

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 18 October 2012

Agents urged to fill record capacity

Australian and New Zealand travel agents have a responsibility to meet the challenge and potential presented by this summer's wave season.

TERRI Bettany, cruise product specialist for Infinity Cruise, Flight Centre's flagship cruise holiday supplier, believes 2012-13 will be "an incredibly exciting time" for local agents, who need to rise to the occasion.

"I think this impending cruise season will be an important test for the industry in Australia as we have some of the newest ships headed down this way for the first time and it's a great vote of confidence in our growing market," she told *Cruise Weekly*.

"There's still so much potential for growth here that it's up to us as travel agents to ensure our passengers get the chance to cruise," she added.

Until she left her job at Clean Cruising last month, Bettany was the number-three most qualified cruise consultant in Australia, based on the amount of training and practical shipboard experience that she had undertaken with the International Cruise Council Australasia.

"I have been fortunate enough to experience the US market by working onboard with Princess in future cruise sales and I would definitely say that we are moving closer to the US market than ever before," Bettany said.

"I think the cruise lines are showing confidence in our market but they do need to realise that Australian passengers are now getting more cruise-savvy and have been educated by US and UK passengers on how to get the best deals, so we do need competitive deals."

Martine Hero, who replaces Bettany as Australia's number-three ICCA Master Cruise Consultant, and who also works at Clean Cruising, said it was unbelievable how rapidly the local cruise industry had grown.

"I am sure there is enough interest here in the new ships," Hero said.

"People who are new to cruising are now wanting more and love trying new ships, so I think we will get fantastic repeat cruise business in the years to come," she added.

For families, Hero recommends *Carnival Spirit* as best value for money with "great family cruise experiences on board", and Holland America ships for older clients who would prefer a more traditional style of cruising.

Bettany's pick of the local options this season is Royal Caribbean, and internationally, she believes MSC is the best deal for families.

For older couples, Bettany advises clients take advantage of the earlybird options with free or reduced airfares for European river cruises.

The Spirit of Australia

YESTERDAY after months of anticipation, *Carnival Spirit* sailed into Sydney Harbour to kick off her year-round home porting in the region.

Spirit's arrival follows many months of consumer and agent education by Carnival Cruise Lines, as well as a massive seven-million dollar spend on Aussifications to the ship, such as the Green Thunder waterslide and the Aussie backyard BBQ feature.

"We're convinced Australians will love the collaboration as much as we'll enjoy having them aboard," said Jennifer Vandekreeke, director Carnival Cruise Lines Australia & NZ.



Deltamarin goes to AVIC

FINNISH ship design and engineering company Deltamarin Oy will sell the majority of its shareholding to AVIC International Investments Limited.

According to Deltamarin, the sale will not affect its existing operations, with business set to continue as usual.

ALL THE CRUISE NEWS

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

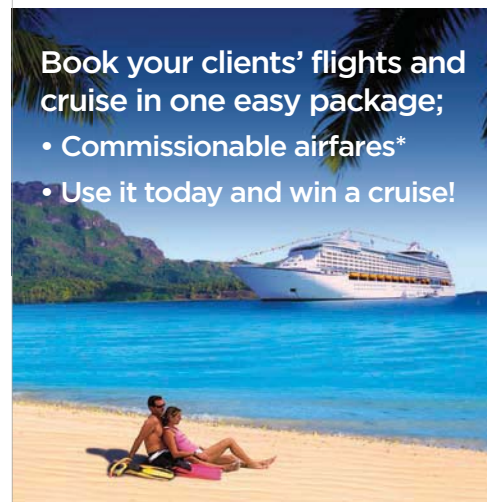


ChoiceAir

ChoiceAir
takes flight

Book your clients' flights and cruise in one easy package;

- Commissionable airfares*
- Use it today and win a cruise!



*Click here for more



GRAND YANGTZE - VICTORIA CRUISES

19 DAYS FULLY INCLUSIVE

Shanghai - Yangtze River Cruise
- Chengdu - Xian - Beijing

From **\$5,820** p.p twin share
ex Syd, Mel, Bne, Adl & Per. Departs 16 Apr 2013

- ✓ Return international economy airfares
- ✓ All meals and accommodation
- ✓ Transportation, entrance fees & sightseeing
- ✓ National Escort &/or English-speaking guides
- ✓ Visa fees for Australian passports
- ✓ Taxes, Fuel surcharge and tipping



Wendy Wu Tours

Just say 'Wu'

Call 1300 727 998

wendywutours.com.au

Price is per person, twin share ex Syd, Mel, Bne, Adl & Per. Airline fuel surcharge and tipping included and subject to change. Advertised prices based on Grand Yangtze departing 16 Apr 2013. Additional departures available. Seasonal surcharges apply. Prices and availability correct as at 8 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. 8998K.



