

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 07 May 2015

## Venice fighting back

**PROTESTORS** in Venice have rebelled against Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, presenting a petition urging excavation of the city's lagoon to allow access to larger cruise ships to be stopped and for ships to dock elsewhere.

According to *La Repubblica*, environmentalists and scientists are in agreement that planned dredging of the lagoon will open up the city to the sea, leaving it exposed to irreparable damage.

## Carnival returning to NZ

**TWO** separate circumnavigation itineraries around the North or South Island of New Zealand are among a host of product to debut in the new 2015-2017 brochure by Carnival Cruise Lines, out now.

The seasons will again be operated by *Carnival Spirit* - which will then boast several new amenities as part of a \$47 million makeover taking place this Aug -

and *Carnival Legend*, its third wave season sailing in Australia.

The line will offer Trans-Tasman voyages of 11 days to the North

Island, visiting Wellington, Napier, Tauranga, Auckland and the Bay of Islands, and 10-day journeys to the country's South Island.

Carnival Cruise Line Australia vp Jennifer Vandekreeke said the line's return to New Zealand is partly in response to a Facebook page urging it to come back, a clear sign the demand was there.

"We're doing it in a very Carnival way," she commented.

Further highlights for the season will also see the launch of Queensland coastal cruises, and more short breaks for the time-poor or new-to-cruise markets.

These will include four and five-day weekend round-trip cruises to Mooloolaba or Moreton Island in Queensland, and Tasmania.

Melbourne Cup cruises will also return, albeit shortened to a six night voyage in Nov 2016 & 2017.

Four one-way 18-day Hawaii

voyages on *Legend* have been scheduled as it repositions to and from Sydney each season.

Upgrades available on *Spirit* will include new dining options in Guy's Burger Joint, and amenities such as Hasbro the Game Show, Camp Ocean Youth Club and the Seuss at Sea kids program.

CCL launched its new brochure in a distinctly Mexican theme on



Tue night as a nod to the Blue Iguana Cantina and Tequila Bar, which will also be added to *Spirit* this year.

All of the 133 departures scheduled for

the season are now loaded in POLAR, ready to book.

The new program has also seen CCL slash deposits required, with voyages of six days or less now requiring \$150pp down and \$250pp for longer voyages.

Vandekreeke is pictured above centre with Lance Dye and Anton Loeb from the CCL sales team.

## Stay healthy for sea

**HEALTH** authorities have issued a public warning for cruise ship passengers to be vaccinated for the flu prior to boarding in order to prevent an outbreak.

NSW Health branch director Vicky Sheppard said more than 550 pax from 30 voyages on eight ships - one third of voyages - had been diagnosed from Feb to Apr.

Passengers should be vaccinated two weeks prior to boarding.

## Today's issue of CW

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

## New Princess to China

**SHANGHAI** has been confirmed to become the year-round home of Princess Cruises' newest ship, due to be delivered in mid-2017.

The third sister vessel to *Royal Princess* and *Regal Princess*, both recently launched themselves, is currently under construction at the Fincantieri shipyard in Italy.

Princess Cruises president Jan Swartz said the 3,600-pax ship will be the first year-round int'l luxury vessel designed and built specifically for Chinese guests.

The line homeported its first ship in China last year, with *Sapphire Princess* completing its first season in Shanghai and starting a second stint from Jun.

Like its sisters, the new Princess will offer a multi-storey atrium, overwater SeaWalk, Princess Live TV studio and a plethora of international dining options.

Itineraries to be operated by the as-yet-unnamed vessel will be announced on a future date.

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## CAU Soles4Souls

**CARNIVAL** Australia, Virgin Australia and Virgin Atlantic Cargo have joined forces with charitable firm Soles4Souls to initiate a shoe and clothing drive for Vanuatu.

The partnership will see more than 10,000 shirts, shorts & skirts distributed to those affected by Cyclone Pam, which struck in Mar.

