



Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from P&O Cruises.

NZCA holds 8th annual conference

THE New Zealand Cruise Association (NZCA) yesterday welcomed stakeholders from across the industry to the first conference in three years.

Delegates were welcomed by NZCA Chair, Debbie Summers, who said "I know that we are all bonded together by the sheer adversity we have faced both in our working lives and subsequently our personal ones" through the pandemic.

Summers noted the positive position the industry was in, with the recent reopening of NZ's maritime borders and the strong shared future with 900 upcoming cruise calls from 42 different ships which will bring over 250,000 cruisers to NZ.

"It is time for new beginnings," she enthused.

Tassie cruise alert

THE Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania (TICT) has called for a five year ban on "mega" cruise ships entering the state, as well as a cap on daily passenger numbers and extra fees for vessels visiting protected areas, as part of a "more sophisticated approach" to the industry.

A resolution was passed backing the measures during this week's 2022 Tasmania Tourism Conference, with TICT Chair Daniel Leesong telling delegates "we don't believe Tasmania is suitable for these new generation mega ships... there are more than enough small and medium cruise ships for us to build a vibrant cruise destination".

Bratton: regulate, but be clever about it

SARINA Bratton, Asia-Pacific Chair of Ponant Cruises, has warned increasing regulation of the NZ cruise sector is likely to be counterproductive, with the country needing a cruise industry with "varying scales and experiences".

Bratton (pictured) was the keynote speaker at yesterday's New Zealand Cruise Association Conference in Auckland, and took the opportunity to highlight that while the pandemic has created an amazing opportunity to transform the sector, "having regulations that do not take into account the different needs of cruising will hinder, not help, transformation".

"New Zealand needs a cruise industry with varying scales and experiences," she said, noting the difference between a 5,000 passenger ship delivering tourists into downtown Auckland and scale small expedition ships which deliver Zodiac experiences in the Fjords and sub-Antarctic islands.

"Both are critical, neither can fill New Zealand's needs alone, and each impacts the country differently," she said.

Bratton highlighted the "Tiaki Promise" to care for NZ and protect its environment & culture.

"NZ's aspiration to protect and preserve its wonderful environment and culture leads inevitably to regulations designed to sustain the environment and the culture, and that's a good thing," Bratton said.

CLIA, NZCA pact

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the NZ Cruise Association (NZCA), which was first signed in 2017.

The move was announced at the NZ Cruise Association Conference during a speech by CLIA MD Joel Katz yesterday.



"But to be even more effective, these regulations must be realistic and smart," she added.

Bratton suggested that NZ has the opportunity to continue showcasing its environment to the world, "by developing and embracing smarter regulations that are just as protective but also take into account rapidly-evolving new technologies and different visitor expectations".

She highlighted an NZ biosecurity ruling which orders mandatory hull inspection and cleaning for all international vessels - but with the catch-22 that "there is nowhere within NZ's territorial waters where you can undertake hull cleaning".

Another example is the Fjordland Master Plan which proposes a maximum of two ships per day into the region - and the fact that a third ship could be in a different sound 150km away is not taken into account.

"This is not a 'smart' regulation," Bratton suggested, precluding the entry of a small, low impact expedition ship if

larger vessels had visited.

Ships would only be allowed to deploy a maximum of four Zodiacs - a measure believed to be aiming to protect existing shore operators despite them not having sufficient capacity to service cruise ship needs.

Bratton also highlighted infrastructure issues, such as the long-anticipated plan for dolphin mooring extensions in Auckland, which appears to have stalled.

There is potential for NZ to be a leader in the environmental space while allowing the benefits of cruising to flow to the wider community, Bratton said, urging all stakeholders to take steps to "ensure enduring 'tiaki' and long-term economic contribution".

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P&O is uncorked

P&O Cruises has announced the debut of a new adults-only show called "Blanc de Blanc - Uncorked" aboard its new Pacific Encounter which will undertake her first revenue voyage out of Brisbane on Sat.

The cruise line is also running an Encounter "Welcome Aboard Sale" - see **page three**.



Virtuoso cruise celebration

CRUISE lines and their trade partners from across the globe let their hair down this week in Las Vegas on the "Cruise Night Out" session of Virtuoso Travel Week.



Held on the rooftop of the Paris Casino, revellers **pictured** above included Jess Jones from Celebrity Cruises with Alison Lord, Gillian Woodley and Peta Pascoe, all of Travel Associates, while showing some heart **below** are Celebrity's Fiona Heron with Travel Associates' Dani Galloway and Shannon Fogarty.

Above is Fiona Heron from Celebrity and Hurtigruten's Jerry Pilgrim with Travel Associates' Adam Crossman, Damian Clark and Becky Kent-Perchalla.



And **left** with the illuminated Bellagio Hotel and its famed fountains behind are Patrice Willoughby, Azamara MD Int'l, Jess Jones from Celebrity Cruises, and Azamara President Carol Cabezas.

Hong Kong cruise back on agenda?

ROYAL Caribbean International has made a formal presentation to Hong Kong's Legislative Council, detailing protocols and plans for a proposed cruise restart in the Asian city according to the *South China Morning Post*.

The report cited Jeff Bent, MD of the city's Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, saying the proposal highlighted the cruise sector's high levels of sanitation, contact tracing, social distancing measures and onboard medical facilities.

Royal Caribbean ceased its cruises in Hong Kong in Feb and moved *Spectrum of the Seas* to Singapore after Hong Kong's response to the Omicron outbreak made it difficult to operate.

Currently all 26 Royal Caribbean ships are back in service, and it's unclear which vessel could be redeployed for any Hong Kong restart, which is likely to be months away even if permission is granted.

Filling the bicky tin

CRUISE lines continue to raise capital to fund their operations, with Virgin Voyages this week taking on US\$550 million in funding and "additional continued support" from its lenders in order to continue to execute the line's growth strategy.

Royal Caribbean also raised US\$1.25 billion in a private notes offering which was priced to pay 11.625% interest.

Explora F&B reveal

EXPLORA Cruises will offer 11 culinary experiences across six restaurants aboard its new *Explora I* when she debuts in May next year.

The product will feature all-inclusive regional wine selections, an exclusive mixology program and curated beverage tastings including an "Ocean State of Mind" cocktail created using gin made with seaweed algae.



THERE'S nothing quite like an oceanside lounge, but usually they're strictly designated for human use.

That wasn't the case on Samos Island in Greece, where Twitter user @Gabriele_Corno captured the image **pictured** below of a pretty lazy Mediterranean Monk Seal relaxing in the early morning.

It's pretty easy to understand why the marine mammal chose the more comfortable option, particularly when you consider how rocky the beach there is.

The tweet has now been viewed over 1.3 million times.



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