

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 04 October 2012

Big ships prepare for biggest season

Next weekend marks the start of Australia's wave season, involving a record number of passengers, ships and ports of call.

CARNIVAL Australia will have 19 ships, carrying 325,000 passengers and making 310 calls to Australian ports, and Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd will host more than 200,000

passengers on four ships.

A record 14 Carnival Australia ships will be based in Australian waters for all or some of the 2012-13 season, with a further five ships visiting as part of their world cruising itineraries.

The program features the Australian debut of *Carnival Spirit*, maiden visits from Holland America's *Oosterdam* and *Seabourn Quest*, and the return of *Queen Mary 2*, which will undertake its inaugural circumnavigation of NZ.

With more ships cruising down under for longer periods, Carnival Australia CEO Ann Sherry said the greater number of international and local passengers was a 5% rise on the last cruise season.

"In all, this cruise season we'll carry more than triple the number of passengers who cruised with us eight years ago when Carnival Australia was first formed," Sherry said.

"We'll be visiting more Australian ports than ever before, with 27 different towns and cities set to welcome our ships over the coming months."

RCCL's two newcomers – *Voyager of the Seas* and *Celebrity Solstice* – will become the two largest and most modern cruise ships ever based in Australia.

Radiance of the Seas officially kicks off proceedings on Friday 12 Oct, as the first international cruise ship to arrive in Australia this season; closely followed by the revamped *Rhapsody of the Seas* on 14 Oct and *Celebrity Millennium* in Nov.

RCCL's Australia and New Zealand Commercial Director, Adam Armstrong, said *Voyager* and *Solstice* would "revolutionise the cruising landscape as we introduce a size and calibre of superliners previously only experienced overseas".

Armstrong said the passenger numbers were "remarkable" compared to the 35,000 guests who sailed with RCCL two seasons ago.

New P&O Webinars

NEXT week P&O Cruises will host two webinars on its latest winter 2014 holiday program.

The program will go on sale from 22 Oct and will include five new cruise itinerary categories: P&O Islands (7 to 10-night Pacific Is itineraries); P&O Explorer (cruises of 10 nights or more); P&O SeaAustralia (all domestic cruise holidays); P&O Seabreaks (short getaways); and P&O Mainevents (celebrations like Xmas).

The webinars will take place on 09 and 10 Oct between 8am-8.45am, **CLICK HERE** to register.

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ALL THE CRUISE NEWS

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

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Cruise News & Views



Brett Jardine - General Manager, ICCA

Local Season Underway

With October now recognised as the official start to our local cruise season it is timely to note what is happening in the months ahead.

We often refer to the October/April six month period as our "wave season".

With the 2012-13 wave season we will experience a 25% capacity increase so exciting times lie ahead for those looking to embark on a cruise close to home.

The first arrival of international ships being deployed 'down under' for our wave season will be Royal Caribbean's *Radiance of the Seas*, closely followed by *Rhapsody of the Seas* – both making return visits to our shores.

We then see the first of the international ships making their (much anticipated) maiden visits here, *Carnival Spirit*, Holland America's *Oosterdam*, Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* and *Celebrity Solstice* – all before Christmas!

In the New Year we will see further maiden visits from *Seabourn Quest* and Oceania's *Marina*.

No doubt plenty will be written about all of these fine vessels along with the myriad of others we will see here in the months ahead – so what does this mean for the consumer?

Historically our market has been driven by capacity so the more ships we have here the better!

Consumer awareness of cruising will continue to grow and all retail agents need to be well equipped to handle increased enquiry levels.

Get along to the next ICCA Cruise Training so cruise is top of mind for you and becomes part of every conversation you have with your clients.

ICCA training receives high praise

Agents are raving about the new and improved cruise education program, according to the International Cruise Council Australasia.

ATTENDANCE levels are up and ratings are high for ICCA's overhauled training program, as agents sign up in preparation for the summer cruise season.

Since the Feb appointment of training and development manager, Peter Kollar, the

Council has introduced eight new or revamped modules across Australia and New Zealand.

