



Genting plots hotel cruise partners

GENTING Hong Kong has outlined an ambitious plan for a fleet of hotel-branded cruise ships to be managed by its Crystal Cruises business.

Speaking at the christening ceremony of Crystal's highly anticipated *Crystal Endeavor* at MV Werften shipyard in Germany (**CW** yesterday), Genting deputy Chief Executive Officer Colin Au said the initiative would include small- and mid-sized vessels.

Au showcased the concept with a video, which included brands such as Accor, Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, Hilton Worldwide and Marriott International.

Two classes are envisioned - luxury expedition yachts similar to *Crystal Endeavor*, customised for brands such as Hilton's Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts; and the previously flagged 2,000-passenger Universal class ships which just six months ago

were believed to have been dropped from the construction schedule (**CW** 19 Jan).

The Universal newbuilds will also be managed by Crystal, with the first now scheduled for delivery in 2025.

Linking with hotel brands would give "instant name recognition, direct distribution and huge loyalty programs," according to the video shown during the event.

They will be "designed like airplanes, where function is more important than form, simplifying the design and production process and reducing costs, while allowing for customisation by hotel and other brands".

Features would allow for more social distancing, such as private balconies with inbuilt UV lights for sunbathing, meaning sun decks will be less crowded.

Staterooms will feature retractable beds so "guests can

dine in comfort in their own cabin with friends and family, without being in public dining rooms," the video enthused, with other health and safety innovations including disinfecting surfaces, contact-free systems and one-way corridors.

MV Werften is also continuing to build the 9,000 passenger *Global Dream*, which will be delivered next year, followed by a 2023 Endeavor class vessel.

The strategy aims to help revive the European shipbuilding industry, where Genting has a major stake through its ownership of MV Werften.

"Do not wait for demand to pick up so you can build more ships... the way to build more cruise ships is to make obsolete the entire 350 ships that are floating now," Au said, suggesting this would happen over the next decade with the likely introduction of new safety regulations.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Due dates suspended

THE final payment due date for Royal Caribbean International's (RCI) Australian cruises has been suspended.

Guests were informed of the change to their upcoming travels in a letter from RCI, which noted further details would be shared "very soon".

RCI took similar action with Alaska cruises earlier this year, continuing to push back the final payment date until cruises got the go-ahead.

It is too early to tell what this may indicate about RCI's summer season, after Federal Minister for Health Greg Hunt moved to extend the human biosecurity emergency period until 17 Sep (**CW** 11 Jun).

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New groups deal

FAMILY groups can save almost \$10,000 on a tall ship adventure this Christmas with Tradewind Voyages.

The Christmas and New Year voyage from Cairns to Sydney from Dec 2021 to Jan 2022 also provides free drinks on Christmas Day and New Year's Eve, when booking through Cruise Traveller.

Golden Horizon will sail from 22 Dec for a 15-night voyage south to Sydney via Townsville, the Whitsunday Islands, Brisbane, Noosa, the Gold Coast, Trial Bay, and Newcastle, before arriving on 06 Jan.

The 16-night package also includes a pre-cruise night in a Cairns hotel.

Five cabins must be booked together, with fares for the 16-night package from \$9,530ppts - **CLICK HERE**.

Wine don't you come and join us



UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruise Collection held a function with the Adelaide travel trade on Thu at the National Wine Centre of Australia, where the cruise line caught up with some of its most valued South Australia travel partners.

Pictured are Lewis & Turner Travel Associates Advisor Ashlee Cutting, Uniworld National Accounts Manager Jen Pagett,

Perchalla & Turner Travel Associates Senior Advisor Kristy Thomas, Perchalla & Turner Advisor Becky Kent-Perchalla, Chrisakis & Turner Travel Associates Advisor Catherine Oosterveld, Clarke & Turner Senior Travel Manager Lisa Clarke, Chrisakis & Turner Advisor Karalee Watson, Chrisakis & Turner Advisor Cetina Illies and Uniworld GM Alice Ager.

Windstar resumes

WINDSTAR Cruises has resumed operations, with its first cruise underway in the Greek Isles aboard *Wind Star*.

The line's entire fleet will sail with vaccinated crews and guests, with the first voyage setting sail on 19 Jun from Athens.

Windstar plans for the yacht to sail the itinerary on near-weekly dates through Oct, with the return sailing visiting Nafplio, Monemvasia, Patmos, Santorini and Mykonos.

The cruise line is returning to operations in a phased manner, with its fleet of six yachts debuting on various dates through Nov.

Windstar also recently had *Star Legend* returned to the fleet, the second yacht to complete the cruise line's Star Plus Initiative transformation (**CW** 26 May).



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Denmark reopens

DESPITE the passage of most of its 2021 cruise season, Denmark has reopened for cruises, as the country unlocks its borders for tourism.

Vaccinated cruise guests were allowed to go ashore in Denmark from last Sat without any further restrictions.

"We look forward to finally welcoming cruise guests in Denmark again," said CruiseCopenhagen Director Claus Bodker.

"We had hoped that non-vaccinated cruise guests also were welcome in Denmark as only one of four in the EU have been vaccinated, but the authorities chose a very cautious restart," Bodker added.

Qatar commemorates seafarers



HAMAD International Airport's world-first lounge for the exclusive use of seafarers has passed 50,000 visitors in under seven months since its opening (**CW** 26 Nov 2020).

To mark the International Maritime Organization's Day of the Seafarer on 25 Jun, Qatar Airways, the operator of the



lounge, held a ceremonial event. Qatar Group Chief Executive Officer Akbar Al Baker attended the event, where he met with customers in the Mariner Lounge (**inset**), and oversaw the cutting of a cake to commemorate the 50,000th visitor (**pictured**).

Hundreds were also given free flight upgrades as part of the lounge's commemoration.

Dedicated facilities provide crew members travelling with Qatar an exclusive haven, featuring an international selection of food & beverages, unlimited high-speed wi-fi, shower facilities, a television area, reading materials and a Business Centre.

Qatar has transported more than 380,000 seafarers and offshore workers since Apr 2020 for repatriation and crew change.

"We offer something no other airport or airline in the world currently provides – a peaceful space for these key workers to relax during their flight transfer," Al Baker proclaimed proudly.



FRENCH startup A2V has unveiled *Lili*, an aerodynamic boat that "flies" above the water at 100km/h, and burns three times less fuel than comparable vessels.

Lili generates an aerodynamic lift that provides her with impressive velocity, and reduced fuel consumption.

Lightweight and therefore significantly faster, *Lili* is made with 3.5 tonnes of plastic and fiberglass, is 10 metres long, and "turns like lightning".

Two RCI positives

TWO unvaccinated kids have tested positive on a Royal Caribbean International (RCI) cruise to The Bahamas.

The pair of passengers aboard *Adventure of the Seas* were isolated, with one displaying mild symptoms and the other asymptomatic, RCI said.

The virus was discovered during planned testing prior to disembarkation during the cruise, which arrived in Freeport late last week.

Adventure sailed with more than 90% fully vaccinated guests as required, however, children are not currently eligible for the vaccine.

All other members of their travelling party were vaccinated and tested negative.

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