



Emerald Sakara keel laid

A KEY milestone has been reached for Emerald Cruises with the keel-laying of its newest superyacht *Emerald Sakara* (CW 29 Sep).

Set to become the cruise line's second yacht when she launches in 2023, the keel-laying ceremony took place last Wed at the Ha Long Shipyard in Ha Long Bay.

Sakara joins soon-to-launch sister *Emerald Azzurra* at the forefront of the progress of the brand, according to Scenic Group owner Glen Moroney.

"We're very excited with the progress of our ocean yacht division at Emerald Cruises," he enthused.

"Global demand from our guests for our yacht cruise product gave us the confidence to build a sister yacht to *Emerald Azzurra*.

"I would like to thank our partners at the Ha Long Shipyard for their ongoing support."

Emerald Director of Sales, Marketing & Product Angus Crichton said the build of *Sakara* demonstrates the line's commitment to small-ship cruising.

"Our superyachts have a capacity for 100 guests only, while the maximum number of guests on our river cruise ships in our fleet is just 180," he explained.

"Following her maiden voyage through the Indian Ocean islands of the Seychelles in early 2023, *Emerald Sakara* will join *Emerald Azzurra* in sailing the Mediterranean, Adriatic, Red and Black Seas."

Sakara will boast balconies on 88% of her cabins, and more space per guest than similar vessels of her size.

The ship will also have a large infinity pool, a spa, a gym, a marina platform, and more.

Esprit to Lindblad

LINDBLAD Expeditions has seen strong reservations for future travel, with next year's bookings 51% ahead of bookings for 2021 at the same point 12 months ago, thanks in part to the recent acquisition of *Crystal Esprit* (CW 08 Sep).

Bookings are also 27% ahead of bookings for 2019 at the same point of that year, as revealed in Lindblad's third quarter results, with the cruise line also divulging its replacement of *National Geographic Islander* with *Esprit*.

The most recent financial period also saw Lindblad expand its fleet capacity with the delivery of the 126-passenger polar vessel *National Geographic Resolution*, in addition to the USD\$13 million acquisition of *Esprit*.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Earle sea trials

SUNSTONE Ships has announced the successful sea trials of Aurora Expeditions' Infinity-class expedition vessel *Sylvia Earle* (pictured).

The ship completed the trials across five days last week in the South China Sea.

More than 150 people were on board during the trials.

Sylvia Earle and her namesake will play host to the first-ever Antarctic Climate Expedition in 2023 (CW 21 Oct).



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MSC updates

MSC Cruises will offer sailings in the Southern Caribbean from 05 Dec, with *MSC Seaview* to provide seven- and 14-night voyages out of St. Maarten and Barbados.

The line's amended itineraries offer up to 12 hours of extended stays at each destination to allow holidayers to make the most of each destination.

With authorities in Martinique and Guadeloupe having decided cruise ships are not allowed yet, the updated itineraries reflect the ports that have guaranteed access, and allow for a full day at each destination.

"The Southern Caribbean is an area much loved by cruisers from around the world as well as local guests from this region and we have worked hard to find alternative options for the itinerary that would allow us to confirm our usual winter season here," said Chief Executive Gianni Onorato.

"We would like to particularly thank our airline partners who have amended their charter flight schedules to serve the new itinerary to make it accessible for our guests.

"For this, we are still able to offer our guests an incredible cruise holiday this winter, calling at some of the most beautiful islands in the South Caribbean," he said.

Heritage scholarship open



HERITAGE Expeditions has released its first True Young Explorer scholarship opportunity for the upcoming season for travellers aged 18 to 30.

The scholarship offers the chance to experience expedition travel to New Zealand's Subantarctic Islands (**pictured**), as well as Fiordland and the Chatham Islands on the 'Galapagos of the Southern Ocean' itinerary, at a fraction of what it would otherwise cost.

Every year, Heritage takes small groups of up to 50 travellers on voyages to some of the world's most unique and remote islands, coasts and shorelines.

In doing so, Heritage's aim is to create a league of ambassadors inspired to help protect these areas and raise awareness.

Heritage said it is looking for individuals who are as passionate as it is about giving a voice to, and protecting the Subantarctic Islands and Southern Ocean.

"Whether you are studying

science, an artist, in media, involved in community organisations, work in travel, are a teacher...we want to know how you will share your experience travelling aboard our trusty expedition vessel *Spirit of Enderby* alongside like-minded passengers and an incredibly experienced expedition team of naturalists, biologists and historians on the trip of a lifetime," Heritage said.

Scholars must be able to contribute to 30% of the cost of the expedition of NZ\$12,215 (AU\$11,656), for a scholarship price of NZ\$4,450 (AU\$4,246).

They must also share their experience within three months of returning.

