

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 22 September 2011

Growing demand for new Mekong

Uniworld has reported strong Australian interest in its 2012 Asia program.

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruise Collection's inaugural Vietnam and Cambodia itineraries are gaining traction among Australian agents and consumers after only two months on the market.

The 15-day Timeless Wonders and 24-day Grand Asia & the Mekong tours, both onboard the new *River Saigon* from January 2012, were launched in July in response to growing demand for river cruising in the region.

John Molinaro, Uniworld's general manager Australia, said: "We are very pleased with the number of enquires we have received about our two new Vietnam and Cambodia itineraries for 2012 and are anticipating a highly successful season for these markets out of Australia.

"Many are also asking about our 2013

departures, so we are really confident about the ongoing strength of this new program".

Molinaro added that while the river cruise market in Vietnam and Cambodia is highly competitive, the company's custom-built ship gives it a strong point of difference.

"*River Saigon* offers your clients a unique, indulgent and hassle-free way to cruise the Mekong River and experience the untouched beauty of these destinations," he said.

The *River Saigon* has 30 "riverview staterooms" with outside sitting areas; a sun deck, lounge, massage room, boutique and a panoramic, fine-dining restaurant.

Passengers are also offered a pillow menu, individual climate control, bottled water, robes, slippers and luxurious bathroom products.

See www.uniworldcruises.com.au.

Small Ship Cruising commission

SMALL Ship Cruises features product from over 350 cruise suppliers, and has upwards of 2,000 itineraries on offer.

In addition, the company pays commission on all services, see **p6** for details.

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SuperStar Virgo cruising deals

SAVINGS of over 40% are available for all remaining five, three and two-night sailings for the rest of *SuperStar Virgo's* 2011/12 season.

For more details see **p7**.

Oceania Giveaway week two

BE sure to get your entries in this week for your chance to win a \$500 Wish card and a Taste of the World Cookbook with **Cruise Weekly's** Oceania Cruises competition.

For your chance to win, see **p3**.

MEANWHILE congratulations to last week's winner, Sandra Reucker of Travel Managers.

Land of Extremes released

THE last available cabins for Compagnie du Ponant's 10-night Antarctica itinerary, 'Land of Extremes', have just been released for sale.

Cruising onboard *L'Austral*, the voyage will depart from Ushuaia on 29 Jan 2012, and will cross the Drake Passage, before exploring Neko Bay, Booth Is, Cape Renard, Pleneau Is, Port Lockroy, Cuverville Is, the Gerlache Strait of Antarctica and Deception Is.

Prices start at \$6,387pp, call 1300 950 622 or visit www.traveltheworld.com.au.

TODAY'S ISSUE OF CW

Cruise Weekly's trade issue today features five pages of cruise news and photos.

Plus, see **p6** for information on Small Ship Cruising and **p7** for special cruise offers on *SuperStar Virgo*.



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ICCA UPDATE

ICCA General Manager,
Brett Jardine

Spotlight on Carnival Cruise Lines, an ICCA Cruise Line Member

Before taking the decision to send a mega-liner to be home ported in our local waters, Carnival Cruise Lines (CCL) had to be sure that they were able to deliver on what their target audience was looking for.

Step one was to conduct in-depth research within this market. This uncovered the fact that less than 40% of consumers think that a cruise holiday is 'great for families', far behind other holiday options such as the Gold Coast or a beach resort.

How could that be? As those who have travelled with their children know, cruising is an exceptional family holiday.

Armed with this research CCL have identified a great opportunity and are now truly focused on taking family holidays to a whole new level.

When *Carnival Spirit* arrives in October of 2012, guests will be amazed by the family experience onboard.

One of the most dramatic examples of family fun, Carnival WaterWorks, will be added to the ship in dry dock in January.

Carnival is adding a huge splash park with an enormous tipping bucket, mini racing slides and water cannons to keep younger kids actively entertained for hours.

For those who really like to get their heart racing, there will be two waterslides including the steepest waterslide at sea – which will be named by Australians later this year.

Australian based Director for CCL, Jennifer Vandekreeke says "I've seen the designs and the slide actually goes out over the ocean – yikes!"

