



### Cruise Weekly today

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

### Norwegian + ABB

**SWEDISH** multinational ABB and Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings have expanded their long-term partnership to reduce the emissions of Norwegian Cruise Line's fleet.

The collaboration includes a comprehensive 10-year service agreement for Azipod propulsion, modernisation of the propulsion control system of 11 of Norwegian's vessels, and installation of shore connection technology on board four ships.

The agreement covers a number of Norwegian's existing ships, and a further four vessels due for delivery from 2025 to 2028.

## TM expecting big year for cruise

IT'S going to be another huge year for cruise sales thanks to growth in the number of new ships visiting Australian waters, if predictions from TravelManagers (TM) Cruise Product Manager Lia Malone prove to be correct.

The travel agency network experienced a 46% increase in average consumer holiday spend last year versus 2019, TravelManagers revealed.

The network believes this upward trend will continue, with Malone pointing out TravelManagers' "PTMs" (personal travel managers) are some of the most experienced and high-achieving cruise consultants in Australia.

"Three PTMs have been named as finalists for the CLIA Home-Based/Mobile Agent of the year, including Rose Febo, who is also a finalist for Cruise Month Promotion of the Year, and



"Agency/Agent Cruise Promotion of the Year," she said.

"PTMs Tanya Barker and Jo Patton were recognised as top sellers for Virgin Voyages and were rewarded with an opportunity to meet with Richard Branson (pictured) prior to Resilient Lady's inaugural cruise from Melbourne," Malone added. TravelManagers is entering 2024

with a sense of high expectation, with the company eager to build on 2023's achievements.

Chief Operating Officer Grant Campbell said TravelManagers has tracked its growth across a variety of measurables, which include 68% in average monthly sales compared with 2019, and a similar level of improvement in average margins. MS

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## RCG Barca terminal

**ROYAL** Caribbean Group (RCG) is reportedly set to build a new cruise terminal in Barcelona, according to sailor blog *Crew Center*.

RCG emerged as the sole bidder for the future 'Terminal G', it has been reported, just a few months after Barcelona authorities imposed new restrictions on cruising (*CW* 10 Oct).

Norwegian Cruise Line, Viking, and Virgin Voyages all initially challenged the bidding process, *Crew Center* reported, before RCG emerged as the sole bidder.

RCG was unavailable for comment before *Cruise Weekly's* deadline.

# Quark eyes advisors in sales tweak

EXCLUSIVE

**THE** sales strategy for Quark Expeditions will "change slightly" under the new local leadership of Tenille Hunt (*CW* 08 Jan), with added resources to be focused specifically on trade marketing.

Speaking with *CW* this week, Hunt said Quark is in the process of adapting to a higher-performance sales culture, which will also include a new NSW BDM joining the team soon.

"Ultimately, we want Quark Expeditions to be the leading brand that instantly comes to mind as soon as travel advisors think of the polar regions," Hunt explained, adding that the business had previously been doing a "pretty good job of this" while the recently departed Robert Halfpenny (*CW* 17 Nov 2023) was at the helm.

The broader sales objectives for the year include ensuring its three ships continue to be close to full capacity - which now includes *Ocean Explorer*, in a move unveiled to the public late last month (*CW* 23 Jan).

According to Hunt, sales for the new ship are "off to a good start", with solid booking traction also noted across the wider Antarctica 2025/26 season, which includes a hyped return to Snow Hill.

"Snow Hill is home of the



legendary - and seldom seen - colony of 8,000 Emperor penguins, and our team at Quark has a long-standing history of success at Snow Hill," Hunt said.

"In 2004, we were the first to confirm the existence of the 8,000-strong Emperor penguin colony and our team has landed at Snow Hill more times than any other expedition company."

Emerging technologies will also play a key role in ensuring travel agents have a top notch sales experience with Quark, with Hunt confirming the introduction of AI-driven 'Parker the Polar Bear' last year (*CW* 29 Aug 2023) has already made a strong contribution to sales.

"[Parker] is the industry's first real-time, AI-driven virtual polar resource...and is designed to help travel advisors increase their polar expertise and generate more sales...and it has been

an exciting development for us and for our community of travel advisors for a number of reasons," Hunt said.

"The portal is a veritable one-stop shop, providing travel advisors with all the tools, resources and support necessary to help them fulfil their clients' travel goals.

"Travel advisors can easily and quickly access training resources, marketing materials, advisor incentives, our latest news, expedition brochures and expert tips on how to sell Quark Expeditions' portfolio of innovative polar itineraries."

