

Gold Coast push for cruise terminal

Major cruise lines are investigating the potential for ships to visit the Gold Coast instead of Brisbane.

THE Gold Coast may soon be opened up to cruising – if the local tourism body and government can work together on a solution – but the move would be likely to take ships away from Brisbane.

According to Gold Coast Tourism ce Martin Winter, “political considerations” were hindering the development of the Gold Coast as a cruise destination.

“This has been a highly political issue for many years, because Brisbane is only a short trip away, but I think the demand from cruise passengers is for the Gold Coast rather than

Brisbane,” he said.

Winter told *Cruise Weekly* that two major cruise lines were interested in changing their itineraries to incorporate the Gold Coast.

“In the discussions we’ve been having, these cruise companies have said they would be very keen to visit the Gold Coast, but it depends on their ability to safely load and unload passengers,” he said.

Gold Coast Tourism has completed a preliminary study into an offshore mooring facility for cruise ships, which will be presented next week to the Broadwater Masterplan Community Reference Group.

“Offshore mooring makes a lot of sense, and it appears to be feasible, but our preference would be for a permanent platform-style facility inside the broadwater on Wavebreak Island, with a bridge connection,” Winter said. “This would require extensive dredging, but it is doable.”

The project would also require substantial government funding for the new infrastructure, he said.

Meanwhile, the State Government and Gold Coast City Council are set to undertake a \$1.5 million study into the future usage of the region’s broadwater.

“Clearly, one of the key features will be what it takes to create an environmentally sustainable cruise terminal, and I’m absolutely certain that the study will involve cruise industry input,” Winter said.

“Hopefully this will lead to a timeframe as to when we can welcome the first cruise ship to the Gold Coast.”

Winter’s vision is to have several cruise ships visiting the city in time for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

TODAY’S ISSUE OF CW

Today’s trade issue of *Cruise Weekly* features seven pages packed with all the latest cruise news and photos.

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ICCA UPDATE

ICCA General Manager,
Brett Jardine

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Feel free to contact our office for further information or click on the Masters Conference icon at www.cruising.org.au.

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Remember ongoing education is critical to maintaining an edge over your competitors and just like taking a shower – it is something you should be doing all the time!!!



NCL signs new music partnership

Norwegian has joined forces with Sixthman to take the next step in its musical entertainment.

A **STRATEGIC** relationship between Norwegian Cruise Line and Sixthman, a leading producer of music-themed cruises, is set to evolve the entertainment offered on NCL ships.

Sixthman, founded in 2001, pioneered the destination event movement by hosting guests on more than 43 full-ship charters over the past 11 years.

The US company has partnered with artists such as KISS, Kid Rock, John Mayer, Zac Brown Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd, 311, Lyle Lovett, Barenaked Ladies, and many others, as well as brands such as VH1, Graceland and Turner Classic Movies.

According to Sixthman, its mix of intimate artist interaction with fan communities has "ignited a passionate, loyal and growing following" for its cruise events.

"We have been impressed with the range of events Sixthman has produced and believe strongly in this growing segment," said Kevin Sheehan, NCL's CEO, in a statement.

"Sixthman's expertise and relationships will help us further extend our position as the leader in cruise ship entertainment."

The new partnership allows NCL and Sixthman to work with the many travel partners and music and theme cruise producers in expanding this growing segment of the industry by delivering a unique experience for fans.

The deal is the latest in a series of NCL innovations in the evolution of onboard entertainment, which began when the line was

the first to bring Broadway-style shows and celebrity performers to sea, and has continued with its most recent success with *Norwegian Epic* featuring brand-name entertainment such as Blue Man Group, Legends in Concert, Cirque Dreams & Dinner, and Howl at the Moon, all never before offered on ships.

MSC to homeport in Miami

MSC Cruises has signed an agreement with the Port of Miami which will see it use the facility as its exclusive homeport for its Caribbean sailings from Sep 2013.

Currently MSC homeports out of Port Everglades for Caribbean routes.

The deal is currently pending agreement by the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners later this month.

The initial terms of the agreement is for three years.

