



# Thank God almighty we're free at last!

AUSTRALIA'S cruise ship ban will come to an end on 17 Apr, with the government announcing the prior prohibition extension will be the last (**CW** breaking news yesterday).

The date will mark 25 months since Australia banned the entry of international cruise vessels under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, and confirms the news foreshadowed by Minister for Tourism Dan Tehan on Mon (**CW** 14 Mar).

Upon the resumption, additional measures will be in place to reduce the COVID-19 risk on board ships, including enhanced pre-arrival reporting; ensuring vessels always arrive with permission to unload passengers; stress testing of emergency response systems; and engaging with the cruise industry on a safe resumption. Ships will also need to meet

all state and territory public health requirements, with these jurisdictions to soon advise on their readiness to begin cruising.

Passengers will be required to be double-vaccinated, which opens the cruise industry up to almost 95% of Australians over the age of 16 who have had two doses.

Tehan said the resumption of cruising was an important milestone in the Australian travel industry's recovery.

"This is great news for the cruise industry, tourism, the broader economy and the Australians who love to take a cruise holiday," he said.

"The resumption of cruising is another key step forward in the tourism sector's recovery from COVID-19.

"We look forward to welcoming cruise ships and passengers back to Australian waters."

Minister for Home Affairs Karen Andrews said the Australian Border Force stands ready to welcome international pax and crews back to the country.

"The cruise ship industry plays an important role in our tourism sector and forms part of the Morrison Government's plan to bolster our economic growth as we recover from the pandemic," she enthused.

"I can't wait to see our cruise terminals once again filled with arriving international passengers, getting this important industry ship-shape and back out on the water once more.

"In 2019, before the pandemic, Australia welcomed more than 600,000 cruise ship passengers across the border from almost 350 vessels."

More on the ending of the cruise ship ban on pages **two**, **three**, and **four**.

### Cruise Weekly today

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

### FC welcomes cruise

FLIGHT Centre (FC) Australia General Manager Kelly Spencer welcomed the news the country's cruise ban will soon come to an end.

Although it was Flight Centre's hardest-hit business segment throughout the pandemic, upon the reopening of the Australian border in Nov, the company witnessed a three-fold increase in enquiries on all cruise products, Spencer revealed.

"Since then, enquiries have remained steady, with Jan and Feb this year showing a significant increase month on month to levels that rival pre-pandemic enquiries," she said.



2023-2024 EARLY RELEASE

# GRAND *voyages*

### EXPLORE THE WORLD ON A GRANDER SCALE

Perfectly designed for seasoned and time-rich travellers, Oceania Cruises' specially curated set of 72 to 82-day Grand Voyages is an invitation to navigate storied seas, straits and oceans on intriguing journeys that boldly connect diverse and exotic corners of the globe. Embrace the opportunity to experience a constellation of vibrant and remote destinations with imaginative and meaningful excursions ashore that connect you to the place, the culture and the people. You'll settle into the rhythms of local life, taste traditional dishes and experience destinations others only dream of.

RESERVATIONS NOW OPEN

VIEW VOYAGES



Visit [OceaniaCruises.com/terms](https://OceaniaCruises.com/terms) for details.

*keep dreaming...*

Travel inspiration for your clients' next holiday!

[Click to read](#)

Travel & Cruise  
Weekly

## P&O announces new Aussie season

P&O Cruises Australia was first off the blocks yesterday following the government's decision to lift the cruise ban (see **page one**), with the line setting a course to resume sailing in May.

The brand yesterday launched a new 2022 program of sailings from Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Melbourne aboard *Pacific Explorer*, *Pacific Adventure*, and *Pacific Encounter*.

The first to depart will be *Explorer*, when she sails from Sydney on 31 May on a four-night round trip to Brisbane, where she is scheduled to make the first call at the city's new cruise terminal on 02 Jun.

It will be the first sailing ahead of a series of Queensland and South Pacific cruises through to late Oct, replacing *Adventure's* scheduled program.

While most cruise itineraries will remain unaltered by the

change of ships, a 10-night cruise to Vanuatu departing 01 Jun has been replaced with three shorter domestic cruises.

*Adventure* will now begin her maiden season of cruises from Sydney on 22 Oct, when *Explorer* will sail to Adelaide for a new mini-season of four cruises.

*Explorer* will then redeploy to Melbourne for three months in Nov, before returning to Adelaide in Feb 2023 for a longer season of nine cruises.

Meanwhile, the Brisbane debut of *Encounter* has been rescheduled from 04 Jun to 20 Aug, prompting the cancellation of 15 cruises - P&O will work closely with travel advisors to explain the changes and rebook affected guests on a new cruise.