Kollar said 90% of participants had given the sessions the highest possible rating, with many cruise specialists complimenting the mix of port content and "visual stimulation", including nearly 1,000 new slides.

"We're trying to make the training as relevant as possible for agents who are dealing with more customer enquiries than ever as demand for cruise holidays surges," he said.

Kollar has also been impressed by the number of accredited agents returning to ICCA to update their training.

"For well-trained agents to take time out of their day and make further learning a priority takes a strong level of commitment and to see them walk away with high levels of satisfaction is a great result.

"We've definitely seen an increase in attendance levels over the past few months as word filters out about the new and improved modules."

The revamped modules include the mandatory 'Cruise Holidays Introduction' and 'Cruise Sales & Service', as well as 'ICCA Fleet Review', 'Europe River Cruising' and Cruise Geography modules for the Americas, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South Pacific, Asia and the Indian Ocean.

For details, see cruising.org.au.

Quark Expeditions in 2014

THIS week Quark Expeditions has launched its 2013/14 brochure featuring itineraries in the Arctic and Antarctic including voyages on the company's *Sea Spirit*, which will join the fleet in 2013.

MEANWHILE Quark is also offering a few juicy deals including 50% off second pax on all Antarctica 2012/13 voyages (50% off for travel industry employees plus one co-traveller, non-commissionable); as well as 20%-25% off suites for Antarctica 2013/14 until 30 Nov 2012.

Cruise Office travel credit

CRUISE Office is offering a \$1,000 Travel Credit per stateroom on selected American Queen Steamboat Company voyages in Oct, Nov and Dec 2012.

In addition, the company is offering a free upgrade to the Best Available Outside Stateroom with Veranda for Outside Stateroom reservations made between 03 Oct 2012, through 06 Oct 2012.

Nine-day packages are priced from US\$1,995pp including one-night luxury pre cruise hotel, shore excursions, wine and beer with dinner as well as complimentary soft drinks, bottled water, teas and specialty coffees.

Contact Cruise Office on (02) 9959-1300.

Adventurer to be renamed

FROM 11 Oct 2012 *Clipper Adventurer*, operated by Quark Expeditions and owned by International Shipping Partners, will be renamed *Sea Adventurer*.

As such, from 11 Oct all Quark Expeditions marketing material related to the 2013/14 season will relate to the ship as *Sea Adventurer*.

"This is a name change only and will in no way effect any element of service or amenity in relation to any Quark voyage," Quark said in a statement.

2013 China Brochure Out Now

YANGTZE IN FOCUS

The shores of China's Yangtze River present an ever changing mix of ancient and modern cultures as you cruise along one of the world's largest inland waterways.

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Prices are per person, based on low season upstream itinerary. Prices and availability correct as at 3 Oct 2012 and are subject to change. Tour details and booking conditions as per Wendy Wu Tours 2013/14 China brochure. Wendy Wu Tours Lic No 2TA4792. 8980K.

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Just one click away from keeping up to date with all the breaking news as it comes to hand...



First ever Trois-Rivières stop

FRED Olsen Cruise Lines' 1,350-guest *Balmoral* became the first-ever cruise ship to call at the Canadian port of Trois-Rivières at the end of last month.

Trois-Rivières is a city in the Mauricie region of Quebec, Canada, located on the Saint Lawrence River, about halfway between Montreal and Quebec City.

"Trois-Rivières was a really fantastic port of call and we received a great welcome from the local people," said Guy Sharp, *Balmoral's* hotel manager.

MEANWHILE the cruise line has announced that it will feature two new 'Grand Voyages' for 2014 onboard *Balmoral* and *Black Watch*.

Balmoral's 104-night Myanmar, Japan & Hawaii World Cruise will depart 05 Jan 2014 from Southampton and will include highlights such as maiden calls to Yangon in Myanmar and Hiroshima, Osaka and Yokohama in Japan.

Black Watch's 114-night 'Australia & South America World Cruise' will depart Southampton on 14 Jan 2014, and is Fred Olsen's longest ever cruise.

The voyage will include regional visits to Auckland, Sydney, Brisbane and Cairns.

