

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 15 November 2012

## Travelmanagers launch cruise brand

Home-based agency group Travelmanagers has raised the stakes in terms of cruise competitiveness, launching a new brand to specialise in the cruise market.

**UNVEILED** at last weekend's TravelManagers annual conference in Fiji, the new brand is to be named CruiseManagers, with the new identity to be part of the Cruiseco consortium.

While the finishing touches are still being put in place, the brand is tentatively set to launch in the first quarter of 2013, according to Joe Araullo, ceo of TravelManagers parent company House of Travel.

"It's all about specialising in cruise, and my conversation with Cruiseco was we were going to set up a separate brand called CruiseManagers," Araullo told *Cruise Weekly*.

In criteria set by House of Travel, the new brand will not be made available to all of the current 375 personal travel managers in the network; rather, only to those who have written a pre-set level of cruise sales over a predetermined period of time, Araullo added.

PTM's who are accredited as International Cruise Council Australasia masters will also be

### Royal Clipper discounts

**STAR** Clippers is offering a 35% discount off two of its *Royal Clipper* Mediterranean sailings this year.

The first discounted voyage departs on 18 May for seven-nights from Marseilles to Rome, and is priced from \$2,175pp; whilst the second sailing is 12-nights in duration and departs 26 Oct from Rome to Lisbon, priced from \$3,495pp.

The discount is applicable on bookings made by 31 Jan 2013.

See [www.starclippers.com](http://www.starclippers.com).

automatically permitted to use the new brand.

PTM's who meet the preset sales criteria to join the new brand will be encouraged within the network to build on their cruising education and attain an ICCA masters accreditation.

"What this will do is give all of the PTM's the opportunity to specialise in cruise," he added.

"The reason [for starting the brand] was due to requests I was receiving from the network for a cruise club and the reality is that what the network wanted was some cruise marketing and access to cruise wholesale, and my theory was 'why duplicate that' when Cruiseco do it well and focus on it," Araullo concluded.

### Buy one, get one free

**BRITISH** cruise line, Fred Olsen Cruises, is offering Australian cruisers the chance to buy one cruise, and get another one absolutely free.

Holidaymakers are eligible for the deal when they purchase a voyage from a choice of 51 Fred Olsen ocean cruises of 10-nights or more, which take in destinations including the Caribbean, Mediterranean and Europe to the Canary Islands and West Africa, The Middle East, Baltic and Scandinavia, Norway, Spitsbergen, and Iceland.

Cruisers must book and pay in full for the voyage by 31 Jan 2013 in order to qualify for the free cruise.

Guests can then select their free cruise from a list of 20 Fred Olsen cruise, and can either choose to take the freebie themselves, or gift it to friends or family.

The free cruise will be booked in the same cabin grade as the cruise which was purchased, and can only be booked once full payment for the original cruise has been received.

This promotion can only be booked via Cruise Abroad, the Australian agent for Fred Olsen Cruises.

For details see [www.cruiseabroad.com.au](http://www.cruiseabroad.com.au), or phone 1300 669 369.

### ALL THE CRUISE NEWS

Today's trade issue of *CW* features four pages jam packed with all the latest cruise news.

### Costa's new appointment

**COSTA** Cruises has appointed Beniamino Maltese as senior vice president and chief financial officer of Costa Crociere S.p.A.

In this role, Beniamino will be responsible for Costa and Iberocruceros Group's accounting, treasury, control, taxation and legal matter activities.



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Cruise News & Views



Brett Jardine - General Manager, ICCA

## New England Ports

Further to last week's focus on the New England cruise region, I wanted to highlight a couple of personal favourite ports from my recent *QM2* cruise.

The city of Boston was established in 1630 and today you can see many stark reminders of years gone by.

Much of the city still reflects the original layout that abounds with alleys, dead ends and one way streets.

Many great cities around the world have their own equivalent to a botanical garden or central park and here it is known as the "Boston Common".

A stroll across the common in October with a magnificent array of autumn (fall) colours leads to one of Boston's much loved icons - "Cheers Bar"!

The famous bar from which the hit TV sitcom was based upon offers a fun atmosphere, great local beer and enough memorabilia plastered around the walls to keep you occupied for hours!

Next stop on this New England itinerary was certainly a highlight - one of those gems that only a cruise itinerary can deliver - Bar Harbour.

