



A new Cogin joins the P&O team

P&O Cruises Australia has strengthened its leadership team with the appointment of Deborah Cogin as Vice President Guest Experience Hotel Operations.

Cogin joins the team from BridgeClimb Sydney, and brings a strong background in operations and tourism to the role.

She said she's already "addicted" to the energy and pace of the cruise industry since joining the team just over a month ago.

Explora II inaugural out



EXPLORA Journeys has announced the inaugural itineraries of its second ship *Explora II*, which launches in the northern summer of 2024.

The schedule is now open for bookings, with a unique set of journeys and new destinations, which will allow guests to explore renowned and off-the-beaten-path locations in the Mediterranean, the Middle East, India, the Indian Ocean, and Africa.

Featuring 25 journeys between Aug 2024 and the end of Apr 2025, the itineraries will include 82 unique ports across 26 countries.

At each stop, guests will have opportunities to discover the local nature and culture through exclusive activities, while exploring exotic 'bucket list' destinations through sustainable and tailored experiences.

There will also be 14 extended journeys during the inaugural season.

Explora II will first traverse the Mediterranean, reaching ports in Italy, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Croatia, where guests will immerse themselves in the ancient history of each country, enjoy their traditional and signature culinary flavours, and soak up the surrounding art,

colours, and architecture.

The ship will pass through the Suez Canal and allow its guests to enjoy the beauties of Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula (**render pictured**), Saudi Arabia, the Red Sea, and more.

Explora II will then reach the coast of India, where guests can explore the steamy evergreen forests of the Western Ghats, the waterfalls and tea plantations of Goa, the Kerala hinterland, and Mumbai.

The voyage of discovery will continue to the islands of the Indian Ocean including the Seychelles and the Maldives, with other African stops including Mozambique, Tanzania, Madagascar, Kenya, Mauritius, and South Africa.

"This is a new chapter for the brand, we are extremely proud to unveil *Explora II* and these new itineraries," Chief Executive Officer Michael Ungerer said.

"Our portfolio of destinations is constantly expanding, and we look forward to welcoming guests on board our ships to enjoy once-in-a-lifetime experiences in incredible countries where they will be able to reconnect with themselves, while connecting with the people they meet, the surroundings and the local communities."

Cruise Weekly today

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

Now I am the Master

BECOME an MSC Master for your chance to win \$500.

Those who become a certified MSC specialist through the training platform can go in the running for a \$500 gift card if they graduate by 21 Dec.

Across seven modules, travel partners will improve their knowledge of MSC's new ship *MSC World Europa*, pricing models, MSC Yacht Club, pre-paid packages, MSC Voyager Club, and more - access through MSC Book **HERE**.

NCL sets records

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) is celebrating a record-breaking day, week, and month of sales, following a holiday push led by Black Fri and Cyber Mon.

The record Nov was capped off by 25 Nov, the best booking day in Norwegian's history, which also marked a record week for the cruise line.

However the latter record was soon to be broken again, with the following week bringing even more sales than the last.

"Momentum is strong and there is no better evidence of this than our record-breaking performance this Nov, the best-booked month in the history of our cruise line," President & Chief Executive Officer Harry Sommer said.

"This achievement is even more impressive when considering Nov is historically one of the slower booking months for our business.

"On the heels of the successful launch of our groundbreaking *Norwegian Prima*, which has already received numerous accolades, we are well on our way to a banner year".

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PORTRHOLE

A MYSTERIOUS object has emerged on a Florida beach, setting off speculation regarding the 24m enigma. Made of wood and metal, the object appeared during low tide yesterday. Archeologists are expected to examine it, after it began protruding through the sand at Daytona Beach Shores. Theories about the object have circulated on social media and on local news websites, with guesses including a shipwreck, a barrier, a portion of an old pier, or spectator seating from when NASCAR had races on the beach.

Cruise back in the Sunny Coast



THE Sunshine Coast's cruise season is full steam ahead, with the first arrivals of the year reaching the region this week.

After more than two years in hiatus, Viking's *Viking Orion* arrived on Mon, having sailed from Vancouver via Asia to Australia.

Orion will homeport out of Sydney for the 2022/23 season, but will return to Mooloolaba (pictured) on 05 Mar - the final cruise call of the season.

Also visiting from Viking this season will be *Viking Neptune*, in town on 19 Feb.

Tomorrow will see the arrival of Oceania Cruises' *Regatta*, while other ships calling this season include Windstar Cruises' *Star Breeze*, Phoenix Reisen's *Amera*, Regent Seven Seas Cruises' *Seven Seas Explorer*, and Silversea Cruises' *Silver Muse* and *Silver Whisper*.

Sunshine Coast business owners and operators are expected to receive a major economic boost thanks to the anticipated arrival of nine cruise ships docking on


Mooloolaba's shores this season, injecting an estimated \$2 million into the local economy.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 80% of passengers debarked for a local tour, or to enjoy Mooloolaba's surroundings, including dining and shopping experiences.

Visit Sunshine Coast Chief Executive Matt Stoeckel said the ships often arrived during quieter trading periods, providing a needed boost to local businesses.

"What makes the cruise sector so valuable for the Sunshine Coast - beyond the immediate revenue injected into local businesses - is that cruise ships tend to visit mid-week and out of peak holiday periods, so it really boosts our tourism economy when we most need it," he said.

"The research also indicates that passengers who have a pleasurable experience during a stopover are likely to talk about the experience and return to the Sunshine Coast in the future for a holiday, providing longer-term benefits."



AUSTRALIAN CRUISE ASSOCIATION
ACA UPDATE
with Jill Abel - CEO

Board Report

WE HELD our final board meeting for 2022 this week in Hobart which provided us with a great opportunity to revisit how we have been tracking against our strategic plan for restart.

ACA's several priorities have all progressed during the past two years, with the Association anchoring relationships with key decision-makers in government and industry.

We have had a seat at the table during critical discussions around restart and have been invited to comment and advise on major issues which impacted our industry.

Another area where we believe we have had major impact is in positioning cruise within Australia's overall tourism offering and generating increased understanding of the interplay between the related industries.

For too long cruise was considered an ancillary player but we are delighted to have forged a strong relationship with Tourism Australia, which is allowing us all to move forward with some exciting plans.

As a mark of the progress of our new partnership, representatives from TA joined our meeting followed by us all attending an industry event at MONA where we had the opportunity to meet with their Global Leadership Team.

It was encouraging to hear that cruise is gaining greater recognition for its ability to bring high-yielding, international visitors to Australia - dispersing to regional destinations through a huge range of cruise product - as well as offering pre- and post-cruise extensions.

Sold for a song!

DISNEY Cruise Line's new partially completed ship *Global Dream* was acquired at a bargain price, according to reporting in German media (CW 17 Nov).

The hugely discounted price of €40 million is barely 2% of the estimated cost to construct of USD\$1.8 billion.

A report in *Capital* suggests Disney will assume all risk in the conversion of the 75% complete ship, and will have no right to any warranty claims.

Disney is expected to spend just under €1 billion to finish *Global*, which is scheduled to set sail in 2025.

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