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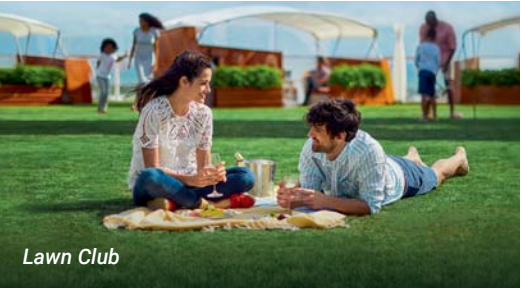
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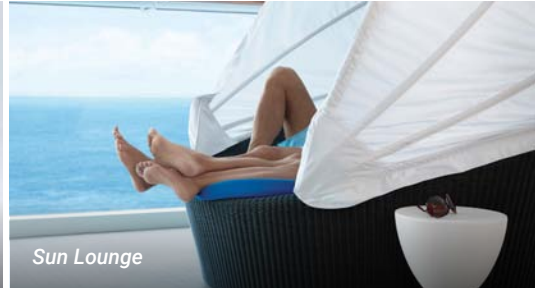
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## Grow the market, urges RCL's Gavin Smith

**NEWLY** appointed Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines (RCL) Managing Director for Australia and New Zealand Gavin Smith (**CW** 09 Oct) has wasted no time getting in front of the cruise industry, urging the local sector to focus on the "new to cruise" market.

Speaking at a function earlier this week to launch RCL's 2019/20 Australasian season, Smith noted the exceptional penetration rate of cruising among the Australian and New Zealand population, but added that despite this, there was still a huge opportunity.

"As cruise lines we don't really compete with each other for guests...what we're competing for is newcomers," he said.

"What we're competing for are the 20-odd million Aussies and Kiwis who just haven't gotten around to it yet - they're the people we want to get after."

Smith said the sudden recall of his predecessor, Susan Bonner, to return to work with Celebrity Cruises in Miami had created a great opportunity for him to return home.

"I'm excited to be back in the business here, because Australia's an exciting place to work".

The cruise landscape has changed somewhat since Smith headed offshore about four years ago.

"We've got to be very honest with ourselves about the strength



of the competition in the local market."

He didn't directly refer to rival Carnival Corporation's deployment of newer vessels in Australasia, including *Majestic Princess*, but noted the "heavy investment" being undertaken by Royal Caribbean's competition which has brought "big changes" in hardware.

"We've had a really good run here, and we've got world class ships, but I think we've got to be bolder, we've got to be more single-minded, a lot more purposeful," Smith said.

He flagged a revitalised approach to the industry, saying "we've got to win back the hearts and minds of the trade".

Smith noted the burgeoning order books of all three Royal Caribbean brands, saying there were 10-year plans to build "ship after ship after ship".

Innovation continues to be key for Royal Caribbean, which as well as developing some of the world's largest and most technically advanced vessels, has also gone so far as to create its own destinations in the Caribbean, such as Coco Cay, which are now among its top-rated ports.

While some of the new capacity in the fleet pipeline will go to markets with huge potential such as China, "these ships will also continue to come to Australia and New Zealand.

"We'll sort out old Circular Quay over here, we'll work out where the ships are going to park and how that's going to work.

"We'll create the room and then we're going to create the market," he concluded.

Smith is **pictured** at the season launch event with Royal Caribbean Marketing Director, Kathryn Valk.

### Cruise Weekly today

**Cruise Weekly** today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a front cover wrap from **Celebrity Cruises**.



### en route to Moscow, Russia

Today's issue of **CW** is coming to you courtesy of **Viking Cruises**, which is hosting a **VIP Waterways of the Tsars** river cruise from **Moscow to St Petersburg**.

**A RIVER** cruise provides an ideal way to experience the highlights of Russia, with Viking's iconic 12-day itinerary allowing plenty of time in both Moscow and St Petersburg while also exploring the countryside along the Volga River from the comfort of a ship.

We will be aboard *Viking Akun* which features 102 outside staterooms with all the mod cons, a sun deck, two bars, a restaurant and more.

Wi-fi is free, with ports including Uglich, Yaroslavl, Kuzino, Kizhi Island and Mandrogy featuring Viking's included shore excursions plus an impressive range of optional add-ons.

### Solstice returns

**CELEBRITY** Cruises is today celebrating the 2019/20 return of its popular *Celebrity Solstice* to Australasian waters with a range of special offers.

Deposits of just \$25 can secure a cabin, with fares priced from \$1,299 and up to \$400 in on-board credit available for some itineraries.

For details see the **cover page** of today's **Cruise Weekly**.

### New Oasis Wonder

**ROYAL** Caribbean President and CEO, Michael Bayley, has announced that the name of the company's fifth Oasis-class vessel will be *Wonder of the Seas*.

