

P R E S S R E L E A S E

[Antarctica to Asia: Orion Expedition Cruises expands with the addition of a second specialist expedition cruise ship](#)

[SYDNEY \(26 November 2009\): Orion Expedition Cruises is to increase the size of its fleet with the addition of a second specialist expedition cruise ship to join the existing 106 passenger *Orion*.](#)

Orion Expedition Cruises today released details regarding the forthcoming long term charter of *Clelia II*, a 100 passenger all-suite luxury expedition cruise ship, to be renamed *Orion II*. The ship, configured to Orion's exacting requirements, is scheduled to commence expedition voyages under the Orion Expedition Cruises banner in May 2011.

Making the announcement today from onboard *Orion* in Sydney Harbour, Sarina Bratton, Orion's Managing Director, was upbeat about the expansion of the business she started in 2004, citing a strong existing market – despite tough current worldwide economic conditions – and growing interest from international markets in expedition cruising in this part of the globe.

A loyal *Orion* past-passenger base, resurgent growth by independent travellers and significant opportunities afforded through charter and incentives markets have provided the platform for the expansion.

Based on thorough research, and following the success of Orion's recent voyages, *Orion II* will be based in South East Asia offering a wide range of expeditions that will include Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, the Indonesian archipelago, Japan and Borneo. Details of destinations and itineraries will be released in 2010 once voyage details and expedition team scouting are finalised.

Recently subject to a €13 million (A\$21 million) refurbishment undertaken by the present operators, with emphasis on technical enhancements and upgraded environmental systems, the ship will also undergo additional cosmetic enhancements to bring her fully into the Orion style.

Commenting on the additional range of destinations and itineraries, Sarina said that Orion Expedition Cruises will be able to provide exclusive expeditions from Antarctica to Asia, and the Kimberley to Melanesia and New Zealand, with the two ships offering a balance of onboard service and luxury combined with unique personal experiences in environmentally and culturally sensitive parts of the region. Together, *Orion* and *Orion II* will be two of the most modern and capable expedition cruise ships cruising in Australasia.

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The long term charter of a second purpose built ship able to access remote regions in comfort is a further step to fulfilling the company's original vision to have Orion Expedition Cruises regarded as the operator of choice in the Asia Pacific.

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Attachment: Image of Orion II (as she will be with new Orion branding in 2011)

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Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises can be obtained by visiting the website www.orionexpeditions.com

For reservations or to obtain a brochure call Orion Expedition Cruises: 61-2 9033 8777 (Sydney callers) 1300 361 012 (regional and interstate) or your travel agent. Email: info@orioncruises.com.au

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About Clelia II / Orion II

Clelia II, will continue to be marketed and operated until April 2011 by Travel Dynamics International, New York, a leading U.S expedition cruise company serving the American educational and cultural non-profit groups.

Originally launched in late 1990 as *Renaissance Four* and re-launched in 2009 after extensive technical refurbishment, redecoration and other improvements, the all-suite *Clelia II* offers fine small-ship cruise travel. In May 2011, the ship will be renamed *Orion II*.

This private yacht-like cruise ship accommodates only 100 guests in 50 suites, each of which affords ocean views, measuring 215 to 285 square feet, and appointed with a sitting area or separate living room, twin or queen-size beds, spacious closets, and air conditioning.

- Satellite TV, DVD/CD player
- Telephone
- Mini-refrigerator
- Marble-appointed en-suite

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BESPOKE SMALL-SHIP AMENITIES

Decorated with rich fabrics, handsome wood, polished brass, rare antiques and fine works of art, the ship's public spaces are warm and inviting. These include:

- Library with Internet access
- 2 Lounges with audiovisual facilities
- State-of-the-art gym/spa
- Beauty salon
- Boutique
- Hospital
- Elevator serving all passenger decks
- Dining room
- Two sun decks
- Jacuzzi
- Swimming platform

Clelia II complies with the latest international and U.S. Coast Guard safety regulations and is outfitted with the most current navigation and communications technology as well as retractable fin stabilizers for smooth sailing, an ice-strengthened hull for Antarctic voyages and a fleet of Zodiacs to enable easy shore access in remote locations.

Clelia II carries a staff of 65, providing a ratio of over 1 crew member for every 2 guests. Taken together with her limited guest capacity, excellence of design, craftsmanship and material, *Clelia II's* spaciousness and intimate ambience combine to make her ideal for distinctive cultural and expedition voyages.



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[About Orion Expedition Cruises](#)

Founded in early 2004, Orion Expedition Cruises is the only world class expedition cruise line operating from Australia to pristine wilderness areas in Antarctica, the Kimberley, Papua New Guinea, Melanesia and Asia. Orion is known worldwide for its new and diverse itineraries and sustainable operations.

Orion is designed to fulfil the desire of the sophisticated traveller for experience driven, cultural and nature based tourism that allow for a more informed and in-depth interpretation of, and interaction with, destinations and their people. Providing the comfort and luxuries that today's travellers expect in a specially designed vessel that provides access to areas otherwise largely unreachable through conventional means, Orion truly provides a path less travelled.

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