

Cruise Weekly today

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

Royal upgrades

ROYAL Caribbean International has announced a new program called RoyalUp, allowing Australian and New Zealand guests to bid for stateroom upgrades on select sailings from Feb.

Passengers will receive an email inviting them to submit an offer and if successful will be automatically upgraded.

"We'll take care of the upgrade arrangements whilst travel partners receive full commission on the upgrade amount and will be copied on all communication," said RCL Cruises Australia Director of Sales Jason Triebel.

For more info, [CLICK HERE](#).

Aurora releases 2020/21 program

POLAR exploration specialist Aurora Expeditions has launched its 2020/21 program featuring itineraries on board the *Greg Mortimer* which debuts in Oct.

The latest collection features a range of new itineraries, with destinations listed including Iceland, West Greenland and Costa Rica.

Highlights include the new 11-day West Greenland sailing where guests can take photos of the many ice-filled fjords dotted throughout the UNESCO World Heritage site.

Another interesting package is the 11-day Iceland Circumnavigation where passengers will have the chance to spot breaching whales in Husavik, explore the remote fjords and bays in Westfjords, and visit Vatnajokull National Park to observe glacial lagoons and black sand beaches.



"We're thrilled to launch our new program which embodies our 27-year long legacy of offering small group expeditions that allow passengers to experience and access these otherwise extremely difficult to reach destinations," said Aurora Expeditions Managing Director Robert Halfpenny.

"Our sales have grown exponentially over the past year, with 95% of our Antarctica 2019/20 season and 75% of our Arctic 2020 season already sold," he added.

Aurora also has an earlybird deal in place to mark the launch, offering savings of up to 25% on new voyages booked by 31 Mar.

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Silversea musters rural support



British agent godmother for new AmaDouro

AMAWATERWAYS has announced that Julia Lo Bue-Said, CEO of travel agency group Advantage Travel Partnership, will be the godmother of its new *AmaDouro*, which will debut in Porto, Portugal on 12 Apr 2019.

Bue-Said (pictured) is AmaWaterways' first UK godmother, with Ama Executive Vice President and co-owner, Kristin Karst, saying a huge part of the river cruise company's success had been due to its "very important trade partners".



AmaWaterways UK opened just two years ago, and is seeing strong support from the trade with a 30% year-on-year increase in revenue.

SILVERSEA Cruises is making the most of the inaugural visit to Australia of its flagship *Silver Muse* this month (CW 04 Jan), taking the opportunity to do some good by supporting Australia's drought-stricken farmers and their families.

A new partnership between the upmarket cruise line with Rural Aid aims to raise awareness and funds for the drought, including a \$20,000 cash donation in lieu of a fireworks display originally planned for *Muse's* maiden arrival into Sydney on 06 Jan.

Ahead of the ship's visit, Silversea last year deployed its photographic ambassador Steve McCurry to the Australian outback where he took a series

of powerful images capturing the drought - including the iconic photograph pictured above.

New Silversea donors to Rural Aid can enter the Silversea competition to go into the running to win a cruise plus a copy of a selected image from the photographic collection.

The competition is being conducted in partnership with Nine Publishing, through its newly revamped Traveller portal.

Silversea Cruises MD Australia/NZ, Adam Armstrong, said the initiative reflected Silversea's ethos of bringing guests not just to the coastlines but closer to the "authentic heartlands" of the destinations the line visits.

See traveller.com.au for more.

Adv Canada deal

ADVENTURE Canada and Cruise Traveller are offering two nights free and no solo supplement on an 18 night expedition cruise taking in the Northwest Passage in Aug 2019 - call 1800 507 777.

McEvoy to SkyBus

SEALINK Travel Group Chairman and former Tourism Australia CEO and Managing Director Andrew McEvoy has today also been named as Chair of the AATS Group of companies, trading as SkyBus.

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Carnival Fun Zone

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SeaDream combos

SEADREAM Yacht Club has released a program of extended sailings called "Grand Voyages", which combine two-, three- or multiple seven-day sailings in the Caribbean or the Mediterranean for 2019/2020.

The voyages can also be combined with a trans-Atlantic crossing of 12 or 13 days.

The program allows guests to explore various destinations in separate journeys including the French or Italian Riviera, the Greek Isles and the Adriatic Sea.

Complimentary inclusions consist of wines and spirits, water sports and mountain bikes for shore expeditions, lunch and dinner, along with select crew-led activities such as hikes and walking tours.

For full sailing details call 02 9958 4444.

Oceania bubbles

OCEANIA Cruises has introduced a new luxury Dom Perignon Experience dining service.

The new offering pairs six meal courses with a different expression and vintage from Dom Perignon's collection.

"We worked with the team at Dom Perignon to pair the perfect champagnes with the perfect flavours and the outcome is spectacular," said Oceania Cruises CEO Bob Binder, adding "Marina and Riviera will be the only places in the world for travellers to enjoy this exclusive Dom Perignon experience".

The pairing dinner is currently available for all *Riviera* voyages and will be introduced aboard *Marina* from 31 Jan.

Reservations are required, and the cost is US\$29pp.

