



P&O expands cancellation freedom

EXCLUSIVE

P&O Cruises Australia is set to unveil a generous new customer policy for its 2021 cruises, with the aim of giving guests more flexibility and confidence to book.

The initiative comes alongside an additional 5% bonus commission which will be paid to travel agents in Australia and NZ on all new bookings made from 23 Oct 2020 to 01 Dec 2021.

Under the new "P&O Assurance" policy to be announced today, guests are able to cancel at any time up to 75 days prior to the scheduled date of departure, and receive a full refund with no cancellation fee.

The revamped policy applies to all existing and new bookings made before 03 Mar 2021, while guests scheduled to sail on or before 31 Jan next year can access the same offer if they choose to cancel at any time up

to 30 days prior to departure.

P&O Assurance also allows guests to cancel their cruise up to 14 days prior to sailing and receive a 100% future cruise credit, with P&O Australia Head of Sales & Marketing Ryan Taibel saying "as we look ahead to the time when we can welcome our guests onboard again, we know it's important to provide guests with as much flexibility as possible around future bookings".

The bonus commission was recognition of the "overwhelming support" of the travel trade, Taibel added, "both through the good times and the challenging year we've all been faced with".

"We want to support them in getting back on their feet and work together on making thousands of Aussies' and Kiwis' future cruise holidays come true.

"The opportunity to earn extra commission is one way of

instilling confidence and showing our unrivalled support for our agency partners," Taibel said.

The bonus commission offer applies to P&O Australia Value Plus, Value Go and Short Sales fares, and will be added automatically to reservations at the time of booking.

P&O's new policy follows last week's confirmation that *Pacific Encounter* and *Pacific Adventure* will join the local fleet earlier than previously expected (**CW** 23 Oct), with both set to begin sailing in the first half of 2021 and itineraries are now on sale.

Taibel said he was optimistic about the return of cruising in the region, saying "from the start of this highly unusual year, we have been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of our guests who are looking forward to being back onboard and sailing as much as we are".

Cruise Weekly today

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

New CDC warning

THE United States' Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) is advising Americans to "defer all cruise travel", just days before its no sail order is set to expire.

The CDC said it typically does not post health notices for ships, but was issuing the advice because of the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention said reports of coronavirus on cruises highlight the risk of infections to cruise passengers and crew members, although it failed to elaborate on these reports.

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MANY of us have heard of Kyle McDonald's 'One red paperclip' blog, which details the Canadian's successful attempt to barter his way into as much value as he possibly could from a single red paperclip - which ended up landing him a house.

McDonald won himself many admirers, one of which is supposedly Richmond Tigers player Kamdyn McIntosh.

The 26-year-old, who on Sat won his second AFL premiership, decided to learn about trading to kill time during the season, and started out by advertising a paperclip on the internet.

What's this all got to do with cruising...after swapping the paperclip for a Rubik's cube, McIntosh swapped it for a pair of boots worn by his superstar teammate Dustin Martin, which he then parlayed into a boat.

Maybe McIntosh will attempt to upgrade to one of the many cruise ships on the market with his next trade.

CLIA portside learning



CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia is set to showcase some of the world's best cruise ports and destinations next month in its latest online education initiative for members.

The first Cruise Port & Destination Virtual Showcase will be held between 01-10 Dec and will offer presentations from 13 CLIA Executive Partners, providing insight to help cruisers get the most from their port visits.

Members will be able to learn more about each destination, such as the location of cruise terminals, details on public transport services, touring options and insider visitor tips.

The virtual showcase will be CLIA's final online event for 2020,

with Director of Membership & Events Marita Nasic saying it would offer valuable insight to help ensure clients have a rewarding visit.

For full details and a list of presenters, **CLICK HERE**.

MEANWHILE, the next instalment in CLIA's new #wearecruise video series (**CW 12 Oct**) has gone live, this time featuring Western Australian operator Wijingarra Tours, which is based on the Kimberley Coast.

The company has lost all of its cruise bookings and revenue for this year but are looking forward to welcoming cruise visitors, having implemented a range of coronavirus safety measures.

The video is live now at cruiseweekly.com.au/videos.

Azamara solo deal

AZAMARA is offering a 125% single supplement on local 2021/22 sailings.

Included sailings onboard *Azamara Journey* are the 07 Dec 2021 12-night departure from Singapore to Perth, the 19 Dec 2021 16-night departure from Perth to Melbourne, and more.

Call 1800 754 500 for more information.

Costa bunkering

COSTA Cruises on Sun completed Italy's first liquified natural gas bunkering operation in the port of La Spezia with *Costa Smeralda*.

The exercise was the 50th completed by Costa Group, and was done with support by the Italian Coast Guard, the Port Authority of Eastern Ligurian Sea, Shell and a range of local authorities.

The operation took place with the ship berthed at the pier, where the bunkering vessel *Coral Methane* was positioned bow-to-bow with *Costa Smeralda*.

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