



Cruise Weekly today

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

Virgin cancels again

VIRGIN Voyages has cancelled more cruises aboard *Scarlet Lady* and *Valiant Lady*.

The cruise line, which is set to make its debut next month in the United Kingdom (**CW** 09 Apr), has cancelled the 22 Sep through 01 Oct sailings on *Scarlet*, which were slated to be the first three cruises scheduled to leave from Miami.

Virgin's American debut will now take place on 06 Oct.

The cruise line has also pushed back the launch of its second cruise ship, *Valiant Lady*, cancelling her cruises from 14 Nov through 01 May 2022.

Guests who were booked on one of the cancelled sailings will automatically be credited 200% in future voyage credit of the amount they've paid to date toward their fare.

The future voyage credit is valid for redemption up to a year after the original sailing date for any open inventory through 2022.

Guests can also choose a full refund along with a future voyage credit of 25% of the existing paid voyage fare.

Parliamentary push for cruise

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) is urging everyone involved in cruising to meet personally with their local Member of Parliament to highlight the "enormous human cost" of the current cruise ban.

The Meet Your MP initiative is the next phase of CLIA's Ready Set Sail campaign (**CW** 16 Jun), and encourages travel advisors to connect with their local representative.

To support the process, CLIA has created a new online toolkit which provides resources needed to seek face-to-face or virtual meetings with state and federal representatives.

It provides step-by-step instructions for contacting an MP and explaining the key issues facing the industry, as well as a fact sheet and infographic - **CLICK HERE** to access the resources.

"CLIA and cruise lines have been lobbying hard among political leaders and will continue to do so," said Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz.

"The grassroots involvement of travel agents, suppliers and other stakeholders will help support our efforts and highlight the devastating personal impact of the cruise suspension," he said.

The phase is being rolled out as Federal Member for Leichhardt Warren Entsch leads his own charge to reopen the cruise industry, with the backing of 15

fellow members of parliament, *The Australian* has reported.

Entsch, whose Far North Queensland electorate has been hit hard by the cruise restrictions, has garnered support from both sides of the political divide, including Liberal's Dave Sharma, Labor's Kristy McBain, and independent Zali Steggal.

Describing the situation as a "tragedy", Entsch said he was very worried about the cruise industry, saying the first step should be to give the industry a date to work with.

"It has been a difficult 15 months since [tourism] businesses vanished overnight with the suspension of cruising," he wrote in a letter to Minister for Tourism Dan Tehan and Minister for Health Greg Hunt on 24 Jun.

"Some [tourism operators] are living off retirement savings and others are facing critical decisions in the survival of their businesses," he said.

"The reality is we all know about *Ruby Princess*, [but] you have to accept lessons have been learnt...the cruise industry accepts they have to put in place procedures like every other part of our community to minimise the risk."

Entsch added he had also raised the issue with the offices of the Prime Minister and the Treasurer.

He said he wants the eastern states to reopen for cruising, and thinks New Zealand should also be opened up to the cruise industry as part of the travel bubble.

The Member for Leichhardt also noted in Cairns, in his electorate, millions of dollars was recently spent dredging the harbour to facilitate larger cruise vessels.

In a statement to *The Australian* Tehan said since the start of the pandemic, the Government has made the health and safety of Australians its top priority, and closing the international borders accomplished this.

New Ama venture

AMAWATERWAYS and touring company Metropolitan Touring have partnered to provide a new luxury experience on Colombia's Magdalena River.

Starting in Dec 2023, the pair plans to carry travellers on two itineraries aboard *AmaMagdalena*, a custom-built, all-suite, eco-friendly river vessel.

The seven-night itineraries will feature music, art, chocolate, rum, and a chance to witness the biodiversity of the region, including 2,000 species of birds.

Pre- and post-cruise land programs delving into Colombia's heritage.

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WE ALL want to return to the water - even Hollywood's royalty, it would appear.

NSW Police is probing a boat trip taken in Sydney last week during lockdown by actors Sacha Baron Cohen and Natalie Portman, and her husband, French choreographer Benjamin Millepied.

The group rented a boat at Barrenjoey Boating Services in Palm Beach in northern Sydney, despite the city-wide pandemic health restrictions barring non-essential travel.

The Australian understands Baron Cohen and Portman left the Eastern Suburbs for Whale Beach, where they have been holidaying since the beginning of lockdown.

Portman has also been spotted hiking during the lockdown, which under the restrictions, is probably okay, but even if not, she's a celebrity, so apparently she can do as she pleases!

New MSC Miami terminal



MSC Cruises and Fincantieri have partnered for the construction of a new terminal at PortMiami (render pictured).

The new facility will be capable of hosting as many as three of MSC's latest-generation and most environmentally friendly ships at the same time, handling up to 36,000 passenger movements per day.

The project is due to be completed by Dec 2023, and reflects an investment of approximately €350 million.

It will be made up of a multi-

level central body and three berths, and will include state-of-the-art facilities for passenger services, multi-level parking for at least 2,400 vehicles, and a new road connection.

"Thanks to the Italian flair that Fincantieri will undoubtedly contribute to this project just like they do to many of our ships, this new state-of-the-art terminal will become a Miami landmark of style as well as comfort for passengers passing through what's considered the cruise capital of the world," said MSC Cruises Executive Chairman Pierfrancesco Vago.

"Moreover, it will serve as a platform to support and sustain the expansion of our cruise division across the region and in the Caribbean for years to come.

"It will also allow us to deploy there some of our most modern and environmentally high-performing vessels, representing together with our other investments in the US our commitment to the local market, our trade partners and guests."

P&O positivity

THE United Kingdom's P&O Cruises President Paul Ludlow has hailed an "exceptional" response to the line's Caribbean voyages, which sold out in six hours.

All cabins put on sale last week on P&O's new 40-night winter sun Caribbean cruise aboard *Aurora* sold out on the first day, demonstrating the pent-up demand for cruising.

Aurora's 12-night Portugal & the Canary Islands itinerary, also on sale last week, saw an equally strong response, with 80% sold on the first day of booking.

RSSC World Cruise

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has unveiled its 132-night 2024 World Cruise.

The voyage goes on sale Thu, with guests to visit Australia, as well as Central America, the west coast of the United States, Hawaii, the South Pacific, New Zealand, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, and more.

Navigate the World features a choice of 442 free shore excursions, and access to more UNESCO World Heritage Sites than ever before.

Beginning on 06 Jan 2024 from Miami on board *Seven Seas Mariner*, the ship visits 66 ports of call across 31 countries and four continents.

There are also exclusive shore excursions in Wellington, Mumbai and Malaga.

Full voyage details [HERE](#).

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