



Cruise Weekly today

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

'Coolcations' hot with MSC



SWITCHING warm destinations for cooler ones with more nature and taking mid-career breaks for extended travel are on the rise in 2025, MSC Cruises has revealed.

Television, films, books, and social media are also continuing to influence destination decisions for MSC's guests next year, the line has revealed, as part of a number of travel trends driving holiday commitments.

'Coolcations' are rising in popularity as travellers seek out milder climates in place of traditional summer hotspots.

MSC has been adding cruises in Northern Europe and the new destination of Alaska (**CW** 29 Oct) to respond to this trend.

There is also a heightened eagerness for the rise of the 'radical sabbatical', as workplaces become increasingly more flexible with remote work, and more companies offer sabbaticals as an employment perk.

Another emerging travel trend

for next year is 'set-jetting', where travellers are inspired to visit a destination because of a book, movie, or television series.

MSC visits a number of the world's iconic cultural and cinematic landscapes on its cruises, including Dubrovnik, made infamous by *Game of Thrones*; Dubai, the set of a number of *Mission Impossible* films; and New York City, for *Sex and the City* fans.

There has also been a noticeable shift in preferences toward all-inclusive holidays, with MSC seeing travellers increasingly willing to spend more for an elevated experience that balances simplicity with touches of exclusivity.

MSC has been redefining its Yacht Club product to meet this trend, recently rolling out exclusive shore excursions for guests travelling in its luxury 'ship-within-a-ship' concept (**CW** 11 Jul). *MS*

Ama new Aus rep

AMAWATERWAYS is joining as the newest partner for Australian small ship representation specialist, Cruise Traveller.

The experiences offered by AmaWaterways are exactly what Cruise Traveller specialises in, the Australian company's Managing Director Joe O'Sullivan said.

"We look forward to bringing to the Australian market a constant stream of packages and product with AmaWaterways that showcase amazing places and offer amazing value."

Marking the new affiliation, cruisers can save \$3,196 per couple on an AmaWaterways French river voyage, and stay three nights for free in Paris, when booking by 30 Dec.

Victorian era ending

HURTIGRUTEN Group Marketing Director Joel Victoria is set to depart his role, **CW** understands.

The company confirmed the Marketing Director role is under review, as part of the separating of Hurtigruten and HX (**CW** 29 Nov).

"The role - which was previously shared across both brands - is under consultation to determine the best alignment with local market needs," the company said.

Victoria began his first of two pandemic-separated stints at Hurtigruten Group in 2019, before which he served in marketing roles with Captain's Choice, AAT Kings, and Abercrombie & Kent.

Also departing Hurtigruten Group will be PR & Communications Manager Christina Koullas, who is finishing in her role today.

Hurtigruten and HX earlier this month announced a new leadership structure in APAC (**CW** 05 Dec).

Damian Perry will now guide a dedicated Hurtigruten Norway APAC team, while HX's Australian team will be guided by the United States-based Steve Smotrys.

Holliday is over

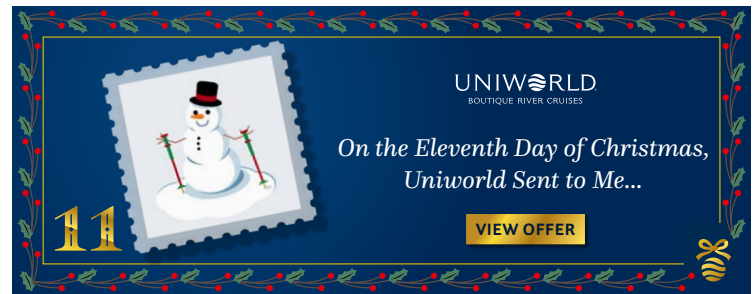
PHILIP Holliday will leave his post as Port Authority of New South Wales' Chief Executive Officer & Director at the end of next week.