There are also the award-winning children's clubs with age appropriate programming and bespoke areas for three different age groupings.

And to make sure the parents can truly enjoy all 16 bars and lounges, Carnival offers babysitting every night until 3am.

Let's make sure we get the word out to Australasia that a cruise holiday can bring family fun to a whole new level.



Carnival Corp sales up but sliding

Australasian bookings for 2012 are stronger and at higher pricing, but global sales have started slowing.

SINCE June, bookings for Carnival Corp's North American, European and Australasian brands have been up on last year; however, consumer confidence has been recently hit by economic and political "challenges", according to the company's management.

The sales slowdown, observed in August and September, has shortened the booking window but "it's definitely not like 2008", Carnival chairman and ceo Micky Arison told analysts yesterday.

Reporting its third quarter results, the company outlined stronger than expected demand for its North American brands and lower than forecast costs, with \$1.69 earnings per share.

Net income was \$1.3 billion on revenues of \$5.1 billion, compared to last year's Q3 profit of \$1.3 billion on revenues of \$4.5 billion.

North American brands achieved almost 6% yield increase, but European, Australian and Asian brand yields fell 2% "due primarily to the geopolitical unrest in the Middle East and North Africa", Arison said.

Higher revenue yields also helped offset a 45% rise in fuel prices.

According to Carnival, cumulative advance bookings for the remainder of 2011 and the first half of 2012 are at higher prices with

slightly lower occupancies compared to 2010.

Arison said the company had "a strong base of business for the first half of 2012", with full year net revenue yields expected to increase.

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TTW river cruising information

TRAVEL the World is hosting a Tauck river cruise information session for interested consumers on 27 Sep at 2pm at the Vaucluse House Tearooms in Sydney.

See www.traveltheworld.com.au/taucksyd.

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Seabourn Quest World Cruise

SEABOURN Quest will depart from Ft. Lauderdale on a 116-day World Cruise on 06 Jan 2013, taking in the South Pacific, Australia, Indonesia, Asia, India, the Middle East and the Mediterranean, see www.seabourn.com.

Regent's fresh new product

THIS week Regent Seven Seas' *Seven Seas Voyager* emerged as "a fresh new product" following the completion of the third stage of her 'Signature' drydock, which included renovations to 26 suites; placement of iPads in her penthouses; and new balcony furniture in a selection of her suites.

Voyager's public areas were also refreshed with new carpeting, extended menus in Compass Rose, a new coffee bar on Deck 5, new furniture and soft furnishings in the Voyager Lounge, new wood flooring in the Observation Lounge, an updated Pool Bar and expanded Pool Grill, and new wallpaper and chairs in the La Varanda restaurant.

The Panama Canal in 2012-13

NEWLY released Panama Canal 2012-13 itineraries for Princess Cruises include a classic 10-day roundtrip itinerary from Ft. Lauderdale onboard *Coral Princess* and *Island Princess*, which offers a partial Panama Canal transit to Gatun Lake, an evening call in Colón, plus calls in the Caribbean ports of Aruba, Cartagena, Limón (Costa Rica), and Grand Cayman or Ocho Rios, operating between 13 Oct 2012 and 15 Apr 2013.

Island Princess will also offer four 14-day Full Panama Transit voyages between Nov 2012 and Mar 2013, which feature a full Panama Canal transit plus visits to Aruba, Cartagena, Puntarenas (Costa Rica), San Juan del Sur (Nicaragua) and Cabo San Lucas.

Panama Canal Two-Day Experiences will also be offered on *Island Princess* and *Coral Princess* between Sep 2012 and May 2013.

Windstar to refurbish fleet

WINDSTAR Cruises is investing \$18 million into a fleet refurbishment of its three vessels, *Wind Star*, *Wind Surf* and *Wind Spirit*.

Set to be completed in stages over the next 18 months, the multi-million dollar plan will begin in Nov with renovations to *Wind Surf's* staterooms and suites, as well as the laying of a timber boardwalk throughout the main deck.

