



Cruise Weekly today

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

First Endeavor

CRYSTAL Cruises has announced its inaugural deployment for *Crystal Endeavor* (CW 08 Jan) - a 10-night Luxury Iceland Expedition.

The voyage, beginning 17 Jul, will circumnavigate the Nordic island and cross the Arctic Circle, and will also be the first for the Crystal Expedition Cruises brand.

Sailing five, 10-night voyages round-tripping from the ship's homeport Reykjavik, reservations for *Endeavor's* Luxury Iceland Expedition journeys open 13 Apr.

Crystal interim President & Chief Executive Officer Jack Anderson thanked Minister of Tourism Þórdís Kolbrún Reykjavík Gylfadóttir, and described Iceland as "the ideal beginning for *Endeavor's* adventures."

Endeavor was originally set to launch last Aug, but was stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

She also recently completed her technical sea trials in Germany, where she is being built at the MV Werften shipyard.

NCLH writes to the CDC

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) has written a letter to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) requesting the conditional sailing order (CSO) be lifted for its vessels in order to carry out its plan to resume cruise operations from Independence Day.

The plan will include NCLH's multi-layered SailSAFE Health & Safety Program, and will require all guests and crews to be vaccinated during the initial relaunch, in line with the CDC's new guidance on international travel (CW yesterday).

With cruising starting 04 Jul, NCLH believes vaccines, combined with a phased-in launch and its own measures, provide a "uniquely safe & healthy environment".

Operations would begin at an initial reduced capacity of 60%, which will be gradually ramped up by 20% every 30 days.

"By requiring full and complete vaccinations of guests and crews, the company believes it shares in the spirit and exceeds the intent of the CDC's conditional sailing order to advance mutual public health goals and protect guests, crew and the communities it visits," the letter said.

"Norwegian trusts and is optimistic the CDC will agree that mandatory vaccination requirements eliminate the need for the CSO and therefore



requests for the lifting of the order for Norwegian's vessels, allowing them to cruise from US ports.

"The company looks forward to its continued partnership with the CDC in recommencing operations with 100% vaccinated guests and crew aboard and reduced capacity initially as part of a phased-in launch."

NCLH President & Chief Executive Officer Frank Del Rio (pictured) said the company can create a safe, "bubble-like" environment for guests and crew.

"Our robust and comprehensive SailSAFE health and safety program extends well beyond the protocols of the travel, leisure and hospitality sectors, all of which have already reopened including hotels and resorts, casinos, restaurants, sporting venues, theme parks and airlines," he said.

"With vaccine mandates and strict health and safety protocols in place, we believe we can provide a uniquely safe and healthy vacation experience.

Del Rio added NCLH's vessels returning to the water will not only reinstate thousands of American jobs, but also meet the significant consumer demand for cruising, and re-contribute billions of dollars to the economy.

Now is the time

CRUISE Lines International Association has called the announcement of a trans-Tasman travel bubble a "positive step forward" for tourism in Australia and New Zealand, but added it highlights the lack of progress being made toward a responsible resumption of local cruise operations.

"Now is the time for governments in Australia and New Zealand to progress a phased and tightly controlled resumption of local cruising, operating initially for locals-only within domestic boundaries or within the trans-Tasman bubble," said MD Australasia Joel Katz.



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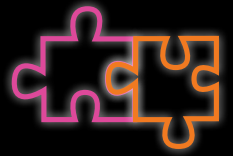
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Putting off the Ritz

THE debut of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's new ship *Evrima* has been pushed back again, this time until Nov.

The cruise line said in Jan it would begin cruising in Jul (*CW* 27 Jan), but has blamed pandemic-related travel restrictions and regulations in Europe, where the ship was scheduled to sail.

"While we remain excited by the promise of future travel, given the unpredictable environment created by existing restrictions and the inability to safely gather our [crew] at this time, we have made the difficult decision to forgo our 2021 Mediterranean season," Chief Executive Officer Douglas Prothero said.

"We look forward to welcoming guests on board in the Caribbean this fall," he added.

A walk in the Quark



QUARK Expeditions took ownership of the highly anticipated *Ultramarine* (pictured) late last week.

The official handover of *Ultramarine* took place in Split, and was attended by Quark Senior Vice-President of Operations Malcolm Ellis, and members of the Brodosplit

shipyard team.

