

CRUISE

WEEKLY



Tuesday 15 Nov 2016

MSC's world cruise

MSC Cruises' inaugural world cruise will swing by three Aussie ports during a 119-day itinerary.

Now on sale for MSC Cruises Voyagers Club members, the *MSC Magnifica* voyage will sail from Genoa on 05 Feb, 2019 and visit 49 destinations in 32 countries.

Guests will cross both the Panama and Suez Canals, cruise through the Caribbean, Colombia, & Aruba then onto the America's before heading to Hawaii.

Magnifica will next explore Tonga, Samoa, Bora Bora, Fiji and then sail into New Zealand for its maiden visit exploring the Bay of Islands and Auckland.

Sydney, Melbourne and Fremantle are next on the itinerary, followed by Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and an overnight in the Maldives.

Magnifica will then sail onto the UAE before transiting the Suez and back to the Med.

General sales will open mid-Dec.

Polar class ship for who?

CRUISE lines are increasingly looking at expedition cruising as a key growth sector, with a contract for another Polar Class 6 ship having been signed with an Eastern Europe shipyard.

Brodosplit, Croatia's largest shipyard, has inked an agreement to construct an expedition vessel for an undisclosed customer.

The ship, due for delivery in 2019, will accommodate 196 passengers in 95 luxury cabins and suites and will be tended by 69 crew members.

Much like Scenic's newbuild *Scenic Eclipse* - which is set to cut steel in coming weeks and enter service in Aug 2018 - this new ship will be capable of cruising

polar regions, in addition to warm water destinations.

Brodosplit, which specialises in the production of naval ships, confirmed last week its ship will be 107.6m long, 17.6m wide.

It will be equipped to allow passengers to visit glaciers above, and below, sea level.

The eight-deck unnamed vessel will be powered by two engines with a total output of 4200 kW, and able to cruise at 15 knots.

Scenic has confirmed to **CW** the new order is not theirs, with its *Discovery Yacht* to be delivered before the mystery vessel.

Scenic Eclipse will be built at the shipyard of fellow Croatian Uljanik Group, and will carry 228 guests - 32 more guests than this undisclosed company.

Other luxury cruise operators with expedition vessels signed for the future include Crystal Cruises and Ponant.

Cruise Month success

PLAN a Cruise Month exceeded CLIA Australasia's expectations, with thousands of Australian and NZ agents jumping on board.

Commercial director for the region, Brett Jardine said CLIA's local Cruise Month pages received thousands of hits during Oct and their local sites overall received their strongest visitor numbers ever.

Jardine said "With so much buzz in member agencies and widespread exposure across social media and in the press, it's safe to say that Plan A Cruise Month has well and truly surpassed its goal of raising consumer awareness of cruising and promoting CLIA agent members as cruise experts".

The final two major Cruise Month prizes went to Rochelle Clark, Dreamlines Australia who chose to go on a RCI cruise, and Travel Studio on the Gold Coast, who are joining a Cunard voyage.

Cruise Weekly today

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Celebrity snatches comp

CELEBRITY Cruises' success in sales is being fuelled by "stealing customers from our competitors," Adam Armstrong, md Celebrity Cruises Australia told **CW** on board *Celebrity Solstice* yesterday.

These competitors are "traditional holiday styles such as resort stays and touring companies", Armstrong said, noting the line is "almost" sold out for its local season.

Next season's 2017/18 program

is already in the market, some six months ahead of usual, he confirmed.

Celebrity is striving for the CLIA Australasia collective goal of reaching two million ocean cruise travellers from Australia by 2020, but Armstrong added that local infrastructure in NSW was needed to get to that target, with his preference given to a new terminal located in Kurnell in Sydney's south.

As for who would fund the solution, part public and part private contribution is "something they have done in other locations," Armstrong said.

Aranui shipboard

ALL new bookings on Aranui Cruises' *Aranui 5's* 07 & 25 Mar, and 13 Apr, 2017 departures made by 31 Jan will receive on board credit of approximately \$425 per person.

The pax freighter's 14-day cruise is a round trip from Papeete, visiting nine islands across three French Polynesian archipelagos.

Visit www.aranucruises.com.au.

X2 Pattaya launch

X2 YACHTING has expanded to Pattaya, Thailand, offering luxury day and an overnight cruises out of Ocean Marina Yacht Club.

Sailings are on a 20-pax yacht, **CLICK HERE** for more.

ITG celebrates cruise excellence



THE Independent Travel Group held its annual Business Forum in San Francisco last weekend, wrapping up the event with delegates kicking up their heels at a Qantas-sponsored gala dinner at the W Hotel on Sat evening.

As well as a plethora of agent giveaways, the night saw top performing agents across the italktravel franchise group and the Independent Travel Group networks recognised for their activities over the year.

Cruise is a strong and growing focus for ITG, which will formally welcome Australia's multi-awarded top cruise agency, Bicton Travel, into its ranks on 01 Dec.

In fact river cruising was ITG's top non-air product category, with a strong presence at the conference from APT, Scenic and Avalon Waterways, along with other suppliers such as CroisiEurope and perennial supporter Royal Caribbean.