Having a meal whilst ashore during a cruise holiday is asking for trouble and with Bar Harbour well known for its fresh lobster I knew we were in trouble as soon as we hopped off the tender!

It was only about 15 degrees celsius but a perfectly clear sunny day meant lunch on the pier was a must and the lobster stew we experienced was nothing short of sensational.

Bar Harbour is also famous for high quality Tourmaline gem stones and thanks to the Budweiser over lunch my better half now has a gorgeous pendant as a reminder of our visit to Bar Harbour!

## Travel Compensation concerns

Carnival Australia is hoping to mend fences with the travel industry over direct sell revelations in its Travel Industry Transition Plan submission.

THE cruise giant has been meeting this week with key travel agent partners and the Australia Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) to discuss concerns over the Draft's possible plans to abolish the Travel Compensation Fund (TCF).

"As Australia's largest cruise operator, we are concerned about the risk to public confidence in travel agents and the broader tourism industry if an appropriate compensation mechanism is not found to replace the TCF," said Carnival Australia ceo Ann Sherry.

The Draft plan could see the TCF scrapped, with consumers potentially relying on the 'chargeback' protections available with some credit cards, the provisions of an industry accreditation scheme or travel insurance, should their booking go belly up.

"Simply scrapping the TCF without a suitable replacement would leave Australian travellers who book through travel agents with limited protection," Sherry said.

"It's no secret the current TCF arrangement is onerous for travel agents so it's timely to sit down and find a mechanism that addresses the current challenges and properly balances consumer risk," she added.

In its formal submission to the Draft Travel

Industry Transition Plan, now removed from the Ministerial Committee website, Carnival highlighted what its now describing as "worst case scenarios" which demonstrated the inherent risks if an appropriate compensation mechanism is not available to travellers.

The Carnival document revealed that out of over 190,000 bookings last year about one in five were direct from consumers, and warned that "without a collective approach to ensuring the financial stability of agents, we may find it more attractive to drive direct sales".

"The extraordinary growth of the Australian cruise industry in recent years is a direct reflection of the work of the travel agent community who we consider to be partners in our business," Sherry said.

The state and federal Ministers are scheduled to meet to discuss the draft on 07 Dec.

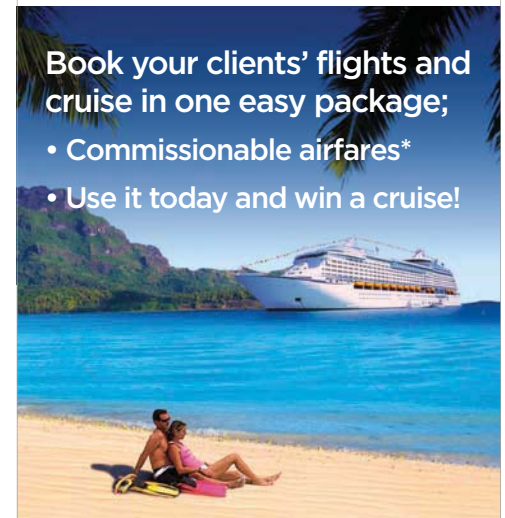


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## Love baseball, cruise *Poesia*

MSC Cruises is embracing baseball, adding a line-up of some of the sport's legends to three of *MSC Poesia's* Caribbean 2012/13 sailings.

Hosting the baseball themed cruises will be former New York Yankees star pitcher Stan Bahnsen, whilst players on the cruises will include: Jesse Barfield, Glenn Beckert, Bill Russell, Dave Campbell, Ken Griffey Sr., Jim Fregosi, Ed Herrmann, Larry Parrish, Tommy Davis, Cookie Rojas, Clarence Jones, Juan Marichal, Gorman Thomas, Gary Peters, Wallace Johnson, Rico Petrocelli, Randy Hundley, Jack Billingham and Ellis Valentine.

The baseball cruises include a 10-night Caribbean Dream departing 11 Dec 2012; a seven-night Eastern Caribbean Enchantment departing 23 Feb 2013; and a seven-night Colours of the Caribbean voyage departing 06 Apr 2013.



## Another saga for Ruby

**SAGA** Ruby has had to cancel her most recent European sailing after she experienced engine problems.

Ruby was forced to call into the port of Porto in Portugal for repairs, with passengers told the cruise was cancelled and that instead of disembarking in Southampton that they would be completing their cruise at the Portuguese port.

