



Cruise Weekly today

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

Disney tips hiked

DISNEY Cruise Line (DCL) has increased its recommended gratuity guidelines for select positions by almost 15%, *Cruise Weekly* understands.

DCL is increasing its recommended gratuity by \$1.50 to \$16.00 per person, per day, and for Concierge staterooms by \$3.75 to \$27.25 per person, per day.

This update is the first since Jul 2022.

Gratuities will appear in a cruiser's onboard account, if they are not pre-paid, and can be removed or adjusted once on the ship.

There is also an 18% gratuity charged for the bar, beverages, wine, and deck service.

Celebrity to enter river with 10 new ships

CELEBRITY Cruises has announced the launch of river vacations, entering a new era with an order of 10 ships.

The cruise line will begin taking bookings for its new river cruises later this year, with the program to launch in Europe in 2027.

Celebrity has not revealed any details about the initial order of ships, but has said they will boast "the elevated design and sophistication" of its Edge-class ocean vessels.

"We're thrilled to announce our entry into the river cruise market through our Celebrity Cruises premium travel brand," said Jason Liberty, President & Chief Executive Officer of Celebrity's parent company, Royal Caribbean Group (RCG).

"Our guests and travel partners should expect us to do what we do best - innovate and elevate the river cruise experience as



we meet the growing demand for intimate, culturally enriching travel experiences.

"With about half of our guests having experienced or intending to vacation on a river cruise, we know they will enjoy Celebrity's elevated offering on the river."

Liberty said RCG will leverage its loyalty program across its three brands: Celebrity, Silversea, and its namesake Royal Caribbean, to deepen its customer engagement, and keep passengers within its

ecosystem of vacation offerings.

Celebrity President Laura Hodges Bethge added: "we've redefined travel on the ocean with our best-in-class hospitality, award-winning food and beverage experiences, and elevated design and style.

"We are thrilled to bring these experiences to the river and combine them with authentic, destination-rich itineraries that will give our guests an experience unlike any other." *MS*



In Celebration of Australia Day, invite your clients to enjoy a limited time offer of **US\$500 Shipboard Credit*** when you book before 7 February.

In addition they will also receive a **FREE 2-Category Suite Upgrade*** plus up to 40% off select 2025 and 2026 sailings when they book before 28 February.



SOJOURN TO OZ BALI (BENOA) TO AUCKLAND *Seven Seas Explorer**

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Carnival to home port in Victoria in '27

EXCLUSIVE

CARNIVAL Cruise Line will set sail from Melbourne in 2027, **CW** can reveal, adding a third Aussie home port for the brand.

Victorians will be able to embark from their home state aboard *Carnival Adventure* - one of the line's former P&O Australia ships - on a month-long ex-Melbourne program.

Adventure will arrive in the Victorian capital (pictured) on a cruise from Singapore in Mar 2027, taking guests on a 16-day holiday through Malaysia and Bali, before sailing to Western Australia, and then Melbourne.

The ship will offer four voyages from Australia's second-biggest city, including three to Kangaroo Island, and a two-day getaway to New South Wales, pitched at first-time cruisers.

Adventure will then resume sailing from her traditional



Sydney home port.

"We know Victorians are passionate about cruising and have been calling for more options to sail from their home state," Vice President Sales & Marketing Kara Glamore said.

"This is about offering Victorians the chance to enjoy a fun and affordable holiday without the hassle or cost of flying."

"These itineraries are part of an exciting new chapter in

cruising for Australia, as Carnival Cruise Line prepares to expand to four ships, when P&O's *Pacific Adventure* and *Pacific Encounter* join the Carnival family in Mar.

The news comes in a week in which mainstream media has speculated on hundreds of a millions of dollars in losses for Melbourne's cruise sector.

Bookings for *Adventure's* Victorian program are available through travel advisors now. **MS**



On location on
Viking Polaris

Today's issue of **CW** is coming to you courtesy of **Viking**, which is hosting key industry partners aboard *Viking Polaris*.

AFTER a beautiful morning in Port Lockroy, we are this afternoon moving to Damoy Point, where guests aboard *Viking Polaris* will have their first opportunity to set foot on Antarctic land.

