



Cruise Weekly today

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

A champion will rise

A TRAVEL advisor will be honoured with a special Cruise Champion award at this year's Cruise360 Australasia conference.

Ordinarily presented at Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) annual Cruise Industry Awards, the special presentation of this year's Cruise Champion will be made at Cruise360 next month, recognising the determination of Australian advisors during the pandemic.

Despite the suspension of its awards & presentation night, CLIA will not go without honouring an individual member who has excelled as a champion for the industry.

The award is open to CLIA Australasia travel advisor members for self- or peer-nomination until the end of the month, and the winner will be announced at Cruise360 in Sydney on 27 Aug.

"The Cruise Champion award honours an outstanding individual who embodies CLIA's mission of educating, advocating and promoting the cruise industry," said Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz.

For further details and a nomination form, [CLICK HERE](#).

ACA conference line-up

THE upcoming Australian Cruise Association (ACA) conference in Townsville will feature a stellar array of cruising expertise, with keynote speakers announced this morning including Royal Caribbean International MD Gavin Smith, Carnival Australia President Sture Myrmell and Princess Cruises' Stuart Allison.

Also on stage will be Adele Labine-Romain from Deloitte Access Economics and health expert Dr Ian Norton from Respond Global, who will be joined by other industry experts to round out the two-day agenda at The Ville Resort-Casino.

About 100 people are expected to attend the event which is supported by Townsville

Enterprise Limited, Port of Townsville and Tourism & Events Queensland.

ACA has highly subsidised the registration fees for the conference, in recognition of the importance of this opportunity to bring together key stakeholders in the industry to develop the roadmap for a cruise restart.

"There has never been a more challenging time for the cruise industry, globally and within Australia," said ACA CEO Jill Abel.

"It is essential that we all come together in Sep to develop a clear roadmap of recovery for the cruise sector," she added.

Registrations are now open for the 08-10 Sep gathering - see australiancruiseassociation.com.

Creative + Quark

CREATIVE Cruising has announced the addition of Quark Expeditions to its product portfolio.

To celebrate, Creative and Quark will offer a saving of \$1,000 off every cabin booked, and gift USD\$150 onboard credit per person.

Advisors will also receive a \$200 eGift card incentive per booking, if booked and deposited this month via Creative.

These can be combined with Quark's book now early booking bonus program offer, with savings of up to 30%, and a further 10% on select voyages when payment is made in full within 30 days of booking.

Get cruise on the roadmap!

AUSTRALIA'S plan for future travel requirements, announced by PM Scott Morrison last week (**TD** breaking news Fri) needs to include cruising, CLIA has said.

The four-stage pact is a positive step forward for the tourism sector, but a framework must include provisions for domestic cruising to save thousands of local jobs and businesses, said CLIA MD Joel Katz.

Responding to the National Cabinet's agreement on a phased easing of restrictions, Katz said governments needed to include carefully managed

domestic cruise operations in the early stages of their plans.

"Lines globally have committed to stringent new health protocols in response to COVID-19 and these measures are already working successfully in other countries," he said.

"Australia is now the only major cruise market in the world where no progress has been made towards a responsible cruise resumption...we need urgent action from governments to save jobs and revive economic opportunities for communities around the country," he said.

Azamara canx

AZAMARA has cancelled its Australian departures from Dec to Feb, "due to the ongoing complexities of cruise operations" in the country.

Cancelled journeys include the 07 Dec 12-night NT Bali & Western Australia voyage, the 19 Dec 16-night Intensive Australia voyage, the 04 Jan 16-night Australia/New Zealand voyage, the 05 Feb 17-night New Zealand & Australia Golf voyage and the 22 Feb 17-night Intensive Australia sailing - for more information.

Call 1800 570 552 for more information.

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Open travel freedoms to cruise

OPINION

Dan Russell is the General Manager of cruise agent Clean Cruising.

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au.



AMID moves for vaccinated Australians to again be free to travel, Clean Cruising believes plans to enable the restart of cruising should proceed as a matter of urgency.

