

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Thursday 25 Feb 2016

## SeaLink acquisition

**SEALINK** Travel Group has entered into an agreement to acquire Captain Cook Cruises Western Australia for \$12 million.

The price includes seven vessels, plant equipment, all contracts and intellectual property.

SeaLink md Jeff Ellison said the company sees "significant upside" of expanding the business footprint in WA, with the opening of Elizabeth Quay in Jan.

"This development will reconnect the city and the Swan River, bringing public spaces, business opportunities and much needed accommodation to Perth," Ellison said.

"There is potential to provide marine transport to the new football stadium and the expanded casino and the ability to offer further commuter service in Perth."

Captain Cook Cruises WA's ceo, Pauline McAlinder and cfo Jame Fallon will be added to SeaLink's management team.

## NCLH full year results

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line Holdings has reported an adjusted net income of US\$662.7 million for the 2015 full year.

The company's revenue increased 39% for the period to US\$4.3 billion, compared to US\$3.1 billion in 2014.

NCLH has entered 2016 with more than half of its inventory sold for the year, significantly ahead of the same time last year.

Revenue is forecast to hit US\$5 billion in 2016, with *Sirena* set to join Oceania Cruises in Q2 and *Seven Seas Explorer* to join Regent Seven Seas Cruises in Q3.

## Value of cruising trends up

**CRUISING** in Australia delivered a record economic contribution of \$3.6 billion in 2014-15, up 11.6% since 2013, new figures reveal.

The "Contribution of Cruise Tourism to the Australian Economy in 2014" report, commissioned by CLIA Australasia shows an increase in cruise pax numbers and homeported ships drove the growth.

During the 2014-15 financial year, on homeported ships the number of calls rose 8.3% and pax numbers climbed 10.3%.

CLIA noted capacity constraints remain a barrier to future growth, particularly in Sydney.

NSW's share of the overall economic contribution slipped from 73% in 2013 to 68% in 2014-15 but maintained its position as the dominant state.

Passenger and crew visit days rose 8.8%, up 11.5% for passengers visiting Australian ports on homeported ships and 4.1% for passengers visiting on transiting ships.

## Carnival Magic reno

**CARNIVAL** *Magic* is adding to its dining and bar offering as part of a multi-million-dollar reno.

The vessel went into a two week dry dock on Sun and will emerge fitted out with Guy's Burger Joint, RedFrog Rum Bar, Bluelguana Tequila Bar, Pizzeria del Capitano and Alchemy bar next month.

The move is to prep the ship for its repositioning to Florida in Apr, where it will begin year-round Caribbean departures.

*Magic* will continue its schedule from Galveston until 10 Apr.

The study found homeported passengers spent on average just over \$505 per visit day while transit passengers spent an average of \$160 per visit day.

Releasing the figures today, CLIA Australasia md Neil Linwood said the report "provides further proof of the value of our industry and demonstrates the benefits which can flow to communities that embrace cruising".

The association also pointed to capacity constraints limiting the number of visiting int'l ships, as international passenger visit days in 2014-15 plummeted 10%.

International passengers spent an average of \$700 a day in a home port compared to \$181 in a transit port, while domestic passengers spent an average \$483 a day in a home port and \$151 in a transit port.

### Cruise Weekly today

*Cruise Weekly* today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news and photos plus a full page from **Norwegian Cruise Line**.

## P&O's events take off

**P&O** Cruises has seen a "real surge in interest" since the launch of its corporate events product a year ago, director of sales Ryan Taibel told media at AIME on Tue.

When *Pacific Aria* and *Pacific Eden* joined the fleet in Nov, that interest intensified, with the pitch of the vessels "really resonating" with incentive and event planners.

"That's something that's really exciting for us and maybe not something that we were fully expecting at first," Taibel said.

About 70% of the fleet's delegates are booked on *Aria* and *Eden*, of which 60% are booked on meetings and 40% on incentives and the line has seen a notable rise in charter enquiries.

"Our forward bookings are looking really strong, in fact we've already exceeded the total for all of 2015 and we're well on track to hit our target of 12,000 pax for 2016," Taibel added.

P&O has pinned the appeal of cruising to event organisers down to value for money, convenience of having everything under one roof and cruising's "wow factor".

