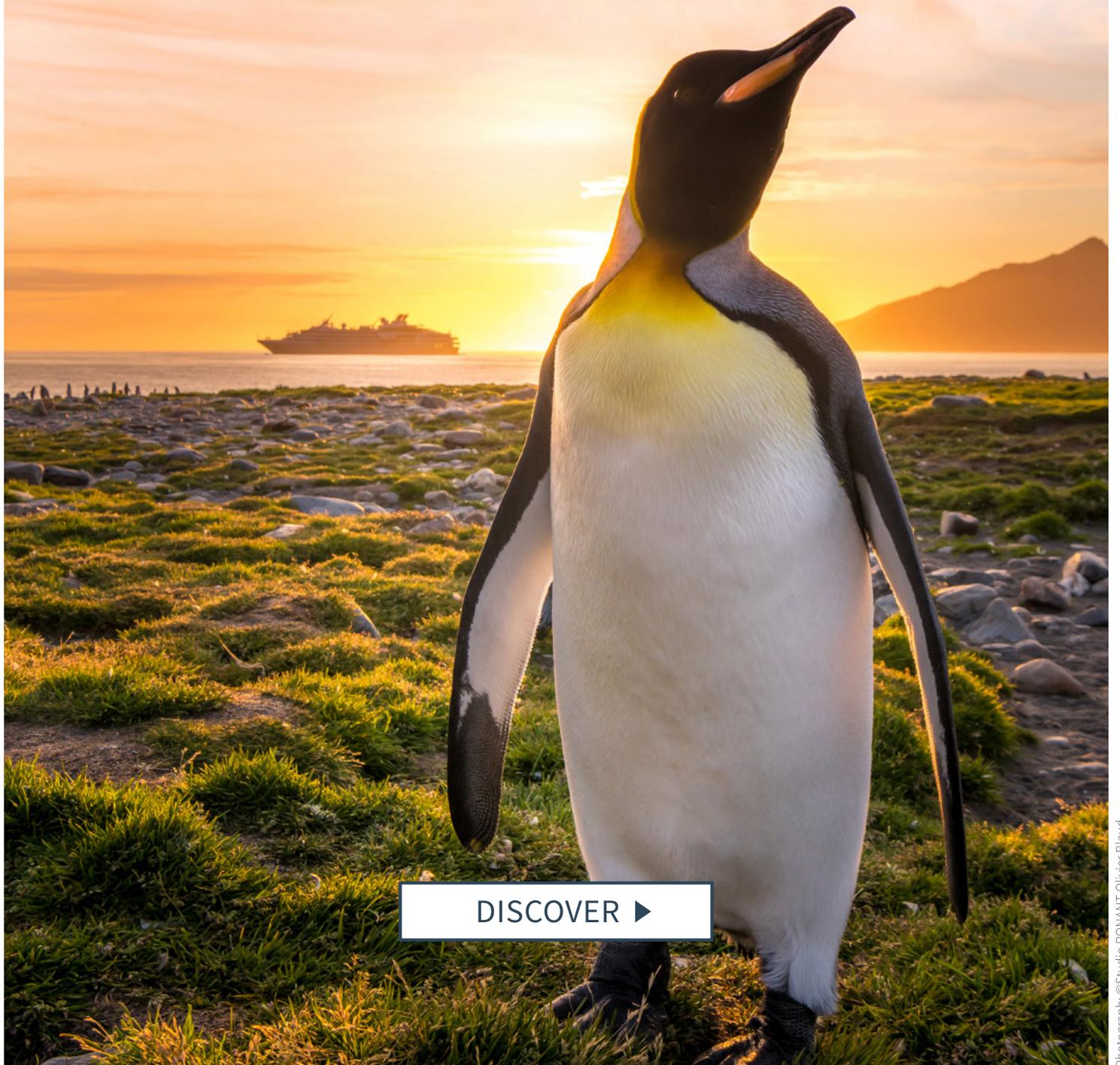


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## Carnival over for Vandekreeke

### EXCLUSIVE

**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line Vice President & General Manager Australia, Jennifer Vandekreeke, will leave the company in the coming weeks to take up a yet-to-be announced role within the local travel industry.

