



### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Cruise Lines International Association**.

### Celestyal F1 fam

**CELESTYAL** Cruises will host travel advisors on a Qatar F1 super famil later this year, with former driver David Coulthard confirmed as a special guest.

The cruise line has partnered with Visit Qatar to bring more than 30 advisors from around the globe to the Nov famil, which will include tickets to the F1 Qatar Grand Prix.

Travel advisors will experience a three-night land stay, which will include an array of exciting excursions in Qatar, as well as taking in the Arabian Travel Market.

They will then embark on *Celestyal Journey* for a further two nights.

Guests will be invited to a speaker event with Coulthard while on board, who competed in F1 from 1994 to 2008, winning 13 Grands Prix across 15 seasons.

The trip's finale will see guests attend the Qatar Grand Prix at Lusail International Circuit on 01 Dec, with grandstand ticket access.

"As *Celestyal Journey* is making her way to Doha, we're starting to rev up for our inaugural season in the Arabian Gulf with this adrenaline-fuelled agent fam trip," Vice President Janet Parton said.

## Aussies living on the Edge



### EXCLUSIVE

**CELEBRITY** Cruises is bearing fruit in Australia as both a key destination and source market for the line, says Managing Director and Vice President, Tim Jones.

The cruise line's chief, speaking to **CW** aboard *Celebrity Edge* this week, said Australia is providing a "beautiful mix" of contributions for the company.

"We have a lovely number of international cruisers who come to cruise with us in this part of the world...they want to see Australia," he explained.

"However we also know Australians are prolific cruisers, so we have a great [group] of domestic Aussie cruisers who want to cruise close-to-home.

"We have a really high number of Australians who love cruising with us in Europe, Alaska, Asia and South America."

Basing some of its newest hardware in Australia, such as *Celebrity Edge*, builds rapport

between local passengers and the company's newbuilds, encouraging them to book a fly-cruise with the line, Jones added.

"They can experience [Edge-class] ships close to home, and then they can book *Edge*, [which] goes off to Alaska in our winter," Jones explained to **Cruise Weekly**.

"There's the opportunity to stay reunited with the ship you've just fallen in love with, but to see a different part of the world."

*Edge* is in her second season in Australia, which will run through to Apr (**CW** 22 Oct).

The ship will offer 17 itineraries visiting a collection of 26 ports, including new destinations such as Samoa, Fiji, American Samoa, and Tonga, with highlights including 11- and 13-night New Zealand voyages.

**Pictured** are Jones, Commercial Marketing Director Jen Walter, Digital & CRM Manager Cheryl Chua, and Media & Campaign Manager Michaela Davies.

### CLIA memberships

**TURN** knowledge into sales with Cruise Lines International Association Australasia (CLIA), with memberships now open for next year.

CLIA is inviting travel advisors to become cruise destination specialists, in regions such as Australia, the Pacific islands, Southeast Asia, South America, Northern Europe, as well as European and global river cruising.

The Association offers access to specialised cruise destination training and resources to help drive professional development, strengthen cruise selling skills, and earn recognition as a trusted cruise specialist.

Head to **page 5** for more info on CLIA memberships.

### MSC AK webinar

**MSC** Cruises is set to host an Alaska webinar, after the line announced it will launch voyages in the state from 2026 (**CW** 29 Oct).

The webinar is scheduled for Wed over two sessions, with Business Development Manager Alka Thapar to host an 8:30am AEDT session, while Business Development Brenton Reidy will host a 12:30pm session.

The 20-minute webinar, will be followed by a five-minute interactive Q&A session, designed to provide travel partners with a comprehensive overview of this new to MSC destination - **CLICK HERE** to sign up.



# NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

## Nominate yourself or a colleague today



### A Royal Eden visit

**PRINCESS** Cruises' *Royal Princess* will become the biggest-ever ship to dock in Eden on Mon, carrying 3,560 passengers - more than the entire population of the town.

*Royal's* visit will be the first following the NSW Government's approval of larger and more frequent visits to Eden following the city's port extension (CW 25 Jul).

