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Cruise Weekly today

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

RCI to enchant Bris

THE Enchanted Garden, presented by Royal Caribbean International (RCI), is returning later this month to transform Roma Street Parkland in downtown Brisbane.

The light show spectacle is returning from 23 Nov to 20 Dec, transforming the world's largest urban subtropical garden into an illuminated landscape with twinkling lights, intricate holograms, dazzling lasers, night-time projections, and mesmerising special effects, as well as food trucks and a bar.

The one-kilometre self-guided and wheelchair-accessible trail takes 30 to 40 minutes to complete.

Halfpenny to join Heritage Expeditions

EXCLUSIVE

QUARK Expeditions Asia-Pacific Sales Director Rob Halfpenny (pictured) has accepted a new role as Head of Global Sales for Christchurch-based cruise line Heritage Expeditions.

Halfpenny, who formerly headed up Aurora Expeditions, and has held senior roles at Rocky Mountaineer, Virgin Australia, and Globus Family of Brands, told *Cruise Weekly* he's thrilled at the opportunity, which will see him join the family-owned and operated Heritage early next year.

"I'm passionate about the future of expedition travel, and eager to contribute to Heritage Expeditions' success," he told *Cruise Weekly*.

Halfpenny will continue to be based in Sydney, and will report to Heritage's leaders, Aaron and Nathan Russ, with a focus on building new partnerships



and expanding the cruise line's presence in the expedition sector.

Heritage is on a strong growth trajectory, having recently upgraded its fleet, which now comprises the 140-guest *Heritage Adventurer* (CW 24 Oct 2022) and the 18-passenger expedition yacht *Heritage Explorer*.

Established in 1984 with a

vision to increase awareness and conservation through responsible expedition travel, the company specialises in "unforgettable journeys" to the Ross Sea, described as the 'heart of Antarctica', as well as the Subantarctic Islands of NZ and Australia, and around the islands of Japan, Taiwan, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Philippines, Australia's iconic Kimberley Coast, and coastal New Zealand.

"Robert Halfpenny's appointment is a significant step forward for Heritage Expeditions, as the company continues to provide unparalleled expedition experiences while fostering sustainable practices in the travel industry," according to Heritage.

Quark is expected to make an announcement next week regarding Halfpenny's replacement as Sales Director. *BP*

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Travelmarvel NZ

TRAVELMARVEL has launched its New Zealand program for 2024/2025, with a variety of trips now on offer by cruise, as well as land and rail.

One of the highlights of the program is a tour of New Zealand's best on a new 15-day cruise and rail itinerary.

Passengers will sail the full length of Milford Sound and capture the pristine beauty of the fiord, taking in towering Mitre Peak, lush rainforests, and magnificent waterfalls.

"Our Travelmarvel New Zealand tours continue to offer exceptional value showcasing the amazing variety of experiences that this country has to offer, from stunning scenery and landscapes to cultural experiences and interactions," New Zealand Operations & Product Manager Ajay Vagha said.

Third *Edge* Aussie season is official

CELEBRITY Cruises' *Celebrity Edge* is officially returning to Australia in 2025-26, as exclusively revealed by **Cruise Weekly** last month (**CW** 31 Oct).

The return was announced by Celebrity overnight, with *Edge* to sail locally until 20 Apr 2026, according to port schedules.

The cruise line's 2025-26 season will also feature the inaugural sailings of *Celebrity Xcel's* (pictured) year-round voyages in the Caribbean, as well as new immersive itineraries throughout both Japan and Iceland.

Celebrity described its new season as its "most ambitious ever", with more than 800 sailings to almost 300 destinations in 72 countries across every continent.

The program also includes new ports in Europe and new experiences in 29 cities with single and double overnights.

Other highlights include year-



round sailings from Miami to the Caribbean on *Celebrity Beyond*; three new European ports to discover in Bar, Trondheim, and Djupivogur; and four brand-new itineraries circumnavigating Iceland on *Celebrity Silhouette*;

There will also be two new distinct Asia itineraries. "We've placed our incredible ships in every corner of the world for guests to experience iconic

places, take a short break to rejuvenate or explore stunning cultural and historic landmarks," according to President Laura Hodges Bethge.

"Our 2025-2026 season is filled with opportunities to experience multiple countries through our Caribbean and European programs, visit bucket-list destinations with sailings like our immersive Japan program". MS



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Nominations are open until 30 Nov 2023 and are open to all CLIA Travel Agent Members.



Missed out on any episodes of Season ONE of 'Conversations with women in travel'?

