



Ponant sales up 80% versus 2019

PONANT is experiencing a post-pandemic global sales boom, recording the best quarterly sales result in its 35-year history for the three months to 31 Mar.

The new record was 80% above the same period in 2019, with the Asia Pacific market contributing almost 21% of the volume, according to Chief Sales Marketing & Communications Officer Herve Bellaiche.

“This result not only reflects our industry recovery but also highlights Ponant’s ability to stand out in its market,” he said.

The figures were released during a visit to Australia by Chief Executive Officer Herve Gastinel, who’s **pictured** second from right in Sydney yesterday with some of the Asia Pacific team, including Director of Marketing & Communications Charles Boutet; CEO Chris Hall; Chair Sarina Bratton; and Commercial Director Deb Corbett.

“The unparalleled quality of service, which has made the company’s reputation over the last 35 years, is more than ever trusted by passengers,” Bellaiche added.

He reiterated Ponant’s small ship strategy, saying “whilst we remain vigilant about the changes impacting our industry and can swiftly adapt our practices when necessary, we are more than



ever confident in our business model: small ships that are respectful of their destinations and environmental issues, with an even higher quality of service”.

Gastinel and Bratton last week experienced the Kimberley aboard the recently refurbished *Le Ponant* sailing vessel, which the company has dedicated to the Asia Pacific market.

The renovation to Ponant’s inaugural vessel saw her previous 32 staterooms consolidated into just 16 large luxury spaces, with a 1:1 passenger-to-crew ratio.

Ponant is also continuing to build its fleet, with the most recent addition being the hybrid LNG/electric *Le Commandant Charcot* polar-class expedition ship, which takes guests to the

most remote regions of the planet.

An announcement is expected shortly with further details about a planned 14th vessel which aims to have “no impact on the environment when sailing” by combining several non-fossil fuel energy sources, including wind propulsion, like *Le Ponant*.

The cruise line has produced a scope of work for the new ship including technical specifications for a tender process, with the aim of having it in service by 2025.

The zero-emissions newbuild continues Ponant’s ongoing sustainability strategy, which includes key environmental commitments and places R&D into new technologies at the core of the company’s growth strategy.

Viking river to go year-round from Europe

VIKING has announced a new Treasures of the Rhine itinerary, with the new winter voyage to establish the cruise line as the first to operate year-round river voyages in Europe.

The new Middle Rhine itinerary debuts in Dec, offering guests easier access to landmarks when there are typically fewer crowds.

The 10-day Treasures of the Rhine itinerary allows guests to discover the enchanting

landscape and rich cultures of the Middle Rhine, admiring the terraced vineyards dating back to the Romans, and tasting the region’s renowned red and white wines, while exploring Amsterdam, Basel, and Cologne.

“The Middle Rhine is one of our most popular destinations, with constantly changing views of hilltop castles, historic towns and terraced vineyards along the steep valley sides,” Chair Torstein Hagen said.

New Heritage offer

HERITAGE Line has launched an exclusive travel advisor offer, providing the opportunity to experience the brand’s immersive South East Asia sailings first-hand with a guest.

For just USD\$180 per night, advisors can sail between Jun and Sep on the Lower Mekong between Vietnam and Cambodia, or Northern Vietnam’s iconic Ha Long Bay or Lan Ha Bay.

Cruise Weekly today

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

New Grand Journeys

CRYSTAL Cruises has announced its Grand Journeys for next year, extending from 37- to 68-night itineraries.

The Journeys complement *Crystal Serenity’s* World Cruise for next year, which will visit 29 countries and 62 destinations over the course of up to 141 nights.

One of the highlights will be *Crystal Symphony’s* Sydney to Singapore cruise, which sails from 24 Jan to 12 Mar.

CLICK HERE to book one of the Journeys.




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ROYAL Caribbean
International has revealed two-thirds of TikTok users would book a holiday at random, following a trend growing on the social media platform.

The new TikTok filter allows a user to randomly choose their next holiday location, following a trend of spontaneity.

Sixty-six percent of those who use TikTok say they have or would let fate decide their getaway destination, or book a last-minute holiday.

The current desire to pack up and go is so strong, results showed only 6% of people would not go to a holiday destination selected at random.

Nineteen percent of consumers said they'd be happy to arrive at an airport with no destination in mind.

This is beyond a Gen Z trend too, it appears spontaneous travel is sweeping the nation across multiple age groups, with research showing 68% of 25-34s and 44% of 35-44s said they would let the filter decide a destination at random.

Fortunately for cruising, almost half of participants (46%) in the survey agreed cruising is a good option for last-minute travel.

A quarter of respondents (25%) said they want to visit multiple destinations in one trip, making a cruise ideal.

Mornington first cruise pax

MORNINGTON
Island residents were thrilled to welcome the first international cruise ship tourists to its destination in the Gulf of Carpentaria on Thu.

About 100 tourists from Silversea Cruises' *Silver Explorer*, which was on her way from Cairns to Broome, disembarked on the island - about 70% of whom are Australian and 30% from overseas.

They were welcomed to country, and provided with a welcome show, before embarking on art tours, and cultural knowledge tours guided by the Island's traditional owners.

Elders told stories and gave cultural insight into Mornington Island's land, the salt pans, the beaches, the freshwater creeks, and the black soil plains.

Knowledge which has been passed down over 60,000 years was also shared with the visitors,




including bush medicine, and the use of plants in constructing didgeridoos, boomerangs, and spears.

Mornington Shire Council Mayor Kyle Yanner told the ABC a tourism industry on the Island would provide a huge boost to the local economy and help foster jobs and engagement among the town's youth.

"This was so exciting for our little community.

"This an opportunity to showcase how amazing and beautiful our people and our country here is."

Mornington Shire Council said it is looking forward to welcoming more cruise ships in the future.



**AUSTRALIAN CRUISE ASSOCIATION
ACA
UPDATE**
from the SATC's
Andrew McKinnon

Strong outlook for SA cruise

CRUISING has made a buoyant return to South Australia, with a record number of ships visiting the state's shores in 2022-23, more than prior to the pandemic.

This season, SA welcomed a total of 103 ship visits across Adelaide, Port Lincoln, Kangaroo Island and various expedition locations.

We were also pleased to host the ACA quarterly board meeting in Adelaide, where we showcased some of SA's best food and wine offerings to celebrate the success of the season and discuss the exciting future of cruise in SA.

The 2023-24 season is on the horizon, with even more visits scheduled.

The SA team has been busy working with tourism operators to collate unique new product offerings available for shore excursions including wellness and walking tours, food and wine experiences, Aboriginal experiences, and many more.

All eyes have been on Adelaide with new events like the AFL Gather Round and LIV Golf Adelaide, as well as the Fringe and WOMAdelaide creating real wins for SA's tourism and hospitality sector.

Many events on offer fall within the cruise season and the SA team is working with key cruise lines to provide cruise passengers with unique event experiences and activations when visiting during this time.

A brochure which contains extensive information about cruising in SA, is online [HERE](#).

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