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cruiseweekly.com.au cruiseweekly.co.nz Thursday 5th December 2019

## Cruise Weekly today

*Cruise Weekly* today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news and a front cover wrap from *Celebrity Cruises.* 

#### Celebrity discounts

**CELEBRITY** Cruises is currently offering a free balcony room upgrade on select sailings from Sydney, Melbourne and Auckland.

The line is also allowing guests to take advantage of a free drinks package and up to \$500 of onboard spending money - see **cover page**.

### Hurtigruten solo

HURTIGRUTEN is now waiving the solo supplement on select Northwest Passage cabins, providing savings of up to \$15,000 - more info HERE.

# Viking Cruises fraudster sentenced

#### EXCLUSIVE

**YET** another cruise industry finance scandal was laid to rest yesterday, with the sentencing of Lisa Maree Jeffers to a two-year custodial prison sentence.

44-year-old Jeffers, who was the Office Manager for Viking Cruises between 2014 and 2017, was accused of embezzlement, after an internal review discovered seemingly dodgy invoices.

A subsequent investigation coincided with Jeffers' departure from the company in Oct 2017, and following a full audit the matter was referred to the NSW Police Service.

The Office Manager allegedly created false invoices to perpetrate the fraud, ultimately stealing more than \$160,000 from the company. Court appearance records

for the case, number 2018/00325203, indicate no less



than 13 hearing dates, with the first police mention at the Local Court in Hornsby, NSW in late Jan this year.

It appears Jeffers initially intended to defend the charges, but ultimately pleaded guilty at the 11th hour, on the day of the actual court proceedings.

Subsequently several court dates for sentencing were not attended by Jeffers, who was ultimately compelled to appear yesterday when she received the prison term. The court also ordered her to repay \$150,000 to Viking Cruises.

The sentencing follows two similar cases in the last month or so - one in which Mary Ann Abellanoza, the former book keeper for Silversea Cruises, was given eight years for an elaborate \$3.7 million fraud (*CW* 06 Nov), and Susanne Hunter, wife of former Cruise & Maritime Voyages CEO Grant Hunter, who was given 15 months for defrauding \$2.4 million from the business (*CW* 21 Nov).





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#### Cruise by Morocco

**ECRUISING** has introduced a new 29-night cruise tour exploring the Mediterranean, and circumnavigating the Iberian Peninsula in May 2020.

Taking place aboard Azamara Pursuit, highlights from the Andalusia & Morocco voyage includes a stopover at the Italian port of Sorrento, a visit to the iconic Rock of Gibraltar, an exploration of Menorca in Spain, as well as a stop off in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon.

Pre-cruise, the trip also encompasses a two-night stay in Rome at the recently refurbished Sofitel Rome Villa Borghese.

Prices for the cruise package start from \$9,379ppts, including return Economy airfares from Australia, accommodation, select beverages on board, and all touring and transfers per the itinerary.

Call 1300 369 848 for further information on the cruise.

#### **CLIA** clarifies crime

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) has pushed back against media reports citing a rise in sexual assaults on cruise ships (CW 04 Dec), suggesting the data released by the US Department of Transportation also illuminates the safety of cruise holidays.

"The latest Department of Transportation report shows that allegations of serious crime on board cruise ships remain extremely rare, especially compared to crimes that occur on land," CLIA said.

"A study of crime data from Jan 2015 to Dec 2018 by criminologist James Alan Fox found that overall crime rates on board cruise ships are 25 times lower compared to a typical city in the US, with the rate of reported sexual assaults on cruise ships just 30% the rate on land".

# Silversea bridges the gap



SILVERSEA Cruises has announced the details of a new fly-cruise service to Antarctica it plans to formally launch to the market next week, making it more obtainable for Aussie guests to cruise the remote continent.

The new Antarctica Bridge service allows for passengers to be flown Business class directly to Antarctica from Punta Arenas near the tip of Chile's southernmost Patagonia region, saving a total of four days at sea on the return journey.

The new collection of 12 flycruise voyages aboard Silver Explorer consolidates Silversea's push on the polar regions, and also marks the largest Antarctica offering in the line's history.

"This is a defining moment for Silversea's expedition offering, Antarctica Bridge will revolutionise the way in which our guests discover Antarctica," said Silversea Senior Vice President of Tour Operating, **Expedition & Destination** Management Conrad Combrink.

"Many will still choose to cross the epic Drake Passage, which is an unforgettable experience in itself, but Antarctica Bridge is perfect for time-conscious travellers, as it will immerse guests into the White Continent in a shorter time frame," he added.

Sales for Antarctica Bridge opens in Australia on 10 Dec, with fares starting from \$21,000ppts.



\*Offer correct as at 4 December 2019 and is subject to change or withdrawal. Offer ends 16 December 2019 unless extended. For full terms and conditions click here.



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## Regatta's Aussie return



OCEANIA Cruises has this week sailed its recently refurbished *Regatta* back into Australian waters, arriving in Brisbane yesterday before docking in Sydney tomorrow.

Emerging from drydock on 22 Sep following a US\$100 million renovation, accommodation on board *Regatta* now boasts new bathrooms, closets, desks and vanities, lighting and mirrors, as well as state-of-the-art technology including interactive TV systems and USB ports. The OceaniaNEXT

refurbishment program will also see Regatta debut the Aquamar Spa + Vitality Center when she returns for the second time to Sydney on 06 Jan 2020.

