



# Sun Princess takes line to next level

### EXCLUSIVE



**THE** new *Sun Princess* will be Princess Cruises' biggest ever-vessel (**CW** breaking news), but still maintains the line's "global cruising model," according to President John Padgett.

Speaking to **Cruise Weekly** in the lead-up to this morning's unveiling of the first Sphere-class ship for the line, Padgett (**pictured**) confirmed that the newbuild was "20% larger than our biggest ship, yet it can still transit the Panama Canal".

"This is a completely unique platform for the Princess brand only...it allows us to keep moving our ships around the world wherever our guests like to go."

When the ship debuts in 2024 it will bear the third generation of the *Sun Princess* name, which Padgett said reflected ongoing respect for Princess' deep heritage and tradition, combined

with the line's ongoing innovation and "progression of the brand".

*Sun* will sail her inaugural spring/summer season in the Mediterranean, before relocating to Port Everglades in Florida in the second half of 2024.

The ship is centred on a gigantic "architectural sphere" which takes the central Princess Piazza brand icon "beyond epic," Padgett said, featuring an outward-looking suspended space with

views both inside and outside across nine storeys - and even integrated into some staterooms.

Also new is The Dome, a giant indoor/outdoor relaxation space on the top deck which transforms into a stunning entertainment venue in the evening.

Like the rest of the fleet, *Sun* will feature the Princess Medallion which Padgett noted uniquely allows the brand to deliver "everything that comes with a big ship, along with small-ship, yacht-class level personalisation" by allowing guests in all cabin classes to access on-demand service no matter where they are.

The LNG/MGO dual fuel 21-deck vessel will also see the launch of a new Signature Collection level of suite accommodations, complemented with an exclusive restaurant, lounge and sun deck.

For renders of the new ship see [facebook.com/cruiseweekly](https://facebook.com/cruiseweekly).

### Cruise Weekly today

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

### Scenic Mekong out

**SCENIC** Luxury Cruises & Tours will next month resume operations in South East Asia, with *Scenic Spirit* once again cruising the Mekong River.

Coinciding with the return, Scenic has unveiled its new 2023 and 2024 South East Asia river cruise and land journeys collection, with the new program said to venture "deeper into the exotic wonders of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos".

Additional destinations include Vientiane and Vang Vieng in Laos, while the new program includes an exclusive nine-night river itinerary and new Scenic Freechoice experiences - [scenic.com.au](https://scenic.com.au).

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## Inter cruises + Nat Geo partnership

**INTERCRUISES** and National Geographic Expeditions have launched 'National Geographic Day Tours', a new range of 48 itineraries available in seven countries.

Day tours will be offered to cruise passengers as shore excursions in 2023, with a wider distribution rollout planned throughout the year and into the future.

The collection of one-day and half-day itineraries will launch during next year's northern summer, initially to Mediterranean destinations.

The lineup of 48 tours will initially include Marseille, Rome, Barcelona, Palma, Ibiza, Funchal, Tenerife, Arrecife, Dubrovnik, Naples, Corfu, Kusadasi, Athens, Mykonos, Rhodes, and Santorini, with more to be included soon.

## Celeb & Four Pillars a perfect pair

**CELEBRITY** Cruises guests can now cheers with a Four Pillars Gin on board *Celebrity Eclipse*, thanks to a new partnership between the two brands.

The pair has teamed up to bring Four Pillars to the seas for the first time, with *Eclipse's* bartenders to serve up a collection of four craft gin cocktails at select bars on board throughout her 2022-23 season.

Cruisers also have the chance to join an exclusive sailing hosted by Four Pillars Senior Brand Ambassador Wes Baimbridge, departing Sydney on 10 Mar.

Guests of this five-night Tasmania sailing will be treated to exclusive gin tasting & food pairing experiences.

Other highlights of the *Eclipse* Gin Sailing include a Sail Away Party with Four Pillars, featuring a complimentary cocktail to celebrate; intimate q&a sessions



with Baimbridge, which will discover the story behind the brand and its method of making its gins; and a series of exclusive events throughout the sailing, including gin & oyster flights, an exclusive gin appreciation & pairing dinner, and hands-on cocktail masterclasses.

**CLICK HERE** to find out more

about the sailing.

**Pictured**, Baimbridge clinks glasses with the Celebrity team at the partnership's launching in Sydney last night: Vice President & MD, Australia & APAC Tim Jones, PR & Social Manager Tenneal Baker, and local Marketing Director Emma Mumford.

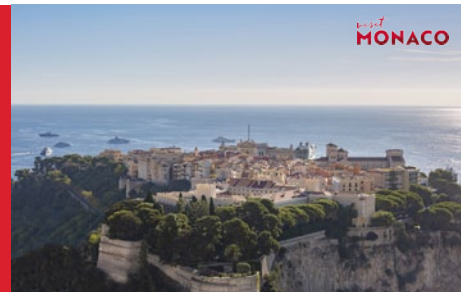




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## Deloitte: cruise can drive dispersal

AS THE cruise industry emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of rural tourism being driven by cruise is legitimate, Deloitte Access Economics National Tourism, Hospitality & Leisure Sector Lead Adele Labine-Romain (pictured) believes.

