



### It's River Week!

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia has this morning kicked off the second stage of Cruise Month 2023 - River Cruise Week.

There are many ways for travel advisors to maximise their benefit from the initiative, which is being complemented by widespread mainstream media coverage set to drive ongoing consumer demand.

There are Cruise Month webinars, marketing toolkits, special offers, and the opportunity to win prizes for hosting your own events.

More details on **page five**.

## Cruise lines drop Haifa



**THE** outbreak of hostilities near Israel's border with Gaza over the weekend has seen cruise lines rapidly rearrange itineraries to avoid the conflict.

It's understood that Oceania Cruises' *Nautica* and Holland America Line's *Nieuw Statendam* were docked in Haifa (pictured), about 80km from some of the blasts near Tel Aviv, and left the port rapidly after guests returned from shore excursions.

Royal Caribbean is expected to be the most impacted cruise line because its *Rhapsody of the Seas* is currently undertaking a Haifa homeport season, with the company advising guests of the cancellation of sailings scheduled for today and 13 Oct.

*Rhapsody of the Seas* is currently sailing in the Greek isles and it's unclear what her future deployment will be, with impacted guests advised they will receive a full refund including all taxes, fees, gratuities, amenities

and shore excursions.

Other ships forced to cancel upcoming calls in Israel include *Celebrity Apex* which will replace Israel ports with calls in Mkyonos, Rhodes and Santorini.

Royal Caribbean's *Odyssey of the Seas*, which is about half-way through a 13-night cruise out of Rome, will adjust itineraries and instead operate a Bodrum, Turkey and Cyprus itinerary.

Other cruise lines with upcoming calls in Israel are believed to include MSC Cruises, TUI Cruises, Costa Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line, all of whom are expected to alter their planned programs. *BP*

### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news, and full pages from:

- Riviera Travel River Cruises
- CLIA

### Riviera Douro

**RIVIERA** Cruises is today highlighting its seven-night itinerary cruising Portugal and Spain's gorgeous Douro River in 2024 aboard the *MS Porto Miranti* - details of the experience on **page four**.



### Coral unveils Atlas

**CORAL** Expeditions has released its new Expedition Atlas for 2024/25, with the program featuring a wide variety of departures in the line's 40th year of operation.

The Kimberley, Tasmania, WA's Coral Coast and South Australia all feature, along with international explorations in NZ, New Guinea, Japan and the Philippines.

Coral has been conducting roadshows in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne to showcase the program, which also reconnected the company with members of the line's XPLorers Club for the first time in many years - view the program at [coralexpeditions.com](http://coralexpeditions.com).



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On location in  
Doha, Qatar

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Visit Qatar, Qatar Airways and Destination Qatar.

**QATAR** is getting set for its biggest-ever cruise season, with the newly inaugurated Doha Port and its Grand Cruise Terminal, which can handle two 6,000 passenger vessels simultaneously.

The facility is quiet at the moment but set to swing into action next month, with visitors treated to an art gallery, a spectacular aquarium, and extensive customs and immigration facilities.

On arrival guests can enjoy the colourful Mina district - see [cruiseweekly.com.au/videos](http://cruiseweekly.com.au/videos).

## Azamara's quadruple treat



**AZAMARA'S** entire fleet had the chance to come together last week in Koper, Slovenia, as passengers on board *Azamara Journey*, *Azamara Quest*, *Azamara Pursuit* and *Azamara Onward* were invited to partake in the city's Gourmet Festival.

Customers were given free tickets to experience the local cuisine, wines and entertainment at the festival, while Vice Mayor Mateja Hrvatin Kozlovic presented the four captions with a plaque to commemorate

the occasion, which marked the second time the four ships have come together.

"It's such a unique moment to have our four ships meet once again and host all of our guests at a specially curated event where they can experience local gastronomy while meeting new people from this wonderful country," Head of Itinerary Planning Mike Pawlus said.

**Pictured:** Officers and crews across the Azamara fleet had the opportunity to catch up. *JM*

## VV names new COO

**VIRGIN** Voyages has announced Florida-based Michelle Bentubo as its first Chief Operating Officer amid its global expansion plan.

She has more than three decades of travel experience under her belt, including seven years at Virgin Voyages in senior level roles, most recently as SVP of Service Excellence, Travel Operations, Crew Training and Experience.

