

Cruise Weekly today

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

Mekong's first Gypsy

MEKONG Kingdoms Cruises has announced the maiden voyage of its two-cabin river cruiser called *Gypsy*.

The new addition to the fleet will sail between the ancient Laos capital of Luang Prabang and Thailand's Golden Triangle, starting May.

Daily shore excursions include guided jungle treks, mountain biking in Ban Houy Phalam & freshwater fishing.



Infrastructure impedes cruise growth

INFRASTRUCTURE is failing to keep pace with Australia's growing demand for cruising, CLIA Australasia md Joel Katz said in Sydney today at the release of the *2017 Australian Ocean Passengers Cruise Industry Source Market Report*.

The report showed a 4.4% growth in cruise passengers to more than 1.34 million which is an increase of approximately 56,000 passengers over the 2016 result of 1,281,159.

Growth has slowed however from a previous high of 21% posted in 2016 over 2015 results.

Katz conceded growth wasn't as dramatic as it has been in recent years but highlighted it was on par with the growth rates achieved in the world's largest cruise market, the USA (up 4.7%) and ahead of the established markets of Europe (up 2.5%) and the UK and Ireland (up 0.5%).



Port infrastructure constraints were blamed for the slowing growth rate, with Katz reiterating that there was "so much potential" and that "resolving the infrastructure constraints is a priority to help future-proof cruise tourism in Australia".

The lack of cruise infrastructure projects has impacted on a future growth target set by CLIA Australasia in 2015.

"We will not achieve the two

million passengers by 2020," Katz lamented.

Additional findings from the report showed 35% of total cruise passengers headed to the South Pacific and 34% opted to cruise on Australian waters.

For long-haul fly-cruise destinations, Asia was the most popular with 7.3% of travellers.

Pictured: CLIA Australasia chairman Steve Odell with CLIA Australasia md Joel Katz.

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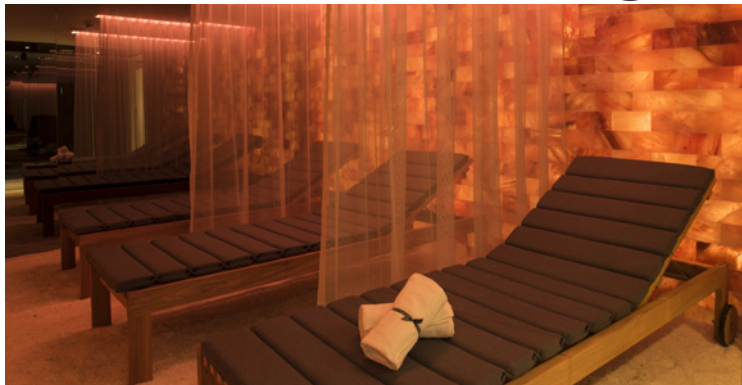
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Scenic renovates eight



SCENIC has announced plans to refurbish eight Scenic Space-Ships in its European fleet, with the remodelling scheduled to be completed in time for the 2019 river cruising season.

Scenic Ruby, Scenic Pearl, Scenic Jasper, Scenic Opal, Scenic Amber, Scenic Crystal, Scenic Jade and Scenic Jewel have all been earmarked for the refresh and work is slated to commence at the end of 2018.

Highlights of the impending renovations include the addition of new 48m² Royal Owners Suites and the introduction of new wellness centres that will feature the Salt Therapy lounge.

All of the ships to undergo the remodel operate on Europe's Rhine, Main and Danube rivers.

Pictured: The Scenic Salt Therapy Lounge.

Snapshot savings

UNIWORLD is currently offering savings of up to \$2,800 per couple on select cruises throughout Europe, Asia, India, and Egypt.

The promotion is valid until 31 May with bookings best directed to 1300 780 231.



ONE of the biggest deep water mysteries on record could soon be solved with news an international team led by the University of Otago will use DNA to once and for all prove (or disprove) the existence of The Loch Ness Monster.

Next month the group will collect 300 water samples from the loch and then spend the rest of the year trying to identify the animals that live in the waters.

Either way, we can smell the faint whiff of Jurassic Park 7!

