



CRUISE WEEKLY

On location in the Antarctic Peninsula

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Aurora Expeditions as she journeys in the globe's far southern waters.

AURORA Expeditions' *Greg Mortimer* sailed to King George Island over the weekend, where she disembarked her passengers for a flight back to South America.

Her final day on the voyage saw guests visit Lindblad Cove, with a zodiac cruise around the region offering an excellent change to spot a whale or two

Passengers then conveniently flew back from King George Island to Punta Arenas, skipping the return leg of the sometimes arduous Drake Passage.

Plan for industry Canberra mission

THE high media profile achieved by last week's industry Day of Action (**CW** 27 Jan) is set to be further amplified through the next stage in the campaign to have the current Australian ban on foreign cruise ships lifted.

A "Mission to Canberra" has been announced by the Aussie Travel Action Group, urging stakeholders from across the cruise and travel sector to gather at Parliament House, Canberra on 09 Feb.

That will be the second day of the new sitting of Federal Parliament, and will provide another opportunity to press for the lifting of the cruise ban.

Anyone who has been impacted by the inability of ships to operate locally for the last 23 months can join - for more information **CLICK HERE**.

Dream Cruises put into administration

GENTING Hong Kong's woes continue to escalate, with the company on Fri filing a winding up petition for its Dream Cruises Holding Limited subsidiary.

Genting is the majority shareholder in Dream Cruises with a stake of just over 67%, with the remainder held by US private equity group TPG which paid US\$459 million for its shares in late 2019.

In an announcement to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, Genting HK confirmed it was appointing provisional liquidators to the Dream Cruises business, saying the previous appointment of liquidators to Genting HK itself (**CW** 19 Jan) had "triggered further insolvency events of default or termination events" under Dream's existing finance arrangements.

However it appears Genting HK hopes the Dream Cruises business may survive, saying "the company is of the view that a consensual restructuring will present higher recoveries to all creditors and stakeholders compared to a value-destructive liquidation...which is the likely alternative outcome".



"The Dream Sub-Group remains valuable, and there are transactions which can be pursued which are likely to realise better value for the Dream Sub-Group's creditors than a formal and terminal liquidation scenario," the statement read.

Shares in Genting HK remain suspended, while the update made no mention of the fate of other subsidiaries including Crystal Cruises LLC and Star Cruises, both of which operate as separate corporate entities.

Crystal Cruises has advised of the suspension of all current sailings (**CW** 20 Jan), while its

Crystal Symphony made global headlines last week when it changed course while en route to the USA to avoid an arrest warrant which had been issued over unpaid fuel bills.

Dream Cruises has led the cruise restart in Asia, having been one of the first lines to safely resume sailings in Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong.

The company also has a massive 9,500 passenger newbuild, the *Global Dream* (**pictured**) under construction at the MV Werften shipyard in Germany, which also declared bankruptcy earlier this month (**CW** 12 Jan).

APT launches 2023 Europe pre-release

APT has released a 2023 Europe pre-release brochure, offering clients the opportunity to travel in 2023 at current prices when booked by 31 May.

The program includes the perennially popular Magnificent Europe river cruise itinerary between Amsterdam and Budapest, with the 15-day voyage starting at \$6,495 per person twin share including flights and a saving of up to \$1,000 per couple.

The Magnificent Europe itinerary features several APT Signature Experiences, including a visit to the privately owned Nymphenburg Castle in Germany & an

exclusive journey on Hungary's Grand Empress steam train.

APT's 15-day Balkans river cruise also returns at 2022 prices, while the company has also reintroduced the Colours of Morocco small group journey as the ideal complement to its Douro River Cruise.

A 13-day Russian Waterways river cruise can be combined with the return of the Trans-Siberian rail journey, with APT Product Manager for Europe, Sarah Latimore, saying with excitement surrounding the return of international travel "we expect high demand for Europe touring in 2023".