The worst of the pandemic crisis is still to come for many travel agencies including those with a strong connection to cruising.

Some, having already been forced to shed staff, are now faced with even tougher decisions, with little prospect of cruising being allowed to resume before the end of the year.

Scott Morrison's move to determine vaccination thresholds to enable vaccinated Australians to travel gives some hope that this will also apply to people wanting to cruise.

The fact that Mr Morrison is moving in this direction makes it even more imperative for federal and state governments to agree on a pathway for the resumption of domestic cruising.

The current position is grim - a number of cruise lines that normally base ships in Australia year round have extended their suspension of operations until mid-Dec, while other international cruise lines have cancelled planned Australian seasons completely.

Recent outbreaks of COVID in Sydney and elsewhere in Australia, and the extension of the suspension of cruising by cruise lines, could tempt the federal government to go slow on agreeing to a plan for the resumption of domestic cruising. Nothing could be more

damaging for the travel sector currently in limbo in the absence of a plan for the restart of the \$5 billion a year cruise industry.

Having no plan means that these companies cannot do any business planning including making decisions in relation to staff retention.

Even under the best case scenario, it now appears likely that no cruise ship will return to Australia for up to six months.

By then, the proportion of Australians fully vaccinated against COVID will be significantly higher, making the resumption of

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cruising viable.

However, we cannot afford to wait six months for a restart plan to be agreed because of the long lead time for the return of ships to Australia.

It needs to happen now and as a matter of urgency.

A recent visit to Brisbane's new, but still unused, international cruise terminal by hundreds of travel agents served to highlight the crisis they faced.

The terminal was a source of pride that Australia now had a state-of-the-art cruise terminal, but also frustration that it is no closer to having its first cruise ship alongside it eight months after its completion.

With its world class design, proximity to the airport and geographic benefits close to Queensland and South Pacific cruise destinations, the terminal represents the future of homeport cruising from Australia

for decades to come.

Our economy is likely to be stronger than other parts of the world coming out of the pandemic and many ships will eventually return to these waters in the same way that capacity increased following the GFC.

We have had long enough in the doldrums and it is time to plot a course to get Australians travelling again by air, land and sea.

The government needs to work with the industry to develop this restart plan and we need to see it soon.

Experience in other parts of the world where cruising has resumed has already confirmed that widespread vaccination combined with on board protocols were the key to the safe return of cruising.

Even in two cases where COVID had been detected, there was no outbreak because passengers had been vaccinated.

It showed that vaccination combined with strict health protocols provide a sound basis for the return of cruising and that it can happen here as well.

Our message to the government is not to be put off from agreeing to a plan.

Rail & sail savings

COUPLES can save at least \$7,110 and solos \$14,625 on a rail and sail adventure through the Kimberley and Central Australia next year.

For those booking by the end of Sep, small ship specialist, Cruise Traveller, is offering 25% cruise savings on the Aug 2022 trip, which pairs a Ponant voyage aboard *Le Soleal* along the Kimberley's coast with a journey through the heart of the continent aboard famous train voyage The Ghan.

To book, **CLICK HERE**.

AQSC fully vaxed

AMERICAN Queen Steamboat Company (AQSC) has become the only fully vaccinated US-based river cruise line.

AQSC has lifted its pre-cruise testing, and has resumed hop-on, hop-off excursions, beginning with all Cumberland, Mississippi and Ohio river sailings embarking later this month.

Masks are also no longer required onboard after embarkation, but must be worn during boarding, and on shore excursion motorcoaches, as per the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's transportation guidelines.

AQSC's President Shawn Bierdz thanked the cruise line's crews, guests, travel advisors and port partners for their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Thanks to their unwavering commitment, we have been able to evolve our policies to further deliver an authentic river cruise experience without confusing restrictions," he said.

All guests must show proof of their coronavirus vaccination by uploading an image of their vax card prior to their pre-cruise hotel check-in.

