



CRUISE WEEKLY

On location in the Antarctic Peninsula

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Aurora Expeditions as she journeys in the globe's far southern waters.

TODAY will be Aurora Expeditions' Greg Mortimer's last day heading south before she reroutes to King George Island, from where passengers will fly back home.

The morning will see guests visit Portal Point, with a zodiac cruise around the spectacular region offering an excellent change to spot a feeding humpback or two.

In the afternoon, guests will land in Antarctica for the last time at Hydrurga Rocks, where waiting for them will be seals and penguins aplenty.

CLIA reports on progress

MORE than 75% of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) member ocean-going capacity has returned to service across the globe, while every 24 cruisers create one full-time equivalent job, according to a new report released by CLIA overnight.

The 2022 *State of the Cruise Industry Outlook* report which was released in Washington DC "provides an opportunity to reflect on how far the industry has come," said CLIA CEO Kelly Craighead, with more than six million guests having been welcomed onboard since operations resumed in Jul 2020.

"While our focus on health and safety remains absolute, our industry is also leading the way in environmental sustainability and destination stewardship," she said.

As well as summarising how the industry has continued to resume operations responsibly

with "proven protocols that are leading the way," the report also underscores the value of cruise tourism to local communities and national economies globally.

There are also reflections from cruise industry partners and community members from across the world, including UK Maritime Minister Robert Courts MP and Mato Frankovic, Mayor of Dubrovnik as well as tour guides, retailers and travel agents.

Charting cruising's sustainability progress, the report notes that by 2027 its ocean-going cruise line member fleet will include 26 LNG-powered vessels, with 81% of global capacity fitted with Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems and 174 cruise ships with shoreside power connectivity.

The paper also highlights the shattering economic impact of cruise suspensions - to view the full report see cruising.org.

Ponant 2023 out

PONANT Cruises has released details of its 2023 program, comprising 75 luxury expeditions with a total of 14 new sailings - including nine voyages in the waters of north-west Australia, Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

Itineraries include a Tropical Odyssey aboard *Le Laperouse* between Cairns and Bali, a new Arctic voyage on *Le Commandant Charcot* from Greenland to Spitsbergen, and an all-new half-circumnavigation of Antarctica from Dunedin, NZ to Ushuaia in South America.

For more info call 1300 737 178 (Au) or 0800 767 018 (NZ) or see au.ponant.com.

Cruise Weekly today

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

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P&O cancels more

P&O Cruises Australia has been forced to announce a new series of cruise cancellations, continuing the rolling pause in operations since local cruising was suspended in Mar 2020.

The move comes as sister brand Carnival Cruise Line also cancelled a series of upcoming voyages (CW yesterday), with P&O cutting a total of 15 cruises which had been scheduled to depart Sydney or Brisbane between 23 Apr and 28 May this year.

“The pause period reflects that it will take several months for a ship to return to operation once Government agencies and public health authorities have worked with the industry to agree protocols,” P&O Australia said.

“Australia is one of the last remaining major cruise markets in the world without a return to service pathway,” the company added, with the biosecurity ban currently in place until 17 Feb.

Royal treatment for Rotterdam

HER Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands has been announced as the official godmother of Holland America Line’s newest flagship *Rotterdam*, which will be named in a ceremony in its namesake city on 30 May.

The event will be part of a special seven-day Rotterdam Naming Ceremony cruise which will sail roundtrip from Amsterdam on 29 May, also visiting Kristiansand, Stavanger and Flam in Norway.

HAL’s connection to the Dutch Royal Family goes back almost 100 years to 1929 when Prince Hendrik launched *Statendam III*, and since then members of the House of Orange have christened 11 more Holland America Line ships, with *Rotterdam* to be Princess Margriet’s fifth vessel.

RCI welcomes *Wonder*



ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) overnight officially took delivery of *Wonder of the Seas*, the latest in its behemoth Oasis-class series of vessels which was handed over in Marseille, France after three years of construction.

Royal Caribbean Group Chairman Richard Fain, alongside CEO Jason Liberty and RCI CEO Michael Bayley attended the ceremony, with Liberty saying *Wonder* “will energise cruising in a bolder and bigger way”.

“Adding this ship to our already best-in-class fleet elevates the company in continuing to lead the industry with new features and innovation,” he said.

Wonder of the Seas is the fifth Oasis-class vessel, with innovations including a new “Suite Neighbourhood” with a private restaurant and lounge - alongside familiar favourite eateries and activities such as waterslides, FlowRiders & Central Park with over 20,000 real plants.



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CHINA'S claim of sovereignty over parts the South China Sea is nothing compared to something brewing off the coast of Ireland, where local fishing boats have revealed plans to disrupt a Russian military exercise.

The Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation has been in contact with the Russian Embassy in Dublin over the issue, claiming that "half a billion tonnes of blue whiting" are being put at risk by the war games involving three ships.

A spokesperson for the embassy told *RTE* that the controversy was "hugely overblown," saying the exercise was "not in anyway a threat to Ireland or anybody else".

"While we understand the concerns of fishermen about the integrity of marine resources, there are neither grounds nor scientific data to believe that these exercises would influence the biodiversity of the ocean".

However the fishermen insist their livelihoods are being endangered by the move.

"Can you imagine if the Russians were applying to go onto the mainland of Ireland to go launching rockets, how far would they get with that," said the group's CEO, Patrick Murphy.

"It's no different to fishermen, this is our ground this is our farm, this is where we earn our living," he said, highlighting previous incidents of seismic activity which changed the migratory pattern of tuna.

AIDAmira bought by Ambassador

FLEDGLING British operator Ambassador Cruises has announced the acquisition of Carnival Corporation's *AIDAmira* which is currently sailing with the group's German AIDA Cruises brand.

To enter service in 2023, the vessel will be renamed *Ambition* and will be the second in the Ambassador Cruise Line fleet after *Ambience*, which previously sailed as P&O Australia's *Pacific Dawn*.

Ambassador Cruise Line is led by former Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) CEO Christian Verhounig, who has gathered a team of his former colleagues who worked at CMV prior to its being placed in administration in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic (*CW* 01 Dec 2020).

Both of the Ambassador ships will homeport out of the UK, targeting the 50-plus market with a "premium value, authentic cruise experience," the company said.

Ambition will offer a program of regional departures from ports such as Liverpool, Belfast, Bristol, Falmouth, Dundee and Newcastle, allowing passengers to board cruises close to home.

Full details of Ambassador's itineraries are still being finalised, with some industry speculation the cruise line will pursue a similar strategy to CMV and deploy its ships in Australasian waters during the northern winter season.



P&O crew takes the cake



THE extended pause on foreign-flagged ships cruising in Australian waters has left the crew aboard P&O's *Pacific Explorer* feeling very homesick, with the cruise line traditionally celebrating Australia Day each year on Sydney Harbour.

Full of memories of colourful displays, special events and spectacular culinary creations from previous years, the onboard team made sure 26 Jan 2022 was no exception, celebrating the

national day at sea and creating a delicious Australia Day cake as a special commemoration (**pictured**), despite *Explorer* currently being located far from home in the Mediterranean.

Hotel Director Kevin Boag asked the question "can we come home now?" echoing the pleas of the cruising community for a return to service in Australia.

P&O Cruises has operated voyages from Australian shores for 90 years.

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