Western Australia's Mandurah Travel & Cruise was named "National Agent of the Year - Cruise" for the ITG Group, while italktravel Castle Hill in NSW took out the top cruise award for the italktravel network.

Italktravel Castle Hill's Joanne Miller is **pictured** above accepting the award from ITG general manager sales Jonathan Nelson.



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Dream sails into Hong Kong



DREAM Cruises' inaugural ship, *Genting Dream* sailed into her new homeport of Hong Kong over the weekend.

Official launch festivities were held in the 999-seat Zodiac Theatre and included an exchange of gifts and a preview of Dream Cruises' production show.

Guests were then treated to

lunch at the ship's fine-dining eateries, followed by a guided tour of the newbuild.

The *Genting Dream* 'Ship Model Memento Exchange Presentation' by Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, chairman and ceo of Genting Hong Kong to Mr Gregory So GBS, JP, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development is **pictured**.

Esprit relocates 17/18

CRYSTAL Yacht Expedition Cruises will redeploy *Crystal Esprit* in Nov 2017 and all of 2018 to the islands of the West Indies.

Crystal says the move is the result of guests and travel partners requesting the experience "in closer proximity to major travel hubs".

Sailing two alternate round-trip itineraries from Marigot Bay, St. Martin, the two routes are designed to be easily combinable.

Esprit's inaugural West Indies season will be open for bookings on 17 Nov.

The vessel was originally poised to focus on the waters of the Med region nearly year-round.

Latitude 33 Myanmar

LUXURY tour operator Latitude 33 have launched a Myanmar Unveiled 2017 package, including a two-night stopover in Singapore at the Mandarin Oriental.

The tour spends six-nights at The Strand Yangon and the Villa Inle Resort followed by a seven-night cruise along the Irrawaddy.

Priced from \$9,990 per person twin share, the package is inclusive of return Economy air fares from Australia, domestic airfares in Myanmar & transfers.

The journey departs 19 Sep, **CLICK HERE**.

Emerald arrives in Oz

EMERALD Princess docked for the first time in Sydney today, following her maiden call to Melbourne this week.

The 3,082 passenger ship will spend five months in local waters during its first Australian season.

She is fitted with SHARE by Curtis Stone, Princess' new Salty Dog pub and her arrival marks the debut of on board musical *Magic to Do* by Broadway composer Stephen Schwartz.

CLIA Global chair

CARNIVAL Corporation ceo, Arnold Donald will step into the role of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Global chair, as of 01 Jan.

He will replace Adam Goldstein, president & chief operating officer of Royal Caribbean Cruises.

Antarctica discounts

THE announcement Antarctica's Ross Sea will become the world's largest marine protected area in late 2017 has prompted Oceanwide Expeditions to offer discounts on two upcoming trips.

Savings of up to US\$7,950ppts are available on the Jan departure of the Spectacular Ross Sea itinerary and US\$10,450 for the Feb sailing.

For more, **CLICK HERE**.

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

CLICK HERE to read **travelBulletin**

Solstice mega makeover



AN \$11 million makeover of *Celebrity Solstice* (CW 20 Sep) was shown off to media yesterday in the vessel's homeport of Sydney.

New additions include Australia's first Tiffany & Co store at sea, Japanese restaurant Sushi on Five and "A Taste of Film" experience, which sees cuisine-themed movies screened in an open air cinema during which the dishes featured are served.

Speaking with *CW*, Adam Armstrong, md Celebrity Cruises Australia said "We've added more of the things that Australian guests love so our guests can feel relaxed, refreshed and revitalised after a holiday on board".

Other enhancements include

Scenic's food tick

SCENIC *Azure* has been awarded the golden certificate for excellent food hygiene standards from the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).

The line is the only cruise company with the certification on the Douro River in Portugal.

six new lawn club cabanas on the half acre of real grass on the top deck as well as facial recognition technology for the ships' photo gallery that simplifies the way guests can collect their photos.

"In her fifth season, she is quite literally the best ship sailing in Australia," Armstrong opined.

This summer *Solstice* calls into New Zealand, Indonesia and destinations across Australia.

Pictured are: Loren Arsovski, food & beverage director; Ashley Gordon, on board marketing manager and Adam Armstrong.

CLICK HERE for photos.

Bentours savings

SAVE \$1,800 per couple on select Hurtigruten expeditions in 2017 booked by 31 Dec.

The 20-day Great Antarctic Expedition is priced from \$13,385ppts, the 16-day Discover Patagonia & Antarctica from \$6,015ppts and 12-day Elves, Sagas, Glaciers & Volcanoes from \$4,470ppts.

For the full list, **CLICK HERE**.

Dominica bus crash

ONE P&O Cruises World Cruising passenger has died after a bus operated by a shore excursion provider was involved in a collision in Dominica on Wed.

The bus was carrying 10 guests from *Azura* and nine were injured and treated at a local hospital.

P&O Cruises World Cruising has activated its Care team to help those affected by the accident.

