



## Cruise Weekly today

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

## New delivery date?

**EXPLORA** Journeys is hoping its debut ship *Explora I* will be ready for delivery on 24 Jul, with her first sailing to depart on 01 Aug from Copenhagen, the line told **Cruise Weekly**.

The new luxury MSC brand last week delayed the handover and naming ceremony of *Explora I* (**CW** 06 Jul), due to an issue which was yesterday revealed to be related to fire panels installed on the ship (**CW** yesterday).

*Explora* confirmed work is underway with the shipbuilder and relevant classification societies to obtain *Explora I's* safety certificate as soon as possible.

# Fox to head up Crystal in Asia-Pacific

## EXCLUSIVE

**DEBRA** Fox says she's "absolutely delighted" at her recently announced new regional role as Executive Vice President of Trade Sales APAC for Abercrombie & Kent (A&K) and Crystal Cruises (**CW** breaking news).

The promotion, which also saw her reconfirmed as A&K Managing Director as part of a new unified global "One A&K" structure, comes a year after she was appointed to run the company locally - a period during which its owners purchased the assets of Crystal, including its brand and its two ocean-going ships (**CW** 09 Nov 2022).

"It is truly an exciting time at the A&K Travel Group as we continue to deliver on the One A&K Vision," Fox said.

"My last 12 months at A&K have been exceptional, and my team and I look forward to



continuing to work closely with our trade partners in delivering unparalleled travel experiences for their clients," she said.

Tony Archbold remains in his current role as Vice President of Sales Crystal APAC, while Michelle Mickan's job expands to encompass cruise as Vice President Marketing for both A&K and Crystal.

A&K also confirmed the retirement of Crystal CEO Jack

Anderson (**CW** yesterday) with the global One A&K structure including a newly created Chief Sales Officer role across both the A&K and Crystal brands, to be filled by US-based Marett Taylor.

The new structure comes in the lead-up to the relaunch of *Crystal Serenity*, which will undertake her first post-COVID voyage later this month between Venice and Marseille after a multimillion dollar makeover.

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## Emerald Sakara completes sea trials

**EMERALD** Cruises' *Emerald Sakara* (pictured) has completed her successful sea trials, with the line's second luxury yacht on schedule for her first Mediterranean sailing next month.

Conducted by Captains John Edwards and James Griffiths, the sea trials took place in Vietnam, departing Ha Long Shipyard on 03 Jul, where all major systems were tested and the yacht was certified for guest operations.

Following the successful sea trials, *Sakara* departed Vietnam on 06 Jul for her relocation to the Mediterranean, ahead of her debut sailing - an eight-day Ionian Sea Adventure from Athens to Rome departing 05 Aug.

The cruise will call on Itea before transiting the Corinth Canal and sailing to Cephalonia, Sicily, Amalfi, Sorrento and Capri, and ending in Rome.



"We are extremely pleased with how well our newest luxury yacht, *Emerald Sakara*, performed in her sea trials - she exceeded our expectations in every way," Scenic Group founder & Chair Glen Moroney reported.

"We're thrilled to be able to share our newest gem in less than a month's time and look forward to offering our guests wonderful experiences in the Caribbean and Central America later this year."

After *Sakara's* debut, she will explore the coastal waters of Italy,

Greece, Turkey, and the Adriatic.

From there, both *Sakara* and her sister ship *Emerald Azzurra* will cruise the warm waters of the Caribbean and Central America from Nov to Mar.

*Sakara* will be christened on 02 Dec in Puerto Rico by her godmother, Cruise Lines International Association President & Chief Executive Officer Kelly Craighead (**CW** 18 Apr).

"We've had a phenomenal response to our luxury yacht cruising program, since Mar 2022, which has been virtually a sell-out," Emerald Director of Sales Marketing & Product Angus Crichton announced.

"Although the launch of *Emerald Sakara* doubles the capacity, there are just 100 guests on each yacht, so I'd urge you to book your clients now to avoid disappointment for 2024."

## Hurti gets Green!

**ARCTIC** Umiaq Line has partnered with Hurtigruten to promote sustainable tourism in Greenland.

The new partnership will enhance growth and opportunities in Greenland's tourism industry.

Both companies will develop Arctic Umiaq's unique product for the international market, with a high focus on sustainability.

"With less than 60,000 people spread mainly along the 3,000 kilometre west coast, this is a delicate society that needs a subtle sustainable approach to tourism and business," Arctic Umiaq Chief Executive Officer Jens-Jakob Sandgreen explained.

Further details regarding the collaboration will be unveiled toward the end of next month, the companies said.

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## Whales & wineries

**CORAL** Expeditions has announced the release of a new expedition, Whales & Trails of Western Australia.

The special spring sailing for next year will explore the coastline of South West Australia on a 10-night voyage.

*Coral Adventurer* will follow the migratory trail of the Humpback, Southern Right and Blue whales through this confluence of the Indian and Southern Oceans, during a prolific time of year to witness the creatures, as they nurse their calves.

