



### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from **Viking**.

### Back exploring again

**VIKING'S** Explorer Sessions are back, bigger and better than ever, helping travel advisors boost their sales and earn more this quarter.

There are sessions tailored to cruises no matter where they are going, with 12 unique sessions in each city.

Each session will provide passengers with all the information and inspiration they need to plan and book their next cruise.

Viking will also spoil attendees with refreshments, as well as exclusive offers they can redeem when they book - more on **page 5**.

## LTC to "dominate" luxury cruise

**THE** Luxury Travel Collection (LTC) looks forward to "dominating" the luxury cruise segment through exclusive offers available in Cruises de Luxe, the group revealed at its Luxury Product Showcase on the Gold Coast this weekend.

Cruises de Luxe is one of seven sectors of the brand's new Galeries de Luxe luxury department store (**TD 23 Feb**), and will allow LTC consultants to give their clients the ultimate luxury experience by booking them on signature itineraries with exclusive extras.

LTC Director of Brand and Marketing Anna Burgdorf explained "Cruises de Luxe is a curated collection of luxury cruise line partners, selected for personalised on board services and inclusions, but there's always that little bit extra when they book with one of the Luxury



Travel Collection brands."

"That might be a personal invitation from the captain to come and meet with the officers, have a drink standing on the bridge and looking at the very best view of the gorgeous vista, a view that nobody else can have access to," she explained.

LTC already has a significant number of luxury cruise lines taking part in Cruises de Luxe, but shared that discernment is key when they consider partnerships.

"What is important for us is to

have the right mix [of product], and make sure that we're considering what additional value we can bring to the luxury client," Burgdorf told **Cruise Weekly**.

"With the growth and popularity of luxury cruising, and the number of new ships coming onto the market, we look forward to dominating in the luxury cruise segment," she shared. **AP**

**Pictured:** The LTC leadership team with Ponant's Deb Corbett and Julie Rogers at the Ponant Polar Gala this weekend.

  
**VIKING**

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## Viking confirms IPO

**VIKING** has confirmed its confidential submission of a draft registration statement for a proposed initial public offering in the United States (*CW* 19 Feb).

The number of shares to be offered and the price range for the proposed offering have not yet been determined, the cruise line said.

The IPO is expected to occur after the US' Securities & Exchanges Commission completes its review process, and is subject to market and other conditions.

## Pandaw's new spa

**PANDAW** has announced the launch of The Pandaw Spa, a luxurious upgrade to its existing spa services on the lower Mekong.

The Pandaw Spa will be in line with the company's unique style and ship design, and will utilise locally sourced materials and products.

Pandaw's expertly trained local therapists will offer a wide range of Asian and international treatments including massages and facials, allowing passengers to unwind after the day's excursions.

The new look Pandaw Spa will launch in Sep aboard all lower Mekong ships with pre-booking and payment also available for spa services via [pandaw.com](http://pandaw.com).

## A-ROSA boosts excursions

**A-ROSA** River Cruises has boosted its excursion program for this year with more than 50 new options in all five of its regions.

The cruise line now offers more than 650 excursions, adding new city sightseeing tours and visits to landmarks, to more unique experiences such as personally prepared lunch by a Countess on the Douro (**pictured**).

A new discount of up to 15% off the excursion price has also been introduced when three or more tours are pre-booked in advance.

Five new excursions are now available on the Douro, including two new small group options.

There is also the chance to visit the Quinta da Pacheca, one of the most renowned wineries in the region, which dates back to the 16th century.

Meanwhile, the arrival of *A-Rosa Alea* and *A-Rosa Clea* into the cruise line's fleet in Apr has also boosted options.

Their smaller length means they can sail directly into the heart of ports such as Trier and Strasbourg, making it easy for guests who wish to explore these destinations at their leisure.

*Alea* will dock in Strasbourg this year, and during the festive season, a Christmas Market excursion will be offered.

There is also a once-in-a-lifetime flight experience for two now available in Vlissingen, offering a chance to get a bird's eye view of the region's rolling hills,



windmills, farmland, and more.

One of the new options on the Danube is a trip to the Royal Palace of Godollo near Budapest, where guests can walk through the magnificent halls and gardens which was the former summer residence of Empress Elisabeth of Austria and her husband, Franz Joseph I of Austria.

For those sailing on the Rhone, a new exclusive tour for just six passengers will explore the Ardeche region and visit a Chateau to meet wine growers and enjoy a tasting.

There is also a new bike excursion exploring the Cotes du Rhone region.

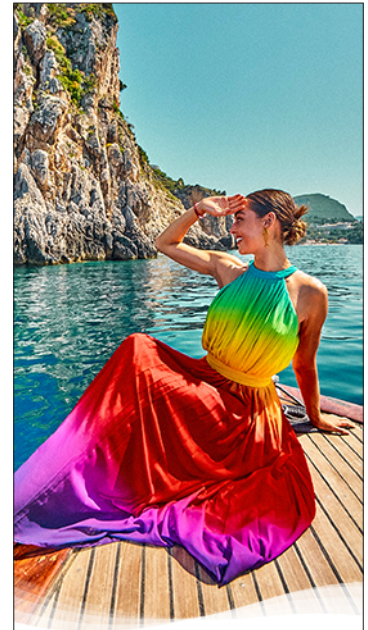
On the Seine, history and nature enthusiasts can enjoy a new excursion to Castle of La Roche-Guyon, which towers over the banks of the river and boasts three hectares of gardens and excellent views.

"We are delighted that we have been able to expand our excursion portfolio again this season and that our total range has now grown to over 650 tours," Shore Excursion Manager Jennifer Bockmann said. *MS*

## Crystal + Beefbar

**CRYSTAL** Cruises has announced an exclusive collaboration with global restaurant brand Beefbar.

The new offering will be added aboard *Crystal Serenity* and *Crystal Symphony*.



