

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 15 Jan 2015

Europe on Seabourn

MORE than 60 departures to 100 destinations feature in the 2016 Seabourn European season.

Seabourn Quest and *Seabourn Sojourn* will both operate in the Western Mediterranean over the period, with *Quest* then spending the summer in the Baltics.

The line's three ships will operate voyages of between 7-22 days to the French, Spanish & Italian Rivas, Greek Islands and the Norwegian Fjords.

Director of sales Australia Tony Archbold said the season will include several stops at ports with UNESCO World Heritage sites.

New Ecrusing charter

ONLINE cruise and tour retailer Ecrusing.travel has lined up new exclusive charter bookings of two upcoming cruise vessels, growing its presence in ship charters.

The two newest departures are a 19-night Galapagos Islands tour leaving 17 Aug 2016, which will include a charter of Ecovertura's forthcoming ship *MV Origin*.

Additionally, an 18-night cruise tour to Myanmar on 23 Oct 2016 which will include a voyage on APT's new vessel *RV Samatha*.

Both voyages will include Economy airfares, several nights accom prior to and following the cruise, all transfers and meals onboard, a number of exclusive land tours and extras such as rail. For info, phone 1300 369 848.

Doors opened on Explorer

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has released the first artist renderings of *Seven Seas Explorer*, the Norwegian Cruise Line subsidiary's newest ship which will be delivered in mid-2016.

Ordered 18 months ago, the line heralds the ship (pictured) as "the most expensive luxury liner ever built" at a price tag of US\$450m.

Catering to 750 pax per sailing, Regent's all-suite, all-balcony vessel will debut with a 14-night sailing from Monte Carlo to Venice departing on 20 Jul 2016.

Reservations for the ultra-luxury craft's maiden season will open next month on 04 Feb.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises president and coo Jason Montague said the company was excited about its new ship.

"We set a high benchmark for *Seven Seas Explorer*, not only to build a ship that far surpasses the current standard in luxury cruising, but to design a ship that

will be recognised industry-wide as the most luxurious ship ever".

Onboard will be three specialty restaurants including the Compass Rose dining room, La Veranda buffet and fine dining fleet-wide steakhouse Prime 7.

At the top of the stateroom categories will be the Regent Suite, a two-bedroom retreat offering an in-room spa complete with steam room and sauna and an outdoor sitting area with private garden and views over the ship's bow.

MEANWHILE, Regent has signed a new partnership with the Smithsonian Institute which will see art historians, authors and experts on geopolitics join select voyages to give special seminars relevant to a ship's ports of call. Lecturers will join 80 sailings over the 2015 and 2016 seasons and take part in Q&A sessions.

Sell three, sail for free

TRAVEL agents can earn a free Royal Caribbean cruise fare under a new incentive to help fill cabins on some last-minute departures.

To avail the offer, book three cabins or more on selected South Pacific departures this month and receive free fares for two on a local RCI cruise up to seven nights.

Cruises in the promotion include a 11-night cruise leaving 17 Jan and a 10-night sailing on 28 Jan onboard *Rhapsody of the Seas*.

Also valid are two departures on *Radiance of the Seas* - an 11-night Sth Pacific cruise on 20 Jan and a 12-night sailing departing 31 Jan.

Agents need to send details of each cabin booked on the above sailings and details of their own requested voyage to the line on insidesales@rcclapac.com by the promotion cut-off of 13 Feb 2015.



Today's issue of CW

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

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SeaLink board change

VETERAN SeaLink Travel Group chairman Giuliano Ursini has advised he will be stepping down from the position after 19 years, taking the decision to retire.

Among Ursini's achievements is steering the firm through its ASX listing in 2013 and overseeing vast fleet and network expansion.

Managing director Jeff Ellison praised Ursini's work, saying since 1996, the company had grown and transformed from two vessels to 26 under his watch.

The company has now begun a search for a new Chairman.

MEANWHILE, former Tourism Australia managing director Andrew McEvoy has today been named as a new non-executive independent director for SeaLink, with the post effective from Feb.

72 HOUR MEGA SALE
FROM AU\$81 PER DAY
UP TO US\$200 ONBOARD CREDIT
DEAL ENDS 10AM AEDT 16 JAN 2015
Royal Caribbean INTERNATIONAL

Venice removes ship ban

CRUISE ships can once again travel the Giudecca Channel and pass St Mark's Square in Venice after a ban on large ships was thrown out by local authorities.

