



## Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a full page from APT Travel Group.

## Aurora runs aground

**AURORA** Expeditions' *Ocean Explorer*, which the cruise line has been operating temporarily in place of *Greg Mortimer* (CW 26 Jul), has run aground in Greenland.

All pax and the crew are safe, and there is no immediate danger to the environment, *Ocean Explorer*, and those aboard her, Aurora said.

The cruise line added it has secured the support of other vessels in the vicinity, should their assistance become necessary, with Aurora's top priority ensuring *Ocean Explorer's* recovery without compromising safety.

# Trade key to Captain Cook's new era

## EXCLUSIVE

**CAPTAIN** Cook Cruises Fiji is embarking on a new era of small ship luxury expedition cruising in Fiji with the arrival of *Caledonian Sky* (pictured), with the company seeing the travel trade as key to the brand's evolution.

Speaking to **Cruise Weekly** yesterday, Executive Chair Allison Howarth West explained the travel trade is key in sharing Captain Cook's unique product with the wider community.

"The trade is a critical part of people's ability to have good travel experiences," Howarth West enthused.

"A travel advisor is the difference between a good trip and a bad trip, both in terms of choices and in terms of management.

"We rely on the trade to share our message out into the greater community.



"If we can help travel agents to understand what we do, give them great deals, and of course to experience and have a firsthand knowledge of our products, then that enables them to sell our experiences and have people have great experiences themselves when they go."

*Caledonian Sky* will replace Captain Cook's current vessel, *Reef Endeavour*, as exclusively

revealed at this year's Fijian Tourism Expo, with the ship to explore Fijian waters from 11 Nov (CW 08 May).

The ship will provide guests with an elevated travel experience, bringing a new level of luxury to Fijian expedition cruising, while also taking travellers to some of the most remote and beautiful locations in Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa. AP

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## APT says *Serenity* now on the Mekong

### EXCLUSIVE

**THE** first sailing of APT's *Mekong Serenity* has set out, marking the maiden voyage of the newest ship on the Mekong.

The 44-suite *Serenity* was host to a flurry of excitement, as the first guests, including eight of APT's top travel advisors, stepped aboard the ship for the 11-day 'Spiritual Cambodia and The Mekong' cruise.

Celebrations included a lion and dragon dance - rituals commonly performed to bring good luck and fortune - along with a special welcome happy hour hosted by Chief Executive Officer David Cox.

*Serenity* will embark on all APT Vietnam & Cambodia itineraries, including the currently sailing 11-day flagship cruise, which includes an in-depth exploration of Siem Reap and the ancient city of Angkor, including a sunrise viewing and tour of Angkor Wat.



Guests can also join the brand-new *Serenity* for an eight-day cruise featuring lesser-known riverside gems including Koh Pen, Angkor Ban, and Oknha Tey, which provide an insight into rural Cambodia, where a special buddhist blessing ceremony in Oudong is among the highlights.

"What an auspicious occasion to be on board this beautiful ship

as she sets sail on her maiden voyage," Cox said.

"*Serenity* is the first Asian ship we have built from scratch to our own specifications, and we couldn't be happier.

"We can't wait to showcase our brand-new ship to our future travellers and we are sure they will be just as pleased as we are with the contemporary Asian-fusion sophisticated design."

**Pictured** enjoying the inaugural cruise are Tallys Herivel (HelloWorld Travel Kotara); Kai Floto (Southlands Travel & Cruise); Abbey Alvin (Coopers Travel); Rosy Glisson (Phil Hoffmann Travel Semaphore); APT's David Cox and Barbara Baron; Karina Isaza (Travel by Wyndham); Kieran MacKenzie (Cruise Travel Centre Green Hills); Brooke Weber (Flight Centre Castle Towers); and Craig Pearce (Figtree Travel). *MS*

## She sells Seychelles

**EMERALD** Cruises has announced its luxury yacht sailings through to Apr 2026, featuring new voyages in the Seychelles, and updated itineraries in Europe and Central America.

The line has released a "Cruise Calendar", previewing voyages aboard *Emerald Sakara* and *Emerald Azzurra*, and is available to view [HERE](#).

The Calendar is being released ahead of the full brochure, which will be out later this year, to allow guests to plan ahead.

Drinks packages are also now included on all sailings from Apr 2024, which includes unlimited access to a range of cocktails, mocktails, premium wines, Prosecco & Champagne by the glass, bottled beer, soft drinks, and a mini-bar selection in each suite.

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## Celestyal on a big fat Greek Journey

CELESTYAL Cruises last night invited around 50 trade partners to a viewing of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3* in Sydney.

Guests assembled at Palace Central Cinemas to take a trip back to Greece with the Portokalos family, as they travel to the Balkan country to locate their deceased patriarch's childhood friends.

The event also served as a celebration of the impending arrival of *Celestyal Journey* (CW 28 Jun), which is due to set sail on her maiden voyage with the cruise line later this month.

Regional Manager Asia Pacific Stewart Williams (pictured with Business Development Manager Mary Williams and Vice President Business Development Janet Parton), told guests *Journey* will resonate strongly with the Australian market, with the ship to feature far more suites than



previous Celestyal vessels.

"The Australian market in particular loves suites...*Journey* has 120 Junior suites and 28 Grand suites, and for the first time ever, we have the Stargazer suite - this is our penthouse," he remarked.

"For our market, that's a particularly good thing, because

we get a lot of demand, and historically, the suites are the ones that sell first."

