



## Viking blasts off to Neptune in LA

VIKING'S newest ocean ship *Viking Neptune* has been named in Los Angeles by American engineer and retired NASA astronaut Nicole Stott.

The new 930-guest *Neptune* was named during the 2022-2023 Viking World Cruise, before she departed for Honolulu.

Stott used a historic Viking broad axe during the ceremony to cut a ribbon, that allowed a bottle of Norwegian aquavit to break on *Neptune's* hull.

Prior to the ribbon cutting, the axe was presented to Stott by Norwegian soprano Sissel Kyrkjebø, the godmother of *Viking Jupiter*, who used it when naming her ship in Jan 2020 (*CW* 17 Jan 2020).

Guests of the occasion also enjoyed performances from Sissel and violinist Tor Jaran Apold.

Although identical to Viking's other ocean ships, *Neptune* is



uniquely equipped with a small hydrogen fuel system, making it the cruise industry's first ship to test the use of hydrogen power for on board operations.

Viking is using the system as a test to determine how hydrogen fuel could be used at a larger scale in future newbuilds.

The naming of *Neptune* comes at a time of record sales for Viking, with the launch of the

cruise line's new 25th Anniversary Sale on 01 Jan, resulting in the highest number of bookings in one week in its history.

**Pictured** at the ceremony are Chair Torstein Hagen; *Viking Orion* godmother Anna Fisher; Stott; *Neptune* Captain Erik Saabye; renowned longship builder Geir Rovik; NASA astronauts Richard Linehan & Ron Garan; and Viking EVP Karine Hagen.

### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise news.

### Weather forces Windstar changes

A TROPICAL cyclone near New Zealand is forcing Windstar Cruises to make itinerary changes to its current cruise aboard *Star Breeze*.

The ship will miss her port calls in both Tauranga and Picton, which will be made up with an additional day in Auckland.

The itinerary change will also see entertainment on board by local entertainers, and a full slate of events and activities for guests to enjoy during the sea days.

Windstar noted the weather is expected to improve later in the week.



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## Crystal fleet sparkles for Riverside

**RIVERSIDE** Luxury Cruises, the startup European river line founded by German hotelier family the Gerlach Group, has acquired the four near-new river ships which were constructed by Crystal Cruises in the years leading up to its demise (**CW** 10 Feb 2022).

Riverside had already purchased Crystal's first river ship, the double-width *Crystal Mozart* (**CW** 06 Oct 2022), which was constructed in 1987 but totally renovated in 2016 to become the backbone of the Crystal fleet.

The cruise line subsequently built four additional identical ships - *Ravel*, *Debussy*, *Mahler*, and the 106-passenger ultra-luxury *Bach*, which were delivered in 2017 and 2018.

Riverside will commence its first operations in Apr, with inaugural voyages plotted aboard *Riverside Mozart*, *Riverside Ravel* and



*Riverside Debussy.*

Sister ships *Riverside Bach* (**pictured**) and *Riverside Mahler* will return to the rivers in 2024.

*Mozart* will cruise on the Danube, while *Ravel* itineraries include the Rhone and Saone, and *Debussy* the Rhine.

"If personalised service, serene spaces with impeccable design and sumptuous cuisine top your list of favourite things, then Riverside Luxury Cruises is about to become your new favourite

way to travel," the freshly minted Riverside website notes, promising extensive onboard space, an extraordinary culinary offering and unique destination experiences and itineraries.

While Australia and NZ aren't yet on the Riverside radar, the company has already established an American office which is offering generous rebates for travel advisor famils, as well as 21% commission on all departures this year.



**COULD** we see Viking in an upcoming Jeffrey Archer thriller novel?

The next instalment of the famed British author's latest series, based around the exploits of fictional detective William Warwick, is likely to be set on board a ship, according to the epilogue of his most recent novel, *Next in Line*.

Archer said he likes to draw inspiration from real life, and having had a long association with Viking founder Torstein Hagen (as well as appearing on the [Viking.TV](#) enrichment channel) suggested the allure of the sea may prove the ideal setting for Warwick's next case - the sixth in the series.

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## Cruise Calendar

The next few port calls of cruise ships at various destinations around Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	12 Jan
MELBOURNE	<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Oceania Regatta</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Norwegian Spirit</i>	12 Jan
HOBART	<i>Silver Shadow</i>	12 Jan
BURNIE	<i>Oceania Regatta</i>	12 Jan
AUCKLAND	<i>Coral Princess</i>	12 Jan
	<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	12 Jan
CHRISTCHURCH	<i>Majestic Princess</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	12 Jan
WELLINGTON	<i>Silver Whisper</i>	12 Jan
BAY OF ISLANDS	<i>Coral Princess</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Celebrity Eclipse</i>	12 Jan
DUNEDIN	<i>Le Soleal</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Azamara Quest</i>	12 Jan
	<i>Majestic Princess</i>	12 Jan
FJORDLAND	<i>Grand Princess</i>	12 Jan
PICTON	<i>Silver Whisper</i>	11 Jan
SHIPS COVE	<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	11 Jan
TAURANGA	<i>Coral Princess</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Star Breeze</i>	11 Jan
	<i>Viking Mars</i>	12 Jan
TIMARU	<i>Azamara Quest</i>	12 Jan

## A century of Cunard snaps



CUNARD Line is celebrating 100 years of photography on the ocean, and is calling on guests to share their magical moments for its centennial 'Sea Views' exhibition.

British photographer Mary McCartney will curate 100 years of photographs for Cunard's new exhibition, which will be made up of guest images and never-before-seen shots from the cruise line's archives.

Sea Views will mark two centenaries - 100 years since Cunard was the first cruise line to introduce onboard photographers, and a century since its first round-the-world voyage aboard *Laconia*.

With previous guests including icons such as Cary Grant (pictured aboard *Queen Mary*) and Elizabeth Taylor (pictured inset aboard *Queen Mary*), the line will be opening up their archives to select photographs that showcase the "glamour, grandeur, and timeless style for which Cunard has become famous".

Sian Wilks, the cruise line's



Archivist at the University of Liverpool Library, said: "with over 14,000 images stored in the Cunard archives in Liverpool - the founding home port of Cunard Line - we have a wealth of memories from the 1920s to present day to choose from".

To find out how you can submit your favourite moment captured on board a Cunard ship, visit [www.cunard.com/seaviews](http://www.cunard.com/seaviews).

Images must be submitted by 05 Feb.

Sea Views will go live later this year, and more information will soon be shared on the web page linked above.

"We're extremely proud of Cunard's 183-year history and particularly the fact we pioneered the round-the-world voyage 100 years ago," President Sture Myrmell said.

## CLIA UPDATE



with Joel Katz  
MD, CLIA Australasia

### A big year for cruise

THE new year gives us plenty to look forward to in the cruise industry – and plenty of opportunity for Australian travel agents.

By the end of 2023, global cruise passenger volumes are expected to return to pre-pandemic levels, putting our industry back on course for growth.

It's a year in which at least 15 new CLIA ocean ships will debut, a sign of strong confidence in the outlook for cruising and just one of the ways cruise lines are investing in the fleet of the future.

It's also a year in which we expect the Australian market to hit its stride, both in terms of the recovery in passenger bookings and the return of operations in our region.

Already we can see the effects of cruising's return as ships bring guests back to vibrant ports and destinations around the country, and this will only build further as more than 40 ships sail in Australian waters by the end of the current summer season.

CLIA is working hard to provide the best possible training, events and support to help agents capitalise on this renewal, and we look further to working with our members to build prosperity in 2023.

