



### Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from **Cruise Lines International Association**.

### RSSC back in USA

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises has successfully resumed operations in the USA, with its *Seven Seas Explorer* embarking passengers in Miami earlier this week for a week-long Caribbean itinerary.

CEO Jason Montague said "we are absolutely delighted to sail from the global home of cruising once again".

*Explorer* is the second Regent Seven Seas vessel to return to operations, following the successful restart of *Seven Seas Splendor* which has been sailing in the Mediterranean since early Sep.

## Aussies top RCI World Cruise sales

**AUSTRALIANS** comprise the largest international market for Royal Caribbean International's Ultimate World Cruise (**CW** 22 Oct), with the epic 274-night global odyssey already sold to 70% capacity.

While US passengers will comprise the biggest nationality on board, Aussies make up the second highest number of bookings globally, a Royal Caribbean spokesperson told **Cruise Weekly**.

Taking place aboard the 2,490 passenger *Serenade of the Seas* (**pictured**), the nine-month voyage is also available for purchase in four shorter segments, with the cruise calling at 150 destinations in 65 countries across the globe.

Interestingly, almost two thirds of the Australian bookings were taken directly through the Royal Caribbean call centre, which



booked 63% of the sailings.

Travel partners made up the remaining 37% of bookings, with Royal Caribbean confirming reservations made through Travel Associates, Ignite Travel Group, The Travel Authority, Flight Centre stores in Elanora, Mandurah and Mt Druitt, Travel Central, Travelrite, TravelManagers, RAA West Lakes, Dreamlines and Helloworld Travel Forbes.

The voyage sails roundtrip from

Miami, USA, departing on 10 Dec 2023 and returning on 10 Sep 2024 after exploring the length and breadth of the oceans.

Earlier this month the cruise line confirmed that the top cabin for the Ultimate World Cruise, the Royal Suite, had been booked through a US travel advisor who will receive a considerable commission cheque after processing the booking worth over US\$770,000 (A\$1.03m).

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## Emerald names Azzurra crew

**EMERALD** Cruises has made appointments in two key positions on board its first superyacht, *Emerald Azzurra*, which is now scheduled for a Jan 2022 debut (**CW** 08 Dec 2020).

Jonathan Edwards (**right**) will take the vessel's helm as Captain, joining the Scenic Group after almost 20 years at Holland America Line.

Most recently Edwards has been sailing onboard Scenic's *Scenic Eclipse*, as the "Discovery Yacht" sailed in Saudi Arabia and the Red Sea (**CW** 09 Jul).

Meanwhile Petros Zarpanely (**right**) will lead the service side of *Azzurra* as its Hotel Director, heading up a team of 68 onboard staff hailing from 17 different countries across the globe.

Formerly with Silversea Cruises, Zarpanely is a cruise industry veteran with 25 years of experience, with his role overseeing *Azzurra's* bars and restaurants, housekeeping, galley, laundry, guest services, onboard entertainment and shore excursions.

David Winterton, Emerald Cruises Global Director of Brand and Marketing, said "we are excited to match our incredible new superyacht with talented leadership".

"Captain Jonathan combines a true love of his craft with a wealth of global navigation experience, while Petros' background of managing luxury hotel staff, both on land and



onboard cruise ships, means our guests will see the best of the best when it comes to service, food and experiences.

"We couldn't ask for a better start for our new journey."

The 100-passenger *Azzurra* will sail the Mediterranean, Adriatic, Black and Red Seas, while sister ship *Emerald Sakara* is also currently under construction, due to launch in 2023.

## Guernsey reopens

**THE** Channel Islands of Guernsey will once again welcome cruise ships next year, with a 2022 Northern Summer season set to kick off in Apr next year with a call by Hapag-Lloyd's *Hanseatic Spirit*.

Cruise ships have not visited Guernsey for the last two seasons due to the pandemic, but the "vital part of the tourism economy" is to be reinstated next year.

Almost 80 ship calls are scheduled for 2022, with the season running through until 30 Oct with a planned visit by *Vasco da Gama*.

VisitGuernsey spokesperson Wendy Pedder said "over the last five years we have worked hard to establish an attractive, compelling cruise proposition that offers an unrivalled product in the British Isles," with heavy investment in cruise infrastructure focusing on welcome, disembarkation processes and an extensive shore excursion offering.

"We are delighted to be bouncing back and seeing the level of interest and commitment from the flagship cruise lines," she said.

A spokesperson for Cruise Britain said the successful 2021 cruise restart in the UK had brought renewed focus on the British Isles product, giving Guernsey an opportunity to build on existing business.

## New Croisi route

**CROISIEUROPE** has announced a new itinerary on Europe's Elbe and Vltava Rivers, with the *Prague, Dresden & The Castles of Bohemia* trip cruising roundtrip from Prague from Mar-Nov 2022 aboard a unique paddlewheeler - see [croisieurope.travel](https://croisieurope.travel).



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# Silversea delays season

SILVERSEA Cruises has overnight advised travel agents and clients that several upcoming Australian voyages aboard *Silver Muse* will not operate - but has not given up on its overall local summer deployment.

The season had been scheduled to kick off on 21 Dec with the arrival of the 596-guest *Muse* in Cairns, with Silversea MD Asia Pacific, Adam Radwanski, confirming today that the first three departures had now been cancelled.

He said the move was necessitated "in light of ongoing ambiguity from State and Federal governments on the return of cruising in Australia".

