



Carnival doubles Aussie presence

In addition to the *Carnival Spirit*, Carnival Cruises will deploy a second ship in Australian waters for 2014/15.

OVERWHELMING demand has been cited as the reason for this morning's announcement that the company will send its *Carnival Legend* liner to operate from Sydney from Sep next year (**CW** breaking news).

Legend is planned to arrive in Sydney on 24 Sep 2014 to operate a series of 8-12 night cruises to New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Fiji on a seasonal basis, with bookings set to open from next month.

The 88,500 tonne vessel is a sister ship to the *Carnival Spirit*, which currently operates year-round to New Zealand and the South Pacific ex Sydney, and offers capacity for 2,680 guests across 1,062 staterooms.

Carnival Cruise Lines Australia and New Zealand director Jennifer Vandekreeke expressed her excitement about the addition of the vessel to Australian waters.

"The tens of thousands of Aussies who have already travelled on *Carnival Spirit* tell us they

love the quality of our dining, entertainment, activities on offer for families and couples, comfort of our staterooms, and of course the exceptional service provided by our crew – and we can now offer this to even more guests with the arrival of *Carnival Legend*".

Prior to her arrival, a drydock refurbishment will be carried out on the ship to "ensure she's perfectly suited for the tastes of the Aussie market," Vandekreeke added.

The vessel has been committed to at least two seasons sailing from Sydney, returning in 2015 after the Northern summer.

Since *Carnival Spirit* arrived in Sydney last year, more than 100,000 passengers have booked cruises, with approx 60% of these first-time cruises, Carnival said.

More information on itineraries, departure dates and ports visited will be revealed by Carnival towards the end of this month.

Norway Solstice extension

HURTIGRUTEN has extended the book-by date for its Sensational Norway Summer Solstice Fares until 31 May, bookable in Australia through Discover the World Cruising.

The special fares are valid for selected sailings on four voyages departing until 31 Jul, with cabins for a 6-night Classic Voyage South priced from \$1376ppts.

Video gaming with Celebrity

A **NEW** partnership with Microsoft will see the largest Xbox experience at sea developed aboard Celebrity Cruises' vessels, according to an announcement from the company today.

Through the alliance, Xbox themed activities will be developed across the company's Fun Factory and X-Club onboard kids clubs, with age-appropriate games & themed nights held.

Events themed around sports, racing and adventure will be run to entertain children, with adults also able to take part in events such as Zumba parties and sports tournaments.

Celebrity Constellation has become the first ship to have the new Xbox experience installed, with the entire fleet to be fitted by the end of the year.

HAL breaks through 1m likes

HOLLAND America Line has overnight passed one million likes on its Facebook page.

HAL said its social media presence was an important way to connect with its customers, with latest news, cruise advice, competitions and photo sharing among the features offered.

"Our social community is very engaged and we look forward to continuing to grow our fan base through new initiatives and interesting content," Holland America Line's executive vp of sales and marketing Richard Meadows said.

Variety on the Panama Canal

DISCOVER The World Cruising has launched a new Central America itinerary, with an eight-day Treasures of Costa Rica and the Panama Canal Voyage, to be operated by Variety Cruises' new mega-yacht *Variety Voyager*.

The itinerary begins in Los Seunos in Costa Rica and explores a number of nature reserves and national parks before transiting the Canal.

Shore excursions available on the voyage include mountain biking, zip lining, scenic trams, white-water rafting and much more.

Discounted cabin prices are available in celebration of the launch, with savings of up to \$2,230 per couple on offer if booked by 31 Jul.

For more information, phone 1800 623 267.

Four pages of cruisy news

Today's trade issue of **CW** features four pages of all the latest cruise information.

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Costa's first China world voyage

In a first for the industry, a round-the-world cruise ex-Shanghai is set to debut in March 2014 on *Costa Atlantica*.

CARNIVAL Corporation has underlined its commitment to the Chinese market with the launch of an 83-day world cruise roundtrip from the mainland, excluding the South Pacific.

In partnership with Shanghai Airlines Tours, Costa Cruises last night announced the venture as "a pivot towards China" for the Italian company.

"China's first around-the-world cruise is a perfect example of this and is the lynchpin of our Asia strategy over the next couple of years," said Pier Luigi Foschi, chairman and ceo of Carnival Corporation Asia and chairman of the board of Costa Crociere.

Foschi said the product "heralds a new milestone" in China's cruise industry, which Costa pioneered with the international cruises homeported in Shanghai since 2006.

Scheduled to depart Shanghai Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal on 22 Mar 2014, the inaugural world voyage covers 23 destinations in 16 countries.

The 2,680-pax *Costa Atlantica* will sail to Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Oman, Egypt, Greece, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, the US, Caribbean and Mexico,

including a transit of the Panama Canal, before returning to Shanghai on 13 Jun 2014.