Mixed results for Yangtze cruising

China's luxury cruising is on the rise, while older ships are suffering, but Australian offices report strong overall growth.

Victoria Cruises it features in the program," said managing director Helen Wong.

Sales have more than doubled on the 15-day Yangtze Wonders group itinerary, compared with the previous year, outselling some of the more traditional China tours.

"We are looking at a bright 2013," she said.

ACCORDING to an article in *China Daily*, Yangtze river cruise companies have experienced a fall in passengers, forcing fares to be slashed on some vessels.

Century Cruises and Yangtze Gold Cruises have delayed the maiden voyages of their new ships, moving this month's planned launches to the end of the year, in a move apparently aimed at "buffering market pressure".

According to Chongqing's tourism authority, passenger numbers in the first half of 2012 dropped to 446,000 – a 6% decrease year on year.

In the "luxury" segment, the total passenger volume was down 2.1%, despite an increase in the number of ships.

Over the past two years, 14 new five-star river vessels have started operating on the Yangtze, boosting the total number from 12 to 26.

Yangtze Gold Cruises is set to start building another seven luxury vessels at the end of this year, which experts warn may result in fierce price wars.

In the Australian market, Avalon Waterways has slightly decreased fares for next year's Yangtze itineraries.

Christian Schweitzer, Avalon Waterways' marketing manager Australasia, told *Cruise Weekly* the company's 2012 bookings had been "on par" with 2011, but forward bookings for 2013 were already up 70% on this time last year.

"We attribute this to working with a new cruise operator next year, Century Cruises, which allows us to offer new, modern ships," he said.

Meanwhile, Uniworld's 2013 pricing has slightly increased to take into account its two new ships, *Century Legend* and *Century Paragon*, and new cruise and land components, such as five-star hotels.

"Throughout 2012, we have experienced steady growth," said John Molinaro, Uniworld's general manager Australia.

Helen Wong's Tours has decided to maintain 2012-13 prices for its 2013-14 brochure, which will be released later this year.

"It has been an extremely good year for Helen Wong's Tours and the American-owned

MSC Preziosa milestone

THIS month MSC Cruises marked a milestone in the construction of its newest vessel, *MSC Preziosa*, with a traditional coin laying ceremony at the STX shipyard in Saint-Nazaire.

MSC took over the 140,000 tonne ship earlier in the year after the termination of the agreement with her original owner, renaming the ship *Preziosa* and announcing that she will become the fourth ship in the company's Fantasia class ships.

Live from Cunard's QM2!

This week's column is from on board *QM2* as the ICCA hosts the 2012 Masters Conference.

We are currently somewhere in the north-Atlantic ocean but looking out the window I can't be 100% sure!

Being surrounded by nothing but ocean is an element of cruising that certainly inspires me (and no doubt the thousands of others that undertake this journey each year).

Weather conditions can be somewhat unpredictable for a trans-Atlantic crossing but so far we have only had to experience "moderate" swells and *QM2* is making sure our journey is as smooth as possible – as she was designed to do!

We are undertaking a west-bound crossing from Southampton to New York and what a joy it is to be able to wind your clock back an hour each night when getting into bed – I always thought 24 hours in a day were just not enough and now I know I am right!

A trans-Atlantic crossing on *QM2* really is the ultimate traditional ocean cruise experience.

There are multiple formal nights and a myriad of activities to keep even the most restless of souls entertained.

There is all the time in the world to experience everything this grand vessel has to offer – including the very British tradition of tea and scones mid-afternoon which are very difficult to refuse!

Our Masters group has also managed to squeeze in a 3-hour conference session each morning and as expected our legendary facilitator Scott Koepf has kept all participants focused on the primary reason for being here – to learn what it takes to become a standout cruise specialist travel consultant.

AUSTRALIA'S

Premiership

VOYAGER OF THE SEAS

Travel Agent Exclusive!

Win a cruise worth \$5500

Ends Fri 26 Oct

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

Royal Caribbean INTERNATIONAL

SAVE \$500 PER PERSON
ON 2013 GROUPS DEPARTURES



ONE IN TEN PASSENGERS TRAVELS FREE

Contact groups@globusfamily.com.au or phone 1300 330 334

Click Here to download groups flyer

OFFER EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 31

AVALON WATERWAYS

Cruising for Excellence winners

MELANIE Banyard of Champagne Travel, WA, has won a 14-night Azamara Club Cruises voyage after having completed her Cruising for Excellence online training.

