



Caught in the Southern Cross-fire

P&O Cruises Australia has overturned a ban on the national flag on its short Australia Day cruises, after the issue was highlighted by New South Wales One Nation MP Mark Latham.

The Daily Telegraph has reported that P&O Australia President Marguerite Fitzgerald stepped in to override the decision, which was set to ban both the national flag and the anthem on the upcoming cruises.

While an internal memo granted an "Australia Day-themed cake" in food & beverage areas, it also said "no use of the Australia flag is permitted".

The memo stipulated no flags on cakes, no flag face-painting, no flag temporary tattoos, no flag towels, and no buntings.

Fitzgerald told the newspaper the directive was "news to her", and a "misunderstanding", adding P&O had wanted to ensure



everyone had a good time on the cruise and "feels included".

"The Australian, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander flags and the national anthem will be all part of the program," she said.

P&O's Australia Day cruises will see *Pacific Explorer* (pictured) call at White Bay on Thu, *Pacific*

Adventure anchored in Sydney Harbour, and *Pacific Encounter* at Airlie Beach in Queensland, on her way to Indonesia.

Australia Day controversy has also engulfed other players, including retailer Kmart, which last week decided not to sell any Australia Day merchandise.

Cruise Weekly today

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

New NCL BDM

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has appointed Chris Catanzariti as Business Development Manager for NSW, ACT, and South Australia.

Catanzariti will report to Senior Sales Manager Angela Middleton, and comes to Norwegian with extensive experience in delivering marketing, sales, partnerships, and event strategies.

He comes to Norwegian from his most recent job with Linkd Tourism as an Account Manager.

Catanzariti has also previously worked with BridgeClimb Sydney, Evolution Travel Collective, and more.

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Tauck: Europe river demand strong

TAUCK is eyeing further success in Australia, as it sees incredible demand for river cruises sailing the Rhine, Douro, Danube, Rhone, and Seine.

Much-loved European destinations such as Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal continue to be popular with Australians, Tauck has revealed, as the luxury travel company believes it is well-positioned to further build upon its success in the country.

Tauck has witnessed near-record pre-season bookings, and strong interest from both past guests and new-to-Tauck travellers, following a dramatic rebound from the pandemic.

Local Managing Director David Clark said Tauck's staged restart has paved the way for its success Down Under, and around the world.

"Here in Australia, we have been continuing to grow our existing customer base and remind agents



of our unique value proposition," he said.

"Our phenomenal growth in Australia last year, has given us the experience, resources and momentum to confidently move forward into 2023.

"There are always challenges, but we're very optimistic for the future and of course in this region in particular."

Tauck believes luxury and experiential are king, with

guests looking for intimate, personalised and exclusive access to destinations and attractions.

The company has found its guests want a travel provider who can arrange unique, one-of-a-kind, off-the-beaten-track experiences.

An increased number of Tauck's guests are also booking Business class air travel, or Premium Economy at the very least.

Pictured: Eiffel Tower.

I bet you'll like this

HOLLAND America Line (HAL) is expanding the casino on five of its ships.

More than 140 new slot machines and video slot poker have been added to *Eurodam*, *Koningsdam*, *Nieuw Amsterdam*, *Nieuw Statendam*, and *Rotterdam*.

Non-smoking areas have also been added to the casinos of Holland America's Pinnacle-class ships, while there will be more slot tournaments and rewards.

"Casino play is a key part of their Holland America Line cruise vacation for many of our guests, and we were able to take advantage of some extra space on our Pinnacle-class ships to add more gaming machines," Senior Vice President Guest Commerce & Performance Analytics Daniel Materassi said.



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Additional Asia cruises for Spectrum

ROYAL Caribbean International has announced additional 12-night sailings exploring Asia on *Spectrum of the Seas* (pictured).

The cruises will voyage between Singapore and Japan later this year, with prices starting from \$1,583 per person.

Huge demand for longer itineraries has prompted the additional sailings, which will also explore Hong Kong and Vietnam.

The new 12-night cruises depart from Singapore and Tokyo on 19 Sep and 01 Oct respectively, and can be enjoyed back-to-back, which means guests can visit up to 10 destinations across three countries over the 24-night adventure.

Destinations unique to the new itineraries include Hue, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima, Okinawa and Ishigaki.

Holidaymakers can choose to explore Vietnam's imperial capital, or the cities of Japan on



their own or through a variety of shore excursions that will take them to uncover the sights, sounds, and cultures of Asia.

These new itineraries are currently open and available to book now.

Director of Sales Dave Humphreys said cruises in Asia continue to prove hugely popular for Australian guests.

"On our longer sailings, guests can go on an extended adventure and explore must-see

destinations at their own pace," he said.

"As the majority of our staterooms on 12-night Singapore to Tokyo sailings were sold out by the end of 2022, we've listened to our loyal guests and have modified our schedule to include more trips to this vibrant region.

"These extremely popular sailings on *Spectrum of the Seas* provide travellers with even more choice onboard Asia's largest and newest cruise ship."

New Celestyal CCO

LEE Haslett is set to succeed Leslie Peden at Celestyal Cruises as its Chief Commercial Officer.

