



Cruise Weekly today

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

Nine ships on show

NINE upcoming cruise ships will make their debut at Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) 2025 Ocean Debut Virtual Showcase next month.

The online education series, which will run from 03 Feb to 07 Feb, will introduce the spectacular new fleet of ships due for launch this year.

Ships to be profiled will include MSC Cruises' *MSC World America*, Windstar Cruises' *Star Seeker*, Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Aqua*, and Aurora Expeditions' *Douglas Mawson*.

Attendees will also get a look at Disney Cruise Line's *Disney Adventure*, Oceania Cruises' *Allura*, Princess Cruises' *Star Princess*, Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Xcel*, and Royal Caribbean's *Star of the Seas*.

Essential facts and features of each new ship will be outlined, including elements like dining options, entertainment, accommodation styles, public spaces, unique features and designs, and what type of experience guests can expect when they step on board.

Participants will earn CLIA points for attending - **CLICK HERE** for more information.

HAL opens Australia 26-27

HOLLAND America Line's (HAL) 2026-2027 Australia, New Zealand, and Asia cruises are now open for booking, with four Legendary Voyages highlighting the season.

The program's cruises range from 13 to 35 days, with *Westerdam* and *Noordam* to explore the region from Sep 2026 to Apr 2027, with the latter ship to be based in Australia.

Three Legendary Voyages will sail from Australia, including two 'Legendary South Pacific Crossings', in Oct 2026 (34 days, Seattle to Sydney) and Mar 2027 (29 days, Sydney to Seattle).

There will also be a 35-day 'Legendary Australia Circumnavigation', sailing 15 Nov 2026, voyaging around the country, and including four ports in Papua New Guinea.

It will include overnight calls in Fremantle and Hobart, as well as late-night calls in Adelaide, Philip Island, and Melbourne.

There will also be a variety of 14-day Australia & New Zealand itineraries, open-jaw between Auckland and Sydney, each calling at Milford Sound and Fiordland National Park.

Guests can also embark on a 14-day 'South Australia Discovery Holiday', celebrating both Christmas and the new year aboard *Noordam*.

"The 35-day 'Legendary Australia Circumnavigation' is one of our deepest explorations of

Australia," VP Revenue Planning & Analytics Paul Grigsby said.

"For those who are looking to sample the region on a shorter sailing, our popular Australia and New Zealand cruises provide a great opportunity."

Meanwhile, *Westerdam* will sail Holland America's 2026-2027 Asia season, which will start earlier than it ever has before.

Highlighting the season is the return of the popular 28-day 'Legendary Coral Triangle & Great Barrier Reef', sailing to the Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia round trip from Singapore.

The cruise departs 03 Jan 2027, taking guests to the Coral Triangle - home to more than 75% of the world's coral species - including two days of scenic cruising of Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

Guests will also enjoy close-up encounters with the Mount Batutara and Krakatoa volcanos in Indonesia, and an overnight call in Bali, allowing guests more time to take in the iconic island.

More than half of the Asia season's itineraries depart from Tokyo, including the 13- and 14-day 'Circle Japan' cruises or a 14-day 'Japan and South Korea Discovery' voyage.

There are also several 14-day 'Far East Discovery' cruises sailing open-jaw between Hong Kong and Singapore, and a 14-day 'The Philippines, Taiwan and Japan' cruise departing Hong Kong. *MS*

Nassau on top

LAST year was another record-breaker for Nassau Cruise Port, with 5.6 million visitors in 2024.

The total makes Nassau the most popular cruise port in the Caribbean region.

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Azamara goes big

AZAMARA Cruises has announced its longest World Cruise yet for 2027, spanning 188 nights, five continents, almost 40 countries, and more than 100 destinations.

The once-in-a-lifetime cruise aboard *Azamara Quest* will visit some of the world's most popular destinations, including Sydney, Hong Kong, Tokyo, New York City, Amsterdam, and Stockholm.

The cruise departs from San Francisco on 05 Jan 2027, heading to Hawaii, before visiting Polynesia and NZ.

Quest will then head to the southern coast of Australia, including Tasmania, before cruising to Bali, kicking off a two-month exploration of Asia, including stops in Thailand, Vietnam, China, and more.

The ship will then cross the Pacific Ocean to Alaska, before travelling through the Panama Canal to Newfoundland, and then sailing the transatlantic to Northern Europe, visiting Ireland, Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Sweden, and concluding in Copenhagen.

The cruise will feature longer days in port (50) and more overnights (15) than previously, while also accessing smaller destinations which larger ships cannot reach, such as the Kiel Canal.

There will also be 12 exclusive AzAmazing Evenings.

AKTG reworks sales structure



ABERCROMBIE & Kent Travel Group (AKTG) has appointed new roles for Susan Haberle and Tony Archbold, as the company strengthens its market focus to further incorporate Crystal into its fold.

Haberle has been appointed Vice President Sales for Australia and NZ and Archbold as VP Sales for Asia, with both to oversee the Crystal brand, in addition to the flagship Abercrombie & Kent (A&K) marque.