Guests who fail to provide proof will be denied boarding and are subject to full cancellation penalties.

Picture Perfect Offer

AS AUSTRALIANS plan their 2023 return to Europe, Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection is rolling out exclusive early booking access, along with a generous discount of \$1,500 per person.

Aussie guests can have the first pick of every cabin, on every itinerary, before international guests are invited, and also save \$1,500pp - 1300 780 231.

Monday 5th July 2021



A FOUR-MAN crew recently rowed for 30 days to set a record in a boat race across the Pacific Ocean.

The crew rowed from San Francisco to Hawaii in record time, as part of the Great Pacific Race, a rowing competition that pits two- and four-person teams against one another in identical boats on a journey across the open ocean.

The crew rowed in two-person, two-hour shifts for the entire trip, 24 hours a day.

The captain said that, believe it or not, the rowing was the easy part, and the two-hour breaks in-between were the hardest, with resters having to find ways to eat, sleep, stay healthy and clean.

The team beat the previous race record by more than a week when they arrived in Waikiki.

Seabourn Saving

SEABOURN Cruise Line has extended and expanded its Early Bonus Saving promotion through to the end of Sep.

Guests will receive an additional 10% saving off the base cruise fare when they book now and pay in full by the end of Sep.

The promotion will now include select sailings that depart on or after 01 Feb 2022, as well as voyages through 2023's northern summer.

The cruise line also recently updated its Seabourn Source mobile app (**CW** 02 Jul).

Scenic river return

SCENIC Group has announced the resumption of Scenic and Emerald European river cruising in Portugal, France, and Germany.

Scenic Group Chief Operating Officer Rob Voss said "we are so excited to be able to greet our guests again after such a challenging year".

"Our teams in operations, sales and marketing have worked hard with our travel partners to bring about our European launch, and we are seeing very positive responses from our guests who have been looking forward to this news," he said.

Voss said Scenic planned to continue adding more itineraries, as Europe and other countries like the USA and UK continue to reopen their borders to travel.

Itineraries on the Douro River in Portugal will resume from 30 Jul, followed by France's Gironde and Dordogne rivers in Bordeaux on 29 Aug, the Rhine River on 30 Aug, and the Danube River on 27 Sep.

There will be six of the eight-day Bordeaux Affair cruise departures through Oct, and the six of the 11-day Beautiful Bordeaux, offering guests an immersion into all things French.

The eight-day Gems of the Danube will depart four times in Sep and Oct.

However for Australian and NZ residents, Scenic Group has suspended all Europe river cruising departures through to 31 Dec due to border closures.



PRINCESS Cruises has announced its 2023 voyages to Europe, with five MedallionClass ships set to sail the British Isles, the Mediterranean, the Nordics, Russia (**pictured**) and Scandinavia.

The fleet, which includes ships such as *Emerald Princess*, *Island Princess*, *Regal Princess* and *Sky Princess* will sail to 116 destinations in 32 countries, with *Enchanted Princess* making her debut in the Mediterranean.

Princess will sail on 67 itineraries ranging in length from seven to 33 days, and offer a total of 24 More Ashore late night and overnight calls in port, where guests can make the most of their time exploring and experiencing the local sites and cultures.

The cruise line is also offering five distinct cruisetours, including an opportunity to sightsee

in Madrid, available on the Highlights of Spain cruisetour, discovering the birthplace of the Renaissance on the Classic Italy cruisetour, taking in the art and architecture of Prague, Vienna and Budapest on the Imperial Treasures cruisetour, marvelling at the sweeping landscapes on the Ring of Kerry cruisetour, and visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Mycenae, Meteora and Delphi on the Best of Greece cruisetour.

All 177 departures go on sale to Elite Guests only on 16 Jul, and to the General Public on 17 Jul.

Princess Past Guests are also eligible for a special promotion when they book early, consisting of a Captain's Circle Launch Discount, which can be combined with launch and group promotions when booked by the end of Oct - call 1300 587 473.



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