

CRUISE



WEEKLY



Thursday 23 Apr 2015

Hurtigruten promises to see the light

DISCOVER the World has announced details of a new "Northern Lights Promise" offered by Hurtigruten.

The offer is available to guests who book a 12 day Classic Round Voyage for departure between Oct 15 and Feb 16.

During the cruises staff on board Hurtigruten's fleet of 11 coastal ships will be "scouring the night skies" for the Northern Lights - and if they don't appear during the voyage Hurtigruten will offer guests the choice of a free 7-day Classic Voyage North or a 6 day Classic Voyage South in an inside-twin cabin the following season.

"Seeing the Northern Lights remains one of life's truly incredible experiences and we are so convinced that a voyage with us is one of the best ways to see them that we have put our money where our mouth is," said Hurtigruten's Cyril Bricaud.

Prices for an inside cabin on a full board basis start at \$2490ppts on a choice of dates including 30 Oct 2015, while Jan 16 departures start at \$2070ppts.

Lindblad on expansion trail

THE public float of Lindblad Expeditions (**CW** 11 Mar) is set to give the pioneering expedition cruise company "strategic opportunities to acquire or partner with other operators".

Jeremy Lindblad, who's been running the group's Australian operations since it acquired Orion Expedition Cruises, told **CW** this week the Lindblad business produces significantly higher yields than anyone in the industry - which is good news for the firm's trade partners too.

It means that Lindblad can devote huge resources into its product - such as the development of new European itineraries for *National*

Geographic Orion, which is heading away from Australian waters after its upcoming Kimberley season wraps up in Aug this year.

Lindblad told **CW** that four people have been working full time on the European program - a massive investment which will ensure the 22-week season offers a unique perspective and continues the company's tradition of unique, memorable and meaningful cruising.

He didn't rule out a future return to the Kimberley for Lindblad, but said at the moment guest feedback indicated strong demand from Australians for the Lindblad product in Europe.

The 2016 European program for *National Geographic Orion* is now on sale - see au.expeditions.com.

Norwegian free drinks

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has announced that from Jan 16 all guests sailing aboard *Norwegian Sky* out of Miami will enjoy the "next level" of Freestyle Cruising, with unlimited beer, wine and premium spirits included.

Passengers aged 3-20 will be offered unlimited soft drinks.

Divina US year-round

MSC Cruises is continuing its onslaught on the US market, overnight announcing that its *MSC Divina* will cruise year-round from Miami.

The company said it was responding to significant growth and strong demand, with *Divina's* existing Nov 15-Apr 16 itineraries remaining unchanged.

However from Apr 16-Mar 17 the ship will rotate between Eastern and Western Caribbean routes, with stops in St Maarten, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Mexico, the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas.

The news follows the recent announcement that the new *MSC Seaside* will also sail year round from Miami to the Caribbean when it debuts in Nov 2017.

P&O 2016-17 VIPs

P&O Cruises has launched its 2016-17 program, with special VIP packages available for the first 200 passengers who make a booking on the program.

Onboard credits of up to \$150 per room are on offer for the lucky guests, who will also receive a welcome pack featuring a bottle of wine and canapes, a P&O robe and slippers and a premium bathroom amenities pack.

VIP passengers get priority check-in on arrival and priority tender passes during their cruise.

The new program, which opened for sale yesterday, offers a whopping 191 departures across 38 unique itineraries between Oct 16 and Jul 17 aboard *Pacific Aria*, *Pacific Eden*, *Pacific Jewel*, *Pacific Dawn* and *Pacific Pearl*.

New options include music-themed short breaks and Christmas cruises to Papua New Guinea, with full details to be revealed in the new P&O Cruises brochure which will be available from next week.

MEANWHILE *Pacific Jewel* will mark a WA milestone tomorrow when it anchors in Geographe Bay, becoming the first P&O ship to visit Busselton as part of a three day cruise out of Fremantle.

Almost 2,000 guests on board will transfer to the town for a day of dining, sightseeing and shopping, injecting around \$200,000 into the local economy.

