



On location aboard  
**Norwegian Prima**

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line aboard its newest flagship, **Norwegian Prima** which has popped up in Cork.

**TODAY** *Norwegian Prima* arrived in Cork, Ireland, on a glorious day perfect to experience shore excursions such as visiting Blarney Castle, exploring the countryside or simply finding a cosy pub to make the most of some Irish hospitality.

Some of the Australians on board are disembarking today to head home, but a sizeable contingent will continue on to the UK, France and the Netherlands, making the most of the spectacular newbuild.

## Robertson joins Carnival

**KATHRYN** Robertson (pictured) has been appointed Chief Commercial Officer Australia at Carnival Corporation (**CW** breaking news yesterday).

The company's President Australia Marguerite Fitzgerald announced the appointment yesterday, with Robertson joining from Air New Zealand, where she was Group GM of Sales.

Robertson's Chief Commercial Officer role is a new position within Carnival's executive structure in Australia, reflecting the organisation's goals to rebuild and grow, following the restart of cruising in the country.

"I am delighted to be joining Carnival Australia at such a pivotal time, where travel demand is accelerating and the cruise industry is rebuilding to pre-pandemic levels," she said.

"I am excited to see this region reach its full potential working



with our trade partnerships amid renewed optimism and confidence after what we have experienced."

Robertson will take up her new role in Nov, a "very exciting time" for Carnival, Fitzgerald added.

"Kathryn's career background and many achievements are ideally suited to leading the commercial success of Australia's main cruising organisation... as we contribute to the rebuilding of Australia's \$5 billion a year cruise industry," she said.

### Cruise Weekly today

**Cruise Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise news.

### Celebrity roadshow

**CELEBRITY** Cruises has announced its upcoming travel advisor roadshow, being held across Australia next month.

Guests will be treated to exclusive insights into Celebrity's design, culinary excellence, and destination immersion that punctuates its product.

There will also be presentations by the Celebrity team highlighting the cruise line's unique itineraries across Europe, Alaska, Asia and more.

Agents will hear directly from Vice President & Managing Director Australia, New Zealand, and APAC Tim Jones, and have the chance to win prizes - register **HERE**.

*Regent*

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**THERE'S** always a silver lining, so they say, and that's perhaps been the case for river cruise operators in Europe impacted by low water levels this season.

Operational difficulties aside, at least there may be a major new visitor attraction to see - because the drought has seen the reappearance of ancient Roman ruins in Spain, which have been uncovered as water levels receded to record lows.

The extensive former military camp (pictured from a Twitter post by @bbcweather) was built in AD75 in the region of Galicia in the country's northwest.

Known as Aquis Querquennis, the ruins were later abandoned and then laid forgotten until an archaeologist rediscovered the site in the 1920s.

They became submerged in 1949 due to the construction of a dam which created the As Conchas reservoir, meaning only small portions were left visible.

Now the camp has emerged in its entirety - an antiquarian traveller's absolute delight.



## Azamara, RCG reciprocity ending

**THE** loyalty programs of Azamara and Royal Caribbean Group (RCG) will separate early next year, ending reciprocal arrangements in place since RCG sold Azamara to private equity firm Sycamore Partners last year.

An update to members of the Azamara Circle program notes that from that date cruisers will no longer earn cumulative points and have reciprocity with Celebrity and Royal Caribbean International voyages, but existing loyalty status will be retained.

Cumulative loyalty points will be retained for sailings on Azamara or Celebrity before 01 Feb next year, but thereafter Azamara Circle members will only earn loyalty points for Azamara sailings, and will not be able to use points for Celebrity or Royal voyages.

In a letter to Azamara Circle members, the line's Loyalty Ambassador Sandra Penaranda said "having our own independent systems allows us to more effectively implement your loyalty program suggestions and improve pre- and post-cruise guest experiences".

Azamara is now operating four boutique sister ships and recently named Victoria Chigwidden as Director of Sales for Australia and NZ.

## The *Prima* gang's all here



**AN EXCLUSIVE** cocktail party aboard *Norwegian Prima* saw the Australian trade partners celebrated in the vessel's Improv comedy lounge venue.

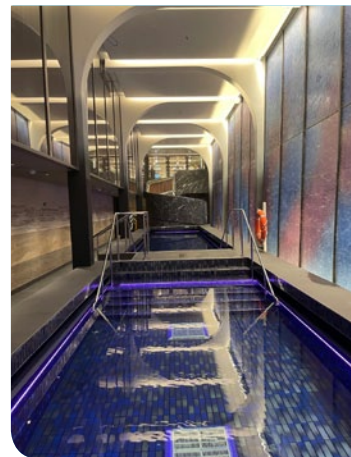
The gathering saw a number of senior Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) executives pop in including Vice President of International Sales, Eamonn Ferrin, who assured Australian guests out of all his 242 global markets, they are his very favourite.

