



## Royal Caribbean's double milestone

**ROYAL** Caribbean International has returned to Australia for the first time since 2019 with *Ovation of the Seas* (pictured).

Two- to 12-night cruises around Australia and the South Pacific are on the menu for *Ovation's* sixth season from Sydney.

The ship is the first Royal Caribbean vessel to return to Australia, ahead of *Quantum of the Seas'* call in Brisbane tomorrow.

The two arrivals are a testament to Australia's demand for cruising, according to Vice President & Managing Director Gavin Smith.

"This is an incredibly exciting time for Royal Caribbean in Australia, with *Ovation's* return to Sydney and *Quantum of the Seas'* arrival into Brisbane on Tue 01 Nov," he said.

"It is fantastic to see *Ovation* in Sydney Harbour once again, and today is also an important milestone to thank our suppliers, the travel industry and our loyal guests for the unwavering support they have demonstrated over the last two years.

"We are very much looking forward to welcoming back our returning guests and new holidaymakers for a much-needed summer season of adventure and lifelong memories."

Meanwhile, ahead of her arrival in Brisbane, *Quantum* has also made history in New Caledonia, arriving in the country for the first time on Fri.

Royal Caribbean's long-awaited return to New Caledonia was marked with a plaque and key ceremony, which was conducted by *Quantum's* Captain Arild



Hanson and The Harbour Master of Noumea.

The arrival of *Quantum* in New Caledonia welcomes an exciting boost to the local community and Noumean businesses, a cause for celebration among locals who have been looking forward to this recovery.

The call is the first of 11 *Quantum* will make throughout her maiden season sailing in Australia.

*Quantum's* sister ship *Ovation* will also make eight calls in New Caledonia, during her Sydney homeport season.

"Today we are delighted to welcome *Quantum of the Seas* to Noumea for the first time, we also look forward to welcoming back her sister ship *Ovation of the Seas* this season," said New

Caledonia Tourism President Michael Forrest.

"Cruise ship guests play a key role in supporting the New Caledonian tourism economy, therefore today is a celebration for all the local operators who have been looking forward to this recovery."

Royal Caribbean local Director of Sales Dave Humphreys said cruises to Noumea and across the South Pacific continue to prove hugely popular for Aussie guests.

"South Pacific cruises are guest favourite sailings and as Australia's closest South Pacific neighbour, New Caledonia offers unique Melanesian culture, French elegance, and all of the wonderful exotic South Pacific charm we want on a holiday," he said.

### CCL <3 Queensland

**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line's (CCL) *Carnival Luminosa* has arrived in Queensland, with a personalised love letter.

*Luminosa* arrived at the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal for the first time overnight, sending a special message to locals.

More than 60 of *Luminosa's* windows were illuminated to spell out "We <3 QLD" across the ship's portside (pictured).

Setting sail on her first passenger cruise on 06 Nov, *Luminosa* will be the first Carnival ship to sail from Brisbane this year, with 28 cruises from Nov to Apr.

With 60 ports of call across Australia and the South Pacific, *Luminosa* will visit a number of Queensland destinations including Airlie Beach and the Great Barrier Reef, supporting Carnival Corporation's anticipated \$165 million contribution to the Queensland economy.

CCL Vice President Australia Kara Glamore said *Luminosa* is a testament to the brand's ongoing commitment to Qld.



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## CLIA kicks off '23 membership drive

**CRUISE** Lines International Association's (CLIA) 2023 program will support travel advisors in cruise's renaissance, as the organisation kicks off its membership drive for next year (**CW** 26 Oct).

Offering bonus rewards, live events, and an award-winning education program, 2023 CLIA memberships are now available to existing and new members, and will focus on providing skills and insight to help advisors grow their business.

Back for next year will be CLIA's Travel Agent Rewards Program, which will provide members with bonus commissions and other rewards when making bookings with member cruise lines.

The scheme will offer rewards with a combined indicative value of over \$1,500, meaning advisors can potentially recoup the cost of their membership many times

over, CLIA believes.

The 2023 program will also provide more live events, including the annual Cruise360 conference, and the travelling education program CLIA LIVE in key cities throughout next year.

The Association is also reviving its Cruise Industry Awards, which will honour the region's most dedicated advisors at a gala dinner in Sydney.

Education will also be a key focus next year, with an extensive range of professional development options to ensure CLIA advisors excel as cruise specialists.

The Association was honoured earlier this month at Australia's National Travel Industry Awards, where it received the award for Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Institution (**CW** 17 Oct).

CLIA Managing Director for Australia & New Zealand Joel Katz

said the membership program had been designed to offer the best possible support to CLIA members as the industry worked to accelerate its recovery.

