

Viking adds river cruises in Burma

The rapidly expanding line has today announced its first-ever itinerary along the Irrawaddy River in Myanmar and Thailand.

FOR a company that plans to launch 18 ships in the next two years, it makes sense that it would need a few new waterways.

Viking River Cruises has selected Myanmar (Burma) as its latest destination, operating the 16-day 'Memories of Mandalay'.

Departing from the convenience of Bangkok, the land portion of the journey explores the city's landmarks, including the floating markets on the Chao Phraya River and the famous Grand Palace, before continuing to the former Burmese capital of Yangon (Rangoon).

Passengers will visit the colonial-era Strand Road, historic Buddhist temples, a local market and Shwedagon Pagoda.

The cruise component, aboard the refurbished *Viking Mandalay*, visits the colonial frontier post of Thayetmyo, the forts of Minhla and Gwechaung, the Golden temple of Mya-Tha-Lun Pagoda, the monasteries of Sale and Bagan, pottery villages in Yandabo, as well as the former Burmese capitals of Ava and Amarapura.

In Mandalay, highlights include the Mahamuni Pagoda and the Shwenandaw

Golden Palace monastery.

The final days of the itinerary are spent back in Bangkok.

"Burma is a magical destination in Southeast Asia, and we are pleased to offer our guests the opportunity to explore its rich history and spiritual wonders first hand," said Torstein Hagen, chairman of Viking River Cruises.

Details will soon be uploaded to www.vikingrivercruises.com.au.

Island Princess to the rescue

PRINCESS Cruises *Island Princess* has come to the rescue of five Jamaicans who were adrift at sea.

According to reports the hapless sailors told *Island Princess* crew that they had run out of fuel on the way to a barbecue.

Cyclone Evan cruise disruption

CYCLONE Evan has caused disruption to several South Pacific cruise itineraries this week, including that of *Crystal Symphony*, which cancelled a 16 Dec stop in Lautoka, Fiji in favour of a jaunt to the Bay of Islands and an extra day in Auckland.

Carnival Spirit was also forced to change its itinerary, cancelling Fijian calls in Suva, Port Denarau and Isle of Pines, in favour of stops in Vanuatu's Port Vila, Luganville and Wala.

MEANWHILE Evan has also caused damage to Captain Cook Cruises' Fiji-based ship, *Reef Endeavour*.

"Unfortunately Captain Cook Cruises have had to cancel their cruises for the rest of December 2012 due to the damage the *Reef Endeavour* sustained from Cyclone Evan," Captain Cook Cruises said in a statement.

"We hope to have her ready early in the New Year and she will resume 3, 4 and 7 night cruises early to mid January 2013," the statement added.

ALL THE CRUISE NEWS

Today's trade issue of *Cruise Weekly* will be the last **CW** for 2013!

The team at **CW** would like to thank you all for your support, emails and feedback throughout the year, and to wish you all a happy and safe Christmas break.

Cruise Weekly will return with a bang on 08 January 2013.

Until then, happy cruising.



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We look forward to supporting you in 2013!



Costa Pacifica collision

COSTA Pacifica has scored herself a 24-foot gash after she hit a berthing structure called a docking dolphin on Tuesday whilst maneuvering in the port of Marseille.

The accident occurred during high winds, with the gash being ripped into the ship fortunately above the water line.

The damage was repaired overnight with the ship's departure from Marseille to Barcelona only delayed by eight hours.



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Cruise News & Views



Brett Jardine - General Manager, ICCA

Global Cruise Association

Being a member of any industry association is not only a demonstration of your support for that particular industry, it's also an indication to present and potential customers that you take your business seriously and have confidence in your sector.

This week's announcement by Cruise Industry Associations from around the world that they are joining together to create one global cruise association is evidence that a collective approach to business does work, "one industry, one voice".

As a retailer, the value of your professionalism cannot be underestimated and by being part of a global association representing a major part of your business demonstrates your commitment to the cruise industry.

Clients are also likely to be impressed by a business that is proud to promote their credibility by endorsing their industry association.

Through your membership you are taking a leadership position that says you are knowledgeable about your industry and interested in its future.

This is a low cost way of demonstrating your involvement in the industry and contributing to its growth.

We anticipate that being part of our global association will lead to more robust partnership programs and networking on a broader scale for our growing number of retail members.

In closing 2012 with this very exciting news we look forward to what lies ahead in 2013!

On behalf of our team at the ICCA and our member lines, we wish you all a safe and prosperous festive season.

APT concludes record year of familis

A Mekong cruise aboard APT's *AmaLotus* has wrapped up the company's largest agent famil program.

A TOTAL of 250 agents experienced various APT products in 2012, more than any other year.

The company's expanded famil program demonstrated its commitment to the retail travel networks, according to national sales manager Susan Haberle.

"We hosted more retail selling consultants than ever before," she said.

"Our passengers may be doing their research through brochures and online, but they refer to agents to pull everything together, including their private pre and post APT tour arrangements."

Haberle said it was "imperative that our agency networks experience our product and in turn educate their colleagues across the country."

This year's APT familis have included Europe river cruising, the Kimberley, Alaska, South Africa, South America, Central Australia and West Coast USA Air Cruising.

One of the final familis involved a Flight Centre group, who explored Vietnam and Cambodia on APT's 124-passenger *AmaLotus*.

