



### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise news plus a full page from **Disney Cruise Line**.

### Craighead is out

**CRUISE** Lines International Association Chief Executive Officer Kelly Craighead will step away from her role at the end of the year.

Chair Jason Liberty said a search for her replacement will start immediately.

### Disney Magic Ahoy

**WHAT** can you do aboard a Disney Cruise Line's Magic Ahoy virtual cruise?

Quite a lot, it turns out. Virtual cruisers can enjoy fun new activities every day, collect Mickey stamps to win prizes, and more.

Head to **page 4** for more info.

## Luna to glow as NCL's newest ship

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line (NCL) has unveiled its next vessel, *Norwegian Luna*, with bookings opening today.

The new Prima Plus-class ship will be a sister to *Norwegian Aqua*, and will debut in Mar 2026, sailing seven-day Caribbean voyages from Miami.

*Luna* will accommodate approximately 3,550 guests, boasting an overall 10% size and capacity increase from Prima-class ships *Norwegian Prima* and *Norwegian Viva*.

The 21st ship in Norwegian's fleet will kick off her inaugural Caribbean season with two western itineraries to Roatan, Costa Maya, Cozumel, and Harvest Caye.

The ship will then sail seven-day cruises with calls to Eastern Caribbean destinations including Puerto Plata, Tortola, St. Thomas, and Great Stirrup Cay, NCL's

private island in the Bahamas.

*Luna* will feature the exclusive Aqua Slidecoaster, which will become the longest and fastest slide at sea when it debuts on board *Aqua*.

The ship will also boast the all-new luxurious three-bedroom Duplex Haven Suites in NCL's premium keycard-access-only complex, The Haven by Norwegian, which will also debut on board sister ship *Aqua*.

A variety of NCL's elevated guest experiences will also make their comeback on *Luna*, including Ocean Boulevard, the outdoor walkway which wraps around the ship to bring guests closer to the sea; Vibe Beach Club, the adults-only, open-air lounge; Infinity Beach, which provides sweeping views of the ocean; and an expansive, upper pool deck equipped with day beds for soaking up rays.

The vessel will also "shine brighter" with celestial-inspired hull art inspired by the reflection of moonlight on the sea by celebrated street artist Elle.

"*Luna* is the second vessel in our acclaimed Prima Plus-class, representing the continued evolution of our fleet," Vice President and Managing Director Ben Angell explained.

"This class offers everything Australian cruisers love - more space to relax, diverse dining options, upscale health & wellness facilities, and world-class entertainment venues.

"With the launch of *Norwegian Luna*, we continue to deliver more opportunities for our guests to embark on the holiday of their dreams across a choice of 400-plus destinations," Angell added.

Additional guest experiences aboard *Luna* will be unveiled in coming months. *MS*



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## Labadee is back

**ROYAL** Caribbean International (RCI) is set to return to Labadee next month, around six months after the cruise line suspended calls to its private Haitian island (**CW** 30 Apr).

The cruise line temporarily suspended calls to Labadee due to social upheaval emanating from a years-long national crisis.

The situation in the area has shown signs of improvement, such as the return of flights.

"Labadee is one of our fan-favourite private destinations and we are ready and excited to return in Oct," RCI said.

The first ship scheduled to visit Labadee will be *Adventure of the Seas*, which is set to arrive on its 08 Oct Eastern Caribbean cruise.

The itinerary includes stops in Puerto Plata and Perfect Day at CocoCay.

Several other ships from RCI's fleet, including *Freedom of the Seas* and *Independence of the Seas*, will also begin calling at Labadee next month, with the *Grandeur of the Seas* following in Nov.

RCI ships sailing in the region have replaced scheduled calls at Labadee with Falmouth, Grand Turk, George Town, Bimini, Perfect Day at CocoCay, or with a day at sea.

Smartertraveller currently advises Australians not to travel to Haiti.

## Local SALT flavours revealed

**SILVERSEA'S** new ship *Silver Nova* is set to debut in Asia-Pacific in Nov, with the ship's arrival marking the introduction of the cruise line's culinary concept SALT.

**CW** flagged the Australian introduction of the program earlier this year (**CW** 05 Mar), with the first taste to take place in Melbourne on Silversea's 'First Flavours: Native Ingredients and a Chef with a Mission' excursion.

Silversea's guests will learn from chef Nornie Bero, and how Australian chefs and home cooks are incorporating native ingredients in their menus.

They will then try their hand at making damper, an ancient Aussie bread, before a unique five-course lunch, sourced completely from local and native ingredients.

The excursion will be held on 27 Nov, 07 and 08 Jan, and 05 Feb.

The Australian SALT program will also see chef Tom Tilbury host guests for a seasonal foraging tour through the Adelaide Botanic Gardens with canapes and aperitifs served en route.

The 'Garden Foraging and Lunch with Chef Tom Tilbury at Adelaide Botanical Gardens' will see passengers enjoy a four-course lunch, paired with premium local wines, on four dates: 29 Nov, and 08 & 09 Feb.

There will also be a 'Cooking Masterclass with Analiese Gregory' in Tasmania, which will see guests embark on a day trip

from Hobart to The Bowmont, a heritage building on the banks of the Huon River, for an interactive cooking masterclass.

Gregory will guide guests on an immersive exploration of produce and foraging, followed by a lunch of local specialities, served with SA wines.

This masterclass will take place on 06 and 07 Dec, 10 Jan, and 02 and 03 Feb.

The new excursions can now be booked on the Silversea website.

*Nova* will arrive in Kushiro, Japan, on 27 Sep, crossing to Australia in Nov for a seven-voyage-season until Feb.

