

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 29 September 2011

TODAY'S ISSUE OF CW

Cruise Weekly's new-look trade issue today features six pages of cruise news and photos.

Plus, see **p5** for your chance to win with Oceania Cruises, **p7** for Cruise Traveller news, and see **p8** for cruise deals from Star Cruises.

Win with Cruise Traveller

TRAVEL agents are being given the opportunity to win a 13-night Istanbul to Athens cruise for two including flights with Voyages to Antiquity.

To be in the running simply make any Voyages to Antiquity booking with Cruise Traveller, see **p7** for full details.

SuperStar Virgo savings

STAR Cruises is hosting an end of season sale for *SuperStar Virgo* voyages, see **p8** for details.

Europa ranked top ten by Berlitz

The 2012 Berlitz Guide is out this week, with a few new winners among the usual suspects.

ANOTHER year, another glowing review for Hapag-Lloyd's flagship in the latest edition of the 'Berlitz Complete Guide to Cruising & Cruise Ships'.

For the 12th consecutive time, *Europa* has scored highest (1,852 out of 2,000 points) and is once again the only vessel rated "five-star plus".

Douglas Ward, the guide's feared critic, commended its three-star Michelin chef "on board for most of the year", and said *Europa* is "a classic that has stood the test of time, and looks almost new".

The other big winners are Seabourn, which scooped six of the 10 top places, and SeaDream which came first and second in the small ships category.

At the bottom of the pack, in the same positions as last year, are National Geographic's

Sea Bird and *Sea Lion*.

However, Ward promises a few surprises.

"There are movers in the ranks too, with ships going both up and down in star rating, to reflect the changes in service or staff training," he said.

A total of 285 cruise ships were reviewed in the new book, also now available as an app for the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch.

It also reveals the "truth" behind low fares, such as restricted cabin choice and excluding children.

Releasing the book and app, Ward said Northern Europe and the Mediterranean will be heavily discounted next year due to overcapacity.

The Berlitz Guide 2012 is on sale from 01 Oct 2011.

Further details in next week's **CW**.

To comment on this story and discuss the Berlitz findings, click the Facebook link.

Tasmania at half price

ORION Expedition Cruises is offering discounts of up to 50% off its two five-night Tasmania Food and Wine voyages during Nov 2011.

Fares start from \$3,715pp for an Ocean Suite, see www.orionexpeditions.com.

Happy Cruises ending

SPANISH operator, Happy Cruises, has announced a board meeting will be held on Monday to discuss its future after it cancelled this week's sailings.

The line's website has also been taken down.

Happy Cruises is currently chartering three ships in the Mediterranean – *Gemini* (formerly *Crown Jewel* and *Superstar Gemini*), *Happy Dolphin* and *Ocean Pearl*.

Gemini will terminate its present voyage in Valencia, the *Ocean Pearl* in Malaga and the *Happy Dolphin* in Venice.

Media reports point to "liquidity problems" and the recent replacement of a Caribbean winter season with a program from Barcelona.

The company had also recently operated a short charter in China as *Hainan Express*.

Its main rivals in the Spanish market are Royal Caribbean's Pullmantur Cruises and Carnival-owned Iberocruceros.

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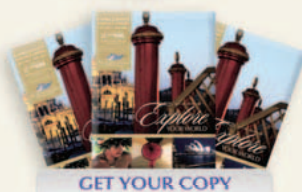
THIS WEEK'S FEATURE CRUISE

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ICCINTERNATIONAL CRUISE COUNCILAUSTRALASIA

ICCA UPDATE

ICCA General Manager, Brett Jardine

Back to School!

I have to confess to being a Rodney Dangerfield fan (tragic as that may be).

Two of my all time favourite comedy movies are 'Caddyshack' and 'Back to School'.

After recently watching a re-run of 'Back to School' it got me thinking about the number of consultants that have undertaken ICCA training over the last 16 years and figure now might be a good time for many of them to go "Back to School"!!

This thought has been reinforced with teenage children of my own recently seeking help with Maths homework that included such things as the definition of py!

It has been many years since I was at school and I do recall at the time thinking there had to be more to life than wasting all this time learning.

More than two decades later I am still learning and am happy to report we continue to see more and more agents attending ICCA training to refresh their skills relevant to the cruise industry.

We are constantly updating all training material to ensure content is not only current but also of a high standard to assist front line consultants in their day to day role.

If you have attended ICCA training in the past I would encourage you to take the time to come 'back to school' and update your knowledge.

To quote our inspirational Masters facilitator Scott Koepf – "constant education is like taking a shower – very important that you keep doing it".

For more information on future ICCA training check out our website www.cruising.org.au and click on Training Academy.



P&O hits three million milestone

Today P&O Cruises welcomed it's three millionth passenger, saying the achievement is evidence of the "enormous growth of cruise".

