



#ILoveCruiseWeekly

DON'T forget to use the hashtag #ILoveCruiseWeekly and tag us @cruiseweekly in any Instagram posts from tonight's Cruise360 industry-wide cocktail party and from the conference tomorrow.

We're giving away a deluxe bottle of French Champagne for the best Cruise360 photo, and will be announcing the winner later in the week.

Tonight's #ILoveCruise-themed cocktail party kicks off at 5.30pm at Cafe Del Mar on Sydney's Cockle Bay Wharf, and concludes at 8pm, while the conference proper takes place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel from 8.30am sharp.

The Cruise360 trade show will be in the Grand Ballroom and open during breaks in the conference as well as the post-event networking drinks happening from 5pm-8pm.

Viking names new *Osiris*

VIKING has celebrated its long association with Highclere Castle and the wildly popular *Downton Abbey* TV series by having George Herbert, the 8th Earl of Carnarvon, name its new *Viking Osiris* in Luxor, Egypt.

Herbert becomes Viking's first ever "godfather," after offering a blessing of good fortune and safe sailing for the 82-passenger newbuild which will ply the waters of the Nile on the popular Pharaohs & Pyramids itinerary.

The naming event also featured Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen (pictured), who said "Egypt has always drawn curious explorers for its rich history and ancient antiquities, and ever since we first began operating on the Nile River in 2004, our guests continue to be amazed by the country's many cultural treasures".

"Today we are pleased to officially welcome the *Viking*



Osiris to our growing fleet on the Nile River, which allows us to welcome even more curious explorers to this incredible destination," he said.

The naming ceremony will help meet surging demand for Egypt, which this year marks several key events including the opening of the new Grand Egyptian Museum on the Giza Plateau near Cairo.

Viking's 12-day Egyptian offering includes a three night hotel stay in Cairo, followed by a flight to Luxor and then an eight day round-trip on the Nile.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Azamara ramps up

NEWLY appointed Azamara Cruises Director of Sales Australia/NZ, Victoria Chigwidden, has hit the ground running after taking over the local team from Belle Osmic (*Travel Daily* 29 Jul).

She joins Azamara with more than 25 years of experience in retail, coach, river and ocean cruise, most recently as SA/NT District Sales Manager for Royal Caribbean Group.

Chigwidden's team is now back in the field, including Kristina Sambaher (BDM NSW/Qld/WA/ACT), Jessica March (BDM Vic/Tas/SA/NZ) and the support team of Darah Robbins and Natalie Bax - vchigwidden@azamara.com.

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TODAY we have another good news story about an item lost on a beach, after our most recent update telling of the recovered prosthetic leg on Rhode Island (**CW** yesterday).

This time it was a precious diamond wedding ring - a somewhat more conventional object, but perhaps trickier to find - which slipped off the finger of a woman playing football at North Beach in Hampton, New Hampshire.

After fruitlessly searching for the family heirloom, Francesca Teal turned to social media, posting a plea on Facebook for anyone who might visit the beach with a metal detector to be on the lookout, according to the *Boston Globe*.

The post was shared multiple times and ultimately held the attention of an energetic 60-year-old Lou Asci who donned a wetsuit and used a waterproof headlamp and metal detector to ardently search for the ring.

Two days of fruitless looking led to a bit of frustration, but on the third day he said "I wanted to go back and give it one last shot" - at which point he found the ring lurking in sand on the ocean floor.

He sent Teal a message with a photo of the item, saying "please tell me this is the ring so I can finally get off this beach!" - and it was.

Uniworld 2023/24 launch

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises is set to further ramp up its presence in the Australian and NZ markets, with CEO Ellen Bettridge yesterday unveiling the company's latest programs as well as announcing the elevation of Alice Ager to be the Managing Director of the brand locally.

Bettridge is in Australia to speak at tomorrow's CLIA Cruise360 conference, and noted that "Australia is our second last source market...and if early bookings are any indication, 2023 will be outstanding".

"This result has been achieved through the hard work, resilience and creativity of the team under the fantastic leadership of Alice Ager...Alice has been an outstanding General Manager and is ready to take her leadership to the next level."

2023 bookings from Australia and NZ are up 38% on 2019 levels with travellers from this region booking longer itineraries and higher cabin categories, Bettridge noted, reiterating the strong local response to Uniworld's version of a "world river cruise" (**CW** 17 Aug).

The new offerings are part of ongoing innovation within the Uniworld product, with Bettridge saying "each year we strive to make the next river cruise season even better than the last".

New itineraries for next year include the 15-day Grand Central Europe voyage which cruises in Switzerland, France, Germany and Austria on the Rhine, Main and Danube rivers.

There's also a 10-day Zurich and the Rhine River Valley trip which includes a canoe ride through the Mainschleife nature reserve, as well as a new 8-day Belgian Holiday Markets itinerary.

Updated voyages also include a more immersive experience of Venice aboard the *S.S. La Venezia* with a Po Delta sailing and Murano glass blowing demonstration.

The launch of the 2023/24 season also includes exclusive availability for Australian and NZ passengers to have "first pick of every cabin on every itinerary, before international guests are invited," Bettridge noted, with current prices also including 10% Early Booking Savings.

MSC update

MSC Cruises has modified its Northern Hemisphere Winter 2022/23 program, with *MSC Virtuosa* to replace *MSC Preziosa* in Northern Europe.

Preziosa will instead be based in Santos, Brazil for a series of mini-sailings and week long voyages including Uruguay and Argentina, while *MSC Bellissima* will operate *Virtuosa's* Mediterranean trips.

Ponant specials

PONANT Cruises is offering last minute savings on 2022 departures for voyages in Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, NZ and the Pacific.

A flight credit offer of up to \$1,000 per person is combinable with up to 25% off brochure fares and a welcome offer of \$800 per stateroom is also available - 1300 373 178 (Au) or 0800 767 118 (NZ).



Cruise360 is back!

OVER recent weeks we've celebrated new milestones in cruising's revival in this region - New Zealand's first cruise ship arrival, Fiji's first ship, and confirmation that New Caledonia will reopen to cruising next month.

But this week we get to celebrate a milestone on a much more personal level as CLIA members reunite in Sydney for our Cruise360 Australasia conference, the first time we've been able to come together in well over two years.

The response to this year's event has been fantastic. More than 500 delegates will attend a sold-out conference, and over 40 exhibitors will take part in a fully booked trade show.

This year's Cruise360 Australasia will allow us to focus on the future and share real insight into the new opportunities emerging from cruising's global revival.

Every aspect of our program has been designed to give travel agents the edge when it comes to understanding the new landscape we operate in and the evolutions happening in cruise markets.

Despite everything travel agents have endured, we're seeing a level of resilience and enthusiasm that gives us enormous pride. We're glad we can reunite this week, and look to a more positive future

