



Cunard drops Australia season

CUNARD Line has cancelled its planned upcoming sailings from the United Kingdom to Australia overnight, as well as the local season of *Queen Elizabeth*, citing the “ongoing complexities of navigating global travel”.

The season had been scheduled to operate from 18 Oct through until 09 Mar 2022, and comes along with the suspension of World Voyages on *Queen Mary 2*.

Queen Victoria’s voyages have also been cancelled through until 29 Apr 2022, with the exception of five journeys, which will transfer onto *Queen Elizabeth*.

The announcements came along with confirmation Cunard is resuming operations in just over a month’s time, with *Queen Elizabeth* welcoming guests on board for a series of United Kingdom voyages from Southampton on 19 Jul.

Rather than heading down

under, *Queen Elizabeth* will sail internationally from 13 Oct, with new voyages including to the Canary Islands and Iberian Peninsula, and will then depart the United Kingdom in mid-Feb next year to resume her scheduled season in Japan from 13 Apr 2022.

President Simon Palethorpe said Cunard was eagerly anticipating next month’s restart and the United Kingdom season.

“Sadly, the path for a return to sailing across international waters is less clear and we are extremely sorry for the huge disappointment cancellations will cause for all guests who have been affected,” he said.

“Unfortunately there are simply too many international ports of call impacted by the ongoing complexities of COVID-19, which has sadly led to this decision including the need to reluctantly

cancel *Queen Elizabeth’s* much anticipated Australian season.”

Palethorpe appeared in a video specially recorded for Cunard’s Australian guests, personally apologising for the changes.

“While we are seeing positive signs that cruising is on its way back, its resumption is still very much influenced by operational challenges due to the pandemic.”

All guests whose cruise has been cancelled will automatically receive a future cruise credit worth 125% of the standard deposit terms, and 100% of any additional monies paid.

Alternatively, a 100% refund is also available to passengers via a form on www.cunard.com.

Palethorpe stressed that the “interruption to our close relationship with Australasia is only temporary, and *Queen Elizabeth* is still scheduled to return in Nov 2022”.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Silversea confidence

SILVERSEA Cruises has “a lot of confidence” it will be able to operate its Australian 2021-22 summer season (**CW** 04 Jun 2020).

Director of Sales Australia & New Zealand Steve Richards explained on a travel advisor webinar yesterday that, with its season still six months away, Silversea was confident it would be able to operate its 19 planned departures aboard *Silver Muse* and *Silver Shadow*.

“We have a lot of confidence, being six months away, that the government framework will work in our favour,” Richards said.

“It is selling well, but there is space available.”

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Xplorer xpanded

CORAL Expeditions' Xplorers' Club Past Passenger Loyalty Program has been updated with a range of new and enhanced benefits.

Starting next month, Coral will introduce a new tier of Lifetime Xplorers Club members who have sailed with the cruise line for more than 100 nights.

Coral is also rewarding its most loyal Platinum guests with an extra tier of benefits, including a free one category stateroom upgrade at the time of booking, 15% off the fare for all future trips, and a direct line to the company's General Manager for bookings.

Another modification will see the long-standing Platinum benefit of a free seven-night cruise aboard *Coral Expeditions II* on the Great Barrier Reef replaced with the equivalent value of \$5,000 per person in cruise credit to be used on any Coral cruise.

This benefit offers more flexibility than the formerly offered deal, with *Coral Expeditions II* retired and the Great Barrier Reef program no longer offered year-round.

Coral's Kimberley season is currently in full swing, with all three vessels now sailing between Broome and Darwin.

As of last week, Coral has departed on over 50 incident-free voyages since its restart.

Extraordinary Expeditions



SEABOURN Cruise Line has announced its Extraordinary Expedition itineraries in Antarctica and the Amazon for 2022-2023.

The cruise line's *Seabourn Venture* (render **pictured**) is the first of two purpose-built expedition ships, and will sail the west coast of South America, cross the Drake Passage to Antarctica, tuck into remote South Georgia and the Falkland Islands, and explore deep into the Amazon River all the way to Peru, between Nov 2022 and Apr 2023.

The new itineraries include 15 distinct 10-to 21-day Antarctic and Amazon expeditions, with extended voyage options available up to 30 days in length.