Saga flew a team into Porto to help get passengers back home, with guests given the option to either fly or take a bus back to England.

Guests were also granted a full refund and a sincere apology.

Aimee Spicer social media manager for Saga Ruby informed cruisers that the cancellation was due to "some technical issues which will take a few days to repair".

Saga has since confirmed that Ruby's next eight-day Advent cruise will depart as planned on 06 Dec.

## Cruise3sixty Rego open

**AGENTS** can now register for next year's cruise3sixty conference in North America.

As with previous years, the International Cruise Council Australasia is coordinating a local delegation to attend the event, which will take place between 18 - 23 June 2013 in Vancouver.

The ICCA's delegation will not only attend cruise3sixty's educational sessions and networking opportunities, but will also participate in a number of ship inspections.

According to the ICCA, so far, cruise3sixty's educational program looks to include training and professional development seminars, destination and product workshops, hands-on technology training and cruise updates from CLIA-member cruise lines.

The ICCA cruise3sixty package is priced at \$1,495pp/ts, and includes full conference participation, a welcome cocktail function and exclusive ICCA seminar, plus five nights' accommodation at the Renaissance Vancouver Harbourside Hotel and daily breakfast.

Return international airfares to Vancouver and transfers are additional.

For those interested in exploring after the conference, the ICCA is also offering a Rocky Mountaineer add-on tour from 23 to 26 Jun.

The tour is priced at \$575pp/ts, including an extra night in Vancouver, two days travelling Gold Leaf Class to Banff including accommodation in Kamloops and Banff, and a couch transfer to Calgary.

For details visit the ICCA website at [www.cruising.org.au](http://www.cruising.org.au).

## The Symphony of Hobbiton

**CRYSTAL** Symphony is set to offer guests a Hobbit experience New Zealand this December.

The experience, priced at \$265pp, will take place on a *Crystal Symphony* day tour in Tauranga on 20 Dec 2012 and again on 29 Jan 2013.

The excursion includes a guided tour of the Hobbit village from the upcoming Hobbit movie, and will allow guests to immerse themselves in all things Hobbit, such as Hobbit buildings, Hobbit hills, Hobbit holes and even Brandywine Bridge.

Tour guests will also be able to indulge in some Hobbit style eating at the Green Dragon Inn where they will feast on wine, beer and BBQ served by waiters dressed in full Hobbit gear.

## Whisper 2014 World Cruise

**SILVER** Whisper will sail 113-day World Cruise from Los Angeles to Barcelona in 2014, taking in 54 destinations in 29 countries, including Australia and New Zealand.

Departing 06 Jan, the voyage will visit Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, Australia, New Zealand, Koror, China, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, India and the Mediterranean.

"The intimate *Silver Whisper* is ideal for this World Cruise designed for experienced travellers looking to venture to harbours and secluded waterways that larger vessels cannot access," Karen Christensen, gm and director sales and marketing Australasia for Silversea, "*Silver Whisper's* 2013 World Cruise has been a complete sell-out, so we recommend early bookings for this new 2014 voyage," she added.

The voyage is priced from \$50,950pp/ts, see [www.silversea.com/worldcruise2014](http://www.silversea.com/worldcruise2014).

## Cruise Holidays enjoys Allure



**AUSTRALIAN** md of Cruise Holidays Les Farrar recently attended the Cruise Holidays International annual convention onboard Royal Caribbean's *Allure of the Seas*, along with 250 other Cruise Holidays franchise owners, consultants and industry experts.

The Cruise Holidays franchise group has already signed up three home-based agents and a retail store in Australia, despite the program yet to officially launch here.

Described as "the most important educational and networking event of the year for Cruise Holidays franchise owners" by Farrar, the conference included presentations on the latest industry trends, included discussions on ways to improve client services, and showcased recent developments of Cruise Holidays technology platforms.

The conference also saw the majority of convention participants join in a 5km walk around *Allure's* jogging track to raise funds for the MS Society.

Royal Caribbean even got in on the charity act, donating \$1,000 to the cause.

Vicki Freed, senior vp of sales at Royal Caribbean and Dondra Ritzenthaler, senior vp of Sales Celebrity Cruises are pictured above presenting the \$1,000 cheque to Mark Schiffner, coo of Cruise Holidays and Tom Baumann, president of Travel Leaders Group.



