

# CRUISE

WEEKLY



Tuesday 08 Nov 2016

## Cruise Weekly today

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

## MSC 2017 new ports

**SARANDE**, Kingstown and Riga are new destinations which have been added to MSC Cruises' 2017 offering, on sale now.

The Albanian resort town of Sarande, in the Eastern Mediterranean appears on *MSC Poesia* seven-night itineraries from 09 Apr-28 Oct.

Visits to La Romana have been replaced with a call at Kingstown, the capital of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on *MSC Fantasia* from 25 Nov to 07 Apr 2018.

One day at sea has been swapped out for Riga, Latvia, on the *MSC Magnifica* journeys departing 13 and 24 May 2017.

Riga is an industrial, cultural, commercial and financial centre. For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Scenic sees Euro pick-up

**SCENIC** is predicting late bookings will help boost a tough year in European river cruising as the Australian market shows signs of recovering from shocks in France and Belgium.

Speaking at the operator's recent 30th anniversary celebrations in Sydney, Scenic acting executive general manager Aleisha Fittler told *Cruise Weekly* she expected sales of 2016 European river cruises were likely to end "on par" with those of 2015 despite a difficult year.

"France was the hardest hit, since the Nice terror attack," Fittler confirmed.

"For Scenic, we have ships in France operating on the Seine, Bordeaux and the Rhone, so France has been tough... but it is starting to pick up."

She said a closer booking cycle had emerged, which had combined with some of the best

airfares available in recent years to improve expectations and boost late bookings.

"River cruising is still solid," Fittler said.

"Europe is picking up and confidence is coming back."

## Maritime reg delay

**THE** introduction of a national system of maritime safety regulations has been deferred to 01 Jul 2018, Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester said yesterday.

"By extending the timeframe to 01 Jul 2018 we will allow each state, the NT and stakeholders in the domestic commercial vessel industries to better consult and prepare for the changes before Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) assumes responsibility," Chester explained.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

## Carnival capacity up

**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line will add a second year-round ship in Tampa, Florida and upgrade its capacity in Long Beach, California in 2018.

*Carnival Miracle* will launch seven-day Caribbean sailings from Tampa on 27 Jan, calling into the ports of George Town, Grand Cayman; Cozumel, Mexico; and Mahogany Bay, Isla Roatan; and Belize City, Belize.

Carnival will deploy *Carnival Splendor* to the West Coast to operate week-long Mexican Riviera cruises following an agreement last month to expand the Long Beach Cruise Terminal facility to accommodate larger ships (**CW** 18 Oct).

Prior to arriving at their new homeports, both ships will offer extended Panama Canal cruises in Jan 2018.

*Splendor* will also operate two 14-day Hawaii cruises round trip from Long Beach, one departing 13 Oct and the other 01 Dec.

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Get an update on all the latest cruise news in the November issue of *travelBulletin*.

**CLICK HERE** to read **travelBulletin**

## Cruise fusion push

**THE** addition of Geoff Hackett as general manager of Cruise fusion will help develop the brand for the trade (*CW* breaking news Fri).

Cruise fusion is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cruise1st Australia and provides cruise packages and promo materials, which can be featured on the websites of industry retailers.

Hackett "will assume full P&L responsibility and drive the Cruise fusion wholesale business forward," said managing director of Cruise1st Australia, Carl Frier.

"Geoff's previous experience and track record will build on what is now a recognised cruise package wholesaler," he added.

## Details on Duchess

**THE** American Queen Steamboat Company has released more details on its new upmarket vessel *American Duchess* ahead of its introduction in Jun 2017.

The all-suite paddlewheeler will cruise the Mississippi and tributaries alongside existing vessels *American Queen* and *American Empress*, but caters to just 166 passengers.

Its 83 cabins are promoted as the largest on the river, including owner's suites of up to 50m<sup>2</sup> with private verandas and personal butlers.

Loft suites are the first double-story cabins on US rivers, also 50m<sup>2</sup> with private balconies.

Itineraries will range from six to 23 days between New Orleans, Memphis and Minneapolis.

## Aussies' Dream a reality



**A GROUP** of Australian agents had a taste of Dream Cruises' new *Genting Dream* this week as it began its maiden voyage from Singapore to Hong Hong.

The agents (**pictured**) were quick to sample some distinctly Aussie flavours, being among the first to try some of the cuisine offered by Sydney chef Mark Best.

*Genting Dream* also provides a taste of fine Australian wines, offering the world's first Penfolds Flagship Wine Vault at sea.

## France culinary cruise

**EUROPEAN** Waterways has released a new culinary themed itinerary aboard its hotel barge *Enchanté*, travelling through the south west of France.

The six-night cruise explores the Canal du Midi and is available for up to eight on a charter basis.

Departures cost from €36,000, with 10% discount Mar-May.

