



Hurtigruten to expand away from Vic

HURTIGRUTEN has announced its intention to boost its presence in New South Wales, with regional MD Damian Perry saying "there are now too many challenges and uncertainty in trying to expand in Victoria".

Perry said the ongoing draconian lockdown measures and the fact that a state of emergency declaration remains in the hands of Premier Daniel Andrew "without him showing any willingness to compromise and offer real transparency" is a heavy burden on the people of Victoria and businesses trying to recover from the pandemic.

"I am very concerned for the wellbeing of our team in Melbourne and what they need to endure under this extraordinary lockdown," he said.

"The uncertainty is a huge stress for so many...we will offer full support to give them confidence,

purpose and structure in their daily lives," Perry added.

However the situation has also necessitated the development of a contingency plan which will see Hurtigruten establish a broader national presence.

"It is difficult to foresee how we can expand our business model in Victoria, and I have therefore instructed our landlord with their national footprint to re-engineer our agreement and make space available in Sydney," Perry said.

Hurtigruten's local boss enthused that the cruise line's global business across multiple source markets already had clients planning ahead and booking into all of 2021 and 2022.

"This positive sentiment is happening to some degree in other states with the exception of Victoria where confidence is shot."

Most agents and retailers in the state are forced into a "wait and

see" approach which will cripple many, he said, adding "we need some certainty at the most senior level that is fact-based so the market can become more active, deliver consumer confidence to travellers and rebuild before the industry collapses".

Perry said Hurtigruten expected that significant job losses, mortgage stress and potential travellers diverting funds to help family members in need will soften the Victorian market over the coming year, while the lack of clarity and ongoing doubt is making it difficult for individuals to bounce back.

"Hurtigruten has a strong business model with a solid financial runway and we remain agile and we will offer our support to any agency and agency group that wishes to be proactive in building consumer confidence," he added.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Costa winter trips

CARNIVAL Corporation's Costa Cruises has introduced new itineraries for its winter 2020-21 season, following the cruise line's restart earlier this month (**CW** 07 Sep).

The line has redesigned its itineraries from Oct 2020 to Mar 2021, with bookings open to European citizens residing in countries included in the decree handed down by the Government of Italy.

The season will see the debut of *Costa Firenze*, which is currently under construction, and will visit destinations such as Savona, La Spezia, Naples, Valencia, Barcelona and Marseille.

SEVEN SEAS CRUISES™
AN UNRIVALLED EXPERIENCE™

elevate your
EXPERIENCE

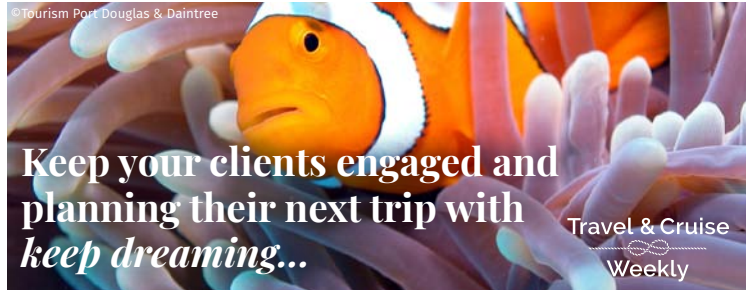
**EUROPE & ALASKA *with*
FREE SUITE UPGRADE**

***PLUS UP TO 25% OFF & REDUCED 10% DEPOSIT**
BOOK BY 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

Bonus \$500 Visa Gift Card
for travel advisors*

> FIND OUT MORE

*Terms and conditions apply. For more information visit www.rssc.com/2021-Free-Suite-Upgrade.
*For more information on our \$500 Visa Gift Card incentive visit: www.rssc.com/travelpartnerbonus



THERE are many fascinating animals to spot in Kakadu National Park, but typically, humpback whales are not among them.

One of the rogue mammals was spotted swimming upstream in the region's East Alligator River, which perhaps confusingly, is actually infested with crocodiles.

However, the concern for the beast is not the carnivorous reptiles which inhabit the waterway, but the fact the humpback could get stuck, after its two friends, part of the initial pod ditched it.

It is the first time the whales have been recorded in Kakadu, which has stunned experts, who are tracking the animal to make sure it does not get too lost.

US Xmas cruise

A **SAVING** of US\$1,800 per couple is available on American Queen Steamboat Company's river cruises in Christmas 2021 when booking this month.

The itineraries travel through the southern United States over eight nights and explore the Mississippi, Ohio and Tennessee rivers.

Offered through Cruise Traveller, the saving is available on a range of different departures - for more, call on 1300 680 374.

MRPS: open the River

MURRAY River Paddlesteamers (MRPS) Director Craig Burgess (pictured) has pleaded with New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian to set a date for the reopening of the Murray River for commercial operations.

The call comes with rural Victoria expected to re-emerge from stage three lockdown next week, and the current NSW Health order regarding closure of the border between the two states set to expire on 06 Oct.

Burgess said from this date, the Government of New South Wales must allow the commercial operation of tourism businesses on the Murray River.

"There can be no recovery for any tourism-related businesses along the river if it remains closed with the border, which could continue until Christmas," Burgess warned.

"Businesses will not be able to hold on until then, missing the spring/summer trade after being forced to close essentially since 23 Mar," he said.

Rural Victoria has been recording under the 14-day average of less than five cases, with Burgess affirming there was no health risk to New South Wales residents by allowing commercial operations on the river.

With Murray River Paddlesteamers already outlining a comprehensive COVID-19 Cruise Well program, Burgess explained the incongruity of allowing pubs, clubs and restaurants to trade, but disallowing river cruising that happens to venture into New South Wales' waters.



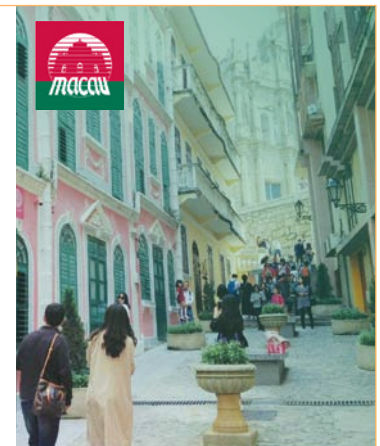
"We are hoping [Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews] can influence the NSW Premier to make a common sense decision".

RCG appointment

ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) has appointed Donna Hrinak Senior Vice President Corporate Affairs.

She will lead the Group's government relations, communications and public relations functions, reporting directly to Chair Richard Fain.

Formerly Boeing Latin America & Caribbean President, Hrinak has also served under two Presidents of the United States as an ambassador to Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela.



LET US HELP YOU EDUCATE THE TRADE

These suppliers have chosen the Travel Daily Training Academy for their trade education programs.

Click here to find out how you can too.