The cruise was dished out as part of a prize pool of eight voyages from Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises, for agents who completed the new Cruising for Excellence training program modules and achieved 'Admiral' status.

Second prize which included four one-night *Celebrity Solstice* voyages went to: Jan Rattray of Jetset Brandon Park; Susan Doyle of Travel & Cruise Castlemaine; Matthew Chisholm of Chisholm Turner Travel Associates; and Kelly Fitzgerald of Warkworth Travel, NZ.

Third prize of three one-night cruises on *Voyager of the Seas* went to: Lauren Wall of Seven Oceans Cruising; Christine Cartes of Flight Centre; and Elizabeth Johns of Pasadena Travel.

SA welcomes Pearl

P&O'S announcement that it will offer an entirely South Australian voyage onboard *Pacific Pearl* next year (**CW Tue**) has been lauded by the SA Minister for Tourism, Gail Gago, who said it was "great news for the state".

"This is great news for our regional economies, which will benefit from the visitor expenditure, as well as the wider indirect expenditure such cruise ship visits generate," Gago said.

"This cruise by *Pacific Pearl* is yet another stepping stone on our way to ensuring cruising becomes a \$17 million industry for South Australia by 2020," she added.

RCL introduces ChoiceAir

THIS week Royal Caribbean launched its ChoiceAir program, designed to allow agents to book flights and cruises at the same time.

The ChoiceAir online tool can be used to book flights for cruises on Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises.

The tool can be accessed by agents 24-hours a day via Royal Caribbean's Cruising Power, and individualises flights to individual clients needs, meaning that it only shows flight options which connect with the cruise's embarkation and disembarkation times, and which adhere to ticketing time limits and fare rules.

In addition, the tool lets guests choose their preferred flight class, links air reservation with cruise reservation, and provides an option to add airport to seaport transfers.

In terms of agents, international airfares booked through ChoiceAir are commissionable.

"Royal Caribbean's Air/Sea team are on hand able to assist before, during and after the cruise," RCL said in a statement.

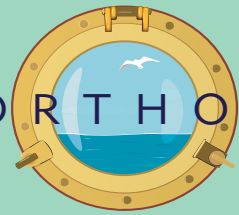
"ChoiceAir allows Royal Caribbean to monitor guests' travel to the ship, and step in to help should they encounter any difficulties in transit.

"Should the guest miss the ship's departure, Royal Caribbean can also work with airline partners to get them to the next port-of-call as quickly and conveniently as possible," the statement added.

MEANWHILE, to mark the launch RCL is giving agents the chance to win a cruise for two to Hawaii sailing 18 nights onboard *Rhapsody of the Seas*.

To be in the running, agents need to make five new bookings using ChoiceAir, and then send an email listing each booking's reference, and then explain in 25 words or less why they will be using ChoiceAir when booking cruises.

See www.royalcaribbean.com.au/choiceair.



P O R T H O L E

HORROR on the high seas!

Fans of scary movies are all a twitter this week with the news that *Carnival Victory* will be turned into a floating house of horrors next October for a specially chartered Ship of Fear voyage in the Caribbean.

Billed as a "Bloody Good Time" the frightful five-night voyage will feature classic horror movie reunions with the genre's biggest directors and actors, as well as nightly screenings of horror classics under the stars, Q&A discussions with cast members and film makers, daily horror panels, a 24-hour screening room, and a special Halloween Zombie Prom and Costume Contest.

The ship will also boast a Monster Museum, a special Screech on the Beach Halloween event on Half Moon Cay, Horror themed cocktail hours and activities, as well as live music from the likes of Alice Cooper.

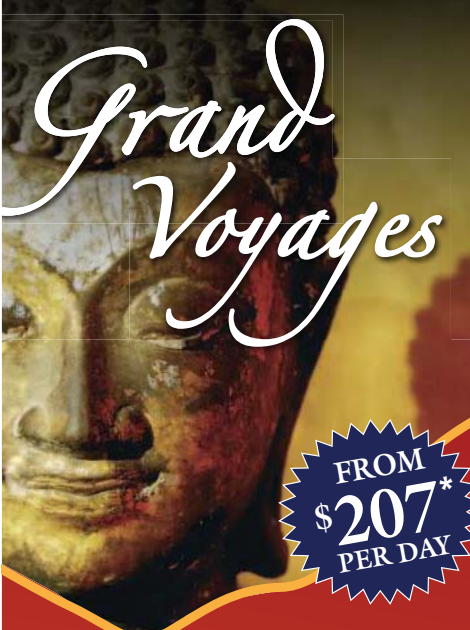
Oceania announces 2013-14

NEXT year Oceania Cruises will send *Riviera* for her second northern hemisphere winter season in the Caribbean, with 13 voyages scheduled, including a range of 10-day cruises in both the Eastern and Western Caribbean, as well as a new 14-day voyage Caribbean Sand & Sea (departing 04 Mar 2014) which will sail to the Southern Caribbean, visiting islands such as Aruba, Curacao and Kralendijk and Bonaire.

