



CRUISE

WEEKLY

delivered daily!



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Cruise Weekly today

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

Learning with Ama

AMAWATERWAYS has scheduled three information evenings this month for travel advisors in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

Sessions will take place at Sofitel Wentworth Sydney (6pm 14 May); Crystalbrook Vincent Brisbane (6:30pm 21 May) and Metropolis Events Melbourne (6pm 27 May).

Attendees will learn more about Ama's brand of cruising, its immersive itineraries and well-appointed ships, with canapes and beverages served.

One lucky guest attending each event will go home with a prize of an AmaWaterways river cruise for two people.

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Galapagos demos shift

THE demographic of Galapagos Islands cruisers has greatly changed since the COVID-19 pandemic, Expedition Leader of HX's *Santa Cruz II* Ramiro Tomala told *Cruise Weekly*.

The largest part of the ship's clientele prior to the pandemic was Americans, Tomala explained to *CW* on board last week; however following the COVID-19 pandemic, a wider range of guest demographics have returned to the Galapagos region.

"Before, most of our clientele was from the US: families, people who came to spend time with their loved ones, go out, take lots of pictures, enjoy the ship," Tomala explained.

"Then came COVID, and most foreigners were not coming, and our clientele shifted from Americans to Ecuadorians, [who] weren't perhaps so interested in a three-hour hike, [they're] more

interested in an hour hike, and then coming to the jacuzzi and doing all sorts of things, so we had to change the way we did things as a company."

Santa Cruz II's post-pandemic clientele includes more Europeans, giving the ship a more international flavour.

"Now a big percentage of our clientele are Germans; they like to hike more, they like to observe more, they like to take pictures like to learn more," he said.

"We have a lot of British guests, they're the same thing, they're more interested in birds and plants, so we have to change with the times and with the clients that we get, so we are adapting."

Tomala added this large mix of nationalities and cultures on board makes curating an enjoyable journey for everyone and meeting all tastes and interests HX's toughest job. *MS*

A Grand diversion

PRINCESS Cruises will redeploy *Grand Princess* away from its Brisbane and Sydney home ports for the 2025/26 season, instead sending the ship to San Juan, Puerto Rico.

According to cruise schedules, *Grand Princess* was set for its Pacific repositioning in Sep 2025, however the ship will now sail alternating seven-night itineraries from San Juan from Oct 2025 to Mar 2026.

These itineraries feature port calls in a mixture of Southern Caribbean cities, which can be combined to form a 14-day adventure with only one repeat call in Barbados.

Princess Cruises Chief Commercial Officer, Terry Thornton, said the line's return to San Juan after more than a decade expands the departure points across North America for its guests to sail from.

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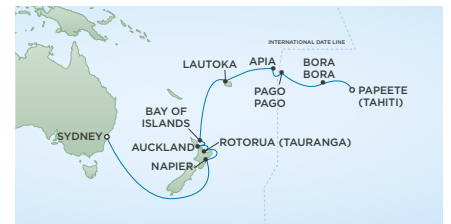
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MSC island vibes

MSC Cruises will operate four ships across a range of itineraries in the Caribbean during the 2024 summer, growing to six for the winter.

One ship will operate from New York City, another from Port Canaveral and two based in Miami, each cruising to a range of destinations including The Bahamas, Jamaica, Mexico, Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, Martinique & more.

For the 2024/25 winter, MSC *Virtuosa* will join the fleet with seven-night sailings from Martinique to St Maarten, Guadeloupe and Barbados.

Five ships will take guests to Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve, which is set to undergo an expansion to cater to expected growth, with new F&B outlets, a new kids lagoon pool and larger facilities to support watersport activities.

FUN in the South Pacific



CARNIVAL Cruise Line recently hosted 27 top-performing agents to a South Pacific adventure onboard *Carnival Splendor* as a reward for amazing sales efforts.

Hosted by National Account Manager, Lance Dye and Business Development Manager, Sarah Miller, the eight-night journey included a range of activities including access behind-the-scenes to see the inner workings of Carnival's style of cruising, plus plenty of fun and games during

some onboard training sessions.