Today's issue of CW

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise news plus a full page from **JITO**.

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Scenic goes to eleven

SCENIC now has eleven of its signature Space-Ships, after Australian author Kathy Lette officially named *Scenic Jasper* in Vienna earlier this week.

The "next generation" *Jasper* features 85 cabins, including what Scenic describes as the "ultimate in private balcony accommodation," the 44m² Royal Panorama Suites.

The christening ceremony was attended by Scenic founder and chairman Glen Moroney, who said innovations on *Jasper* such as its heated vitality pool on the panoramic Sun Deck had further enhanced "what was already an exceptional design".

Lette said she was honoured to have been asked to be *Scenic Jasper's* godmother.

"Not only is river cruising the best way to see Europe - no sat nav malfunctions, no orbital ring roads, no traffic jams or cancelled trains - but this sleek new cruise ship is so luxurious it should be renamed *HMS Hedonism*" she said.

Jasper offers six dining options

and butler service for all guests, unlimited complimentary beverages including mini-bars replenished daily and complimentary wi-fi internet.

Scenic Jasper is the first of two Scenic Space-Ships to launch this year, with the fleet to be boosted to twelve in the coming months with the addition of *Scenic Opal*.

Two more Scenic vessels are under construction for 2016 - the *Scenic Amber* which will sail the Rhine, Main and Danube Rivers; and the *Scenic Azure* which will launch on Portugal's Douro River.



ABOVE: Karen and Glen Moroney celebrate the moment with *Scenic Jasper* godmother Kathy Lette.



LEFT: Godmother Kathy Lette was thrilled to receive this "figure head" as a memento of the christening.

"I'm thrilled to unveil my leopard print skin mini-skirted figure head," she said.

"Yes, I finally have prowess...plus I can now say that I have a really big bust," she quipped.

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UPDATE

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CRUISE
NEWS &
VIEWS

with Peter Kollar
CLIA Australasia

Self-Improvement Events

I'M writing this week from the largest dedicated B2B travel conference in the USA, Cruise360 (C360) where 1,300 agents will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in all aspects of the cruise industry, expand their knowledge and network with industry leaders and colleagues alike.

So what's the engine that has driven this event for the past 11 years? C360 is fuelled by the one thing behind all sustained business success stories – innovation – and not necessarily advances in technology and exciting new products, although they are here in abundance.

The landscape of our industry is constantly changing and innovation is a prerequisite for durable, long-term success.

The most successful agents aren't the ones that focus on preserving an existing advantage. They are individuals and agencies that constantly seek to adapt and renew themselves in order to stay relevant into the future.

They continue to put new ideas into practice and demonstrate an appetite for change and a willingness to embrace risk. Competition gets fiercer, the pace of change is ever increasing and customers have more choice and are less loyal than ever before – you have to win their business anew every day.

For those of you wanting to make your own business a success story, there are still ten cabins left on the 2015 CLIA Masters Conference aboard *Quantum of the Seas* in October. Visit www.cruising.org.au for details.



Albany for Astor

CMV'S *Astor* will overnight in the WA coastal town of Albany during her 2015/16 season, after the destination proved a hit with passengers during the vessel's down under visits over the last two years.

The extended stay in Albany is part of the "Cruise the Coast" itinerary which voyages from Fremantle on 31 Jan 2016 for six nights, also calling in Esperance.

The 620-passenger *Astor* will return to Perth this Dec to begin her third Australian summer - see www.cmvastralia.com.

Wild Earth release

WILD Earth Travel has launched a new Small Ship Luxury Expedition Cruises brochure, which contains a collection of voyages curated by Wild Earth's gm Aaron Russ.

The program features 20 cruises aboard 11 different ships, with destinations including Japan, Sri Lanka, the Scottish Isles, Alaska, the Amazon, Mediterranean and the polar regions.

CLICK HERE to view.

BRAVO! 2015 encore

CHOOSE Your Cruise has confirmed the return of its popular BRAVO! Cruise of the Performing Arts, which will see a host of operatic acts including David Hobson perform during a seven night *Radiance of the Seas* departure from Sydney on 24 Oct this year - 1300 247 371.

