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Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise news plus a cover page from Oceania Cruises.

Oceania sale

OCEANIA Cruises' exclusive upgrade sale provides an up-to four category upgrade, plus the line's OLife Choices.

These include free pre-paid gratuities, and the cruiser's choice of free shore excursions, a free beverage package, free shipboard credit, and more.

Other included amenities are free internet, free specialty restaurants, free room service 24 hours per day, a free shuttle service from the port to the city centre, free fitness classes, free still & sparkling water, and free soft drinks & coffee.

See the **cover page** for more.

Albatros not ready

ALBATROS Expeditions has been forced to cancel a cruise departing Mon aboard *Ocean Atlantic* after it was unable to recondition the ship in time.

The line told **Cruise Weekly** *Ocean Atlantic*, which has not been operating the past two years, requires work more involved than expected to bring her back online.

"We were unfortunately not able to document that all safety procedures had been put in place before our expected departure," Albatros said, adding the ship's crew is working with local authorities to resolve the matter.

My Cruises launches Cruise Academy

IGNITE Travel Group is working to address the industry staffing crisis with the launch of its own in-house My Cruises Cruise Academy, a training program aiming to equip participants with the skills required to succeed as a cruise sales consultant.

"With travel bouncing back at a rapid rate, we quickly realised that the industry is facing a massive shortage in qualified staff," My Cruises General Manager Michael Middleton told **Cruise Weekly**.

"In particular, we noticed that many applicants are not equipped with prior sales experience in the cruise industry," he said.

The Academy is a fully-paid six-week training journey where participants learn from top cruise experts in an "interactive, fast-paced environment".

Upon completion they become fully accredited Cruise Sales Consultants, with guaranteed future career opportunities within the My Cruises team.

The first intake (**pictured**) has now concluded after kicking off last month, and all now work full-time on the My Cruises sales floor.

"Our first run of the program



has been a massive success, and we look forward to welcoming new recruits to the Cruise Academy regularly in the future," Middleton added.

He said the initiative had seen My Cruises work closely with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), utilising its professional development programs to immerse the group in all things cruise including presentations from key partners including Norwegian Cruise Line, P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises, Carnival Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity

Cruises and MSC Cruises.

Participants also learn how to manage bookings by shadowing existing consultants and attending training sessions with systems providers including airline GDSs and online booking platforms.

My Cruises continues to grow rapidly, with Middleton saying the company aims to run the program with a new intake of participants every 10 to 12 weeks.

"It feels great to be creating opportunities for people to join the industry and helping fill the staff shortage at the same time," he said.

Memphis cruising

BAZ Luhrmann's new *Elvis* movie starring Tom Hanks is set to ignite interest in Mississippi cruising, according to Cruise Traveller, which has released a special American Queen Voyages journey combined with a two-night stay in Memphis, Tennessee - see aqvoyages.com.au/Elvis.

Carnival Corp in talks to sell Seabourn?

CARNIVAL Corporation is understood to be in preliminary discussions to sell its upmarket eight-vessel Seabourn Cruise Line brand to Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund.

American media organisation CNBC broke the news, citing "people familiar with the situation" although Carnival

declined to comment.

The Saudi fund bought 5.1% of Carnival in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

CNBC noted that the talks to sell Seabourn came in the same week that Carnival Corporation raised about USD\$1 billion in debt markets, at an interest rate of about 10% per annum.

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Pandaw famil from just USD\$250

PANDAW is inviting all travel advisors to join its famil trip between Saigon and Phnom Penh.

The line has refitted its ships, which are set to sail again from Oct, and, all registered sales agents can join the trip for just USD\$250 including transfers, meals, and excursions.

A limited number of cabins are available on the sailing between Vietnam and Cambodia, with the Saigon-Phnom Penh route sailing for three nights on 29 Oct, 12 Nov and 24 Dec, and in reverse on 25 Oct, 22 Nov, and 20 Dec.

For more information please email James Talbot [HERE](#).

Pandaw recently announced a third ship for the Mekong for next year (**CW** 19 May).

AIDA's accessibility push



AIDA Cruises' new expert advisory council on accessible cruising went to work last week aboard *AIDAprera*.

Starting its initial exchange of experiences, the newly formed council of experts includes people with mobility, vision, hearing

disabilities, and more.

The council was given the opportunity to observe the accessible offerings on an AIDA cruise, and provide valuable input for the further development in accessibility.

Captain Michael Schmidt and General Manager Kai Botschek also heard from the participants of the council.

The initiative was founded under the patronage of *AIDAcosma* godmother, former German track cyclist and paraplegic Kristina Vogel, who christened her ship last month (**CW** 14 Apr).

Uniworld flights

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruise Collection has launched its 2023 Fly Back Into Cruise air deal.

The line is now offering flights on all 2023 Europe river cruises, up to the value of \$1,500, with a Business class upgrade available from \$4,700 - for more info [CLICK HERE](#).



PORTHOLE

YOU may think you've been on a few trips across the oceans in your lifetime, but there's no chance you've voyaged more than this particular species of insect.

A new study has determined the drywood termite has successfully crossed the ocean at least 40 times in the last 50 million years.

By genetically tracking their family tree, researchers found their earliest common ancestor lived 84 million years ago, meaning some of the early splits in the tree might have happened before the continents finished breaking up.

However, most of the 40 or so splits happened less than 50 million years ago, which suggests these termites were travelling across the oceans too.

Big Carnival coup

ONE of the maritime industry's most highly regarded members, Terese Lloyd, will join Carnival Corporation as its Chief Strategy and External Affairs Officer Australia.

Currently Chief Executive of industry body Maritime Industry Australia, the appointment comes as Carnival's local Vice President Corporate Affairs Sandy Olsen is promoted to a corporate affairs role for Holland America Group.

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EDITORIAL
Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper
Associate Editors – Myles Stedman, Adam Bishop
Contributors – Nicholas O'Donoghue, Anna Piper, Janie Medbury
info@cruiseweekly.com.au
info@cruiseweekly.co.nz

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING
 Sean Harrigan, Hoda Alzubaidi
advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au
advertising@cruiseweekly.co.nz

BUSINESS MANAGER
 Jenny Piper
accounts@cruiseweekly.com.au

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Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
 Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
 PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
 Tel: (AU) +61 2 8007 6760 or (NZ) 0800 799 220
 Tel: (Int'l) 1300 799 220

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