The local contingent includes representatives of Flight Centre, Arrivia/Our Vacation Center, Goldman Travel, Helloworld, Spencer Travel, TravelManagers, E-Cruising, Dreamlines, Ignite Holidays, Melbourne Travel Project, Clean Cruising, RAA Travel, Imagine Cruising, Your Travel & Cruise, Phil Hoffmann

Travel, Platinum Travel Group, iTravel, Creative Cruising and more.

In addition to networking opportunities like this, those on board have attended a range of sessions curated by the NCL team including discussions with the cruise line's global leaders on maximising partnerships, the creation of immersive experiences & unique incentive offerings, and insight into what's behind the development of the *Prima* offering.

Agents also participated in shore excursions, enjoyed the onboard entertainment, sampled the huge array of dining and beverage offerings available, and took part in behind-the-scenes tours of areas like *Prima's* exclusive The Haven enclave.



On Board: *Norwegian Prima*

### Mandara Spa

Offering an extensive range of lavish services from massage to cosmetic treatments. The Mandara Spa also has a Thermal Suite available for guests, featuring different styles of saunas, along with other wellness experiences such as a steam room, ice room, pools, and an extensive relaxation area. Guests can purchase a day pass which allows them access to all that is on offer.

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## Virgin loyalty plan

**VIRGIN** Voyages has announced the debut of a new loyalty program next year called the Sailing Club.

The “dual-pronged perks program” is soft launching with a Deep Blue Extras package for those sailing this year, and Red Hot Booking Bonus Months for new reservations.

The bonuses can be unlocked by either being a “Sea-Blazer” (pioneers who sailed with Virgin Voyages in 2021), a “Sea-Rover” (those who have sailed with the line twice this year) or via a Match and Sea More Program which matches existing tier status with other cruise lines or select airlines.

Bookings this year will contribute to 2023 Sailing Club status levels, while passengers are being urged to provide input as to the types of benefits they would like in the loyalty scheme, described as “the first-ever crowd-sourced rewards club at sea” - more at [virginvoyages.com](http://virginvoyages.com).

## Lindblad update

**LINDBLAD** Expeditions has released new COVID-19 vaccination and testing protocols, with masks to become optional on all ships and from 01 Sep booster shots no longer required, but remain “strongly recommended”.

For cruises departing on or after 01 Oct guests will also no longer need to test prior to leaving home or on embarkation.

## A HAL of a time for PTMs



**THIS** week has been all wildlife and wellbeing for eight TravelManagers PTMs aboard a recent Holland America Line (HAL) famil.

The seven-night trip to Canada and Alaska was the result of a promotion run by HAL several months ago, enthusiastically taken up by the PTMs.

TravelManagers’ representative for Claremont Kathy Millett (**inset**) said she had not previously experienced the destination or the HAL product, and was impressed by how efficient life was aboard *Koningsdam*.

“Aside from getting to know the destination, I really appreciated getting to experience the realities and restrictions of post-pandemic travel, such as testing requirements, visas and being prepared for travel delays,” she said.

“The staff were wonderful and both Canada and Alaska exceeded my expectations with their stunning scenery.

“Travelling by cruise ship



allowed me the slower pace needed to fully absorb local life.” Millett’s TravelManagers colleague, representative for Forster Laurin Targgart (**pictured**), sailed aboard *Zuiderdam*, following the same itinerary which departed from Vancouver and sailed via the Inside Passage, as far north as Glacier Bay before returning.

“The natural beauty of Alaska and the timeless experience on board *Zuiderdam* are essential bucket list experiences,” she reported.

“At every turn you had to pinch yourself – the pictures just do not do it justice.

“We were lucky to see brown bears, humpback whales and bald eagles, not to mention those incredible fjords and glaciers.”



## #LoveCruise

IT HAS been a pleasure to be involved recently in two of the industry’s major conferences – the NZ Cruise Association and Cruise360 in Sydney.

What has struck me is the absolute resilience of agents, suppliers, cruise lines – indeed anyone who has a touch point with cruise. They have held their own over the past two years and the optimistic conversations were so good to have.

We are of course an industry still in transition and we have much work to do yet. It was important to have the discussions around issues such as the port capacity challenges around the country and how we work through the skills shortage which impacts the onshore experience.

But more than ever it showed that our industry has worked together throughout the lockdowns to come out the other side and will continue to do so.

CLIA has led an amazing team on this and ACA and NZCA have been willing partners in the need to find solutions.

One of the most exciting takeaways for me was that our region is still positioned as highly on the cruise radar as we were at the beginning of the decade. With many new generation ships in the water from cruise lines like Virgin, Celebrity and NCL and more to come, the good news is we are on their itineraries.

Looking forward to more discussions in Townsville at our conference next week.