



Australia set for *Enchantment* in 2023-24

ROYAL Caribbean International has revealed its adventures for its 2023-24 Australia season, with three ships to make a summer splash locally.

Starting Oct 2023, the season will see the Australian debut of *Enchantment of the Seas*, touting new destinations and itineraries from Sydney.

Enchantment will be joined by *Ovation of the Seas* and *Quantum of the Seas* (**pictured**), which will both return to Australia, sailing from Brisbane and Sydney.

Highlights of *Enchantment's* inaugural season in Australia include Kangaroo Island and Gladstone, which are new destinations for Royal Caribbean.

A series of special cruises will include an 11-night Christmas sailing which features visits to locales along the Top End and Western Australia, including Darwin, Exmouth and Fremantle.



Guests looking for a longer holiday can choose a circumnavigation cruise that explores Australia, as well as New Zealand, in a combination of two itineraries that can be booked individually, or back-to-back to make for a 34-night adventure.

Other season highlights include explorations of Queensland's coast, including destinations such as Airlie Beach and Cairns; and more southerly locales such as Hobart, Adelaide, and Eden.

Cruisers can also discover the

South Pacific on eight- to 11-night sailings visiting Raiatea, Isle of Pines, Lifou, Port Vila, Noumea, Milford Sound, Wellington and Bay of Islands.

Royal Caribbean's action-packed line-up is now open and available on the cruise line's website.

Travellers can also currently celebrate with half-price deposits when they book from 23 Mar to 05 Apr.

To book the new 2023-2024 cruises, cruisers can visit www.royalcaribbean.com.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Minerva changes

SWAN Hellenic has announced changes to its 2022-2023 cruises in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Minerva will set a new course away from the war zone, with additional United Kingdom Celtic discovery sailings and a refocused Arctic season.

Meanwhile, *Vega* is now due to launch in Sep, where she will join her sister ship *Minerva* for the next Antarctica season.

Chief Executive Officer Andrea Zito apologised to guests for any disappointment caused, but said Swan Hellenic was very proud of the new itineraries it has developed.

2023-2024 EARLY RELEASE

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New Croisi voyage

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(Travel)marvellous returns



TRAVELMARVEL is celebrating its first sailing in Europe for 826 days this week.

Not only has it been more than two years since the last time the APT Travel Group (ATG) had a ship cruising the European waterways, the departure is also the maiden voyage for *Travelmarvel Vega*, and it is the first ever Balkans cruise for the marque.

The brand-new *Vega* commenced her maiden voyage on the Danube River from Budapest through to Bucharest.

As part of *Vega's* debut, she played host to 250 delegates attending the Cruise Lines International Association RiverView Conference in Budapest.

Travel advisors conducted a site visit to explore *Vega*, followed by cocktails on the Sky Deck, and a presentation by ATG Managing Director Europe Paul Melinis.

"Without doubt, this is one of the most exciting and celebratory days for the company in a long time," commented ATG Chief Executive Officer David Cox.

"After the last couple of years, it is so great to have such positive travel news.

"We are so proud of our new Travelmarvel ships and pleased to have *Vega* the first of the three on the waters this month with her sister ships, the *Polaris* and the *Capella*, set to sail soon."

The three new state-of-the-art river ships feature suites and staterooms across the three decks.

Each cabin has an en suite, personal climate control, luxurious linen, ample storage, a TV, a safe, and a mini-fridge.

Suites also include electric slide-down windows that open to a French balcony.

The ships also feature multiple social areas with abundant space and greater access to fresh air, to enable guests to enjoy the scenery in comfort.

Across the globe, ATG employees marked the celebration, including in the Melbourne office, where staffers enjoyed some nautical-themed frivolity (**pictured**).

Cruise lines sued

A MIAMI judge has dealt a major blow to cruise lines which travelled to Cuba between 2015 and 2019, saying they engaged in "prohibited tourism" and "trafficking activities" by carrying passengers to the country, and profiting from the use of port facilities in Havana.

The decision is the first of its kind, and could affect similar lawsuits, with Carnival Cruise Line, Norwegian Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean International and MSC Cruises all included in the judgement.

