



## Ponant confirms Aus restart details

**PONANT** has announced further details about its Australia restart next month, in time for this year's Kimberley (pictured) season.

The cruise line has confirmed departures between 28 Apr and Oct (**CW** 21 Mar), following the highly anticipated announcement by Western Australia it will welcome small ships with a maximum of 350 persons to its waters (**CW** 04 Apr).

A highlight is two new dates for the popular 10-night 'Australia's Iconic Kimberley' cruise, between Broome and Darwin onboard *Le Soleal*.

High points on the itinerary include visiting Western Australia's Hunter River, discovering the King George River on a Zodiac excursion; reaching the Twin Falls, the highest in WA; and a visit to Collier Bay, to explore Montgomery Reef.



General Manager Sales & Marketing Asia Pacific Deb Corbett said the announcement was incredibly exciting, following a two-year hiatus due to COVID.

"We've been anticipating this announcement for many months and have been working behind the scenes to ensure we are ready to set sail for the magnificent Kimberley as soon as

possible," she said.

"Australia's Kimberley is one of the greatest wonders of our country, with such grandeur and majestic beauty; it's certainly an absolute bucket list destination for both Australians and international tourists and we look forward to sharing it again to those whose travel plans have been put on hold".

### Cruise Weekly today

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

### This is tutu good!

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises has announced a multi-year partnership with The Australian Ballet.

Guests on board Regent Seven Seas' fleet will enjoy fascinating insights on art, history, and culture from expert lecturers as part of the onboard enrichment offering.

They will also enjoy a scintillating entertainment program of orchestra, world dance, cabaret, and theatre productions in the glittering Constellation Theater.

Regent Seven Seas SVP & MD APAC Steve Odell said the partnership underlines the cruise line's dedication to supporting the arts industry.

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## Aurora acclaims Antarctica achievements

**AURORA** Expeditions has heralded a triumphant Antarctica return this season, celebrating a 100% voyage success rate for the first time in almost two years.

Hundreds of adventurous expeditioners from around the globe, including *Cruise Weekly*, joined Aurora aboard *Greg Mortimer* across eight voyages, ranging between 10 and 23 days from Jan to Apr.

The mix of passengers included Australians, Americans, Canadians, Britons, Frenchmen, Singaporeans, and more.

"Aurora Expeditions is thrilled with the success of our return season to Antarctica, getting back to what we do best in our 30th year of operation," commented Vice President of Operations Tomas Holik.

"Our exceptional safety record and lack of interruptions during this season is a testament to our



team's commitment, planning, and expertise in ensuring that our expeditions were as safe and enjoyable as possible for our pax.

"It was undoubtedly a combination of our strengthened health and safety measures, and the fantastic cooperation of our passengers that ensured our incredibly successful return to operations."

Still upcoming for this current season include voyages to Costa Rica & the Panama Canal, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Greenland, and Canada.

Aurora's 22-23 Antarctica season will commence in Oct, and forward bookings are performing strongly, with many voyages close to sold out.

The cruise line also recently released its 2023 Arctic season, with new itineraries including the 'Jewels of Coastal UK', 'Across the Arctic Circle', and 'Canary Islands, Cape Verde and the Azores', all of which have so far seen an "overwhelmingly positive response", the cruise line said.

**Pictured:** Aurora passengers get in position for the perfect shot.

## Canada cruise return

**CRUISING** has returned to Canada this week, with the first major ship in the country for two years stopping in Victoria.

Holland America Line's *Koningsdam* was the first ship to make her return to Canada, 905 days since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We've worked a long time to make this day happen, and we are delighted to be back," said Cruise Lines International Association President & Chief Executive Officer Kelly Craighead.

British Columbia Minister for Transportation Rob Fleming added: "we know that cruise ship passengers enjoy everything our communities have to offer, helping support thousands of jobs in the maritime, tourism, hospitality, and agricultural sectors".

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## Infrastructure growth

WITH the first cruise ship (P&O Australia's *Pacific Explorer*) due back into Australian waters next Mon after a long two-year hiatus, it's great to see some major infrastructure projects back on deck.

Over in the west, the Port of Broome looks forward to welcoming larger cruise ships in early 2024, with construction set to begin on a new floating port terminal.

This innovative new design, built to cater to the area's huge tidal flow, will be funded by the Kimberley Marine Support Base.

The new facility will complement the dredging project upgrades at the Port in 2019 to increase all-tide vessel access, particularly for larger ships.

Broome is a bucket-list destination for many cruise ship passengers due to the area's fascinating history and incredible natural landscapes.

On the other side of Australia, we welcome a new platinum member Shute Harbour Marine Terminal, Whitsunday Regional Council – reinforcement of the returning confidence in the industry.

The Terminal was officially reopened at the end of last year following a \$63.5 million restoration after extensive cyclone damage.

It is a convenient access point to the Whitsundays and now has three finger pontoons to accommodate cruise ship tenders which can easily transfer guests to the many tour operator vessels using Shute Harbour as a mooring.

A new restaurant, bar and lounge will soon be opened.

## Hurtigruten x UTas tie-up



**HURTIGRUTEN** Expeditions has signed a nine-year partnership with the Institute for Marine & Antarctic Studies (IMAS) at the University of Tasmania for Antarctica research.

Running through to Jul 2031, the new partnership will guarantee IMAS access and support for an on-site study into scientific and social programs, and will see researchers on board Antarctica and South America Hurtigruten Expedition ships.

This will create opportunities for travellers to participate in ground-breaking experiments, Hurtigruten said.

The cruise line's Chief Scientist Verena Meraldi confirmed there are already three projects being planned for the coming Antarctic season.

"We're scheduled to have Marine Mammal Observers on board our 2022–2023 Antarctic season as a follow-up of the project we supported during the 2019-2020 season," Meraldi affirmed.

"We'll welcome two researchers on three departures on *MS Fridtjof Nansen*, who will be studying the impact of Citizen Science participation on our guests' travel experience and attitude towards Antarctica."

Meraldi said Hurtigruten is also identifying which departures will be ideal for a pilot study on the behaviour and habitat of ice seals in the Antarctic Peninsula.

Hurtigruten Managing Director & Vice President Sales & Marketing Asia-Pacific Damian Perry added: "we're very excited to announce our long-term collaboration with the University of Tasmania to support social and natural science research projects on board our ships."

"Our science projects with IMAS will not only provide contributing data to the scientific community, but they will also enhance our guests' experiences through face-to-face interaction with the scientists and their work".

**Pictured:** Brown Bluff, Antarctica.



WITH so many cruise ships heading to the breaker's yards, we're wondering if one of them will befall this fate!

A European man has turned an old boat into a toasty floating sauna.

The steel-hulled boat was purchased for less than €1,000, after which he stripped it out, and inserted high-quality windows capable of resisting high temperatures and steam, and following some interior carpentry, he had himself a "floating sauna".

## Not five o'clock yet

THE seaborne launch of Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line's rebrand to 'Margaritaville At Sea' has been delayed two weeks, with a number of cruises cancelled.

The "new" line is now scheduled to debut 14 May, having originally been planned to make its first appearance 30 Apr.

Guests booked on the impacted sailings have received an email with the news, with the delay an apparent result of supply chain issues, according to media reports.

Margaritaville Hotels & Resorts, the company owned by singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett, announced its branding takeover of Bahamas Paradise last year (*CW* 09 Dec).