

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 07 Apr 2016

RCI to assist guests

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) is assuring all guests booked on the rescheduled *Ovation of the Seas* Sydney to Singapore cruise (CW Tue) that it will be assisting with any hotel or airline change fees incurred as a result.

The rescheduling comes as RCI extends *Ovation's* maiden season in Australia with four extra cruises to be added to its summer 2016/17 season.

Some guests on the axed 23 Jan voyage have taken to Facebook to vent their frustrations.

RCI has responded with an official statement on their page saying they expect "all guests communications to be completed in the next two weeks.

"Affected guests will have first choice to re-book any of the new sailings on *Ovation of the Seas*, including the revised repositioning cruise one month later, or receive a full refund of any deposits paid," they said.

MyCruises brand launch

GOLD Coast-based Ignite Travel Group - well known for its My Holiday Centre portfolio with brands such as MyFiji, MyBali and My Queensland Holiday, has launched a new MyCruises brand with hand-picked ocean, river and speciality cruises.

MyCruises offers complete holiday packages, including pre & post stay, flights, ground transfers, upgrades, extra room nights, credits and tours.

The brand was created with the aim of streamlining the cruise booking process and removing the need to go "wading through the mounds of confusing information on itineraries, ships and departure points to find out which is the best cruise.

"With so many cruise options available today, deciding which offer to go with can be overwhelming," MyCruises md Randall Deer said.

"We've taken the guesswork out and partnered with the best airline, cruise operators and resorts to create unbeatable cruise holidays whilst including our signature bonuses that MyHoliday Centre is so well known for," Deer continued.

The brand also offers a Price Beat Guarantee to ensure clients are getting "the best value in the market," with a promise to undercut identical deals by \$100 "or you travel for free".

The Brand's latest 'Hot Cruise Deal' is an 11-night Hawaiian Cruise package with seven nights onboard *Pride of America*, four-nights at Sheraton Princess Kaiulan and return Economy Airfares to Honolulu stating at \$3490 pp.

ATAS travel accredited, the brand has now gone live at MyCruises.com.au with several special launch offers available.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Celebrity fast Wi-Fi

CELEBRITY Cruises is rolling out its new 'Xcelerate' high-speed wireless internet across the fleet.

Xcelerate is already available on *Celebrity Reflection* and is soon to come into place on the remainder of the line's large ships with the exception of *Celebrity Xpedition*, the 100-guest ship sailing year-round in the Galápagos Islands, which is not scheduled to receive the fast internet.

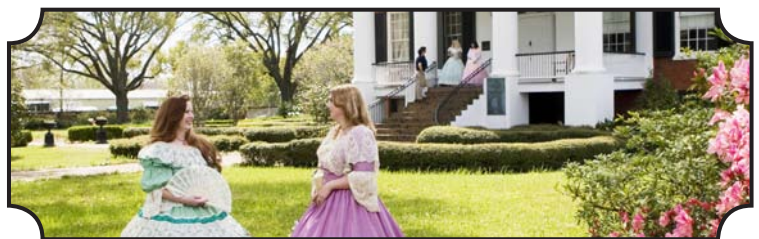
Numerous Xcelerate packages are on offer, all of which can be pre-booked before the departure or purchased on board for the same rate.

Unlimited packages start at \$US140 per person for five to nine days and \$US199 per person for 10 plus days.

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*CONDITIONS: Sales to 30 June 2016 or until sold out. Fare is cruise only in US dollars, per guest, based on 2 people sharing an inside category E and Outside category C, including all known port charges. Valid for new bookings only and not combinable with other current offers. Gratuities, air & land transportation additional. All fares & itineraries are subject to change, availability & currency fluctuations. Please request a brochure for complete terms & conditions, or ask your local Travel Agent for details.



Four new ships for MSC

MSC CRUISES announced yesterday in Paris that it would be adding four new, 'cutting edge' Liquefied Natural Gas-powered ships to their fleet with the first set to be delivered in 2022 and last in 2026.

The company signed a formal letter of intent with STX France for the cruise ships, an investment worth €4 billion.

Two of the ships are firm orders and the other two are options with each designed to have capacity for 5,400 passengers.

It comes just months after MSC confirmed an order for two new 6,300 passenger Meraviglia Plus-class ships also with STX France.

This means MSC now has 11 next generation ships on order, eight in France and three in Italy, bringing the total value

of the company's 10-plus years investment plan to nearly €9b.

MSC Cruises executive chairman Pierfrancesco Vago said the announcement was "a reflection of our constant commitment to innovation, as we partner with STX France to design yet again a completely new prototype".

"Our long-standing focus on innovation will make the new prototype quite unlike anything currently existing in the industry," Vago promised.

"It will be the richest in amenities & features for all guests, including families; cutting edge in design; feature the latest & best state-of-the-art smart technology at sea as well as use the most-advanced environmentally-friendly technology available," he added.

Oceania earlybirds

OCEANIA Cruises has today unveiled its 2017-18 itineraries and earlybird booking deals.

A total of 173 sailings are on sale from today along with 41 extended journeys.

The new season sailings will also be eligible for the 5% bonus commission (CW Tue) which is on offer this month to celebrate the newly integrated Norwegian, Oceania and Regent Seven Seas office in Sydney.

Guests booking before the end of Sep 2016 will receive a choice of either the OLife special offer of free shore excursions, a free beverage package, free unlimited internet access or free shipboard credit; or complimentary pre- or post-cruise land tours to African or Asian destinations.

