



### Ponant recommits to the Kimberley

**PONANT** is increasing its Kimberley departures to a whopping 26 for next year, with an extended operating period from Mar to Sep 2022.

General Manager Sales & Marketing Asia Pacific Deb Corbett said Ponant had been amazed by the demand for its 2021 Kimberley season (*CW* 12 Feb 2021), which had overwhelmingly confirmed pent up interest in Australian exploration voyages.

"This means we will be increasing our already significant presence in the Kimberley to the highest number we have ever offered, which will allow us to expand the 2022 season to include the end of the Big Wet in Mar," Corbett explained.

"We have been simply amazed by the unrelenting demand for our 2021 Kimberley season, clearly confirming pent up local interest in immersive Australian coastal exploration voyages."

Ponant initially announced eight Australian coastal voyages for later this year following the termination of its New Zealand cruise season (*CW* 04 Feb).

For further details or for an overview of Ponant's Kimberley luxury expeditions next year, [CLICK HERE](#).

### No reason not to cruise

**FOLLOWING** *Cruise Weekly's* profiling yesterday of Royal Caribbean International's (RCI) restart in Singapore (*CW* yesterday), hordes from within the industry have pondered why a similar feat is not possible around the wider APAC region.

The New Zealand Cruise Association drew the attention of its social media followers on Facebook and LinkedIn to *CW's* story, with the hashtag #restartcruise posing the question of why a Singapore-style season would not be possible in their country - an opportunity the New Zealand Government inexplicably shut down on the doorstep of the commencement of Ponant's season.

However, Royal Caribbean Cruises VP & MD Gavin Smith warned that although the cruise company was discussing the pathway back to service with the Australian Govt, as well as the states and territories, it would not be as simple as importing RCI's Singaporean measures.

"Continuous innovation is vital," Smith told *Cruise Weekly*.

"While some protocols, like the advanced HVAC filtration systems, will be here to stay, we'll refine others based on needs specific to

Australia and requirements from the local and federal government.

"We'll adapt as more information emerges and technology - like vaccines - progresses even further."

Smith noted working closely with Singapore's authorities, including the Ministry of Health and the Singapore Tourism Board, had also been key, building on what MD APAC Angie Stephen told *CW* yesterday.

"We're working towards that level of collaboration in Australia," Smith enthused.

### Viking weekly deal

**VIKING'S** deal of the week is its 29-day Mediterranean Iconic Shores itinerary.

Priced from \$19,495pp including savings up to \$2,000 per couple when booked before the end of the month.

The trip combines four other Viking itineraries - the Iconic Western Mediterranean; the Italian Sojourn; Venice, the Adriatic & Greece; and the Ancient Mediterranean Treasures.

For additional information, [CLICK HERE](#).

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#### Cruise Weekly today

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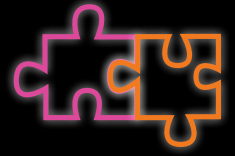
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## Nowhere Man

**THE** United Kingdom's P&O Cruises has announced staycation trips to nowhere for the northern summer.

The week-long cruises will sail around UK waters, and will go on sale later this month.

"Whilst holidays here in the UK will be the first to become a reality we will, of course, gradually see the return of international travel but first we want guests to be able to enjoy a proper summer holiday at sea with the best in relaxation, entertainment and dining choice," said President Paul Ludlow.

"These sailings will leave from our home port in Southampton and sail around UK coastal waters enjoying the summer sunshine."

Ludlow said more details of dates, prices and onboard experiences were coming.

## That's the way I Vike it



**VIKING** took its Viking Vor trade training program to Adelaide on Thu - the first stop in a national program.

Agents were treated to the latest on Viking's worldwide product over a two-course meal and drinks at Eos by SkyCity.

Launched in Jun 2017, Viking

Vor events are designed for agents who are new to the cruise line, as well as those who are keen to brush up on the latest in product knowledge for the award-winning cruise line.