Bentubo is tasked with leading the brand's end-to-end operations, including service delivery, port functionality, marine and technology, customer service, digital platforms, change management and business transformation.

VV CEO Nirmal Saverimuttu said she "couldn't think of a better leadership mentor for all our crew, especially our future women leaders".

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**OFTEN** awards are given out for doing things faster than anyone else - but it's just the opposite case in the recently awarded 'Protecting Blue Whales & Blue Skies' program off the coast of California.

The voluntary program saw 23 global cargo shipping companies participating, all of whom agreed to transit at 10 knots or less while in the San Francisco Bay and Southern California region at certain times of the year.

The cargo operators received 'Sapphire', 'Gold' and 'Blue Sky' awards based on the distance travelled by their ships through designated Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) zones.

The eight winners of the top Sapphire level included MSC, Swire Shipping, COSCO, NYK, OOCL, CSL Group and Wallenius Wilhelmsen, with the initiative aiming to reduce whale strikes.

## Titanic to Victoria



**THE** tragedy of the 1912 sinking of the *Titanic* will be showcased in Victoria's Melbourne Museum in a special exhibition running from 16 Dec through to 14 Apr.

*TITANIC: The Artefact Exhibition* will come to Australia after a sold-out season in Paris, with Vic Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, Steve Dimopoulos, saying it will "attract visitors from near and far to the heart of Melbourne".

Items on show will include meticulously recreated ship interiors (**pictured**), with visitors to receive a boarding pass allowing them to "step on board" to connect with victims through personal stories and possessions of passengers and crew.

The exhibition will also feature a touchable piece of the *Titanic* hull alongside other authentic items salvaged from the sea floor.

## Variety sales chief

**VARIETY** Cruises has named Nick Stasinopoulos as its new Global Business Development Manager, filling the role held by Aussie Jarrod Zurvas until his return to Australia earlier this year to lead sales for Coral Expeditions (**CW** 08 May).

Stasinopoulos will "focus on increasing Variety Cruises' brand recognition on a global scale and expanding its int'l business activities, including in the Asia-Pacific region."

## NCL spa tweaks

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line has advised passengers it is recategorising the Spa Club Balcony, Spa Balcony and Spa Suites in the Haven by Norwegian staterooms, which will henceforth be designated as traditional Club Balcony, Balcony and Suites.

These accommodations previously offered additional access to the onboard Thermal Suite in NCL's Mandara Spa, with additional availability for the Thermal Suite to now be offered to all cabins shipwide.

## Costa Cruises plots Malaysian season

**COSTA** Cruises' *Costa Serena* will operate a homeport season from Malaysia's Port Klang, in a program which will be exclusively sold through Malaysian retail travel agency group Hwajing Travel & Tours.

The move is part of a "pilot charter service" in partnership with Hwajing, with the Jan cruises being conducted with the support of Malaysia's Ministry of Transport, which welcomed the opportunity for more ships to operate from Port Klang.

The Malaysian itineraries include a two-night roundtrip to Penang, as well as two subsequent three-night voyages also taking in Phuket.

Guests will enjoy Costa's Sea Venice Carnival experience during their voyages, with the Malaysian deployment following *Serena's* upcoming maiden season in India which includes a series of domestic itineraries departing from Mumbai.

Twenty-three Indian cruises taking in Goa, Cochin and more will be operated in partnership with Lotus Aero Enterprises, Costa's Indian GSA.

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Porto, Portugal



## Highlights of the Douro Valley & Salamanca

7-nights onboard *MS Porto Mirante*



Riviera Travel River Cruises recently unveiled their newest ship joining their illustrious fleet - *MS Porto Mirante*! Paired with a splendid itinerary sailing across the Douro river in Portugal and Spain in 2024, *MS Porto Mirante* will undoubtedly delight any client looking to sail across this increasingly popular region.

Discover Portugal's captivating beauty on an 8-day Douro River cruise in 2024 aboard the luxurious *MS Porto Mirante*. Unwind in a boutique-hotel atmosphere with a splash pool and daily cocktails of the day. Enjoy a complimentary Superior drinks package, guided excursions, and five-star comfort. An unforgettable journey for wine, history, and architecture enthusiasts.

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