P&O also said it will liaise closely with the governments of Fiji, New Caledonia and Vanuatu on the planned return of cruising

to those countries in the second half of this year.

Carnival Australia President Marguerite Fitzgerald, said the next important step in cruise's resumption is for state governments to reopen their ports to ships.

She noted discussions are progressing with the Australian Government and the eastern states are still to finalise a set of health protocols and guidelines ahead of a restart.

"The uncertainty of the past two years has been replaced with hope and a belief that the lifting of the cruise ban at last heralds the return of cruise operations in Australia," she said.

"Overseas experience... has confirmed that cruising can operate safely in the new environment with comprehensive health protocols that can support the return of cruising here."

## Princess cancels

**YESTERDAY'S** decision to lift the cruise ban (see **page one**) has seen Princess Cruises announce its return to Australia, with *Coral Princess* to return to the country in Jun.

The ship will round-trip from Brisbane, on itineraries ranging from three to 12 days.

In Aug, *Coral* will reposition to Sydney for a new 12-day voyage calling at Queensland and the Conflict Islands in Papua New Guinea, before resuming her previously announced Australia program for the 2022/23 season.

To accommodate for the changes, *Royal Princess'* sailings in Australia and the Pacific from Sep through 04 Mar 2023, and *Majestic Princess* sailings in Australia and the Pacific from 24 Feb 2023 through May 2023, have been cancelled.

## FEEL FREE TO RELIVE THE CLASSICS

Give your clients the best of the Mediterranean from ship to shore with NCL

UP TO **35% OFF** CRUISES\* + **FREE BEVERAGE PACKAGE & MORE\*** + **US \$200 FREE ONBOARD CREDIT\***



\*Offer correct as at 1 March 2022 and subject to change or withdrawal. Offer ends 24 March unless extended. For full terms and conditions visit ncl.com.

Travel Daily's second Survival Survey shows green shoots of recovery, but it is a serpentine road ahead. Read more in the latest *travelBulletin*.



**ITALIAN** police have seized the world's biggest superyacht, owned by Russian billionaire Andrey Melnichenko.

The announcement came a few days after the industrialist was placed on a European Union sanctions list following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The 143-metre *Sailing Yacht A* has a price tag of €530 million, and has been sequestered at the port of Trieste, the Government of Italy said.

*Sailing Yacht A* is designed by Philippe Starck, and was built by Nobiskrug in Germany.

She will add to Italy's impressive collection of assets the country has seized from Russian billionaires of late, totalling more than €700 million.

## Industry bodies welcome cruise news

A LITANY of travel industry bodies have welcomed the federal government's announcement to restart cruise Down Under (see **page one**), with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) saying the lifting of the ban is welcome news for thousands of Aussie workers.

CLIA said the industry would continue working with state and territory governments to finalise the extensive health protocols needed before cruising can resume.

"[Yesterday's] announcement is a huge breakthrough for more than 18,000 Australians who depend on cruise tourism, including travel agents, tour operators, food and produce providers, entertainers, port workers and many other industry suppliers," said Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz.

"The suspension of cruising over

the past two years has cost the Australian economy more than \$10 billion and we now have an opportunity to work on a revival."

The Australian Cruise Association (ACA) added its enthusiasm, saying the return of cruise ships would signal a return of economic growth.

"We have worked closely with our industry partners to hold extensive discussions with federal government around the healthy and safety protocols required onboard and onshore to make a cruise restart possible," Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel explained.

"We were fortunate to be able to draw on modelling from a successful restart internationally which has seen CLIA ocean-going cruise lines welcome nearly nine million guests onboard since resuming operations in Jul 2020.

"The New South Wales, Victoria

and Queensland Governments have done the heavy lifting on clearing the way to make this restart possible, with the NT, SA and Tasmania also lending their support to this effort."

The Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) described the end to the ban on cruise as "great news", and an important step toward a return to normal for the country's tourism sector.

AFTA said the travel industry now awaits state and territory governments to confirm their position on cruise.

"Given international cruise ships must meet all state and territory public health requirements to be able to berth, clarity is needed before the real planning of getting ships back here can begin," urged Chief Executive Officer Dean Long.

"It's going to take a couple of months for the ships to get here."

