



Cruise Weekly today

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

Viking 2020/21 world cruise off

VIKING yesterday lamented its 166-day *Viking Star* 2020/21 world cruise would not proceed, at the same time as unveiling the itinerary for its 2021/22 world voyage.

While restrictions are starting to ease in some countries, "travel remains particularly complicated in several regions on which the world cruise voyages will call," the company advised, with guests given the option of a 125% future cruise voucher or a cash refund.

The 2021/22 voyage will visit Eden and Philip Island - more at vikingcruises.com.au.

Ponant, APT working on cruise plans

PONANT and APT have been collaborating on the development of expedition sector protocols for the resumption of Kimberley cruise operations, with Ponant APAC Chair Sarina Bratton confirming a "breakthrough" with a state government which could see an announcement about a restart in the next week or so.

Speaking on this week's Cruiseco podcast, Bratton confirmed the Government's National COVID-19 Coordination Commission (NCCC) had asked the companies to come up with a plan, and while the Kimberley proposal had been submitted already under the Tourism Restart Taskforce framework (CW 06 Jul), at this stage "we're not as advanced with the wider cruise sector because we haven't got a common industry set of protocols that have been agreed at the higher level".

Bratton also lamented the complexity of approvals required from the federal, state and territory governments.

"I've got to say it's a long hard road...I certainly won't go to my grave ever wishing I'd put more effort in to try to get us as an industry operational," she said.

Despite the dire consequences the COVID-19 pandemic has had for the industry, "I think there's some light at the end of the tunnel," Bratton added.

She also warned the industry not to be too optimistic at this stage, saying "there's just such an extreme caution and a low risk appetite within all levels of government, so it's quite tough".

Bratton noted Ponant has "COVID-free *Le Laperouse* and her COVID-free crew are in COVID-free New Caledonia, just awaiting for us to push the button for her to call the Kimberley home".

On top of that, another Ponant vessel has been earmarked for local operations, extracting her from the Antarctic Peninsula season which will be consolidated among the line's other ships.

This ship would "call Australia and New Zealand home, by offering 'bubble expeditions'," Bratton said.

"We've got lots of good plans, I've got a few more hoops to get through, that's all," she concluded.

MEANWHILE Australian (Pacific) Holdings (APH) Chief Executive Officer Chris Hall also spoke on last week's Cruiseco podcast, citing plans to expand the APT Kimberley small ship cruise offering further afield.

"We're looking to extend our cruising program in other places around Australia, so it's not just restricted to the Kimberley," he confirmed, with no further details available at this stage.

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NO, YOU haven't reached the real estate pages...

Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Chief Executive Officer Frank Del Rio recently sold his waterfront mansion for over US\$7 million.

The five-bedroom, 746m² arrangement in the upscale Miami suburb of Coral Gables is set on Lago Monaco, one of the area's many canals which make its way out into Biscayne Bay.

The estate was listed for as much as US\$11.5 million in 2018, and was bought by a Goldman Sachs executive.

Swan Hellenic to return in 2021

FAMOUS British cruise line Swan Hellenic has been reborn, just over three years after it ceased trading and was sold to G Adventures (**CW** 05 Jan 2017).

However the revived brand has now been on-sold to a private group led by Andrea Zito, who formerly worked for V-Ships Leisure, a major supplier of ship management and marine services to the cruise sector.

The reborn Swan Hellenic is currently building two Polar Class 5 ships at Helsinki Shipyard, under the working titles *Vega 1* and *Vega 2*, with both to have ice-strengthened hulls.

The ships will have 76 cabins accommodating 152 guests in total, with 60 cabins on each ship to feature a large balcony.



Swan Hellenic is describing its ships as "Scandi-lux", with the newbuilds set to offer spacious and well-planned cabins, generously sized bathrooms, in-room dining facilities and unobstructed views from cabins and public spaces - renders available on **Cruise Weekly's** Facebook page **HERE**.

Oceanview, Balcony, Suite and Premium Suite accommodation is on offer, with Swan Hellenic saying its first ship will debut in Nov 2021 sailing to Antarctica, with the next to arrive in Apr 2022.

The website swanhellenic.com is already advertising a 13-day trip to New Zealand from £15,950 per cabin, as well as cruises to the Arctic, Antarctica, the Russian Far East, and the "rest of the world", including destinations such as Japan, the South Pacific and Western Europe.

New Swan Hellenic Chief Executive Officer Andrea Zito (**pictured**), who also helped broker the earlier sale of the cruise line to G Adventures in 2017 (**CW** 02 Feb 2017), said the phoenix company retains its British heritage, whilst also being international in outlook, with offices in Germany and the

United Kingdom.

Zito said Swan Hellenic was "aimed at the traveller, who wishes to explore, experience and enrich whilst the infinite beauty of the world and its inhabitants in a safe and sustainable way".

He also said the cruise line would be heavily involved with the trade.

"Hellenic was always a family brand and we want to continue along the same line by inviting all cruise industry partners to become part of the new Swan Hellenic community."

Interested travel agents can register their curiosity **HERE**.

Swan Hellenic describes its expedition program as offering "immersive exclusive bucket list experiences for the discerning traveller", including opportunities to explore the Yenisey river system, Franz Josef Land and Lyakhovsky Islands.

Swan Hellenic last cruised in Jan 2017, when operator All Leisure Holidays Group collapsed, impacting around 13,000 future bookings for both Swan Hellenic and Voyages of Discovery passengers.

G Adventures then stepped in to attempt to save the brand, but no itineraries were ever publicised or released for sale.

It was the third time Swan Hellenic had ceased operating, after initially being discontinued in 2007 by Carnival Corporation.

Swan Hellenic was formerly represented in Australia by Discover the World, but there has been no indications of any third-party or general sales agent agreements taking place yet.

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