"Our employees and crew are working to do everything we can to extend support and assistance to those affected and their loved ones," said P&O Cruises World Cruising senior vice president, Paul Ludlow.

Owens to Silversea

SILVERSEA has appointed Craig Owens to the newly created role of head of trade & partnerships in Australia and New Zealand.

Owens has held a number of senior sales roles with leading cruise companies, including Cunard/Seabourn, MSC Cruises and the last four years at Cruise Office, handling Voyages to Antiquity and the American Steamboat Company.

Contact Craig by email at craig@silversea.com.

Carnival IOT plans

ARNOLD Donald, ceo of Carnival Corp will unveil a new Connected Experience that uses "internet of things" at a tech conference in Las Vegas in Jan.

The tech is tipped as "first of its kind" and promised to "create an entirely new guest experience level based on personalisation and simplicity at scale".

Earthquake impact

ENGINEERS are working to assess the impact on New Zealand's ports after this week's magnitude 7.8 earthquake.

The Christchurch port of Lyttelton reopened today, however Wellington's port remains closed due to damage.

Azamara cruising solo

SINGLE supplement discounts are on offer for more than 42 of Azamara Club Cruises' voyages in 2016 and 2017.

Solo travellers will pay just 125% of the double occupancy fare, which translates to \$6,099 for an Interior stateroom on the 15-night Australia and New Zealand cruise, departing from Sydney on 19 Feb.

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Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY	
<i>Emerald Princess</i>	15 Nov
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	15 Nov
<i>Sun Princess</i>	16 Nov
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	17 Nov
<i>Carnival Legend</i>	17 Nov
<i>Maasdam</i>	18 Nov
<i>Voyager of the Seas</i>	19 Nov
<i>Explorer of the Seas</i>	20 Nov
<i>Dawn Princess</i>	20 Nov
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	21 Nov

MELBOURNE	
<i>Maasdam</i>	16 Nov
<i>Noordam</i>	18 Nov
<i>Golden Princess</i>	20 Nov

BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	15 Nov
<i>Sun Princess</i>	18 Nov
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	19 Nov
<i>Pacific Jewel</i>	19 Nov
<i>Sea Princess</i>	20 Nov
<i>Legend of the Seas</i>	21 Nov

CAIRNS	
<i>Coral Expeditions II</i>	18 Nov
<i>Sun Princess</i>	21 Nov

GERALDTON	
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	15 Nov

FREMANTLE	
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	16 Nov

ADELAIDE	
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	21 Nov

HOBART	
<i>Golden Princess</i>	16 Nov
<i>Maasdam</i>	21 Nov

AUCKLAND	
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	18 Nov

An Epic return to the US



NORWEGIAN Epic has returned to the US after spending a year in Europe, where she underwent an extensive renovation.

Arriving in Port Canaveral, Florida over the weekend, the vessel will spend her winter season sailing Eastern and Western Caribbean and Bahamas itineraries ranging in length from three-, four-, six- and seven-days.

"We saw great success in Port Canaveral when we returned to the port last year with *Norwegian Spirit*, so we felt it made sense to take our commitment to the next level by bringing *Norwegian Epic*, one of

our largest and most awarded ships, to sail from the greater Orlando area," said Andy Stuart, president and chief executive officer of Norwegian Cruise Line.

Avalon air offer

AVALON Waterways has extended its Europe air deal until 15 Dec, 2016, offering savings of up to \$2,000 per person to put towards flights.

The offer provides \$2,000 per person for 2017 European river cruises of 15 days or more, or \$899 per person for cruises of 7-14 days.

Cruise expo on GC

MDM Travel & Events and Marina Mirage will again partner to host a cruise expo on the Gold Coast next year.

The event will be held at the Marina 01 to 30 May, 2017, and follows the success of an inaugural expo held this year.

Accommodation packages are available for the expo, which is timed with local boat shows.

Vard share buyback

ITALIAN shipbuilder Fincantieri has announced an offer to buy the remainder of shares in Norwegian-headquartered shipbuilder Vard Holdings for up to \$118 million.

The move would see Vard delisted from the Singapore Stock Exchange, with Fincantieri increasing its existing stake of 55.6% to a minimum 90%.

Cruise training school

ITALY has opened its first cruise hospitality training school in the port city of Genoa.

The Academy for Advanced Training in On-Board Hospitality will provide schooling for cooks, pastry-makers, bakers, entertainers, customer service reps and other cruise ship roles.

The initiative is a collaboration between the region of Liguria, the Municipality of Arenzano and the Italian Merchant Marine Academy ITS Foundation.

Costa Cruises has invested in the project and will employ at least 70% of graduates.



FORGET polar expedition cruises, the world's attention this week is online where a pair of penguins have had their extra-marital dramas exposed



The National Geographic Channel has posted a video of penguin returning home to find its partner in cahoots with a rival bird.

The video has since gone viral as the duelling males erupt in a violent flipper-flapping altercation.

Battered and bloody, the birds show none of the cutesy composure ordinarily seen in wildlife documentaries.

Nor, it seems, have they honoured the mate-for-life custom of their species.

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