According to *Seatrade Insider*, further protests by the Venice Passenger Terminal (VTP) and associated businesses saw the Veneto Region Administrative Tribunal annul the decree.

Tribunal judges ruled that proper diligence had not been carried out by the authorities imposing the restrictions.

Authorities had not proposed any alternative routes for cruise ships to take and had not assessed the interests of the affected public and private sector businesses relative to the ban.

It added that real and true environmental impacts had also not been adequately evaluated.

Pandaw into India

INDOCHINA river cruise line Pandaw are set to expand into India, with an inaugural itinerary along the Ganges and Hooghly rivers departing on 27 Oct 2015.

A 16-night itinerary includes a 13-night sailing on *RV Rajmahal* preceded by a three night land program spending two nights in Varanasi and one in Bodh Goya.

Pre and post-cruise extensions to Delhi and Kolkata are available.

Stateroom prices start from US\$4,675 per person twin share.

Carnival Easter-ready

FARES starting from \$599ppts for a four-night Tasmania cruise departing 16 Apr onboard *Carnival Legend* are on sale from Carnival Cruise Lines as part of its range of Easter holiday offers.

The voyage includes a full day in Hobart to explore the local sights including Mt Wellington & MONA.

Also available is an 11-night roundtrip cruise to New Caledonia and Vanuatu, priced from \$1,100 per person twin share, with an Easter Egg hunt to take place onboard - phone 133 194 for info.

Cunard timeline video

UPMARKET British line Cunard has kicked off celebrations for its 175th anniversary year in 2015 by launching a video timeline of the line's most famous moments.

Available now on the line's website, the video looks back in time at the different ships that have come and gone through the Cunard fleet right back to 1840.

Queen Mary 2, *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Victoria* have all now departed Southampton on their annual World Cruises.

QE2 and QE will conduct a Royal Rendezvous in Sydney Harbour on 12 Mar as one of many 175th birthday extravaganzas slated to happen throughout the year.

CLICK HERE to view the video.

MEANWHILE, Cunard has detailed some of the celebratory events to take place onboard its three Queens during the year.

In addition to guest speakers, themed entertainment and gala dinners, mail posted onboard will carry a special 175 year postmark.

Tech team takes to the high sea

AFTER another year imparting their extensive knowledge to classrooms full of eager beavers, a number tertiary teachers across NSW took some time out with Travelpport aboard *Carnival Spirit*.

The educators, whose teaching syllabuses are designed around the Travelpport Travel Commerce Platform, participated in the tech firm's annual Learning and Development Forum onboard.

Each year, the Forum offers the

chance for Travelpport to update the teachers on the latest industry goings-on, discuss key issues and receive feedback on course materials & training techniques.

Time was also taken to kick back and socialise about the achievements of the year and to relax in the surroundings of the plush Australian-based ship.

The Travelpport representatives and teachers are pictured above on the vessel's Aft deck.



CRUISE NEWS & VIEWS

with Brett Jardine
GM, CLIA Australasia

Cruise360 Countdown

CRUISE360 is the first major travel industry event of the year.

Based on ticket sales to date, attendance at the 2015 Cruise360 has already surpassed last year and I have no doubt remaining tickets will be snapped up in coming weeks.

Not sure what to expect at Cruise360? At the end of the day the event program has been designed with travel agents in mind. Agents are the primary distribution channel for cruise lines and it is events like Cruise360 that enable cruise lines to speak openly with their trade partners in a business to business environment.

The day will be a mixture of panel sessions and a free flowing trade show/exhibition.

The panel sessions will feature a stellar line-up of 20 senior cruise industry executives from around the globe. Participants will then be able to attend an exhibition of cruise lines and cruise industry suppliers during extended morning tea and lunch breaks.

As always, there will be plenty of opportunities for networking at the closing function, so we look forward to welcoming the industry to a productive and enjoyable event.

For anyone who has their sights on attending what will be an excellent event, don't delay ordering your tickets any longer!

The full Cruise360 program, panellist bios and instant purchase tickets are available to buy now at www.cruising.org.au (click on the Cruise360 tab).



