

NCL planning for a full house in '22

EXCLUSIVE

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) hopes to have its entire fleet operating by early next year, including the Sydney-homeported *Norwegian Spirit* (pictured) President & Chief Executive Officer Harry Sommer has told *Cruise Weekly*.

Buoyed by Australia's travel bubble with New Zealand, which NCL believes will set a precedent for the restart of tourism in the two countries, Sommer said the cruise line is "making plans accordingly" for *Spirit* to be sailing Down Under some time early next year.

"The critical message from our side is, we're not in any race to do this, and we really want to take a staged approach... we realise different parts of the world are in different phases of this" he said.

"My guess is Australia will be one of the latter places to



resume...the good news is, when we get this restarted in other parts of the world, it'll give the Australian Govt confidence.

"How quickly things move after that, it's anyone's guess, it's moving a bit slower than we'd like, but it's moving."

NCL's first ports of call for its restart are the Caribbean and Greece (*CW* 08 Apr), the former of which incorporates the complexity of international, inter-island travel, which the region was happy to accommodate.

"CLIA has said of 500,000 cruisers, (there have been) less than 40 cases, and that was before vaccines," Sommer said.

"You take these protocols and you layer mandatory vaccinations for all crew and passengers on top of it, and the Caribbean governments' questions were how quickly can you come?"

"Even with that, we want to be super careful, so we're not starting tomorrow, we're starting in early August."

Vice President & Managing Director APAC Ben Angell added the unhurried pace at which NCL was taking its restart was possible thanks to a long booking curve.

"In this market, and Asia to some degree, we focus on fly-cruise holidays and getting guests to book well in advance to travel," Angell explained.

"We're booking good numbers, we're seeing demand come through strongly on '22 and '23.

"It's not a race for us, but we're doing a great job on building those base loads."

Cruise Weekly today

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

A-ROSA is a-okay

A-ROSA River Cruises has joined Cruise Traveller as its newest cruise line partner.

To mark the cooperation, Cruise Traveller has released three double cruise combo packages, offering savings of more than \$900 per couple.

Cruise Traveller Managing Director Craig Bowen welcomed A-ROSA to the small ship specialist's fold.

"We look forward to spreading the news in Australia about A-ROSA's wonderful range of contemporary European river cruises that appeal to travellers who value choice, flexibility and a relaxed setting," he said.



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Storyteller Series

AVALON Waterways has launched Storyteller Series, a program of celebrity-hosted cruises.

Confirmed storytellers for the new series of sailings departing this year and the next include world-renowned authors, such as Diana Gabaldon (*Outlander* book series), Candace Bushnell (*Sex and the City*), Cheryl Strayed (*Torch*), Gillian Flynn (*Gone Girl*), and Christopher Moore (*A Dirty Job*).

American singer-songwriter & guitarist Edwin McCain will also join Avalon for a Storyteller sailing, which will take place on the Rhine, Danube and Seine rivers.

"Through this special series of sailings, Avalon guests get to spend a week in Europe with their favourite storytellers," explained Managing Director Pam Hoffee.

"They're invited to meet legends in legendary landscapes.

"With no more than 160 fellow travellers, fans of our celebrity hosts will be privy to special gatherings – from book-signings to concerts and Q&A sessions – not to mention, off-the-cuff opportunities to interact with their host, while on ship or in port."

For more on the Storyteller Series, [CLICK HERE](#).

Inaugural Ultramarine leader



QUARK Expeditions is introducing its first Expedition Leader for its recently delivered *Ultramarine* (CW 07 Apr), Laurie di Vincenzo (pictured).

A member of the Quark team for almost 10 years, di Vincenzo said it was an honour to be asked to lead aboard *Ultramarine*.

"A project of this nature requires incredible investment, not just in terms of finances, but in terms of the work and effort by a passionate team who have taken this build from a dream and a concept to the purpose-built expedition vessel it is today," di Vincenzo said.

"When *Ultramarine* is launched this year, 30 years after Quark Expeditions' inaugural voyage - to the North Pole - this vessel will encapsulate decades of knowledge and experience that our team has gained working

on a variety of ships in the most diverse fleet in the polar industry.