The work will be completed by 10 Dec in time for *Surf's* Caribbean season, whilst her final renovations will commence in the US fall next year, and will see a makeover to her public spaces including the Restaurant (new seating layout, soft furnishings and wine display), the transformation of Degrees Restaurant into a Mediterranean Bistro; the Compass Rose (new configuration to open up to an outdoor deck); the Veranda (new buffet and expanded outdoor seating); and the Lounge (hard floors to replace carpet, lighter colour palette and improved sound insulation).

Meanwhile *Wind Star* and *Wind Spirit* will undergo complete refurbishments of staterooms, suites, and corridors, along with public spaces including The Restaurant (complete makeover) Veranda (new market-style buffet), Lounge (new furniture, soft furnishings and AV system), WindSpa (new soft goods), Library, and Pool Bar (redesigned with the addition of Candles Grill) following their respective Costa Rica and Caribbean seasons.

Star and *Spirit's* refurbishments are due to be completed in time for their Mediterranean seasons which begin on 29 Apr 2012 and 15 Apr respectively.



FRIENDS united by the ocean.

Primary school friends who threw a message in a bottle into the ocean near the Japanese town of Kagoshima to celebrate their graduation, have been reunited many years later after a US sailor found the bottle whilst cleaning up a beach on the Hawaiian Island of Kauai.

The note held the names of the classmates, whilst the bottle contained four paper cranes.

After being contacted by the sailor one of the classmates, Arikaw, was able to track down the rest of her class for a reunion.

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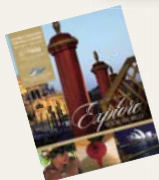
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Last Week's Winner: Congratulations Sandra Reucker of Travel Managers! This week's winner to be announced 29th September.

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Japanese port marketing

THE Japanese ports of Osaka, Sakaiminato, Takamatsu, Kochi and Beppu have banded together to promote their facilities via social networking sites, in the hopes of reviving their flagging fortunes in the wake of the recent nuclear and earthquake disasters.

The group will also lobby the Govt for swifter immigration procedures for cruise passengers.

Nordlys investigations

ALL Hurtigruten's *Nordlys* guests who were travelling onboard when the vessel's tragic engine fire broke out last week near the port of Alesund (**CW** Tue) have now been repatriated, according to the cruise line.

Nordlys' is also now stable after a pump out of water taken on from a hole in her hull, and she will be towed to drydock sometime this week for more inspections.

All *Nordlys* departures through till mid Oct have been cancelled.

Carnival Australia runs Sydney



THE team from Carnival Australia put themselves on the line for charity over the weekend, getting out their joggers to compete in the Blackmores Sydney Running Festival.

Starring in the Carnival line-up (pictured above from left) was the company's Event Manager, Greg Dehn and Carnival Cruise Lines Australia Director, Jennifer Vandekreeke, as well as Complete Cruise Solution's Rebecca Mutaten and Rosalino Gonzales who took on the grueling 21.2km Half Marathon.

"It is up there with the hardest things I have ever done in my life both mentally and physically," Greg said after the race, adding that the people who had donated to the charity he was supporting Breast Cancer Australia, kept him going.

2012 Cruise Shipping Miami

NEXT year Cruise Shipping Miami, the largest int'l cruise industry conference and exhibition, will take place between 12 and 15 Mar at the Miami Beach Convention Centre. See www.cruiseshippingmiami.com for details.

Orion II grounded in Borneo

LAST weekend a technical hitch caused the grounding of *Orion II* on soft mud at the port of Sandakan, Sabah.

There was no damage to the vessel or passengers during the incident, however the cruise line cut short the itinerary, and guests were put up in hotels, as repatriation arrangements were made.

Affected passengers will receive a partial refund, and *Orion II* is now enroute to begin its next voyage a day later than planned.

Passengers booked on the upcoming shortened itinerary will be accommodated overnight before boarding *Orion II*.

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A Princess in the Caribbean

PRINCESS Cruises will send five ships to the Caribbean for the 2012-13 season including *Ruby Princess* which will service the Eastern Caribbean with roundtrip seven-day cruises from Ft. Lauderdale commencing 28 Oct 2012 to 28 Apr 2013 and calling in at Princess Cays, St. Maarten, St. Thomas and Grand Turk.