THE magic mark was struck today when Deanna Carlett and her family walked onboard *Pacific Pearl* this morning, and became the cruise line's three millionth passenger since cruises resumed after World War Two (the beginning of modern cruising in Australia).

This marker proves the burgeoning popularity of cruise based holidays, the cruise line said, adding that in the last four years alone it has seen a 30% (one million) spike in its cruise passenger numbers.

The event comes in the wake of another record held by P&O Cruises parent, Carnival Australia, which sees, for the first time ever, 19 ships from across its fleets sailing in Australian waters this season.

During this time, it is expected the ships will welcome around 310,000 guests onboard, and will make more than 300 calls into 24 different Australian ports.

These ship and passenger numbers represent double digit growth from Carnival Australia's first Australian season in 2004-05 which saw seven ships sail through regional waters carrying 130,000 passengers.

Speaking at an event to mark the three million milestone, Carnival Australia's CEO Ann Sherry said "we are well on the way to one million Australians cruising annually by 2020".

"It's a great indication of the growing popularity of cruising in Australia as well as the economic impact that cruising is having right

around the country," she added.

Sherry also used the occasion to remind Australian governments and authorities to "make sure their cruise ship facilities are adequate so that their cities and towns could share in the growth", given that this year the company has estimated it's economic value to the region will sit at around \$230m.

MEANWHILE agents can earn up to \$125 in bonus cash payments as part of the celebrations.

The offer also coincides with P&O's \$3 million cash back campaign for passengers, which entitles guests who book a cruise departing from 08 Jan 2012, before 12 Nov 2011 to up to \$200 cash back per cabin.

To be eligible for the agent incentive, consultants need to be registered with P&O Academy and make a P&O Cruises booking via POLAR Online between now and 31 Oct 2011.

See www.mycpspromo.com/cashback.

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Orion II cancels cruises

ORION Expedition Cruises is currently contacting passengers to advise them of the cancellation of two upcoming *Orion II* itineraries: the 10 Oct Gulf of Siam voyage and 17 Oct Thailand Temples cruise.

The cancellations follow the recent grounding of *Orion II* into soft mud (**CW** 22 Sep), and will make time for the vessel to go into drydock in Singapore to fix technical glitches and problems with the ship's airconditioning.

Guests booked on affected voyages are being offered the chance to book on the same itineraries later in the year or future cruise credits, see next week's **CW** for more details.

Cunard registry swap?

CUNARD has addressed rumours circulating in the industry that it is considering a move out of the British shipping registry to another country to allow captains to proceed over on-ship weddings, saying that "at present no decision has been made".

Speaking to *Cruise Weekly* this week, the cruise line said "naturally, in these challenging times Cunard is exploring ways of maximising revenue and one possibility is to offer Weddings at Sea".

"We know there is a pent up demand as we receive many enquiries, especially about marriages on transatlantic crossings which no other line can offer.

"However this business is currently denied to us as our fleet is registered in the UK, and we have for some time been examining our options," the cruise line added.

Cunard told *CW* that three options are currently being considered: the first being to forgo the share of the wedding business; the second is to designate a 'wedding ship' and change that ship's registry alone; and the third is to maximise the opportunity and re-register all the Cunard ships.

Training with ICCA in 2011

FOR agents who are eager to get in some cruise product training to be at the top of their game for the new wave season, upcoming ICCA training dates are as follows: 5 and 6 Oct Perth (6 Oct Member Cruise Line Evening); 11 and 12 Oct Adelaide; 17 and 18 Oct Sydney (18 Oct Member Cruise Line Evening); 15 and 16 November Hobart; 7 and 8 Dec Brisbane (8 Oct Member Cruise Line Evening).

See www.cruising.org.au for details.

MICE onboard Athena

CLASSIC International Cruises has released new low-cost MICE packages on its 600-guest *Athena*, suited to charters, conferences, corporate meetings or incentive groups.

The new corporate conference, meeting and product packages can be used on any of *Athena's* 15 cruises between Nov 2011 and Apr 2012, and include dedicated use of the ship's 260-seat auditorium, free use of video equipment, morning and afternoon tea, cocktail functions, daily newsletter, free banner display and the carving of the company's logo into ice.

See www.classicintcruises.com.



PORTHOLE

WEALTH from the watery depths.

Shipwreck search and recovery company Odyssey Marine Exploration has netted itself possibly the world's largest precious metal haul, from onboard the *SS Gairsoppa*.

The *Gairsoppa* was sunk in Feb 1941 by a German U-boat as she was sailing from India to Britain laden with 219 tonnes of silver coins and bullion, now worth a cool \$204m.

She was heading towards Galway for shelter from a storm when she sunk, with all but one merchant seamen onboard dying as she went down.