"All of the first-hand knowledge, combined with innovative new developments, means that *Ultramarine* will be an incredible platform to explore the polar regions, and I couldn't be more excited about working with the team onboard to ensure that this vessel lives up to its potential."

Di Vincenzo has worked on six different vessels over her career with Quark, and said she has always embraced the challenge of working on a new ship.

"There is so much to learn and adapt to during an inaugural season, and while an incredible amount of work has already been done in the planning of *Ultramarine*, it's not until the team gets onboard the ship that we'll really be able to bring it to life," di Vincenzo added.

RSSC land programs

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) is offering more complimentary land programs with its Free Extended Explorations, which have been extended until the end of the month.

Guests can enhance their holiday at no extra cost by up to six nights in a range of enticing locales across Australia, as well as Africa, Asia, New Zealand and South America.

Across all destinations there are 13 complimentary pre- and post-cruise land programmes that can bookend 22 voyages, sailing between Oct 2021 and Mar 2022 on board *Seven Seas Explorer* and *Seven Seas Voyager*.

Free Extended Explorations also offer guests the luxury of flexibility, with 50% reduced deposits.

The programs range between two and three nights in length, and showcase destination's must-sees, and reveals local hidden treasures.

"We wanted to offer our guests the opportunity to make up for lost time and maximise their next vacation with immersive exploration experiences at no extra cost to them," said President & Chief Executive Officer Jason Montague.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).



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THE JOURNEY TO RELAUNCH BEGINS

Want to see how Norwegian Cruise Line is gearing up for its return back to sea?
Watch the first episode of *EMBARK – The Series*.

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HOLLAND America Line (HAL) celebrated its 148th anniversary on Sun.

The mainstays of the cruise line's business throughout the 19th century were transportation and shipping, before HAL offered its first vacation cruise in 1895.

Today, the cruise line operates 10 ships that visit more than 500 ports across all seven continents.

Nieuw Statendam led HAL's celebrations (**pictured**), proudly displaying the cruise line's 148th birthday.



Dining afloat: Lindstrom



SHIPS: *Fram, Roald Amundsen, and Fridtjof Nansen.*

NAMED in honour of Polar expedition leader Roald Amundsen's personal chef Adolf Lindstrom, this fine dining establishment is both a feast for the eyes - and belly.

Classic Scandinavian design meets modern art in a venue that offers diners nothing but the best food and wine from the northern countries.

Guests can sample reindeer sirloin, beetroot-cured salmon with wasabi cream and pickled onion (**below**),



pan-fried fillet of halibut with buttered king crab meat, while dessert options include mille feuilles with mascarpone and raspberries (**inset**).

You could say they've taken a "viking" to this food concept.

INCLUDED IN FARE: Dining at Lindstrom is included for suite guests. A surcharge applies for all other passengers.

RESERVATIONS: Essential.

DRESS: Casual.



Discerning deal

DISCERNING Traveller has launched an exclusive bonus of US\$500 shipboard credit per stateroom on Oceania Cruises' 21-night Australian extravaganza from Bali to Sydney.

The exclusive offer can be combined with the free shipboard credit as part of the OLife Choice package, offering guests up to US\$1,300 in shipboard credit.

To find out more, contact Discerning Traveller on 1300 950 622.



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Reinforce our message

IMPORTANT discussions with government have continued in recent days as CLIA and cruise lines push for an urgent pathway forward for our industry.

Working across multiple agencies and ministries, this is a complex process and involves detailed discussions.

Though we don't have news to announce just yet, we continue to apply pressure and point out the devastating impact of the cruise suspension on local communities.

To help travel agents and other stakeholders reinforce our message, CLIA has expanded its #WeAreCruise pages, which include a new fact sheet on our [Model for Responsible Sailing](#).

This guide explains the extensive health measures cruise lines have adopted globally and our vision for their implementation in Australia and New Zealand, beginning initially with carefully controlled domestic sailings.

Visit [WeAreCruise.org](#) to find out more.

CLIA and our supporters have also been busy in the media recently, appearing on television, radio and in print to highlight the urgent need for a path forward.

In Australia this has included [Sunrise](#) and [Today](#), and in New Zealand [TVNZ](#).

CLIA is planning other initiatives to raise our voice, and we'll tell you more soon. In the meantime, visit our [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) pages to see some of our latest news and help share our messages in your own communities.

