



Viking Venus named as line restarts

VIKING'S newest ocean ship, *Viking Venus*, has officially been named by her godmother, British journalist & broadcaster Anne Diamond, as the cruise line prepares to return to service following 14 months of paused operations.

The new 930-guest *Venus* was welcomed to the fleet with a celebration at sea in the English Channel, with Diamond offering a blessing of good fortune and safe sailing for the ship.

Guests will embark this Sat from Portsmouth for the first of five roundtrip sailings of the England's Scenic Shores itinerary, which will carry British passengers to local destinations, including Liverpool, the Isles of Scilly, Falmouth and Portland.

"Today is one of the proudest days in Viking's nearly 24-year history," proclaimed Chairman Torstein Hagen.

"When we became the first cruise line to suspend operations in Mar 2020, we certainly did not know it would be 14 months before guests would be welcomed back on board.

"Now, we are among the first to set sail again—and with our industry-leading health and safety protocols in place, we believe there is no safer way to travel the world than on a Viking voyage."

Guests on board *Venus* for the naming ceremony enjoyed scenic sailing along the British coast, as well as exclusively recorded



concert from artists including soprano Sissel Kyrkjebø, violinist Tor Jaran Apold and all-boy vocal group Libera.

Diamond, who has been a key feature on the Viking TV broadcast platform over the past year, helped smash a bottle of Norwegian akvavit on *Venus*' hull, using a historic Viking axe to cut a ribbon holding the bottle in place (pictured).

After two months in the United Kingdom, *Venus* will relocate to Malta where she will homeport for more Welcome Back voyages in the Mediterranean.

Delivered in Apr 2021 at Fincantieri's shipyard in Ancona (CW 16 Apr), *Venus* is the newest vessel to join Viking's ocean fleet.

Cruise Weekly today

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

A prime offering

NORWEGIAN *Prima* has debuted as Norwegian Cruise Line's most in-demand vessel, with record-breaking sales during its first day and week in the market.

The first of six *Prima* class vessels recorded the single-best booking day in Norwegian's history, as well as the best initial booking week.

President & Chief Executive Officer Harry Sommer added nearly 20% of the bookings are for Haven suites.

We're on the hunt...

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A new Endeavor

A NEW *Crystal Endeavor* Iceland and Norway expedition has been announced for later this year, offering an exploration of Scandinavia's landscapes and fjords.

The 10-night expedition will depart Reykjavik for Tromsø on 05 Sep, and follow on from *Endeavor's* recently announced inaugural series of five Luxury Iceland Expeditions (CW 07 Apr), which opened to extraordinary demand, with 50% of capacity reserved within the first 24 hours of its release.

"This new expedition caters to travellers seeking a truly luxurious experience that pushes the boundaries of wide-open space both on board and in the destinations featured," said Crystal President Jack Anderson.

For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Universal praise for CCL

CARNIVAL Cruise Line (CCL) has named Miss Dominican Republic (pictured) godmother for *Mardi Gras* during the recent Miss Universe Pageant.

Kimberly Jimenez will serve as godmother to CCL's newest ship, set to debut later this year.

Jimenez, as well this year's winner Andrea Meza (Miss Mexico), will be among the first to sail on *Mardi Gras* when she begins week-long adventures from the United States' Space Coast to the Bahamas and Caribbean later this year.

CCL President Christine Duffy also presented Miss Dominican Republic with the "Spirit of Carnival" award during the broadcast, for embodying Carnival's values of fun, friendship, diversity and inclusion.

Duffy also served on the selection committee for this



year's Miss Universe.

"Kimberly is a role model for female empowerment and has a passion for so many worthwhile causes, particularly those that assist women, children and families," Duffy said.

Emmylou tours

MURRAY River

Paddlesteamers will offer four new escorted tours in 2021/22 aboard *Emmylou*.

Botanica World Discoveries will embark on an eight-day Murray River Gardens by Paddle Steamer itinerary, as well as a nine-day Murray River Cruise & Silo Art Trail of the Wimmera, departing from Apr and May 2021.

Zeppelin Travel will host a seven-day Murray River Explorer tour departing 24 Jul 2021 ex-Brisbane.

Ballarat Lifestyle Travel will offer an eight-night Discovering the Mighty Murray adventure departing Oct and Nov, and Mariner Boating Holidays will also depart in Nov aboard a 10-night tour.

For more information, call Murray River Paddlesteamers on (03) 5482 5244.

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A GRAY whale, part of a species once thought to no longer occur in the Atlantic Ocean, has shown up in the Mediterranean - but is on no holiday.

Some researchers have speculated receding Arctic sea ice confused the whale during its annual Pacific migration, with researchers concerned about the whale's size.

"Underwater images confirm that he is extremely thin," said Maddalena Jahoda from the Tethys Research Institute in Italy.

"This raises a lot of concern for his fate."

Gray whales were thought to have been extinct in the Atlantic since the early 18th century because of overhunting, having once been prized for their oil.

There have been only a couple of other sightings of gray whales on the other side of the Americas in recent years, such as a spotting near Israel in 2010.

P&O international canx



P&O Cruises Australia has decided all cruises this year with an international component will be replaced with domestic port content, the cruise line has announced (**CW** breaking news yesterday).

All guests affected by the changes have been notified directly about their range of options, P&O Australia said in a post in a partners-only Facebook

group seen by **Cruise Weekly**.

Guests can remain booked on their cruise on the new domestic itinerary, or receive a full refund of the amount paid to P&O without penalty.

If a traveller is happy to remain on the new domestic itinerary, no further action is required, and if a future cruise credit was used to pay for an affected booking, its value will be re-applied to the passenger's cruising code for future use.

To a request a booking cancellation, contact 13 24 94, or visit Flagship for more details.

P&O recently extended its cruising pause until 17 Sep (**CW** 06 May).

Pictured: President Sture Myrmell.



23,000 and counting

THE size and passion of Australia's cruise community has become clear this week as CLIA's Ready, Set, Sail campaign provides an opportunity for supporters to be heard by political leaders.

Since its launch last Wed, more than 23,000 emails have been sent to Members of Parliament and Ministers around the country, targeting state and federal governments with a united voice in support of a cruise resumption.

Travel agents, industry stakeholders, cruise passengers and other supporters have helped reinforce CLIA's lobbying efforts by taking part in the campaign.

We've been overwhelmed by the response, but there's still more work to be done.

To support the initiative, CLIA has created an online tool at www.ReadySetSail.com.au that allows you to message politicians quickly and easily.

With a few clicks, you can generate instant emails to local MPs and key Ministers or personalise a message to tell your own story.

We encourage you to edit your own message and share your personal experience with MPs – the impact the cruising suspension has had on Australians will help show the true cost to our community.

Please visit www.ReadySetSail.com.au.

Portugal welcomes back cruising

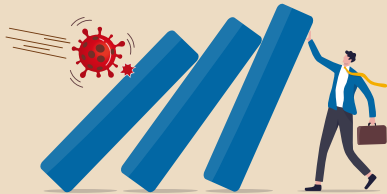
THE Government of Portugal has lifted its cruise ban, with embarkation and disembarkation at Portuguese ports now permitted.

Cruise ships may also carry foreign passengers, and shore visits are also permissible.

However, the ruling excludes entry to residents of countries with a coronavirus incidence rate equal to or greater than 500 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the last 14 days, such as Brazil, Croatia, India, Lithuania, the Netherlands, South Africa, and Sweden.

This policy applies through to 31 May, when the Government will reevaluate it and make changes if needed.

How are you surviving the current environment?



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