Until now her location has remained a mystery, however her final resting place has been confirmed as 15,400 feet below the Atlantic Ocean and about 482km off the coast of Ireland.



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Agents enjoy the Carnival whilst trying new things



CARNIVAL Cruise Lines treated travel agents and consumers to tasty treats this week, served out of its own icecream truck, to try and break them out of their routines.

Travelling throughout Sydney's metro area the truck enticed Sydneysiders to try two new ice-cream flavours Bananamite (banana and vegemite) and Balsamberry (balsamic vinegar and strawberries) for free.

The icecream drive was held in the wake of a recent Carnival Cruise Lines study, which

found that despite being stuck in their routine, 92% of Australians believe that being open to new things is good, and that people can be adventurous at any age.

Agents who benefited from the icecream delights included JTG (pictured above) and Flight Centre in North Sydney; Flight Centre Norwest; and Harvey World Travel, Flight Centre, Travelscene and Cronulla Travel in Cronulla.



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New Safari Baja itinerary

SAFARI Endeavour will sail a new week-long Baja Bounty itinerary in 2012, according to American Cruise Lines.

The new itinerary will run between Nov 2012 and Apr 2012 roundtrip from La Paz, Mexico, exploring Espíritu Santo, Isla Partida, Isla San Francisco, Loreto, Isla Coyote and Isla San José. See www.smallshipadventurecompany.com.

Building bridges in Miami

PASSENGER boarding bridge manufacturer, TEAM, has been enlisted to craft two new bridges for the busiest cruise port in the world, Miami.

The new HYDRA bridges will be located in Terminal D and will be able to facilitate Carnival Cruise Line's newest mega ship with overhanging lifeboats.

TEAM has also confirmed orders for two new bridges for Spain's Palma de Mallorca (similar to the ones recently installed in Barcelona's cruise terminals A and C) and one new SEDNA bridge for Italy's Port of Genoa.

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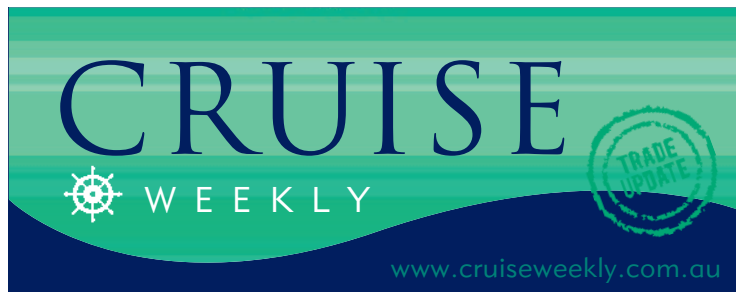


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Gauguin in Brisbane

THE \$7m planned renovations for *Paul Gauguin* (CW 20 Sep) will take place in drydock in Brisbane in January while the ship is crossing from Tahiti to Queensland.

P&O Australia Day deals

PACIFIC Sun will anchor, for the first time ever, in Sydney Harbour on Australia Day 2012 (26 Jan).

The three-night cruise will depart from Sydney on 25 Jan and will sail out through the heads before returning to anchor at Athol Buoy, near Mosman, for the Australia Day celebrations.

"It's the first time P&O Cruises has scheduled a cruise allowing passengers to experience Australia Day from the heart of Sydney Harbour and we think it will be an amazing day and night for all onboard *Pacific Sun*," said Jenny Lourey, senior vp of Carnival Australia.

After hanging around to witness the Australia Day festivities including the annual Ferrython, 21-gun salute and a RAAF aerial display, *Sun* will sail into Darling Harbour for the evening fireworks display.

The voyage is priced from \$399pp, see www.pocruses.com.au for details.

New Russian Heritage voyage

THE Sea of Okhotsk is the subject of a brand new Russian Far East voyage from Heritage Expeditions next year.

Spanning 18 days, the Sea of Okhotsk journey departs from Sakhalin Island (the Port of Korsakov) and travels to Tuleniy Island, Pil'tun Bay, Iona Island, the Shanter Archipelago, Mal' Minskie Islands, Fedora Bay, Okhotsk Town, Talan Island, Magadan, Shelekhova Bay, Cape Yuzhnyy, and the Opala River before arriving in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy.

The voyage is priced from US\$8,000 and includes one night pre-voyage hotel accom, transfers, all meals and shore excursions.

See www.heritage-expeditions.com.

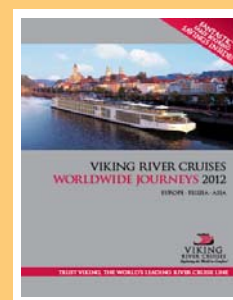


Viking River Cruises has released its Worldwide Journeys 2012 brochure featuring six new vessels, earlybird booking discounts and some of the most popular itineraries.