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# CRUISE WEEKLY

AGENT UPDATE

Thursday 25 Feb 2016

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## Cruiseabout Aussie-first

**CRUISEABOUT** this week announced a new technology to the Australian cruise market with the launch of the brand's virtual reality experience.

The virtual reality vision is an Australian cruise industry first and has been produced in collaboration with Royal Caribbean International and Carnival Cruise Line Australia.

It provides customers with a fully-immersive, 360 degree guided tour inside *Voyager of the Seas* and *Carnival Spirit*.

Featuring at select Cruiseabout stores initially but with a planned national roll out, the virtual reality vision is powered using Samsung VR headsets.

Jarrold Pask, general manager for Cruiseabout said "we are at the forefront of virtual reality technology advances and proud to bring the experience to all customers. For travellers that are new to cruise and unfamiliar with ships, cabin types and the onboard experience, this vision will be a huge asset to their decision making process as they have the ability to get a taste for it virtually before stepping on

board in real life."

Pask told **Cruise Weekly** the "last twelve months has been a record for us ahead of market growth, we've surpassed already what we did for the last financial year at the half way point and on track for double over last year".

Pask added "all cruise categories are growing for us, we're doing really good in the river cruise space and ocean cruise space but all categories have grown for us.

"Our big focus is on air attachment and land attachment; we really want to be the cruise expert that completes the whole experience with the customer from door to door."

Cruiseabout currently has 67 stores with the goal of reaching 100 within the next three years and upping staff numbers to 350.

### CW industry survey

**DON'T** forget to be a part of the cruise industry's biggest ever survey on agent satisfaction, sales, support and consumer behaviour.

To participate in the 5-10 minute survey, **CLICK HERE**.

## Geraldton trains up agents



**MORE** than 50 local retail reps attended an inaugural info session and workshop presented by Jurek Leon of Terrific Trading on Geraldton on Mon.

The event was a collaboration between Tourism WA and Geraldton Chamber of Commerce.

**Pictured** left to right are: Jurek Leon, Terrific Trading; Rebecca Tuesley, City of Geraldton; Rob Jefferies, Chamber of Commerce Geraldton; Joanne Brown and Christine Cole, Tourism WA.

### Cancelled Fiji calls

**ROYAL** Caribbean has stated it will maintain its scheduled calls to Fiji in the weeks & months ahead, if it is appropriate to do so.

*Voyager of the Seas* and *Legend of the Seas* this week swapped out calls into Mystery Island and Port Vila in Vanuatu for Brisbane and Champagne Bay respectively, due to Cyclone Winston.

Carnival Cruise Line said it will return to Suva and Port Denarau "as soon as the people of Fiji are ready to welcome us back".

On Tue, Princess Cruises said *Dawn Princess* is still set to arrive in Denarau on 01 Mar.

### P&O events mix it up

**P&O** Cruises has seen an increasing appetite in the events sector for cruises departing from ports other than Sydney and Brisbane.

In 2015, over 90% of events and incentive booking were on cruises out of Sydney and Brisbane, but 30% of 2016 and 2017 corporate bookings are departing from alternative ports.

These include Melbourne, Adelaide, Fremantle, Cairns, Singapore and Auckland.

### Footy tipping sign up

**SIGN** up to **Travel Daily's** footy tipping competitions for the chance to win weekly prizes plus the grand prize of Emirates flights.

The Super Rugby tipping comp kicks off tomorrow, so get in quick and sign up **HERE**.

If AFL is more your style, sign up **HERE** or if NRL tickles your fancy, **CLICK HERE** to join in.

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## Azamara's ambitions

**SALES** growth has been "phenomenal" for Azamara, vice president of marketing and sales for the Americas, Ellen Bettridge told *Cruise Weekly*.

"Once you bring a ship here and people see it and you become top of mind, it's amazing what it's done to our sales," said Bettridge.

"The first voyagers here in Australia were mostly American and now we're seeing a lot of Australians jumping on board and for 2017 the Australian market is coming on even stronger.

Azamara has "very strong forward bookings" and a repeat rate of 38%, bringing the cruise line back into Australian waters.

