

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features five pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus full pages from:

- Tauck
- AA Appointments

Win with Crystal

THE latest instalment of the Cruise Weekly/Crystal Cruises webinars, kicking off on 27 Feb, will see one lucky agent winning a luxury nine-night Caribbean cruise departing from Ft Lauderdale on 08 Nov.

The prize includes stateroom and dining staff gratuities, as well as a range of premium non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages, plus other features included in the onboard experience.

To be in the draw to win, simply register to attend the webinars via the link [HERE](#).

Another delay for Scenic Eclipse

SCENIC Luxury Cruises and Tours yesterday announced that the first sailing date for its much-anticipated *Scenic Eclipse* had been amended to 15 Aug 2019 - almost exactly a year later than its initially planned launch.

However the resolution of financial issues at the beleaguered Uljanik shipyard in Croatia, where *Eclipse* (pictured) is under construction, has set the foundation for the completion of the ship as well as the commencement of sister vessel *Scenic Eclipse II*.

Scenic has also hinted at ongoing development of further Discovery Yachts, having signed a letter of intent with the shipyard's new owners, Croatian group DIV and Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri.

"Production of *Scenic Eclipse II* will commence as soon as the restructuring program is approved, and we have already



commenced detailed designs of an entirely new series of Scenic Discovery Yachts," said Scenic Group Chairman, Glen Moroney.

Scenic is providing disrupted guests a full refund for the cost of their *Scenic Eclipse* cruise, and "consideration of any other reasonable associated costs".

Any person who rebooks an

Eclipse voyage will also receive a future cruise credit to the value of 25% of the rebooked itinerary.

"Please be assured we are working hard to complete the delivery of *Scenic Eclipse* - a whole new benchmark in design, innovation and luxury - to bring you this amazing cruising experience," the company said.



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River Dream's escape



LUXURY houseboat *River Dream* Boatel has introduced a new concept in houseboating with the introduction of an all-inclusive fully escorted luxury gourmet escape along the Murray River.

Designed for couples and small groups, the boat offers

five staterooms, each with its own private ensuite and floor to ceiling panoramic views, as well as a range of private dining experiences, **pictured**.

Earlybird prices are available on bookings made before 11 Mar, with six nights leading in at \$2,496 - more **HERE**.

Small ships to surge



SURGING growth of over 20% year-on-year has seen small ship and expedition cruise specialist Wild Earth Travel ramp up its support in the market to meet with current demand.

Speaking with *Cruise Weekly* last week, Aaron Russ, General Manager for Wild Earth Travel said that growth in small ship and expedition cruising would benefit from the overall growth of cruising but understands that often the array of product can be daunting for agents.

"I've come from an operational background and what I've learned is that small ship cruising and expedition cruising is so diversified that it can be

overwhelming for a lot of agents, that they tend to go back to what they're familiar with," he said.

"This means there's so much unrealised potential out there, there's a great breadth of other products out there that clients would want."

Now in its ninth year, Wild Earth Travel works with 60 different operators with Russ who is **pictured** urging agents to "look beyond the obvious options".

"There was an opening in the Australasian market for a range of expedition cruise brands that perhaps weren't as well known but offered cruise experiences that would meet untapped demand," Russ said.

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New leadership team for *Sky Princess*

PRINCESS Cruises has announced a raft of new staff will lead the team on board *Sky Princess* when she debuts in Oct.

Captain Laakkonen will sail the ship's inaugural voyage, and will be joined by Chief Engineer Officer Fabio Braccelli, Hotel General Manager Terri Cybuliak and Staff Captain Giovanni Cardile.

Captain Michele Tuvo, Chief Engineer Officer Mladen Ratkovic, Hotel General Manager Richard Harry and Staff Captain Brian Whelan round out the team.

"We are confident the deep seagoing expertise of these officers will allow our future guests to safely enjoy all that a Princess experience offers," said Jan Swartz, Group President of Princess Cruises and Carnival Australia.

RoyalUp goes live

ROYAL Caribbean's commissionable stateroom upgrade bid program, RoyalUp by Royal Caribbean has officially gone live (**CW** 18 Jan 2019).

Guests booked on eligible sailings will receive an email advising of the options available and invited to submit an offer.

Terms and conditions apply, **CLICK HERE** for more info.

Cook extends sale

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises has extended its "Three Nights Free Sail" offer until 31 Mar, with travel periods available until 31 Mar 2020.

The deal is applicable on any seven-night cruise, with savings of up to \$1,350 per person, twin share available.

More information **HERE**.

Cunard talks up record



CUNARD President Simon Palethorpe was in Sydney this week to promote the cruise line's record season in 2020/21.

Queen Elizabeth will return to service the Aussie market, undertaking a record 118-day season which will include more than 60 itineraries.

"The growth is a real tribute to the Australian market and to our travel agent partners who have really got behind us and gave us the confidence," Palethorpe said.

New sailings offered in the latest program include 12- and 13-day cruises between Sydney and Auckland calling at a number

of ports in New Zealand, as well as new options in Tasmania and Victoria.

"Basing *Elizabeth* in Australia for a record 118 days allows us to create a range of new itinerary options, such as our longer New Zealand journeys, which we think will appeal to both existing & new Cunard guests," Palethorpe said.

Details of the program arrive 05 Mar, with sales opening 12 Mar.

Pictured: Cunard President Simon Palethorpe; Cunard Senior Manager ANZ Katrina McAlpine; & Cunard Vice President of International Development and Planning Matthew Gleaves.

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Fiji's fresh Princess



BLUE Lagoon Cruises has revealed a new look for its *M.V. Fiji Princess* ship following an extensive three-week refurb.