See fredolsencruises.com for more details.

Crystal overnight in Laos

CRYSTAL Cruises will debut a new optional Crystal Overland Adventure during *Crystal Symphony's* 07 Mar 2013 Southeast Asia cruise.

The three-night Laos Overland Discovery sees guests depart the port of Laem Chabang for Bangkok for the first night, then fly to Laos for two nights to witness a Laotian Buddhist alms-giving ceremony; visit sacred temples, a local village, the last royal palace, Hmong night market, and the Buddha-filled Pak Ou Caves before rejoining *Symphony* in Ho Chi Minh City.

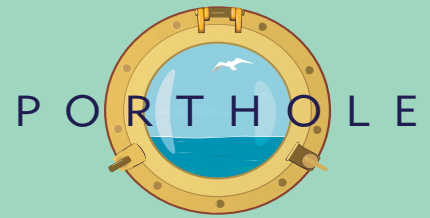
Prices for the adventure start from US\$5,026pp, see wiltrans.com.au.

Conroy steps down at RSSC

AFTER more than 20 years at the helm of Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Mark Conroy will step down as president effective Jan 2013.

Taking up the role will be Prestige Cruise Holdings' (parent company of RSSC) president Kunal Kamlani, whilst Conroy will help the with the transition as executive advisor.

"I am very much looking forward to my new advisory role and taking a step back from the daily grind and extensive travel associated with running an international cruise line," Conroy said.



WHY wouldn't you just cruise?

Most people who dream of winning the lottery imagine taking an extended holiday, or booking a cabin permanently on *QM2* or *The World*, but for one Brit, it was business as usual.

The 41-year old lotto winner, Adrian Bayford, scooped a £148m jackpot in August this year, and has since returned to work at his musical instrument store in Suffolk.

According to reports, Bayford with his wife and kids celebrated the win (which was the second largest lottery jackpot in British history) with a meal of takeaway pizzas.

The family has also reportedly splashed out on a modest Ford Kuga.

Bayford's wife however has said that she will quit her job as a healthcare assistant to spend more time with her kids.

WIN

A 7 NIGHT COSTA CRUISE FOR 2!



Over part of September and October, **Cruise Weekly** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a 7 night cruise, courtesy of **Costa Cruises**. This amazing prize is valued at over \$4,000 and includes a 7 night cruise on board *Costa Victoria* from Singapore to Malaysia and Thailand in an Ocean-view Premium twin cabin.

Costa Cruises has been operating for over 60 years and offers the best in Italian style, hospitality and cuisine. Relax in the sun, shop up a storm in designer fashion boutiques, or be treated to exclusive entertainment, including the world's most renowned Michael Jackson impersonator!

To win this dream holiday, send in the most creative response in 50 words or less to the question below.

Why do you want to win this dream holiday on Costa Cruises?

Email your answer to costa@cruiseweekly.com.au

Visit www.costacruises.com.au for more info.

[Click here for Terms and Conditions](#)

Royal Crown in Europe

BRITISH small ship company, Hebridean Island Cruises, will bring back its *Royal Crown* European River Cruises for the second year running in 2013.

"Following its successful inaugural year, Hebridean will offer cruises to the Main for the first time along with cruises to the Rhine and Danube," a statement from the company said.

Royal Crown will offer a choice of five itineraries next year, commencing on 08 Jun, including a seven-night Cruising the Rhine voyage taking in Basel, Breisach, Strasbourg Speyer, Kaub, Koblenz, Konigswinter, Cologne and Amsterdam; as well as a seven night Cruising the Rhine and the Main voyage which takes guests to Amsterdam, Düsseldorf Remagen, Frankfurt, Miltenberg, Würzburg Bamberg, and Nuremberg.

Other itineraries featured in the line-up include a seven-night Cruising the Danube journey from Nuremberg to Budapest; the seven-night Cruising the Danube Budapest roundtrip and the seven-night Cruising the Danube Budapest to Regensburg voyage.

Prices for the voyages start from £2,750pp (approx AU\$4,337pp).

