



### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Cruiseco**.

### Cruiseco + Disney

**DISNEY** Cruise Line is returning for a magical new season, and it's easier than ever to book with Cruiseco.

The line has announced a whole new season sailing from Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, with Cruiseco offering direct links to Disney's API.

Travel advisors have access to live inventory availability, interactive deck plans, instant booking confirmations, and comprehensive itinerary details for each sailing.

To celebrate the return of Disney, Cruiseco is also offering USD\$50 onboard credit - see **page 4**.

## Carnival on course for recovery

**CARNIVAL** Corporation has reported record bookings and customer deposits over the last three months, with its second quarter results showing "we are clearly gaining momentum on an upward trajectory," according to Chief Executive Officer Josh Weinstein (**pictured**).

The company's adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) was USD\$681 million - but the net loss overall was USD\$407 million due in main to its heavy debt burden.

Carnival saw acceleration of demand, with a new all-time-high for forward bookings, and total deposits reaching USD\$7.2 billion, surpassing the previous quarterly record by USD\$1 billion.

Weinstein noted the strong demand environment had enabled Carnival to raise ticket prices, even while at the same time maintaining record onboard

spending levels, building occupancy and growing capacity.

Operating income for the quarter was USD\$120 million, in the black for the first time since the post-pandemic resumption of guest operations.

Carnival saw record second quarter revenue of USD\$4.9b, and booking lead times extended in North America and Australia to the furthest out ever seen.

Looking forward, Carnival expects occupancy of 100% plus for the full year, and an adjusted EBITDA of USD\$4.1 billion to USD\$4.25 billion.

**MEANWHILE**, Carnival said it is expecting to approach "investment grade leverage metrics" by the end of 2026, under a newly launched SEA Change Program which specifies key strategic goals over the next three years.

The initiatives focus on Sustainability (more than 20%



reduction in carbon intensity versus 2019), EBITDA (a 50% increase in adjusted earnings per passenger day - the highest level in almost 20 years), and Adjusted Return on Invested Capital (a doubling of yields to 12%).

Weinstein said Carnival would achieve the targets by focusing on initiatives to drive net yield growth while maintaining its "industry leading cost base and fuel efficiency" to improve margins and grow cash flow, which the company believes will enable further debt reduction.

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## AIDA vegan eatery

AIDA Cruises is offering new vegan gastronomy on board three of its ships with Soulkitchen.

The cruise line expanded its restaurant variety on 24 Jun, with guests aboard *AIDAnova*, *AIDaPerla*, and *AIDaPrima* now able to enjoy sustainable dishes made from fresh and primarily plant-based ingredients.

Soulkitchen is open for breakfast and dinner, offering vegan treats to start the day, as well as fair trade coffee, organic tea, fresh orange juice, and smoothies.

At night, Soulkitchen serves a daily changing, three-course menu, offering a variety of vegan and plant-based meat & seafood alternatives, such as coconut lemongrass soup, almond barley risotto, and a trio of cremes brulee.

## They'll never take our cruises!

**"TENACIOUS"** Australian travellers are refusing to give up their holiday, according to new research from Carnival Cruise Line.

Australians are prioritising a holiday, and are reluctant to give them up, despite rising financial pressures, the research has revealed.

The study reported Australians are more likely to spend on a holiday than renovate their house or buy new clothes, with Carnival having seen an increase in bookings by 20% this year compared to its last full cruise season in 2019.

Despite 12 interest rate hikes since May last year, 84% of Australians say they need a holiday now more than ever.

In fact, Carnival's research reveals Aussies are more likely to book a holiday than have brunch with friends, go to the movies, or

eat/drink out.

When asked what they've had to sacrifice this year, expensive clothing, handbags and footwear (86%), a new car (82%) and renovations (79%) were more likely to hit the chopping block than a holiday (53%).

Despite being able to justify the cost of a holiday, Australians still need to overcome some stress points when it comes to taking time off, which include blowing the holiday budget (41%) and the hassle of navigating airports and flying (32%).

Nearly half of us (45%) are also discouraged from taking a holiday because it's too stressful to plan.

"From three-course meals, to Broadway-style entertainment, to kids clubs, and Dr Seuss-at-Sea activities, and more, a cruise with Carnival is a value-packed holiday, with so much included," Vice President Kara Glamore said.

## Viking weekly deal

**VIKING'S** deal of the week is its Iconic Western Mediterranean voyage from Barcelona to Rome or vice versa.

Explore the French Riviera and Tuscany on the eight-day voyage, which is priced from \$4,995 per person, with a \$2,000 flight credit per couple.

