



Orion adds destinations in 2012

Orion Expedition Cruises will sail to China, Micronesia and Java and offer new routes in NZ and Japan.

ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK, NEXT YEAR'S ITINERARIES incorporate the first full year of voyages for the new *Orion II* including several maiden visits for the expanded cruise line.

China is featured for the first time with two expeditions in the Yangtze Delta: Kobe to Shanghai, which offers a forest hike to a shrine at Miyajima and Misen San holy mountain; and Shanghai to Tawau, via Taipei and the Philippines, with snorkelling on the coral reefs of Ishigaki and Coron.

New Japanese cruises will focus on art, while another has a culinary theme.

An inaugural visit to Java will explore the temples of Borobudur in a shore excursion.

In addition to its existing itineraries, *Orion* will add 'Pure New Zealand' and 'Bay of Islands'.

The two purpose-built expedition cruise ships are scheduled to undertake a total of 69 voyages to 17 countries and 174 destinations "well off the marine superhighway".

Other options include Antarctica, the Russian Far East, Borneo, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia (*Orion II*); the Kimberley coast, Arnhem Land, Great Barrier Reef, the Spice Islands, the Sub Antarctic islands and Papua New Guinea (*Orion*).

For dates and details of departures, see www.orionexpeditions.com.

BLC fuel surcharge

BLUE LAGOON CRUISES HAS BEEN FORCED TO DELAY the introduction of a new FJ\$25 per person per day fuel surcharge until 23 May because of contractual obligations with wholesalers.

Originally effective from next Sunday, the new levy will be collected from passengers at check-in for all travellers aged 15 and over.

BLC ceo Tim Stonhill admitted that the impost was "distasteful and unpopular," but said the cruise operator had no choice because of high fuel prices.

Agents are being asked to clearly advise all passengers of the charge and write it on vouchers and itineraries before departure.

Magic in the water

CARNIVAL CRUISES HAS TAKEN DELIVERY OF ITS 100th vessel, *Carnival Magic*, this week at the Fincantieri shipyard in Italy.

Magic will debut on 01 May with a nine-day Mediterranean voyage from Venice to Barcelona showcasing a host of new features to the Carnival brand, including a RedFrog Pub and an open air recreation complex, SportSquare.

TODAY'S CRUISE WEEKLY

Welcome to today's **Cruise Weekly** Trade edition featuring four pages of all the latest cruise industry news.



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See Scenic Pearl

CRUISE WEEKLY'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL TODAY features an exclusive sneak peek at Scenic Tours' new *Scenic Pearl*, which debuted this month on the waterways of Europe.

Our exclusive *Travel Daily* TV video was taken during an agent famil, and can be viewed at youtube.com/cruiseweekly as well as www.traveldaily.com.au/videos.



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Specialty dining on Celebrity...

Having just spent seven days on the magnificent *Celebrity Solstice*, cruising the Eastern Caribbean, there was plenty of opportunity to savour something that Celebrity Cruises are well known for – their cuisine.

Like most ships in this category, *Solstice* offers a number of different dining options (ten in fact) with three of them in particular delivering an experience that is worth sharing.

Tuscan Grill as the name suggests is a steak house, but not just any old steak house!

With an "old world Italian" theme behind all menu items your experience begins the moment you walk through the entrance that is an archway reminiscent of the opening to an underground wine cellar.

From classic Caesar salads that are prepared tableside to amazing steaks that are grilled to perfection, dinner at Tuscan Grill is complimented by magical views of the ships wake being left behind.

Murano is an exquisite "fine-dining" experience that boasts a French theme with elegant service to match the surrounds.

For lovers of seafood it is impossible to go past the many options available here, the highlight being "Lobster Murano" that is prepared tableside by chefs in spectacular fashion.

Silk Harvest is the final in this trio of dining options.

Described as "Asian Fusion", Silk Harvest offers a unique menu of tastes from all over Asia with many items offered as "small plates" giving you plenty of different flavours to sample and wash down with specially selected beer, wine and of course sake!

With *Solstice* heading down under in 2012, your clients will be thankful you pre-booked their specialty dining in advance.

The experience is very understated whilst on board – a classic case of "under promise and over deliver"!

