarctic in silence (on electric power) would be amazing.

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Ponant heads south

PONANT has opened bookings for more than 22 Antarctica departures in the 2019/20 season, including one new itinerary and an increased number of sailings beyond the Antarctic Circle.

A new 21-day Antarctic Odyssey cruise aboard *Le Lyréal* will visit the South Orkney Islands, home to leopard seals and numerous penguin species.

Travelling from Montevideo, it also visits the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula before ending in Ushuaia in Argentina, with prices from \$19,410ppts.

The line has also increased the number of expeditions across the Antarctic Circle from one to three, travelling beyond latitude 66° 33' 39" South on the 17-day Beyond the Polar



Circle cruise from Ushuaia.

Other new features in the program include a premium package available with all cruises departing from Ushuaia, which includes an overnight stay in the luxury Arakur Resort and an excursion to Tierra del Fuego National Park.

In all there are five different itineraries on offer starting 15 Nov 2019 and priced from \$13,150ppts for the 11-day The Antarctic Peninsula.



ROYAL Caribbean Cruises (RCL) and Ctrip have confirmed they will end their Chinese joint venture SkySea Cruise Line and sell its ship, *Golden Era*.

The line has operated since May 2015 and was billed as the "first smart contemporary cruise line" specifically developed for the Chinese market.

SkySea will continue to operate until a final voyage is confirmed in coming weeks, and is expected to have carried nearly 500,000 guests on almost 300 cruises by the time it ends.

RCL and Ctrip said they would end the venture in the northern autumn this year and that *Golden Era* would be sold to TUI's Marella Cruises, with delivery in Dec.

Tui plans to operate the ship as an adults-only vessel to be called *Marella Explorer 2* (render

pictured), sailing from Naples.

Despite the line's demise, Ctrip and RCL insisted China would continue to be an important passenger source.

"The cruise market in China is still in the early stages but holds big potential," the pair said.

"The cruise business will continue to be an essential part of Ctrip's one-stop platform and the company will continue to work closely with all the cruise lines in the world, including Royal Caribbean, to better service the growing number of Chinese cruise travellers."

RCL said it would continue to serve the Chinese market through its Royal Caribbean International brand "with the largest fleet deployment in the region and a strong collaborative relationship with Ctrip".



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Princess goes south

PRINCESS Cruises will allocate its largest ever deployment of ships to Adelaide for a summer season, with plans to dispatch three of its vessels to the South Australian capital during the 2019/20 period.

Three international roundtrips will set sail from Adelaide, including a new 18-day Fiji itinerary on board the *Golden Princess* and a 55-day Indian Ocean and South Africa Odyssey cruise undertaken by the *Sun Princess*.

More broadly, Princess has flagged the 2019/20 season to be the biggest Australian & NZ deployment in the cruise line's history, led by the maiden arrival of *Ruby Princess*.

Dream plots Oz move



DREAM Cruises president Thatcher Brown has outlined plans for the line to become "an attractive cruise alternative to a land vacation" to the eight million Asian tourists predicted to visit Australia and New Zealand each year by 2021.

"Our plans are to have Shanghai and Tianjin as homeports in summer and then, to offer itineraries in Australia, New Zealand, the ASEAN region, and the west coast of the United States in winter," he said.

Brown made the comments as the cruise line celebrated a steel cutting ceremony for the first of two global class vessels.

Dream Cruises' global class ships will be designed specifically

for the Asian cruise market and bring the Dream fleet to four.

"Expanding the Dream Cruises brand 'globally' goes hand-in-hand with an aggressive new-build program that will more than double our capacity by 2021," Brown said.

The two dream class vessels were originally set to join the line's sister brand Star Cruises, but were instead shifted to "bolster the Dream Cruises' expansion plans and global aspirations," Genting Cruise Lines president Kent Zhu said.

"However, we are commencing our design for a new class of ship for Star Cruises which will rejuvenate the Star Cruises brand in the coming years," he added.

Silver Whisper to undergo refurbishment

SILVERSEA Cruises has revealed its 382-pax capacity *Silver Whisper* vessel will be undergoing a revamp ahead of her 140-day World Cruise 2019 which will see the ship sail to all seven continents.

Renovations on board will include fresh decor in all guest suites, new carpet throughout, updated furniture in the gaming rooms, and new state-of-the-art machinery installed in the *Whisper's* gymnasium.

The exterior will also see space added for Zodiac storage.

Upgrades will aim to bring the ship up to par with sister ship *Silver Muse* with works expected to be completed 19 Dec.



NEW public spaces? Refreshed cabins? Updated carpets? Energy-efficient lighting?

While all of these innovations are important, German cruise line AIDA really showed it was in tune with the public when it highlighted the most important additions during a recent Dubai drydock for its *AIDAstella*.

The key feature was the "Langese Happiness Station" - a brand new ice-cream bar allowing guests to create their own personal favourites - while AIDA also showcased a new gaming centre for the on-board teenagers' club.

CLIA UPDATE



with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Masters Pre-launch

2018 marks the 21st anniversary of the annual CLIA Australasia Masters Conference, and this year we are expecting record levels of participation.

We are very excited to be partnering with P&O Cruises, who will be hosting this year's masters on board the *Pacific Aria* in the South Pacific from 19th -26th Oct.

Earlier this week we announced that we are accepting pre-registrations ahead of the official launch in early Apr, and we have already been inundated with requests from CLIA agents wanting to participate.

The Masters Conference is a unique opportunity - there is nothing like it in the travel sector, let alone the cruise industry.

Recent Masters graduates have said: "Masters exceeded my expectations, I can't wait to go back to the office and start work, in fact, I just wish I could do the training again, it was so inspiring!", "Best course I have attended in 31 years of travel" and "It was a great experience which is really helping my business".

Achieving your Masters Accreditation will see you joining an elite group officially endorsed by the cruise industry body as the most qualified individuals to be advising about cruise holidays.

The skills gained through attending the Masters will set you apart from your competitors.

If you aspire to be the best in your field don't miss out, and pre-register by emailing info-aus@cruising.

