



Yarra Bay cruise solution must return

THE challenge of the capacity constraint on the Australian cruise industry, particularly the Yarra Bay solution, must be “back on the table”, Senior Vice President & Managing Director Oceania Cruises & Regent Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) Steve Odell commanded at yesterday’s Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Cruise360 conference.

With the COVID-19 pandemic over, the former local Chair of CLIA said the capacity challenge, particularly in Sydney, remained as one of the largest questions the cruise industry needed to answer post-pandemic.

“That was a challenge at the time, the capacity constraint, it’s still there today,” Odell remarked.

“If you look at the Port Authority (of NSW’s) books, there are bookings there until the middle of ‘25, there are 100 new cruise ships on order, some of

them going to be deployed here, ships that provide the volume to the market, so that issue has to be back on the table soon.”

Odell said although the cruise industry recognised the difficulty of the Yarra Bay plan, which has received much opposition (*CW* 29 Jul 2021), there is no question Sydney needs another cruise terminal.

“The endgame, though, is that we’re going to need more capacity in Sydney,” he commanded.

“You see companies like Virgin coming into Melbourne, you see what’s happening in Brisbane, so there’s no question given what the projections are, we have to get back on this conversation quickly here.”

However, Odell added ensuring communities are better off from the presence of cruise would be about collaboration, and

managing restriction against benefit.

“At the end of the day, this is about partnership, making sure we direct people to the right experiences, and that we’re respectful of the communities that we’re going to,” he added.

“In [RSSC’s and Oceania’s] luxury and premium sector, we’ve tried to accommodate that by offering different kinds of experiences.

“There’s been definitely this sort of trend towards smaller tours, and more specialist interests, like culinary things that are eco-friendly...because we can deal with smaller numbers”.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features five pages of all the latest cruise industry news, including a photo page from yesterday’s *Cruise360*.



On location in Iceland

Today’s issue of *CW* is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line, which will name its brand new *Norwegian Prima* in Reykjavik tomorrow.

GLOBAL pop icon Katy Perry is warming up her vocal chords for an exclusive “A Very Perry Special Christening Ceremony” event aboard *Norwegian Prima*.

The naming event is the start of a week-long celebration of the newbuild, which is the first of a new six-strong class for Norwegian, with vessels arriving annually until 2027.

The line is pulling out all stops to highlight its innovation, hosting a large contingent of Australian travel partners for the inaugural voyage.



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Fred.Olsen local launch

BRITISH brand Fred.Olsen Cruise Line will for the first time ever have a presence in Australia, with the appointment of Cruise Traveller as its exclusive local distributor.

The boutique line is founded on the principle that “smaller, traditional ships deliver better quality experiences for guests,” with Cruise Traveller Managing Director Craig Bowen saying “we’re very excited to work alongside Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines as the latest partner in our growing fleet of small ship cruise brands that we promote”.

“Fred.Olsen’s ships are uncrowded and offer a classic, elegant and personal style of cruising featuring more interesting and off-the-beaten-tourist-trail ports, and that’s a distinctive experience more Australians are now seeking.”

A dedicated Australian brochure

for the brand is in the works covering the 2023/24 season, and Cruise Traveller has launched the first-ever dedicated Australian website for Fred.Olsen at fredolsen.com.au.

The cruise line operates four vessels: *Bolette*, *Braemar*, *Balmoral* and *Borealis*, with capacity ranging between 900 and 1,360 passengers each.

The wholesaler has also launched an exclusive new 95-night ‘Grand Africa & Indian Ocean’ cruise-and-stay package, kicking off in London on 17 Nov 2023 with a pre-cruise stay, followed by a circumnavigation of Africa aboard *Bolette*, which includes a visit to 24 countries.

The itinerary leads in at \$24,645 per person twin share, with a complimentary drinks package and on-board credit valid for bookings by the end of next month - call 1800 507 777.

Russell named a ‘Champion’



CLEAN Cruising General Manager & Director Dan Russell (**pictured**) has been named Cruise Lines International Association’s (CLIA) ‘Cruise Champion’ for 2021-22.

