



Cruise Weekly today

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

A Royal arrival

“THE ultimate family holiday” has returned to Sydney, with Royal Caribbean International’s *Ovation of the Seas* sailing into Sydney Harbour to mark the start of a record-breaking 2024/2025 summer season.

Royal Caribbean is anticipating more multigenerational families than ever before, with two-night weekend getaways to 14-night holidays, visiting destinations in Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific.

“The 2024 season will be one for the books, with young families and holidaymakers new to Royal Caribbean enjoying the ultimate holiday on *Ovation of the Seas*,” Vice President & Managing Director Gavin Smith said.

Royal Caribbean has been evolving its brand position as the cruise line seeks to champion its shorter product and offer a “total holiday/vacation option” (CW 22 Oct).

The highlighting of Royal Caribbean’s shorter, getaway-style cruises align with the launch of the line’s new ship *Utopia of the Seas*, earlier this year – billed as the “world’s biggest weekend”.

NCLH’s strong third quarter

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) has reported strong third quarter financial results, with revenue up around 11% over the prior year - a record for a quarter.

The company pulled in \$2.8 billion on 4% capacity growth.

Adjusted EBITDA grew 24% to US\$931 million, a quarterly record high, compared to US\$752m for the same period of last year.

Performance was driven by strong revenue growth and continued execution on cost reductions and efficiencies.

NCLH also noted its sustained focus on margin enhancement drove another quarter of improvement in operating costs.

The results saw NCLH beat its third quarter guidance across all key metrics, and raised its full year guidance for the fourth time.

Full year adjusted EBITDA guidance increased US\$75 million from the prior guidance to approximately US\$2.425 billion.

NCLH remains at the upper range of its optimal booked position on a 12-month forward basis, with occupancy 108% for the third quarter of the year.

Full year 2024 occupancy is expected to average approximately 105%.

NCLH’s advanced ticket sales balance, including the long-term portion, ended the third quarter of 2024 at US\$3.3 billion, a quarterly record high, and

approximately 6% up from the same period of 2023.

“Our exceptional third quarter results, with record revenue, net income and adjusted EBITDA, surpassed guidance across all key metrics, underscores the strength of our business, the attractiveness of our product offering across all brands and the superior execution and delivery by our teams both shoreside and shipboard,” President & Chief Executive Harry Sommer said.

“Fuelled by robust demand and our relentless focus on cost control and margin enhancement, we’re raising our full year guidance for a fourth time and expect 2024 to be our best year for revenue, net yield growth and adjusted EBITDA.”

NCLH also continues to prioritise efforts to optimise its balance sheet, with a total debt of \$13.4 billion, compared to the PCP’s figure of \$14.1 billion.

“This quarter, we made significant strides in strengthening our financial position,” EVP & CFO Mark Kempa said.

“We successfully refinanced \$315 million of notes coming due in 2024 with 6.25% unsecured notes due 2030 with the remaining balance of US\$250 million to be paid at maturity.

“This transaction represents another key step in our ongoing efforts to optimise our capital structure,” he added. MS

FCTG new insurance

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has launched new branded travel insurance - the first time the company has ever put its name insurance.

The product will include Cruiseabout Travel Insurance Chartered by Europ Assistance, and is available this week.

The insurance is bookable through Cruiseabout, Flight Centre, and Travel Associates, with other markets to launch in the coming months.

The exclusive insurance range is backed by global provider Europ Assistance, and allows FCTG’s core leisure brands to market a travel insurance product designed specifically for its key demographics and market segments.

FCTG Global Leisure Chief Executive Officer James Kavanagh said the new product range offers a more comprehensive and tailored insurance coverage for peace of mind when travelling.

“Our customers put immense trust in us to bring their travel experiences to life, and we firmly believe comprehensive travel insurance is a core part of this experience,” the FCTG head said.

“We believe this is a world class travel insurance offering for protection and peace of mind, and ultimately this will mean a better overall holiday experience for our customers.”

Discover our Adventure Special Report

Still time to win

AGENTS are reminded that Nov is the last month to enter Globus family of brands' \$1k a Day Giveaway (**CW** 01 Oct), with the trade incentive remaining open until 30 Nov.

To take advantage of the offer, agents simply need to make a deposited booking with Avalon Waterways, Globus or Cosmos for departures in 2025.

Each booking made automatically qualifies for the daily draw, and the more bookings made, the more chances to score, with no limitations on the number of times an agent can win.

Winners will be drawn by the GFOB sales team each day, including weekends, and will be notified directly.

The first round of lucky winners have already claimed their prize, including Isabella Bartsch from Flight Centre Brown Plains (**pictured** with BDM Anji Tierney).



Cruise windfall for NZ

THE full value of cruise tourism in New Zealand has been revealed for the first time in a new economic analysis, showing a total NZ\$1.37 billion injected into communities around the country during 2023-24.

Jointly commissioned by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and the New Zealand Cruise Association (NZCA), the economic impact assessment offers the first in-depth analysis of cruise tourism in the country.

While previous assessments have shown only direct expenditure by passengers, crew and cruise lines, the latest analysis also calculates the indirect and induced benefits to the New Zealand economy, as well as the employment created.

According to the report, cruise tourism supported a total employment of 9,729 New Zealand jobs last financial year and provided NZ\$425.9 million in wages to New Zealand workers.

NZCA Chief Executive Officer, Jacqui Lloyd, said cruise ships had delivered NZ\$439.5 million in passenger spending to virtually every region of New Zealand in 2023-24.

The North Island received the largest slice of cruise tourism, with a total economic output of NZ\$981.9 million and total employment of 6,886 jobs, while Auckland was the top region, raking in NZ\$604.7 million.