The surrounding vista casts a striking scene with dark, rugged mountains peaking through thick white snow and ice.

This afternoon's expeditions will see guests embark on Zodiac landings ashore with the vessel's specialist guides to see the local colonies of Gentoo penguins and their chicks.

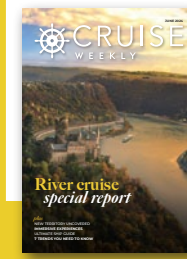
HAPPY
CHINESE
NEW YEAR

UP TO
\$200
USD
ONBOARD CREDIT

2025 SELECT SAILINGS

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T&Cs Apply



Discover our River Cruise Special Report

[Click here](#)



On location on
Viking Venus

Today's issue of *CW* is coming to you courtesy of Viking, which is this week hosting us on a leg of its Grand Australia Navigation itinerary.

THE sailing is only a day away from reaching Darwin, where guests on board will have the chance to explore the northern city through a variety of adventurous land excursions.

But before then we have another day at sea sailing north of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

There are plenty of activities to enjoy, from attending a lecture about Australian ecology with Wendy Jennings, to a baggo tournament pitting guests against the crew.

Also on offer are lessons in perfecting the game of bridge, and a tutorial in how to dance to classic ABBA tunes.

Uniworld world cruise back



UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises is reintroducing its 'Rivers of the World' voyage for next year, which will also be the company's 50th anniversary.

The 50-night journey, which will be the first Rivers of the World voyage since 2024, will span six countries, and feature five-star hotel stays.

The five-part cruise will sail from Brussels to Amman, from 16 Apr to 05 Jun 2026.

Adding to the intrigue, the second part of the cruise will be one of Uniworld's Mystery Cruises, which are also returning this year.

The Mystery Cruise will sail aboard Uniworld's new ship *Elisabeth*, set to arrive later this year (**CW** 14 Mar), with the destination to remain a secret.

The first part will see cruisers board the new *Emilie* for a voyage through Belgium and the

Netherlands, with an included hotel stay at Hotel Amigo.

Following the Mystery Cruise, passengers will set sail on the *Joie de Vivre* for a voyage through Paris and into Normandy's countryside, with a show at the Moulin Rouge included.

This cruise will link up with part four in Southern France aboard *Catherine*, which will be complete with a visit to an olive farm, and three nights in Cassis.

The 'Rivers of the World' voyage will come to an end in the Middle East, starting with five nights in Cairo, where passengers will sail down the Nile to visit ancient wonders, before joining a luxury land tour in Jordan.

The final part will also see passengers enjoy stays in Four Seasons Hotel at Nile Plaza; Kempinski Ishtar Dead Sea; Movenpick Resort Petra; and The Ritz-Carlton, Amman. *MS*

Windstar Japan '27

SMALL ship luxury line Windstar Cruises has opened its 2027 Japan itineraries for booking earlier than planned.

The decision comes off the back of "unprecedented demand" for the sailings, with Windstar nearly selling out its itineraries for next year.

The 2027 voyages will take place on board *Star Seeker* on seven dates between Mar and May, just in time for cherry blossom season.

Windstar's early booking offer includes a free upgrade to all-inclusive fares which bundle in wi-fi, gratuities, unlimited select alcoholic beverages, plus \$200 onboard credit per stateroom.

A Royal-ly big profit

ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) is eyeing off a strong profit this year, on the back of robust cruise demand.

RCG's calendar year Q4 revenue jumped 13% to US\$3.76b, comparing favourably with estimates.

The firm's flagged expected adjusted earnings per share (EPS) for the year in the range of US\$14.35 to US\$14.65.

The adjustment is attributed to strong demand, continuing into the new year thanks to a record start to wave season.

Adjusted earnings per share for last year was US\$11.80, RCG reported, a slightly stronger result than the expected US\$11.57-US\$11.62, largely thanks to close-in demand and onboard revenue.




On Board: *Viking Venus*

The LivNordic Spa

Located on deck one, this wellness area has a wide range of amenities and services to make passengers feel relaxed.