The award was announced by CLIA at yesterday’s Cruise360 conference in Sydney.

Russell has been celebrated for his role in supporting industry calls for a resumption of cruise operations in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CLIA’s local Managing Director Joel Katz said Russell has been recognised for working shoulder-to-shoulder with the Association, as well as its members and fellow advocates, to help secure a pathway to resumption for the Australian cruise industry.

“Dan’s efforts supported and inspired so many others to help secure a way forward for cruising in our region,” Katz said.

CLIA’s Cruise Champion Award was created in 2019 to acknowledge the evolving role of travel advisors and the increasing part they play as ambassadors for the cruise industry.

The Association’s annual Cruise Industry Awards will return for the first time in three years in Mar, with a gala event to be held at Big Top Sydney.



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\$4,941 price based on Q2 Mini Suite aboard MS *Nordnorge* on 28 Nov 2022 Classic Roundtrip Voyage and is subject to availability. Price correct as of 12 Aug 2022. On sale until 30 September 2022.

Bettridge: value of agents is peaking

TRAVEL advisors are needed now more than ever, Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection President & Chief Executive Officer Ellen Bettridge told yesterday's Cruise360 conference.

Delivering her "Opportunities Abound - Making the Most of Cruising's Revival" keynote presentation, Bettridge reinforced travel advisors play a crucial role in selling cruise, and should be looking for new opportunities to grow sales to take advantage of the "ready to travel again" mindset.

"The use of travel agents is having a resurgence," she told the audience, citing comparison website Finder.

"They are seeing that more and more people are going after the travel agent and trying to find one.

"[Travellers] learned when something happens, they need



to have somebody on the other end of the phone, who they can pick up and go to who's going to be there to help them, and that is like a travel agent."

A former consultant herself, Bettridge encouraged advisors to be visible and to take risks.

"Get out there and be who

you are, you have amazing knowledge, and you've got to get out there and share it," she encouraged guests.

Bettridge is pictured with Senior Vice President & Managing Director Oceania Cruises & Regent Seven Seas Cruises Steve Odell.

Coin ceremony held for Ascent

CELEBRITY Cruises has celebrated a construction milestone on *Celebrity Ascent*, its fourth Edge series ship, with a coin ceremony at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard.

Workers welded a ceremonial coin to a massive steel docking block forming *Ascent's* keel, officially marking the beginning of construction on the ship.

Ascent will stand at 17 decks tall, and will be 20 metres longer than the original *Celebrity Edge*, meaning it will feature more space than her predecessor.

She will debut from Port Everglades on 03 Dec 2023 for her inaugural Caribbean season of alternating seven-night Eastern and Western Caribbean itineraries.

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Fri 26th Aug 2022

YESTERDAY'S return of Cruise Lines International Association's Cruise360 conference in Sydney saw the industry gather formally for the first time in almost three years. Hosted once again by James O'Loghlin, getting back into the swing of the conference was just like riding a bike for attendees. The Australian comedian moderated a "State of the Industry" panel which featured executives from Carnival Corporation, Royal Caribbean Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings. There were also other talks and panels,

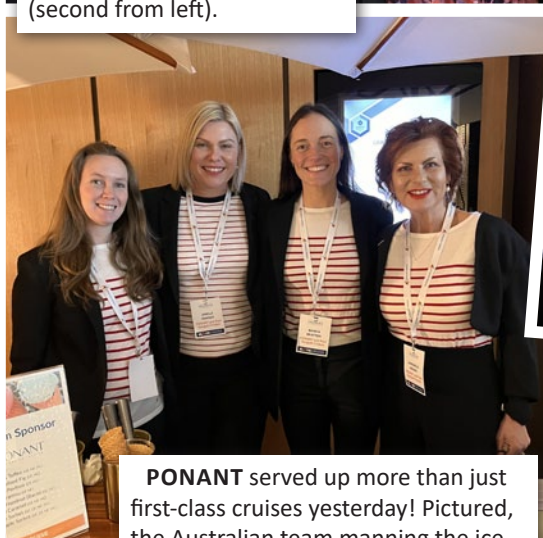
featuring guests from Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection, Clean Cruising, and more.