Holliday has been with the Port Authority for just over 10 years, before which he served in a similar capacity in Southampton with the Associated British Ports.

He is also the Chairman of the Australian Cruise Association and a Director of Ports Australia.

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Celebrity 2026/27

CELEBRITY Cruises has opened bookings for its 2026/27 season, which will see *Celebrity Solstice* return to Australia during her 110-night Grand Voyage following her refurbishment in 2026.

Departing 13 Sep 2026, the Grand Voyage will span 54 destinations across 15 countries from Canada to Hong Kong, with Aussie travellers able to join from Sydney or Auckland.

The Grand Voyage can be booked as an entire journey, or as an international or local segment, including a 10-night 'Australia Wine & Tasmania' itinerary and a 13-night 'Best of New Zealand' leg.

Aussies can also now book *Celebrity's* winter 2027 sailings in Asia, including open-jaw cruises between Seoul, South Korea and Tokyo, Japan, and unique voyages during Gion Festival, Golden Week, and the Nebuta festival.

The Asia 2027 season will also see *Celebrity Millennium* home port out of the brand-new centrally located Tokyo terminal for the first time, as well as return to Taiwan's port city of Hualien for the first time since 2018.

In Southeast Asia, itineraries on *Celebrity Solstice* will take guests off the beaten path to explore the region's rich history, cultures and cuisines.

HLO's cruise stars set sail



HELLOWORLD'S 2024 Cruise Star top-performing travel advisors rediscovered their inner child recently on a whimsical four-night adventure on Disney Cruise Line's *Disney Wonder*.

The ship, which was kitted out in full Christmas regalia, was hosted by Cruiseso Sales Manager Greg Wilson, with advisors able to fully immerse themselves in the Christmas magic as only Disney can do it.

"Our Cruise Star agents had a terrific time on the sailing," said Wilson, **pictured** above inset with Cinderella herself.

"It was so great to see such big smiles and agents being able to meet their favourite Disney characters," he added.

Sailing return from Melbourne to Hobart, the 2024 Cruise Stars

reward famil saw agents treated to a glittering fireworks display on departure from Tasmania as part of the 'Pirates in the Caribbean' themed deck party.

This theme continued with a swashbuckling dinner experience, while the voyage also featured a private mixology class, brunch in the speciality restaurant Palo, and plenty of photo opportunities with iconic Disney characters including Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck (**pictured** above).

Helloworld Group General Manager Cruise Steve Brady extended his thanks to Disney for its support of the 2024 Cruise Stars reward trip.

"The collaboration with Disney Cruise Line provides a unique opportunity for top-performing agents to experience the magic of Disney at sea, sailing from an Australian port that we know is incredibly popular with Australian cruise travellers," Brady said. *ML*

Atlas keeping CEO

PRESIDENT and Chief Executive of Atlas Ocean Voyages, James Rodriguez, will no longer be stepping down from his roles, the yacht expedition brand has revealed.

Rodriguez was expected to part ways with the business, which is owned by Mystic Invest Holding, by the end of this year - an announcement by the cruise line made just a few months back (*CW* 04 Oct).

Mystic Invest Holding Chairman Mario Ferreira said Rodriguez, who has led Atlas Ocean Voyages for the past two years, has been "instrumental" in the brand's success, and "is the proven leader to guide its future".

Ferreira pointed out that Atlas is well placed to capitalise on the "explosive" growth of the expedition cruise market going into next year, with 70% of its inventory already sold for next year.

During Rodriguez's tenure, the brand has strengthened its relationships with travel advisors and consumers and boosted its international presence, particularly in Australia and the UK.

"Leading this exceptional group of professionals has been one of the most rewarding chapters of my career, and I look forward to driving our continued success together," Rodriguez enthused.

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PORThOLE

THERE may soon be plenty of renditions of *The Little Mermaid's* classic *Under the Sea* tune around the Australian National Maritime Museum.