In order to meet changing customer expectations, *Quest* will head to Singapore for a 15-day dry dock in Apr (*CW* 19 Jan).

"We're redoing absolutely every single venue. New carpeting, new lighting, new furnishings. A true transformation within the

staterooms," Bettridge added.

As for fleet expansion, Bettridge was staying tight-lipped, commenting "we're part of the Royal Caribbean family and those decisions are made by our board. We of course would love to add more ships immediately.

"We're very optimistic that will come in the future because we've been so successful with the *Journey* and *Quest*."

Azamara is looking to bring a new learning and incentive platform over from the US called The World Academy, which will allow agents to sail for free after they use the portal and sell three cruises.

### Hurtigruten guest

**UN PATRON** of the Ocean Lewis Pugh will join two Hurtigruten voyages in 2016 – one along the Norwegian coast in May and the other, a trip to Antarctica in Dec.

## Coral Exp's Asia trips

**CORAL** Expeditions' new Asia itineraries (*CW* 18 Feb) are headlined by the 12-day exploration from Singapore to Yangon (or v.v.).

The trip spends six out of the 12 nights exploring the coastline of Myanmar, incorporating the Irrawaddy River and the Mergui Archipelago in the Andaman Sea.

"Myanmar is still a vastly unexplored country by tourists; like Vietnam a decade ago it's one of those 'get-there-before-everyone-else-does' destinations", said Coral Expeditions' lead Expedition Leader Steve Cox.

### Costa's cheese bars

**COSTA** Cruises will serve up fresh buffalo mozzarella produced on board at a Mozzarella Gourmet bar set to open at the end of 2016.

The first bar will be on the *Costa Diadema* and the concept will roll out across the fleet in 2017.

### Australis new ship

**AUSTRALIS** will launch a new 200-pax ship for "bottom of the world" voyages in 2017.

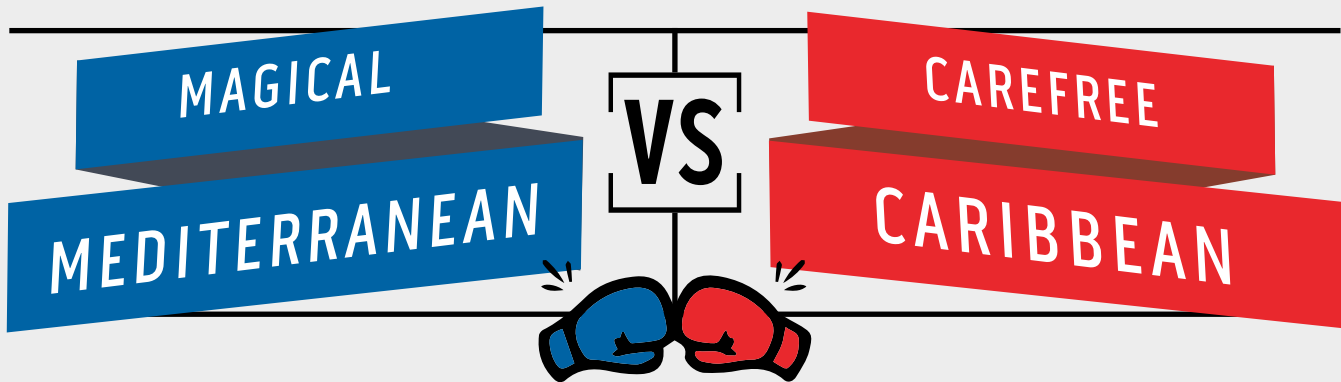
The vessel will replace the 136-pax *Via Australis*, which will be sold to Lindblad Expeditions at the end of the current summer season in Patagonia.



**UNIWORLD'S** 2017 Asia Cruises and Tours brochure feature five itineraries exploring India, China, Cambodia and Vietnam. Using all-suite ships and five-star accommodation on land, the trips stop off at India's Taj Mahal, China's Great Wall and Cambodia's Angkor Wat. The 15-day Timeless Wonders of Vietnam, Cambodia & the Mekong cruises aboard the *Mekong Navigator*, a new addition for 2017. India's Golden Triangle & the Sacred Ganges is a 13-day trip which includes five-nights at Oberoi Hotels & Resorts in Agra, Jaipur and New Delhi, and seven-nights on board the newly launched 56-pax all-suite ship *Ganges Voyager II*, stopping off at the Taj Mahal and Jaipur's City Palace.



