

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from **Cruiseco**.

Cruiseco platform

THE Cruiseco consortium is today highlighting its newly developed CruisePRO platform (see **page five**) which gives members exclusive access to more than 500 unique fly/stay/ cruise holiday packages.

The custom platform aims to be a one-stop-shop solution for cruise, with the debut set to be showcased at this week's Cruiseco annual conference taking place in Auckland, NZ.

The conference will feature more than 30 brands, two days of curated sessions and a series of networking events - see **Cruise Weekly** on Wed and Fri for on-location reports.

Aurora's Greg Mortimer hits the sea

THE world's first "X-BOW" passenger cruise ship has been launched, with the milestone moment for Aurora Expeditions taking place near Shanghai, China last week.

The ceremony was attended by Aurora co-founder Greg Mortimer OAM himself, who is **pictured** with his namesake on the dock.

The *Greg Mortimer's* sea launch is the latest stage in Sunstone Ships' construction of the new vessel, which is scheduled to formally debut in Oct this year.

Aurora Expeditions MD Robert Halfpenny, who also attended the event, said the launch was the "culmination of months of hard work from everyone involved, and we're delighted the *Greg Mortimer* has reached its sea testing phase ahead of schedule.

"Due to set sail in Oct 2019, the final stage of work includes the interior fit-out which is due



for completion in the coming months," Halfpenny said.

Mortimer, who also is one of Australia's pioneering mountaineers, said "to have a ship named after me is surreal, wondrous and humbling.

"Was it better than climbing Everest or K2? I would say about

the same but different," he said.

The purpose-built *Greg Mortimer* is the first passenger expedition vessel to use the patented Ulstein X-BOW which allows for more gentle sea crossings and faster transit speeds as well as lower fuel consumption and air emissions.

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CRUISE



Monday 18th March 2019

ADELTE gangways

SPANISH boarding bridge specialist Advanced Elevation Technologies (ADELTE) has been contracted by cruise ports in Boston, Port Canaveral and Miami in the USA to supply a total of six new Seaport Passenger Boarding Bridges.

The products include HYDRA and SEDNA-type bridges which are capable of operating with current and future cruise vessels, including those with overhanging lifeboats.

WW MSC cruise

WW, the "new Weight Watchers" is launching its first Wellness European Cruise, in partnership with MSC.

The Jul voyage aboard *MSC Seaview* includes packages available to Australasian pax for the first time - ww.com.

50DN expands

NORDIC travel specialist 50 Degrees North (50DN) has announced an expansion of its portfolio, with the addition of Hurtigruten's polar cruise expeditions to Antarctica.

50DN has also appointed polar expert Jill Blunsom as its new Polar Specialist, with her first-hand knowledge of Antarctica and experience in polar travel sales seen as a key advantage for agent clients.

"This is a very exciting change for us...we worked together at Peregrine Adventures for many years and I'm thrilled to be working on a shared project again," said 50DN CEO Tietse Stelma.

2020/21 bookings are now open for Hurtigruten's new expedition voyages aboard the hybrid-powered *Road Amundsen* and *Fridjof Nansen* - fiftydegreesnorth.com.

Dublin slams cruise activity

IRISH authorities are under fire from the global cruise community after a decision to significantly reduce passenger cruise ship activity at the Port of Dublin.

The Dublin Port Company has announced a new system which will halve the number of cruise ship visits by 2021, as well as eliminating all turnaround calls at the port.

In 2019 there are more than 160 cruise ship calls booked for Dublin, while for 2020 there are already 140 bookings in place.

From 2021, however, the new policy will reduce this to a maximum of 80, allowing for just two large ships per week during the summer season and one weekly visit during the winter.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) said the move was "very worrying," particularly since the Port of Dublin (**pictured**) had "always valued the cruise business and seen a major growth over the last 15 years."

"The port has also given valuable support to growing



Ireland as a whole as a cruise destination," with 262,000 passengers having called at Irish ports in 2017, according to a statement from CLIA Europe.

CLIA said it believed Dublin's decision had been taken without consideration of the impact it will have on Ireland overall, with the number of cruise calls expected to dramatically drop across all Irish ports as a result of the move.

"We urge the port to reconsider its decision and to work with the Irish Government and the cruise industry to build cruise tourism sustainably across Ireland moving forward," CLIA concluded.

The port said it was introducing the changes due to a huge growth in cargo volumes, with the aim of better balancing the allocation of berths for year-round cargo ships.

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"La Mer" for Sky

PRINCESS Cruises has announced the introduction of a second La Mer restaurant into the fleet on the new *Sky Princess*, complementing the upmarket eatery currently being experienced by Australian guests aboard *Majestic Princess*.

Sky Princess will debut in Fort Lauderdale in Dec 2019 for her inaugural season of Caribbean cruises, with *Majestic's* La Mer having "already become a firm favourite with Australian guests," the cruise line said.

The restaurant is inspired by Three Michelin-Star Chef, Emmanuel Renaut, who is owner and executive chef of the Flocons de Sel restaurant in the French alpine village of Megeve.

La Mer offers casual, French bistro-style dining with a modern twist.

New Ritz itineraries

THE Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection has launched new Caribbean itineraries for 2020.