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Cairns gets ready for big cruise ships

Cairns' Trinity Inlet will be dredged as part of a \$40 million project to allow larger ships access to the port.

DEEPENING the channel, according to the Tourism & Transport Forum, will allow large cruise ships to berth right next to Cairns' city, and will circumvent the process that larger ships usually have to go through when visiting, which sees them forced to moor at Yorkey's Knob, and then transfer guests via tenders to shore, followed by buses to the city.

"Cruising already delivers millions of dollars in economic activity to Cairns," said Tourism & Transport Forum ce John Lee.

"But the potential is even higher if the right cruise ship access and facilities are provided," he added.

Given that visiting cruise ships usually only

stay for less than a day, Lee said that having a facility where tourists can disembark within a short walk from the Cairns CBD is vital, and would improve the city's financial position by giving guests extra time to spend their money in town at local shops, restaurants and attractions.

"Improving the economic activity and business and employment opportunities for Cairns is why deepening the channel has been on TTF's agenda for some time," he said.

The dredging plan, announced by the Liberal National Party (LNP), is also timely, according to Lee, in light of the trend for new ships to be built "larger and larger".

"Allowing them access direct to the city of Cairns will encourage more ships to visit in the future, bringing with them tens of thousands of tourists each year," he said.

"Considering the challenges the Cairns tourism industry has been facing, this will deliver a welcome boost to the city and surrounding region," he added.

MEANWHILE the announcement has not been met with universal support, with Opposition members arguing that the funding commitment was premature in light of the fact that the Government has not yet received the final feasibility and environmental impact report on the project, which may indicate that the project will cost more than the planned \$40m and may have devastating effects on the Reef.

"There's no point dredging the inlet if it destroys the Reef," Cairns Labor candidate Kirsten Lesina told local media.

The LNP leader Campbell Newman responded to the comments however saying "the single most important commitment tourism operators have been after" is to "see large tourist cruise liners being able to get in alongside to the berth here in Cairns".



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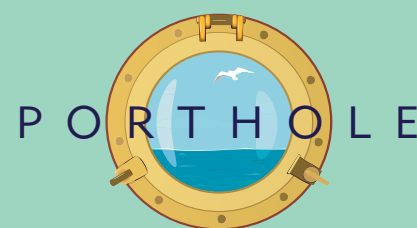
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HE definitely needs a warm weather cruise.

A 44-year old Swedish man has been discovered alive after two months trapped in a snowdrift in his car in temperatures which dropped as low as -30°C.

According to reports the man survived by eating handfuls of snow and bunking down covered by a sleeping blanket which was fortuitously in his car at the time it got stuck, whilst the snow slowed down his metabolism, placing him in a sort of hibernative state.

Although having lost a considerable amount of weight, the man is recovering well in hospital, and could sure use a tropical cruise.

Grab your passport and go!

MSC Cruises is hosting a 72-hour cruise sale offering savings of up to 40% off the price of regular cruises.

Kicking-off at 10am on Friday until 26 Feb, the sale includes *MSC Armonia's* 18 May Italy, Greek Is and Montenegro voyage (from \$499pp) and *MSC Sinfonia's* 18 May Italy, Tunisia, Spain and France cruise (from \$499pp).

Reduced rates starting from \$599pp are also available on *MSC Fantasia* cruises departing 08, 29 Apr ex-Genoa; 02, 09, 16, 23 and 30 Apr ex-Naples; and 13, 20 and 27 Apr ex-Barcelona; as well as on *MSC Splendida* voyages departing 07 Apr ex-Genoa; 08, 15 and 22 Apr ex-Barcelona and 06, 13, 20 and 27 Apr ex-Rome.

Savings are subject to availability, see www.msccruises.com.au for details.

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Cruising boosts best sales week ever

TravelManagers has achieved its best sales week ever this month, and has attributed much of this success to a massive increase in cruise bookings.

THE bumper week, between 06-12 Feb saw sales up a whopping 26.9% on the company's last 'record week' 14-24 Feb 2011, with TravelManagers ceo, Joe Araullo, saying that a 69% year-on-year increase in cruise bookings has much to do with the company's success.