Cruises will range from 16 to 18 days, before she returns to Asia until Apr.

*Nova* will return to the Asia-Pacific region in Sep 2025 before undertaking a 47-day circumnavigation of Australia, departing from Melbourne.

"We are thrilled to finally be celebrating the arrival of the beautiful *Silver Nova* in Asia-Pacific," the cruise line's President Bert Hernandez said.

"Anticipation has been building among our valued guests and travel advisors in the region, and we're delighted to be able to introduce them to one of the most pioneering ships in experiential luxury cruise travel.

"*Nova* will be the most luxurious ship sailing in Asia-Pacific until she leaves the region in April," Hernandez added. *MS*

## Virgin NYE cruises

**VIRGIN** Voyages' New Year's Eve sailings through the Caribbean will incorporate the line's entire fleet this year.

*Scarlet Lady* and *Valiant Lady* will hit the Caribbean from Miami, both making stops at Virgin's exclusive Beach Club at Bimini.

*Valiant's* 'New Year's Ahoy' is a four-night sailing, while *Scarlet's* 'New Year's Ahoy' is a more leisurely eight-night option, making stops in Puerto Plata, San Juan, and St. Croix before cruising into Bimini and back to Miami.

*Resilient Lady* will sail from the cruise line's new home port in San Juan, with a seven-night voyage through the southern Caribbean.

## RCG financing

**ROYAL** Caribbean Group (RCG) has announced a \$1.5 billion senior unsecured notes offering, to refinance its existing debt.

The notes will mature in 2031, and are expected to be issued on or around 26 Sep 2024, with Royal Caribbean intending to use the proceeds to eliminate its remaining guaranteed debt.

The proceeds from the notes will also be used to repay all outstanding obligations under Royal Caribbean Group's *Silver Dawn* finance lease.

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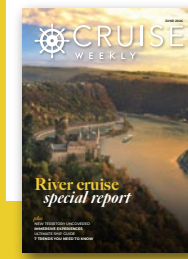
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**VIKING'S Explore TV** is set to return to the airwaves this weekend, with viewers to uncover the trade routes of the Middle Ages with the line.

The 15-day 'Trade Routes of the Middle Ages' voyage from Bergen to Barcelona will be the star of the show on the Nine Network, beginning Sat, and airing over four parts.

The episodes, hosted by experienced television producer Trevor Cochrane, are a valuable opportunity for agents and their clients to get a glimpse of what life is like onboard Viking ocean ships, as well as the diversity of experiences they can expect to enjoy on this itinerary.

Viewers will discover the history, landscapes, and diverse cities and towns along this ancient trade route from Scandinavia, and sailing into the Mediterranean - time to dig out your remote!

## Virgin on a successful Jerne



**VIRGIN Voyages** is celebrating the success of its partnership with Jerne, which has seen it connect with social media influencers and content creators.

The partnership has enjoyed a strong start to the year, with the Jan to Aug dollar value of new cruise booking referrals by Jerne creators outpacing the same period last year by 271%.

This has resulted in hundreds of qualified leads and both individual and group bookings for the cruise line.

New leads are placed in Jerne's proprietary B2B2C re-marketing engine for Virgin to take advantage of on-demand sales and marketing efforts to build an evergreen funnel of new consumer bookings.

"We are no stranger to leading the industry in sales and

marketing innovation, particularly for new-to-cruise travellers who are looking for a different experience at sea," Virgin Manager Influencer & Celebrity Partnerships Lauren Goerl said.

"Jerne makes it easier for us to reach, scale, and manage this incredible opportunity to showcase our stunning ships and turn sailors into sellers," she said.

Chief Executive Officer of Jerne **Tim Morgan (pictured)** said its partnerships with companies like Virgin are increasingly providing marketing cost savings and driving bookings to retail channels including travel advisors and direct sales.

"As arguably the most creative new entrant in premium ocean cruising in recent years, Virgin Voyages is no stranger to innovation," he said.

"We are thrilled to celebrate the success of Virgin Voyages in hosting dozens of creators on their ships in 2023 and 2024, where they create and share inspirational content, resulting in referral bookings from their followers that continue to build with every hosted experience."

## RCG partnership

**ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG)** and Marine company Wartsila have signed a life-cycle agreement to accelerate the cruise company's sustainability goals.

The five-year partnership is designed to optimise the performance, reliability, and availability of the ships' engines, to ensure the highest level of operational efficiency to support the company's sustainability goals.

This partnership is hoped to decrease the risk of unplanned maintenance and costly downtime, and improve performance to save fuel and reduce emissions.

"Collaborations, with longtime partners like Wartsila, serve as a cornerstone in our joint efforts to accelerate reliable and sustainable operations and future initiatives," RCG Executive VP and Head of Marine **Palle Laursen** said.

"It provides a solid framework for sustained collaboration and will have a meaningful impact."

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### EDITORIAL

Editor - Myles Stedman  
Deputy Editor - Matt Lennon  
Journalists - Adam Bishop, Janie Medbury  
Editor-at-large - Bruce Piper  
Publisher - Damian Francis  
Associate Publisher - Jo-Anne Hui-Miller  
[info@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:info@cruiseweekly.com.au)

### ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Head of Sales & Marketing - Sean Harrigan  
Advertising - Laura Aghajanian & Dante Muranty  
[advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au](mailto:advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au)

### HEAD OF OPERATIONS & CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Anna Piper

### ACCOUNTS

[accounts@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accounts@traveldaily.com.au)

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd  
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia  
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia  
Tel: (AU) +61 2 8007 6760 or (NZ) 0800 799 220  
Tel: (Int'l) 1300 799 220



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