

Oceania release

OCEANIA Cruises has unveiled its 2022-2023 Tropics & Exotics Collection.

Australia, Antarctica, Africa, Asia, and the South Pacific headline a collection of 127 voyages, ranging from seven to 77 days.

For sale from Thu, the program features more diverse itineraries, more overnights and more variety in itinerary lengths, with a total of 272 port calls and 284 overnight or multi-night stays.

Highlights include three trans-Tasman Australia-New Zealand voyages aboard *Regatta*, as well as six voyages that explore the Pacific.

Coral Expeditions set for WA season

WESTERN Australia is set to sail again, with Coral Expeditions extending its successful small ship expedition restart to the state.

A new 45-voyage program will include itineraries exploring Western Australia's coastline, as well as a number of the state's rarely visited islands.

Coral will also sail its celebrated Kimberley voyage between Broome and Darwin, with *Coral Adventurer* currently en route from Adelaide to Fremantle, before she sets sail from the WA port on 10 Mar, calling on the Houtman Abrolhos, the Ningaloo Coast, Shark Bay (**pictured**), the Muiron & Montebello Islands and the Dampier Archipelago.

The brand-new *Coral Geographer*, to be delivered next month, will also depart on her sold-out maiden voyage on 31 Mar, for the Across the Top of Australia expedition, a 19-night



voyage exploring remote regions of Western Australia, including Ashmore Reef, Scott Reef, Adele Island and the Lacepede Islands.

Coral has attained all required state and federal approvals, including the endorsement of its SailSAFE plan, with the cruise line having been continuously

operating incident-free in the Great Barrier Reef and Tasmania since Oct (**CW** 28 Oct 2020).

The company has also just completed a successful inaugural voyage in South Australia last week (**CW** 10 Feb).

"Coral Expeditions will be one of the first to resume operations since last Apr," enthused Cruise Broome Chairman Shayne Murray.

"The expedition cruise industry provides significant tourism dollars to local and indigenous tours and business throughout the Kimberley.

"Despite the seasons closure last year, local cruising contributed some \$13 million dollars, and with their three-vessel fleet approved and operating this year, Coral Expeditions will be a very significant contributor once again," Murray added.

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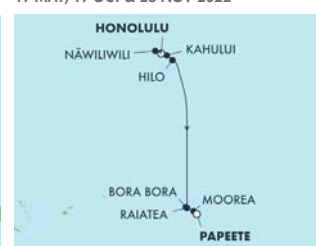
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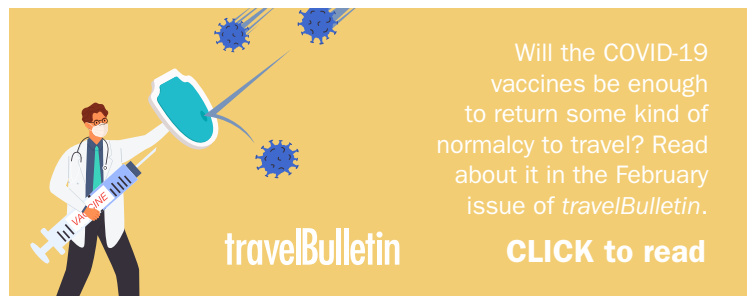
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Alaska push

UNITED States Congress has asked authorities in Canada to consider allowing cruise ships to make “technical stops” in their country, in a bid to enable North American cruising to restart despite Canada’s year-long ban on vessels carrying over 100 passengers (**CW** 05 Feb).

The Transportation Committee of the US House of Representatives wrote to the Canadian Ambassador to the US, urging a mutually agreeable solution to enable cruising to resume and noting the US\$2.85 billion in direct economic spending in Alaska, Washington, the Great Lakes and New England.

Other measures considered include a temporary cabotage waiver, which would deem round trips between Seattle and Alaska as foreign voyages.

NCLH “strong future demand”

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) overnight reported a US\$4 billion full year loss, with the COVID-19 pandemic seeing the company’s revenue decline 80% to US\$1.3 billion.