The ship is currently under construction at Chantiers de l'Atlantique, with a scheduled delivery date of mid-2021 when it is expected to debut in Shanghai, China.

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## MSC's grand affair

MSC Cruises will celebrate the christening of *MSC Grandiosa* over four days in Hamburg, commencing 06 Nov.

Featuring artists such as Michelle Hunziker and Mousse T, the events will happen at MSC Village on the banks of the Elbe River.

A gala dinner will also take place on board the ship, with a menu designed by three-starred Michelin chef Harald Wohlfahrt, with the four nights of cheer to be punctuated by ongoing illuminations from light artist Michael Batz.

*Grandiosa* will also host musical artists in the lead-up to the main event, including a performance from Austrian folk singer Anrdreas Gabalier and dj sets by German actress and TV host Palina Rosinjki and Michi Beck, known as a member of the Fantastische Vier, and his wife, Ulrike Fleischer.

## Shake for bubbly

**VIRGIN** Voyages' new adults-only cruise ship, *Scarlet Lady*, will make champagne available on-demand to its passengers - not at the click of a finger, but at the shake of a smart phone.

In true Richard Branson style, passengers need only open the Virgin Voyages Sailor application, give their phone a shake, and wait for the bottle of Mœt Chandon Impérial to arrive in a bright red champagne bucket with two flutes.

"We want our sailors to enjoy a glamorous holiday and what better way to feel like a rockstar than a sip of bubbly whenever and wherever you want it," said Tom Mcalpin, Chief Executive Officer of Virgin Voyages.

*Scarlet Lady* will also feature a champagne and caviar bar called "Sip".

## Viking Expeditions launch



**VIKING** Cruises founder Torstein Hagen (**pictured**) will add a third major division to his company in 2022, with the launch of the new Viking Expeditions product, which went on sale yesterday.

An exclusive offer to past passengers and their travel agents showcases itineraries to the Arctic and Antarctica, with 13-day voyages on two newbuild ships which will be named *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris*.

The inaugural sailings currently available depart in 2022, but the shipyard making the vessels, VARD, has the first one set

for delivery in late 2021 so additional itineraries are likely to be available once the program formally launches.

Details of the Viking Expeditions product are scant at this stage, with the company only confirming the vessels will carry 378 guests, and that Arctic voyages will operate round-trip from Tromso.

In the Southern Hemisphere, cruises will operate between Buenos Aires and Ushuaia.

All details of the new Viking Expeditions product will be unveiled on 16 Jan.



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### Regent experiences



**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises has unveiled its new collection of immersive on-ship and on-shore experiences for 2020 Alaskan sailings.

Guests can enjoy a range of on-board experiences, including a presentation by the Alaska Raptor Centre and a series of Inside Alaska Highlights delivered by experts at every port of call.

Passengers will get a glimpse into the local cultures and

lifestyles on the Go Local Tours, such as the 'Behind the Scenes with a Local' tour in Juneau.

Shoreside excursions feature experiences such as the Alaska 4X4 Nature Safari and Wilderness Sea Kayaking Adventure.

Other highlights include craft brews from the Alaskan Brewing Company, delicious Alaskan-themed cocktails, and a superb selection of Alaskan cuisine.

For more info, **CLICK HERE**.



**ROYAL** Caribbean made the most of the arrival of its *Radiance of the Seas* into Sydney Harbour on Wed this week, hosting a celebratory event at The Squire's Landing in the Rocks to welcome the start of its 2019/20 cruise season.

*Radiance*, pictured behind the smiling faces of Nic Cola and Emma Mumford of Cruiseco, along with Royal Caribbean's Cameron Mannix, was only in port for the day, before departing on a novel "mid-week weekend cruise", taking guests away for a three day break.

The season opener featured

specially created blue cocktails and saw the company's new local MD, Gavin Smith, formally open the season which will see more than 250,000 passengers carried across the Royal Caribbean, Celebrity and Azamara brands.

As well as *Radiance*, Royal Caribbean will deploy its giant *Ovation of the Seas* and the newly "amplified" *Voyager of the Seas* in local waters, while *Celebrity Solstice* and *Azamara Journey* will also cruise here.

It's estimated the season will see the three brands inject a combined \$160 million into the Australian economy.