Carnival helps out at Christmas



THOSE less fortunate in the community received a welcome boost during the season of giving as Carnival Australia headed into the kitchen to help out charitable organisation One Big Kitchen.

More than 50 staff from the cruising juggernaut headed into the kitchen to prepare meals for Bear Cottage, the only children's hospice in NSW.

The day was spent chopping fresh vegetables and making a range of delicious desserts.

"After lunch we helped the kitchen team package the food that would be distributed to those in need," Carnival senior manager commercial analysis Caroline Handisides said.

"Overall it was such a rewarding

day, one where we were naturally humbled in remembering how fortunate we are in our corporate world," she added.

Carnival Australia executive assistant Amanda Hall said the experience was inspiring for all.

"None of us was prepared for how amazing our visit to Our Big Kitchen would be, and we all left the kitchen humbled by the experience."

The group of hairhat-donning team of Carnival volunteers are **pictured** above on the day.

Heroes on Zuiderdam

EIGHT crew members aboard a sinking Bahamian vessel were rescued by the Holland America Line vessel *MS Zuiderdam* while cruising in the Caribbean.

The nearby HAL ship altered course to conduct the rescue, providing food & accommodation before the men alighted in Aruba.

Pandaw birthday deal

SAVINGS of up to 25% are available on selected Pandaw voyages as part of celebrations for the line's 20th anniversary.

Eligible sailings include Burma, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and India & must be booked by 31 Jan.

Bild full of hogwash

GERMAN daily newspaper *Bild* has been forced to backtrack and correct a published report saying Crystal Cruises was set to buy the *MS Deutschland* cruise ship.

The vessel is currently owned by Peter Deilmann Cruises and is the only vessel operating in its fleet.

Crystal Cruises president Edie Rodriguez has hinted in the past the line was seriously looking at ways to increase its fleet size.

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Freak wave accident

AN INCIDENT involving a freak wave which dislodged a window on the *Marco Polo* cruise ship and resulted in the death of an 85-year old male passenger has been deemed a "tragic accident".

The ship operated by Cruise & Maritime Voyages was en route back to the UK after a 42-night Caribbean cruise when the wave struck during a storm (*CW* 18 Feb).

The passenger was killed instantly after the window fell inwards on top of him.

An investigation into the ship following the accident found no evidence the *Marco Polo* was in poor condition and that it was fully equipped and certified.

Alaska comes aboard

PRINCESS Cruises has added a range of culinary & entertainment products and experiences themed on Alaska as part of its voyages to the region, titled 'North to Alaska'.

Passengers will enjoy seafood sourced from Alaskan waters including signature dishes from Juneau restaurants and onboard festivals showcasing Alaskan food.

Education and entertainment will also feature, with seminars about life in Alaska as well as activities and games including axe throwing and panning for gold.

RedFrog on Miracle

POPULAR Fun Ship 2.0 concepts enjoyed by Australians such as the RedFrog Pub, Seuss at Sea & Hasbro, The Game Show will be added to *Carnival Miracle* during an upcoming two-week drydock, Carnival Cruise Lines has said.

Other works will see the addition of Alchemy Bar, Playlist Productions, Spin U and the Cherry On Top candy store during the project, running 07-21 Mar.



ONCE cruising gets in your blood, it clearly never gets out.

Popular US comedian, talk show host and long-time star of Carnival Cruise Lines TV ads, Kathie Lee Gifford has returned once again to the line, this time promoting her new wine range.

Gifford has been starring in Carnival TV ads for more than 21 years after first appearing for the line way back in 1984.

Her latest tie-up with Carnival is to spruik GIFFT wine, which is grown on her own estate and will be progressively available across the Carnival fleet.

The GIFFT wine collection comprising of two top-rating Merlot and Chardonnay blends.

Gifford had trouble hiding her enthusiasm at working with Carnival again.

"It's like coming home again-- this time bearing great wines!"

Vietnam PM calls for easier cruise visas

VIETNAMESE Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung has directed the Ministry of Finance not to increase the cost of a tourist visa for visiting cruise passengers.

A new law on Entry, Exit and Transits took effect on 01 Jan, which also increased the cost of the visa 900% from US\$5 to \$45.

Cruise passengers also now need to apply for individual shore visas rather than purchasing their entry permit from the cruise ship.

Dung's move follows a surge of complaints from cruise operators about the new regulations and the increased workload involved.

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