"It's a great indication of what 2012 might have installed for us," he said.

"There's no doubt cruising is growing from strength to strength and regularly forming part of a holiday itinerary our personal travel managers are creating for their clients," he

added.

Araullo said that the company's variety of cruise product on offer, as well as its emphasis on training, education and ship inspections was clearly making a difference.

"To give you an example of the variety available, in the week 14 – 20 February 2011 cruise sales encompassed 13 suppliers, in our record week this year (6 – 12 February 2012) cruise sales covered 21 suppliers," he said.

"We work closely with our partner suppliers to provide training and regular updates for our personal travel managers on what's new in the area of cruising so they always have the most up-to-date information for clients," he added.

The growth of cruise, according to Araullo, also shows that "organised holidays are making a comeback through the personal travel manager sector".

The top sellers in TravelManagers record sales week 2012 included: P&O Cruises, APT River Cruises, Princess Cruises, Silversea and Wiltrans.

"Obviously this is just one week out of 52 weeks and cruise sales vary from week to week depending on what season it is, marketing activities whether it's pricing specials, onboard credits or fly free offers but the key point is people want to cruise," he said.

"It's seen as offering significant value for money, it's a low stress holiday where you unpack once and the variety ensures there is something to suit everyone's individual taste and budget," he added.

Scenic sells out agent famil

SCENIC has sold out of spots on its Travel Agents Famil departing 05 Mar, which showcases the Hidden Jewels of Egypt and includes, for the first time ever, a cruise on Lake Nasser.

Whitsunday cruising goes off

THE Whitsundays has enjoyed a massive week for cruising this week, welcoming QM2 to Airlie Beach last Saturday, followed by a visit from *Oriana* on Sunday, *Rhapsody of the Seas* on Monday and *Radiance of the Seas* today.

"The Cruise Industry is a very solid long term growth sector for Queensland and one we have been courting in earnest for the past four years," said Director of Business Attraction - Aviation and Cruise for Tourism Queensland, Denise Deveney.

"Our visitation from world voyage cruising continues to grow year on year and we will be attending Seatrade again this year to grow this market even more," she added.

Capture wildlife like a pro

RENOWNED wildlife photographer, Martin Bailey has signed up with Aurora Expeditions to host photography workshops on five 2012 voyages.

Named on the '30 Most Influential Photographers of The Decade' list Bailey will host workshops on the Ring of Fire 25 Jun, Bering Sea Explorer 07 Jul, Jewels of the Arctic 21 Aug and Voyage to the End of the Earth 08 Sep cruises.

See www.auroraexpeditions.com.au.

Hurtigruten's bestsellers

LAST year 57,000 Hurtigruten guests visited the North Cape (the famous Norwegian rock plateau on the 71st parallel), making it the cruise line's most popular excursion.

In second place was Hurtigruten's Midnight Concert in the Arctic Cathedral excursion which attracted 20,000 guests, and in third place was the Arctic Capital Tromsø excursion, which attracted more than 18,000 participants.

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UK homeporting spat

THE UK City of Liverpool Cruise Liner Terminal has applied for full turnaround facility approval, in a bid to attract business in the form of homeported cruise ships.

Current restrictions on Liverpool port, put in place in 2007 after it received grants from the UK Government and EU to develop its facilities, inhibit it from having turnarounds and poaching cruise trade from other ports such as Dover, Southampton and Newcastle.

The move has caused much consternation in the industry, with other ports worried that if approval is granted, Liverpool would indeed draw business away.

Recently Liverpool has moved to quash arguments made by Southampton that the public funds it had received gave it an unfair advantage, by saying it will pay back a large portion of the cash.

"We have no objection, providing Liverpool pay back that subsidy, if they want to go into the cruise industry and operate turnaround cruises," the chairman of Southampton Chamber of Trade told local media.

"We are not concerned about competition.

"Southampton will fight on a level playing field - this is about subsidising a competitor".

According to reports, Liverpool offered to pay back £5m of the £9m it was granted from the UK Government, but left out any mention of paying back the £8.6m it got from the EU.

This figure has not satisfied Southampton however, with a spokesperson saying it will not be content until Liverpool includes the EU funds in the repayment scheme.