Meanwhile *Crown Princess* will take guests to the Western Caribbean from Galveston between 22 Dec 2012 and 27 Apr 2013 with seven-day round-trip itineraries calling at Costa Maya, Roatán, Belize and Cozumel; whilst *Caribbean Princess* will travel the Southern Caribbean with seven-day roundtrip voyages to Princess Cays, Curaçao and Aruba between 10 Nov 2012 and 27 Apr 2013 as well as a four-day Bermuda Sampler voyage from New York; and a 10-day Caribbean Islander voyage from New York.

Grand Princess will be also deployed in the Eastern and Southern Caribbean on alternating seven-day voyages from Ft. Lauderdale between 17 Nov 2012 and 19 Jan 2013; whilst *Emerald Princess* will host alternating 10-day roundtrip itineraries to the Eastern and Southern Caribbean between 07 Nov 2012 and 26 Apr 2013.



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Face to Face: Debbie Collins

Area Sales Manager, Oceania Cruises

Welcome to Face to Face, where we chat to cruise industry leaders.

How did you get into the cruise industry?

In 1997 my boss Maria sent me on a Royal Viking Cruise which I loved and with her encouragement and support came back and organised one of the very first mini Cruise Expos and it all went from there.

What is the key to your success?

Passion for cruising, my knowledge of the cruise industry and my agents.

What is your favourite destination and why?

Caribbean- tropical paradise.

What is your most favourite moment on a cruise?

When we are leaving port after a perfect day and watching the sun set with a gin and tonic in hand.

How do you spend days at sea?

Most people know I love my food and wine, so where else but a cooking class or wine tasting.

How can cruising continue to grow in the current financial climate?

It will we just need to break it down to \$\$ per day for room, all meals, entertainment and transport so that the consumer can see they are getting value for money.

How can cruising attract more young people and families?

Educating the public that there are cruise lines that cater for this market and by bringing those type of ships to Australia which they are now starting to do.

What do you think is the most underrated aspect of cruising?

The ability to UNPACK once only and visit so many different places.

What is something you wished more agents and consumers knew about cruising?

Agents: how easy it is to sell cruising. And consumers: that cruising has changed over the years and it is not just for when you retire.

What advice would you give other people who want a job like yours?

You have to have the passion first and learn as much as you can about the cruising industry.



Debbie's Cruise Favourites!

Ship: *Marina*

Ship Activity: Bon Appetit Culinary Centre or lying on a deck chair

Shore Excursion: Ephesus

Region: Caribbean

Port: St Barts

Onboard Drink: Cocktails

Perk of the Job: Cruising of course!

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PO Box 428, West Ryde, NSW 1685

Phone: 1300 799 220 Fax: 1300 799 221

Publisher/Managing Editor: Bruce Piper

Editor: Louise Goldsbury

Assistant Editor: Amanda Collins

Contributors: Roderick Eime, Chantel

Long, Lisa Maroun and Guy Dundas

Email: info@cruiseweekly.com.au

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Travel Daily Group:

Advertising and Marketing: Lisa Maroun (Manager), Lisa Martin and Magda Herdzik

Email: advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper

Email: accounts@traveldaily.com.au



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*CONDITIONS APPLY: All prices are cruise only, AUD, per person twin share and subject to change and availability. Prices based on following cabin categories; Inside Cabin DC, Window Cabin CC, Balcony Cabin BC. Single passengers must pay a single supplement. Every effort is made to ensure advertisement accuracy, however Star Cruises cannot be held responsible for printing or typographical errors or errors arising from unforeseen circumstances. Pricing & Balcony Class Credit is correct as at 8 September 2011. Pricing valid from 15 September 2011 until 31 December 2011 & can be withdrawn at any time without notice. Price includes port charges and fuel surcharge. Holiday surcharge imposed on Peak Sailings Dates: 23 Dec 2011, 25 Dec 2011, 28 Dec 2011 & 30 Dec 2011. Promotion not for sale on the following dates: 5 & 3 night cruise – 1, 8, 15 & 22 January 2012 and 2 night cruise – 4, 11, 18 & 25 January 2012.
[^] Meals included in selected restaurants. Strict cancellation fees apply. Please note that a surcharge may be imposed on credit card transactions. A service fee will be charged. SCS 26270