Vandekreeke launched the Carnival business in Australia, having undertaken feasibility studies on the local operation prior to announcing the deployment of *Carnival Spirit* in Aus (**TD** 12 Jan 2011).

She was subsequently named as the brand's first ever Director Australia (**TD** 19 Apr 2011), relocating down under and settling here with her family.

"After 13 fun-filled years of waterslides, cucumber sunrises and the occasional sing-along with [shipboard cruise band] Music Manila, I will be leaving the Carnival team to take on a new challenge," Vandekreeke told **CW**.

"It was the opportunity of a lifetime to launch the Carnival business in Australia and to play a role in the growth story of cruising in this market.

"It has been an honour, a privilege and a joy to lead the team as we built the Carnival brand from zero to one million Australian guests," she said.

"I am leaving the brand and the business in the very best of hands with the local Australia team, and I can't wait to see where they take our fun brand next.

"I'll be cheering on from the



sidelines every step of the way."

Vandekreeke, who a decade ago told **Cruise Weekly** her favourite onboard activity is Superstar Live Karaoke (**CW** 25 Aug 2011), also paid tribute to Australian travel advisors.

"I'd like to express my deepest gratitude to the travel agents who supported us every step of the way...our agent partners not only made us successful, they also made the job a lot of fun."

She said she takes away some great memories of Sail Away Parties, partnership summit sing-alongs and "the never ending passion and dedication of the Australian and NZ travel agent community".

Vandekreeke is **pictured** sharing a refreshing beverage with Christine Duffy, Carnival President during a visit to Australia in 2016.

### Cruise Weekly today

**Cruise Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news and a cover wrap from **Ponant**.

### Coral NYE cruises

**CORAL** Expeditions will go Across The Top in the New Year, with two new Northern Australian expeditions in 2022. The itineraries will operate between Broome and Cairns in Jan - 1800 079 545 for more.

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## Victoria warning

**GREATER** Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) in Canada is advocating for the country's marine department to announce plans to rescind the order suspending cruise, in effect until 28 Feb 2022.

Planning and certainty is required for the cruise industry in British Columbia, GVHA said, adding the threatening permanence of the exemption to the United States' *Passenger Vessel Services Act* could decimate the CAD\$2.7 billion cruise industry in British Columbia.

Signed into law in May, the exemption allows cruise ships to bypass Canada for the 2021 season, and GVHA Chief Executive Officer Ian Robertson is asking Transport Canada to announce an end of the suspension by the northern autumn.

## RCI beefs up HomePort

**ROYAL** Caribbean International (RCI) has enhanced its trade tools, in support of its travel partners.

RCI has redesigned its advisor portal HomePort, with brand new features and improved functionality, such as dedicated landing pages for local ships, bespoke flyers, deck plans, customisable digital resources for social media and email, and new share features to make communicating with clients more seamless.

From today, advisors will also have access to a plethora of information, such as training videos and new assets, designed to help sales and ensure they have more time to service their clients and secure bookings.

RCI is also hosting a Virtual Scavenger Hunt through the new HomePort, with prizes up for grabs, including a cruise famil during its local 22-23 season.

There are nine prizes on offer in total, including an iFLY voucher, a BridgeClimb Sydney experience, and more.

All travel partners are invited to compete in the event, which will be hosted on RCI's Travel Agent Facebook group today until 5pm - **CLICK HERE** for full details.

**MEANWHILE**, RCI has begun construction on its Icon class, with its newly named *Icon of the Seas*.

RCI's first ship powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG) will debut in the Northern Hemisphere in autumn 2023, after construction is finished at Finnish shipyard Meyer Turku.

*Icon of the Seas* will be the first of three of RCI's ships to be powered by liquefied natural gas and other environmentally friendly applications, such as shore power connection, the cruise line said.

## Seabourn cancels

**SEABOURN** Cruise Line's *Seabourn Encore* and *Seabourn Ovation* will not sail in Australia for the 2021-2022 season, the cruise line has announced.