Agents in raptures at sea



A GROUP of very lucky Aussie and Kiwi agents got to experience first-hand what *Rhapsody of the Seas* has to offer, onboard a 10-night South Pacific Gems cruise which departed on 06 Feb.

The group even included four first time cruisers, Anne Johnson, Alex Russ, Laura Wilkinson and Gina Reinhard.

Onboard highlights of the cruise included Broadway style shows in the vessel's main theatre and rockclimbing.

The group is pictured above (front row from left) Michelle Alcorn, National Seniors; Alex Russ, Flight Centre; Faye Lockwood, Rourke Jetset; Merick Pistora, Travel Brokers NZ; (second row from left) Gina Reinhard, Infinity; Tara Boyles, Cruiseabout; Warren Young, Cruise Express; (third row from left) Amanda Taylor, Our Vacation Centre; Peter Carson, Royal Caribbean Cruises; Tracy Keir, HWT; Anne Johnson, Travelscene; and (top row from left) Laura Wilkinson, Travel Hot Spot and Sara Salisbury, Travelworld.

Silversea offers sweet deals

SILVERSEA is reducing the fares of a selection of its cruises in a bid to attract new cruisers to the brand.

To sweeten the deal, the cruise line is also combining the new discounted fares with onboard spending credits from US\$500 to US\$1,000 per suite.

Discounted sailings include *Silver Shadow's* seven-day Alaskan voyage departing 07 Jun (now priced from \$3,199pp plus \$500 onboard credit); as well as two of *Shadow's* 11-day Asian itineraries departing on 25 Apr and 06 May respectively (each priced from \$4,399pp plus \$1,000 onboard credit).

Sailings in the Mediterranean have also been reduced including *Silver Spirit's* 12-day roundtrip Monte Carlo voyage departing 05 May (from \$3,889pp plus \$1,000 onboard credit); whilst *Silver Cloud's* 10-night Copenhagen cruise departing on 20 May is also reduced to \$3,199pp plus \$1,000 onboard spending credit.

See www.silversea.com for more details.

Cruising together at AIME



PICTURED above catching up at this week's Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) at the Melbourne Convention Centre is Chris Perkins, sales and marketing manager at Orion Expedition Cruises and Jane Tanti, sales manager for Oceania Cruises.

The pair caught up at AIME to discuss the promotion of cruising as an option for the conference and incentive market.

"Orion has already had great success with ship charters and conference groups, and Oceania is trying to break into this lucrative market," Jane said.

Jane said that with the launch of *Marina* last year, and the new *Riviera* in May this year capacity has increased for Oceania and that this opens up a lot of new opportunities.

Other cruise lines represented at AIME included Silversea and Sea Dream Yacht Club, both of which reported full dance cards of scheduled appointments with incentive organisers.



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Miami tops cruise pax numbers

MORE than four million cruise passengers passed through the Port of Miami last year, more than any other port in the world.

Meanwhile the port also announced that it is adding Regent Seven Seas to its line-up of cruise vessels making use of its facilities.

True North out of Dampier

NORTH Star Cruises has introduced a new itinerary for *True North* departing roundtrip from Dampier on 09 Mar this year.

The four-day maiden Montes Extravaganza cruise is priced from \$3,196pp and includes cruising the Monte Bellos, a rarely visited chain of 174 islands off the West Australian coast, as well as a tender adventure to Claret Bay and Ah Chong Island and a trip to Vodka Beach.

Included in the price are all meals, plus trips in the vessel's own helicopter.

See www.northstarcruises.com.au.

Save species and cruise too

HERITAGE Expeditions is offering wildlife lovers the chance to become a part of genuine conservation projects helping to save endangered species from extinction in the remote Kuril Islands and Russian Kamchatka Peninsula, onboard two of its voyages this year.

The 18-day Sea Otter Survey voyage (from US\$4,900pp) departs on 09 May and will be led by a team of world-renowned scientists, who will undertake much-needed research on the Sea Otters of the region.

As part of the voyage, guests will be able to join the research teams in Zodiacs and on shore patrols to assist with research.