MSC marine experience



MSC Cruises has revealed details of its new Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve (**pictured**) experience set to be unveiled on 09 Nov.

The former sand extraction site in the Bahamas is being transformed into a marine reserve and private island, which MSC said would offer travellers a chance to "connect with nature" and learn about the environment.

"Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve will bring something new and unique to our Caribbean itineraries from Miami and Havana and is set to become a truly memorable highlight for our guests," said MSC Cruises' CEO

Gianni Onorato.

"There was no need for us to build extensively on an island that already had the ingredients of a natural paradise," he added.

Sun beds will be available on all beaches and some will also offer cabanas that can be rented.

The Ocean Cay excursions will allow visitors to discover the waters around the island through snorkel safaris, kayak tours and paddle boarding.

Guests are also able to rent a smaller island close to the main body for the day, this will include a private boat taxi, a marquee, sun beds, loungers, along with food and drinks.



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SEABOURN

CMV appoints new NSM



CRUISE & Maritime Voyages (CMV) Australia has appointed Darren Chigwidden to the role of National Sales Manager Australia and New Zealand.

He will commence in the position on 29 Jan and be based at the Adelaide office.

"We're thrilled to bring Darren on board to work alongside our

fantastic community of travel agents and help them develop their business," said CMV Managing Director Dean Brazier.

Chigwidden brings more than 20 years of travel experience to the position, previously holding successful tenures with major cruise brands Royal Caribbean, Princess, and P&O.



LUXURY cruise operator Ponant has announced it is now offering free unlimited wi-fi accessible to guests anywhere on its ships.

Irrespective of stateroom category, passengers can now take advantage of a satellite connection which the cruise line said can be used "in most of the regions travelled by the company's ships, even the remotest, and for the full duration of the cruise".

The enhanced wi-fi service fulfils one of the "excellence goals" laid

down by Ponant to establish an improved guest experience, and is also another step in the cruise line's digitalisation process.

Ponant noted internet access may be slower or in some situations interrupted, depending on certain geographic locations or other circumstances beyond Ponant's control.

Ponant described itself as "leading the way with a new style of luxury cruising through a unique concept of sea travel".

Pictured: Ponant's *Le Laperouse*.

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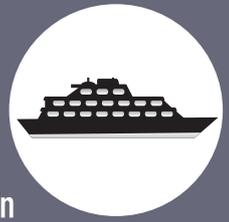
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Need help wading through the huge variety of cruise options out there?

Check out the 2019 Cruise Guide for a comprehensive tool.

CRUISE WEEKLY Travel Daily travelBulletin



Capt Oz Day cruise

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises has released a range of Australia Day lunch and dinner cruises on Sydney Harbour aboard its flagship *MV Sydney 2000*.

Three lunch & dinner cruise options are available on either the Sky, Club or Show decks, with attractions including a jet-ski and flyboard show, an on-water opera performance, yacht ballet, and a series of light and firework displays.

Prices start from \$149 per adult and \$99 per child for the Australia Day buffet option.

Guaranteed window seating for lunch and dinner is an extra \$35 per person.



SEARCHING for a "cool" new river cruise attraction, then look no further than the Presumpscot River in Maine which is currently home to a slow turning icy disk.

The strange phenomenon has stunned curious onlookers, with some comparing the odd sight to an alien spacecraft or a marine crop circle.

Perhaps don't burn your noodle trying to solve it for too long though, it'll have you going around in circles!



Window into a RockStar



VIRGIN Voyages has ramped up its preview of what life will be like on board its first ship *Scarlet Lady*, releasing several renderings of its upcoming RockStar Suite offering.

The gregarious Richard Branson's unique vision of what the rock'n'roll lifestyle looks



like at sea includes massive common living spaces (**top**), bathrooms with "Peek-a-view" showers (**inset above**), swanky bedrooms with floor-to-ceiling views (**inset left**), and terrace spaces for drinking sparkling wine in the sun (**below**).



MV Werften buys

SHIPYARD group MV Werften will acquire Germany's largest ship design office Neptun Ship Design.

The design office will become a subsidiary of MV Werften and provide design services for the shipyard group.

The deal will increase the workforce of MV Werften by 120 experts, with the new engineers and designers to mainly work on the basic design of new ship projects.

Neptun Ship Design MD Stephan Merkel said the acquisition will allow the company "to take on the challenges involved with the engineering required for the most advanced pax ships in the world as well as the entire current and future product portfolio of MV Werften".

Diverse Carnival

CARNIVAL Corporation has been named one of America's Best Employers for Diversity in 2019 by Forbes Media.

"As the world's largest cruise company with nine global cruise line brands, we have a deep commitment to our over 120,000 talented and dedicated employees representing nearly 150 countries, so we fully embrace the importance of diversity and inclusion," said Carnival's Chief Communications Officer Roger Frizzell.

Respondents were surveyed on topics such as age, gender equality, ethnicity, disability, and LGBTQ+ issues.

CRUISE WEEKLY

www.cruiseweekly.com.au

Cruise Weekly is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Cruise Weekly is Australia's leading travel industry cruise publication.

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