"All our services are designed to give CLIA members the best support, education and benefits we can, so they emerge stronger and more knowledgeable as the travel industry recovers," he said.

"CLIA agents have always been among the most successful agents, and our aim is to help them stand out even more as industry leaders."

Cruise's revival in Australia has come after a long and hard-fought campaign by CLIA and the sector as a whole, Katz endorsed.

"Having raised our voice and lifted public understanding of the benefits of cruising, we want to maintain the momentum and help build further support across our region," he said.

## Oceania new prog

**OCEANIA** Cruises has debuted its 2024-2025 Tropics & Exotics Voyage Collection.

Opening for sale 03 Nov, the new collection of 157 voyages spans seven continents and ranges from seven to 200 days in length (**CW** 27 Oct).

Featuring more than 300 ports of call, the Collection includes 14 new off-the-beaten-path ports, with 30% to 50% more time in-destination than most other cruise lines.

Oceania's itineraries include more than 450 overnight stays across 123 cruises, which include 70 Grand Voyages.

"This new Collection of itineraries showcases iconic ports of call along with a wealth of opportunities to explore corners of the globe nearly untouched by tourism," said CEO Howard Sherman.



  
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# WELCOME CARNIVAL LUMINOSA!

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**A WORLD** War II explosive device has been found by a fishing boat.

The vessel was dropping its line off the coast of Rhode Island when she made the discovery.

The Captain said his crew dredged up the mysterious object, which was confirmed to be a depth charge by the Navy Region Mid Atlantic.

The crew called the Coast Guard after the discovery, and a team came to pick them up and return them to a safe area.

The charge was detonated safely about a kilometre and a half offshore, and despite the distance, the impact could still be felt.

## Big cruises back in the NT



**LARGE** cruise ships have been welcomed back to the NT with the arrival of Princess Cruises' *Coral Princess* earlier this month.

The call marked the recommencement of large ship cruising in NT waters post-COVID, with smaller expedition ships having been cruising in the Territory's waters since Apr.

*Coral* received a warm welcome for its maiden visit to Darwin, which included an official plaque exchange between the ship and the Port.

Visiting Darwin as part of a 28-day circumnavigation of Australia trip, *Coral* passengers spent the day in the city, exploring the region through organised tours, shopping at the city's retail outlets, and dining at its venues.

Passengers were greeted by Tourism Top End visitor information ambassadors, live

music in The Mall from 11-2, Larrakia Nation performing Welcome to Country ceremonies, and a performance by didgeridoo artist eMDee (pictured).

The return is a major boost for the NT's tourism and hospitality industry, with *Coral* bringing 1,970 passengers to Darwin, with certain downtown businesses offering extended trading for pax.

Large cruise ships provide a big financial injection into the NT's economy during its low season, with Darwin set to host a total of 37 vessels during the period, which will bring more than 44,000 passengers.

Prior to the pandemic, cruise ships generated around \$60 million of annual expenditure within the NT, with the Territory's government having committed to increasing the benefits its people see from the sector.

## Cruise back in SA

**ADELAIDE** is off and sailing once again, as P&O Cruises Australia's flagship *Pacific Explorer* arrives in the city to begin her season sailing from the capital of SA.

The record-breaking cruise season kicked off with *Explorer* sporting a giant "we love SA" banner on its bow as she arrived.

The season begins with three round-trip cruises from Adelaide, including calls to Kangaroo Island and Port Lincoln, and a fourth ending in Melbourne, her other Australian homeport.

*Explorer's* program from Melbourne will also include calls in South Australia.

The ship will round out her deployment in southern Australia with another homeport season from Adelaide, beginning 24 Feb.

This will feature seven round-trip cruises, including a spectacular voyage to New Zealand, with the season ending in Fremantle.

In all, P&O Australia's summer 2022-23 cruise season will see ships from five Carnival Corporation cruise lines make 72 calls to SA ports, generating almost \$65 million in economic activity.

SA's Minister for Tourism Zoe Bettison said it was now "plain sailing" for the cruise sector in the state, signalling a multi-million-dollar boost for the local visitor economy.

"Pre-pandemic, the cruise industry was worth \$145 million to our state," she said.

## Gordon exits HLO

**FORMER** Cruiseco Commercial Manager Josh Gordon has joined itravel as its Head of Commercial.

In addition to his time in the cruise sector, Gordon has more than 20 years of experience in the wider travel industry.

After Helloworld purchased Cruiseco (CW 23 Nov 2020), Gordon's talents were shuffled into the Commercial Relationships Manager position with the company.

He has also worked at KAYAK, Qantas Airways, and Sydney Airport.

Managing Director Steve Labroski hailed Gordon's arrival at itravel.