"A cruise passenger spends an

average NZ\$283 every day on shore in New Zealand, but that's only one piece of the picture," Lloyd said.

"Cruise tourism supports a huge variety of local Kiwi businesses like tour operators, travel agents, hotels and restaurants, retailers, transport providers and port operators," she explained.

The retail shopping sector benefited the most from direct passenger expenditure, receiving NZ\$123.5 million, or 28.1% of passenger spending.

Other beneficiaries included the food and beverage sector (NZ\$109.6m, 24.9%), shore excursion product (NZ\$76.7m, 17.4%), hotels & accommodation (NZ\$57.6m, 13.1%), transport providers (NZ\$34.5m, 7.9%), and entertainment (NZ\$30.1m, 6.9%).

Although the value of cruise tourism is high, the cruise industry has warned that rising costs and regulatory complexities are hampering the industry in New Zealand (**CW** 16 Oct).

"While cruise tourism is thriving in the rest of the world, New Zealand is going backwards and local communities are facing a 20% reduction in visitor numbers over the coming season," the NZCA boss warned.

"New Zealand has become one of the world's most expensive destinations for cruise operations, and this is already costing Kiwi businesses millions of dollars as ships head elsewhere." *JM*

EPA port clean-up

THE Alaskan port of Seward will spend a US\$45.7m govt grant to install a shore power system as part of an effort to combat climate change.

Funds were awarded through the Environmental Protection Agency's 'Clean Ports Program', and will also allow the port to build a battery energy storage system and invest in electrical infrastructure upgrades.

"Alaska's ports are vital to supporting jobs and communities across the state," said Regional Administrator Casey Sixkiller.

"This funding, made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, will supercharge efforts to electrify port operations and cleaner, zero-emissions solutions that benefit air quality, surrounding port communities, and help advance our collective efforts to tackle the climate crisis."

The Don Young Port of Alaska in Anchorage also received a US\$1.9 million stipend to fund new clean energy systems.

Bon voyage tix

EARLY bird tickets to Bon Voyage, **Cruise Weekly** and **Travel Daily's** end-of-year party, end today.

From tomorrow, tickets will only be available at regular prices - purchase **HERE**.

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ROYAL Caribbean Group announced strong third quarter results this week (**CW** 30 Oct), and **CW** is concerned it may be getting to the heads of the top brass in Miami.

After recording almost \$5 billion in revenue for the quarter, President & Chief Executive Officer Jason Liberty - along with a number of his colleagues - have already anointed themselves as superheroes (**pictured**).

Of course, the dress-up was merely Royal Caribbean's nod to Halloween, with the team also celebrating by decorating the office and trick-or-treating each other.



Luxperience finalists

LUXPERIENCE has announced the finalists for its annual awards, with several cruise brands making the cut.

Silversea is up for the 'Inspiring Award', while Aqua Expeditions and Heritage Expeditions will vie for the 'Meaningful Award'.

The winners will be named at a masquerade gala event on 19 Nov in Sydney.

A Quark-ing good time



QUARK Expeditions is seeing tremendous growth in the Asia-Pacific region, with a double-digit increase in sales year-over-year.

The results were revealed at a recent Quark event in Sydney (**CW** 26 Sep), attended by the cruise line's Senior Director Global Partnership Sales Beth Mercier, in town from head office in Seattle.

She revealed one-fifth of all Quark guests now come from the Asia-Pacific market, which has contributed 26% more passengers this year compared to last.

The event, which took place at the Australian Museum, also saw attendees hear overviews of what to expect on a polar expedition, and why Quark is one of the leaders in the space.

Guests also heard about the cruise line's hotly anticipated Arctic and Antarctic 2026 season from Mercier, and Director of

Trade Marketing Seb Canape, also flown in especially for the event.

The events represent a tweaked sales strategy for Quark, which has been active out on the road in the past few months with its partners (**CW** 06 Sep).

Quark is under its first year of leadership from Hunt (**CW** 08 Jan), who has been adding resources to focus specifically on trade marketing (**CW** 02 Feb).

"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 told **CW** earlier this year. **MS**

Pictured is the Quark team: Business Development Manager Sarah-Louise Scales; Mercier; Regional Sales Director Asia Pacific Tenille Hunt; Business Development Managers Chris Catanzariti and Travis Graham; and Expedition Guide Ian Gordon.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY		
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>		01 Nov
<i>Celebrity Edge</i>		02 Nov
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>		02 Nov
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>		03 Nov
<i>Ovaion of the Seas</i>		04 Nov
<i>Disney Wonder</i>		05 Nov
<i>Celebrity Edge</i>		06 Nov
<i>Disney Wonder</i>		06 Nov
<i>Carnival Luminosa</i>		07 Nov
MELBOURNE		
<i>Disney Wonder</i>		01 Nov
<i>Disney Wonder</i>		03 Nov
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>		04 Nov
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>		04 Nov
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>		05 Nov
BRISBANE		
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>		02 Nov
<i>Carnival Luminosa</i>		05 Nov
<i>Silver Muse</i>		07 Nov
PERTH		
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>		05 Nov
<i>Crown Princess</i>		06 Nov
ADELAIDE		
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>		06 Nov
HOBART		
<i>Celebrity Edge</i>		04 Nov
CAIRNS		
<i>Silver Muse</i>		02 Nov
TOWNSVILLE		
<i>Silver Muse</i>		03 Nov
GERALDTON		
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>		04 Nov
ALBANY		
<i>Crown Princess</i>		04 Nov
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>		07 Nov
BUSSELTON		
<i>Crown Princess</i>		05 Nov
BROOME		
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>		01 Nov
<i>True North</i>		02 Nov