While experiencing the cities of Saigon, Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, they cruised for seven nights on the Mekong, visiting floating markets, villages, factories, temples and

monasteries, and while onboard they enjoyed the food, entertainment and comfortable suites.

Pictured clockwise from top left: Logan McEwan, National Campaign Manager Flight Centre; Julie Malane, International Cruise Consultant Cruiseabout Q Super Centre; Jen Scott, Trainer FCL & NSW Learning Centre; Fabian Cannavo, Assistant Manager Flight Centre Mosman; Ali Dick, Cruising Specialist Cruiseabout Geelong; Kate Ziebarth, Business Systems Leader Infinity Cruises; and Susie Coughlin, Partner Program Manager APT.



Italian family fare video

ROYAL Caribbean has debuted a new video 'Italian Fare Family Style: Royal Caribbean Guests Feast at Giovanni's Table'.

CLICK HERE to view.



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CRUISE WEEKLY 

Royal Caribbean repairs

ROYAL Caribbean has awarded Singapore's Sembawang Shipyard with a Favoured Customer Contract to provide the company's 41 ships with repairs, revitalisation, upgrading and related marine services.

"This milestone long-term maintenance and refit contract with Royal Caribbean will further boost Singapore's status as a major Asian cruise hub and reinforce Sembawang Shipyard's reputation as one of the world's leading shipyards in the highly specialised segment of cruise ships repair, refurbishment and conversion," Sembawang said in a statement.

Crystal repositioning

CRYSTAL Cruises has unveiled a series of repositioning cruises for 2013, with new itineraries on 60% of the voyages.

New routes include a Transpacific/Alaska crossing onboard *Crystal Symphony* from Kobe to Vancouver departing 12 Apr, including an overnight in Kobe (Japan), a visit to Petropavlosk (Russia's far east), and four calls to the lesser-visited Dutch Harbor and Kodiak, plus Seward and Ketchikan.

Symphony will also feature a New England/Canada Trans-Atlantic voyage from New York to Reykjavik departing on 23 May, including an overnight in Manhattan, as well as stops in New England ports, including Newport, RI; Boston, MA; Bar Harbor, ME; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and St. John's, Newfoundland; and an overnight in Reykjavik.

On 23 Nov *Symphony* will reposition from North to South America with a cruise from Miami to Rio, including a Rio overnight as well as Caribbean stops in Barbados and Devil's Island, French Guiana; a maiden call to Brazil's Natal, plus Belém, Fortaleza, Maceió, and Salvador stops.

Meanwhile *Crystal Serenity* will feature two nine-day repositioning cruises Barcelona-London (30 May)/London-Barcelona (2 September).

For more information on the line-up, see www.wiltrans.com.au.

Juile joins the Captain

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises has secured Australia's first ever 'MasterChef' winner and resident cook on Channel Nine's *Today Show*, Julie Goodwin, to entertain guests onboard its four night Murray River cruise departing 10 Jun 2013.

During her time onboard Julie will hold three cooking demonstrations.

P&O UK struck by sickness

P&O UK's bad luck has held this week with a second ship struck down with the norovirus.

Last week *Oriana* was dubbed the 'plague ship' after around 300 guests were laid up with the gastric bug during an 11-night Baltic cruise.

Angry guests spoke to the media following the outbreak, complaining of wait times and the shut down of certain eateries and public areas, and the sick being confined to their rooms.

Guests were also angered to learn that the illness had also broken out on the voyage which proceeded their own.

P&O Cruises managing director, Carol Marlow defended the company however, saying "The number of people affected was at an unprecedented level but we did not put profits before health".

"There were a small number of people on the previous cruise that had norovirus but we thoroughly cleaned the ship at the end of that trip," she said.

"We believe somebody unwittingly brought the virus onto the ship at the start of the latest cruise.

"The virus has an incubation period of 15 to 24 hours but the first case was reported on board just four to six hours after leaving port.

"That means they could not have caught it on board," she added.

Compensation for the cruise, according to Marlow, would be considered on a 'case by case' basis.

Meanwhile after weathering that storm, the company has this week been hit with another bout of the sickness, this time on *Azura*, with ten pax reporting gastro symptoms whilst on an 11-night Iberia cruise.



THE future of lifeboats.

The newest lifeboat has hit the market after passing a safety test which saw it drop from a whopping 61 metres from a crane into water.

The GES50 lifeboat was designed with massive container ships and drilling platforms in mind, so that in case of emergency, workers can hop into the vessel in a maximum of one and a half minutes, and fall from over 60 metres to land safe and upright in the water.

Measuring 15 metres in length, and able to accommodate 70 people, the vessel includes an engine which is sealed in a separate waterproof compartment.

Testing of the vessel involved its droppage from 61 metres, where it fell "head first" into water, filled with 70 100kg sandbags which were seatbelted into the seats, as well as gear to measure g-forces etc...

The vessel, which is designed to land, unlike toast, topside up every time, passed the test with flying colours.

The company has now begun processing orders for the high-flying boat from Australia, the UK and Norway.

SEA Cloud Cruises is celebrating a victory after *Sea Cloud II* set a new sailing record on a transatlantic voyage from Las Palmas to Barbados.

The windjammer averaged about 7 knots, but a speed of just over 9 knots was also attained on the voyage.

"In a record for Sea Cloud Cruises, 151 hours were spent under sail and 1,061 nautical miles were covered on the voyage," the company said.

Even a small tear in the sail could not put a stop to the record voyage, with the crew managing to replace the "main royal" during the sailing.

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