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Viking reveals expedition cruise ships

VIKING Cruises last night unveiled the details of its new *Viking Polaris* and *Viking Octantis* expedition ships (**CW** breaking news), with a host of innovations including an elevated “marina” inside the ships to make it easy for guests to board Zodiacs.

Octantis will be the first to launch, in Jan 2022, operating an already sold-out season to Antarctica as well as voyages to North America’s Great Lakes.

The ships will carry just under 400 passengers, and offer a host of features familiar to Viking’s ocean cruise customers including multiple restaurants, an extensive on-board spa and a host of public areas including lounges, lecture areas and a laboratory.

“The Hangar” is described as an industry first, facilitating the launch of small excursion craft through the bow after allowing guests to board on a flat, stable



surface inside the ship.

The Polar Class 6 vessels are “optimally sized and built for expeditions”, according to Viking Chairman, Torstein Hagen, who said they were small enough to navigate remote polar regions as well as Canada’s St Lawrence River, but large enough to provide superior handling and stability in the roughest of seas.

So-called “U-tank stabilisers” - the first to be deployed in

passenger vessels - can reduce rolling by up to 50% when the ships are not moving.

All cabins feature a so-called “Nordic Balcony” in the form of a panoramic window which can be lowered to form an al fresco viewing platform.

A full portfolio of renderings can be viewed at facebook.com/cruiseweekly, with bookings now open for Australia and NZ passengers - see the **cover page**.



On location in Los Angeles

Today’s issue of **CW** is coming to you from the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles courtesy of Viking Cruises and Air New Zealand.

LAST night cruise industry dignitaries were welcomed by Viking Cruises Chairman Torstein Hagen to the official unveiling of the new Viking expedition cruise fleet.

Viking’s expedition ships continue the line’s laser-sharp focus on its core demographic of “curious and active travellers”, with key differentiators including a focus on English-speaking markets, customers over 55, no children, no casinos and no “nickel-and-diming”.

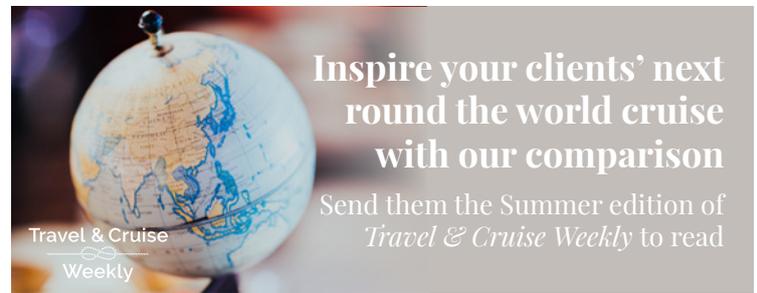
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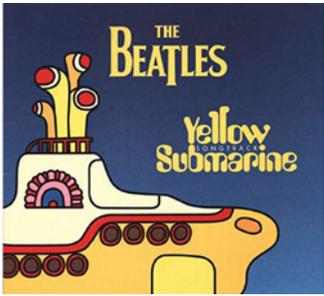
CRUISE FROM \$899[~]



THE new expedition cruise ships being deployed by Viking Cruises (see p1) feature not one, but two on-board submarines.

The six-passenger underwater vessels are offered as part of Viking's expedition program at no extra cost, and will allow guests to experience the sub-sea world as well as facilitate new areas of research - particularly in Antarctica where little study of the deep aquatic environment has previously been done.

And the colour? The Viking subs are yellow, of course, in homage to the famous Beatles album which is a favourite of Viking chief Torstein Hagen.



Regent cruises '22

REGENT Seven Sea Cruises has announced that its new collection of cruises for 2022, Marvels of the Pacific Rim, are now open for reservation.

The collection is comprised of seven new itineraries, all onboard the *Seven Seas Mariner*, including the 18-night Quintessential South Pacific and 15-night West to East Asia.

Cruise trends 2020

CRUISERS are choosing cruise itineraries based on a desire to visit "unusual and faraway" destinations, particularly ones in cold climates such as the Arctic, according to a Virtuoso-YouGov survey.

The survey also revealed a trend towards micro (two- to five-night) cruises and more destination immersion, including "shore excursions that encourage deeper connections with local people and cultures".

A preference for suites among and an increased awareness of eco-conscious travel were also reflected in the survey results.

Viking christens Jupiter



AS WELL as the unveiling of the new Viking expedition product (see p1), the huge Viking Cruises event in Los Angeles overnight featured a formal christening ceremony for *Viking Jupiter*.

The sixth vessel in the Viking fleet, *Jupiter* is currently sailing near the Falkland Islands, with a lavish dinner at the Beverly Hilton including a live link to the ship.

The vessel's naming ceremony was originally scheduled for Jun last year (CW 08 Feb 2019).

In Los Angeles last night *Jupiter's* Godmother Sissel Kyrkjebø, a popular Norwegian singer and the favourite artist of Viking chairman Torstein Hagen's late mother, pronounced the formal blessing before symbolically cutting a ribbon using a gigantic Viking axe - appropriately provided by a Viking in-person who earlier in the night caught up with Viking's PR manager Anna Bathgate and MD Australasia Michelle Black (pictured).



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