More than 20,580 pairs of thongs (flip-flops) will also be distributed, with CAU and VA to carry the cargo onboard ships and planes as part of regular services.

"It's a simple idea and a good one that will be greatly appreciated by the people of Vanuatu many of whom lost everything in the cyclone disaster," CAU chief exec Ann Sherry said.

**MEANWHILE**, through its nine brands, Carnival Corp in the US has donated US\$200,000 to assist in relief from the earthquake in Nepal - money which will be spent on food, water and hygiene.

## Lindblad Euro show

**AGENTS** and clients in Australia are being invited by Lindblad Expeditions to a series of product information evenings to showcase its European expedition range.

Features of the tour operator's 2015/16 Explorations brochure will also be detailed, including the activities of the repositioned *National Geographic Orion* vessel.

Events will take place in Sydney, SE Queensland and Melbourne, with sessions at 2pm and 6pm - **CLICK HERE** for registration info.

## 'Glut' of river cruise ships

**THE** global head of The Travel Corporation, among whose brands include Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection, has labelled the unbridled expansion of river cruising on European waterways as "irresponsible".

In Sydney last week, Los Angeles-based Brett Tollman told *Cruise Weekly* he was concerned of the impact and experience the "glut" of capacity was causing in Europe.

TTC acquired Uniworld when river cruising was in its infancy & operates 13 ships in Europe on the Danube, Main, Rhine, Moselle, Rhône, Saône, Seine, Dordogne, Garonne, Po and Douro rivers.

Since then, multiple new lines have entered the arena & others have significantly ramped up their presence, such as Viking, which now has 64 ships, christening 12 new vessels in Mar (*CW* 26 Mar).

Questioned by *Cruise Weekly* if Uniworld would likely respond by adding new ships, Tollman slammed the current influx which he says is saturating the market.

"Definitely not. I think it's stupid. I think it's irresponsible to the sector, to the customers because the docking space is not keeping up with the plethora of inventory," Tollman remarked.

"Rivers are finite, therefore we are only cannibalising ourselves."

"If you end up with too many ships, it negatively impacts the experience for everyone."

Docks are filling with so many

ships that iconic landscapes in cities such as Paris are now lost to the view of a neighbouring ship in port, Tollman said, adding he hoped ship development would slow down in the next 5-10 years.

He also lambasted the free and '2-for-1' airfares to Europe being offered by competitors which is cheapening the market.

"It's becoming a mini version of ocean cruising."

"We certainly don't believe in it. We have a much higher cost infrastructure and spend approx \$10+ million more on our ships than any of our competitors, so we have a higher investment per ship...we won't and can't drop our prices," Tollman said.

"We're all suffering in terms of this glut of additional inventory but the segment has, in the long term, a very rosy future."

"Many in the segment will be looking at Scenic and Viking who have upped the game, and that is fantastic. I think it raises the bar for all of us. Competition is very good. It keeps you on your toes."

"If you want to survive & thrive you've got to make sure you have a point of difference."

"I think we are in a good place, as are a lot of our competitors," Tollman added.

While critical of capacity, Tollman applauded Viking for bringing awareness and interest to the river cruise segment, saying its competitor was doing "a fantastic job of advertising".

## Tummy bugs on HAL

**AROUND** 60 pax and 11 crew on a Holland America Line voyage onboard *MS Maasdam* contracted norovirus symptoms last week at the end of a 14-day Caribbean voyage, the US Centres for Disease Prevention advised.



**THE** Kiwi creator of a special amphibious vehicle should probably consider a cruise as an easier option for setting sail.

The seagoing Subaru Impreza (pictured) has been put up for auction on NZ website Trademe, with a reserve price of just \$1.

The vehicle, which can also drive on the road, has been ingeniously adapted with a 40cm propellor, with the website description saying "the craft comes with all the mod cons of a car and also the extreme luxuries of a high end boat".