### Two more Viking Nile ships



**VIKING** has named its two newest Nile ships in Luxor.

The identical 82-guest *Viking Hathor* and *Viking Sobek* (pictured) joined the cruise line's fleet in Egypt, where they will serve the popular 12-day 'Pharaohs & Pyramids' itinerary.

The naming ceremony took place at Viking's exclusive docking location in Luxor, and was followed by a celebratory dinner inside the nearby Karnak temples.

Viking's guests also enjoyed a performance by Sissel Kyrkjebo, one of the world's leading sopranos, and godmother of *Viking Jupiter*.

"Today, we are proud to welcome the *Viking Hathor* and the *Viking Sobek* to our growing fleet in Egypt," Chair & Chief Executive Torstein Hagen said.

"Along with their sister ships, we believe they are by far the most elegant vessels on the Nile.

"As our award-winning fleet on the Nile continues to grow, we look forward to introducing even more curious travellers to this phenomenal destination."

Edward Herbert served as the ceremonial godfather of *Hathor*; whose great-great-grandfather, George Herbert, fifth Earl of Carnarvon, was Howard Carter's benefactor and co-explorer who discovered the intact tomb of the 18th Dynasty Pharaoh Tutankhamun in Nov 1922.

Meanwhile, Mohamed El Banna, founder of Cosmos Egypt and a member of the Egyptian Senate, served as the ceremonial godfather of *Sobek*.

"We are very grateful for our continued close friendship with the Carnarvon family and that Eddie has honoured us by serving as the godfather of the *Viking Hathor*," Hagen pronounced.

"For more than 15 years, Mohamed El Banna has been a part of the extended Viking family, helping to take good care of our guests in Egypt, and it is a great honour that he is serving as the godfather of the *Viking Sobek*," he added.

The two new ships are identical sister ships to *Viking Aton* and *Viking Osiris*. MS

### A HAL of a cruise

**HOLLAND** America Line's (HAL) 2026 Grand World Voyage has been refreshed to include further exploration of Asia and Central America.

The sailing aboard *Volendam* will now include more destinations in the United States, and a transit of the Panama Canal.

The cruise has been adjusted to avoid the Red Sea.

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### Ponant heads north

**PONANT** has unveiled its exclusive Northern Lights Quest itineraries for next year.

The cruises visit destinations such as Lofoten, the North Cape, Greenland, Reykjavik, Disko Bay, and more.

Shore excursions will see local guides lead the search for the Northern Lights, with authentic experiences like sipping coffee under a traditional lavvu on the tundra.

Ponant offers two voyages as part of its Northern Lights Quest itineraries: 'Nordic Discoveries & Traditions', on board *Le Champlain*; and 'Disko Bay: Meeting the Inuit & Discovering the Unknown', on *Le Commandant Charcot*.

This voyage will journey from Reykjavik to Greenland, offering encounters with local Inuit people and insights into their lives and traditions.

### Eden left wondering no more



**THE** NSW south coast town of Eden received a dose of magic this week as *Disney Wonder* made its maiden visit to the state's Sapphire Coast.

*Disney Wonder* is currently on a seven-day sailing which departed from Melbourne earlier this week and also included calls in Sydney and Hobart before returning to the Vic capital on Sun.

"Every cruise season, visiting

international cruise passengers can spend up to \$283 a day, according to CLIA, injecting millions into local economies like ours," said NSW Member for Bega, Michael Holland.

Eden is due to welcome 25 cruise ships this season, among which will be 12 ships making their maiden calls to the city.

*Disney Wonder* is **pictured** above sailing into Eden harbour.

### Lindblad growth

**NATIONAL** Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions Founder and CEO Sven Lindblad says future growth for the company could come by acquiring new ships at distressed rates.

Speaking to investors during the company's Q3 earnings call, Lindblad said new ships could be acquired "at very, very reasonable rates" from businesses that have failed.

"We're kind of excited about the opportunity to think about ships that have already been built that may become available," Lindblad added.