Quark President Andrew White said the cruise line's commitment of more than five years of time and money reflects its confidence in the future of polar travel, and "underscores our commitment to delivering life-changing polar experiences no one ever thought possible."

RSSC out until Aug

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has suspended voyages until Aug, with affected travel partners to be contacted.

For all active reservations, RSSC will provide a 100% refund on the amounts paid as of 06 Apr.

These will be processed automatically within 60 days, and no action is required to request a refund.

Commissions will be paid on fully paid booking amounts, less any non-commissionable items, including applicable future cruise credits on the suspended voyages.

On most affected sailings, RSSC has identified a comparable future itinerary next year on which the cruise line will honour the price a traveller has paid, if rebooked by 20 Apr; an alternative to this option is available **HERE**.

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AS NAT King Cole said, "love finds a way".

A man has discovered one of his prized possessions - a tinnie on which he proposed to his wife - in his uncle's backyard, after it was swept away by the recent Eastern Australian floods.

As reported by ABC, *Love Boat* travelled 70 kilometres from Telegraph Point on the North Coast of New South Wales to Port Macquarie, after a flood tore through the man's backyard late last month.

A few days later, when the man was visiting his uncle's home about a half-hour drive south, it was discovered a tinnie had washed up in his back yard - and not just any tinnie - *Love Boat*.

The man said he later went out and bought two lottery tickets - let's hope he's not used up all his luck!

Study slaps cruise

A **STUDY** by Florida International University (FIU) has found the water quality around Key West in Florida has improved in the absence of cruise ships.

The study used both satellites and data from FIU's water quality program in Key West, which dates back to 1995.

The city passed a number of cruise ship restrictions in Nov, but there is currently a state-level bill attempting to overturn them (**CW** 11 Jan).

What Athens in Greece...



SEABOURN Cruise Line has received approval from Greece (**pictured**) to relaunch its cruises in the country from Jul.

The cruise line will operate a series of seven-day sailings round-trip from Athens during the northern summer, beginning 03 Jul.

Seabourn Ovation will explore beautiful ports throughout the Greek Isles, with the voyages scheduled to open for booking on 12 Apr.

Guests will also be able to book longer 14-day voyages, which combine individual seven-day cruises, with a variety of different ports on each, including Agios Nikolaos, Mykonos, Nafplion, Patmos, Rhodes, Spetsai, Thira, as well as Limassol and Paphos in Cyprus.

Each sailing includes a sea day to spend time on board, and the cruises are open to any guests who are fully vaccinated against coronavirus a minimum of 14 days before cruising.

Proof of vaccination and the dates given will be required,

with approved forms of documentation to be confirmed closer to time of departure.

This confirmation must be shown at the terminal prior to boarding.

"The entire Seabourn family is truly excited to provide our award-winning travel experience aboard *Seabourn Ovation* starting again this Jul in the Greek Isles," said Seabourn President Josh Leibowitz.

"We're grateful to the people of Greece for welcoming Seabourn back to the Mediterranean."

The country's Minister for Tourism Harry Theoharis said Greece was looking forward to welcoming back Seabourn, which has been visiting the nation for more than 30 years.

"Tourism is a vital part of our economy and our plans place a priority on health and safety to help restore traveller confidence to all," he said.

"We are sure that once again all your guests will have the best experiences in Greece creating memories to last a lifetime."



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Now is the time

IN RECENT days CLIA has stepped up a major new campaign in the United States, calling on health regulators to open a pathway to resumption in the world's biggest cruise market.

This mirrors the advocacy efforts CLIA is undertaking here in Australia and New Zealand, as well as in other key regions around the world.

In America, CLIA has rallied cruise industry stakeholders to support its call for existing cruise restrictions to be lifted, so that planning can begin for a phased resumption of cruise operations by the beginning of Jul.

Similarly in Australia and New Zealand, CLIA is calling for agreement on pathways that allow cruise lines to progress toward initial domestic operations.

In all countries, resumption will be supported by the extensive new health protocols cruise lines have committed to worldwide.

With measures including 100% testing of all guests and crews, they are among the most comprehensive COVID-19 protocols of any industry worldwide and are already working successfully in several countries overseas.

CLIA is continuing to lobby hard for a phased and carefully controlled resumption of domestic cruise in Australia and New Zealand.