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Azamara returning to Australia in Dec

AZAMARA is returning to Australia next month with *Azamara Journey* and *Azamara Onward* to sail Down Under.

After a nine-night cruise from Singapore, *Journey* will dock in Fremantle on 20 Dec, and set sail on a fully booked 14-night voyage around Western Australia and South Australia the following day.

Guests will celebrate Christmas at sea and dock overnight in Sydney for the city's spectacular New Year's revelry.

The season will see *Journey* sail two country-intensive voyages between Australia and New Zealand - 16- and 17-night itineraries which visit 13 ports.

Journey will also cruise a 14-night voyage from Sydney to Fremantle, after which she will depart for Asia on a 16-night journey which includes seven port calls in five different countries, and overnight stays in



Singapore and Ho Chi Minh City.

One of the highlights of Azamara's Australian season will see *Journey* guests treated to an exclusive concert by James Morrison and his band in Adelaide, accompanied by local wines and tapas.

This will be followed by a light show at Adelaide Oval, in one of the most popular annual events on the cruise line's calendar (**CW** 15 Feb).

The season will also see the

company's newest ship *Azamara Onward* will make her debut in Australia when she arrives on her inaugural world cruise.

Onward will arrive in Hobart from New Zealand, and cruise from Eden to Sydney, before embarking on a 21-night voyage to Hong Kong via PNG, Palau, and the Philippines.

She will call at Mooloolaba, Airlie Beach, and Cairns, where she will stay overnight, before leaving local waters. **MS**

Cunard hits the stage

CUNARD Line has teamed up with theatre producer David Pugh to bring the West End to *Queen Anne*.

The exclusive collaboration will see Pugh work with Cunard's creative team to launch two iconic stage shows during *Queen Anne's* maiden season from the UK.

The collaboration will kick off with a uniquely adapted production of Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter*, directed by Emma Rice, which will debut on *Queen Anne's* maiden voyage to Lisbon in the Royal Court Theatre.

Pugh's second *Queen Anne* production is still to be announced, but Cunard is promising neither production has never hit the oceans.

Queen Anne will begin sailing from Southmpton next year (**CW** 20 May 2022).

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AU Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia.

SYDNEY	
<i>Brilliance of the Seas</i>	17 Nov
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	17 Nov
<i>Royal Princess</i>	19 Nov
<i>Majestic Princess</i>	20 Nov
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	20 Nov
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	21 Nov
<i>Coral Princess</i>	22 Nov
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	23 Nov
<i>Brilliance of the Seas</i>	24 Nov

MELBOURNE	
<i>Coral Princess</i>	18 Nov

PORT ADELAIDE	
<i>Coral Geographer</i>	24 Nov

BRISBANE	
<i>Quantum of the Seas</i>	17 Nov
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	18 Nov
<i>Carnival Luminosa</i>	19 Nov
<i>Quantum of the Seas</i>	20 Nov
<i>Coral Princess</i>	24 Nov

CAIRNS	
<i>Coral Discoverer</i>	21 Nov
<i>Silver Muse</i>	22 Nov

TOWNSVILLE	
<i>Silver Muse</i>	23 Nov

BURNIE	
<i>Coral Princess</i>	19 Nov

HOBART	
<i>Royal Princess</i>	17 Nov
<i>Coral Princess</i>	20 Nov
<i>Majestic Princess</i>	22 Nov

DARWIN	
<i>Silver Muse</i>	17 Nov
<i>Viking Orion</i>	23 Nov

Celestyal's new *Discovery*



CELESTYAL Cruises overnight confirmed the acquisition of AIDA Cruises' former *AIDAura*, with the recently retired vessel to sail as *Celestyal Discovery* from Mar.

The ship (render **pictured**), had previously been reported as going to Miray Cruises for its yet-to-be realised "Life at Sea" residential cruise concept (**CW** 30 Jun), but will now replace the existing *Celestyal Olympia*, which effective from today ends its deployment.

"Given strong market and business conditions, we are thrilled to have expedited the renewal of our fleet to welcome *Celestyal Discovery* into the Celestyal family," Chief Executive Officer Chris Theophilides said.

"As a confident challenger brand, our team is excited to continue to make waves across the industry next season, with a refreshed fleet, brand,

network and a renewed sense of direction," he enthused.

With 633 staterooms, 62 of which have balconies, *Discovery* is Celestyal's second acquisition this year, after the announcement the line was taking on Holland America Line's former *Ryndam* (**CW** 24 Feb), which will next year sail as *Celestyal Journey*.

