

CRUISE



WEEKLY



Thursday 21 May 2015

Peace of mind at CLIA

TRAVEL insurer InsureandGo has become the newest member of the CLIA Australasia executive partner portfolio, becoming the fourth new member this year and first insurance firm to take part.

CLIA Australasia gm Brett Jardine said the signing was an indication external suppliers were taking a greater interest in cruising.

InsureandGo offers tailored cruise policies designed to cover shortcomings of general policies.

Coast Guard to lead CLIA

UNITED States Coast Guard Rear Admiral Thomas P Ostebo has been selected by the CLIA Global Executive Committee as its new president and chief executive.

Ostebo most recently held the role of director of strategic management for the US Coast Guard where he oversaw strategy and budgets for the organisation.

He also led Coast Guard operations in Alaska, the Arctic and North Pacific and brings 30 years of complex organisational management experience to his new role, where he will work with CLIA's 15 offices globally.

CLIA's new Captain replaces

Christine Duffy, who moved late last year to Carnival Cruise Lines as its new president (**CW** 19 Dec).

"After a thorough search process, we are thrilled to announce the appointment of our new President and CEO, Thomas Ostebo," CLIA chairman and spokesman Adam Goldstein said.

"Tom brings years of outstanding maritime and strategic business leadership experience to this important position that leads the cruise industry's global association. We are confident CLIA will thrive under his direction for years to come."

Ostebo begins his role on 06 Jul.

P&O seeing the white

A REVAMPED entertainment setup on P&O Cruises will see the line introduce new top deck "white parties" among a host of new onboard party concepts.

White Parties will see the upper deck covered in white with smoke cannons, closing with snowfall.

Parties will include live music and a selfie wall to snap photos.

Further new party ideas include a Gatsby-themed 1920's evening, retro Back to School theme and afternoon Vegas-themed parties.

Dawn scrapes a reef

NO REPORTS of injuries have been received after a Norwegian Cruise Line vessel ran aground on a reef close to the Bermuda coast.

According to passenger tweets, *Norwegian Dawn* "hit the reef hard" while en route back to Boston Bermuda, where it spends three days as part of weekly voyages to the British territory.

A variety of US news sources said the ship was stuck on the reef while lifeboats were deployed to check for damage.

"The ship's propulsion was affected and, at which time, the vessel made contact with the channel bed," Norwegian said in a statement about the incident.

"The ship has full power and onboard services continue as scheduled. The ship's team is currently assessing the situation and we will provide more information as it becomes available," it continued.

Norwegian has blamed a fault in the steering system, with high tide allowing *Dawn* to refloat and move to a Bermuda dock for a more thorough inspection.

Agents take on the sharks in Fiji



FACING their fears head on, this group of agents looked down on sharks in a pulse-racing snorkel trip during a recent Fiji fam trip.

The experience came on a visit to Barefoot Kuata Island Resort, part of Blue Lagoon Cruises' new Ultimate Encounters range, with the line hosting the group.

The Flight Centre group from Victoria also spent a night onboard the line's recently refurbished *Fiji Princess* vessel.

Pictured above at Kuata Island Resort from left is Allison McDonald, FC Echuca; Laura Kennett, FC Shepparton; Heidi Bradford, FC Mildura; Amy Morrison, FC Bendigo; Michael Dalton, FC North Essendon; Richard Carrick, Blue Lagoon Cruises; John McKay, FC Round The World; David Infiri, FC SOAR; Carly Taylor, FC Watgardens; Bianca Barnes, FC Mildura and Melissa Siocco from FC SOAR.



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CRUISE NEWS & VIEWS

with Brett Jardine
GM, CLIA Australasia

Paul Gauguin review

SAILING the waters of French Polynesia has been high on my bucket list for years and I was fortunate to be able to fulfil this on a Paul Gauguin cruise recently.

From Papeete we joined a diverse range of people on the spectacular *Paul Gauguin* for a journey around the Society Islands & Tuamotus and I have to say both the product and destination way exceeded expectations!

Although there are no direct flights from Australia to Tahiti, a prevailing wind ensured our hop across the ditch from Sydney to Auckland was a speedy 2 hours 20 minutes and the Auckland to Papeete leg was just as impressive in under four and a half hours.

With plenty of time to ponder life's challenges whilst gazing at spectacular turquoise waters, I did stop to think how lucky we were and to also consider what fulfilment such an experience delivers.

The presentation of the *Paul Gauguin* was first class with my OCD tendencies unable to fault any aspect of this charming 320-pax vessel. The crew were nothing short of delightful and I would go so far to say our cabin steward was probably the best we had experienced.

And then there was the cuisine - nothing short of exceptional thanks to the culinary creations of Jean-Pierre Vigato - Chef Propriétaire of the world-renowned, Michelin-starred restaurant Apicius in Paris.



NZ dredging for Ovation

THE New Zealand coastal port of Dunedin is the first in the country to have dredging works approved which will enable the city to host visits by mega-ships such as Royal Caribbean's *Ovation of the Seas*.

The NZ\$30 million project at Port Otago will also allow the facility to accept the next generation of container ships.

Port Otago ceo Geoff Plunket said the "Next Generation Port Otago" project would include simulation exercises to ensure Quantum-class cruise ships like *Ovation* could enter the harbour.

