

CONGRATULATIONS

TRAVEL DAILY EDITORS' CHOICE AWARDS WINNERS 2022

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Industry Support
Richard Taylor

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Destination Representative
Julie King & Associates

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Wholesaler
Entire Travel Group

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Tour Operator
Bunnik Tours

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Education and Training
TIME

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Air Ticketing Support
CVFR Travel Group

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Cruise Marketing
**Princess Cruises for
The Real Love Boat**

Travel Daily
Editors' Choice Awards 2022



Best Cruise Industry Support
**Norwegian Cruise Line for
Walk for Wellness**

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Travel Daily



Explora expands Australia team

EXCLUSIVE

EXPLORA Journeys, the new luxury cruise line created by MSC Cruises, has appointed former Regent Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) sales chief Gillian Seller as its first Sales Manager in the Australia & New Zealand market.

Seller started with Explora this week, reporting to Head of Sales APAC Nicole Costantin, who was appointed to her new role earlier this year (**CW** 07 Jul).

Also new to the growing Explora team is James McCullagh, who joins the fledgling brand after about eight years with Norwegian Cruise Line and other sales roles with Princess Cruises, Harvey's Choice Holidays and Jetset Travelworld's Cruise Team.

Costantin told **CW** the Explora Sales Excellence Team's first

Asia-Pacific team member will join on 09 Jan when Lauren Bevan commences, while Wanda Ferrand has welcomed Matt Backo into her Customer Experience team to round out the Explora Journeys Asia Pacific contingent to six.

Bevan was most recently with RSSC and has also worked at Uniworld Boutique Cruise Collection, while Backo's industry experience includes roles at Aurora Expeditions, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings and Qantas Holidays.

Costantin said Explora was looking to further grow its local staff numbers over the next few months as the brand's footprint in the region grows.

"The response from the industry has been truly overwhelming, and

we are very grateful," she said.

Explora has six newbuild ships on order, with the first, *Explora I*, set to debut in Northern Europe in Jul, and *Explora II's* 2024 itineraries released this week (**CW** 07 Dec).

The cruise line will offer an all-inclusive product, with each vessel carrying about 900 passengers featuring 10 culinary experiences, four swimming pools, and extensive wellness & fitness facilities.

Travel advisors interested in finding out more can now register at the Explora Travel Advisor Centre by **CLICKING HERE**.

Season of giving

OCEANIA Cruises is sprinkling some extra sparkle over its trade partners this Christmas & holiday season, with the brand to recognise its top performers for the year.

The line will recognise three different categories: most revenue, most bookings, and most new-to-brand bookings.

The lucky winners will receive either a spa voucher (valued at \$400), a dinner voucher (\$600), or a getaway voucher (\$1,000).

Winners of each category will be announced from today and every Fri for three weeks on the Oceania Cruises Trade Insider Facebook Group page (**HERE**).

Viking back in NSW

VIKING'S *Viking Orion* has returned to Sydney after more than 1,200 days.

Orion is currently sailing her 17-day Komodo & the Australian Coast itinerary from Bali to Sydney, having first made her way down through Asia from Alaska.

She is the first Viking ship to return to Australia this year, ahead of another two of the cruise line's vessels which will visit this wave season.

Viking Mars, which launched in May, arrives into Darwin next week, and travels down the Qld and NSW coastlines, arriving in Sydney on 17 Dec.

She will be followed by *Viking Neptune*, the newest ship in the line's fleet, which will arrive in Australia in Feb as part of a World Cruise.

Viking MD Michelle Black was on board *Orion* as she sailed into Sydney Harbour yesterday morning.

"We've been waiting a long time for this day to come...after being absent from our shores for so many years, it was so special to be on board as we sailed through the heads."

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a **cover page** showcasing the winners of this week's **Travel Daily Editors' Choice Awards**.

Norwegian launches 2024 & 2025 cruises

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has unveiled its Northern Hemisphere summer 2024/25 and winter 2025 cruises in Europe, Alaska & the Caribbean.

CEO Harry Sommer said the newly developed itineraries are in line with guest feedback, offering more time in port and sailings to almost 400 destinations worldwide.