## Viator top shore tours

**VIATOR** has named its top ten shore excursions for Australians sailing to the South Pacific and New Zealand.

The TripAdvisor subsidiary says its most popular shore excursion last season was the Taieri Gorge Railway Tour and sightseeing trip departing from Dunedin on New Zealand's South Island.

On the east coast of the North Island, Viator names a seven-hour Rotorua Highlights travelling from Tauranga as its second highest selling shore tour.

Other NZ tours include the half-day Ultimate Wine Tour from the town of Napier and the Highlights of Marlborough from the southern port of Picton.

Top Pacific excursions include a Guided Country Tour from Noumea, a Zipline Canopy Tour from Port Vila and a Jetboat Safari on Fiji's Sigatoka River.

## NCL new svp sales

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line has announced the appointment of Camille Olivere as senior vice president, sales.

Previously senior vp of partner brands at World Travel Holdings, she has had past roles at NCL and will now oversee the line's North American sales development.

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### ETG masters the art of cruising



**OVER** the weekend over 50 Sydney-based agents from Express Travel Group's portfolio of brands spent the day on *Radiance of the Seas* for a cruise masterclass.

Conducted in conjunction with Royal Caribbean, the group inspected the ship and enjoyed lunch before tucking into an 'art of cruising' masterclass.

The team are **pictured**.

### Hobart terminal wi-fi

**SIX** wi-fi points are now in operation within the Hobart Cruise Ship Terminal.

The service is accessible for 30min, per device, per location, each day.

Hobart terminal has recently completed upgrades to cater for larger ships.

# OPT plan a wet blanket

**PLANS** to turnaround two ships in Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal in one day could "put a damper on cruise itineraries," Terry Thornton, svp commercial port ops and Carnival Int'l said.

Speaking to *Cruise Weekly*, Thornton said timing of the plan may see the first ship arrive around 5am and leave at 3pm & the second from 4pm-midnight.

The proposal (**CW** 08 Sep) could create problems for the itinerary, particularly for the second ship.

"It's challenging to get to the Pacific Islands without that additional time, that could cost you a lot of time or cost you a lot of fuel," Thornton said.

Another concern is the impact getting onto the ship later may have on the guest experience.

"People view their vacation begins right when they get on the ship and if now, you're sitting in port and doing your first night at dinner in port, it's not the same as sailing out through the beautiful harbour," he explained.

Thornton pinned infrastructure as the brand's single biggest issue for growth, noting the issue stretches to Brisbane too.

"The Carnival brand should be in Brisbane, but right now the terminal where the ships can operate is not acceptable for a

ship our size," he said.

While there is progress in Brisbane, Thornton emphasised a deal was yet to be done.

Noting the guest throughput of the combined Carnival brands in the Australian market, Thornton said "we're going to try and leverage our position and try & see if we can get that to happen".

### HAL Aussie direction

**HOLLAND** America Line carries more Australians to Europe and Alaska than "close to home" cruises, Beth Bodensteiner told media at the WLCL conference.

The next most popular destinations for Aussies cruising with HAL are Canada, New England, South America & Asia.

As the fleet evolves and larger ships are moved into other deployments, HAL plans to grow Aussies into "secondary markets".

"We know they have interest because they're travelling a lot there now, but it could certainly grow," Bodensteiner said.

Meanwhile, Joe Slattery, HAL's svp global marketing & sales told *Cruise Weekly* it would be "nice" to have another Australian chef back on the Culinary Council to replace Mark Best, but they are "still looking".

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## RCL three ship rendezvous



**THE** three largest cruise ships in the world met over the weekend.

Royal Caribbean International's Oasis-class ships, *Oasis of the Seas*, *Allure of the Seas* and the new *Harmony of the Seas* came together on the eve of *Harmony's* debut in her new permanent homeport of Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale.

The new addition is 30cm longer in length than her sisters and boasts VOOOM, the fastest internet at sea, a 10-storey tall slide, Jamie's Italian Cuisine, Wonderland and robot bartenders.

## Viking 2018 program

**VIKING** Cruises' 2018 river cruise itineraries are now open to book, offering 2017 prices on select river cruises reserved by 31 Dec with a \$100 deposit.

*Harmony* sails seven-night Eastern and Western Caribbean itineraries from Port Everglades. The trio are **pictured**.

## Australis' new ship

**PATAGONIAN** cruise line, Australis' new ship, the 210-pax *Ventus Australis* will make its maiden cruise on 02 Jan 2018.

The cruise will be part of the 2017/18 "bottom of the world" voyages to Cape Horn and Tierra del Fuego.

During her maiden season, *Ventus Australis* will operate 22 four-night sailings between Ushuaia in Argentina and Punta Arenas in Chile while *Stella Australis* will offer 54 three-, four- and seven-night sailings from Ushuaia and Punta Arenas.

The line has frozen 2017/18 Patagonia fares at 2016/17 prices.

## Cunard identifies "blocks"

**A PERCEPTION** of expense is a potential block to new cruisers booking with Cunard, the cruise line found in a study in Aug.