Lucky guests will enjoy sightings of nursing whale calves and stingrays as they cruise the sheltered waters of Point Ann, Albany, and Hamelin Bay.

Guests will also step ashore each day to explore renowned vineyards and walks - [HERE](#).

## Do your part to grow the Grinch's heart

"GRINCHMAS" has sailed into the Emerald City, with Carnival Cruise Line's new fundraiser for the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF).

The furry, green cynic arrived into Sydney Harbour on Sun, on board *Carnival Splendor*, for the cruise line's first series of its 'Grinchmas in Jul' sailings.

Carnival has teamed up with Dr. Seuss Enterprises to launch the 'Grow the Grinch's Heart' initiative, with every dollar from the initiative to support patients and families from the SCHF.

Grinchmas sailings see *Splendor* transformed into a magical winter wonderland for the next two months, bringing the best Christmas in Jul traditions to sea.

The new additions include festive food and beverage offerings, a giant glittering Christmas tree, festive entertainment including carolling



and games, a screening of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* at the Dive-In Movies, an ugly Christmas sweater competition, and of course, special appearances from The Grinch himself.

"We're thrilled to be extending our support for the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation beyond our existing Conga for Kids program through this new initiative as we spread

love, cheer, and of course, fun," Carnival Cruise Line Vice President Kara Glamore said.

"Whether you're on board *Carnival Splendor* or celebrating Grinchmas from home, we are encouraging as many people as possible to help us Grow the Grinch's Heart for this incredible cause."

Donations can be made [HERE](#) from now until the end of Aug.

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**IF YOU'VE** ever wondered what you get the traveller who has sailed everywhere, Norwegian Cruise Line may have the answer for you.

The brand has announced its new series of Starbucks "Been There" mugs, which are set to debut aboard its ships next month.

Beginning with the launch of *Norwegian Viva* in Aug, the collectible limited-edition mugs will be exclusively sold at the Starbucks Cafes aboard nine of the cruise line's ships.

Each mug's design showcases unique elements of the ship it can be purchased on, including *Norwegian Bliss'* magnificent whale tail hull art, and the exhilarating dueling slides aboard *Norwegian Prima*.



## Costa Voyages to debut

**COSTA** Cruises has launched Costa Voyages, a new experience designed to uniquely explore extended itineraries.

Starting from Sep, new cruises ranging from 10 to 14 days will include the wild Canary Islands, the myriad facets of Turkey, the mystery of the Egyptian pyramids, the stunning Azores, the mystical lands of Israel and Morocco, and the cultures of Northern Europe.

Costa Voyages will be available from Sep to Nov 2023, Apr to Jun 2024, and Sep to Nov 2024, aboard six ships: *Costa Favolosa*, *Costa Fortuna*, *Costa Firenze*, *Costa Fascinosa*, *Costa Pacifica*, and *Costa Diadema*.

Guests will have the opportunity to savour a range of special gastronomic experiences, starting with a new, exclusive menu included in the fare by three world-renowned chefs: Bruno Barbieri, Helene Darroze, and Angel Leon.

Fourteen new desserts have also been created in collaboration with master pastry chef Iginio Massari.

Costa Voyages will also provide the opportunity to toast with the

captain during a dinner.

Other highlights on board will be the Banquet Night Party, a buffet accompanied by ice sculptures carved by master ice sculptors, and a live DJ set.

Dedicated onboard partnerships include a collaboration with American monthly *Rolling Stone*, which will offer an exclusive musical show; while Japanese optical company Canon will engage guests in dedicated photography sessions; and the Italian Bridge Federation will provide a full immersion into the world of the card game.

Costa Voyages also offer three elegant formal evenings on board: a gala night at the Grand Bar, where guests can dance with the ship's officers; a Fashion Night, where guests will be the stars of a fashion show, competing on the red carpet of the Grand Bar, followed by a DJ set; and a Glamour Night, a dance competition in between tango, waltz, rumba and cha-cha-cha.

Guests can also partake in a guided tour of the ship, which will visit the galleys, the bridge, the crew bar, and more.

## Viking weekly deals

**VIKING'S** deal of the week is the 15-day Komodo & the Australian Coast voyage from Sydney to Bali or vice versa.

Cruisers will uncover the cultural and natural wonders of Australia and Indonesia, witnessing the colourful traditions of Lombok, exploring Komodo National Park with a trained naturalist, experience the charms of Darwin with a local, and uncovering the cosmopolitan culture of Brisbane.

The cruise is priced from \$9,995 per person with a \$1,000 flight credit per couple, including a saving of \$1,000 per couple.

Also on sale is the Capitals of Eastern Europe 17-day river voyage from Vienna to Bucharest or vice versa.

Cruisers will discover the Austrian capital, view grand palaces in Bratislava, and delve into Budapest's vibrant culture.

The cruise is priced from \$6,995 per person, with a saving of up to \$4,600 per couple - call 138 747.

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