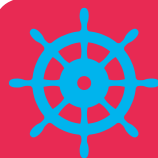
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## Award Winners

AS WIDELY reported in the trade media, the 15th Annual Cruise Industry Awards, held last Saturday in Sydney, was a smashing success!

For those in attendance, if you were not a finalist or better yet a winner, the highlight was most likely your surprise when the super talented Tina Arena arrived on stage. Talk about a WOW moment that was a well-kept secret prior to the night – we hope you enjoyed!

So the benchmark for next year is a little higher (yet again) and we will certainly be pulling out all stops to deliver as the host again next year.

I would like to make special mention of the way in which Tina Arena became a reality for this event as obviously these sorts of acts come with a reasonably hefty price tag.

We are blessed with a number of individuals (that will be embarrassed if I name them) who need to be acknowledged for their contribution in bringing two very serious competitors (RCI & WLCL) together to support a show stopping performance. This was not only a very generous act but also acknowledgment on their part of what the trade means to them.

Congratulations to all the finalists and of course winners from the night. With most of our categories being a result of votes from the very cruise lines you are selling, receiving a "CLIA" would make for a very satisfying night!

Click on the NEWS tab on the CLIA website to see a list of all winners from the night.



## Oceania Marina visits Sydney



**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line Holdings' (NCLH) *Oceania Marina* arrived on Mon for the first time since the company opened its Australasian office (CW 01 Oct).

Over 50 travel agents were invited on board to explore the luxurious vessel and were treated to a lavish hosted dinner in the ship's grand dining room.

After a brief stay, *Oceania Marina* made her way to NZ before cruising the South Pacific.

The next NCLH ship to visit Sydney Harbour will be *Oceania Insignia*, expected in May.

For more photos, see **Facebook**.

## RCL incentive extends

**RCL** Cruises has extended its Colossal Europe incentive due to end 29 Feb until the end of Mar and announced all Celebrity 2016 Europe bookings will receive double entries.

Agents will automatically go in the draw by booking cruises on any Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises or Azamara Club Cruises in Europe, sailing by 31 Mar.

Every booking by the cut-off will earn agents \$50 bonus commission for RCI, \$100 for Celebrity Cruises and \$150 for Azamara Club Cruises.

## Princess' whisky vid

**PRINCESS** Cruises is showcasing the expansion of its whisky offering with a new video.

The video details the new whisky bar 'The Nook', on board *Sea Princess* and *Dawn Princess*. Watch it **HERE**.



**IFYOU** missed out on Uber's puppy delivery service today, you might want to jump on board Princess Cruises' North to Alaska itineraries.

The cruise line is offering a "Puppies in the Piazza" activity on Alaska itineraries, giving guests the opportunity to meet Skagway's newest sled dogs. Guests will be given the opportunity to snap a picture with the pups and meet their trainers.

Also new to the Alaska program is the "meet the mountain climber" activity and "cook my catch" offering.

**MEANWHILE**, a message in a bottle dropped in New York harbour has washed up on a beach in southwest France. The bottle containing a drawing of a cormorant and a signed letter was dropped into the harbour in 2013 by American artist George Boorujy. After travelling 5,700 kilometres, the message was picked up two and a half years later on a beach in the Aquitaine region of France by painter Brigitte Barthelemy and her husband Alain. The pair got in touch via email, with Boorujy hoping the bottle will help raise awareness about the protection of wild birds.

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Postal address: PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia  
Street address: 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia  
P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) F: 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

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Editor: Bruce Piper [info@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:info@cruiseweekly.com.au)

Contributors: Guy Dundas, Jenny Piper, Nathalie Craig, Bonnie Tai, Jasmine O'Donoghue

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan and Magda Herdzik [ads@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:ads@cruiseweekly.com.au)

Business Manager: Jenny Piper [accounts@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:accounts@cruiseweekly.com.au)

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**NORWEGIAN JADE** - first ever complete season from Southampton, Amsterdam and Hamburg

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