## Cruising Specialists - Brisbane - Exp Part Time Consultant

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### Ponant ventures to Asia

2013 will mark a first for French luxury cruise line Compagnie du Ponant, with the company announcing it will debut a new Asian itinerary onboard *Le Soleal* (which will launch in Jun 2013).

The eight-night voyage will depart Hong Kong on 22 Oct 2013 and will take guests to Halong Bay, Da Nang, Hoi An, Nha Trang and Ho Chi Minh City.

Prices for the voyage start at \$4,512pp/ts.

For details see [www.traveltheworld.com.au](http://www.traveltheworld.com.au).

### Free air to the Amazon

CRUISERS with their eyes fixed on an Amazon adventure can score themselves up to US\$1,000 per stateroom in airfare credits if they book one of *SeaDream II's* Amazon itineraries departing in Feb or Mar 2013.

Ranging in length from seven to 20-days the itineraries include shore excursions to visit local tribes, and are accompanied by expert naturalists and historians and 95 crew (for a maximum 112-guests).

Supplements towards air travel are based on US\$500 per guest for 20-day voyages, US\$300 per guest for 10-12 day voyages and US\$200 per guest for seven- and eight-day voyages.

Prices start from US\$5,926pp/ts for a seven-day Iquitos-return cruise.

See [www.seadream.com](http://www.seadream.com) for details.

### Royalty meets Celebrity

THIS month Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* will be welcomed into Sydney Harbour by *Celebrity Millennium*, also owned by RCCL.

The landmark meeting will herald the start of *Voyager's* season Down Under, and will also mark the first time that Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises vessels meet in Sydney.

The event will take place at approximately 7pm on 22 Nov, with the rendezvous taking place west of Fort Denison, and including a water cannon tug-boat and a flotilla of local pleasure craft.

Those keen to witness the meeting are advised that the best viewing spots are the Sydney Opera House, Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Under the Sydney Harbour Bridge (north and south sides), Taronga Zoo Wharf, Bradley's Head in Mosman, and Cremorne Reserve.

### Turnaround in Saint John?

THE Canadian port of Saint John in New Brunswick may become the country's newest turnaround port, pending the finding of a feasibility report commissioned by the regional Government.

"While it is wonderful to have ships visit the Port of Saint John, if it was to become a home port we would be taking this industry to the next level," said Canadian Tourism, Heritage and Culture Minister Trevor Holder.



NOT a morning person.

A British man, David Bookbinder, is suing Thomson Cruises and his Thomas Cook travel agent over the distress he suffered due to an early morning wake up.

The trouble started during Bookbinder's *Thomson Celebration* Mediterranean cruise in Feb this year, where he was asked to be up early for immigration at Israel's Eilat port.

Bookbinder, who was travelling with his 86-year old brother, believes that the early start he was forced to make was not in fact due to immigration procedures, but as a chance for the cruise company to sell day tours.

"I'm happy to get out of bed at 3.30am if the ship is sinking – but not so excursions can be sold," he told British media.

The main cause of consternation for Bookbinder was the difficulty and distress caused by the 3.30am wake up for his brother.

The unhappy holidaymaker is thus suing for the cost of his holiday.

Thomson Cruises has however responded to the claims saying Eilat port authorities adhere to strict immigration policies and "Customers are therefore required to make an early start, which we warn them of in advance".



## Cruise Wholesale Consultants - Brisbane CBD

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### Strikes cause strife for cruises

CELEBRITY Cruises, Seabourn and Royal Caribbean have all altered the routes of vessels in Europe to avoid problems caused by widespread strikes.

The strike action in Greece, Portugal and Spain has seen *Celebrity Constellation* drop a call in Vigo yesterday, with the ship instead spending a day at sea; whilst *Seabourn Legend* called in Palma de Mallorca on 12 Nov, two days earlier than scheduled; and *Independence of the Seas* dropped a call in Lisbon yesterday, replacing it with a call in Lanzarote.

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PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710

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 and Guy Dundas

Email: [info@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:info@cruiseweekly.com.au)

*Cruise Weekly* is part of the **CRUISE**  
Travel Daily Group:

**Advertising and Marketing:** Christie-Lee Lachance, Lisa Martin and Magda Herdzik  
Email: [advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au)

**Business Manager:** Jenny Piper

Email: [accounts@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accounts@traveldaily.com.au)



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