



### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features two pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a full page from **APT**.

### Creative seeks GM

**HELLOWORLD** Travel's newly acquired Creative Cruising has launched a recruitment campaign for a number of roles including a new General Manager, the role formerly held by Caroline Hitchen, who is understood to have left.

Positions are also on offer for an Operations Supervisor, Inside Sales & Marketing Executive and a Cruise Reservations Agent.

The Sydney-based Creative Cruising office was relocated recently to the existing Helloworld operations, as part of its acquisition of Express Travel Group.

## FCTG to debut CruiseHQ

### EXCLUSIVE

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) new cruise wholesale operation is expected to be named CruiseHQ, **Cruise Weekly** can exclusively reveal today.

The name, until now a closely guarded secret, was included in the fine print in an investor presentation released this morning as part of the FCTG annual results announcement.

**CW** can confirm FCTG currently holds domain registrations for the name in a range of jurisdictions including the United States (cruisehq.com), Australia (cruisehq.com.au), New Zealand (cruisehq.co.nz), Canada (cruisehq.ca) and the United Kingdom (cruisehq.co.uk).

None of the addresses have active websites at this stage, with the presentation suggesting an industry-wide B2B focus for the wholesale operation, offering

unique cruise packaging both to FCTG brands and the wider Australian trade marketplace.

The pending launch of the wholesale business and the reintroduction of the Cruiseabout brand in Australia (**CW 24** Aug) are key to FCTG's plans to increase its scale, brand and geographic diversity, according to the company's annual report.

It noted its total available margins in cruise are generally in line with pre-pandemic levels, and cited the launch of a "cruise specialty proof-of-concept store" within Flight Centre Canada.

The company is aiming to capitalise on forecasted strong growth in cruise, with Chief Executive Officer Leisure Brands, James Kavanagh, this month promising a national Cruiseabout footprint plus a network of flagship retail outlets, and a Gold Coast-based call centre.

### MSC sponsorship

**MSC** Cruises has announced it will be the official sponsor of the upcoming Italian film festival, scheduled to screen around Australia from 19 Sep to 25 Oct.

As part of this collaboration, festival-goers can anticipate a synergy of Italian-themed events, film screenings, and exclusive promotions.

"We are delighted to join hands with the Italian Film Festival as its official cruise sponsor," commented Marketing Manager Australia Michelle Warren.

"Italy is not only our spiritual home but also a cornerstone of art, culture, and cinema.

"This partnership allows us to showcase our passion for our Italian heritage while providing festival attendees with a taste of our unparalleled hospitality."

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*The Chat* with Jenny  
Travel Daily



A Conversation with Danielle Galloway of Travel Associates

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**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line has announced its new exclusive Grand Bahama port destination will be called Celebration Key.

The cruise line revealed the name to guests, employees, travel advisors and Bahamian officials earlier this week.

The name is based on the vision for the destination to be a celebration of all that Carnival and The Bahamas has to offer for a memorable vacation.

Once complete, Celebration Key will be the first port destination exclusively designed for Carnival guests, and will be capable of welcoming two million guests each year.

Celebration Key will offer a uniquely Bahamian experience with an abundance of features and amenities, including a one-mile stretch of white-sand beach, as well as Bahamian-operated retail & food outlets.

## Hurti ships meet up



**THE** world's first battery-hybrid cruise ships - Hurtigruten's *Roald Amundsen* and *Fridtjof Nansen* - met in the Northwest Passage earlier this week (pictured).

The world-first took place in Cambridge Bay, with guests and crew members invited to celebrate with flags, banners, and warm beverages on the top deck.

*Fridtjof Nansen* is cruising on her 27-day westbound Northwest Passage sailing to Nome, and *Roald Amundsen* on her 26-day eastbound Northwest Passage sailing to Halifax.

Hurtigruten Expeditions Group Chief Executive Officer Daniel Skjeldam said the gathering serves as a moment to celebrate the company's legacy.

"As the founders of expedition cruising in 1896, we are born explorers, taking generations of travellers into the unknown," he enthused.

Guiding the respective vessels are Captain Raymond Martinsen and Captain Terje Willassen.

"Passing Zenith Point, I'm struck

by the remarkable achievements of past explorers in these cold, remote places more than 100 years ago," Captain Martinsen professed.

"However, it's the enduring presence of today's inhabitants, surviving here since the Thule era, that commands my utmost respect."

### Queensland to AK

**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line has opened more sailings for 2025, including a 29-day transpacific voyage from Brisbane to Seattle that features several stops in Japan and Alaska.

The cruise line's *Carnival Luminosa* will depart Brisbane on 03 Apr 2025, with several unique visits including Okinawa, Hiroshima, Tokyo, Hakodate, and Kushiro.

*Luminosa* will then call on Anchorage, Juneau, and Ketchikan in Alaska.

The new cruise is part of the expanded 'Carnival Journeys'.



Australian Cruise Association  
**ACA UPDATE**  
with Stephen Mahoney, Destination NSW

### NSW cruise focus

**THERE'S** no better way to set sail for Wollongong and this week's Australian Cruise Association 2023 Conference than Premier of New South Wales Chris Minns removing the Eastern Seaboard and Western Australian Cruise Protocols.

While the protocols were an important measure to enable the resumption of cruise operations in New South Wales, Premier Minns has declared "they were never meant to be forever".

With that happy news, the cruise lines, shorex operators and visitor economy businesses along the Blue Highway of the NSW coast are preparing for what's forecast to be the biggest and busiest-ever cruise season.

We can't wait to watch cruise ships berth daily from our desks at Destination NSW HQ in The Rocks, a stone's throw from the Overseas Passenger Terminal.

We've also been busy updating our glossy 'Cruise Sydney and New South Wales - Along The Blue Highway' guide - a collaboration with Port Authority of NSW - and an all-new suite of images and video assets featuring the OPT and White Bay and regional ports Eden, Batemans Bay, and Newcastle.

This new content complements the existing beautiful images and video that Destination NSW offers cruise industry stakeholders free of charge on our Content Library.

We look forward to working with the cruise industry.



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