When asked what makes Quark stand out from other polar expedition cruise lines on the market, Hunt said the cruise line steps foot where few ever will, it has a one of the most diverse fleets on offer, and the most experienced team in Australia. AB



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## Freeman at last

**NATALIE** Freeman has shared she is starting a new position as National Business Development Manager for Murray River Paddlesteamers.

Freeman has served in a number of similar positions in the past few years, including with Genting Hong Kong brands Crystal Cruises and Dream Cruises.

She most recently enjoyed a nine-month career break, before which she worked for Pan Pacific Hotels Group.



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**A SPECIAL** pair of *Carnival Jubilee* cowboy boots are going on auction to benefit American military families.

The boots, handmade by Houston's Parker Boot Company, will benefit Carnival charitable partner Operation Homefront, which provides services to military families.

They are the same as the pair President Christine Duffy wore while welcoming *Jubilee's* first guests on board in Texas, where the ship is home ported.

The boots will soon be on display on board *Jubilee* as one of her many nods to her Galveston home port.

The auctioned pair will be commissioned by Carnival for the winning bidder, an exercise which would typically cost about US\$8,000.

However 100% of the donations will go to Operation Homefront, and if the winning bid exceeds US\$10,000, Carnival will add a seven-day cruise in a balcony stateroom on board *Jubilee*.

"These cowboy boots are an ultimate piece of Carnival regalia, and such a fun way to celebrate the arrival of our new *Carnival Jubilee*," Duffy said.



## Solis power for Seabourn



**SEABOURN** Cruise Line has opened its new fine dining experience 'Solis' (pictured) on *Seabourn Quest*.

The restaurant will be implemented across *Seabourn Ovation*, *Seabourn Encore*, and *Seabourn Sojourn* by the end of the year.

It celebrates Mediterranean cuisine and is inspired by the places visited by Seabourn's ultra-luxury ships.

Solis' highlights include "whimsical cocktails, vibrant plating, and flavour combinations that are both familiar and elevated", all served within a dining space designed to be reminiscent of the afterglow of the sun.

Menus include colourful dishes inspired by the Mediterranean coastlines, Greece, and more, including dishes and specials which will change daily based on the ingredients found during the chefs' visits to local markets on days at port.

There will also be an assortment of vegetarian and vegan options.

Solis will offer a refined and vintage-inspired cocktail menu, featuring classics such as the Americano and the bellini to the always-popular negroni.

"There's no better way to start a new year than by unveiling a new fine dining experience, and the debut of Solis is a milestone that guests of *Seabourn Quest* are going to enjoy and remember," President Natalya Leahy said.

"Every dish and drink at Solis have been carefully created to reflect the inspirations from the places we visit, while the design and ambiance of the dining room set the perfect Mediterranean atmosphere combined with Seabourn style." *MS*

**Pictured** cutting the ribbon on Solis are Captain Joris Poriau, Master Chef Tony Egger, Seabourn Corporate Chef Franck Salein, and Senior Director Food, Beverage and Housekeeping Daniel Putzhammer.

## Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	
<i>Brilliance of the Seas</i>	02 Feb
<i>Azamara Journey</i>	02 Feb
<i>Resilient Lady</i>	03 Feb
<i>Disney Wonder</i>	03 Feb
<i>Celebrity Edge</i>	04 Feb
MELBOURNE	
<i>Viking Orion</i>	02 Feb
<i>Disney Wonder</i>	02 Feb
<i>Vasco Da Gama</i>	03 Feb
<i>Seabourn Odyssey</i>	03 Feb
BRISBANE	
<i>Celebrity Edge</i>	02 Feb
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	03 Feb
<i>Carnival Luminosa</i>	04 Feb
CAIRNS	
<i>Volendam</i>	02 Feb
AIRLIE BEACH	
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	02 Feb
<i>Majestic Princess</i>	03 Feb
BURNIE	
<i>Coral Princess</i>	02 Feb
HOBART	
<i>Viking Orion</i>	04 Feb
DARWIN	
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	28 Jan
AUCKLAND	
<i>Le Laperouse</i>	02 Feb
<i>Viking Neptune</i>	02 Feb
<i>Regatta</i>	03 Feb
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	04 Feb
CHRISTCHURCH	
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	02 Feb
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	04 Feb
<i>Le Commandant Charcot</i>	04 Feb
WELLINGTON	
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	03 Feb
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	03 Feb
<i>Viking Sky</i>	04 Feb