BOOK NOW WITH A  
\$49 DEPOSIT<sup>pp#</sup>

LIVE IT UP  
WITH A ROOM UPGRADE!  
OCEANVIEW to BALCONY ROOM<sup>^</sup>

P&O CRUISES  
LIKE NO PLACE ON EARTH

LEARN MORE

<sup>#A</sup> T&Cs apply

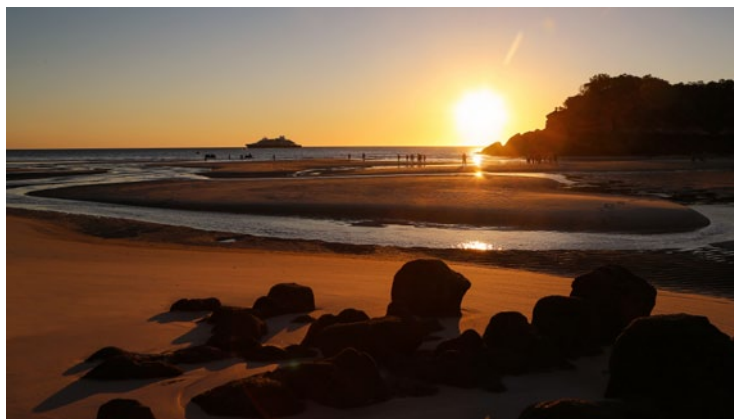
## HLO welcomes cruise

**THE** lifting of the cruise ship ban has been a “long time coming”, according to Helloworld (HLO) Chief Executive Andrew Burnes.

“Agents and their clients across Australia are both relieved and thrilled that the ban is finally coming to an end,” he added.

Pre-COVID cruise sales made up a third of most HLO sales.

## Sun rises on NT cruise



**NT TOURISM** is set to welcome back the cruise industry, reigniting a multi-million dollar industry for the Territory.

The Government of the NT said a number of international expedition cruise operators have already indicated they would like to be part of the Northern Australia cruise season this year, “a fantastic outcome for Australians who still hold bookings on voyages in the region this year”.

“It is also a tremendous result for local businesses and Aboriginal communities who service and receive revenue from the cruise industry,” it added.

Safety measures will see all cruise vessels required to have a COVID management plan approved by NT Health prior to commencing voyages, and will need to visit Darwin as their first port in the Territory.

The NT Chief Health Officer also previously released an updated direction for both Australian and international cruise ships operating in the Territory’s waters, which permits only cruise vessels with up to 350 passengers

and crew members (**CW** 17 Feb).

“The cruise ship industry is a key driver for the Top End tourism sector, and prior to COVID the Territory was seeing \$60 million in annual expenditure as a result,” said Minister for Tourism Natasha Fyles.

“This decision to enable cruising to safely resume in Australia will be a very welcome boost to local operators and retailers.”

“With vaccinated international visitors returning to Australia last month, safely reopening cruising will provide visitors with another reason and travel option to come and experience the Territory.”

Ponant also applauded the decision to allow cruise operations in Australian waters to recommence, and thanked the Government of the NT for leading the push.

“The international expedition sector is a major contributor to Indigenous Australians along the Kimberley coastline (**pictured**), and significant contributors to the tourism economies of both the Northern Territory and Australia’s North West,” said Chair Asia Pacific Sarina Bratton.



## Vic plans for restart

**FOLLOWING** the good news from the federal government about the lifting of the cruise ban yesterday, the timing for our member roadshow to Victoria seems absolutely perfect.

As you read this, Joel Katz (CLIA) and I will be joined by representatives from Carnival Australia, Abercrombie & Kent, and Visit Victoria for an important Destination Workshop and fam.

This trip is on the back of the highly successful workshops held in Queensland last year when we visited five key cruise locations in the state, attracting around 250 people to discuss building a framework for a cruise restart.

This visit takes us to rural Victoria, and more specifically Phillip Island, which is an important regional port.

We will experience a range of shore excursions that soon will be open again to cruise passenger visits.

These include Ocean Adventures jetboat and cruise, a tour of historic Churchill Island, the iconic penguin parade nightly event, and a heli-flight over Phillip Island.

The itinerary will also take in Rhyll Jetty which is the berthing point for cruise ship tenders.

The workshop which closes the visit is critically important as an opportunity to re-engage with members and discuss the planning needed for the cruise restart when the ban is lifted.

## IT'S TIME TO TREAT YOURSELF



### INTRODUCING CELEBRITY REWARDS

➤ LEARN

➤ EARN

➤ SPEND

Celebrity **X** Cruises®

LEARN MORE AT THE  
[CELEBRITYCOMMITMENT.COM.AU](http://CELEBRITYCOMMITMENT.COM.AU)

Terms and conditions apply.  
See [thecelebritycommitment.com.au](http://thecelebritycommitment.com.au)  
for full terms and conditions.