New ships in the 2012 line-up include the Longship class vessels: *Viking Freya*, *Viking Idun*, *Viking Njord*, *Viking Odin*, *Viking Embla* and *Viking Agir*.

Regions covered in the brochure include Central and Eastern Europe, France, Russia, Ukraine, China, South East Asia and Egypt.

For a copy of the brochure visit - www.vikingrivercruises.com.au.



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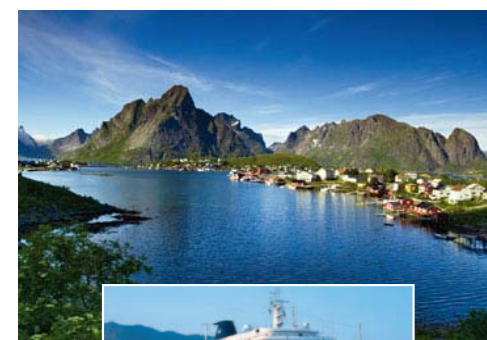
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Face to Face: Craig Owens

National Sales Manager, Bunnik Tours

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

What is the key to your success?

I truly have been blessed to have worked with, and continue to work with passionate dynamic people, giving me an opportunity to learn from them in various aspects of the cruise industry. A sense of humour helps as well.

How many cruises have you been on in the past five years?

Twelve.

What is your favourite destination and why?

Bunnik Tours hosts amazing cruises to the Chilean Fjords, Patagonia, River cruising in Europe, the Nile and (new in 2012) Lake Nasser in Egypt. But my favourite destination is the Chilean Fjords. Words cannot do this destination justice.

What was your most memorable moment on a cruise?

Cruising into Glacier Bay on the Cunard Liner, *Sagafford*.

How do you spend days at sea?

A little sleep-in, team trivia, lunch in the restaurant, a nanna-nap then meeting friends for happy hour.

What is the next 'hot spot' in cruising destinations?

Cruising Lake Nasser in Egypt with Bunnik Tours.

How can cruising attract more young people and families?

I think the cruise industry is doing a good job attracting the above. Cruise Lines such as MSC Cruises and Costa Cruises, where 2 children up to 18 cruise free with 2 adults is outstanding value.

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

The value of a cruise, particularly in the luxury market.

What is your prediction for the future of cruising?

Luxury adventure cruising.



Craig's Cruise Favourites!

Ship: For me it's a tie: The *Seabourn Spirit* and the *Sagafford*

Ship Activity: Team trivia

Shore Excursion: An early morning balloon ride over the Valley of the Kings from my recent Nile river cruise

Region: Alaska

Port: Barcelona

Onboard Drink: An Appletini

Perk of the Job: The travel I am able to do and the amazing people I have met along the way

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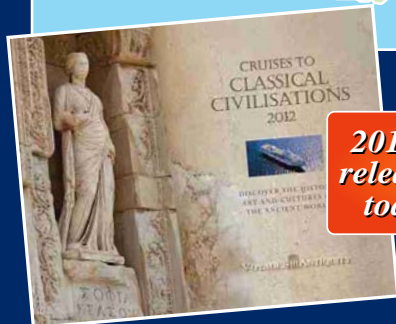
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- 25 Apr Istanbul (Optional Bosphorus boat tour. Embark *Aegean Odyssey*)

GREECE

- 26 Apr Lemnos (Sea of Marmara, Dardanelles, Lemnos: Myrina)
- 27 Apr Cruise past Mount Athos
- 27 Apr Skiathos

TURKEY

- 28 Apr Izmir (Ephesus)
- 29 Apr Izmir (Pergamon, Altar of Zeus, Greek theatre)

GREECE

- 30 Apr Delos (Sanctuary of Apollo, Avenue of the Lions, Sacred Harbour)
- 30 Apr Mykonos
- 1 May Santorini, (Akrotiri, Fira)
- 2 May Rethimnon, Crete (Knossos, Chania, Rethimnon)
- 3 May Nauplia (Mycenae, Nauplia or Epidaurus)
- 4 May Athens (Disembark *Aegean Odyssey*. Acropolis)
- 5-6 May Athens

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*CONDITIONS OF ENTRY: The winner will be the individual travel agent who has sold the highest dollar value in 2012 sailings on Voyages to Antiquity booked through Cruise Traveller. Competition closes 30 November 2011. Applicable to all travel agent bookings. Winner will be announced in December 2011. Prize must be taken on 23 April 2012 sailing. Includes return economy flights. Winner can fly from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Perth. Prize is not transferrable and cannot be sold on to a third party or redeemed for cash. To be eligible you must be the employee of a licensed travel agent in Australia at the time the prize is drawn. Items of a personal nature not included. Voyages To Antiquity and Cruise Traveller reserve the right to change and/or correct errors.



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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


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