Lindblad said he was excited by the business trajectory in the wake of its renewed partnership with National Geographic and Disney.

"This long-term agreement is not yet a year old and we are in the beginning stages of capitalising on its full potential."

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A CRUISE is sometimes like live television - not everything goes right all the time.

A recent Royal Caribbean Halloween party aboard *Symphony of the Seas* went terribly wrong, thanks to some well-intentioned but probably ill-conceived dry ice.

One Reddit user, who was on board for the cruise, said, "they [used] dry ice for Halloween which set off the smoke detectors, slamming the watertight doors down, trapping cruisers near the Rising Tide bar and cafe promenade, which turned into a pool".

The subsequent drenching ruined people's clothes, phones, and costumes, the Redditor added.

Fortunately, no-one was hurt during the incident, and no other alarms were triggered.

## Atlas expands its team

ATLAS Ocean Voyages has expanded its team in Antarctica, in time for the 2024/25 season.

Each of Atlas' three vessels will be staffed with an expanded team of 17 seasoned polar expedition guides led by expedition leaders.

The teams comprise specialists in a variety of disciplines, including naturalists, geologists, marine biologists, and historians, who will join guests for lectures, guided Zodiac landings, and hikes.

"This season, we're excited to expand the team even further with additional experts on each expedition," outgoing President &



Chief Exec James Rodriguez said.

*World Voyager's* expedition leader will be Aaron Strahlke, with Jonathan Zaccaria will be in charge of *World Navigator*, while *World Traveller* is set to be helmed by Katya Uruypova. *MS*

## Liberty to the UK

ROYAL Caribbean will deploy its 3,634-guest ship *Liberty of the Seas* to Southampton for the 2026 summer, replacing *Independence of the Seas*.

The ship is one of five RCI will base in Europe for the summer, with the ship to offer two-to-nine-night voyages into northern Europe along with a solar eclipse itinerary in Aug.

## New Italy terminal

CONSTRUCTION is now underway on a new environmentally-friendly cruise terminal in the Italian city of Ravenna, which will be able to host two ships simultaneously.

The 10,000 square metre terminal will also become Italy's first LEED Gold certified facility and will include a range of energy-efficient features including water and energy reduction technologies, renewable energy, recycling and waste management tools.

Leading the development of the port is Cruise Terminals International and Royal Caribbean Group, however the terminal will be open to all cruise operators.

Ravenna Port Authority says the terminal, once open in 2026, will aim to position the city as a world-class homeport for itineraries in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

## Singapore tech up

SITA is delivering advanced passenger tech to Singapore Cruise Centre (SCC), with the IT firm's digital travel solutions.

The biometric-ready Smart Path and Flex solutions are set to transform the guest experience with biometric-ready kiosks, self-bag drop, and gates.

Forty-five of SITA's Smart Path Kiosks will be installed across the terminals, providing a platform for biometric authentication implementation in the future as part of the OneID initiative.

There will also be 10 Smart Path Bag Drop solutions, streamlining the bag check-in process with SITA's cutting-edge TS6 Kiosks, and 13 new SITA Smart Path Gates, which will be used for efficient boarding procedures.

SCC is also adopting SITA's Flex as a Service across all passenger processing touchpoints, which enables agile and responsive passenger processing, and creates a platform for to build custom passenger-facing applications.

SCC will also integrate its new cloud-based Departure Control System (Cruise and Ferry Operation System) via SITA Flex, set to significantly improve the facility's passenger processing.

The upgraded terminals will serve as Singapore's gateway to the Riau Islands and south-eastern coast of Peninsular Malaysia, as it handles about seven million plus passengers per year.



## On Board: Celebrity Edge Grand Plaza

*Celebrity Edge's* Grand Plaza is a gathering place for everything which goes on aboard the ship. The space serves as the home of the vessel's Martini Bar, and is flanked by cafe al bacio, and its patented Fine Cut Steakhouse. The Grand Plaza also transforms at night, most notably to the Silent Disco dancefloor.



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