

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 27 Aug 2015

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

First Aussies on Amras

MCLACHLAN Tours, which launched Amras Cruises to the Australian market earlier this year (*CW* 26 Feb), has reported strongly positive feedback from its first Australian passengers to experience *Amadeus Silver*.

Booking through Ovation Travel, the customers took Amras' signature 8-day 'Danube Waltz' Nuremberg to Budapest itinerary, with McLachlan Tours gm Peter Smith saying the response "reinforces what a great product Amras Cruises is going to be for our market".

The wholesaler is offering a range of last minute berths for cruises departing in Oct including an eight-day trip from \$4300pp, a 15-day *Concerto of Castles* from Budapest to Amsterdam from \$6990pp and a 22-day *European Melody* cruising from Budapest to Amsterdam and Provence priced from \$10,190.

See www.amrascruises.com.au.

Costa out of Turkey

REMAINING port calls in Turkey by Costa Cruises for 2015 have been cancelled in response to a terrorist attack on the city's United States Consulate.

Three Costa ships sailing in the region will instead visit ports in Greece, Italy and Malta.

Celebrity earlybird launch

CELEBRITY Cruises has today launched a series of European cruise earlybird specials for 2016 - just in time for the launch of the traditional airfare earlybirds.

The cruise line is leveraging its "unprecedented" pricing structure 'Go Big, Go Better, Go Best' to entice cruisers to book, with specials available for bookings until 20 Sep 2015.

The structure is based around optional extras such as unlimited internet, pre-paid gratuities, a classic beverage package or US\$150 in onboard credit.

Go Big offers one free extra, while Go Better costs A\$20 per person per day for a choice of two extras, and Go Best offers all four extras for \$60pp daily.

However under the earlybird offer any Oceanview Stateroom booking comes with a free upgrade from the standard 'Go Big' tier to the premium 'Go Better' level which has two free extras included.

Celebrity' Europe earlybird cruise fares start at A\$2139 for a 12 night voyage aboard *Celebrity Constellation* from Rome to Venice, departing 27 Apr 2016.

The line will offer five dedicated ships in Europe next year also including *Celebrity Eclipse*, *Equinox* and *Reflection*.

Europa 2 specials

HAPAG-LLOYD cruises has released some special offers for the English-speaking market, with local representative Gerd Wilmer saying the cruises involved would be a good start to overcome the "too many Germans" objection.

The offers, valid on the five star *MS Europa 2* include a "second person pays 50%" deal on five cruises from Mar-Oct 2016 in Asia, India, the Middle East, Central America and the Caribbean.

There's a range of value-adds such as additional on-board beverage credits and discounts for early bookings - more details on 1300 136 846.

P&O Gatsby nights

PASSENGERS aboard P&O voyages will be able to take part in a Gatsby evening, with the new party concept said to "elevate the existing cocktail night to a new level" (*CW* 21 May).

Art deco theming will be complemented with Twenties dance lessons and even workshops to make Gatsby-style headpieces, with accessories including hats, bow ties and feather boas available onboard.

The Gatsby night joins other concepts including Back to School nights, afternoon Vegas parties and the already popular 'Bianco, the P&O White Party'.

Every P&O cruise of three nights or more will feature a Gatsby party, according to P&O director of entertainment, Brett Annable. More from P&O on **page three**.

Singapore Legend

ROYAL Caribbean's *Legend of the Seas* has kicked off her 2015 Singapore season, returning to Asia where she homeported between 2008 and 2013.

Cruises range from 3-14 nights through to Nov when *Legend* departs for her Brisbane season.



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Brochure Spotlight

Silversea 2016



THESE new brochures from Silversea Cruises showcase the line's collection of ocean and expedition voyages sailing next year, with its all-suite eight ship fleet visiting over 800 destinations on all seven continents.

A new 192-page brochure details Silversea's ocean-going voyages, while Silversea Expeditions are highlighted in a separate 157-page program.

Both feature new QR barcodes to provide easy connections to the Silversea website.

Copies of the new 2016 Silversea brochures are now available for order via www.tifs.com.au; for more info call 1300 306 872.

Azamara upgrades

AZAMARA Club Cruises' "double upgrade" deal expires next Mon 31 Aug, offering a Club Verandah stateroom for the price of a Club Interior.

Valid for new bookings on most Azamara voyages worldwide, the offer includes the inaugural Australian season of *Azamara Quest* which kicks off this Dec.

More details 1800 754 500.

Florida conference

THE Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association will welcome about 1,000 delegates to Cozumel, Mexico from 05-09 Oct for the annual FCCA Conference & Trade Show, with more than 100 FCCA member line representatives attending the event.

Carnival Corporation chairman Micky Arison will deliver the opening address and participate in a high level roundtable discussion with cruise line ceos, while Royal Caribbean president Adam Goldstein will also be there.

Croatian sailing capers



THIS lucky group of top selling Australian travel agents recently enjoyed a ten day Croatia sailing trip courtesy of Busabout.

