



ANCHORS AWEIGH FOR SUPPLIER OPPORTUNITY AS P&O CRUISES AUSTRALIA FLAGSHIP PACIFIC EXPLORER BEGINS HOMEWARD VOYAGE FOR MID-APRIL SYDNEY ARRIVAL

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Australia's home-grown cruise line, P&O Cruises Australia, is poised after more than two years of suspended operations, to place its first orders for large quantities of local fresh produce as it announced today that flagship Pacific Explorer has begun its homecoming voyage to Australia.

Pacific Explorer, which is scheduled to begin its first guest cruise from Australia on May 31 — a Sydney to Brisbane round trip — is due to arrive in Sydney in mid-April soon after the federal cruise ban is lifted on April 17.

Pacific Explorer had been standing off the coast of Cyprus, with P&O sister ships Pacific Encounter and Pacific Adventure, while awaiting their phased return to service.

Subject to federal and state government approval, Pacific Explorer will be berthed in Sydney during ramping up procedures to prepare for the restart of cruising.

“Our suppliers are at last seeing that the restart of cruising also means the restart of opportunity for them after two long years,” said Marguerite Fitzgerald, President of Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises Australia.

“We are back in the marketplace for the first time in two years for the supply of a wide range of products.

“Pacific Explorer's mid-April arrival means that we will soon be placing our first orders for local fresh produce including large quantities of fruit and vegetables.

“For its first cruise, Pacific Explorer will typically need more than 300 pallets of supplies with around a third carrying around 50 tonnes of fresh produce.

“These numbers will increase further as Pacific Encounter and Pacific Adventure return to service to cruise from Australia.”

Steve Biviano of Select Fresh Proveedores is looking forward to ramping up his operations to again supply P&O ships with produce.

Another key supplier, Graeme Blackman of Inter-Marine Pty Ltd, will also be back on board for the first time in two years to provide his specialist marine engineering services.

And travel agent, Dan Russell, of family-owned cruise holiday specialist Clean Cruising, is reporting increased booking activity with the approaching restart of cruising.

“There is a growing spirit of confidence and optimism that the return of cruising is also restoring opportunities for our suppliers,” Ms Fitzgerald said.

“It is so good that we can contribute to the recovery of fantastic Australian businesses who survived two very tough years and are now on the way back to a bright future.”

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