THE Uniworld team with Managing Director Alice Ager (second from left).



"CHEERS" to the return of Cruise360 from Clean Cruising's Martine Hero and Jean Summers.



PONANT served up more than just first-class cruises yesterday! Pictured, the Australian team manning the ice cream cart.



THERE was no shortage of "celebrities" at yesterday's conference!



"BELLISSIMO"...MSC Cruises stole the spotlight with their Vespa.



VIRGIN Voyages did its best to colour-coordinate - 4/5 for effort!



EXPLORA Journeys burst onto the Australian cruise scene yesterday.



THE Azamara team and its new head, Victoria Chigwidden.



THE Aurora Expeditions team, with its irreplaceable Chief Marketing Officer Hayley Peacock-Gower (second from left).

Scenic showcases

THE industry is being reminded of Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours' Luxury Cruise & Land Journeys travel showcase events, which begin on Mon.

The cruise line's national program of travel showcases will visit Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Canberra, and Perth.

Hosted by the expert Scenic sales team, these interactive sessions are designed to provide insider knowledge and inspire future guests to plan their next luxury cruise.

The showcases will feature five sessions during the day, with interactive Q&As - for more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

Passages at Sea

CORAL Expeditions has launched its 'Passages at Sea' series, introducing a unique experience for guests seeking an attractive fare.

Voyages are priced at a 30-40% discount off the normal expedition rates, with an additional 10% Early Bird offer available for bookings made before the end of next month.

From observing a ship's crew at work, learning about navigation & ship-handling, to enjoying conversation with like-minded passengers, the series is being billed as "a true blue-water expedition".

The feature voyage in the series is an epic 19-night navigation of the Indian Ocean that departs Zanzibar before charting eastwards to arrive in Fremantle.

Seascape trial success



MSC Cruises' *MSC Seascape* (pictured), the second ship in the Seaside EVO class, has successfully completed her sea trials.

Seascape completed her first intensive systems tests at sea during a multi-day trial between 17 and 20 Aug.

Built by Fincantieri in Italy, *Seascape* will be delivered to MSC in late Nov, and will come into service in Dec, sailing year-round from Miami to the Caribbean.

Seascape has now entered the final phase of her preparation for her inaugural season in the Caribbean, which will begin in just four months' time, and includes her naming ceremony, which will take place in New York City on 07 Dec at the Manhattan Cruise Terminal.

The ship will offer two different seven-night itineraries, stopping at destinations such as Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve, Nassau, San Juan, Puerto Plata, Cozumel, George Town, and Ocho Rios.

Following *MSC World Europa*, *Seascape* will become the cruise line's second new ship to launch this year.

Celebrity protocols

CELEBRITY Cruises has announced new protocols for guests sailing from American and European ports.

To make cruises more accessible and easier for travellers, guests departing on most sailings from the United States or Europe can now cruise as long as they meet local testing requirements on board.

Commercially available tests will also now be accepted in many destinations, simplifying guidelines for guests.

The new protocols begin from 05 Sep.

Sailings to and from ports in Australia still require all guests aged 12 and up to be fully vaccinated.



ONE of the biggest surprises Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection President & CEO Ellen Bettridge received on her trip to Australia was the statistic on how early we retire compared to our American friends.

Referencing the Australian travel advisors who chose to retire during the pandemic rather than keep their business afloat, Bettridge was stunned to learn that many of them were in their 50s - an unthinkable age to hang up your keyboard in the United States.

"I can't believe it the stuff I was reading, like who will retire at 55...I heard that the average retirement age in Australia is 56 years old," Bettridge gasped.

"That blew me away!"

Unfortunately, that metric may have increased given the hit our collective superannuation took.

New P&O TVC

P&O Cruises Australia has launched its first brand campaign post-pandemic, "We are the Destination".

The push reaffirms cruise as an easy way to holiday, and showcases P&O Australia as the definitive place to take a vacation.

Kicking off with a 30-second brand TVC, the campaign poses the question to Australians, "why travel when you can cruise?"

The TVC can be viewed [HERE](#).