"This trip highlights our ongoing commitment to supporting the trade and our valued travel agent network through education and unforgettable experiences," said Carnival Cruise Line National Sales Manager, Mark Richards.

The group is **pictured** above during a special shore excursion to Amadee Island in Noumea, where they were lucky enough to go snorkelling with sea turtles and relax on the beach. *ML*

Seabourn reroutes

LUXURY cruise line Seabourn has revealed a revised itinerary for its 90-day 'Grand Africa Voyage', to ensure the ship avoids hostility in the Red Sea.

Changes have been made which sees the itinerary remain the same length, with only one port visited twice.

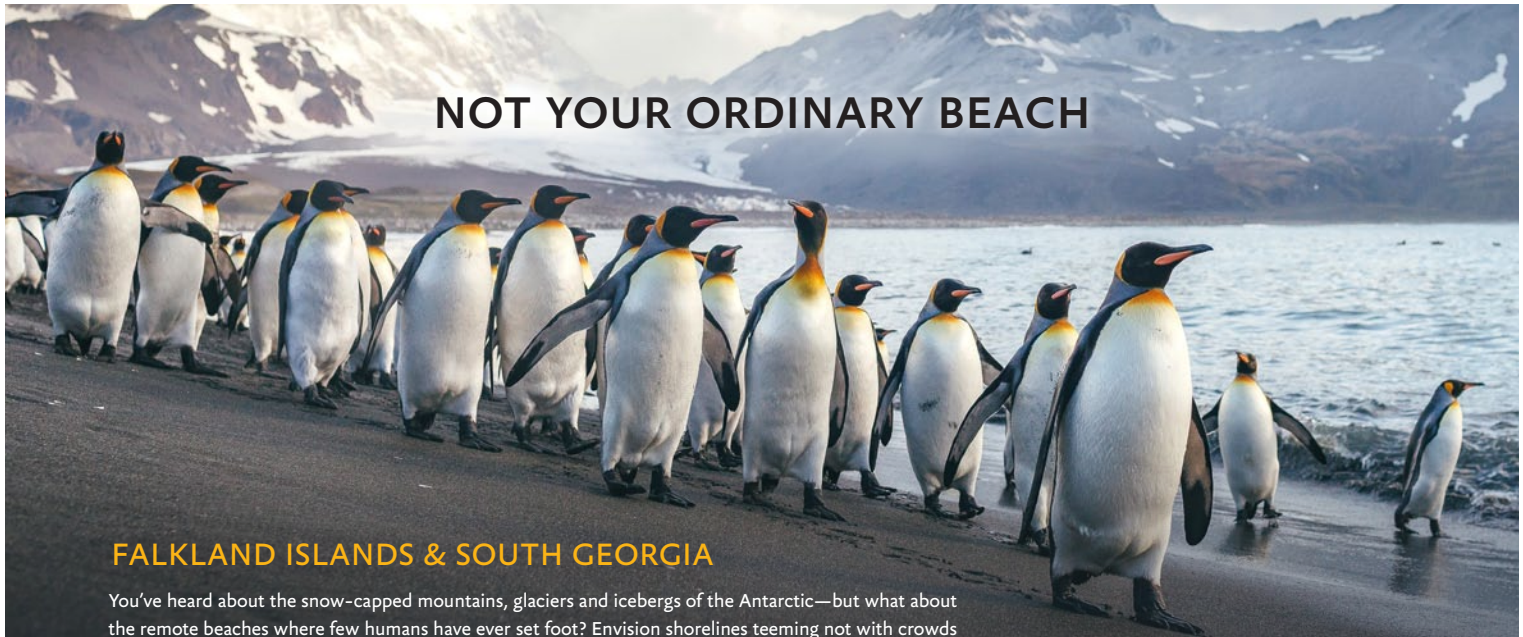
Seabourn Sojourn will still sail round-trip from Barcelona, visiting 42 ports across the west, south and east of Africa including seven overnight stays.

Utopia powers up

ROYAL Caribbean's *Utopia of the Seas* has begun its sea trials, with 900 personnel on board to test the ship's limits.