AKTG will also expand its on-road trade sales team who will represent both the Crystal and A&K brands.

All of AKTG's current sales team will also now represent both brands, with the exception of Crystal Key Account Manager Jacqui Tufala, who will promote the company's luxury cruise line, and its expedition product.

AKTG has also welcomed Sada Memic to the newly created role of Director of Sales and Reservations Centre APAC, while Ann-Marie Chapman has been

promoted to Global VP Education, Sales and Service.

The renewed focus is in line with AKTG's "one company" strategy, which will see the firm strengthen its commitment to trade partners across the region.

AKTG will aim to reinforce its market presence in the APAC region, as it embarks on an exciting period of transformation, including a major brand refresh, and significant investment in product development.

"We are delighted to congratulate Susan and Tony in their new roles within AKTG," MD Debra Fox said.

"With Susan and Tony at the helm of our sales team in AU/NZ and Asia, we are confident that we will continue to lead the way in the region's luxury travel market," she added. *MS*

Pictured is the A&K team: Jacqui Tufala; Sales Director Alexa Papoulias; Susan Haberle; Vice President of Marketing Michelle Mickan; Ann-Marie Chapman; and Tony Archbold.

Exploring again

VIKING'S Explorer Sessions are hitting the road next month, coming to almost 50 regions around Australia between Feb and Apr.

The Explorer Sessions will visit 17 destinations in New South Wales/ACT, nine in Queensland, eight in Victoria, four in Western Australia, three in South Australia, and three in Tasmania.

The presentations will introduce attendees to cruising "The Viking Way", the differences between the cruise line's river, ocean, and expedition voyages, and what life is like on board its ships.

Viking will also showcase a selection of its most popular itineraries from the rivers of Europe and Southeast Asia to the ocean voyages through the Mediterranean, the Americas and Scandinavia, and its Antarctic expeditions.

CLICK HERE for a full list of locations, and to book.

Costa LNG mark

COSTA Cruises recently completed the first LNG refuelling of a cruise ship in Dubai, during *Costa Smeralda's* winter season in the United Arab Emirates.

The cruise line's flagship was refuelled by the *Green Zeebrugge* tanker ship, with one full tank able to power the ship for two-and-a-half weeks.

SPEAKERS



Wendy Wu
Founder,
Wendy Wu
Tours



Cinzia Burnes
COO &
Helloworld



Steve Labroski
CEO,
itravel

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MANY view the “polar plunge” popular on cruises to the Arctic and Antarctica as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, but in Harbin, one of China’s largest cities, a freezing dip is a way of life.

Despite the mercury dropping well below freezing in Harbin this winter, enthusiasm from local swimmers has not been dampened, with some training all year to be able to take a dip during the city’s icy winters.

The keen swimmers have carved out a pool in the Songhua River, breaking through the 10-centimetre layer of ice, before stripping down and plunging into the 10-metre pool.

Some even travel more than 1,500 kilometres, from China’s south, to test the waters.

With the outside temperature already at -13 Celsius, one wonders just how cold the water is.

Cunard Alaska ‘26 open



CUNARD Line’s Alaska 2026 voyages are on sale, with the brand to visit 31 destinations, including a range of countries outside of The Last Frontier.

Alaska voyages will sail round trip from Seattle between Apr and Sep 2026, on 23 round trips ranging from seven to 12 nights.

Queen Elizabeth (pictured) will visit destinations such as Ketchikan, Juneau, and Haines, as well as Glacier Bay National Park, and Hubbard Glacier.

Destinations such as Panama and Jamaica will also feature in the season, for guests looking for a longer sailing of up to 42 nights.

“Alaska is a truly unique destination, and we’re delighted to return with our 2026 program,” President Katie McAlister said.

“Sailing through its spectacular fjords and seeing the immense glaciers is an experience like no other,” she added.

“On board, guests can sip regionally inspired cocktails, enjoy cuisine influenced by local flavours, and hear fascinating stories from renowned explorers.”

Prices for a 10-night Seattle round trip to Alaska start from AU\$4,499, with US\$85pp onboard spending money, in a Britannia Balcony stateroom. *MS*

HAL renovation

HOLLAND America Line (HAL) has announced a US\$70 million multi-year expansion in Alaska, to enhance its Denali Lodge, and its cruisetours in the destination.

The three-year project will begin in 2025, and will not impact planned itineraries.

Enhancements will begin in Denali Lodge’s riverside interpretive trail, with scenic viewpoints, improved on-site wayfinding, refined menu offerings for restaurants, and public space improvements for the Cottonwood and Canyon Lodge guest room buildings.

It will continue into next year, with 48 remodelled rooms, a new coffee shop, and a remodelled Karstens Public House, with expanded indoor and outdoor seating to provide a more immersive experience.

The final year of the project will see new guest rooms built, with 120 suites and standard rooms, as well as a main lodge renovation which will include a new restaurant concept, a new lobby bar, and an enhanced coffee experience.

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