Details on 1300 355 200.

European saving

UNIWORLD is offering \$200pp off its 8-day European Holiday Markets boutique river cruise for bookings deposited by 30 Apr.

Priced from \$4,069pp, twin share the deal is available for travel 01, 08 & 15 Dec.

For more information call 1300 780 231 or visit uniworld.com.

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25% off Scenic Eclipse

SCENIC is offering 25% off solo traveller fares on selected cruises on board *Scenic Eclipse*.

The deal is valid for the 38m² Deluxe Verandah Suites and the 32m² Verandah Suites on a number of departures in 2018 and 2019.

It's available on six of the 12-day Ultimate Antarctica departures (05 Dec 2018, 05 & 16 Jan 2019, 07, 18, 27 Feb 2019), the 11-day Ultimate Arctic departing on 20 & 30 Jul 2019 and the 21/22-day Antarctica, South Georgia and Falkland Islands departing on 16 Dec 2018 and 01 Mar 2019.

For more info call 138 128 or see scenic.com.au.

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<p>7-night Japan Cruise from Hong Kong 16th Apr to 24th Sep 2016</p>	<p>from \$1,333 per person / \$2,666 per couple</p>
<p>12-night Japan & Vietnam Cruise from Guangzhou 25th Sep 2016</p>	<p>from \$2,199 per person / \$4,398 per couple</p>
<p>5-night Malaysia Cruise from Singapore 12th Jun to 7th Aug 2016</p>	<p>from \$800 per person / \$1,600 per couple</p>

Contact your preferred wholesaler for further information or visit www.starcruiases.com

*TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY.

Harmony slide video

ROYAL Caribbean has released the new clip "Engineering the Tallest Slide at Sea: Royal Caribbean Creates the Ultimate Abyss on *Harmony of the Seas*."

To see construction of the 10 storey slide [CLICK HERE](#).

Aranui bonus sailings

ARANUI Cruises is adding two extra sailings to its 2017 schedule due to a strong demand for the line's new freighter ship *Aranui 5* launched in Dec.

A total of 19 departures will now be offered in 2017 on the 14-day adventure across three French Polynesian archipelagoes.

Aranui's regional representative for Australia New Zealand Laurent Wong said "even with the new ship offering 25% more capacity than *Aranui 3*, most of the year's cruises are already fully booked".

Earlybird rates for 2017 start from \$5752pp for *Aranui 5's* 08 Jun 2017 departure including a 10% discount.

The 30 Sep 2017 sailing will be offered to senior travellers aged over 60 for \$5752pp.

Avalon's Kiwi-style christening



NEW Zealand broadcaster Judy Bailey has christened Avalon Waterways' newest river cruise ship *Avalon Imagery II* at a ceremony held on the Rhine in Germany, giving the ship a blessing in Maori.

"May your journey be safe from launch to landing," Bailey said, translating the Maori.

The event was hosted by Avalon's Auckland office and involved more than 70 travel industry guests New Zealand and worldwide guests and dignitaries.

Avalon Imagery II offers two decks of all-suite accommodation and caters for up to 128 passengers.

The ship will operate primarily on the Rhine, offering Avalon's eight-day Romantic Rhine itinerary between Amsterdam and Basel.

The christening is soon to be followed by the launch of *Avalon Passion*, giving Avalon 12 suite ships in a European fleet of 16.

Pictured at the launch of *Avalon Imagery II* from left: Avalon Waterways president Patrick Clark; godmother, Judy Bailey; the ship's captain, Nico van den Boom; Globus family of brands general manager New Zealand Troy Ackerman, and Globus family of brands managing director Australasia Stewart Williams.



Cruise Ship Order Book

THE cruise boom we have experienced in this region could well be attributed to an unlikely global event that turned out to be quite advantageous for Australian and New Zealand passengers.

When the Global Financial Crisis started to unfold in North America, it had a major impact on the traditional source market for cruise passengers (USA).

This gave cruise line executives the opportunity (or some may argue it forced their hand) to redeploy capacity around the world looking for new source markets.

With Australia (and to a lesser extent the smaller NZ market) starting to show some promise with double digit growth, it became a very good opportunity to test the region as a viable long-term proposition.

History shows as we draw toward the end of our 2015-16 cruise season, we've experienced more capacity than ever before & over the last few years this increase in local capacity has given more & more Aussies & Kiwis the chance to cruise for the first time.

In the next five years there are nearly 50 cruise ships on order in ship yards around the world which will deliver increased capacity of close to 150,000 berths.

Perhaps we could consider ourselves the saviour of the global cruise industry in recent years!



The Auckland Hop On Hop Off Explorer bus stop is directly at front of the new Queens Wharf cruise ship terminal

[Click here for more details](#)



EVER wondered what the inside of a cruise ship looks like during a dry dock makeover? Take a look below.

The picture taken inside the luxurious *Azamara Quest* was tweeted earlier in the week by the line's ceo Larry Pimentel along with the following caption: "Take it apart...walk it away...demolition in full progress. Various workers are on the ship 24/7. What an effort".

Not as glamorous as one might expect but we bet the finished results will be pretty spectacular.

If you'd like to have more of a sneak peak into the action that takes place during ship makeovers you can follow Larry on Twitter @LarryPimentel for regular updates and snaps.



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