Hundreds of inspections are scheduled over the 1,000-mile test to see how the ship moves through the water, navigation exercises and more.

NOT YOUR ORDINARY BEACH



FALKLAND ISLANDS & SOUTH GEORGIA

You've heard about the snow-capped mountains, glaciers and icebergs of the Antarctic—but what about the remote beaches where few humans have ever set foot? Envision shorelines teeming not with crowds of sunbathers but with epic wildlife!

Come visit the sandy beaches of the sub-Antarctic islands of the Falklands and South Georgia, home to thousands of king Penguins, massive elephant seals and soaring albatrosses. Then, explore the rugged shorelines of the Antarctic Peninsula.

MULTIPLE DEPARTURES IN 2024/2025. *Contact your travel professional today.*



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IT'S one thing to take home a souvenir from your cruise, but taking home the whole ship might be a little over the top.

One cruise lover made their passion for the seas so obvious, they turned a block of land in suburban Melbourne into a 'cruise ship trophy home'.

The multi-deck home features four bedrooms across five stories, each with a rear deck shaped like the hull of a ship overlooking the backyard and a ground floor swimming pool.

Appropriately, the block in Toorak backs onto the Yarra River and cost more than \$6m to design and build.



Montreal kicks off

MONTREAL has launched its 2024 cruise season with the arrival of Holland America Line's *MS Volendam*.

The Canadian port is set for a bumper season, with 41 ship visits scheduled and more than 50,000 passengers overall.

Ships will range from Ponant's 180-guest *Le Bellot* to the 1,440-passenger *MS Volendam*.

Power in sport for MSC



EXCLUSIVE

SPONSORING the global circus that is Formula One motor racing has proven to be a masterstroke for MSC Cruises, says the line's Vice President of International Sales, Antonio Paradiso.

Speaking to *Cruise Weekly* during a recent visit to Australia, Paradiso described the line's association with F1 as "one of the best things we ever did".

"Formula One is a little bit like a cruise line, you're moving from one country to another [and] bringing that enthusiasm, that passion from one country to another, week in, week out, from Mar until the end of Nov."

The return on investment for MSC Cruises came quickly once its branding began appearing above the starting lights and on corner signage, with Paradiso adding the F1 association was "definitely worth the investment".

Whether or not you're a fan of the sport, Paradiso said one of the most popular perks that comes with Formula One association is VIP paddock tickets.

"It's an opportunity to invite our top partners...to do some networking, and travel agents love it - it's such a fascinating world," Paradiso beamed.

Fans of global sport cannot have missed the presence of MSC Cruises branding appearing prominently with some of the world's largest sporting events.

Off the track and onto the football pitch, MSC is also a major sponsor of English Premier League giant, Chelsea FC, which is the fourth-largest club in the world in terms of fans, with more than 780 million worldwide.

"I was looking for an opportunity and how can I get my brand across to that?"

"Well, the answer doesn't necessarily think about cruising, and the sporting industry is very, very interesting.

"Premier League is the number one sporting event in the world, number two is the Champions League, number three is Formula One and all other sports are miles and miles away behind this topic," Paradiso told *CW*. *ML*



Destination Darwin

I HAVE just returned from Seatrade as part of 'Team ACA' telling the Australian cruise industry story.

It was a team approach with representatives from all over the country working together to promote Australia's unique offering to the global industry.

We had an exceptional coach in ACA's CEO Jill Abel, backed by the outstanding support staff of the ACA Board.

A group of representatives doesn't always make a great team without the guidance of an experienced coach and support staff, but it turned out to be a great team!

This week I'm very pleased Jill and the Australian Cruise Association Board have made their way to Darwin for their Board meeting and to attend the Northern Territory Cruise Forum.

The Forum is a terrific initiative and an important event for local stakeholders to learn more about the cruise sector and the opportunities that may be available to them.

During the pandemic, we were told that the cruise restart would be a slow.

How wrong they were.

In the 2022/23 financial year, Darwin Port exceeded our pre-pandemic record with 91 ship calls.

In the current Financial Year, we will see 106 cruise ships call into the port.

Future bookings are even stronger and as those numbers grow so do the opportunities for local stakeholders.