As a little "value-add", why don't you pick up the tab for the nominal cover charge – a nice touch!



Brett Jardine
Brett Jardine
General Manager
ICCA

SIP Cruise to target social media

A new product aims to improve the cruise sector's understanding of social media and digital marketing.

SIP CRUISE HAS LAUNCHED IN THE AUSTRALIAN cruise tourism sector, allowing companies to keep track of their – and their competitors' – online profile and 'buzz'.

Offered by Doyle Tourism Services, in partnership with the Beijing-based SinoTech Group and Digital Jungle, SIP (Social Intelligence Platform) has been designed specifically for the cruise industry.

According to DTS md Richard Doyle, former chairman of Cruise Down Under, the new product will provide "a unique set of tools designed to assist cruise lines, ports and cruise destinations to access and analyse passenger or commercial sentiment".

With a capacity to mine in excess of 120 million websites every day, SIP Cruise claims to determine how a brand or product is being received and understood by consumers and other key stakeholders.

"This is done in near real-time 24/7, enabling our clients to action any issues immediately, rather than waiting weeks or months to collect and analyse their company's online profile," Doyle said.

It can also mine information about competitors "providing you with an in-depth understanding of their online profile,

strengths and weaknesses", Doyle added.

Facebook, Twitter and cruising-related blogs are the main sites analysed by SIP Cruise.

Doyle said companies need to keep up with the "fast paced" changes and uses of social media.

"The consumer wants answers now as they continue to search and research where they will be travelling.

"It is imperative for cruise lines and cruise destination marketers to learn how to engage with potential consumers by leveraging these social media channels," he said.

SIP Cruise is now available via www.digitaljungle.com.cn.

Costa redeployment

COSTA CRUISES HAS DECIDED TO CHANGE COSTA *Mediterranea's* Oct-Nov 2011 schedule to sail out of Savona, Italy for a series of Canary Islands and Lisbon/Casablanca itineraries, instead of her planned Greece and Turkey voyages out of the same port.

Agents' European odyssey



THE AGENTS PICTURED ABOVE WERE PART OF A privileged few who had the chance to experience Europe from the comfort of APT's *AmaBella*.

Highlights of the famil trip included sightseeing in Germany's fourth largest city, Cologne, as well as the picturesque Bavarian village of Miltenberg.

The lucky ladies are pictured above whilst cruising along the Rhine River (from left) Jacinta Dutscher, APT Reservations; Louise Brock, Harvey World Travel, Scone; Kylie Davis, Harvey World Travel, Orange; Julie Simpson, APT BDM NSW and Cath Bisaro, state manager, Harvey World Travel, NSW.

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Prestige appointments

PARENT COMPANY OF OCEANIA CRUISES, PRESTIGE Cruise Holdings, has appointed Bob Binder as its new vice chairman and president.

Bruce Himelstein has been tapped to replace Binder as the new president of Oceania Cruises.

ANZAC day blogging

PRINCESS CRUISES MARKED ANZAC DAY WITH THE posting of a special 'Essential Experience' blog, written by Osvaldo Tinacci, hotel general manager of *Dawn Princess*, which describes his experience planning a memorial service for the ship's visit to ANZAC Cove.

In his blog Tinacci wrote "As the choir sang *Amazing Grace* I was able to take a look at the shoreline off the side of the ship.

"I was struck by how quiet a place it is now, so peaceful.

"I found myself contemplating the futility of war, saddened at the number of lives lost in this very place," he added.

To view Tinacci's story as well as this week's reader experience on Dubrovnik visit www.50EssentialExperiences.com.

TM cruise goes off!

TRAVELMANAGERS ENJOYED AN IMPRESSIVE 2010 year-on-year cruise growth of 59% - significantly higher than the national average of 27% as reported by the International Cruise Council Australasia.

"The 'Love Boat' stereotype has disappeared thank goodness!," said Michelle Michael-Pecora, one of TravelManagers' ICCA accredited cruise masters and highly commended in the 'Best Travel Consultant Cruise' category at the recent Australian Travel Awards.

"I think people are really taking advantage of the fact we have more cruise ships coming to Australia than ever before," she added.