The new *Norwegian Viva*, which is set to debut in Aug 2023, will offer a series of week-long Greek Isles voyages, while

sister ship *Norwegian Prima* will sail in Northern Europe.

Norwegian Breakaway will operate in the Mediterranean over the 2025 winter season, while *Norwegian Joy* will return to Alaska from Apr-Oct 2025.

Norwegian Encore will undertake a unique 21-day Extraordinary Journey including a Panama Canal transit, while *Norwegian Escape* will cruise out of Galveston, Texas.

More info on 1300 255 200 (AU) or 0800 969 283 (NZ).



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AUSTRALIAN scientists have stumbled on what is believed to be a “shark graveyard” at the bottom of the Indian Ocean, off the coast of the Cocos Keeling Islands.

Voyages of Australia’s *Investigator* uncovered the elasmobranch cemetery, discovered just over a month ago by scientists.

The graveyard contains more than 750 fossilised shark teeth from both modern and ancient sharks.

Investigator has also discovered a never-before-seen shark species in the Gascoyne.

The shark (pictured) is new to science and will be used to understand the species.

It is believed to be part of the generally harmless family of sharks known as the bullheads.



MSC Seascope christened

MSC Cruises has launched its newest flagship *MSC Seascope* in a dazzling ceremony in New York City (pictured).

Seascope was named at the Manhattan Cruise Terminal, ahead of her inaugural season sailing in the Caribbean.

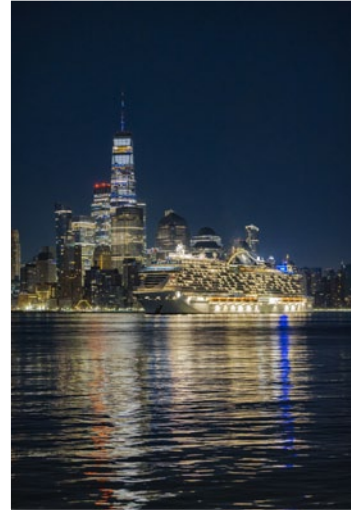
The ship, which was delivered to MSC last month (CW 18 Nov), becomes the 21st vessel in the fleet, and the second to be launched in less than a month, following *MSC World Europa’s* blast-off in Doha (CW 14 Nov).

Seascope also marks MSC’s continued growth in the Americas, and the introduction of New York as a new homeport for the cruise line.

The event was attended by more than 3,000 guests, including VIPs and key travel partners, as well as top management from MSC Cruises.

Godmother of the cruise line’s fleet and Italian actress Sophia Loren blessed *Seascope*, while Alexa Aponte-Vago, daughter of MSC Group’s founder and Executive Chair Gianluigi Aponte, performed the traditional cutting of the ribbon to officially name the ship.

“One of the highlights of the past 20 years has been to officiate the christening of MSC Cruises fleet not only because the



Apontes have become like family to me but also because MSC has always occupied a special place in my heart,” Loren said.

“Let me bless the *MSC Seascope*, her great crew and all her passengers.”

One of the highlights of the ceremony was a performance from international singer-songwriter Matteo Bocelli, the son of Italian tenor Andrea, while afterward, guests enjoyed a gourmet gala dinner and a performance by American singer Ne-Yo.

The christening of *Seascope* will be closely followed by MSC’s second LNG vessel *MSC Euribia*, due to enter service in Jun.

Azamara Alliance

AZAMARA is strengthening its trade partnerships with a new Azamara Alliance program.

Features include new tools and technologies to create a seamless experience for trade partners such as a new booking platform, a more intuitive Azamara Connect trade partner portal, and an expanded contact centre.

Live training sessions for the new tools will be hosted in Jan, with self-paced learning tools also available.


Vista to debut early

OCEANIA Cruises has accelerated the debut of its new ship *Vista* with the introduction of a new Founder’s Cruise.

The voyage will depart from Rome on 13 May, and sail to Venice.

Vista had been scheduled to debut on 20 May, but unprecedented demand for her inaugural season has seen the maiden voyage brought forward by a week.

The Founder’s Cruise will be hosted by Oceania’s founder Frank Del Rio in celebration of *Vista* and to commemorate the brand’s 20th anniversary.



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Cruise Weekly is Australasia’s leading travel industry cruise publication.

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