Dream cruising Japan



FOLLOWING the Select Travel Group (STG) conference held in Macao last week, the team from Dream Cruises invited 18 top STG agents aboard *World Dream* for a cruise from Hong Kong to Japan.

The five-night cruise visited Naha, the capital of the Okinawa prefecture, and Miyokajima, one of the islands off the coast of Okinawa, with

the group experiencing the ship's unique venues as well as shore excursions and dining at speciality restaurants all included.

Pictured at the Shurijo Castle in Naha are the Select agents together with Brigita Devries, vp sales & marketing and Andrew Loving, sales manager New South Wales & ACT for Star and Dream Cruises.

The Strand unveils new 2018/19 season

LUXURY cruise ship *The Strand* will return for another season cruising Myanmar's Irrawaddy River in Sep 2018, bringing a series of fresh options along for the ride.

New offerings include a special departure that coincides with Myanmar's Thadingyut Lighting Festival in Oct 2018, a two-night cruise from Mandalay & Bagan, plus a lowered minimum age limit of four years for more family-inclusive sailing.

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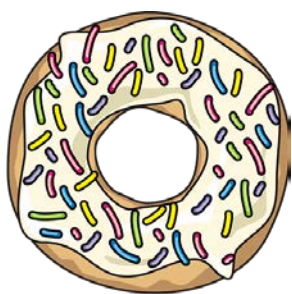
Discover the latest river ships setting sail in the May issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read **travelBulletin**

Adventure Canada

CANADIAN musician Alan Doyle will join Adventure Canada's Newfoundland Circumnavigation cruise, sailing from 02 to 12 Oct 2018.

Doyle will board the *Ocean Endeavour* to discuss local music culture & his new book.



win your morning tea!

Cruise Weekly loves donuts so to celebrate International Donut Day happening on 1 Jun, we're giving readers a chance to win a dozen donuts delivered to your office, on us!

In order to get in on this tasty action, all you need to do is write a short donut ditty, with the best entry taking home the prize. It can be a song, a poem, as long as it's 6 lines or less.

Send your entries to donuts@traveldaily.com.au

Entries close 30 May.

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Virgin bares all for first time



RICHARD Branson's first foray into the cruising sector has taken a visual form for the first time with Virgin Voyages recently releasing renderings of a selection of exterior public spaces and interior designs.

Inspired by the brand's design concept, the Modern Romance of Sailing, the ships will aspire to be "eye-catching, intimate and alluring", with the company holding desires on redefining what to expect from



a sea vacation.

Tropes reflect a contemporary holiday aesthetic paired with romance, and a doff of the hat to the historical glamour and sophistication of a sea voyage.

Highlights include the Pink Agave Mexican restaurant inset **above**, and The Manor theatre inset **below**.

The remaining on board public space designs will be revealed throughout the year as a part of Virgin Voyages' #ShipTease series.



Port upgrades support cruise boom

WITH the cruise industry growing rapidly, our ports are always looking at how they might manage this increase as well as the different types of vessel we are now seeing.

The much-awaited \$158m mega ship facility in Brisbane has received the final approval helping them meet the worldwide trend toward superliners – by 2020, 62% of cruise vessels in the Australian market and will be over 270m long.

In an Australian first, Carnival will pay a fixed annual amount to the Port for 15 years in return for preferential berthing (with ACCC conditions attached).

We will watch with interest to see if this becomes more standard.

Complementing that development, a \$120m upgrade is on the horizon for Cairns which will undoubtedly help with itinerary building in Qld.

The environmental approval was given in late Feb bringing the project one step closer to fruition.

The planned deepening and widening of the navigation channel will allow a substantial increase in the size and number of cruise ships which can visit the Port.

Port Melbourne's Station Pier will receive \$5.8m to undertake planning works to grow cruise ship operations in Victoria.

Significant port upgrades have also been made to Burnie to cater for increased arrivals.

Regional ports such as Newcastle are also growing with an \$800k commitment to upgrade the mooring bollards increasing their capacity to receive larger ships.

ACA is excited to see this level of infrastructure development support further growth of the cruise sector.

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