Updates include new contemporary deck furniture featuring fresh fabric design, **pictured**, new high quality tiled flooring, and updated cabinetry and joinery in public areas.

All 34 Hibiscus and Orchid

cabins have also been treated to a makeover, with new bed runners, pillow and ottoman covers, lampshades and air conditioning units all added.

A new spa facility on the ship's aft deck has also been added, featuring one open side looking out to sea, as well as engineering upgrades to the control system and generator.

Newie's Explorer

NEWCASTLE welcomed the arrival of Royal Caribbean's *Explorer of the Seas* earlier this week, with the cruise ship estimated to have injected more than \$600,000 in tourist spend from guests in one day.

The megalinier, which made its maiden call to the Port on Sun, is the largest ship to visit the region and is one of four of Royal Caribbean's vessels to visit this cruise season.

"Newcastle's vibrant city centre coupled with easy access to world class beaches, coastal countryside and rolling vineyards makes it an incredibly popular port of call amongst both our Australian and international guests," said Royal Caribbean Managing Director Susan Bonner.

NCL's new Chilean data partnership

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has announced it has partnered with Nisomar, a data-driven maritime services company offering analytics that support business decisions and the management of port calls.

The new arrangement will see Nisomar assisting with Norwegian's 2018/19 cruise season in Chile, offering launch services across seven Chilean ports including berthing assistance, pilot embarkation/disembarkation, local port authority liaison, and service launches each visit.

Ports under the agreement include Arica, Iquique, Coquimbo, San Antonio, Puerto Montt, and more.

"Getting sick" a top concern for cruisers

TRAVEL insurance company InsureMyTrip has released its annual cruise survey, revealing the top concerns for travellers when booking themselves on a cruise.

"Getting sick" was at the top of the list, with 42.2% noting that getting sick or injured before or during a cruise was their number one worry, while 37.3% cited "bad weather" as their main concern.

Missing a cruise or departure was listed as being a potential problem for 20.5% of respondents.

The report also revealed that discounts and itineraries that included more time at port and less at sea were motivating factors when booking a cruise.

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Adv Canada's talent

CONSERVATIONIST and author Diana Beresford-Kroeger is set to join the team at Adventure Canada, where she will present a number of sessions on board the cruise line's Ireland Circumnavigation journey departing 09 Jun.

The 10-night cruise, which begins in Dublin, takes guests around the country on board the *Ocean Endeavour*, with Beresford-Kroeger conducting talks on Ireland's plants and nature - more **HERE**.

FACE-2-FACE: Alex Hruncev

DSM - Victoria, Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises.

1. What is the favourite part of your job?

Being able to talk to people about something I am so passionate about day in and day out. I can certainly say that I love what I do.

2. Why did you choose a career in the cruise industry?

Funnily enough, my parents. They took me on my first cruise when *Rhapsody of the Seas* was with us down under and from that moment on, I loved the idea of cruising and couldn't get enough of it. I was doing up to three cruises a year.

3. What is the key to your success?

Passion! People can tell when you are passionate about what you do, or what you are talking about. People tend to really get on board (excuse the pun) with you and in turn want to have that same amazing holiday

experience.

4. Your best fam trip?

Cruising out of Venice on a 10-night Mediterranean cruise with Royal Caribbean down to the Greek islands, Croatia and Montenegro! Kotor, Montenegro is by far the most beautiful place I have visited.

5. Where do you see yourself in five years?

This is tough as I know colleagues will be reading this...I suppose as I am only new into this role I wouldn't want to step on anyone's toes, however everyone would like some career progression! Watch this space...

6. How do you wind down after a busy week?

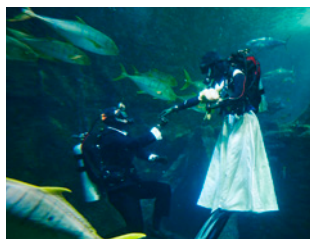
Can I say wine? However as I am new to the Melbourne life, I do find myself tasting all that Melbourne has to offer, otherwise I love a good sci-fi.



WE'VE all heard those stories of couples who get hitched on board a cruise ship, but what about taking your nuptials down a notch - say, under the water line at an aquarium?

SEA LIFE Melbourne is offering one couple the chance to win an "underwater wedding photo shoot" inside a 2.2 million litre Oceanarium surrounded by sharks, rays and thousands of colourful fish.

Talk about keeping your friends close, and your anemones closer.



Regent Seven Seas to serve Vero water

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has announced plans to switch to on-premise water purification system called Vero, a move which the company says will eliminate approximately two million plastic water bottles across the cruise line's fleet.

The system, which will serve both still and sparkling water, uses a five stage "nano-filtration process" that enables the delivery of clean, chilled water without chemicals and imperfections.

The new system will be rolled out across the fleet from Apr.



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

A bumper cruise month

IF YOU ever needed evidence of the popularity of cruising in Australia, just take a look across our bustling ports this month. Feb is the busiest time of the year for the Australian cruise industry, and this year things are running to an especially full schedule.

Just last week, Sydney hosted four cruise ships on one day - two at the city's passenger terminals and another two moored in the harbour. A similar picture emerges across the country, as locally based ships coincide with visiting international vessels.

In all, 44 cruise ships will pass through Australasian waters this month, making more than 350 calls at 55 ports. Together they will carry more than 400,000 passengers - similar to the entire population of Canberra - and help sustain thousands of jobs while making an enormous contribution to the economy.

The convergence of all these ships means that many travel agents will get an opportunity to see and experience different products, with cruise lines busy hosting a succession of on-board inspections and events.

It's a timely reminder of the benefits of first-hand insight, so even if you don't have an invitation to an event this month, keep an eye on the CLIA website for exclusive Product Plus events offered regularly to our members.

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