The 2015 Busabout Freestyle Famil rewarded top sellers with "the ultimate balance of partying and relaxation," as they voyaged around the coasts of the Croatian islands - punctuated by all-night dancing at the Soundwave Music Festival.

Pictured clearly enjoying themselves are, back row from left: Jan Read, Jodi Woolf, Cat Fanto, Micaela Augoustides and Annabelle Tidmarsh.

Front row: Kate Strong, Taylor Allan and Julian Sifiso Nxele.

Crystal Esprit on sale

ITINERARIES on Crystal Cruises' new *Crystal Esprit* 62-passenger yacht (**CW** 20 Aug) will go on sale effective 01 Sep, with a selection of voyages sailing from the Seychelles, Dubai, Cyprus & Jordan, and Venice, Dubrovnik & Athens.

The all-suite *Esprit* will offer seven day itineraries which can be combined into a two-week vacation, with facilities including a two-passenger submarine, wake boards, water skis, kayaks, jet skis, fishing and snorkelling equipment, as well as zodiacs and a tender for excursions.

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Celebrity **X** Cruises

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Is Asia Australia's next source market?

THE 2015 Cruise Down Under conference, which takes place next week in Darwin, will be the platform for a number of critical discussions around the future of the cruise industry, one of which is whether Asia will be our next major source market.

Star Cruises announced recently that it was returning to the Australian market for the first time in 10 years (CW 26 May) with *SuperStar Virgo* embarking on a 48-day round trip from Hong Kong in November calling at more than 20 ports. The itinerary will visit five Australian states and showcase the WA ports of Geraldton, Fremantle and Albany plus key cities including Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

SuperStar Virgo will carry up to 2,500 passengers, all visiting from Asian markets. If the itinerary is successful, it's likely more cruise lines will follow. Indeed Norwegian Cruise Lines is already planning a return to Asia in December 2016 and onto Australia and New Zealand from January 2017.

As an industry we are getting a better understanding of what the Asian traveller is looking for when they come to Australia, but how is this different for cruisers? Are Asian cruisers big spenders? What shore excursions do they enjoy? Are they water lovers? What cultural experiences are they looking for?

These, and many more questions, will be put to CDU Conference speakers including Michael Hackman from Star Cruises, and Asian expert Dwain Wall.

There are still a few places available and we hope to see you there! For details and to register see www.cruisedownunder.com.

Pacific Jewel reveal



P&O'S *Pacific Jewel* unveiled its new look on Tue, with its first passengers embarking to view the much-anticipated Pantry.

The 245m ship recently returned from dry dock in Singapore and is the first P&O vessel to roll out the new dining concept.

"It's time to banish the buffet and really introduce a casual dining concept that you feel like you really want to dine in" said Brett Annable, P&O Cruises entertainment director.

The Pantry is an international food market, where guests can choose from eight outlets, offering cuisine ranging from fish and chips, burgers, Asian and the most popular so far, Mexican.

"The concept is not about grabbing that tray and moving along and putting everything on your plate and getting one chance at it.... you might try some

Mexican for entrée and then go back and have some curry or you might then go and have some fish and chips and some desserts from the sugar bar," Annable said.

The concept will be on P&O's new additions arriving later in the year, *Pacific Eden* and *Pacific Aria*, and will then be rolled out onto the rest of the five-ship fleet.

Guests on Tue also had a sneak preview of the latest production show, "Off the Charts" (below) and P&O's latest onboard evening entertainment concept, the Gatsby Party (see p1).

The ship is also the first to introduce a Pandora store at Sea.

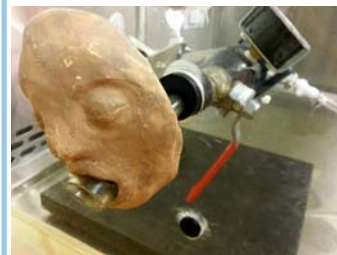
Pictured above during the Pantry showcase are Ewe Stiefel, corporate executive chef Carnival Australia and Brett Annable, director of entertainment P&O.

More exclusive pics online at facebook.com/cruiseweekly.



CRUISE ship operators have gained significant insight into the scourge of the dreaded norovirus, via a research project in the US where scientists created a "vomit machine".

The totally gross device (pictured) aims to answer the question of what happens to the virus which has caused so much gastrointestinal drama on some ill-fated voyages.



Norovirus is notorious for spreading like wildfire, particularly in closed environments such as cruise ships - but it's not exactly clear how it spreads, with speculation that it is "aerosolised" when a sufferer blows chunks.

The scientists from North Carolina State and Wake Forest Universities in the US used a range of "vomit metrics" (perhaps including the fact that it ALWAYS contains carrots), which allowed them to control the "volume, viscosity and pressure of the simulated vomiting incidents".

They found norovirus definitely does have the potential to be carried as an invisible mist by air currents and thus to travel "many metres and land on many surfaces at infectious levels" - so make sure your clients keep their hands to themselves!

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