



Cruise Weekly today

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

CDC changes cruise COVID level

THE Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) last week lowered its COVID-19 Level for cruise ship travel from 4 to 3.

The change represents a switch in CDC advice from “avoid travel” to “make sure you are fully vaccinated before travel”, and “unvaccinated travellers should avoid all non-essential travel”.

The CDC also advises those who decide to go on a cruise to get tested 24 to 72 hours prior to their trip, and three to five days after.

In addition, the CDC is advising passengers who are not fully vaccinated to self-quarantine for seven days after cruise travel, even if they test negative.

If they do not get tested, they should self-quarantine for 10 days after cruise travel.

The CDC typically determines the level for COVID-19 travel health notices monthly, and in May amended its guidelines for masks on cruise ships, with guests able to remove facial coverings in outdoor areas so long as they are vaccinated (*CW* 17 May).

CDC rules struck down

UNITED States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida Steven Merryday has struck down the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s (CDC) cruise rules.

The ruling said the national public health institute cannot enforce its rules from 18 Jul.

As part of its Conditional Sailing Order, the CDC said lines could only sail if 95% of crew members and passengers aboard a ship are vaccinated.

If not, the CDC required cruise lines to take volunteers on test cruises to show they can mitigate the risks of coronavirus.

The ruling says the CDC can propose “a narrower injunction” by 02 Jul “to further safeguard the public’s health while this action pends”.

Florida would have to respond to any such proposal within seven days, with the state’s Governor Ron DeSantis, who filed the suit in Apr, hailing the decision as a “major victory”.

Some cruise lines, such as Royal Caribbean International (RCI), were initially preparing to sail as soon as next week with the CDC’s blessing.

However, RCI now plans to resume sailing from the United States on 31 Jul (see **page 2**), and said passengers on its first sailings from Florida who don’t show proof of a coronavirus vaccine will face more restrictions than passengers who do.

Guests not presenting as

vaccinated will be restricted to a fixed dining time and be assigned to a designated area specifically for the unvaccinated, and will not be able to sign up for My Time Dining.

They will also not be able to participate in some activities, will not be able to access all venues, and will not be able to attend certain performances.

Unvaccinated passengers also will have to wear masks at all times when in interior areas of the ship, and will face extra coronavirus testing at their own expense, including a test at the cruise terminal prior to boarding the ship, and another test on board prior to disembarkation, at an extra cost of \$136 per passenger.

Vaccinated passengers will be issued wristbands, while those who are unvaccinated will have a hole punched in their key cards.

All passengers will have to show their SeaPass cards to access lounges, shows and dining venues on the ship.

Passengers who don’t wish to follow the newly announced protocols for the ship can cancel their trips for a full refund.

“Since the majority of our guests will be vaccinated, there will be venues and events restricted to vaccinated guests only,” RCI said.

“We’ll do our best to create opportunities for all guests to enjoy their time with us.”

Survivors can sue

SURVIVORS of the 2019 White Island eruption can sue Royal Caribbean Group (RCG) in Florida, the Federal Court of Australia has ruled.

A Melbourne mother and daughter are suing RCG over the physical and psychological injuries suffered during the natural disaster, after the company argued they should only be able to sue for damages in New South Wales, given they booked their tickets at a Flight Centre in the state.

The ruling also stipulated RCG must pay the family’s Federal Court costs.

Carnival breach

CARNIVAL Corporation has disclosed another personal data breach, saying it detected unauthorised access to its computer systems in Mar.

The company, which afterward alerted regulators and hired a cybersecurity firm to investigate the breach, acted quickly to “shut down the event and prevent further unauthorised access”, it said.

The breach affected personal information of a number of guests, employees and crew members for Carnival Cruise Line, Holland America Line, and Princess Cruises, as well as the company’s medical ops.

“There is evidence indicating a low likelihood of the data being misused,” Carnival said.

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SUSTAINABILITY is a hot topic for the travel industry, particularly for cruise lines, with the launch of a new eco-label set to have operators clamouring to score it.

The new Whale-safe eco-label will certify cruise lines and other shipping companies which take steps to keep from colliding with the marine mammals.

To earn the label, a cruise line must have 24/7 monitoring aboard their ships, share whale observation data through a digital platform, have procedures in place to act if a whale is sighted, and follow local speed and navigation rules.

NGO World Sustainability Organization launched the label in Mar via its Friend of the Sea project, which certifies tourism, fisheries, and aquaculture efforts as sustainable.

Perhaps the next cruise you go on will be determined by whether or not the line is Whale-safe!

Odyssey postponed

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) is postponing *Odyssey of the Seas'* first sailings from 03 Jul until 31 Jul "out of an abundance of caution", after eight of the ship's crew members received a positive test result for coronavirus.

All 1,400 crew on board were considered fully vaccinated last Fri, with the positive cases identified after the vaccination was given, but before they were fully effective.

The eight crew members, six of whom are asymptomatic and two who had mild symptoms, were immediately quarantined, and are being closely monitored by RCI's medical team.

To protect the remaining crew members and prevent any further cases, RCI has quarantined the entire ship for 14 days, and is continuing with routine testing.

A simulation cruise originally scheduled for late Jun, will also be rescheduled.

All affected passengers will be notified.



CRYSTAL Cruises has announced the 2023-2024 deployment for its luxury expedition yacht *Crystal Endeavor* (pictured), which will spend New Year's Eve in Sydney.

Highlights of the season include polar expeditions, remote island explorations, immersive voyages to Japan, the Northeast Passage, cruising into the heart of Seville, and more.

Other high points include expeditions to the Arctic & Antarctic, South America, Cape Verde and the Canary Islands, the Mediterranean and Western Europe, the British & Scottish Isles, Iceland and the Faroe Islands, Norway, the North Cape and Svalbard, Russia's Far North and the Northeast Passage, Japan and the Seto Inland Sea, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia's Raja Ampat Islands.

In total, *Endeavor* will feature

27 itineraries, ranging from 10 to 28 nights.

Reservations for *Endeavor's* 2023-2024 voyages open Thu, offering travellers all-inclusive fares, with up to US\$2,000 Book Now Savings per guest.

"Our remote expeditions offer guests access to lands few people have ever laid eyes on, let alone set foot upon, and several you would be hard-pressed to find," said President Jack Anderson.

"A number of places we visit are uninhabited by people but are incredibly alive with wildlife, and our immersive expeditions allow guests an up-close and intimate level of discovery, along with unparalleled comfort and luxury in the world's remote locations."

Genting Hong Kong announced significant delivery delays for *Endeavor* last Aug (**CW** 10 Aug 2020), which saw her initial Australian season put on hold.



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