Highlights include cruising scenic sounds, fjords, channels and glaciers in Chile, sailing to Antarctica, and crossing back to

explore South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

The ship will sail on nine voyages, ranging from 10 to 21 days, to Antarctica that will include multiple daily operations using the Zodiacs for landings and cruises along the Antarctic Peninsula.

In Mar and Apr 2023, *Venture* will embark on a series of four 10- to 12-day expedition voyages in Brazil and the Amazon, with highlights including visiting the colourful cities on the coast of Brazil and sailing into the heart of South America.

Guests can cruise in zodiacs along the Amazon River and visit ancient sites and villages.

President Josh Lebowitz said Seabourn is looking forward to returning to South America aboard the cruise line's first-ever purpose-built expedition ship.

NEW ZEALAND CRUISE ASSOCIATION
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NZCA UPDATE

with Kevin O'Sullivan
CEO, NZCA

Regional statement

I SPENT much of last week travelling around the South Island, visiting our members and working with ports and tourism organisations at cruise workshops.

In days gone by we would have had pre-cruise season gatherings to discuss the global and national outlook for cruise and work through operational details to make sure everything went well on cruise days.

We would also hold post-season workshops to examine what worked and what could be improved.

This time though it was difficult to be upbeat, and my presentations were on the gloomy side as we don't want to give the important people that make cruise successful false hope.

They needed to know that government is not yet supporting a return of cruise, and there is no indication when that will happen.

The questions from most participants were, "the rest of the world is starting - why cant we", and "Australians can cross the Tasman in planes, why not in ships?"

Good questions, but I can't answer them - I wish I could.

The hopeful ones are looking at this hiatus as a time when we can plan to come back better.

Yes indeed.


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ONLY 2023 DEPARTURE REMAINING



AN AMERICAN man now has a whale of a tale to tell, after he was swallowed by a humpback off the coast of Massachusetts.

The reluctant Captain Ahab, a commercial lobster diver, was in barely 15 metres of water when, as he described to *NBC Boston*, "I just felt this truck hit me and everything just went dark".

Just as soon as it had happened, the man was spat back out, and was taken to Cape Cod Hospital with a dislocated knee and soft tissue damage.

However, despite the painful experience, he said he plans to go back to diving for lobsters as soon as possible.

Stunningly, the man was also in a plane crash in Costa Rica more than 10 years ago, in which he survived two days in the wilderness clinging to life before he was found.

Perhaps his opportunity to buy a lottery ticket has passed, as surely this guy ain't getting any luckier.

Sweden and weep



THE ports of Gothenburg, Stockholm and Visby have collaborated for the safe restart of cruising in Sweden, which took place yesterday.

The country's first cruise ship call of the year in which passengers were able to disembark was a result of the joint collaboration of regulatory authorities, with TUI Cruises' *Mein Schiff 6* (pictured) calling on Gothenburg.

The "bubble cruise" will see passengers travelling off the ship in specially chartered buses, with their own set times to visit

museums, so as to not mix with members of the community.

The cruise has embarked significantly under capacity, and all passengers have been tested.

"By collaborating with the relevant regulatory agencies to establish joint protocols, unambiguous codes of conduct and practices for cruise ship calls, the shipping companies have had a common policy to adhere to, which has facilitated the restart of the important cruise tourism," City of Stockholm Planning Commissioner Ports of Stockholm Joakim Larsson said.

Fred. Olsen 2022

FRED. Olsen Cruise Lines has unveiled its brand new sailings aboard *Bolette* and *Borealis* for next year.

The 16 new sailings include a 34-night trip to the Caribbean and a 15-night Mediterranean discovery, a five-night scenic Ireland sailing, and a two-night cruise to nowhere.

Also included are scenic sailings to the Norwegian fjords, opportunities to witness the northern lights, and voyages to the Canary Islands or Iceland.

Durations range from two to 38 nights, with departures available from Southampton and Liverpool.

In addition, guests can choose between a free all-inclusive drinks package or up to £250 per person to spend on board.

"Now, more than ever, people are dreaming of their holidays and yearning to get their travels booked in for 2022, and we have been working closely with our destination partners," Fred. Olsen said.



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