



## Fiji full of untapped cruise potential

### EXCLUSIVE

**THE** emerging cruise market of Fiji (**pictured**) is hungry for expansion, but wants to “do cruise better” than some of the world’s other large destinations, Tourism Fiji Chief Executive Officer, Brent Hill, told **Cruise Weekly** at this week’s Fijian Tourism Expo.

Key to the Tourism Fiji head’s wishes for the country’s cruise industry is that it will properly integrate with the community, which will then benefit from it.

Part of this strategy could in the future involve the development of a private island destination in Fiji, with Hill saying he was “open to discussion” about the concept.

“Yeah, absolutely...it’s infrastructure, it’s not just building an enormous jetty or port,” he said.

“You see those images from the Caribbean where they’re pulling



up, and everybody piles out and I’m looking at it thinking ‘100% we could be offering that.’”

However, Hill said he wanted to go through the process in the right way, which involves engaging local landowners and clearly informing them about what is possible.

“There are some parts of Fiji that are just stunning, and I’m sure that with that education, we can have the cruise sector do it in a way that’s really respectful and really helps the villages out.

“I want to go through that process in the right way with the right people, which includes the

landowners so they understand the process and understand what it could mean for them if it’s done well,” he said.

Fiji’s capital Suva is presently the country’s largest cruise port, and its season will kick off in Sep with the arrival of Princess Cruises’ **Coral Princess (CW 16 Mar)**.

Tourism Fiji is currently working with Suva to develop more day trip itineraries for passengers, complementing those available in Lautoka, the nation’s second-largest cruising destination.

“Walking around Suva, it’s great for a day, but we need to get people some itineraries,” Hill said.

“Lautoka (near Nadi) is much easier, because you’ve got all the connections to all of the stuff that’s there, that’s all set up... and when you’re talking about a couple of thousand people, descending [upon the city], that’s significant, right?”

### Cruise Weekly today

**Cruise Weekly** today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page featuring a special **Norwegian Cruise Line** offer.

### Viking Mars arrives

**VIKING** Cruises has taken delivery of **Viking Mars**, its eighth ocean vessel which is scheduled to head to Australia and NZ later this year.

Like its sister ships, **Mars** carries 930 passengers with Scandinavian-inspired decor, spacious suites, an infinity pool off the stern and a huge spa complete with a snow grotto.

**Mars** will be named by godmother Lady Fiona Carnarvon, and operate in the Med and Northern Europe before heading south for her maiden Sydney trans-Tasman departure on 08 Dec 2022.



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# An epic Coral Expedition



AN "EPIC journey of discovery" aboard *Coral Adventurer* (pictured) to the remote Wallis and Futuna Islands is being promoted by Coral Expeditions.

The 21-night cruise will depart Cairns on 16 Dec, with no fixed itinerary as it heads 2,000 nautical miles into the South Pacific before ultimately returning to Auckland.

"Our loyal guests look for us to pioneer new expeditions, and we have done just that with Wallis and Futuna," said Commercial Director, Jeff Gillies.

"Our new fleet enables us to

explore places few have heard of - let alone visited," he said.

After exploring Wallis and Futuna, *Adventurer* will head south to Niue, with the voyage also expected to call on rarely visited islands such as Luganville and Pentecost Island in Vanuatu.

Onboard festivities will feature a memorable Christmas and New Year at Sea, while the trip will also give guests the opportunity to roll their watches back by 23 hours as the ship crosses the International Date Line.

## Paul Gauguin pact

PONANT sister brand Paul Gauguin Cruises has renewed an agreement with South Pacific marine education and conservation foundation, Te mana o te moana, for the ongoing provision of the line's free Moana Explorer Program.

The scheme invites younger passengers aged 7-15 to "discover and value the natural wonders of the South Pacific through hands-on interactive learning on board and ashore".

## Curated Silversea

SILVERSEA Cruises has released a new series of *Curated by Silversea* combination cruise offerings featuring linked voyages in Northern Europe and the Mediterranean.

Packages include flights, hotel accommodation and transfers between sailings, all handled and booked by Silversea.

## Crewing issues impact Cunard

CUNARD Line has confirmed several voyages aboard its *Queen Victoria* and *Queen Elizabeth* will operate with reduced occupancy due to a shortage of qualified crew.

It's understood some passengers are being notified of booking cancellations, with a spokesperson for Cunard saying "the wider impact of COVID-19 is affecting hospitality and disrupting airlines, and as such this is impacting the number of crew members we are able to get to our ships".

"We naturally want to ensure that all guests across the fleet experience the high standards of service onboard that they would expect from Cunard and which we are committed to delivering...we are therefore limiting the number of guests sailing on *Queen Elizabeth* and *Queen Victoria* as we build crew numbers back up.

"Unfortunately, this means that we need to cancel a number of existing bookings", with a full refund and 25% future cruise credit offered to impacted passengers.

## Farrell to hotels

PONANT Cruises National BDM, Craig Farrell, has taken a new role in the hospitality sector, joining hotel representative Lee Segulier as Director of Sales to promote "La Collection", a group of European high-end luxury properties in the local market.



THANKFULLY this isn't something you're likely to encounter on your next cruise.

A British schoolboy has made a rare discovery after bringing home a prehistoric "megalodon" (giant shark) tooth he found on an English beach.

The six-year-old was excited by the find - and even more so after his family sent photos of the object to an evolutionary biologist who confirmed it was in remarkable condition.

"It belonged to a megalodon, the largest ever shark, and its teeth are not often found around the UK coastline," said Professor Ben Garrod from the University of East Anglia.

The BBC quoted the expert saying megalodons were the apex predator of their time, growing to about 18m in length.

The boy's father said he was sleeping with the giant tooth near his bed as he was "very attached to it".

## Celebrity cruises agent rates

BREAKAWAY Travel Club is offering special industry fares on several *Celebrity Eclipse* departures later this year.

Prices lead in at \$1,812 per person for a 13-night trans-Tasman voyage departing Sydney on 14 Nov, with a range of other itineraries also on offer.

For full details on the offers and to book call 1300 380 747 or see [travelclub.com.au](http://travelclub.com.au).

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