Addressing last week's Australian Cruise Association Conference, Labine-Romain described the factors mitigating rural dispersal, particularly for international visitors, which could all be solved by cruise.

"For our international visitors, if they had more time, if it was easier to get to, and less expensive...time, money, and access," she explained.

"If I reflect about the opportunity that exists in this room, you can make a lot of these barriers go away, and I just know that we can solve that problem on a first visit.



"We've talked about the return rate of visitors who've been to a regional destination as part of the cruise as being really high, and I think there's evidence that can solve for those top three issues with prospective emerging trends and travel behaviour."

The result, Labine-Romain added, would hopefully be rural destinations not taking cruisers off track, because it would actually become the track.

"It's not going to necessarily require more time because it's

part of the itinerary," she said.

Labine-Romain and Deloitte Access Economics are also witnessing the trend of visitors paying more for responsible/sustainable travel, which the cruise industry has been making important headway on recently.

"There's an expectation, it is a threshold issue, and all of the innovations and developments that have been discussed this morning, those are now table stakes," she said.

Visitors expect any operator, including the cruise industry, to be making really significant strides towards carbon neutral status.

"I think that you now have guests who will be willing to spend more if that operator can demonstrate that their behaviours and their business aligns with the values of the visitor," she concluded.

## Aqua Galapagos

AQUA Expeditions has successfully launched its luxurious superyacht experience in the Galapagos, the new seven-suite *Aqua Mare* (CW 02 Nov 2021).

Guests from 14 countries, including Australia, were on board during *Mare's* first month of operation.

"The feedback from our inaugural sailings' passengers prove we are on the right track with the launch of this ship," declared founder & Chief Executive Officer Francesco Galli Zugaro.

"No other expedition cruise business offers a ship with the calibre of *Aqua Mare*, built by an Italian luxury mega yacht builder," he added.

*Mare* features oversized custom-designed suites along with ample elegant indoor and outdoor social spaces.

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**WHEN** you're the head of a cruise line, you don't get much time to watch television.

However Princess Cruises President John Padgett is expected to make an exception next month when the highly anticipated new reality TV show *The Real Love Boat* debuts.

Versions of the program are being filmed for both Australia and the United States, with Padgett telling *CW* yesterday it's much more than a dating show.

"There's elements of that, sure, but it's also about competitions between the couples as teams, and has the same formats as the original *Love Boat*," he said.

"So it's kind of like a reality version of the original *Love Boat*, with a touch of *The Bachelor* and *The Amazing Race* all combined," Padgett enthused.

The Aussie version will feature Sydney-based global yachting celebrity Hannah Ferrier, famed for her repeated appearances in *Below Deck Mediterranean*.

Padgett confessed that he's a closet *Below Deck* fan too, agreeing with *CW* that "it's the sort of show that doesn't require 100% of my brain to watch".

### Riviera Travel new group offer

**RIVIERA** Travel River Cruises has launched a new "one-in-four" group reservation offer.

Travel advisors who book a group of 12 or more travellers on a river cruise next year can claim the deal, which allows every fourth guest to go free.

Agents claiming the deal get two free guests (or one cabin) per group of 12, giving them the flexibility to host a tour without paying for their own cabin, or offer additional discounts to guests.

Bookings by 30 Sep are encouraged due to limited availability - for enquiries call Travel The World on 1300 857 437, or [rivieratravel.com.au](http://rivieratravel.com.au).

### Viking Douro deal

**VIKING'S** weekly deal is a Portugal river cruise, with a saving of \$2,000 per couple.

The discount applies to the 10-day Portugal's River of Gold journey from Lisbon to Porto, now on sale and priced from \$4,495ppts cruise-only.

The cruise visits the spectacular Douro Valley, the world's oldest demarcated wine region, and stays for two nights in Lisbon.



**HOLLAND** America Line (HAL) has partnered with the University of Washington Athletics as the official cruise line of Husky Athletics.

In a multi-year sponsorship agreement that coincides with the 2022-2023 football season, the partnership marks Holland America's first foray into college sports, and establishes an ideal relationship for two of Seattle's most loved brands.

The new relationship will see Husky fans engage with unique experiences, including in-game activations, promotions, and branding across UW Athletics media channels and at Husky Stadium.

HAL will also elevate the experience of Husky fans on the water during their pre-game "sailgating" tradition, with

new dock branding and special experiences for fans on game day.

"We're proud to launch this new partnership with University of Washington Athletics and give fans more ways to create memorable moments," said Holland America President Gus Antorcha.

"We have many team members in our organisation who are UW alum, and we're looking forward to wearing our purple and gold in support of the Huskies."

University of Washington Athletics Chief Revenue Officer Heath Bennett said the program is proud to partner with HAL.

"We both take great pride in representing Seattle with excellence and working toward greatness, so we are thankful for the partnership and look forward to future collaboration."


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