



On location in the  
Antarctic Peninsula

Today's issue of CW is coming  
to you courtesy of Aurora  
Expeditions.

**AFTER** a trip through the Chilean fjords and across the Drake Passage, Aurora Expeditions' *Greg Mortimer* has arrived in Antarctica, with her first stop Cuverville Island.

Crawling with penguin rookeries, Cuverville is located in the Errera Channel, and is the first of two shore landings Aurora will conduct today.

Guests will make landfall on mainland Antarctica in the afternoon with a visit to Neko Harbour in Andvord Bay, where *Mortimer* will stay anchored for the night as she watches whales and seabirds go by.

## Genting HK CEO resigns

**THE** majority owner of Genting Hong Kong, Malaysian billionaire Lim Kok Thay, has resigned as the company's Chairman and CEO, while Deputy CEO Au Fook Yew (aka Colin Au) has also stepped down from his leadership role at the parent firm of Crystal Cruises, Dream Cruises and Star Cruises.

Lim, who owns 76% of the Hong Kong-listed business, is stepping down following the appointment of Joint Provisional Liquidators to the company (**CW** yesterday).

Genting Hong Kong, which last week advised that it expected to run out of cash at the end of the month, is facing significant issues, including a US arrest warrant for its *Crystal Symphony* which is currently in the Bahamas, as well as a bankruptcy declaration of its German shipbuilding operations.

Lim Kok Thay has other business interests through the Genting Group which operates a massive



casino resort in Malaysia's Genting Highlands, established by his father, as well as interests in plantations, energy, property development and life sciences.

Genting also has integrated resorts in the UK and Singapore's Resorts World Sentosa, as well as Resorts World Las Vegas which opened in Jun last year.

The *Straits Times* notes there are no cross-shareholdings between the various businesses, apart from Lim (**pictured**) holding a major stake in each of them.

## Flights may be just the ticket for MSC

**MSC** Group has told the Italian Government that it's interested in acquiring a majority stake in ITA Airways, the carrier which has been established from the assets of the defunct Alitalia.

MSC said it would be the "industrial partner" of the venture as part of an agreement with Lufthansa and the Italian state.

The company said it was interested in "activating positive synergies for both companies in the cargo and cruise line sectors," with the bidders now seeking a 90-day exclusive due diligence period.

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# Celebrity Asia 2023/24

**CELEBRITY** Cruises has released details of its 2023/24 deployments in Asia, with *Celebrity Millennium* and *Celebrity Solstice* to cruise destinations such as Japan, China, Malaysia and Thailand.

The season kicks off in Sep next year with *Millennium* operating a series of “completely reimagined” 12-night itineraries out of Tokyo, Singapore and Bali.

Then in Nov she will be joined by *Solstice* (pictured), with a program departing from Hong Kong and Singapore taking in ports in Vietnam and Thailand.

*Celebrity Solstice* will also offer two 170-night trans-Pacific sailings leaving from either Honolulu or Sydney, taking in New Zealand, Fiji and French Polynesia.

New ports of call for *Celebrity* will include Celukan Bawang in Bali and Hambantota in Sri



Lanka, while familiar destinations are also on the agenda such as Lombok and Kuala Lumpur.

Celebrity Cruises MD Australia and APAC, Tim Jones, said “Asia has always been an incredibly popular destination for Australian and New Zealand travellers, and we’re so excited to announce our return to Asia in 2023-24 with our most extensive season yet”.

The voyages will feature *Celebrity*’s “Always Included” offering of wi-fi, drinks and service charges - for more details see [celebritycruises.com/au](http://celebritycruises.com/au).

## AQV Rocky deal

### AMERICAN Queen

Voyages has launched a new partnership with Rocky Mountaineer to provide pre- and post-cruise rail experiences through the Canadian Rockies for the inaugural season of the line’s new *Ocean Victory*.

Debuting in May, *Ocean Victory* will sail 12- and 13-day journeys between Vancouver and Sitka through the less-travelled regions of Alaka’s Inside Passage, with the vessel featuring an innovative X-Bow design and having capacity for a maximum of 186 guests.

The Rocky Mountaineer add-on is available as a five- or six-day pre- or post-cruise option and includes a GoldLeaf trip on the train and hotel nights in Banff, Kamloops & Vancouver.

American Queen Voyages’ parent company is San Francisco-based Hornblower Group, which earlier this month announced the acquisition of Australia’s Journey Beyond which also includes iconic rail experiences such as The Ghan, the Great Southern and the Indian Pacific as part of its extensive product portfolio.