Chief Executive Officer Frank Del Rio said “while 2020 has been without a doubt the most challenging year in the company’s 50-plus year history, our team responded to the unprecedented environment with swift and decisive action”.

NCLH has total debt of US\$11.8 billion and cash of US\$3.3 billion, with an average cash burn of US\$190 million over the last quarter of last year - which included about US\$15 million monthly of additional launch-related expenses as it “began preparing vessels for a potential return to service in early 2021, in connection with the CDC Conditional Order, which did not materialise,” Del Rio said.

Incremental costs included crew re-staffing, repositioning and provisioning of vessels, implementation of new health and safety protocols and a “ramp-up of demand-generating marketing investments which helped further stimulate the strong future demand the company is experiencing”.

The NCLH Chief Executive Officer said bookings for 2022 were very encouraging, despite reduced sales and marketing investments and “a travel agency industry that has not been at full strength for months”.

Del Rio noted the company stopped offering future cruise credits some months ago, with full cash refunds now paid in the event of a cancellation.

With voyages now suspended until 01 Jun, Del Rio said it would take roughly 90 days to relaunch operations in the USA once the company receives the green light.

RCI Caribbean

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has debuted short Caribbean sailings, with three-to-five-night escapes from Florida and Texas in 2022-23.

Eight ships will depart from five ports across the two states, with 17 distinct itineraries on offer.

Highlights include discovering the ancient ruins of Costa Maya and exploring the tropical islands of the Bahamas & the Caribbean.

Freedom of the Seas will sail three- and four-night cruises year-round, from Miami to Nassau and Perfect Day at CocoCay in The Bahamas, on the heels of her US\$116 million amplification last year.

Independence of the Seas will continue to sail three- and four-night getaways from Port Canaveral to the Bahamas.

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IT SEEMS we have been losing more species than we can keep track of lately, which makes it a pleasant surprise when someone seemingly discovers a new one.

A nature photographer snapped a shot of what is supposedly a "never-before-seen" yellow penguin, while they were working in Antarctica in Dec.

The penguin's colouring is due to the pigmentation condition leucism, which in this bird, has resulted in fully yellow plumage, and even yellow eyes.

The photographer claimed to have won "nature's lottery" when he spotted unique bird among thousands of animals on a the beach on the South Georgia islands.

Experts think the penguin is a King, and while the species usually uses its yellow feathers to attract a mate, it is unclear whether golden boy is a hit with the ladies or not.

This will make you pen-grin



ROYAL Caribbean International is hosting a travel partner competition, with 30 family zoo passes up for grabs to celebrate the cruise line's new partnership with Taronga Zoo Sydney.

The two have joined forces on the Litter Free Oceans campaign, and to celebrate the union, the cruise line is holding a week-long competition within its private Royal Caribbean AU/NZ Travel Agents group on Facebook.

For a chance to win, advisors must submit a Facebook comment on how they plan to reduce their plastic use this year.

Throughout the competition, advisors will also hear from the Royal Caribbean sales team about their own individual commitments to reducing single use plastic this year.

"We've taken major action to reduce single-use plastics across our fleet and have removed 77 million plastic straws from our supply chain, achieving our target in 2018 to be plastic straw free," said Vice President and Managing Director Australia & New Zealand

Gavin Smith.

"Our single-use plastic task force is continuing to identify ways to further eliminate the single-use plastic onboard our ships."

RCI shares tech with CDC

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has shared its COVID-safe technology deployed aboard its cruise ships with the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).

Royal Caribbean International President & Chief Executive Officer Michael Bayley said on a Royal Caribbean Group earnings call, the CDC had asked the cruise line to share the technology behind the Muster 2.0 and Tracelet tools on which it heavily relies during *Quantum of the Seas* voyages, which resumed from Singapore on 01 Dec 2020 (CW 04 Dec 2020).

Disney return

DISNEY Cruise Line has announced the return of Marvel and Star Wars days at sea next year.

Departing aboard *Disney Magic* and *Disney Fantasy* respectively, the Marvel Day will cruise across five nights out of Miami, while the Star Wars Day will journey from Port Canaveral for seven nights.



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