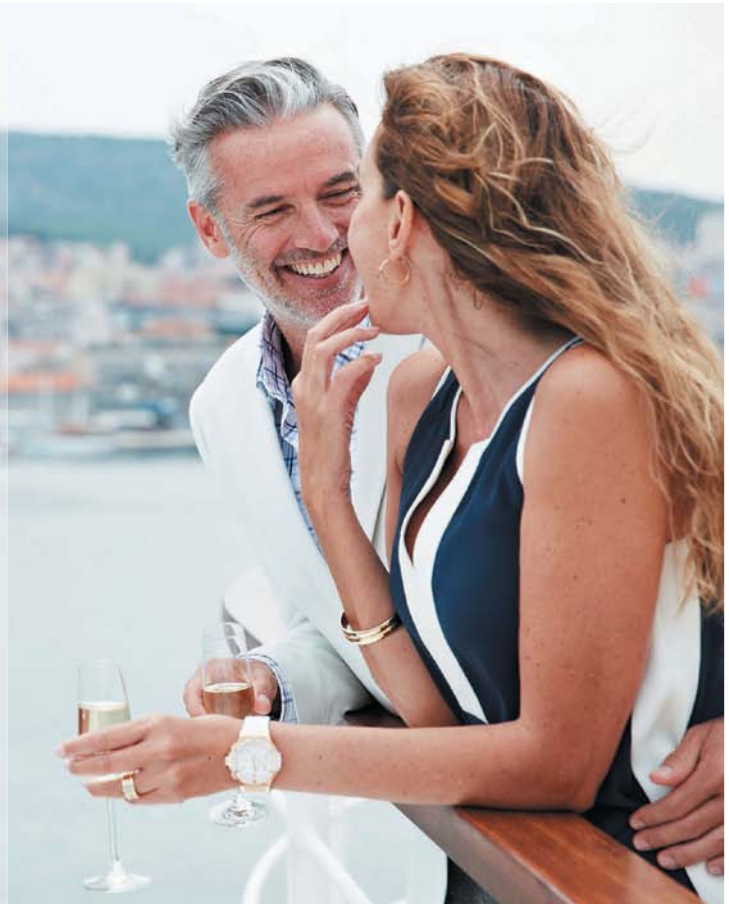


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The cruise survey results are in and the industry is still strong – read more in the October issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read *travelBulletin*

## Silversea shorex

**SILVERSEA** has unveiled 33 new shore experiences exclusive to its world cruises.

Some of the excursions featured include a musical and culinary tour in San Juan; a private performance of a folkloric ballet troupe in Salvador de Bahia; a Polynesian cultural exploration with an anthropologist in Moorea; a four-course lunch prepared by a celebrity chef in Singapore; a candlelit dinner under the stars in the Red Sea desert atop the Royal Yacht Britannia in Edinburgh.

The new shore experiences are not included with the fare.

## TasPorts' sustainability



**TASPORTS** has insisted it is at the forefront of maintaining sustainability for the state's rapidly-expanding cruise sector.

Reports from the *ABC* have seen calls to manage cruise ship visitor growth to the Apple Isle, with some tourist hotspots overwhelmed, but TasPorts insists it is part of the solution, not the problem.

A TasPorts spokesperson told *Cruise Weekly* the organisation had been included in the Regional Anchorages Working Group,

"which has been established to develop a clear framework around the growth of cruise shipping into regional Tasmanian areas alongside Tourism Tasmania, Marine and Safety Tasmania, Parks and Wildlife, the Environmental Protection Agency and Regional Tourism Organisations."

"TasPorts has been a key stakeholder and is supportive of the recently released Sustainable Cruising Blueprint by Government."

## Philippines wants in on cruising cash

**PHILIPPINES** Department of Tourism Undersecretary Benito Bengzon says he wants his country to lure more cruise ships to contribute to its growing tourism economy.

Data shows the slowing Philippine economy is heavily weighted towards tourism, which comprised 12.7% of gross domestic product in 2018.

The Philippine cruise industry lags behind the rest of Asia due to a lack of infrastructure, but with the private sector behind an expansion of facilities, Bengzon expects cruise tourism in the country to expand.

"While our Asian neighbours have the advantage of a regional land connectivity, our archipelago is ideal for cruise tourism," he said.

Salomague Port, scheduled to open this month, will receive Royal Caribbean's biggest ship in Asia this Dec, *Spectrum of the Seas*, while the country's cruise strategy also focuses on Manila, Boracay, Puerto Princesa and northern Luzon.

## Bursting Sensation

**AN APPARENT** burst water pipe on board Carnival Cruise Lines' *Carnival Sensation* docked in Florida last Fri was the cause of major headaches for its passengers, with in-cabin flooding and air conditioning problems forcing a delay in the ship's departure.

Affected guests were offered a full refund plus future cruise credit by the cruise line.



**NEWLY** appointed Royal Caribbean ANZ MD Gavin Smith was in fine form earlier this week during a function to kick off the company's 2019 Australasian cruise season (see page one).

Smith has been London-based for the past four years looking after a wide range of international markets, and said the Sydney event was the first time in years that everyone in the room could understand what he was saying.

He's actually been commuting between Australia and the UK, and said when he took his new local role "I told my wife I would be around a bit more now...she hasn't spoken to me since!"

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