"With its offshore capabilities and its exceptional landing qualities, it would be hard for the military to go past even today".



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## P&O sparkles & shines

**DUTY** Free Pandora jewellery will soon be available on P&O Cruises ships after the line signed a partnership with the brand.

Each of P&O's five ships will see a store added in coming months.

## Small ships on shelves

**APT** has followed up on its new 2016 Europe river cruise brochure by launching its 2016 Small Ships guide in quick succession.

The 121-page brochure boasts a fresh design showcasing 24 cruise voyages on the company's three wholly-owned small vessels.

A 15-day itinerary in Japan has been added to the season, sailing between Osaka to Manila, adding to a strong Europe range.

**MEANWHILE**, further savings of up to \$400pp off the brochure price are available under a new 'Travel with Friends & Save' offer now in market from APT.

Guests travelling with five friends on the same itinerary of 15 days or more can avail the deal.

The offer was launched this week to coincide with the tour operator's latest 2016 Royal Collection European river cruise brochure (**CW** Tue).

Another change made for the season sees the popular Signature Experiences renamed as Signature Invitations to better describe their exclusive nature.

**FURTHER**, APT has launched a new Snap'n'Send Postcard app, allowing guests to send their own photos home as postcards.

Photos uploaded are printed in APT's office in Melbourne and sent to addresses in Australia and New Zealand within 48 hours, with each pax able to send up to 10 postcards per trip personalised with an individual message.

The free app is now available to download from the Apple Store.



CRUISE  
NEWS &  
VIEWS

with Peter Kollar  
CLIA Australasia

## To build or not to build

**GIVEN** that tourism contributes just over 7% of New Zealand's Gross Domestic Product, word last week by Auckland Council that only one of two planned expansions will proceed at Bledisloe Wharf came as a shock, jeopardising the 2016 hosting of the 4,180 pax *Ovation of the Seas* and all other megaships that may visit in the future.

Using CLIA's latest Economic Impact Report as a gauge, this would mean missing out on close to \$1m a day of passenger spend in the local economy as well as potential jobs these visits generate.

Add provisions, transport and tourism suppliers to the mix and the loss of potential revenue is even more dramatic.

On the other side of the fence, you have concerned locals who have started their "Stop Stealing our Harbour" campaign, unhappy with the proposed 100m extension to the wharf. Do they have a right to see how their tax dollars are spent? Sure they do - and they also have a say in their home environment.

A solution will only come from both sides' willingness to resolve the conflict, starting with mapping out everyone's issues.

Once these matters are documented and understood, a resolution will only eventuate with broadened perspectives from both parties, meaning each side needs an empathetic win/win approach while managing emotions, bringing creative responses and co-operative power to the table.



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## Silversea does Anzac Day on site



## Seabourn Pacific rim

**MORE** than 36 ports of call will feature in a colossal Pacific Rim circumnavigation voyage released this week by Seabourn as part of its 2016 northern winter season.

Scheduled to depart on 04 Mar 2017, the voyage will be operated by the 450-pax *Seabourn Sojourn*.

The 89-night adventure will depart Singapore and head north, with ports on the bill including Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines and over six stops in China alone.

It will then cross the Pacific to Canada and Alaska and ending in Seattle on 31 May 2017, with cabins starting at US\$54,999ppts.

**ABOVE:** Two Silversea Cruises vessels have recently concluded a special Captain's Choice charter voyage to Gallipoli in line with the Anzac Centenary ceremonies.

The ships, *Silver Wind* and *Silver Cloud*, were both in position close to Anzac Cove off the western coast of Turkey for Dawn Service ceremonies broadcast from shore.

The dual charter was a first for the line, Silversea said.

Onboard the 14-day voyage were 524 guests from Australia & NZ, including Captain's Choice founder and director Phil Asker.

Both vessels are **pictured** above moored offshore for the Anzac Day commemorations.

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