There are many types of Scandinavian-inspired massages and facials to choose from, but arguably the centerpiece is the Snow Grotto, a crisp space with gentle snowfall to detoxify the body after a sauna.

Holland  America

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PORTHOLE

THIS week, Royal Caribbean is celebrating the one year anniversary of a very special member of its staff.

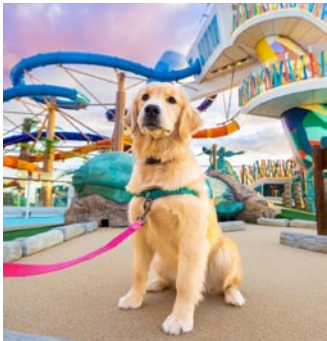
Rover (**pictured**), a two-year-old golden retriever, has been spreading joy on board *Icon of the Seas* for more than 365 days as 'Chief Dog Officer'.

In her first year of service, Rover has attracted quite a fanbase, with more than 50,000 people around the world following her seafaring adventures on Instagram.

According to Rover's caretaker, Maya Marques Trindade, the Chief Dog Officer's "happy place" is Perfect Day at CocoCay, where she can run on the beach.

Rover also loves to play ball, meet passengers, and show off her paw-some tricks, like giving high-fives and handshakes.

Royal Caribbean will soon expand its canine talent pool, introducing a resident dog named Sailor on *Icon's* sister ship, *Star of the Seas*, when she launches later this year.



MSC commits to the USA



MSC Cruises has announced its long-term commitment to Port Canaveral, with deployments at the Floridian destination confirmed through to 2028.

The cruise line will bring one of its World-class ships to Port Canaveral, continuing MSC's commitment to deploying its newest vessels in the United States (**CW** 23 Mar 2023).

MSC's fourth World-class ship will begin offering year-round, seven-night Caribbean cruises starting with the winter 2026-2027 season.

The as-yet unnamed ship will join *MSC World America* as MSC's second World-class vessel operating in the United States, and *MSC Grandiosa* (**pictured**) as the second of the cruise line's ships to sail from Port Canaveral.

MSC Seashore will also continue to offer year-round three- and four-night voyages to The Bahamas and Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve.

The cruise line in 2023 announced it was set to operate year-round sailings from New York City for the first time, with

MSC Meraviglia homeporting from the US' most populous city.

"Our commitment to Port Canaveral is stronger than ever, thanks to the incredible support from our partners there and the growing demand from our guests who love the port's convenient location," local Executive Vice President & Chief Commercial Officer Lynn Torrent said.

"Having ships dedicated to offering both short and seven-night cruises year-round will ensure we have the right options available no matter when someone wants to sail.

"We're especially excited to bring a World-class ship to Port Canaveral, continuing our long-standing pledge to deploy our most modern and innovative ships in the Caribbean market."

The move on the United States comes as MSC is set to debut its first-ever Super Bowl commercial this year (**CW** 10 Jan).

Actors Drew Barrymore and Orlando Bloom will star in the commercial, which will feature the duo aboard *MSC World America* (**CW** 28 Jan). **MS**



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

A big year for events

IF THE past few days are anything to go by, 2025 is going to be a big year for education and events among CLIA agents.

Already, hundreds of tickets for Cruise360 have been booked within days of their release, signalling a huge enthusiasm for our expanded two-day conference in Brisbane this Aug.

We're seeing a similar hunger for other CLIA events, including our CLIA LIVE series which is now sold out in Sydney, Auckland and Christchurch, and has only a few places left in other cities.

Next month's Ocean Debut Virtual Showcase has also proved popular, and we now have hundreds of registrations.

This is a chance to hear about nine of the spectacular new cruise ships launching in 2025, and it's a great opportunity to learn online from a variety of different cruise lines over the course of a week.

CLIA's events and education programs are stronger than ever this year and we encourage everyone to get involved.

Super earlybird rates are still available for Cruise360, exclusively to CLIA travel agent members for a limited time.

Visit www.cruising.org.au to view the full range of CLIA events and education opportunities for travel agent members.