TravelManagers' success has been bolstered, according to Michael-Pecora, by the company's Cruise Database which is a "one-stop shop for all our personal travel manager cruise needs", as well as TravelManagers' cruise training courses.

According to TravelManagers, demand for voyages was spread across many cruise brands last year including Royal Caribbean, P&O Cruises, MSC, Costa and Celebrity.

The Captain cuts prices

CAPTAIN COOK CRUISES IS REDUCING THE PRICE OF selected two-night Sydney Harbour cruises by 25% throughout Jun, Jul and Aug.

The weekend Sydney Harbour cruises take place on *MV Captain Cook's Explorer*, which features 60 cabins with a choice of twin or double berths inclusive of harbour views and ensuite facilities.

Each voyage explores Sydney Harbour and her highlights (including hidden coves and beaches) as well as areas accessible by water from the Eastern Suburbs, to the Lane Cove and Parramatta River.

Voyages depart from No.1 King St Wharf Darling Harbour at 6.00pm with boarding from 5.00pm returning Sunday at 3.00pm.

Prices for the discounted Wintersun voyages start at \$360pp/ts or \$479 for solo travellers.

The wintersun deal is available for sale from now until 26 Aug, for voyages departing on 17 Jun, 22 Jul and 26 Aug.

For details call 1800 804 843, or visit www.captaincook.com.au.

Silversea ditches Prince Albert for its own brand



Silver Explorer at sea

Silversea has taken the unusual step of changing the name of its expedition ship from *Prince Albert II* to *Silver Explorer*.

According to Silversea the decision to change *Prince Albert II's* name is the result of the growing popularity of the vessel's expedition voyages, and the resulting potential for Silversea to add more similarly adventurous vessels to its fleet.

"To reinforce the Silversea luxury brand image for the expedition segment, we decided to change the name of our first expedition ship to *Silver Explorer* and anticipate that any future expedition ships will bear similar names that evoke a sense of luxurious adventure," said Silversea's chairman, Manfredi Lefebvre.

Not forgetting ties made with the vessel's original namesake, Lefebvre added that "It has been an absolute privilege to have a ship in our fleet named in tribute to His Serene Highness Prince Albert II.

"We will continue to honour his legacy of exploration and environmental conservation through our support of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, and look forward to hosting future onboard fundraising events to benefit the Foundation's projects," he added.

The name change will coincide with the vessel's drydock at the Lisnave shipyard in Setubal, Portugal, due to take place later this month.

Whilst in drydock the vessel will undergo routine maintenance prior to kicking off her Northern Europe and Arctic program of summer voyages.

STX Finland resignation

JUHA HEIKINHEIMO HAS RESIGNED FROM HIS position as President of STX Finland after only taking up the role in Jul last year.

Heikinheimo is set to be succeeded by the current chairman of STX Finland, Su-Jou Kim.

Stepping into the presidential role, Su-Jou told media "My objective is that STX Finland shall again be in a position to build and deliver the world's most magnificent cruise vessels - and exceed the clients' expectations when it comes to quality, innovation, reliability and deliverability."

RCI's Stansted connection

ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL IS SET TO launch a direct flight connection which will hook cruisers from London's Stansted Airport up with *Voyager of the Seas* seven-night Adriatic sailings out of Venice.

The charter flight, operated by British Airways, is a response to customer demand.

"Feedback from cruise travellers tells us that convenient flight connections are a factor when selecting their next cruise experience," said Royal Caribbean International UK and Ireland gm, Jo Rzymowska.

"Around 6.7 million people live in Stansted's main catchment area, putting our cruise connections onto the doorstep of millions of potential customers," Rzymowska added.

TUI selects godmother

GERMAN CRUISE LINE TUI CRUISES HAS ANNOUNCED that it has selected the German Olympic fencing champion, Anja Fichtel, as the Godmother to its soon to be launched *Mein Schiff 2*.

Debating on 12 May, *Mein Schiff 2*, is set to become the second largest vessel in the TUI fleet, with 956 cabins (652 outside and 427 with balcony or veranda), eight restaurants and bistros, ten bars/lounges, a 12,000sqm sun deck and two outdoor swimming pools.

AmaKatarina launch

THE 10 MAY DEBUT OF AMAWATERWAYS *AmaKatarina* is drawing ever closer, with the cruise line confirming that following her launch she will sail a total of fourteen 11-night Russian Waterways itineraries between Moscow and St Petersburg.

