

Celebrity breaks Aus sales records

The Australian office of Celebrity Cruises is celebrating its most successful week and expects to break more records this month.

A SERIES of campaigns by the brand's local office has led to a spike in bookings for *Celebrity Solstice*, which is predicted to continue throughout this month.

According to commercial director, Adam Armstrong, last week was the best ever for Celebrity Cruises in Australia, with *Solstice* leading the charge.

"As a relatively new brand to Australians, we're delighted that both agents and the cruising public have embraced *Celebrity Solstice*," he said.

"We actually expect to break the record again over the next two weeks."

After the success of National Cruise Week earlier this month, Celebrity is now offering a local seven-day sale on local *Solstice* cruises, which will be followed by a sale on all international sailings next week.

Venetian cruise protests

PROTESTERS at the port of Venice delayed the departure of three cruise ships, *Costa Fascinosa, MSC Opera* and *MSC Musica*, last Sunday, with a protest against the increasing number of large ships which are coming into the city.

The aptly named group No Big Ships, took 70 small boats into the water during the protest, with the *Fascinosa, Opera* and *Musica* having to delay their departure due to "safety concerns" posed by the protesters vessels.

ALL THE CRUISE NEWS

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

From this Sunday, passengers who book by 29 Sep on any Celebrity Cruises sailing worldwide – including Europe, the Caribbean, Alaska, Asia and Australasia – will receive up to US\$300 onboard credit and half-price deposits.

There are also free flights available on selected New Zealand and Asia sailings.

The international sale allows Australian and New Zealand clients the opportunity to sail on the line's newest ship, *Celebrity Reflection*, which left the Meyer Werft shipyard in Papenburg, Germany this week.

The fifth and final ship from the acclaimed Solstice Class, *Reflection* is a slightly larger sister to *Solstice*.

When *Solstice* arrives in Sydney for the first time in Dec, it will be the newest and most modern cruise ship ever to be based in Australasia.

For details, see www.celebritycruises.com.au.

Maxeine to explore Cosmos



CONGRATLATIONS to the winner of *CW's* Globus Celebrity Photo competition, Maxeine McKeon of Harvey World Travel Erina Group. Maxeine took home the prize for a photo of herself and the iconic American astronaut Buzz

Aldrin who was the second man to walk on the moon and the lunar module pilot of Apollo 11. "It's not every day you meet someone that

has walked on the moon who is an American icon," said Christian Schweitzer, Globus family of brands marketing manager.

"Buzz has experienced the Cosmos and now Maxeine will as well, winning the Route 66 tour next year," he added.

Cruiseco to launch in UK

AUSSIE cruise company, Cruiseco, is set to launch in the UK, with former Royal Caribbean head of sales Mark Walter to lead the operation.

"Cruiseco will bring a completely fresh approach to the UK cruise market by reinvigorating independent agents and offering cruise lines new routes of distribution," Cruiseco founder Steve Lloyd told media.

"Our ABTA and ATOL applications are well advanced, commercial terms have been agreed with a good base of cruise lines and we've paid a significant sum for www.cruising.co.uk to sit alongside the .com.au site," he added.











Singapore Conference

This week's column is "live from Singapore" where I have been attending the Cruise Shipping Asia-Pacific Conference.

As the event has been held within the new Marina Bay Cruise Terminal it makes sense to comment on this amazing development that has been constructed by the Singapore Government at a cost in excess of \$\$350 million.

In case you haven't looked lately the Singapore dollar is close to parity with the Australian dollar so this is a hefty long term investment that will likely take many years to show a return.

So what's a lousy \$350 million when you can now showcase one of the most spectacular cruise terminals ever to be built!

Let there be no mistake, this is one very impressive structure that is sure to rate very highly with future cruise passengers embarking and disembarking in this great city.

So what about the conference?

With Asia on our immediate doorstep as a cruise destination, both regions will play a joint role in the future growth of our industry.

Already we are seeing many itineraries that combine Australia and Asia as part of world cruises, repositioning cruises and even round trip voyages so it is important that both regions collaborate in many areas.

Travel Agent education and understanding of cruise is a long way behind Australia and New Zealand but based on the sheer size of the population there is every chance that growth out of this region as a source market, will be a lot faster than what we have seen over the last five years.

Only time will tell if the Asian market is prepared to embrace the style of cruise product on offer today, or will cruise lines need to make wholesale product changes in order to meet the cultural differences found throughout Asia?

CIC rejects claims of foreclosure

Despite the arrest of *Athena* in Europe this week, the Australian season is expected to operate as scheduled.

THREE Classic International Cruises ships were allegedly detained on the weekend over unpaid fuel bills and crew wages, but the company insists the financial situation will soon be resolved.

CIC's Australian spokesperson confirmed to *Cruise Weekly* today that the 550-passenger *Athena* would return to Perth in December for its four-month season.

