



CRUISE

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Carnival ready to christen Brisbane

ONE of the highlights of Carnival Corporation's return to sailing in Australia will be its christening of the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal (BICT), with the company's P&O Australia's *Pacific Explorer* to be the first leisure vessel to utilise the facility when it arrives for the first time later this week.

Speaking to the media at White Bay Cruise Terminal on Fri, Carnival President Australia Marguerite Fitzgerald said *Explorer's* impending arrival in Brisbane would be the start of a relationship which has been frustratingly delayed due to the pandemic.

"It's fantastic," Fitzgerald said, "that's what Carnival planned when we originally created our relationship with the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal.

"We are going to be running more than 100 calls there every



year, and so this is just the first of many, and the economic activity it brings back to Queenslanders."

Fitzgerald and many members of the Carnival team and suppliers were at White Bay on Fri to witness *Explorer* being stocked with essentials ahead of her first voyage - more broken ground for the Australian cruise industry's restart.

"Today's big delivery of produce to *Pacific Explorer* is where cruising and economic opportunity meet," she said.

"It is also strong confirmation of the multiplier effect of cruise tourism and the diversity of the cruising ecosystem."

Pictured is Fitzgerald with Hotel Director Kevin Boag and P&O celebrity chef Luke Mangan.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Azamara partners with Versonix

AZAMARA has announced a booking software partnership with Versonix.

The association will launch in the first quarter of next year, and will see the two cooperate on the launch of Azamara's new reservations platform.

"We are very pleased to officially partner with Versonix Seaware to provide a more seamless customer experience for our travel partners when booking with Azamara," said the cruise line's President Carol Cabezas.

"We're focused on creating a smooth transition for travel advisors", she added.

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Ponant on the road again



PONANT is demonstrating its commitment to the Australian travel industry through its attendance at conferences around the country this year.

Since welcoming the resumption of cruising last month, Ponant's newly restructured Asia Pacific business development team (**CW** 29 Apr) has been making a vast impact on the Australian travel industry through a variety of dedicated partnerships.

Ponant conducted personal business planning sessions with more than 500 travel professionals recently at the Helloworld Travel Owner Manager Conference on the Gold Coast and the Virtuoso Symposium in Adelaide, both of which the line is a major sponsor.

The brand has announced 12 exceptional giveaways, presenting 10 \$2,000 marketing funds to trade partners to invest in advertising and procuring incremental sales.

Ponant has also awarded two

complimentary luxury staterooms on board the newly renovated *Le Ponant* to two lucky managers.

"By investing in sponsorship at a national level along with local marketing for independently owned businesses, Ponant is demonstrating assurance to the industry which is incredibly welcoming as sailing resumes," Noosa Cruise & Travel owner and Manager Natalie Cherry said.

She testified Ponant's commitment to the trade and the industry has been appreciated by all.

"It is so exciting they have announced *Le Ponant* is coming to Australian waters.

"This type of sailing expedition has never been done before and it is such a unique and intimate way to explore the Kimberley."

Pictured is the business development team: Annabelle Brown (VIC, SA, TAS), Julie Golding (NSW, ACT), Julie Rogers (Director of Sales), and Janelle Ramsey (QLD, NT, WA).



THE world's first underwater bar (**pictured**) has opened to mark the launch of Hendrick's Neptunia gin.

The bar is designed in the Victorian style, and has popped up in an aquarium in Madrid.

It is installed on the floor of the tank, and utilises specially designed scuba gear which allows for the tasting of gin, as sharks, cow-nosed rays, turtles, and more look on.

The 'Pubmarine' is promoting Hendrick's newest limited edition gin-tonic which is made from a combination of refreshing botanicals sourced from the Scottish coast.

To set up the bar, Hendrick's partnered with the Seagrass Project, an environmental charity dedicated to the conservation of marine ecosystems.



Oceania upgrades

OCEANIA Cruises is launching an exclusive upgrade sale of up to four stateroom categories at no extra cost.

A special preview of applicable sailings is now live, ahead of the official sale period which runs from Thu to 04 Jun - **CLICK HERE**.

Cabin Select launch

NEW specialist cruise line channel manager Cabin Select has launched.

A joint venture between Discover The World and Digital Travel Marketing Group, Cabin Select's first two cruise lines to join are VIVA Cruises and Margaritaville at Sea.

The two lines will soon be available on the booking platform, where users will have the ability to provide fully bookable tactical promotions, and content distribution in multiple currencies & languages to a global network of cruise sellers.

Cabin Select will also provide a lower cost of sales distribution and operational overhead than the sector has been able to offer to date.

The channel manager is headed by Graeme Ogston, a technology veteran with more than 20 years of cruise tech experience; Troy Cranmer, head of Cruise at Discover The World; and Peter Whittle, Chief Executive Officer of Digital Travel Marketing Group.

Cabin Select said it will have several new cruise lines joining it throughout the year.

ACL heading to Aus

AMBASSADOR Cruise Line (ACL) has launched its second season program for 2023-2024, which will see its next addition to the fleet, *Ambition*, take to the seas.

Highlights of the program include a Grand Round the World Cruise aboard *Ambiance* which visits Australia.