Seabourn appoints

SEABOURN has named Wendy Whitener as its new Director, North America Sales.

Whitener is a 22-year cruise industry veteran, having joined Carnival Cruise Line in 1999 and worked her way up through various roles, both onboard and in sales.

She was most recently Carnival's Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships.

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EVERYONE loves a souvenir, but this is somewhat ridiculous.

America's Customs and Border Protection has seized a whopping 509 "prohibited aquatic items" from two cruise passengers as they disembarked from a ship in New Orleans.

The officer was stationed to monitor the arrival of a ship which was returning from a seven-day Western Caribbean cruise, visiting ports including Montego Bay, Grand Cayman and Cozumel.

A couple were referred for a baggage examination, where a large quantity of "various aquatic items such as seashells, coral etc," were discovered.

The pair admitted to collecting the items during ports of call "for use in art projects," with Customs and Border Patrol detaining the collection which was formally turned over to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The items which were determined to be illegally imported without a permit included nine sea fans, 47 sea sponges, five Queen conch cells, 297 molluscs, four chitons and 30 sea urchins.

"While these aquatic items look nice, the import/export of them needs to be regulated to protect these natural resources," said New Orleans Port Director Terri Edwards.

Carnival optimism

CARNIVAL Corporation has advised investors that it expects to have all of its nine brands - including P&O Cruises Australia - back in operation for the Northern Summer season.

Currently P&O Australia is the only outlier, with the other eight lines in the portfolio including Carnival Cruise Line, Holland America, Princess, Seabourn, Cunard, P&O Cruises UK, Costa and AIDA having all safely resumed cruising since the pandemic.

A corporate update issued by the company late last week advised of an "impact on bookings for our near-term sailings, including higher cancellations resulting from an increase in pre-travel positive test results and challenges in the availability of timely pre-travel tests".

In addition, in recent weeks Carnival said it had seen a "dampening of the booking activity for the second half of 2022 relative to 2019".

The company confirmed that it had worked closely with health and medical experts globally and nationally, as well as with authorities in destination countries, "to put in place comprehensive health and safety protocols for protection against and mitigation of COVID-19 across the entire cruise experience for all of our nine brands".

Protocols continue to be updated based on evolving scientific and medical knowledge, Carnival added.

The rise of *Osiris*



VIKING Cruises has released details of the float-out of its newest Nile River cruise ship, with the 82-guest *Viking Osiris* touching water for the first time at Cairo's Massara shipyard.

The new vessel (pictured) will join *Viking Ra* which launched in 2018, while a sister ship, *Viking Aton*, will join the fleet in 2023.

Osiris will make her commercial debut in Aug this year, sailing the top-selling Pharaohs & Pyramids itinerary which starts with three nights in Cairo to visit key sites such as the Great Pyramids of Giza, then a flight to Luxor to see the Temples of Luxor and Carnak, followed by an eight day roundtrip Nile cruise.

During the voyage guests enjoy privileged access to the tomb of Nefertari in the Valley of the Queens, and the tomb of Tutankhamun plus excursions to Estna, Qena, Abu Simbel and the High Dam in Aswan.

Viking founder Torstein Hagen said "we are proud to be the only western company to build, own and operate ships on the

Nile - and we will always maintain our commitment to creating meaningful experiences that are focused on the destination".

Additional pre- and post-trip extensions include visits to Jordan or Jerusalem, as well as the five-day "British Collections of Ancient Egypt" add-on, which starts in London with behind-the-scenes visits to the British Museum and the home of collector Sir John Soane, as well as taking guests to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, London's Petrie Museum and the archives of Howard Carter, the discoverer of Tutankhamun's tomb, at Oxford's Griffith Institute.

2022 will see several key events take place in Egypt, including the opening of the new grand Egyptian Museum as well as the 100th anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb.

Hagen said "particularly during this milestone year for Egypt, we look forward to welcoming guests on board *Viking Osiris* and introducing them to the country's many cultural treasures".