

SunSentinel MONEY

Cruise lines offer virtual sailing

Some say they're going overboard, should focus on refunding canceled trips

BY RON HURTIBISE

As their ships idle in ports around the globe, cruise lines are offering virtual experiences on their social media pages.

Formal nights. Towel animals. Fruity cocktails. Karaoke contests. And lots of tropical excursions.

Some consumers are charmed and play along. Others aren't impressed and hijack comment sections below the playful posts with angry demands for refunds for canceled cruises.

On Facebook, Royal Caribbean offers #VirtualoftheSeas with daily itineraries that include trivia

games, DIY spa sessions, towel folding lessons, videos of popular excursions and port calls, and late night comedy shows featuring Cruise Director Abe Hughes.

Norwegian Cruise Line is offering #NorwegianStaycations. One recent post encourages consumers to "dip in the warm waters from the comfort of your couch." Another features a recipe for a popular cocktail, the Moscow Mule.

Pointing out that everyone would be stuck at home again on a recent Friday night, Carnival Cruise Line invited families to have "a Carnival-style Elegant

Night" at their homes by "dressing to the nines," and posting photos of the events on the cruise line's Facebook page.

For dinner, fans are encouraged to follow a video recipe for Cucina Del Capitano's Chicken Parmigiana, followed by one for Carnival's popular Melting Chocolate Cake.

John Heald, the company's brand ambassador, promotes virtual cruise fun on his own Facebook page, posting drink recipes, asking fans to name their favorite piano bar entertainer and conducting Carnival-themed polls that seek answers to such ques-

tions as "Today's breakfast highlight is Eggs Benedict from the dining room brunch menu. Have you had any?" (Fifty-two percent said yes.)

On Thursday, Heald promoted a karaoke contest coming next week to Carnival's Instagram page, which also features a video montage of cruise line service workers declaring how much they miss the company's guests.

Comments under many of the cruise lines' posts express appreciation for the virtual efforts.

On Thursday, past guests posted hundreds of their own photos from visits to Royal Carib-

bean's private island, "Perfect Day at CocoCay," under the cruise line's video post of the "last day" of this week's virtual vacation.

"I was there before everything was shut down, very beautiful!" said Judy Lynn Cestertino, along with her photo of the island's kayak stand.

Another commenter got into the virtual cruise spirit by threatening not to tip his virtual stateroom attendant for leaving a towel lobster on his floor.

Not surprisingly, cruise lines aren't addressing the industry's

See CRUISE, 10B



DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE/COURTESY PHOTOS

This four-story townhouse in Delray Beach features a gourmet kitchen, living room with fireplace, a master wing, elevator, and impact-glass windows and doors.

SLICE OF PARADISE

Professional golfer sells Delray Beach townhouse for \$3.65M



BY ROBYN A. FRIEDMAN

A 6,943-square-foot contemporary waterfront townhouse in Delray Beach recently sold for \$3.65 million. The property was sold at the end of March by professional golfer Jeffrey G. Sluman and his wife Linda A. Skoog-Sluman, records show.

The four-story townhouse, which was listed for \$3.995 million by Nicholas Malinosky of Douglas Elliman Real Estate and sold by Lang Realty in Boca Raton, is at 126 Macfarlane Drive, just one of 10 units in its subdivision, Seagate Yacht Club.

Located directly on the Intracoastal Waterway, three blocks from the beach and Atlantic Avenue, it has three bedrooms and four and one-half baths, along with a gourmet kitchen, living room with fireplace, a master wing, elevator, generator and impact glass windows and doors.

Outside, there's a private pool and an expansive rooftop terrace, complete with summer kitchen and fire pit.

"This property is very unique because it's right on the Intracoastal and the marina," said Julie Giachetti, a real estate

PRIME PROPERTY
A look at South Florida's high-end real estate

agent with Lang Realty in Delray Beach who was not involved in the sale. "It would cost much more — close to \$6 million — to get a single-family home with this amount of square footage."

Sluman, who purchased the home new in January 2017 for \$3.65 million — the same price it sold for — graduated from Florida State University in 1980 and turned pro that same year. Now 62, he has been playing professionally ever since, earning six career PGA Tour victories and more than \$12 million in career earnings. Last year he made his 1,000th career start at the Sanford International.

According to the Chicago Tribune, Sluman and his wife also sold a 2,500-square-foot condominium in Chicago's River North neighborhood on April 3 for \$1.73 million. That unit has three bedrooms, three and one-half baths and city views.

App helps grocery shoppers know what's 'InStock'

Orlando developers rely on crowdsourced info in time of coronavirus

BY MARCO SANTANA

Two Orlando developers have built an app that could limit shoppers' potential exposure to coronavirus by telling them what's on the shelves at nearby grocery stores.

The free InStock app is available for iPhone, and the developers say they expect to release it for Android devices soon.

The project was born after Andrew Dushane could not find a small freezer at a Sam's Club shortly before awareness of co-

ronavirus spread in early March.

An employee asked him to call the store later, but by the time he did, Sam's Club had started coronavirus preparations, meaning his call went straight to an automated message.

"It was just a festering idea," said Dushane, a software developer who first launched the app in the Lake Nona neighborhood.

The app, which is available anywhere in the U.S., isn't widely in use yet, having been downloaded by just 2,500 people.

It relies on crowdsourced information. For instance, if you go to a Publix and see there are 10 rolls of paper towels, you can fire up the app and share that number.

Users in Orlando, New York

City, San Antonio and others have filled the app with data about their own local grocery stores.

When users open the app, it automatically looks for nearby stores and a list of items that have been reported to be available there pops up.

The user can then add items or see which items have not been reported by scrolling or hitting a button.

To report, they choose a store and item from a list and put a quantity in. The lists can be limited because of the small number of users so far.

InStock has been helpful to Stephany Cornelius, who lives in



RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/ORLANDO SENTINEL

Matthew Dupree, left, and Andrew Dushane built an app, InStock, that crowdsources information about product availability at grocery stores.

See APP, 9B