Meanwhile the 2013-14 northern hemisphere winter line-up will see *Marina* start the season with a 20-day South American Holiday itinerary departing from Rio de Janeiro on 08 Dec 2013 and concluding in regional waters.

Once here, *Marina* will feature a series of 10- to 18-day South Pacific itineraries visiting ports in Tahiti, Australia, NZ and the Coral Sea.

The season will also see *Nautica* return to Africa and Asia with six itineraries, three of which will measure 16 and 21 days and the remaining which will measure 30 or 35 days; whilst *Regatta* will commence her winter 2013 schedule with a series of Panama Canal and South American sailings ending up in Peru, where she will sail a series of South American cruises, incl a new Mystical Andes & Majestic Fjords itinerary beginning 03 Feb 2014.



Grand Voyages

FROM \$207* PER DAY

TRADE WINDS

HOLY LANDS

OCEANS & MONUMENTS

TSARS & EMPIRES

MEDITERRANEAN MARVELS

SWAN HELLENIC DISCOVERY CRUISING

*BASED ON 'GRAND TRADE WINDS' 27 FEBRUARY 2013 SAILING TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 18 October 2012

Advertise with us

• Cost Effective • Targeted • Easy

For details call us today:
1300 799 220

CRUISE
WEEKLY

Avalon adds Mississippi

THE iconic Mississippi River has been added to Avalon Waterways growing list of cruise destinations, with the company adding two itineraries onboard the *American Queen* to its 2013 line-up.

The addition marks the first time that Avalon has offered North American itineraries, with the duo running between Mar and Dec 2013.

The itineraries include a 12-day 'America's Heartland: From Music City to the Big City' voyage from Nashville to New Orleans via Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana; as well as an 11-day 'Fall Foliage Spectacular: From the Windy City to the Twin Cities' seasonal cruise from Chicago to St Paul, via Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Iowa and Minnesota.

See www.globusfamily.com.au.

Spend Australia Day with Cook

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises' popular *MV Sydney 2000* will give guests the best position for the Australia Day 2013 Awesome Forces aerial display, 175th Australia Day Regatta and Ferrython, and will offer three lunch packages on her Sky deck, Club deck and Show deck.

The Sky Deck lunch cruise, priced from \$149 (adult) and \$89 (child), includes four courses and an open bar of premium wines, beers, spirits and soft drinks.

Meanwhile the Club and Show Deck Australia Day lunch cruises will include an Aussie buffet, with the former also offering house wines, beers and soft drinks in its \$135 (adult) and \$79 (child) price tag, whilst the latter includes a welcome drink and is priced at \$110 (adult) and \$49 (child).

See www.captaincook.com.au.

Oosterdam 25% increase

THE arrival of Holland America Line's *ms Oosterdam* for her inaugural season in the Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific region will mean a 25% increase in HAL's capacity compared to previous seasons.

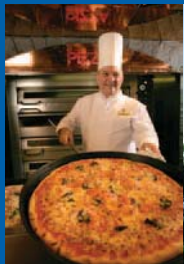
Oosterdam will join *Volendam* in regional waters on 24 Oct, marking the first time that HAL has had two ships sailing in the region simultaneously.

Speaking in the lead-up to *Oosterdam's* arrival Tony Archbold, Holland America Line's Sydney-based Director of Sales said "Since opening our dedicated Australian sales office last August, the number of Australians sailing with us in the South Pacific and in overseas destinations has grown impressively".

See www.hollandamerica.com.au.

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](#)

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.

Sign up for a free subscription at www.cruiseweekly.com.au.

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

Cruise Weekly is part of the

CRUISE
WEEKLY

Travel
Daily TV

Travel
Daily
First with the news

Pharmacy
DAILY

Advertising and Marketing: Christie-Lee Lachance, Lisa Martin and Magda Herdzik
Email: advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper

Email: accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Cruise Weekly is a publication of **Cruise Weekly Pty Ltd**. All content fully protected by copyright. Please obtain written permission to reproduce any material. While every care has been taken in the preparation of **Cruise Weekly** no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions. Information is published in good faith to stimulate independent investigation of the matters canvassed. Responsibility for editorial comment is taken by Bruce Piper.