Passengers can also discover turreted fortresses and grand cathedrals, with Viking's 15-day Lyon, Provence & the Rhineland voyage.

Cruising from Avignon to Amsterdam or vice versa, this itinerary is also on sale now, priced from \$6,895 per person, with a saving of up to \$4,600 per couple.

Passengers can also score a flight credit on the cruise line's Viking Homelands itinerary.

For additional information, visit [vikingcruises.com.au](http://vikingcruises.com.au).



P&O CRUISES

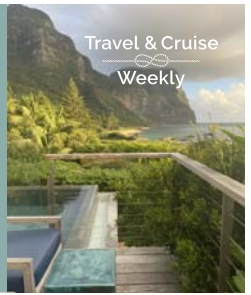
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**A COUPLE** has been married on a P&O Cruises ship, 30 years after they met on...another P&O ship.

The bride, who back in the early 1990s was working on one of the cruise line's ships as a performer, met her future husband, who was a passenger.

Although they clicked at first, it wasn't until five years ago, and a number of meetings in between, that they tied the knot - aboard the aptly named *Pacific Encounter* - the serendipity of it all!

The ceremony took place at the rear of the ship, before moving to the restaurant, and then the disco.

## Cayman upgrade?

**THE** Cayman Islands' cruise sector has been urged to create new attractions, as tourism officials say the territory is on track to meet its passenger target of 1.2 million by the end of the year.

If the Caymans are to maintain and grow this number, it must diversify its products and services, a local press briefing was told.

Department of Tourism Director Rosa Harris said between Jan and May, 666,000 cruise passengers arrived in the Caymans, which represents around 74% of its tourism figures from 2019.

## Watch out for Explora



**EXPLORA** Journeys has unveiled its prestigious luxury watch and jewellery brands retail offering on board *Explora I* and *Explora II*, in the run-up to the cruise line's Jul launch (**CW** 14 Apr).

Cartier, Panerai, and Piaget will all have a spacious and elegant environment on board both ships.

"We are delighted to be launching this new luxury retail offering on board *Explora I*," Chief Executive Michael Ungerer said.

"Our goal is always to provide our travellers with an exceptional and unforgettable experience, and we believe that our new luxury retail partners, offering the best in Swiss luxury watchmaking and fine jewellery, will help us to achieve that goal.

"Our guests are discerning travellers who expect the very best, and we are proud to be able to offer them a shopping experience that reflects our commitment to quality, luxury, and excellence."

**MEANWHILE**, Explora hosted a "sky-high" trade dinner (**pictured**) as part of last week's International Luxury Travel

Market Asia Pacific.

The dinner hosted 30 attendees from Travel Associates at Artemis Grill & Sky Bar, 40 storeys up in Singapore's CapitaGreen tower.

Guests enjoyed iconic views of the Singapore skyline during their four-course meal with the Explora team: Chris Austin, Nicole Costantin, Gillian Seller, and James McCullagh.

"Our travel advisor partners, and especially those from Travel Associates are central to our brand's success," Austin enthused.

## Tax pushed back

**THE** Bahamas' cruise passenger tax increase has been pushed back to Jan 2024, the government has decided.

The increase was set to take effect next month, but according to Deputy Prime Minister Chester Cooper, that date has now been pushed back seven months.

The Bahamas' government intends to raise the tax on visitors to Nassau, Freeport, and Bimini from BSD\$18 (AUD\$27) to BS\$23 (AU\$34).

Passengers who depart from a cruise line's private island without visiting another port in the Bahamas will face a slightly higher tax of BSD\$25 (AUD\$37).

In addition to the departure tax increases, the government plans to impose a BSD\$5 tourism environmental tax and a BSD\$2 tourism enhancement tax on each passenger.

Carnival Cruise Line President Christine Duffy has been a noted critic of the tax, with her company one which operates a private island in the Bahamas.

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# DISNEY CRUISE LINE IS RETURNING FOR A MAGICAL NEW SEASON



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Announcing a whole new Season sailing of voyages from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Auckland from **October 2024 to February 2025**.

At CruiseCO, we've made it easy for you to book; with direct links to Disney's API, we give you access to **LIVE** inventory availability, interactive deck plans, instant booking confirmations, and comprehensive itinerary details for each sailing to help you plan the perfect voyage for your clients.

**PLUS!** To celebrate the return of Disney Cruise Line, CruiseCO are offering **US\$50 onboard credit\*** to the first 250 bookings!

Secure your clients' spots on a magical Disney Cruise Line holiday – Contact CruiseCO today!



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