Celestyal also recently launched a new travel advisor portal in time for the embarkment of *Journey*, which features training, downloadable PDF brochures, images, special offers, and more (CW 03 May). MS

## Viking adds to Nile

VIKING has announced additional Nile sailings through 2026, with bookings open now for the inaugural season of the cruise line's sixth ship on the river, *Viking Sobek*.

Next year's Egypt season is nearly sold out, and 2025 is selling well, with this strong demand leading to Viking opening *Sobek's* inaugural 2025 season early.

Departure dates for 2026 are also open across the entire Nile fleet.

"We are very pleased with the continued interest in Egypt and are proud to be the only Western company to build, own and operate ships on the Nile," Chair Torstein Hagen said in a statement.

"With the addition of *Viking Sobek*, we will offer the largest and most elegant ships on the Nile," he added.

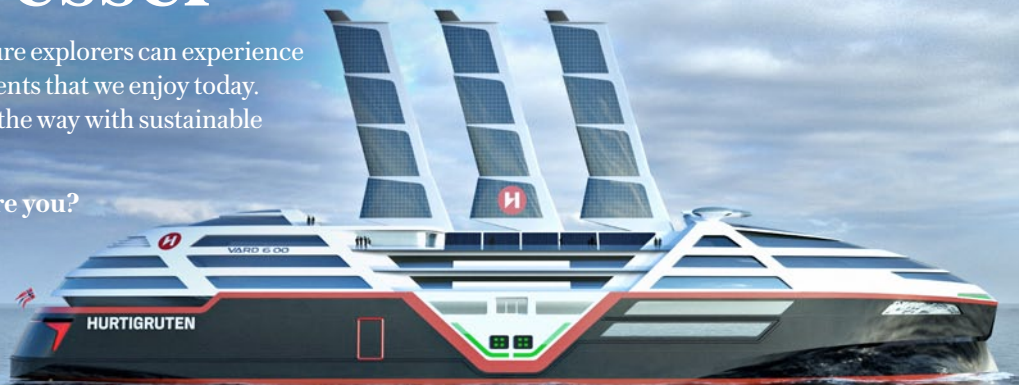


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**ONE** may think a US\$100,000 suite might prove somewhat difficult to move, but as Disney Cruise Line has proved time and again, anything with Mickey Mouse ears on it sells quickly.

Although the cruise line's next ship *Disney Treasure* doesn't sail for more than a year, the company has already found someone willing to pay the six-figure asking price for her most expensive suite.

Reservations for *Treasure's* first voyages were made available earlier today for members of the Pearl Castaway Club, Disney's most loyal voyagers.

Unfortunately for other members of the Castaway Club, and the general public, the Tower suite for *Treasure's* maiden voyage has already been booked.

The two-storey Tower suite, which is capable of sleeping eight guests, is located inside one of *Treasure's* funnels, and there's only one of them on the ship.

Boasting its own private elevator and glimpses to the open horizon through its two-storey window, the Towers suite also features a library, two living areas, a grand spiral staircase, a dining salon, a pantry, a wet bar, and two main bedrooms, both with a walk-in closet.

## Viking regional roadshow

**VIKING** has announced 16 complimentary regional Viking Explorer Sessions around Australia, which are now open for registration.

The sessions span five states, commencing from 12 Oct in Ballina.

There are other sessions scheduled for New South Wales (Central Coast, Port Macquarie, Wollongong, Gymea, and Tamworth), as well as Victoria (Ballarat, Mornington, Gippsland, Geelong), Queensland (Noosa, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Cairns), Western Australia (Bunbury), and Tasmania (Hobart).

Designed for travellers who may be new to cruising, new to Viking, or seasoned travellers, the 75-minute sessions will run twice daily at 10:30am and 6:30pm, with complimentary morning tea or drinks and canapes to be served before each session.

All travellers will receive an exclusive offer, encouraging them to secure their booking with their travel advisor within 14 days of the event.

The cruise line is also offering

agents an incentive to be part of the regional Explorer Sessions, with the chance to earn 800 Rewards by Viking points for every traveller they bring along to the session.

If they end up booking with the travel advisor using the exclusive offer, the agent will receive an additional \$100 in Rewards by Viking points on top of their commission.

"Our metropolitan information sessions were a huge success, and the feedback we received from attendees and agents was overwhelmingly positive," MD Michelle Black said.

"Thanks to the enthusiastic response and requests from our regional partners and guests, we are delighted to be taking popular Viking Explorer Sessions to 16 new regional locations across Australia in the coming months."

Black said the roadshows are an excellent opportunity for savvy agents to convert new bookings and earn extra commission.

Registration is essential as availability is limited - [CLICK HERE](#) for more. *MS*



### Global outlook

**WHAT** an exciting time it has been connecting with industry members throughout the world and discussing the rise of the cruise industry again.

First was my trip to the NZCA conference in mid-Aug, where we discussed the importance of working as one region.

We continued those discussions at ACA's highly successful 25th anniversary conference in Wollongong where we welcomed representatives from Fiji and PNG.

Hot on the heels of our conference, I headed to Hamburg to participate in Seatrade Europe.

It was great to be able to share the news of the imminent lifting of all covid health protocols in Australia, discuss the outcomes of conference discussions on infrastructure developments including greater access for Sydney and also talk about some of our new destination members.

While in Germany, I also represented ACA at CLIA's ports and destinations event and from there went on to meet the Hapag Lloyd team in their offices to discuss future itinerary options for their world cruises that regularly call to Australia.

I also had formal meetings with Carnival Corporation and Viking along with many informal conversations with other cruise lines and destinations.

It was also great to catch up with our friends from Cruise Britain and Cruise Europe.

Our cruise network is definitely global and more connected than ever before.

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From all the team at APT Travel Group