The second 14-day Search for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper voyage, will depart on 24 Jun and is being run in conjunction with Bird Life International.

Priced from US\$8,400pp, guests on the cruise will help conduct vital surveys of one of the world's most critically endangered birds.

See www.heritage-expeditions.com.

Disney Wonder in Miami

DISNEY *Wonder* will begin sailing from Port Miami in December this year, with four- and five-night itineraries to the Bahamas and Western Caribbean.

Orion extends \$500 cash incentive

ORION Expedition Cruises is extending its bonus \$500 cash incentive offer for agents until 07 Apr 2012.

"The excellent incremental sales received from existing and new agents warrant a further investment as we have seen a worthwhile lift in business attributable to this cash incentive promotion," said Chris Perkins, gm Sales and Marketing for Orion Expedition Cruises.

"Our 10% commission represents significant income for the travel agency proprietors and the \$500 cash bonus is working as a compelling incentive for the front line staff.

"Everybody wins - so we have decided to extend the promotion to cover all new sales made until the 7th April this year," he added.

The \$500 bonus applies to all new bookings made between 16 Jan and 07 Apr 2012 for any *Orion* and *Orion II* 2012 expedition sailings, in addition to the regular 10% commission.

See www.orionexpeditions.com.



Business Partnership Manager - Victoria

Complete Cruise Solution is part of the Carnival Corporation, the world's leading cruise holiday company, representing iconic brands such as P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises, Cunard and Carnival Cruise Lines.

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Cruising in Haiti may come true

HAITI could receive its first cruise ship in over half a century, following the announcement of an initiative to bring Cruise with a Cause, which combines tourism and volunteer work, to Port-au-Prince port.

Cruise with a Cause transports volunteer workers to various places that are in need of support, and is looking to take a 4,000 person cruise to Haiti next year.

The passengers on this cruise would participate in projects that include building homes, repairing schools, and installing new water purification systems throughout Port-au-Prince.

The move has been welcomed by Haiti's Minister of the Interior Thierry Mayard-Paul who said "Haiti is at a turning point as a nation".

"When you sail into Port-au-Prince, my friends, you will be making history," the minister said.

"Yours will be the first cruise ship to visit our capital in a quarter of a century: This will be a milestone to remember, so let me thank you now for breathing new life into our tourism sector," he added.



Face to Face: Tony Archbold

Director of Sales Holland America Line and Seabourn

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

How did you get into the cruise industry?

29 years of industry preparation, 10 interviews and some people willing to give an enthusiastic guy a chance. No other industry has had this level of appeal to me for so many reasons. It's dynamic, global and it is dominating the industry's attention. There are very few chances to start up an operation for two such loved brands so I just had to take the chance. So glad I did!

Where do you see yourself and your company in five years?

I see myself and the company continuing to enjoy the growth in cruise that we've seen for the last 10 years. The role isn't important!

What is the key to your success?

It's always been surrounding myself with the best staff I can find and resourcing them so they can do the best they can at the job they are best suited to do.

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

Not enough...I can never do enough!

What is your favourite destination, and why?

Alaska. The cruising is spectacular, the wildlife unsurpassed and the wide open spaces humbling and so peaceful.

How do you spend days at sea?

At sea finding a quiet place on deck with a good book and just watching the world go by. On port days seeing as much as I can of whatever place the cruise has taken me!

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

South America. It has so much to offer as far as variety, scenery, history, culture, food and very friendly people.

What is the most important issue in the cruise industry today, and why?

Apart from the infrastructure issue, it's training more agents so they can confidently sell to the so many future passengers who don't yet know what they are missing out on by not cruising!

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

Continuing to offer the best value of any holiday option available and by reaching out to the great un-cruised.



Tony's Cruise Favourites!

Ship: *Seabourn Odyssey*

Ship Activity: Embarking!

Shore Excursion: Listening to a string quartet in the Ephesus ruins playing just for me and my fellow guests!

Port: Too many to choose just one!

Onboard Food and Drink: The Crème Broulee in the Pinnacle Grill on any Holland America Line ship

Perk of the Job: Cruising!

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