The statement from the cruise line said: "Although *Athena* was arrested last weekend for no payment of a fuel account, which the owners and bank are solving, reports that *Athena's* season in Australia this summer will not go ahead are incorrect.

"CIC will be operating the full program of itineraries as scheduled, commencing with the line voyage to Australia departing 12 November 2012 from Marseille."

CIC said that *Athena* is "being prepared for scheduled dry docking in Marseille". According to French newspaper 'La

NCL New York Rockettes

MEMBERS of the iconic New York precision dance company, the Rockettes, have been named as the Godmothers of Norwegian Cruise Lines' *Norwegian Breakaway*.

"Norwegian Breakaway is being designed as New York's ship and we want everyone to know that this is the "must-sail" cruise ship from New York in 2013 and beyond," said Kevin Sheehan, Norwegian Cruise Line's chief executive officer.

"I strongly believe that the Rockettes, one of the most beloved and recognizable New York icons, are the perfect choice to serve as the ship's Godmothers," Sheehan added.

Breakaway will be christened in New York on 08 May 2013, becoming the largest vessel to home port from New York year round.

As part of the partnership, two of the Rockettes will travel on the vessel's first six cruises, and then on the first cruise of every month.

Whilst onboard, the Rockettes will offer special fitness classes, photo opportunities, meet and greet speaker series and more.

The Rockettes also will be showcased onboard with a historical retrospective in the ship's library and featured beverages. Provence', *Athena* and CIC's *Princess Danae* were held in the Port of Marseilles on Monday, by order of court, over the unpaid bills.

Princess Danae was also detained three weeks ago in Dublin due to alleged nonpayment of 120,000 euros in bunker fees, but was later released.

Also allegedly arrested, in Kotor, Montenegro, is CIC's *Arion*, rated in the '2013 Berlitz Complete Guide to Cruising' as the world's worst performing small ship.

Other media reports claim that World Cruises Agency, which trades as Classic International Cruises, clarified that Portugese bank Montepio had decided to cease funding the ships for the rest of the season.

Athena cruises remain for sale on the CIC website.

The ship is due to arrive in Australia on 18 December to commence a four-month season of sailings from Fremantle and Adelaide before returning to Europe in April 2013.



Discover the spirit of yacht cruising





APT travel Expos

NEXT month APT has organised to run a series of expos which canvass its Asia, Australian Outback, Africa, Canada-Alaska, Russia cruising and rail journeys, and Europe river cruising products.

The expos will be held in: Perth 04 Oct at the Hyatt Perth; Sydney, 09 Oct (Mercure Central); Brisbane, 11 Oct (Suncorp Stadium); and Melbourne, 15 Oct (Rendezvous Hotel).

Attendance at the expo is free of charge, however registration is required.

Call 1300 656 985 or see

www.aptouring.com.au/expo for details.

Costa Asia appointment

COSTA Cruises has appointed its chairman Pier Luigi Foschi, as the new chairman and chief executive officer of the new Carnival Asia unit.

In his new role, Foschi will be responsible for establishing Carnival Corporation & plc's new corporate offices in Singapore and providing guidance and assistance to the organisation's various operating units in pursuing their Asian cruise strategies.

NCW in Wagga Wagga

THE team from Harvey World Travel in Wagga

Wagga (pictured right) got into the spirit of National Cruise Week last week, decking themselves out in eye catching yellow Royal Caribbean t-shirts and creating a visually arresting window display.



The Captain Ventures again

THIS summer season will see the return of Captain Cook Cruises popular Venture Cruise on Sydney Harbour.

Departing every Mon, Wed and Fri from Pier 26 Aquarium Wharf at 1.30pm, between 01 Nov 2012 and 31 Mar 2013, the three-and-ahalf hour cruise takes place onboard the company's sailing catamaran, *Aussie Venture*, and includes a picnic lunch, chart topping music, and a swim at one of Sydney's most secluded beaches, whilst beverages can be purchased from the bar onboard.

To celebrate the return, Captain Cook is offering a launch special price of \$55pp. See www.captaincook.com.au.

McGroy goes to Windstar

ALAN McGroy has been appointed as the new vp of Marine Hotel Operations at Windstar Cruises.

An industry veteran of over 20 years McGroy comes to the new role having most recently served as product operations manager for Royal Caribbean UK, Ireland and Europe.

Red Sea Odyssey with MSC

MSC Cruises has created a 17-night fly/cruise Red Sea Odyssey which combines flights with two Eastern Mediterranean voyages.

Departing Australia on 25 Oct 2012, the package includes return flights, with a sevennight roundtrip cruise from Venice aboard *MSC Armonia* calling at Ancona, Corfu, Santorini, Piraeus, Cefalonia, and Kotor; followed by another roundtrip Venice cruise onboard *Armonia* calling at Ancona and Marmaris before sailing through the Suez Canal to Sharm el Sheikh.

