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CRUISE WEEKLY

On location in Doha

Today's issue of *Cruise Weekly* is coming to you courtesy of MSC Cruises, which has named its all-new *MSC World Europa* on the weekend.

TODAY is the day!

Cruise Weekly is coming to you from the Naming Ceremony of the beautiful *MSC World Europa*.

Over the weekend, guests have had a chance to experience the ship in all her glory, enjoying tastings of the six specialty restaurants on board, relaxing with a traditional Balinese massage at the Aurea Spa, and cooling off from the Doha heat in the seven swimming pools on board.

Tonight guests will don their glad rags, ready to celebrate the inauguration of *World Europa* into the MSC fleet.

Hello MSC World Europa!



MSC Cruises' newest flagship, *MSC World Europa*, was officially celebrated in an extravagant naming ceremony held at the brand-new Grand Cruise Terminal in Doha last night.

The triumphant event was attended by thousands of distinguished guests, travel advisors, and media from around the globe, with the long-standing maritime tradition taking place in the presence of Master of the Vessel, Captain Marco Massa.

Guests were treated to breathtaking entertainment at the ceremony including a cutting-edge video-mapping projection onto the ship's hull, a huge drone show and a grand finale performance by international singer-songwriter Matteo Bocelli.

Finishing the night with a bang, a spectacular fireworks display lit up the Doha skyline as guests enjoyed a glamorous gala dinner to celebrate the first LNG-powered vessel in the MSC fleet.

The weekend's celebrations aimed to reinforce MSC as a brand leader in the Middle East, and its commitment to supporting the growth of international tourism in Qatar and the broader region.

Speaking of the trailblazing ship, MSC Cruises Chair Lynne Clarke said "you are taken on this incredible journey from the moment you set foot on board."

Australian trade partners have been hosted this week by Commercial Director Australia & New Zealand Lisa Teiotu - **pictured** - is the contingent ahead of the celebration: Helloworld's Karen Deveson, Discover Australia's Nathan Harding, Flight Centre's Bhavna Thapar, My Cruises' Michael Middleton, Teiotu, Dreamlines' Ashkan Ghasemi, Ignite's Randall Deer, Our Vacation Centre's Noriye Oto, MSC's Michelle Warren, Ignite's Ryan Thomas, and Flight Centre's Pauline McLennan.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a cover page from **Royal Caribbean International**.

Arriving on Neptune

VIKING has taken delivery of its newest ocean ship, *Viking Neptune*.

The vessel is the first in the cruise industry to test a small hydrogen fuel system, which will be used to power onboard operations.

The test will determine how hydrogen fuel could be used at a larger scale aboard future newbuilds.

The delivery ceremony took place this morning when the ship was presented at Fincantieri's Ancona shipyard.

"We are especially proud to welcome this newest sister ship to our ocean fleet, as it also marks a significant advancement in testing hydrogen as a future fuel for our vessels," said Chair Torstein Hagen.

"She is the 15th new ship we have added to our overall fleet this year, another significant milestone as we continue the celebration of our 25th anniversary.

"We look forward to welcoming guests on board the *Viking Neptune* next week."

The ship will spend her inaugural season sailing itineraries in the Mediterranean before embarking on Viking's 2022-2023 World Cruise.

Silversea changes

SILVERSEA Cruises has told *Cruise Weekly* it will continue to work with port authorities in Queensland to ensure Brisbane remains a key destination, following the chaos of the closure of Portside Wharf (**CW** 11 Nov).

The cruise line said a number of its itineraries have been adjusted to accommodate the closure of the port, which means its next call in Brisbane will be on 07 Mar 2024.

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DO YOU feel lucky punk - well, do ya?

Carnival Cruise Line has pulled the lever on its first-ever, million-dollar slot tournament last week.

It was the largest prize of its kind offered on a Carnival ship, with 100 prizes given to *Mardi Gras* passengers, including the top prize of USD\$500,000.

More than 1,600 players took part, making it Carnival's largest casino tournament to date.

Carnival is now planning more tournaments, including two additional million-dollar slot competitions over the next two years.

Next year, the million-dollar Slot Tournament will take place on *Carnival Celebration* departing from Miami, on 29 Oct, while the following year's tournament will be held on *Carnival Jubilee*.

Creative Cruising deal with Celebrity

BOOK any Celebrity Cruises departure through Creative Cruising for next year with to earn a \$50 e-gift card for all bookings made and deposited before the end of 2022.

Guests can save by booking one of Creative Cruising's packages based on wholesale fare - visit www.creativecruising.com.au.

Aranui brings back Bora

DUAL dual passenger/cargo line Aranui is going back to Bora Bora, and offering more Austral Islands cruises in 2024.

Due to popular demand, *Aranui 5* will visit Bora Bora in the 2024 program, which is on sale now, with the ship to alternate between the picturesque Tuamotus, Fakarava Atoll and Kauehi, on the journey north to the Marquesas, and Rangiroa and Makatea on the return leg.

Staterooms start from \$8,181 per person twin share.

A total 23 scheduled cruises around the South Pacific will make up the program, and after strong demand for the inaugural Austral Islands cruise next year, the line is offering two more dedicated voyages to the archipelago in 2024.

The 11-day roundtrip itineraries from Papeete will depart 30 Mar 30 and 02 Nov 2024, and feature visits to all five Australs, including overnight visits to Rapa Iti, the little sister of Easter Island, and Raivavae, as well as Tubuai, Rurutu and Rimatara, from \$8,503 per person twin share.

In line with Aranui's freight operations, most of the cruises are 12-day roundtrip itineraries from Papeete to the six inhabited Marquesas Islands - Nuku Hiva, Ua Pou, Ua Huka, Tahuata, Fatu-Hiva and Hiva Oa - where *Aranui 5* delivers cargo.

Guests can disembark and explore the remote ports on a range of included excursions such as hikes, four-wheel drive tours, local feasts, and more.

An 11-day Pitcairn voyage will also depart on 17 Feb 2024,

including an overnight visit to the island as well as calls to Anaa and Amanu in the Tuamotus, and Mangareva and Aukena in the Gambier Islands.

The Pitcairn Discovery cruise is priced from \$9,234ppts.

To launch the 2024 program, Aranui is offering an early bird deal with 10% off all voyages booked before the end of Feb.

Early bird prices start from \$7,421 per person twin share.

"We're thrilled to announce that Bora Bora is back, providing the perfect balance of palm-fringed blue lagoons and lush volcanic vistas in our traditional Marquesas Islands itinerary," Regional Representative Laurent Wong said.

Bar Harbor votes to ban large ships

MAINE port Bar Harbor has voted to severely restrict cruise ship visit, with a ballot last week limiting the number of passengers who can visit per day.

Just 1,000 people will be able to disembark in Bar Harbor, with the new total to be grandfathered until 17 Mar.

The number is far fewer than the typical total number of passengers per day during tourist season, with Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Breakaway*, the largest vessel scheduled to visit Bar Harbor for the remainder of the year, bringing in 3,900 cruisers alone.

TICKETS \$70



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