Travellers will get to explore the Caribbean on their own private yacht and visit destinations including the Windward Islands, Bequia, Carriacou and San Juan.

Itineraries include the seven night voyage from Castries to Philipsburg on 12 Dec, where travellers will get to sail between St. Lucia and Sint Maarten.

Along the way, guests will also explore British heritage on Nevis and Antigua, and enjoy "Gallic sophistication" of Martinique and St. Barths.

Additionally, the seven-night San Juan to San Juan on 27 Dec explores Samana, Santo Domingo, La Romana & Ponce.

More details can be viewed [HERE](#).

Sale opens for Silversea 2021



SILVERSEA has launched its groundbreaking Expedition World Cruise 2021, which is now available for general sale.

Silver Cloud (pictured) will depart Ushuaia, Argentina on 30 Jan 2021 and cruise for 167 days, while visiting 30 countries across six continents.

Travellers will have the opportunity to explore Antarctica, by Zodiac; in the South Pacific, they will meet the descendants of the Bounty Mutineers in Pitcairn, after spending two days on Easter Island; and in French Polynesia, guests will swim with rays in Bora Bora and explore Aitutaki.

Other highlights include

Greece, Albania, Tunisia and Spain; where travellers will visit the ancient monastery of Mont St. Michel, the memorial sites on Normandy's beaches, and the delights of the United Kingdom.

Arctic areas including Svalbard and Iceland are also on the itinerary, which is priced from \$138,000 per person in a Vista Suite - or \$704,000 per person in the two-bedroom Owner's Suite.

"A world first, the Uncharted World Tour 2021 is truly unique in the variety of immersive experiences on offer," said Conrad Combrink, Silversea's Senior VP Expeditions and Destination Experiences - see a video [HERE](#).



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Cruise Calendar

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

SYDNEY

<i>Carnival Legend</i>	18 Mar
<i>MSC Magnifica</i>	18 Mar
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	21 Mar
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	21 Mar
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	22 Mar
<i>Radiance of the Seas</i>	23 Mar
<i>Europa 2</i>	24 Mar
<i>Noordam</i>	24 Mar

MELBOURNE

<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	18 Mar
<i>Noordam</i>	19 Mar
<i>MSC Magnifica</i>	21 Mar
<i>Europa 2</i>	21 Mar
<i>Golden Princess</i>	23 Mar
<i>Seabourn Encore</i>	23 Mar

BRISBANE

<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	19 Mar
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	22 Mar
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	23 Mar

CAIRNS

<i>Pacific Aria</i>	18 Mar
<i>Maasdam</i>	21 Mar

DARWIN

<i>Viking Orion</i>	21 Mar
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FREMANTLE

<i>Pacific Eden</i>	21 Mar
<i>Sea Princess</i>	23 Mar

ADELAIDE

<i>Sea Princess</i>	18 Mar
<i>Viking Sun</i>	23 Mar

HOBART

<i>Europa 2</i>	19 Mar
<i>Viking Sun</i>	19 Mar
<i>Noordam</i>	21 Mar

AUCKLAND

<i>Golden Princess</i>	19 Mar
<i>Le Laperouse</i>	20 Mar
<i>Crystal Symphony</i>	22 Mar
<i>Majestic Princess</i>	22 Mar

Major Countess milestone



AMERICAN Queen Steamboat Company (AQSC) has hailed a key step in the construction of its new 245-passenger *American Countess* (pictured), with the connection of the stern to the bow and mid-body section at the Gulf Island Shipyard in Louisiana.

The *Countess* is being built using the existing hull of the *Kanessville Queen*, a former gaming vessel

built in 1995, which was cut in two to allow the addition of a 20m new mid-body section.

The *American Countess*, which is set to launch in Apr 2020, will offer a series of six to 15-day itineraries, including the landmark "Mighty Mississippi" cruise, with AQSC CEO John Waggoner saying she will "raise the bar on US river cruising".



VIRGIN Voyages continues to demonstrate its founder's inimitable appetite for publicity, launching a "worldwide casting tour" for its inaugural season.

Human headline Sir Richard Branson announced the global search for "best-in-class performers and personalities" ahead of the planned Apr 2020 debut of *Scarlet Lady*.

The audition tour schedule includes visits to Sydney and Melbourne next month, as well as New York, London, Berlin, Orlando, Chicago and - of course - Las Vegas.

Rehearsals are scheduled to kick off in Jan next year, and Virgin promised to also replace the traditional Cruise Director role with a "cast of dynamic personalities" including drag performers, artists, fitness gurus, foodies and more.

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SeaDream news

SEADREAM Yacht Club has hinted at some major news to be released later this week, with owner Atle Brynstad promising to unveil a "new era in luxury travel".

The "Global Yachting" concept is expected to be an extension of SeaDream's current offering, which sees it operate the two "mega-yachts" *SeaDream I* and *SeaDream II*.

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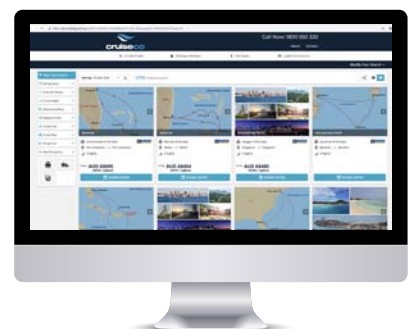


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