"While the Government has made positive indications about cruising's return, including verbal commitment to end the cruise ban on 17 Dec, no concrete decision has been made.

"Also, the lead time required to bring a ship into Australia requires 60-90 days minimum," Radwanski added.

"Silversea is still committed to delivering a domestic season in Australia, and eagerly anticipates the green light from the relevant authorities in the coming weeks," he said, with Silversea now making plans to operate its first

local voyage on 05 Feb 2022.

"The economic contribution of Silversea's domestic cruise season is incredibly high, and well into the millions of dollars," he said.

"We hope to support the local economy when the season is permitted to operate."

Silversea will continue to work with Federal and State Governments, with the cruise line hoping for firm commitments about the restart "imminently".

Passengers disrupted by the voyage cancellations are being offered a 15% saving on public fares if they switch to any voyage in 2022/23/24 apart from a Silversea World Cruise.

Alternatively a Future Cruise Credit (FCC) worth 110% of the total booking amount can be used to reserve a cruise within 24 months for all open sailings.

Silversea's FCCs are fully transferrable to family and friends, can be used partially and applied to more than one new booking, the company said.

Members of the line's Venetian Society loyalty program will accumulate days on both the cancelled voyage as well as any new booking if they select the FCC or voyage switch option.

A cash refund option is also available, Silversea noted.

## Celebrity cuts Ascent steel



**CONSTRUCTION** on Celebrity Cruises' fourth Edge-class ship, *Celebrity Ascent*, is now under way, after a formal steel-cutting ceremony overnight at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in St Nazaire, France.

The event was attended by Celebrity Cruises President and CEO Lisa Lutoff-Perlo and outgoing Royal Caribbean Group CEO Richard Fain, who were joined on the podium (pictured)

by Laurent Castaing, GM of Chantiers de l'Atlantique.

The vessel will be a sister ship to *Celebrity Edge*, *Celebrity Apex* and *Celebrity Beyond*, and is expected to launch in early 2023.

Fain said *Ascent's* name was "very apropos" as the industry rebounds, with the vessel set to "take the industry to new heights as it pushes the boundaries of what people can experience on a ship".

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## PORTHOLE

**CRUISERS** love Lucy - not famous comedienne Lucille Ball, but Lucille O'Neal, the mother of Carnival Cruise Line's Chief Fun Officer, Shaquille O'Neal.

Extending the Shaq-effect, the good lady has been named as godmother of the newly transformed *Carnival Radiance* which will launch next month after a US\$200m drydock.

As well as giving birth to one of the world's most famous basketballers, Lucille has a bunch of other godmother-qualifying credentials to her name, including being an author, philanthropist and accomplished public speaker who "donates her time and talent to a wide range of charitable organisations".

However any of those achievements will surely be eclipsed when she officially cuts the ribbon alongside Shaq to officially open Big Chicken, his second seagoing restaurant which features dishes based on their family's secret recipes.

## Three no crowd for NCLH



**THIS** trio of estwhile Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) BDMs were happy to share a table at a consumer event hosted by Sarah Webster from Travel Partners member Wayfinder Travel & Cruise in Brisbane earlier this week.

**Pictured** at the Sarah Webster Travel Expo are, from left: Craig McLaurin representing Norwegian Cruise Line; Elsa McLean who is Qld rep for Regent Seven Seas Cruises; and James Sitters from Oceania Cruises - complete with stacks of the latest brochures.

## Fred to Norway

**FRED.OLSEN** Cruises has made its first post-pandemic visit to Norway, with new vessel *Borealis* this week setting sail in search of the Northern Lights, the stunning natural phenomenon after which she is named.

The company's Norway season comprises 22 sailings across the year, with its smaller ships enabling it to access size-restricted waters.

## Aranui delay

**ARANUI** Cruises has confirmed that the planned 2022 debut of its new *AraMana* has been delayed due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$100 million 280-passenger vessel first announced three years ago (*CW* 06 Sep 2019) is currently under construction at Huanghai Shipbuilding in China.

A spokesperson for the company said the ship will now not set sail in 2022, with a 2023 program of sailings set to be revealed shortly.

Unlike Aranui's mixed freight and passenger vessel, *Aranui 5*, *Aramana* will not be a hybrid, instead being solely dedicated to passenger cruising.

Previously announced French Polynesian itineraries included visits to Tuamotu, Gambier, Society and Austral Islands, as well as the Cook Islands and Pitcairn Island.

*AraMana* means "path of the Polynesian spirit" with the ship to feature stylish staterooms and an onboard tattoo room.

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*Cruise Weekly* is Australasia's leading travel industry cruise publication.

**EDITORIAL**  
Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper  
Associate Editors – Myles Stedman, Adam Bishop  
Contributors – Nicholas O'Donoghue  
[info@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:info@cruiseweekly.com.au)  
[info@cruiseweekly.co.nz](mailto:info@cruiseweekly.co.nz)

**ADVERTISING AND MARKETING**  
Sean Harrigan, Hoda Alzubaidi  
[advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au)  
[advertising@cruiseweekly.co.nz](mailto:advertising@cruiseweekly.co.nz)

**BUSINESS MANAGER**  
Jenny Piper  
[accounts@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:accounts@cruiseweekly.com.au)

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd  
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia  
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia  
Tel: (AU) +61 2 8007 6760 or (NZ) 0800 799 220  
Tel: (Int'l) 1300 799 220

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