



Cruise Weekly today

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

Chimu to the rescue

CHIMU Adventures has revealed it is working to launch special charter flights for Australian travellers stranded in South American destinations such as Lima in Peru and Buenos Aires in Argentina in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The operator said it would be offering the emergency air services home from early next week, regardless of whether they have booked with Chimu Adventures or not.

To put yourself forward for the service, contact the company via email on australia@chimuadventures.com.

CMV undertakes passenger swap at sea

IN A bid to ensure its passengers make their way home as safely and as quickly as possible, Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) has conducted a unique passenger swap off the coast of Phuket, Thailand.

Passengers (173) were transferred from *Columbus* to *Vasco da Gama*, while guests (63) were transferred from *Vasco da Gama* to *Columbus*, with all ships now sailing to the closest available disembarkation port following a temporary suspension of all the line's cruises.

Australian and New Zealand passengers have remained on board *Vasco da Gama*, with the vessel now sailing for Fremantle, in Western Australia where guests will disembark on 27 Mar.

"CMV is committed to the health and safety of its passengers and crew," a spokesperson for the line said.



"Since the temporary suspension of all CMV cruises globally and in light of the continued border closures and flight cancellations, all CMV vessels are navigating to the nearest available disembarkation port so that current guests can make their way safely home.

"We would like to thank our guests and staff presently on

board our ships across the world, as well as shoreside officials, for their great support, understanding and patience during this time."

European nationals were ferried from *Vasco da Gama* to *Columbus* to join fellow citizens in a cruise bound for London, where guests are expected to arrive on 13 Apr.

Pictured: The unique pax swap.

Dream of flexibility

GENTING Cruise Lines has announced its new Cruise As You Wish assurance and booking policy, featuring a 48-hour cancellation option.

The option allows Dream Cruises and Star Cruises guests to cancel up to 48 hours prior to sailing and receive a 100% future cruise credit usable for any Dream Cruises or Star Cruises sailing embarking on or before 31 Dec 2020.

The option applies to all new and existing bookings made for any Dream Cruises or Star Cruises sailings prior to or on 31 Jul.

President of Dream Cruises and Head of International Sales Michael Goh said the policy will "help minimise booking concerns among our guests and at the same time provide them with the much needed flexibility and cruise option".

For more information, contact Dream Cruises on 02 9212 6288 or **CLICK HERE**.

NCL makes cuts



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has confirmed it will temporarily cut the salaries of its US shoreside team members by 20% and move to a four-day work week.

The changes are due to come into effect from 30 Mar and are expected to remain in place through to 22 Jun.

"As a people-first organisation, this decision was not taken lightly," a spokesperson for the cruise line told **Cruise Weekly**.

"We remain committed to our team members and value their loyalty, passion and determination as we navigate this global situation."

Norwegian Cruise Line also revealed that it is working to temporarily discontinue the employer 401(k) retirement funding match scheme.

The decision comes after the temporary suspension of the line's voyages between 13 Mar and 11 Apr (**CW** 16 Mar).

Cruise frustration

RESPONDING to assurances that all Australian cruise passengers will return home soon, Cruise Express Australia Director Hardy Schneider has reached out to **Cruise Weekly** to express his frustration at being stranded overseas in South America following a Ponant Antarctica cruise aboard the 264-passenger expedition vessel *L'Austral*.

"We were denied to disembark in Montevideo and Buenos Aires shut the door on us one hour before we got there," Schneider said.

"With 100 Australians on board, we are now sailing to Rio just to pick up urgent medical supplies, from there we are heading to homeport in France...to save fuel.

"The journey will take approximately 25 days, from there - who knows?," he questioned.



First Bulanaire

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises Fiji has announced its Marine Biologist, Amos Abhishek Daniel, as Tourism Fiji's first Bulanaire for 2020.

Daniel was nominated by Captain Cook Cruises Fiji Managing Director Jacqueline Charlton, who said he "has the big bula smile and goes above and beyond to ensure our passengers have a fun and meaningful experience in Fiji."

The Bulanaire campaign, now in its second phase, celebrates Fiji's "true hospitality heroes", who are nominated to "share the Bula Spirit with visitors to the destination and to reinforce why Fiji is the place where happiness finds you".

To learn more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Carnival offers assistance



CARNIVAL Corporation is offering countries around the world the use of its cruise ships to serve as temporary hospitals as the world continues to battle the spread of COVID-19.

The vessels will be offered from across its brand suite, including Carnival Cruise Line, Holland America Line, Princess Cruises and P&O Cruises Australia, and comes at a time when nations such as Australia face the prospect of hospital bed shortages should the virus' spread escalate even further.

Carnival said its cruise ships are well suited to serving as a make-shift hospitals because their suites are equipped with bathroom facilities, private balconies with access to sun and fresh air, as well as isolation capabilities, if needed.

"Cruise ships are capable of being quickly provisioned to serve as hospitals with up to 1,000 hospital rooms that can treat patients suffering from less critical, non-COVID-19

conditions," a spokesperson for the cruise line said.

"These temporary cruise ship hospital rooms can be quickly converted to install and connect remote patient monitoring devices over the ship's high-speed network - providing cardiac, respiratory, oxygen saturation and video monitoring capabilities."

Temporary hospital cruise ships would likely be berthed at a pier near affected coastal communities, with all maritime operations such as food and beverage and cleaning services provided by the ship's crew.

However, Carnival also stressed that medical services would need to be facilitated by the government entity or hospital responsible for fighting the spread of COVID-19 within that community.

Governments or health authorities interested in the offer put forward by Carnival Corporation are encouraged to contact Monica Puello by email at MPuello@Carnival.com.

Ecrusing package

ECRUSING is offering up to 47% off its 36-night African West Coast to Cape Town cruise package sailing with Azamara, which begins in Lisbon on 08 Nov.

Prices now start from \$20,049pp, including return Economy flights to Australia when booked by 09 Apr.

Call 1300 369 848 for more.

P&O doubles love

P&O Cruises Vice President of Sales and Marketing Ryan Taibel has announced that passengers who cancel or reschedule cruises will either receive a full refund or 200% future cruise credit to keep agents' sales pipelines going.

"This is to encourage guests to book substitute cruises and we hope they will be calling you to do just that," he said.

Taibel also stated that the cruise line would protect agent commissions irrespective of whether guests choose the refund option or take up its generous new future cruise credit offer.

"We look forward to the world returning to normal and we hope it is soon," he added.



A COMPANY in the United States has found a creative way to deal with the toilet paper shortage caused by coronavirus panic-buying.

Atlanta-based marketing firm Trevelino/Keller came up with the idea of a Toilet Paper Exchange program, as a way of putting to use the 1,000 rolls that were sitting in the office after employees were instructed to work from home.

So, naturally, the company started a pop-up drive-thru in the carpark, where employees toss one or two rolls into open car windows to limit physical contact.

"It's important that you do what you can and maybe even provide a moment of levity," said the company's Principal and co-founder Genna Keller.

Keller is now encouraging other businesses to pass on their excess toilet paper for her company to "toss" to people who are running low.