



RCI to be fully operational by Dec

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has expanded its American comeback for the northern summer, with *Freedom of the Seas* to kick off the line's return in its home market in time for Independence Day.

Six of RCI's ships will begin sailing out of Florida and Texas from 02 Jul, with *Freedom* to sail to Perfect Day at CocoCay (pictured).

By the end of Aug, 12 RCI ships will be cruising across Alaska, The Bahamas, the Caribbean, and Europe, with the cruise line to soon announce its full-fleet return by the end of the year.

Odyssey of the Seas will make her debut 03 Jul from Fort Lauderdale, after she was initially set to begin sailing in Israel (CW 17 May).

The ship will set sail on new six- and eight-night Caribbean cruises, after which she will be followed



by *Allure of the Seas*, *Symphony of the Seas*, *Independence of the Seas* and *Mariner of the Seas*.

Also resuming will be *Harmony of the Seas*, which will return to Europe from 15 Aug, sailing seven-night itineraries to the Western Mediterranean.

All northern summer cruises are available to book today.

President & Chief Executive Officer Michael Bayley said as of the announcement, 90% of all vacationers booking with RCI were either vaccinated, or planning to get vaccinated in time for their cruise.

"We also thank Governor

DeSantis of Florida, Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Broward County Mayor Steve Geller and Chairman of the Canaveral Port Authority board Wayne Justice and board commissioners for their steadfast support of our industry and for providing access to vaccines to the thousands of crew on our ships," Bayley added.

"This act of understanding and humanity has been deeply appreciated, and we are grateful for their support, which is enabling the health and safety of our guests, crew members and the communities we visit."

Superyacht tick

THE Parliament of Australia has been debating a bill which would extend the *Special Recreational Vessels Act* for two years, allowing superyachts to conduct coastal operations in local waters.

The legislation was introduced in 2019 to encourage these vessels not to bypass Australia in favour of New Zealand and Noumea, but had a review clause to ensure the measure didn't adversely impact local operators.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant the superyachts have not yet come, with the measure to extend the review date until 30 Jun 2023 with bipartisan support.

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Monday 7th June 2021



WE'VE heard of high-end cruising, but this is ridiculous.

The creator of a new nuclear-powered emissions-free superyacht is seeking VIP paying passengers for the venture, with fares priced at a whopping US\$3 million for a 10-day voyage.

The *Earth 300* is the brainchild of Aaron Olivera, who described the vessel as a "global icon for science" and plans to use it as a base for environmental research.

It's estimated construction will cost up to US\$700 million, with Olivera seeking investors to help fund the project.

Some berths aboard the futuristic vessel (**pictured**) will also be allocated to scientists.



MSC flies into Spain

MSC Cruises has announced the recommencement of operations in Spain, with the deployment of *MSC Grandiosa* out of Barcelona from 26 Jun this year.

The expansion builds on other MSC restarts planned for Germany, France and the Baltics, as well as confirmed itineraries in the West and East Mediterranean and the UK.

MSC Cruises CEO Gianni Onorato said "when we first announced our confirmed programs for summer 2021, we indicated that we would enrich them with any new ports and destinations as they become available," he said.

"This is the case with Spain and Barcelona, thus allowing our guests to visit this magnificent destination that has been unavailable since Mar of last year, thanks to the secure bubble ashore excursions we provide under our health and safety operating protocol."

MSC has already carried tens of thousands of cruisers safely since restarting operations in Italian waters in Aug last year, with the opening of Spain also enabling the addition of port calls in Valencia.

WA agents still smiling



UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises and Lindblad Expeditions hosted an event in Perth recently, with about 40 WA agents sharing a drink as they looked forward to a brighter future.

Uniworld GM Australia Alice Ager told **Cruise Weekly** "It was just lovely to see so much optimism for our industry," with attendees (**pictured** back row) including Treva Anderson and Linda Bottrell from South

Perth Travel; Nick Missikos from Our World Travel and Jen Pagett from Uniworld.

Front row: Sally Seward from Travelmanagers; Mike Drew from Mike Drew Travel & Cruise; Kathy Millett from Travel Managers; and Vicki Southern from Travelmanagers.

Below: Alex Davey and Renee Hopping from Houston & Turner Travel Associates, with Alice Ager, Uniworld - more pics at facebook.com/cruiseweekly.



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