**Pictured** are Viking's Kim Vaughan and Phil Hoffmann Travel Hyde Park's Jenny Reeves.

## Easy as ABC

**OCEANIA** Cruises has unveiled a series of exclusive events for both travel partners and travellers.

The 'Agent Bring Client' (ABC) series will begin in Brisbane this month, before heading to the Gold Coast, Sydney, and Adelaide, followed by Melbourne in Apr and Perth in May.

Compelling offers will be available for attendees, who will learn about itineraries in Oceania's 2022-2023 Tropics & Exotics Collection (**CW** 26 Feb).

The events will consist of two sessions, commencing at 2pm and 6:30pm respectively, as well as an exclusive travel advisor event at 4:30pm (all times local).

To register, please **CLICK HERE**, and to access the advisor toolkit for the events, **CLICK HERE**.

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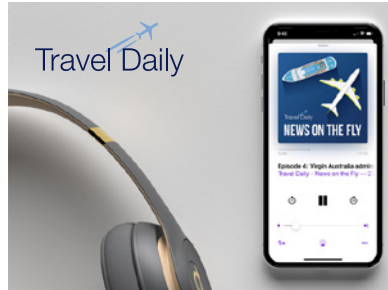
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NEWS ON THE FLY

Episode 4: Virgin Australia adorns 'Resilient Lady'

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## PORTHOLE

**AT LEAST** there are some vessels still sailing!

A toy pirate ship recently completed a voyage from Scotland to Miami - a project that began around four years ago.

A South Florida-based family tracked down the toy ship last week, which they later discovered had been launched by a pair of brothers in Scotland.

*Adventure* was launched four years ago carrying messages in a bottle, sailing from Scotland to Scandinavia to Barbados, but then becoming lost at sea.

Undeterred, the Scots then launched *Adventure II*, which made its way safely to Florida.

*Adventure II* is outfitted with a GPS device that allows the duo to keep tabs on the ship's whereabouts, which they share on social media so that others around the world can keep up - [CLICK HERE](#) to join in.

## Virgin still Resilient



**RESILIENT Lady** (render pictured) has been revealed as the name for Virgin Voyages' third ship, with the cruise line announcing the name on International Women's Day.

The ship will set out from the new Virgin homeport of Piraeus, sailing seven-night itineraries, which include island-hopping in the Adriatic, late-nights in Croatia, and overnights in Mykonos.

The voyages are now on sale for 2022.

"Our collective resilience has been the theme of the last year;

growing, prevailing, and looking toward a future that we've never been more grateful for — which is why it was important to us that the name we chose for our newest lady ship reflect the strength of our past and the power of our future," Virgin said.

"While the year has been filled with adversity and adaptation for all of us, it's no secret that women have been challenged to rise up more than ever during the pandemic.

"From juggling motherhood with the newly minted title of at-home teacher to making sure things stay afloat at work, women around the world have endured and prevailed."

Virgin noted the valour with which the medical community faced the virus, adding women made up 67% of the global healthcare workforce and 80% of all nurses.

"It felt deeply important for us to honor and acknowledge the sacrifices, contributions, and resilience of the women in our lives."

## Creative + Princess

**CREATIVE** Cruising is offering extra onboard credit with Princess Cruises' new Australia & World 2022-23 season launch (**CW** 03 Mar).

The two-week sale started 02 Mar, valid for all Princess sailings, offers up to \$100 onboard credit alongside a 50% reduced deposit when booking through Creative.

Princess' Twice as Nice promotion is also back from 09 Mar, and is combinable with Creative's Cruise Sale Week select sailings - to book, call on 1300 362 599.

## Aurora honour

**AURORA** Expeditions has dedicated its new expedition ship, *Sylvia Earle*, to five of the world's leading female conservationists.

Celebrating yesterday's International Women's Day, *Sylvia Earle* is set to launch in Nov, and is named for the renowned marine biologist.

Each of the vessel's public decks will bear the names of other pioneering female conservationists, such as Bernadette Demientieff, Sharon Kwok, Joanna Ruxton, and Carden Wallace.

The decks will feature a plethora of information on their namesake's work and achievements in conservation, as well as a series of imagery that illustrates their work, with Chief Executive Officer Monique Ponfoort saying Aurora was proud to honour the women.

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