The attraction in Sydney's Darling Harbour will soon become the temporary owner of *Deepsea Challenger*, a submersible which took movie director and self-confessed Titanic buff James Cameron to the deepest part of the ocean back in 2012.

The submersible will be the centrepiece of the museum's 'Ultimate Depth: A Journey to the Bottom of the Sea' exhibit, which opens on 19 Dec.

There's an extra local element to the headline attraction, with *Deepsea Challenger* originally designed, tested and engineered in Sydney by local cave diver Ron Allum, who will be on hand to open the exhibit.

Visitors to the attraction will be able to go on a discovery to the deepest, darkest parts of the ocean, with many incredible objects on show as the five zones of the deep sea are explored - albeit with a lack of singing sea creatures.



A Royal beach-day paradise



ROYAL Caribbean has offered a first glimpse at its debut Royal Beach Club, due to open in Dec 2025 on Paradise Island in the Bahamas (*CW* 23 Apr).

Spanning 17 acres on the western end of Paradise Island, the all-new Royal Beach Club will offer the "ultimate all-inclusive beach day" experience to vacationers, as well as locals, complete with pristine beaches, pools, and what is said to be the world's largest swim-up bar.

With the purchase of a day pass, guests will enjoy access to all amenities, with everything included from the first water taxi ride to food and drinks.

Royal Beach Club Paradise Island will be divided into three zones, including Family Beach, designed for families of all ages and featuring a shallow pool, beach games, and the "ultimate family cabana" with a slide, whirlpool, frozen drink machine, and more.

The 'Chill Beach Zone' is perfect for those seeking all-day relaxation and to immerse themselves in Caribbean culture, while at Party Cove, adventurers

can enjoy a live DJ, swim-up bar, and a VIP space with personal poolside service.

"The Royal Beach Club Collection is designed for every type of family and vacationer to get everything they want out of their ideal beach day - no matter the vibe they're looking for," President & Chief Executive Officer Michael Bayley said.

"With the first-of-its-kind Royal Beach Club Paradise Island, we continue to super-serve our guests with a tailored experience at one of our most highly visited destinations, building on nearly five decades of collaboration with the community and government of The Bahamas."

Starting next year, Royal Caribbean guests can visit Royal Beach Club Paradise Island with a combination of voyages from six destinations, including Miami, Fort Lauderdale and Port Canaveral, Florida; Cape Liberty, New Jersey; Galveston, Texas, and Baltimore, Maryland.

The cruise line will reveal more details about the new destination in the coming months. *JM*

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	14 Dec
<i>Crown Princess</i>	14 Dec
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	15 Dec
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	16 Dec
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	17 Dec
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	18 Dec
<i>Diamond Princess</i>	18 Dec
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	18 Dec
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	19 Dec
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	19 Dec

MELBOURNE	
<i>Crown Princess</i>	16 Dec
<i>Westerdam</i>	17 Dec
<i>Regatta</i>	18 Dec
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	19 Dec

NEWCASTLE	
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	18 Dec

BRISBANE	
<i>Quantum of the Seas</i>	13 Dec
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	14 Dec
<i>Carnival Luminosa</i>	15 Dec
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	17 Dec
<i>Norwegian Sun</i>	18 Dec
<i>Carnival Luminosa</i>	19 Dec

CAIRNS	
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	13 Dec
<i>Coral Discoverer</i>	15 Dec
<i>Viking Venus</i>	16 Dec

FREMANTLE	
<i>Azamara Pursuit</i>	18 Dec

ADELAIDE	
<i>Westerdam</i>	13 Dec
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	15 Dec
<i>Le Jacques Cartier</i>	17 Dec
<i>Le Jacques Cartier</i>	18 Dec
<i>Crown Princess</i>	19 Dec

HOBART	
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	14 Dec
<i>Diamond Princess</i>	15 Dec
<i>Silver Muse</i>	16 Dec
<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	17 Dec
<i>Westerdam</i>	19 Dec