The judge sided with Havana Docks, a company that held a concession to operate the city's port, and which filed lawsuits against the four cruise lines for their use of it when cruise travel to Cuba was authorised by the United States Government.

Havana Docks sued under the *The Helms-Burton Act*, a law which allows aggrieved owners to sue companies which engaged in commercial activities or benefited somehow from properties confiscated by the Castro administration.

"By using the terminal and one of its piers in various ways, Carnival, MSC, Royal Caribbean and Norwegian committed trafficking," the judge ruled.

The case will now go to a jury trial in May, where damages to be paid will be decided.



VIKING

NEW RIVER BROCHURE

Viking's new 2023-2024 River Cruises brochure is now available to order from TIFS.

VIEW ONLINE

Travel Daily's second Survival Survey shows green shoots of recovery, but it is a serpentine road ahead. Read more in the latest *travelBulletin*.



Ready to set sail in NZ

WITH Australia's cruise ban set to end soon, CLIA and the New Zealand Cruise Association (NZCA) have launched a New Zealand version of the Ready, Set, Sail campaign as part of our efforts to achieve a cruise resumption.

Similar to the successful initiative held in Australia last year, the New Zealand campaign will give travel advisors in that country, and other cruise industry supporters, an opportunity to make themselves heard among key political leaders.

Using an online tool to email Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and other ministers, the campaign makes an urgent call for the opening of New Zealand's maritime border and for detailed plans to support a return of cruise operations.

New Zealand is now one of the only significant cruise markets in the world that has not yet committed to a cruise revival, despite its moves to ease restrictions on arrivals by air.

CLIA and the NZCA have been having encouraging discussions with government agencies in New Zealand, but we need MPs to understand the personal costs behind the country's cruise ban.



I'm Viking the sound of this



VIKING has expanded its European river fleet with the naming of eight new ships.

Marking the beginning of its river season, the new Viking longships will further increase its offering in the Seine, Rhine, Main, and Danube rivers.

A Parisian celebration welcomed four ships - *Viking Fjorgyn*, *Viking Kari*, *Viking Radgrid* and *Viking Skaga* – built specifically to navigate the city's Seine, and bring guests to the heart of the French capital with an exclusive docking location at Port de Grenelle, just a short walk from the Eiffel Tower.

The four additional ships – *Viking Egdir*, *Viking Gersemi*, *Viking Gymir* and *Viking Hervor* – were welcomed to the fleet in Amsterdam, and will sail the cruise line's popular itineraries on the Rhine, Main and Danube.

The ceremonies (pictured) were connected via satellite, and in keeping with tradition, a bottle of Gammel Opland aquavit was

broken on the bow of each new ship.

Viking invited eight distinguished cultural partners to serve as ceremonial godmothers of the new ships, including: Karryn Christopher, Kari Garmann, Brenda Hunsberger, Muriel Wilson, Ghislaine Wood, and Alma, Helen, & Janie Deutscher.

The naming of the new river ships comes as Viking continues its 25th anniversary celebrations.

"As we mark 25 years of sailing the iconic waterways of the world, it is always a proud day when we welcome new ships to our fleet and offer more opportunities for curious travellers to explore the world," said Chair Torstein Hagen.

"Today we are especially pleased to honour eight talented and accomplished individuals as godmothers of our newest river ships, and we look forward to the start of another season of European river voyages."



A FISHERMAN who was accused of making an able seaman swim across a crocodile-inhabited river has walked free from court.

The commercial fisherman was accused of torturing his AB, including making him swim across the notorious Gin Arm Creek, known as a haven for crocodiles.

The one-month fishing trip up the rivers in the Gulf of Carpentaria also allegedly saw the accused hit his victim over the head with a metal oar, and put him in a freezer.

The victim was also made to eat raw fish, the jury heard.

Ultimately, it took less than half a day for the accused to be found not guilty, with testimony from other nearby boats casting doubt over the allegations.



APT of the week

ONE of APT's products of the week is a European river cruise, 'Douro Delights with Lisbon'.

The 11-day sailing travels from May to Sep 2023 from \$7,595 per person twin share, and guests booking this week can fly for just \$995, and save up to \$600 per couple.

CLICK HERE for trip details.