Rebuilt by AmaWaterways, *AmaKatarina* features 106 cabins, 76 of which are equipped with balconies.

Saga Pearl II does a switch

UK CRUISE LINE, SAGA CRUISES HAS CONFIRMED that its 446-passenger *Saga Pearl II* will be moved out of the Saga fleet in May 2012, and into that of sister brand Spirit of Adventure under the name *Quest for Adventure*.

Both Saga and Spirit of Adventure are owned by parent company Acromas Holdings.

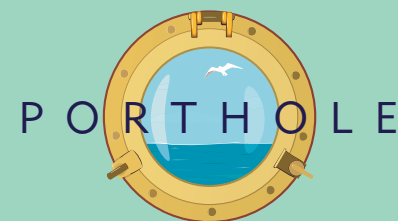
Quest for Adventure will debut on the Spirit calendar from 06 May next year, with a eight-night voyage encompassing Ireland, the Isle of Mull and the Isle of Man.

For details visit www.spiritofadventure.co.uk.

HAL's sustainable seafood

HOLLAND AMERICA LINE IS ROLLING OUT A sustainable seafood program which adopts environmentally responsible purchasing practices and features menus that showcase sustainable seafood.

The program kicks off this year onboard HALs 2011 Alaska and Europe cruises, and will roll out fleetwide in 2012.



A CHARACTERISTIC TO BE PROUD OF?

The next time you see a tipsy Brit onboard you may want to ask them if they are exercising a "national trait".

A recent British poll has found that more than one quarter of English citizens believe that getting drunk is a "national trait".

Other characteristics believed to make one British include drinking tea according to 60% of Brits, whilst 40% said having a "stiff upper lip" mentality was also decidedly British.

Unsurprisingly, almost half of the Brits surveyed said that supporting the British Royal Family was a national trait.

So for anyone feeling a little out of place onboard any of the cruise lines hosting a Royal Wedding festivity, all you need to do is simply sip some tea, swill some wine and do so in a stoic manner, and you'll fit right in.

LOVE A COUPLE OF CUBAN CIGARS?

Cruisers who love to sit back and relax with a Cuban at the end of a long day portside will be excited to learn that the world's longest cigar is currently being crafted in Cuba.

The 70 metre smoke is the brainchild of 67-year old Jose Castelar, who has been slaving up to eight hours a day for more than a week in his attempt to beat his own 2009 cigar record of 43.38m.

PRINCESSES IN PORT.

If you love Disney's princesses and you are cruising out of or into Florida, then you may want to book a pre or post stay at Walt Disney World.

According to reports, Walt Disney World Resort is hoping to boost bookings by converting some of its Port Orleans Resort rooms into princess-themed extravaganzas.

Complete with princess-and-the-frog themed headboards and princess beds, Aladdin's bathroom faucets, fibre optic special effects and Beauty and the Beast footstools, the 'Royal Rooms' will most likely open between Feb and Mar 2012.

As with most royal tags, the rooms will carry a premium price (which Disney has yet to specify).

An Aria to capture the beauty of the Amazon



MV Aria

This month marks the debut of Aqua Expedition's new luxury Amazon riverboat, the brand new *MV Aria*.

Launched last week, *Aria* was crafted specifically for Peruvian Amazon cruising, is 147-feet long and features 16 specially designed 240 square foot suites with floor to ceiling windows and ensuites on the first and second deck.

In addition, four of these suites can be interconnected to cater for families.

Featuring a cruising speed of 12 knots *MV Aria* also includes an indoor bar/lounge, signature Amazon Grill headed up by award-winning Executive Chef, Pedro Miguel Schiaffino, as well as a fully airconditioned top deck, observation lounge, outdoor jacuzzi, boutique, Amazon wildlife reference library, multimedia room, sun deck and exercise room.

Guests are joined onboard by a professional crew of 24, including four world class nature guides.

MV Aria has now joined Aqua Expedition's 130-foot *MV Aqua* (launched in 2007) cruising the Amazon on a series of three, four and seven-night adventures priced from US\$2,550pp.

For details visit www.aquaexpeditions.com.