The introduction of *Costa Atlantica* to the China market this year, before the world cruise, was a key element to the line's Asia strategy, Costa said.

Gianni Onorato, president of Costa Cruises, expressed his gratitude for the support from local government, tourism boards and Chinese tourism partners.

"China remains one of Costa's key markets and today's partnership with SAT and our world cruise announcement highlights our commitment to the region."

See www.costacruisesasia.com.

Springtime Kimberley specials

CORAL Princess Cruises has released a number of Spring Specials on selected Kimberley expeditions operating in Aug & Sep, sailing aboard the 72-pax *Oceanic Discoverer*.

Discounts of 15% per person are available, with an additional 10% saving for Coral Princess' Xplorers Club loyalty members.

Solo traveller supplements have been waived for the eligible departures, creating potential savings of \$4,895 per person.

Spring Specials are valid for the 26 Aug, 06 Sep and 16 Sep departures of the 10-night Kimberley Explorer voyage, now priced from \$7,471.50ppts - phone 1800 079 545.

Suite ship Expression launches

TRAVEL writer Patricia Schultz has christened *Avalon Expression* - the newest Suite Ship to join the Avalon Waterways fleet.

Held in the German town of Koblenz, the author of *1000 Places to See Before You Die* took the wraps off the 83-cabin vessel, which features two decks of all-suite accommodation.

"May you sail through waters calm and serene, and explore Europe's beautiful corners and historic sites," Schultz said at the launch.

Expression is the second Suite Ship concept launched this year after *Artistry II* was unveiled in the Netherlands last month.

New Orion Expedition tour

A NEW 14-night New Zealand & Sub Antarctic Exploration itinerary has been launched by Orion Expedition Cruises, with the first round trip leaving Dunedin on 03 Jan next year.

The cruise visits a number of scenic highlights of New Zealand including Milford Sound and the lesser known Doubtful Sound and Dusky Sound, before heading for Campbell Island.

Special fares have been released to mark the debut of the new voyage, with 15% discounts plus \$1000 Air & Land credit available.

Lead-in fares for cabins start at \$11,030ppts for a B-Stateroom category - ph 1300 361 012.

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Celebrity X Cruises

Family suites on Symphony

CRYSTAL Cruises will next month take the wraps off nine new adjoining staterooms fitted into its *Crystal Symphony* vessel, in a move aimed at catering to growing family markets.

The new family rooms come following a refitting of 18 Verandah and Deluxe Outside Staterooms, with many of the suites also offering sofa-beds.

The company said it had seen a 20% growth in the family cruise market in 2012, with more families already booked to cruise in 2013 than in the entirety of last year.

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Brett Jardine - General Manager



Cruise News & Views...

Beyond the Cruise

WIDELY reported in global trade media circles are behind the scenes activities that cruise lines get involved with. In my very biased view, not enough of this is reported in mainstream media so my challenge to you is to share this knowledge via your social media network so we can all help to communicate the positive impact the cruise industry has across the globe - Feel free to copy and paste!

Cancer: In February this year, Holland America Line launched "On Deck for a Cause" in honour of World Cancer Day.

This is a shipboard giving program that will benefit six international cancer organisations located in the United States, Canada, Australia, Netherlands, Germany and the UK.

There wouldn't be too many of us that haven't been touched by cancer through a close friend or relative so awareness of this initiative is worthy.

Africa: As part of Norwegian Cruise Lines launch overnight of *Norwegian Breakaway*, a new charity was announced.

"Just a Drop" is an initiative that will collect donations to help bring clean water to a village in Africa.

Lifeline: Closer to home, P&O Cruises recently donated 600 teak deck chairs and tables to Lifeline, a mental health support charity, demonstrating how it is incorporating charitable contributions into its everyday processes.

Royalty: What a coup for Princess Cruises who recently announced Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge as the Godmother of *Royal Princess*, which is due to be christened next month. Clearly it makes a lot of sense having a Princess as a *Princess* Godmother but jokes aside, this gorgeous high profile royal will deliver global attention to cruising as a whole.

For many more stories like these, visit www.cruiseforward.org where Cruise Lines around the world have joined together to develop a platform for sharing stories about the industry.

Cruise crime reporting guides

CLIA is set to work with its member cruise lines to implement a uniform set of procedures for the reporting of crime affecting cruise pax.

The procedures were recently adopted by the International Maritime Organisation's legal committee and seeks to set int'l standards for crime reporting, cooperation between governments, evidence preservation and assistance for victims.

Among the set policies include a requirement for cruise ships to operate video surveillance systems and to train crew members in crime prevention, detection and reporting.

Viking to consolidate markets

AUSTRALIA remains one of four major global markets in which Viking River Cruises will promote its river cruise product, with the operator announcing it would no longer market its range of cruises in Germany.

The move comes despite rapid fleet growth this year, christening ten new boats in one day.