As for the lady herself, *Royal Crown* can carry 79 guests and has a crew of 42.

Her interior is described as art deco and art nouveau inspired, and her facilities include The Restaurant, Lounge with bar, Front desk, Wellness and Fitness Centre, Beauty salon, Business Lounge and Library, Signature Shop, and the Lido deck with Lido bar.



Royal Crown

Purdy steps up at Celebrity

GREGORY Purdy has been appointed to the position of senior vice president of Operations for Celebrity Cruises.

Purdy comes to the role having previously served as Celebrity's vp of Marine Operations.

"Under Greg's leadership, Celebrity has been recognised for its development of innovative energy efficiencies and safety measures," said Celebrity ceo Michael Bayley.

"He and the Marine Operations team, together with the Hotel Operations team he'll also now lead, collaborated closely in successfully launching our stunning Solstice Class fleet and leading the ambitious 'Solsticizing' initiative, all of which have transformed the Celebrity brand," he added.

Getaway is closer than thought

NORWEGIAN *Getaway* is set to debut three months earlier than expected, with NCL announcing the ship will launch in late Jan 2014.

Following the ship's inaugural events in Europe, including a Transatlantic sailing from Rotterdam on 16 Jan (stopping in London), the 4,000-guest *Getaway* will arrive in Miami in late Jan 2014, from where she will feature a year-round seven-day East Caribbean itinerary.

When she arrives, *Getaway* will be the largest ship to home port year-round in Miami, and to accommodate, NCL has announced that it will modify the itineraries of its existing ships in Miami including *Epic*, which from 02 Feb 2014 will depart Miami on Sundays and sail a Western Caribbean itinerary.

Other changes will see *Norwegian Sun* depart Miami on her 10 and 11-day Southern Caribbean itineraries a day later than scheduled, on Mondays and Thursdays; whilst *Norwegian Pearl*, which had been scheduled to depart Miami on Sundays will be chartered from 19 Jan to 21 Mar 2014.

NCL also said that it will add four new seven-day Western Caribbean itineraries on 21 Mar, 28 Mar, 04 Apr and 11 Apr 2014.

Getaway is currently under construction at the Meyer Werft shipyard in Germany.

CroisiEurope in France

NEXT year CroisiEurope will launch a Canals of France program onboard the 24-guest *MS Jeanine* (set to be inaugurated in Strasbourg mid 2013), which will include seven-day barge cruising between Burgundy and the Saône Valley.

The company will offer five French barge itineraries: including The Doubs Valley, in the heart of a region of natural and architectural heritage; The most beautiful stops from the Doubs Valley to Burgundy; Changes of scenery and emotions from the Côte d'Or to Saône-et-Loire; France's most beautiful river banks between Burgundy and the Saône Valley; and The most beautiful landscapes of Alsace/Moselle from Strasbourg to Xouaxange.

Jeanine will launch in Apr next year, and measures 30m long by 5.05m wide.

For details see www.croisieurope.travel.

Concordia crew rewarded

THIS year's Seafarer of the Year Award has been bestowed on the crew of the *Costa Concordia* at the Lloyd's List Global Awards 2012.

The Lloyd's List Global Awards are bestowed by the maritime registry across 14 categories, and winners are selected by a panel of 10 international shipping experts.

"When the cruise ship *Costa Concordia* struck a reef off the island of Giglio on 13 January, international attention inevitably focused on the actions of the master," a statement from Lloyd's List said.

"But what was largely missed in the media storm that ensued were the genuine examples of bravery and professionalism displayed by members of the crew.

"There were 4,229 people on board the vessel at the time of the casualty and while the tragic loss of life caused by this regrettable incident will rightly be the subject of forensic investigations for some time to come, it should not be forgotten that without the skilled response of the majority of the crew, the loss of life could have been far higher," the statement added.

Cruise Weekly is Australia's favourite online cruising publication. In production since 2007, **Cruise Weekly** is published each Tuesday, with a further travel industry update each Thursday.

Cruise Weekly is free and is sent to subscribers via email as an Adobe Acrobat PDF document.

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

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