## Princess’ chief chef



**PRINCESS** Cruises has announced that Chef Rudi Sodamin (pictured) will become its first “Head of Culinary Arts”.

Sodamin is currently the master chef for Holland America, a role which he will retain while also expanding to cover sister Carnival Corp brand Princess Cruises.

“Chef Rudi is a hands-on leader with proven ability to motivate teams to achieve new levels of creativity and inspiration,” said Jan Swartz, Group President of Princess Cruises, Holland America Line, Seabourn and P&O Australia.

“Princess is already well-known for its strong culinary culture...we are bringing in Chef Rudi to build the kind of excitement and dining experiences that will impress our guests,” she enthused.



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## Barge travel deals

**SAVINGS** of up to 20% are available on selected luxury hotel barge departures in France, Italy and Scotland later this year through European Waterways, which says its intimate vessels "tick all the boxes" for post-COVID trips.

With a maximum capacity of just 12 passengers, the hotel barges cruise small waterways at just 1.6km/h, making them the ultimate in slow travel.

Crew members personally chauffeur guests in private air-conditioned transport to all excursions, and the trips feature gourmet meals prepared and served onboard by a gourmet chef.

2022 bookings are at "near record levels," according to MD Derek Banks, but remaining space is available at strong discounts such as a full boat charter of the 12-pax *L'Impressionniste* which cruises the Ouche Valley in Southern Burgundy, available at €42,400, a saving of more than €10,000 off the regular price for the vessel - more deals at [europeanwaterways.com](http://europeanwaterways.com).

## Ama's Murphy steps aside



**GARY** Murphy, long-time sales chief of AmaWaterways, has announced plans to retire on 01 Apr, with his role to be filled by the promotion of Alex Pinelo.

Murphy is the son of Jimmy Murphy, the founder of Brendan Vacations, who helped establish AmaWaterways in 2002 alongside Rudi Schreiner and Kristin Karst.

Australia's McGeary family, the owner of the APT Travel Group, also has a close association with AmaWaterways as shareholders in the business alongside private equity investor Certares.

Gary Murphy joined Ama in 2009 and became VP of sales in 2013, then SVP of sales in 2019, when the **picture above** was taken with outgoing APT Travel

Group CEO Chris Hall aboard the innovative "double-width" *AmaMagna* on the Danube River.

Murphy said "it is difficult for me to use the term 'retirement' but I have two passions in my life - AmaWaterways and my family - and the time has come for me to devote more time to the second one," although he will remain connected to the business as an active member of the Board.

Schreiner said he looked forward to continuing the legacy already built with the Murphy family, as the line approaches the 2022 river cruise season with "confidence and peace of mind, knowing our ships are fully paid for and our financial security remains solid".



**OLD** ships never die - they just get repurposed.

At least that's what's going to happen to the venerable New York-based *John F. Kennedy*, a former Staten Island Ferry which took commuters to Manhattan for more than half a century before being retired last Aug due to mechanical issues.

The ferry has been purchased at auction for US\$280,100 by comedians Pete Davidson and Colin Jost who are part of the cast of the iconic NBC TV show *Saturday Night Live*.

They've partnered with club owner Paul Italia for the venture, and plan to refurbish the vessel - with capacity for more than 5,000 passengers - as a waterfront live entertainment space and event venue.

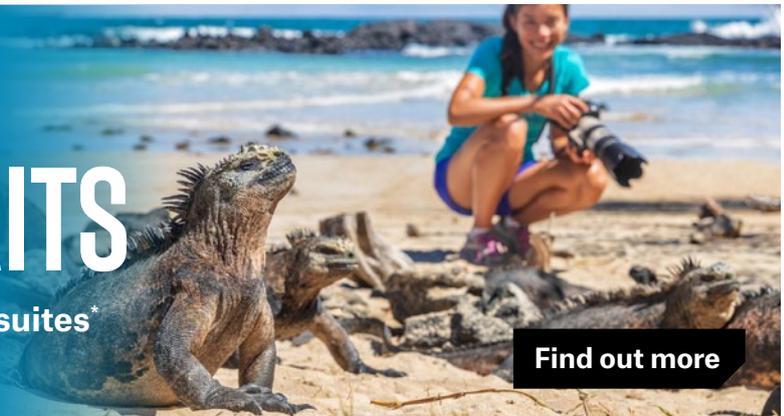
Both Davidson and Jost are Staten Island natives, and said that while the project is still in its early stages, they just didn't want the iconic orange vessel to be scrapped.

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