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## A stroke of *Brilliance* for Darwin

**ROYAL** Caribbean International's *Brilliance of the Seas* made her maiden call in the NT last week (pictured).

*Brilliance's* first visit to Darwin, where she stayed overnight, was part of a 16-day cruise from Sydney to Fremantle.

The ship was greeted by a musical performance, local tourism ambassadors, free shuttle buses into Darwin, and free entertainment in downtown Raintree Park.

The overnight call allowed passengers more time to explore farther afield, with many guests visiting Litchfield National Park, and enjoying crocodile safaris, scenic flights, military history tours, and more.

"Ahoy to all of the passengers and crew of *Brilliance of the Seas*, we are thrilled with your arrival to Darwin and hope you enjoy your time exploring our tropical



city and beyond," NT Minister for Tourism Joel Bowden said.

"The cruise ship industry makes a significant contribution to the local economy with passengers and crew spending across the hospitality, retail and tourism sectors," he added.

More than 100 cruise and expedition ships are expected to visit Darwin this season, with

a total passenger capacity of 60,000 cruisers.

"During the 2023-24 cruise season we are expecting the cruise ship industry to inject \$65 million to the Territory's economy, creating jobs and providing a welcome boost to local tour operators, retailers and the hospitality industry," Bowden added. *MS*

## P&O hopping mad

P&O Cruises Australia has extended its partnership with the South Sydney Rabbitohs, as the club's official membership partner for 2024.

The cruise line has aligned with South Sydney since 2016, and will continue to provide experiences for the club's season ticket holders and fans through their activations at home games and events.

P&O Australia also offers the 'Red and Green Cruise' annually, with last year's voyage its most successful yet.

More than 350 Rabbitohs season ticket holders and fans joined Rabbitohs Head Coach Jason Demetriou and club legends Bob McCarthy, Ron Coote, and Jason Clark on board in late Dec.

South Sydney CEO Blake Solly said P&O has been with the club "through thick and thin".



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**SOME** fishy behaviour was spotted aboard P&O Cruises Australia's *Pacific Explorer* last week, with a passenger aboard the ship appearing to cast an extra long fishing line over the side of the vessel ([CLICK HERE](#)).

*Explorer* was en route to Kangaroo Island, when two unknown figures were seen fishing off the ship's balcony at around 6:45pm Wed evening.

The vision, which was posted by *10 News First's* Instagram account, could land not just the catch, but the anglers themselves, in some hot water.

Two passengers who were caught fishing off their balcony on board a Carnival Cruise Line ship in Apr were banned for life, after they posted their exploits to TikTok ([CW 21 Apr](#)).

It is unclear whether or not the two P&O Australia guests will be in for the same punishment, but it's safe to say it was not a fin-tastic idea.

## AmaWaterways' record start to 2024

**AMAWATERWAYS** has started its Europe season, as record levels of reservations send positive signals for the river cruise market.

The line, which recently announced its first Australian office team ([CW 30 Jan](#)), set a new record for reservations made in a single month in Jan, surpassing the previous record set in 2023 by 27%.

"[The year] is off to an amazing start as Jan marks our most successful month of bookings in our 22 years of history," Executive Vice President and co-founder Kristin Karst said.

"We have been able to handle this surge in demand and provide excellent service to our travel advisor partners by hiring and training additional river cruise specialists for the call centre and doubling the size of our dedicated AmaAir team.

"Our ships are filling up quickly and our wonderful Cruise Managers and crew are eager to welcome our guests on board for a most memorable vacation experience," he added.

Highlights of AmaWaterways' 2024 and 2025 include an



extended season on the Danube and Rhine, with flagship *AmaMagna* to set sail through the heart of Europe, cruising between Budapest and Vilshofen.

Meanwhile, *AmaLucia* will take travellers on seven-night escapes between Amsterdam and Basel.

AmaWaterways has added a sixth French itinerary this year, with the all-new 'Flavours of Burgundy on the Saone'.


Guests can look forward to even more specially curated excursions, with this itinerary offering a variety of activities connecting travellers to France's rich history, culture, food, wine and people.

AmaWaterways will also welcome its second ship on the Nile, with the 82-passenger *AmaLilia* to join the fleet in 2024.

The ship will carry guests through Egypt on 11-night 'Secrets of Egypt & the Nile' itinerary, which will be accompanied by an Egyptologist.

The journey starts with a three-night pre-cruise stay in Cairo to visit the last survivor of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Great Pyramid of Giza.

*Lilia* will launch ahead of *AmaMagdalena* and *AmaMelodia's* debut on the Magdalena River in Colombia ([CW 15 Dec 2023](#)). *MS*



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No matter where your client dreams of travelling, we've got a session tailored to them with 12 unique and themed sessions in each city. Each session will provide your clients with all the information and inspiration they need to plan, and then book, their next journey with you. Think of it as a chance for them to test drive their perfect Viking voyage.

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Ocean cruising – Scandinavia and Northern Europe
- 11:30 AM** Europe river cruising – France and Portugal  
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- 1:00 PM** Europe river cruising – Rhine, Main and Danube Rivers  
Polar Expeditions  
Ocean Cruising – Asia, Australia, NZ and The Americas
- 6:30 PM** Introduction to Viking  
The best of Viking's river voyages  
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## EXPLORER SESSION TOUR DATES

- SYDNEY** | Tuesday 27 February
- BRISBANE** | Tuesday 12 March
- MELBOURNE** | Thursday 29 February
- GOLD COAST** | Thursday 14 March
- ADELAIDE** | Thursday 7 March
- PERTH** | Thursday 21 March

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