



Cruise Traveller bookings up 27%

SMALL ship specialist Cruise Traveller has reported a jump of 27% in 2021 bookings for small ship expeditions, over the same time last year.

Managing Director of the Gold-Coast-based wholesaler, Craig Bowen (pictured), said he was buoyed by robust bookings for future departures and resilient confidence amongst loyal cruisers, adding he is hopeful the trend will continue over the coming months.

“We see the light at the end of the tunnel,” he enthused.

“This is a combination of new 2021 bookings and all the re-bookings from cancelled 2020 sailings, and I am confident that this pattern will continue over coming months.

“Clearly, then, pent-up demand will constrict availability in 2021, particularly for small ships - we had one guest wanting to



make a sizeable booking for a Kimberley expedition but a lack of availability next year pushed the booking to 2022.

“I am confident that the resilience and passion for adventure that Australian small ship lovers have shown in the past will make for a strong 2021.

“We have written off 2020, but we can work on tapping obvious demand for 2021 which is what

we are doing for our 48 boutique cruise line partners.

“Much of the product we are selling is for mid-2021, with the best-selling product being Riviera Travel River Cruises, Ponant, Adventure Canada, Victory Cruise Lines and American Queen Steamboat Company.

“We remain extremely confident about the future of the small ship cruise industry.”

In a recent opinion piece supplied to **Cruise Weekly**, Bowen affirmed his belief in good planning and encouragement as the key to surviving the COVID-19 crisis.

“We have kept our entire team engaged - they worked with me to create the great business we have,” he said.

Cruise Traveller took on the GSA role for several cruise brands following the closure of Cruise Office last year (**CW** 01 Apr 2019).

MSC extends

MSC Cruises has extended its fleet-wide halting of operations through to 10 Jul.

The cruise line is offering guests affected by the lengthened pause a future cruise credit of 125% of the original cruise fare paid, to a future cruise of their choice on any ship and any itinerary through to the end of 2021.

The extension will also see MSC’s flexible cruise program extended to include all bookings between 11 Jul and 30 Sep, allowing guests to move their booking at no cost to any cruise before the end of 2021.

Cruise Weekly today

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

KEEP DREAMING

When your clients are ready to plan their 2021 or 2022 adventure, we’ll be here to help you.

To support our valued travel agent partners and guests during this challenging time, we are providing flexible Future Travel Credit vouchers, which are valid for travel through to 31 December 2022 and are fully transferable to another person, booking or other brands within the Scenic Group.

We remain committed to protecting travel agent commissions on bookings for suspended March to June 2020 land tours, river and ocean cruises.

To keep up to date please access our training and marketing tools on Scenic Hub.

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Crystal's Atlas

CRYSTAL River Cruises has unveiled its 2021 Atlas, featuring more than 145 all-inclusive luxury sailings of four to 16 nights.

Voyages will take place aboard *Crystal Bach*, *Crystal Debussy*, *Crystal Mahler* and *Crystal Ravel*, exploring the Danube, Main, Moselle and Rhine rivers.

"The 2021 River Atlas is a beautifully illustrative resource to inspire our guests as they begin to think of the journeys that lie beyond this current challenging time," said Crystal River Cruises' Vice President & Managing Director Walter Littlejohn.

Access the brochure online [HERE](#).

Origin-al sea trials



SILVERSEA'S newest expedition ship *Silver Origin* (pictured) begun sea trials earlier this week, emerging from her fitout quay in De Hoop Shipyard in Schiedam.

The full trial program is planned for three days, with the all-suite, 100-guest ship having touched water for the first time late last year (**CW** 20 Jan).

Designed to be based in the Galapagos Islands year round, *Origin* is scheduled to sail her maiden voyage in the region on 18 Jul (**CW** 02 Jan).

PORTHOLE



THERE'S probably only one man free to take a holiday right now without persecution - and he's from North Korea.


Rumour has been rife recently the North's Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un may be anywhere on the scale between sick and dead, but recent satellite images of the hermit state suggest Kim may simply be on holiday - a cruise holiday no less!

Kim's personal boats have been spotted by spies at his villa off the city of Wonsan, *The British Times* believes.

Who'd have thought we'd be jealous of little rocket man!

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Vohod new ships

HELSINKI Shipyard has cut the first steel on the first of Russian river cruise line Vohod's two new expedition ships.

The newbuilds were ordered last year, and are being built to operate in polar regions, with a keel laying for the first ship scheduled for this Sep.

Set to carry 157 passengers, this ship is due to debut in 2021, while the other is scheduled for the year after.

"These two vessels are the first newbuilds of the shipyard that was established in May 2019 and thus they are a very important head start for us," said Helsinki Shipyard Chief Executive Officer Carl-Gustaf Rotkirch.

CLIA signs on

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia is among several key travel industry organisations backing the Australian Government's COVIDSafe application.

Joined by the Accommodation Association, the Australian Federation of Travel Agents, the Business Events Council of Australia, the Tourism & Transport Forum and others, the signatories are encouraging the downloading of the Government's app, saying it would help to hasten the easing of current restrictions and social distancing measures, and thus the return of normal business.

The coalition notes the industry is losing billions.