SeaDream set for growth?



ADDING a new vessel to the SeaDream fleet is "not a matter of if, but when," according to the line's president Bob Lepisto.

Visiting Sydney earlier this week, a coy Lepisto wouldn't be drawn any further on the boutique operator's future plans, saying it was up to owner Atle Brynstad to make any decisions.

However any addition to the current *SeaDream I* and *SeaDream II* is likely to carry more passengers than their respective 112 guest capacity.

"The economics of something our size just don't work for a newbuild," he told **Cruise Weekly**.

SeaDream would maintain its "elegantly casual" philosophy on any newbuild, Lepisto assured.

He was in Australia to meet with past guests and key travel agent supporters, who have been vital in spreading the news about SeaDream and seeing Aussies comprise up to 10% of the line's clientele.

Burgeoning interest in wine and food has seen SeaDream add sixteen "Wine Voyages" to its

itineraries - eight this year and eight in 2016 - which are certain to appeal to Australian clientele.

These trips feature an on-board winemaker who will host tastings as well as a special wine-pairing dinner and winery excursions.

For details of upcoming SeaDream voyages contact Julie Denovan (**pictured** above with Lepisto) on 02 9958 4444.



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Cruise Baltic training

A NEW online travel agent training program has been rolled out by Cruise Baltic, which is a network of 27 cruise destinations in the Baltic Sea region.

Announced in the US at the annual Cruise360 event, the program aims to help travel consultants increase their sales of Baltic cruises.

It equips agents with comprehensive information about Baltic destinations and attractions along with recommended hotel and airline add-ons.

There are five modules in the program: "Cruise Baltic Countries," "Baltic Destinations," "Unique Selling Points," "Baltic Highlights," and "Products" which showcases Scandic Hotels and Scandinavian Airlines.

See cruisebaltictraining.com.

Sun Princess premiere



SUN Princess will feature the world premiere of Gillian Armstrong's new documentary *Women He's Undressed* in a special arrangement with the 62nd Sydney Film Festival.

A special "blue carpet" will roll out on the vessel's deck as part of the gala occasion which will be the first time a movie premiere has been held on a ship in Australia.

Women He's Undressed takes a look at the life of Kiama-born Australian designer Orry-Kelly who created wardrobes for many of Hollywood's biggest movie stars between the 1930s and the 1960s.

The documentary will screen before *Sun Princess* departs Sydney on the evening of 10 Jun for a ten night Queensland cruise.

"I can't wait to frock up with cocktails at sunset on the deck and toast [Orry-Kelly's] extraordinary life and talent," said director Gillian Armstrong.

Pictured above during the announcement of the event are, from left: Stuart Allison, Princess Cruises vice president Australia/NZ; Chloe Jones and Nick Ferguson of Princess Cruises; *Women He's Undressed* director Gillian Armstrong; Princess PR manager Meg Koffell; documentary producer Damien Parer; and Sydney Film Festival director Nashen Moodley.



SCENIC Jasper's new godmother Kathy Lette (see p2) has certainly thrown herself into the activities during the vessel's christening cruise this week.

Last night she posted a photo on Twitter after enjoying (or enduring) a 32km bike ride along the Danube river (below).

The caption was *Looking W.I. (Windswept & Interesting) after 32 km bike ride along Danube. Mood-10/10. Vagina- 2. Need padded pants!*



SEADREAM Yacht Club appears to have a special affinity for the Australian market, with about 10% of passengers on the small ship luxury line hailing from down under.

In Sydney earlier this week (see page 3) the line's president Bob Lepisto confided that a group of Australian passengers actually holds a unique SeaDream record.

Some years ago a Melbourne man celebrated a major birthday aboard one of the SeaDream vessels, which was specially chartered for the event.

The presumably well-heeled chap and about 100 of his closest friends partied it up on board, as the boutique yacht cruised around the Mediterranean - and that week set a milestone for the largest quantity of beer consumed on SeaDream in any seven day period ever.

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Pharmacy DAILY

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