The cruise operator's senior vice president of marketing, Richard Marnell, said via an email the company wished to concentrate on its "market-leading efforts in Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and the United States".

Burchmore to conduct carols

AUSTRALIAN singer and entertainer Rhonda Burchmore will perform a special Christmas Carols onboard APT's *AmaVerde* vessel during the company's 2013 White Christmas and New Year's Eve Magnificent Europe River Cruise.

Burchmore will also conduct a New Year's Eve performance as part of the 15-day cruise running between Budapest and Amsterdam.

Cabins on the 15-day sailing start from \$7640ppts and are combinable with APT's Fly Free offer - for more info, phone 1300 278 278.

Titanic II names ship manager

V.SHIPS Leisure is to be the official ship management services partner for Blue Star Line's well-documented *Titanic II*.

Clive Palmer's most recent foray into politics hasn't halted his project to recreate the world's most iconic cruise ship.

The new federal leader of the United Australia Party, Professor Clive Palmer yesterday announced the appointment of V.Ships Leisure to the *Titanic II* team.

V.Ships Leisure is the largest supplier of management and outsourcing services to the maritime leisure industry, employing 200 shore-based staff and 7,000 crew members on more than 120 cruise vessels, ferries and super yachts.

Its parent company V.Group was formed as V.Ships in 1984 by the de-merger of the ship management division of Monaco-based ship owner, Vlasov.

"I would like to welcome V.Ships Leisure to the team and look forward to working closely with them on this landmark project," Professor Palmer said in a statement released on Facebook and Twitter.

Titanic II is scheduled to be launched from China's CSC Jinling Shipyard in 2016, before the maiden passenger voyage retracing the journey of the original *Titanic* from Southampton to New York.

"*Titanic II* will be a regular feature on the transatlantic route between the UK and USA," Palmer said.

Designed by the Finnish-based Deltamarin, whose major projects have included *Oasis of the Seas* and *Celebrity Solstice*, the ship will combine traditional luxury and modern amenities with the latest navigation and safety systems, along with a number of *Titanic's* original features including a high-rollers casino.

The ship will consist of nine decks, including first, second & third classes of accommodation.



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Tauck treats Aussie agents to Swiss Emerald



FOUR top-selling Tauck agents from the Magellan Travel Group were recently treated to one of the company's European cruises, hosted by Tauck's long-time local representatives, Travel the World.

The group travelled aboard *Swiss Emerald* and enjoyed the French Waterways itinerary between Lyon and Arles in the country's south.

Partaking in what they described as "outstanding dining both on-board and ashore," the Aussie agents agreed they were impressed with the ratio of 30 passengers for each Tour/Cruise Director onboard.

Pictured in the back row from left is Pierre Troyanowsky - Tauck Tour Director and Sonia Jones, Hawthorn Travel & Cruise.

Front row: Andrea Nagy, Tauck; Tod Griswold, Tauck; Rachel Javier, Travel the World; Captain Tanguy de la Porte; Belinda Grist, Travel Specialists Mosman; Nanette Lulham, Happy Holiday Ettalong Beach and Megan Dwyer, Broadway Travel & Cruise Centre.

Short cruises now all the rage

VISION of the Seas will become the fifth Royal Caribbean ship operating short 4-5 night Caribbean cruises from Fort Lauderdale next year, the company has confirmed.

Vision of the Seas will join sisters *Liberty*, *Brilliance*, *Enchantment* and *Majesty* operating the short cruises to the region during the year.

HAL choose interior designers

ARCHITECT Bjorn Storbraaten and interior designer Adam D Tihany have been selected by Holland America Line to design interior spaces of a new 99,000 cruise ship scheduled to be delivered to the company in Feb 2016.

The ship will be the company's first Pinnacle-Class ship, but is un-named at present.

Both designers will work together to create the public rooms to feature on the ship, with Storbraaten having previously worked on the company's *Eurodam* & *New Amsterdam* ships.

"We are fortunate to bring together such distinguished professionals for our next-generation ship," HAL's Richard Meadows said.

Holland America has teased that several of the concepts have never been seen before on its ships, with more details to follow.



WE all love our mums, especially holidays with her both as children and adults, but according to a survey conducted by P&O Cruises, the feeling is not quite so warm and fuzzy when it comes to the in-laws.

The poll of 1000 mothers found 22% had been on holidays with their mothers-in-law and a third said they never would again.

When it came to gift giving, the survey found a quarter of mums didn't say anything if given something they didn't like, but they still passed the gift on to somebody else, while 64% said they put the gift somewhere they were never likely to see it again and 5% put the gift on eBay and bought something they liked instead.

US First Lady Michelle Obama was voted by 22% of survey respondents as the famous mother many would like to spend Mother's Day with, closely followed by celebrity chef Maggie Beer (18%) and Nicole Kidman (15%), while Posh Spice ranked last (2%).

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