Speaking to *Cruise Weekly* at the TRENZ trade show in Rotorua this week, Dunedin Marketing's manager of travel trade sales, Gil Abercrombie said the city was thrilled at the approval.

Dunedin, which sits at the bottom of NZ's South Island, is usually the first or last port of call for ships visiting New Zealand.

Abercrombie said as well as making the channel deeper, modifications may be required to enable the mega-ships to manoeuvre within the port.

However, she said Dunedin is only part of the puzzle, because

other NZ ports may also require modification to accept the larger ships and allow vessels such as *Ovation* to undertake a full New Zealand itinerary.

Cruising has transformed the Dunedin tourism sector, with a range of attractions springing up over the last few years to service shore excursion requirements.

For example, the popular Cadbury World chocolate experience is being significantly enhanced for the upcoming season, with a completely new tour which will allow visitors to interact more with the yummy stuff - in contrast to the previous tour which kept them separate from the manufacturing facilities.

Dunedin will also welcome a new five star hotel in Oct this year, with the 121-room Distinction Hotel located in the city's former post office building.

During the 2015/16 summer, Dunedin will have its busiest ever season with arrivals including Azamara Club Cruises, which will undertake the port's first ever overnight stay, allowing cruise passengers to experience some of NZ's nocturnal wildlife.

Lifeguard push flares

FUEL has been added to the fire calling for cruise lines to staff onboard pools with qualified lifeguards after a 10-year-old girl drowned on *Norwegian Gem*.

The accident happened in one of Gem's pools when the ship was off the coast of Myrtle Beach.

It is the second drowning on NCL ships in the space of a year after a four-year-old died while onboard *Norwegian Breakaway*.

Seatrade Asia topics

DISCUSSIONS on maintaining the growth of cruising in the wider Asian market will dominate the upcoming Seatrade Cruise Asia Forum, taking place in Busan, South Korea from 11-12 Jun.

Experts and executives from the cruise industry will gather to talk about the growing sector, which Asian cruise travellers tipped to surpass 2.1 million this year.

Long-term forecasts see Asia providing 8m cruisers by 2020.



CARNIVAL Cruise Lines

Australia has turned a segment made popular by late night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel into its latest promotional video.

In honour of surpassing 100,000 likes on Facebook, CCL has filmed some of its staff reading some of their favourite messages and comments from the Facebook page left by pax.

The compliments speak of a wide variety of the ship's public features, with many focusing on the ship's food options, while the towel animals are also a hit.

Crew also get the chance to show off their personalities by reacting to each message.

CLICK HERE to view the video.

IT'S one thing to fall in love with a particular amenity on a cruise ship, but one couple has chosen to immortalise it into their personal relationship.

A couple from the United Kingdom, Sharon Bowman and Mark Burden (**below**), decided to be the first to get married inside Royal Caribbean's North Star observation gondola onboard *Quantum of the Seas* while off the coast of Haiti.

Overseeing the nuptials was Quantum Captain Felix Srecko, who is fully authorised as a marriage celebrant, joined also by the hotel director, gondola operator and photographers.



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EXCURSIONS by kayak & zodiac will be added first to *Seabourn Quest* as part of an enhancement to the fleet's expedition offerings, all departing from the ship's fold-out watersports marina.

Debuting from the northern summer, the excursions will allow pax to head out with expert teams of scientists, scholars and naturalists while in select ports.

Freshest of fresh fish

PRINCESS Cruises has begun its 2015 Alaska season by serving guests the first catch of Copper River King salmon for the season.

The catch was delivered in grand style to the King Salmon Restaurant, flown in by helicopter.

Pandaw opens 2016/17

SEASONAL river cruise journeys from Laos to China along the "undiscovered" Upper Mekong River headline the launch of the line's new 2016/17 season.

The added itinerary sees pax travel from Vientiane to Jinghong or vice versa on a 14-night voyage available Sep 2016 to Apr 2017.

Early booking discounts of up to 20% along with waived supplements for solo travellers are among incentives launched in line with the season's release.

Incentives are valid for bookings processed before 31 Jul.

A series of sailings designed for first-time river cruisers in Asia has also been identified for the year along with departures on the line's popular small ship fleet.

Funding for WA cruise

FEDERAL Trade and Investment Minister Andrew Robb has joined with WA Tourism Minister Kim Hames to unveil a funding plan for cruise infrastructure in WA.

Jointly announced yesterday, the two governments will provide \$5 million each over four years for projects including a tender platform for transferring pax from cruise ships in Busselton.

Funding will also cover works to see the Mersey Point Jetty in Rockingham redeveloped.

Funding comes as part of a partnership between the federal and state governments under the Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure Program.

A project on the WA Coral Coast is also being considered.

Independence trauma

ROYAL Caribbean Freedom-class vessel *Independence of the Seas* returned early to Fort Lauderdale last week after a passenger suffered serious head trauma on its FlowRider surfing simulator.

It is unclear how or when the accident occurred however the ship returned early to homeport.

Tom Harper anchored

AMERICAN river cruise reseller Tom Harper River Journeys appears to have gone out of business, according to The Better Business Bureau in the US.

Calls to the firm's office were going unanswered in business hours, with multiple lines saying bookings have been cancelled.

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