To be in the running, tell Heritage why you should receive a scholarship, and how the experience will benefit both yourself and the region (how you plan on sharing your adventure).

Applications close 22 Nov - for more information, **CLICK HERE**.

Dream update

DREAM Cruises has introduced additional safety measures, with mandatory vaccination for guests aboard *World Dream*.

In effect from 21 Nov onward, Dream will require guests to be fully vaccinated at least 14 days before the cruising date, and must also test negative in a mandatory pre-boarding rapid antigen test at the terminal.

Dream is updating its guests on the latest requirements, and affected passengers may contact their original booking source for available options, including the choice to transfer to another cruise date or opt for a future cruise credit.

"With Singapore having one of the highest vaccination rates in the world, we have observed that since Oct 2021, close to 99% of our cruising guests aboard *World Dream* were already fully vaccinated," said President Michael Goh.

"As such, the implementation of mandatory vaccination for cruising guests aboard *World Dream* is timely and in line with our continuous effort to provide a safer and worry-free experience on board our ship."

World is the first ship in Singapore to be certified under the CruiseSafe program by the Singapore Tourism Board and also the CIP-M program by DNV.



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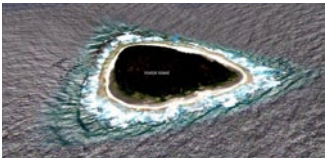
VOSTOK Island (pictured), an uninhabited coral island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, is sparking a mass of conspiracy theories, after being spotted by a number of Google Maps users.

Some internet surfers are suggesting Vostok is a "censored" destination, after it was shared to a popular Reddit thread dedicated to the discussion of unusual Google Maps finds.

Vostok appears to have an empty, black centre, with only its sandy shoreline visible.

Some speculated it is a secret military base, while one eloquent Redditer posited: "what the f**k this looks nothing like an island".

Others offered a more reasonable explanation for its appearance, noting Vostok is made up of dark-green *Pisonia* trees.



Celebrity deal

CELEBRITY Cruises is offering up to 50% off a second guest for a limited time.

Available for 2021-2023 bookings, the sale period runs until 13 Dec, for travel between Dec 2021 and Mar 2023 - for more info and to book, call 1800 754 500.

FACE-2-FACE: Angus Mackay

Key Account Manager, P&O Cruises Australia

1. What is your favourite part of your job?

Simple - there's always something new to learn.

2. What attracted you to a career in the cruise industry?

Opportunity! My first position as BDM for Complete Cruise Solution offered the opportunity to represent six different cruise lines, in an industry that was really starting to take off - lots to learn and lots to get advisors excited about.

3. What is key to success in the cruise industry?

Keep learning as it is constantly evolving. When you think you know everything about a cruise brand - look again.

4. How has COVID-19 changed the way you do your job?

The biggest differences - having a dog at my feet, the lure of the fridge, and not having a three-plus hour return commute to my desk each day. There's also a lot of new topics we need to be up to speed on (never thought I'd become a trainee in epidemiology), but in essence, a lot of the fundamentals are still the same.

5. What is the best thing to say to people who are hesitant to cruise?



Firstly, ask what their hesitations are - it may be a misconception or something simple to address. Before my first cruise I was hesitant too, so I relate my experience and suggest things like considering a shorter cruise to start with or going with a group of friends/family to add a different dynamic.

6. What was your best family trip?

I've had some crackers! *QM2* to France (ex Southampton), *Ryndam* (soon to be *Pacific Aria*) to Norwegian Fjords (ex Harwich), *Seabourn Pride* in Asia (ex Ho Chi Minh)...all were amazing with great groups, however, there's nothing quite like cruising on our home-grown cruise line, and hosting our Flagship Top Achievers on P&O's Australia Day Cruise was a standout experience-wise!

7. How do you wind down after a busy week?

A barbecue, a beer, then just add family and friends.

8. The celebrity you would most like to cruise with?

Jimi Hendrix (yeah I know.....) - can you imagine the entertainment on that cruise!



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Time to catch up

AS THE first stages of an international travel revival began in Australia this week, we're reminded again how far behind the rest of the world our governments have fallen when it comes to cruising.

Australia is still one of the only major cruise markets in the world where governments have no agreed plan in place for cruising's revival, yet Aussies in some states can now travel overseas to sail in countries where ships have been back in operation for months.

Despite our frustrations, there is a clear positive change in the discussions CLIA has been having with governments around cruising.

The Australian Government has said there is no reason why domestic and international cruising cannot begin this summer once 80% vaccination levels have been reached, so our challenge is to translate this into action and agree upon concrete plans.

In particular, we need action from the states.

Once the federal cruise suspension is lifted, we will need agreed plans in place at the state and territory level before we can implement health protocols.