The odyssey is priced from \$3,835pp/ts, see www.msccruises.com.au.





SHE should take her tastebuds on a cruise! A 65-year old British woman, June Blythe, has had her sense of smell and taste restored via surgery after 40 years.

Blythe, an avid cook, lost the two senses after suffering chronic rhinosinusitis in 1975.

Having no sense of smell did not however stop her from becoming an aromatherapist, whilst having no sense of taste did not stop her from continuing on with her love of cooking- for which she won many competitions.

"I had to rely on memories to remember how things smelled and tasted," she said.

Blythe underwent the surgery earlier in the year and said it wasn't until ten days after the operation when she was making scones that she realised that she could smell the lemon she was zesting- imagine how she'd go in Salt grill by Luke Mangan!

WIN A \$100 PREPAID VISA CARD!



This week *Cruise Weekly* has teamed up with **inPlace Recruitment** to celebrate the launch of their new travel recruitment website, by giving two readers the chance to win a \$100 prepaid Visa card to spend online or in a store of their choice!

For your chance to win, be the first person to send in the correct answer to the daily question below.

Which organisation do inPlace Recruitment support by sponsoring Samson?

Email your answer to inPlacecomp@cruiseweekly.com.au Hint! Visit www.inplacerecruitment.com.au





the breaking news as it comes Thursday 20 September 2012

Hurtigruten extension

HURTIGRUTEN is capitalising on the success of its No Single Supplement offer by extending the deal through the Norwegian winter season, until 27 Apr 2013.

The deal is applicable on selected departures between Oct 2012 to Apr 2013 of its 12-day Classic Round Voyage, 11-day Norwegian Discovery Voyage, 7-day Classic Voyage North and 6-day Classic Voyage South.

For more details visit Discover the World at www.discovertheworld.com.au.

TRADE WINDS

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MEDITERRANEAN MARVELS

*BASED ON 'GRAND TRADE WINDS' 27 FEBRUARY 2013 SAILING TERMS <u>& CONDITIONS APPLY</u>

Guaranteed departures

EVERGREEN Tours has announced that 95% of its European 2013 coach tours and river cruises are now guaranteed.

"Having 95% of all our tours and cruises guaranteed right now means that agents can book their clients today for Europe 2013 knowing that the bookings are secured and they don't have to worry about reworking the booking ever again," said Angus Crichton, Evergreen Tours gm.

"This has been achieved due to Evergreen Tours linking its Europe coach tours with its popular river cruising program," he added.

Meanwhile, Crichton also said that agents can now add the \$500 earlybird Europe discount (which has been out for over a month) to the \$500pp discount with the new 2013 Europe airfare earlybirds and guaranteed tours.

The Evergreen European 2013 touring brochure is available at TIFS or email expert@evergreentours.com

Sumatra savings with Zegrahm

THE Small Ship Adventure Company is offering \$500 savings plus cabin upgrades for new bookings on Zegrahm Expeditions' 2013 18-day Circumnavigation of Sumatra.

Departing on 03 Jan, voyage highlights include visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Malacca, observing orangutans at Gunung Leuser National Park, exploring Ujung Kulon National Park and cruising by the still-active Krakatoa volcano. See www.smallshipadventure.com for details.

Crystal soothes the soul

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to hand...

HEALTH conscious holidaymakers and super stressed city-dwellers will be interested in Crystal Cruises latest announcement, that it will host a Mind, Body & Spirit themed Australian voyage onboard Crystal Symphony.

Departing 05 Jan 2013 from Melbourne to Brisbane the voyage features health and wellness expert leading complimentary classes and seminars.

Experts set to motivate and educate guests include ultra-runner, adventure racer, and Seven Summits mountaineer Marshall Ulrich; as well as the founder of the Tai Chi Institute, Dr. Martin Lee, teaching classes in the ancient discipline; and yoga instructor Lisa Goodwin, leading various sessions.

The voyage is priced from US\$2,995pp/ts (for bookings made by 31 Oct 2012) and spends two days in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart and Sydney.

See www.wiltrans.com.au for more voyage details.

Vicariously enjoy cupcake

ROYAL Caribbean is inviting armchair cruisers to experience "the sweetness of fresh baked cupcakes at the Cupcake Cupboard" via its newest online video offering titled A Sweet Idea: Cupcake Cupboard on Royal Caribbean Delights.

CLICK HERE to view.



Call 1300 788 328 or visit helenwongstours.com

Conditions: Prices are per person twin share ex. SYD, MEL, BNE, ADL, PER & includes taxes and fuel surcharges, valid for departures from Oct12 – Jun13, seasonal surcharge apply. Please check with Helen Wong's Tours for exact departure dates. Prices & taxes are current at time of brochure printing 15 Sep 11, and are subject to availability and change without notice at time of booking. All other conditions as per Helen Wong's Tours current brochure range. 3146 Lic.No.2744103

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