

Cruise news

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NEWS

Ponant partners with National Geographic

Luxury French cruise operator Ponant has partnered with National Geographic to present National Geographic's Ocean Cruise Expeditions – a series of immersive ocean expeditions. Each cruise will feature National Geographic experts and photographers on board to provide guided tours and information to passengers. Upcoming trips include The Antarctic Odyssey (November 2019); Ancient Cultures of Northern Australia and Papua (December 2019); and Exploring the Kimberley (September 2020).

au.ponant.com



New Douro riverboat cruises

Three new river cruises have been announced by Tauck on board its new 80-metre Douro Riverboat, for sailings commencing in April 2020 and running throughout the year. The Tauck Douro Riverboat has been purpose-built for travelling throughout Portugal's Douro River, with capacity for 84 passengers. Trips include a 12-day cruise Exploring the Douro, plus Lisbon and Madrid; the seven-night Douro Discovery cruise; and an 80-day Villages and Vintages cruise taking in Portugal's most picturesque wine destinations.

tauck.com.au

IN BRIEF



Acclaimed Australian chef David Thompson will join Aqua Expeditions in October on board *Aqua Mekong* for a four-night Explorer Cruise from Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) to Phnom Penh (Cambodia) from 16–20 August and 13–17 September 2019. aquaexpeditions.com

Viking has announced its new 2020–21 Viking World Cruise on board the 930-guest *Viking Sun*, which will span 161 days, six continents and 75 ports, with overnight stays in 13 cities. Setting sail on 14 December 2020 from Miami, the ship will have an itinerary that includes six new ports of call for Viking. With Honolulu and Nawiliwili in the list, this journey will mark the company's inaugural visit to the Hawaiian Islands. vikingcruises.com.au

Norwegian Cruise Line has refurbished its *Norwegian Jewel* vessel, with nearly all dining, bar and lounge offerings updated, and all 1188 staterooms upgraded. The ship also features two new Haven Deluxe Owner's Suites at 111 square metres. ncl.com/au/en/

Cunard has launched new spa concept with US wellness brand Canyon Ranch named Mareel Wellness & Beauty, unveiled on the newly refurbished *Queen Elizabeth*, (pictured below). Mareel is also onboard *Queen Victoria* and from November 2020 will be onboard *Queen Mary 2*. Mareel facilities will include a couple's suite for seaweed bathing rituals; a meditation room and a fitness centre. cunard.com/en-au



Virgin Voyages to set sail

Sir Richard Branson is launching Virgin Voyages, with the first ship *Scarlet Lady* set to sail from April 2020, and now taking bookings. Virgin promise a "24/7 festival at sea" with all-inclusive trips for its passengers, innovative entertainment options, and more than 20 on-board eateries and fitness classes. All voyages will make a port of call at the The Beach Club at Bimini (pictured). Grammy-award-winning artist and producer Mark Ronson has been named as The Beach Club at Bimini's founding DJ. He'll be the first to soundtrack a day at The Beach Club with four more performances scheduled in 2020. The *Scarlet Lady* will sail from Miami to the Caribbean in 2020 and is an adults-only ship with capacity for 2770 passengers. virginvoyages.com



World's first hybrid cruise ship

Hurtigruten's *MS Roald Amundsen* ship, the world's first hybrid expedition ship, is set to make its maiden voyage in July 2019. The ship was constructed in Norway alongside sister ship, *MS Fridtjof Nansen*. The groundbreaking vessels, the industry's first hybrid cruise ships, will be delivered in 2019 and 2020. *MS Roald Amundsen* will take its 500 guests to such areas as Antarctica, the Arctic, the Northwest Passage and Alaska. The ships offer the latest technologies and sustainable operations. hurtigruten.com