The line is cancelling select departures on *Encore* and *Ovation* between 01 Sep 2021 and 26 Apr 2022 to align with its overall restart plan.

This will now see *Ovation* depart from Athens from 03 Jul 2021 to operate in the Greek Isles, and *Encore* to also depart from Athens, on 17 Apr 2022.

Arabia and Asia departures aboard the two ships have also been cancelled.

Other Seabourn fleet restart plans include *Seabourn Odyssey* departing from Bridgetown from 18 Jul, and *Seabourn Sojourn* departing from LA from 11 Jan 2022.

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## AQSC MS cruise

**AMERICAN** Queen Steamboat Company (AQSC) is offering savings on journeys along the Mississippi River in 2022 and 2023.

Couples can save US\$1,200 on an all-inclusive Minneapolis to New Orleans river cruise when booking by the end of the year.

The newly released, 15-night Mighty Mississippi package is available for three sailings in Sep 2022 or three departures in Sep and Oct 2023 aboard *American Countess*, *American Duchess* or *American Queen*.

The package begins with a one-night, pre-cruise hotel stay in Minneapolis followed by a 14-night cruise south through to New Orleans, with highlights including visits to Gateway Arch, Nottoway Plantation and more.

Including an unlimited onboard beverage package, hop-on-hop-off shore excursions, and the one-night hotel stay, the 15-night Mighty Mississippi package is available from US\$5,071 per person, twin share, with the deposit returned if a cancellation is made prior to final payment, 130 days before sailing.

## Windstar rejig

**WINDSTAR** Cruises has promoted Paul Barrett to Vice President of Marine & Technical Operations.

Previously, Barrett was Vice President of Technical Operations, with his new role including marine operations, safety, compliance, and more.

## MPs hear from cruise



**A GROUP** of cruise industry suppliers has travelled to Canberra to press federal parliamentarians for a pathway to a restart of the industry, to help restore livelihoods and jobs.

Carnival Australia President Sture Myrmell joined the group for the special briefing at Parliament House, where they met with MPs from federal divisions in a number of states that benefit from economic activity generated by cruising.

Representing fresh produce growers, travel advisors, tour operators, marine engineering services and entertainers, the group told MPs its businesses were among many in the travel and tourism sector hit hard by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and which were now looking for certainty to restore livelihoods and jobs.

In the past 15 months, at least \$6 billion in cruise-linked economic activity has been lost industry-wide, and more than 700 cruises that would have carried more than 1.8 million guests

from Australian ports have been cancelled, Carnival said.

This is money that would have been spent on port-related fees and charges, transport and logistics, food and beverage, shore tours, entertainers and travel advisors.

A quarter of Australian-based travel agencies specialising in Carnival brands in 2019 have now closed, while 6,000 consultants registered in one of the company's brand training academies have left the industry.

Myrmell said the situation was devastating for the many suppliers who benefit from the multiplier effect of cruising, and had been looking for some sign of encouragement that their businesses could be restored.

**Pictured** in the flying V formation are Select Fresh Providores' Steven Biviano, Inter Marine's Ross DiBartolo, Clean Cruising's Dan Russell, Myrmell, Bob Wood Cruise Group's Jay McKenzie, Inter Marine's Graeme Blackman and cruise entertainer James Bustar.



**EVERYONE** is looking forward to partying as we celebrate the return of cruises, but this is ridiculous.

More than 30 kilograms of cocaine (pictured) has been found aboard a cruise ship off the Florida coast.

U.S. Customs & Border Protection seized the quantity of drugs, which was discovered by the security services of the ship, who handed over the contraband last week upon docking into Port Everglades.

Given the status of Florida's lawsuit to stop cruise lines asking passengers for vaccine passports, it's probably best we



## New Ponant PR

**PONANT** has appointed Elysee Collective as its public relations agency for Australia.

The announcement follows the retirement of long-serving PR Manager Michael Corbett, who was sent off in a blaze of glory earlier this week with a lavish luncheon in Sydney.

Led by founder & Director Alice Moore, Elysee Collective officially starts its appointment from next month.