"It's these kind of enhancements to the guest experience that see Oceania have one of the highest-repeat cruising rates of any line," said Senior VP and MD APAC of Oceania Cruises Steve Odell.

## Avalon returns to the Nile



AVALON Waterways has announced a return to Egypt in 2020, unveiling its new Taste of Egypt Nile cruise itinerary.

The 10-day river adventure aboard *MS Farah* visits many of the iconic ancient tourist attractions such as the Pyramids and Sphinx in Giza, the Ramses II and Alabaster Sphinx in Memphis, Cairo's historic Hanging Church, as well as Tutankhamun's Tomb in the Egyptian Museum.

"We are thrilled to return to Egypt and the Nile River with this once-in-a-lifetime holiday," said Avalon Waterways Managing Director Pam Hoffee.

"From welcoming travellers to Cairo, 'Mother of the World,' and inviting them to look up at the 'Stairway to the Sky', to welcoming them on board *MS Farah* to sail through Africa's ancient history and civilisations along the Nile, this is a very special and awe-inspiring experience for travellers of all ages," she added.

Prices for the cruise adventure leads in at \$4,473 per person twin share - for more information regarding prices and departure dates, **CLICK HERE**.



\*Fares are cruise-only, per person in Australian dollars based on double occupancy and include taxes, fees and port charges, which vary by departure. Exclusive savings available on YEN201031-14, YEN201114-14, YEN201128-12 and YEN201210-12, are for new bookings made before 31/01/20. Solo Traveller fares available on request. All offers may not be combinable with other promotions, apply to first two full-fare guests in stateroom or suite, are capacity-controlled and subject to availability and may be withdrawn or changed at any time without notice. All timeraries, fares, programs and policies are subject to change. "Optional dining in the Vintage Room attracts and additional fee. *Crystal Endeavor* images are artist's rendering and subject to change. You must be a Qantas Frequent Flyer member to earn Qantas Points. A joining fee may apply. Membership and Qantas Points are subject to the Qantas Frequent Flyer Terms and Conditions, available at quatas.com/terms. Members must add a valid Qantas Frequent Flyer number and surmane to their booking before the itinerary sailing date. Qantas Points will be credited to the Qantas Frequent Flyer member to the Qantas Frequent Flyer reuter and surmate to their positions, available at quatas.com/terms. Members must add a valid Qantas Frequent Flyer number and surmate to their booking before the itinerary sailing date. Gantas Points will be credited to the Qantas Frequent Flyer Terms frequent Flyer member to the Qantas Frequent Flyer Terms for the itinerary sailing the for complete T&Cs and privacy policy, visit crystalcruises.com/tegal. ©Crystal Cruises, LLC





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#### NCL 30% off deals

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line is offering up to 30% off fares on selected sailings and up to five free offers, including a beverage package, specialty dining, shore excursions credit and more - offer ends 06 Dec.

**CLICK HERE** for more info.



**ON 26** Dec, a fleet of around 85 yachts will converge in Sydney Harbour for the annual Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race including a 115-year-old yacht purchased off Gumtree, set to be the oldest-ever entrant.

Bill Barry-Cotter purchased the vessel two years ago in "very bad shape", after searching for a decade for the boat that was originally owned by his father.

Sailing Katwinchar was built in 1904 but, despite its impressively long life, has only completed one race in its lifetime, sailing to Hobart on New Year's Eve in 1951.

Bill and his brother Kendal (**pictured** below) lovingly restored the yacht just in time for the upcoming race, with Kendal at the helm and a capable crew, including sailing icon Michael Spies, who has competed in the race 43 times.



# Getting aerial with Airia



**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line has debuted its illusion show *Airia* on *Carnival Splendor*'s first sailing from Singapore to Australia.

The "visually striking" show is exclusive to Australian audiences aboard *Splendor*, and is described as a family-friendly display of magic, aerial stunts, all set to a great soundtrack.

New Zealand-born Aleisha Manion (**pictured**) is *Airia*, the star of the 40-minute show with "natural grace" and "incredible illusion skills", accompanied on stage by the international Carnival Playlist Productions cast. For more info, **CLICK HERE**.

## Advertising Coordinator

Macquarie Park, Sydney

Travel Daily CRUISE travelBulletin

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Travel & Cruise Pharmacy

Weekly



Building towards Lyttelton

WE ARE two months into the 2019-20 cruise season and there has been an impressive six to 10 ships visiting each day in New Zealand ports this month.

New Zealand has been building up port infrastructure to cope with an increasing number of ships and many multi-ship days.

In Feb 2001, Canterbury was hit with a devastating earthquake, which unfortunately forced the closure of operations in the main port of Lyttelton.

As a result of the stoppage, cruise ships were moved to the small tender port of Akaroa and passengers were able to continue to take tours into Christchurch and the region.

Once the port became operational again, smaller cruise ships started coming back to Lyttelton, as it offers a much closer proximity to the city and its attractions

But the larger ships passed by. Now that is changing, Lyttelton is building a new berth designed to take the largest cruise ships planned for New Zealand providing full access to the South Island main ports.

Lyttelton Port Company invited NZCA to visit the port and see what was happening and to let us know their plans for the future. The new berth will be operational in Nov 2020 and they already have bookings for 80 ships.





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