Haslett is currently Virgin Atlantic's Vice President of Global Sales, and he has also worked with the airline's holiday package offshoot Virgin Holidays.

He will report to Celestyal CEO Chris Theophilides, once he takes up the role on 20 Feb.

"Fresh on the heels of Celestyal significantly growing our trade-facing commercial team, Lee will oversee a global team of over 60 travel professionals covering the whole spectrum of Celestyal's commercial activities including sales, strategic business development, marketing, commercial PR functions, contact centres," Theophilides said.

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AN INFINITY pool on a cruise ship is an increasingly popular choice for vessel designers, but this is ridiculous!

Royal Caribbean International's *Harmony of the Seas* recently created an "unintended infinity pool", likened to a waterfall, on her new year's cruise.

According to guest accounts, while on her voyage, *Harmony* made a hard turn, which caused water to spill out of the pool and through into the atrium, creating the waterfall-like effect.

While the incident, documented **HERE** on TikTok, attracted much ridicule online, guests aboard *Harmony* were seemingly unbothered, with one saying many of the passengers had no awareness of the situation whatsoever, and the water was cleaned up in 10 minutes.

Road trip by sea

AN AUSTRALIAN "summer road trip by sea" in 2024 is available through Cruise Traveller.

Book by 28 Feb for savings and a bonus tour on the Seabourn Cruise Line-led voyage.

The 17-night package departs in Feb 2024 from Sydney aboard *Seabourn Odyssey*.

Save up to \$1,795 per person, with the complimentary pre-cruise tour of the Blue Mountains.

NCLH already 60% full

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings' (NCLH) cumulative booked position was approximately 62% for the full year ending 2023, as of the end of last year.

In its latest financial reports, NCLH said the booked position was in line with previously outlined expectations, and was at higher prices than 2019 at a similar point in time.

Fourth quarter occupancy for last year was approximately 87%, with the gap versus 2019 levels.

NCLH also noted it is experiencing strong and broad-based onboard revenue generation.

However, NCLH expects to report a loss for last year, and the first quarter of 2023.

Total revenues are expected to be in the range of approximately USD\$4.7 billion to USD\$5 billion for the year, compared to USD\$600 million for the year before.

NCLH expects its adjusted EBITDA to be nearly break-even for the six months ended 31 Dec.

MEANWHILE, NCLH has announced the proposed offering of USD\$500 million of senior secured notes, due in 2028.

They will be backed by 13 members of NCLH's fleet, with the profits to be used to repay a portion of the loans due in Jan 2024, including any accrued and unpaid interest.

Hurtigruten birthday sale

SAVE almost \$4,000 per cabin with Hurtigruten's 130th anniversary sale.

For a limited time, the cruise line's Norwegian Coastal Express is offering travellers a saving of up to \$3,600 per cabin.

The best discounts are available now through to 05 Feb, and can be accessed on all suite categories on select departures.

Enjoy savings of up to \$3,600 per cabin on Hurtigruten's premium Svalbard Express and North Cape Express journeys, launching later this year.

Alternatively, save up to \$2,000 per cabin on the line's 12-day Classic Round Trip Voyage, the 11-day Voyage of Discovery, the six-day Classic Voyage South, or the seven-day Classic Voyage North.

Burnie cancellations

AT LEAST five ships have been unable to dock in Burnie this season due to weather and scheduling changes.

Between Nov and Apr, 35 cruise ships were due to dock in Burnie but five have already been unable to make the stop.

Three were cancelled due to weather conditions, and the other two were due to itinerary changes.

Burnie City Council said one of the cancellations was because Australian Border Force services in the city were not available to process a ship arriving from New Zealand, although TasPorts Group Executive Kate Dean said the decision was made by the cruise line.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	
<i>Viking Mars</i>	23 Jan
<i>Silver Whisper</i>	23 Jan
<i>Ovation of the Seas</i>	24 Jan
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	24 Jan
<i>Viking Mars</i>	24 Jan
MELBOURNE	
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	23 Jan
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	24 Jan
GEELONG	
<i>Seven Seas Explorer</i>	24 Jan
PHILLIP ISLAND	
<i>Star Breeze</i>	24 Jan
PORT ADELAIDE	
<i>Grand Princess</i>	24 Jan
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	24 Jan
BURNIE	
<i>Star Breeze</i>	23 Jan
AUCKLAND	
<i>Silver Shadow</i>	23 Jan
CHRISTCHURCH	
<i>Viking Orion</i>	24 Jan
WELLINGTON	
<i>Norwegian Spirit</i>	23 Jan
<i>Viking Orion</i>	23 Jan
<i>ms Noordam</i>	24 Jan
AKAROA	
<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	24 Jan
<i>Silver Muse</i>	24 Jan
DUNEDIN	
<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	23 Jan
<i>Silver Muse</i>	23 Jan
<i>Le Laperouse</i>	24 Jan
<i>Majestic Princess</i>	24 Jan
FIORDLAND	
<i>Majestic Princess</i>	23 Jan
<i>Oceania Regatta</i>	23 Jan
NAPIER	
<i>Azamara Quest</i>	24 Jan
<i>Norwegian Spirit</i>	24 Jan