In Australia, 3,000 existing Cunard cruises, competitor cruisers as well as potential newcomers were surveyed, along with these groups in Germany, USA and the UK.

"If there are blocks it can be that sometimes people think it's so fantastic that it's going to be more expensive than is reality," Simon Palethorpe, svp Cunard told *Cruise Weekly*.

The research also looked at dress codes and found the majority agree two nights of formal wear in a seven-night cruise is the right amount.

"We need to make sure that things like a dress code on our special evenings is not seen as anything other than fun, it's entering into the spirit of an occasion," Palethorpe said.

The cruise line has recently revamped its Training Academy in the UK, indicating it would come

to "this part of the world," but staying tight-lipped on a time.

"We'd be excited to roll that out globally so that we really help agents who are dealing directly with our guests to really understand the product," he said.

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### Cruise Calendar

This week's port calls of cruise ships at various destinations around Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	
<i>Voyager of the Seas</i>	08 Nov
<i>Explorer of the Seas</i>	10 Nov
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	11 Nov
<i>Golden Princess</i>	11 Nov
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	13 Nov
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	13 Nov
<i>Celebrity Solstice</i>	14 Nov
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	14 Nov
MELBOURNE	
<i>Sun Princess</i>	11 Nov
<i>Emerald Princess</i>	13 Nov
<i>Golden Princess</i>	14 Nov
BRISBANE	
<i>Sea Princess</i>	09 Nov
<i>Golden Princess</i>	09 Nov
<i>Pacific Pearl</i>	09 Nov
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	10 Nov
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	12 Nov
<i>Celebrity Solstice</i>	12 Nov
<i>Legend of the Seas</i>	13 Nov
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	14 Nov
CAIRNS	
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	11 Nov
DARWIN	
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	08 Nov
FREMANTLE	
<i>Emerald Princess</i>	08 Nov
BUNBURY	
<i>Emerald Princess</i>	09 Nov
ADELAIDE	
<i>Sun Princess</i>	09 Nov
<i>Maasdam</i>	12 Nov
HOBART	
<i>Sun Princess</i>	13 Nov
AUCKLAND	
<i>Noordam</i>	08 Nov

## Carnival Vista christened



**THE** christening of *Carnival Vista* took place in New York on Fri, followed by a celebration for families of those in the military. Godmother of the vessel, Miss USA Deshauna Barber poured a bottle of Champagne over a bell bearing the ship's name (**pictured**) and released the ceremonial bottle of champagne that smashed over the hull. Barber is the first woman serving in the US military to hold the Miss USA title. The ceremony was followed by a concert for Operation Homefront military families by Carrie Underwood. Festivities included accom, meals, activities & entertainment for military families.

### Mekong availability

**NEW** departures have been scheduled for Pandaw's Classic Mekong program from 17 Jan to 26 Feb 2017 aboard the *Tonle Pandaw* - **CLICK HERE** for details. Additional cabins have also been made available on the 24 Dec 2017 Christmas departure from Siem Reap to Saigon.

### Carbon neutral cruise

**TEN** small-ship itineraries have been unveiled by Intrepid under its Peregrine Adventures brand, which it says make up the largest range of carbon-offset cruises in the market. Catering to no more than 50 passengers, they visit destinations including Croatia, Cuba, Iceland, Portugal, Panama and Greece. Intrepid's offset policy has made it carbon-neutral since 2010.

### Lindblad revenue up

**LINDBLAD** Expedition Holdings has announced increased revenues in the third quarter of 2016, despite facing "headwinds". Tour revenues were up 21% over Q3 last year to \$70.8 million, mainly due to the acquisition of eco-tour operator Natural Habitat earlier in the year. The Lindblad segment's revenue was down 4% to \$56 million, attributed to decreased ticket revenue and higher costs. Adjusted EBITDA of \$17.4 million increased 10%, compared to the same period in 2015.

### Crystal's US TVC

**CRYSTAL** Cruises is running its first TVC in the USA since 2004, airing two 60-second ads on cable news channels CNN and Fox News leading up to and immediately following the United States' Presidential Election.

### CCC Fiji long lunch

**A LONG** lazy lunch cruise to Captain Cook Cruises Fiji's private island of Tivua is now on offer, departing from Port Denarau Marina at 12:30pm. Upon arrival, guests can enjoy a tropical buffet lunch and can then go snorkelling, glass bottom boating, kayaking and more.



**A NEW** tradition will be kicked off by Royal Caribbean this month, which it has dubbed "Friendsgiving". Friendsgiving brings friends together as a replacement for, or in addition to, more traditional, family-focused Thanksgiving festivities. The cruise line has transformed an exclusive VIP sailing on *Harmony of the Seas*, from 10-11 Nov into "the Ultimate Friendsgiving celebration," featuring custom menus and cocktails and a live performance from DNCE. During the cruise, the line is encouraging guests and their friends to take on *Harmony's* thrills, such as sliding down the 10-story Ultimate Abyss, surfing on the Flowrider and rock climbing.

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