Both ships will undergo multi-million euro refurbishments over the upcoming winter season before commencing their 2024 seasons in Athens.

MEANWHILE Celestyal has also announced the suspension of next month's sailings to Israel due to guest and partner feedback and an increase in customer cancellations.

Full refunds are being offered to impacted guests, who will also receive 25% of the total amount paid toward any future sailing. **BP**

NZ Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in New Zealand.

AUCKLAND	
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	17 Nov
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	20 Nov
<i>Disney Wonder</i>	21 Nov
<i>Seabourn Odyssey</i>	23 Nov
<i>Grand Princess</i>	24 Nov
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	24 Nov

CHRISTCHURCH	
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	18 Nov
<i>Grand Princess</i>	20 Nov
<i>Noordam</i>	21 Nov
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	22 Nov
<i>Royal Princess</i>	24 Nov

WELLINGTON	
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	19 Nov
<i>Grand Princess</i>	21 Nov
<i>Noordam</i>	22 Nov

DUNEDIN	
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	17 Nov
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	17 Nov
<i>National Geo Orion</i>	17 Nov
<i>Grand Princess</i>	19 Nov
<i>Noordam</i>	19 Nov
<i>Heritage Adventurer</i>	22 Nov
<i>Royal Princess</i>	23 Nov
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	24 Nov

FIORDLAND	
<i>Grand Princess</i>	18 Nov
<i>Noordam</i>	18 Nov
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	18 Nov
<i>National Geo Orion</i>	19 Nov
<i>Royal Princess</i>	22 Nov
<i>Heritage Adventurer</i>	24 Nov

NAPIER	
<i>Heritage Adventurer</i>	19 Nov
<i>Grand Princess</i>	22 Nov
<i>Noordam</i>	23 Nov

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A FRED. Olsen Cruise Lines fan recently marked 2,500 nights sailed with the company, achieving over 100 voyages, 15 world cruises, and 30 years travelling with the brand.

Kevin Harrison brought up the milestone on a cruise in the Caribbean, aboard which he also turned 75.

He was treated to a surprise party aboard *Borealis* to mark the occasion, attended by dozens of Fred. Olsen team members, who he describes as "my very good friends".

He also enjoyed dinner with Captain Rommel Pineda, who started his career as a deck boy on board *Black Prince* in 1996, during Harrison's 7th cruise.

Harrison first cruised with Fred. Olsen in 1993, when he was 45.

Another reason Harrison is so popular with the British cruise line - he always books the owner's suite!

RCI opens Caribbean 25/26



ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has opened new Caribbean cruises for 2025-26, sailing from Florida, Texas, and Puerto Rico.

The cruise line's upcoming *Icon of the Seas* (pictured) will sail seven-night eastern and western Caribbean vacations.

Every cruise features a visit to RCI's private island destination in The Bahamas, Perfect Day at CocoCay, while new ports for *Icon* will include Puerto Plata, San Juan, and Labadee, the cruise line's other private destination.

Other highlights will see *Icon* visit Costa Maya, Cozumel, Roatan, and Charlotte Amalie.

Adventures in the western

Caribbean will cruise aboard *Harmony of the Seas*, sailing from Galveston, while *Oasis of the Seas* will sail from Fort Lauderdale, visiting the eastern, western, and southern Caribbean.

Rounding out the season, *Adventure of the Seas* will cruise from Orlando, *Independence of the Seas* from Miami, *Rhapsody of the Seas* from both Tampa and San Juan, and *Grandeur of the Seas* from Tampa.

Destinations include Basseterre, Cozumel, Castries, St. Johns, St. Croix, and more.

Six of the season's seven ships will visit Perfect Day at CocoCay and Labadee. *MS*

Seabourn 2026 WC

SEABOURN Cruise Line has announced its 2026 World Cruise - Ring of Fire: Hidden Gems, a 129-day voyage aboard *Seabourn Sojourn*.

The 2026 World Cruise will uncover the natural treasures, regional flavours, and hidden gems of the 'Ring of Fire', a 40,000-kilometre-long tectonic belt which circumscribes the Pacific Ocean.

The cruise will explore 63 destinations in 14 countries, including Australia, and feature seven overnights and seven extended stays.

Departing Los Angeles on 06 Jan 2026, *Sojourn* will travel approximately 28,000 nautical miles, crossing both the International Date Line and Equator twice.

The voyage will circumnavigate the wild coasts of Australia, explore the lush volcanic islands and atolls of the South Pacific, and weave through the beguiling islands of Japan at the cusp of spring flowers season, before crossing the North Pacific to Glacier Bay National Park.



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