



Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Norwegian Cruise Line**.

Viking Mississippi out of service Jan

VIKING has advised clients that its *Viking Mississippi* river ship, which cruises its namesake river, will be taken out of service in Jan and Feb for a "periodic assessment", meaning several departures on its Heart of the Delta itinerary are cancelled.

Impacted travellers are being offered a 110% future cruise voucher applicable to any Viking river, ocean, or expedition voyage, plus the immediate reinstatement of any vouchers applied to the booking, or a full refund.

Silversea transforms Kimberley program

EXCLUSIVE

SILVERSEA Cruises has revamped its Kimberley offering for 2025 to provide travellers with more variety and greater access to remote regions.

The Kimberley voyage collection has been enhanced with two 16-day Darwin-Bali itineraries aboard *Silver Cloud*, combining the Kimberley coast with an off-the-beaten-path exploration of Indonesia, including the Pink Beach, Alor Island, and Palopo, as well as two 17-day Darwin to Perth itineraries.

Silversea will now focus on turnarounds in Darwin only, running just two 10-night Kimberley-only voyages round trip from the capital of the Northern Territory, only visiting Broome as a port of call.

The luxury cruise line has also added a new 14-day Lautoka round trip itinerary.

Senior Vice President and Managing Director Adam Radwanski described the revamp as a "massive change" and a "big differentiator" versus what is being offered by other lines.

He said Silversea's new solution gives the brand more flexibility to sell longer combination voyages, as well as more premium product, both of which its clientele is looking for.

"The primary reason is to optimise our deployment and create longer itineraries to destinations which offer good domestic and international connectivity - that fits our brand, which is very much focused on attracting a global clientele," he told **Cruise Weekly**.

"We'll now be able to offer a 35-day Lautoka to Darwin voyage that will take our guests via Fiji, Vanuatu, PNG, the Top End of Australia, the Kimberley, and then

return to Darwin."

Radwanski said Silversea will ensure its distribution channels and travel partners are well-equipped with information on the revamped Kimberley offering, which will ultimately benefit both the cruise line and the trade.

"Our travel partners will be able to earn significantly more commission on a 16-night itinerary than on a 10-night itinerary," he explained.

"We know that most of our guests that go on a 10-night Kimberley, they stay in the Kimberley region for 15 to 20 days in total, so potentially our travel partners are losing some opportunities to earn commission if those guests are booking the hotels by themselves.

"With Silversea, you book 16- or 17-day itineraries, all inclusive, you get commission on the whole package." *MS*

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Sun rises on new Princess Japan season

PRINCESS Cruises will shine a light on the best of Japan with newly announced cruises and cruisetours in 2025.

The year will see *Diamond Princess* (pictured) return to Japan for a season highlighted with festivals, spring flowers, and regional voyages.

Diamond will cruise in Japan from Mar through Aug, sailing from Tokyo to 36 destinations in three countries.

On sale now, itinerary highlights include new 11-day Spring Flowers cruises in Mar and Apr, which sail to all four main islands and following the predicted blooming season as it moves from south to north.

There will also be nine-day Southern Islands itineraries with two calls to the Okinawa Islands and two calls to Taiwan, including a return to Hualien.

Nine-day and 10-day Sea of



Japan voyages will feature ports along the historic Kitamaebune trading route, while 10-day Hokkaido voyages will visit Otaru, Hakodate, and Kushiro.

Other highlights include 10-day Japan Explorer voyages which call to some of the country's most iconic destinations, like Shimizu, Osaka, Kobe, Hiroshima, and more; and scenic cruising of the

Kanmon Straits.

The season will see four late-night More Ashore ports including Aomori, Kochi, Shimizu, and Tokushima.

Cruisers will also have the option to add on a land tour of Tokyo, Kyoto's intricate gardens, Nijo Castle, Kinkaku-ji, Todai-ji Daibutsuden, Kasuga Taisha Shrine, and Mt. Fuji. *MS*

HX is plugged in

HX, THE brand formerly known as Hurtigruten Expeditions (*CW* 20 Sep), has become the first cruise line to establish shorepower connection in Iceland.

The company's ship *Maud* linked to the country's power grid at Faxagardur Cruise Terminal in Reykjavik for the first time earlier this week.

By plugging into shorepower, *Maud* eliminates her engine use, cutting emissions to zero.

This connectivity curbs both fuel usage and air pollution by substituting renewable electricity from Iceland, where 85% of the primary energy supply is derived from domestically produced renewable sources.

Since 2021, all but one vessel in Hurtigruten Group's fleet have been equipped with shore power connectivity.



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Robyn Sinfield is on the chat...

HOME
Travel Company's Robyn Sinfield is the special guest on this week's episode of



The Chat with Jenny.

The popular podcast series features regular conversations with some of the amazing women in the travel sector, with Sinfield's appearance being the second-last episode of the first season.

Robyn, who next year will celebrate her 40th year as a travel advisor and agency owner, speaks to *CW's* Jenny Piper about her life and career, with the podcast now live on all platforms as well as at traveldaily.com.au/thechat.

Quark can bear-ly contain its excitement

QUARK Expedition's Arctic 2025 season launched yesterday, with the cruise line inviting travellers to "rethink their bucket list".

The season includes 12 itineraries, four of which are new, with cruisers currently able to take advantage of an early booking bonus of \$1,000 until the end of next month.

Three of the new voyages cruise to Greenland, including the 'West Greenland Ice Odyssey: Glaciers and Icebergs', 'Wild Fjords of South Greenland: Land of the Vikings', and 'Adventures in Northeast Greenland: Glaciers, Fjords and the Northern Lights'.

There is also a new 'Ultimate Arctic Voyage: From Svalbard to Jan Mayen to Iceland'.

Quark Expeditions has curated its Arctic 2025 portfolio so travellers can choose from varying trip lengths and off-ship experiences, many of which are



supported by *Ultramarine's* two twin-engine helicopters.

Other promotional offers for the Arctic 2025 season include up to 30% off select departures, and 10% pay-in-full savings on all departures, in addition to the \$1,000 early booking bonus.

"For our Arctic 2025 season, we invite travellers to go bold and take the less-travelled route away from the metropolises of Rome

and New York and instead explore remote Arctic destinations like Svalbard, Greenland or the Canadian High Arctic," Vice President of Marketing Wendy Batchelor enthused.

"We want to inspire people to rethink their bucket list dreams, get off the beaten track and return home with travel stories no other destination can provide." *MS*



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PORTHOLE

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line's "Free at Sea" offer has proven to be a real crowd-pleaser - but unfortunately the all-inclusive drinks package isn't such a hit with Spanish taxation authorities.

Britain's *The Independent* is reporting on the outrage from some passengers after they found that they're being levied 10% in VAT on every one of their "free" drinks.

The taxation quirk only applies to voyages beginning in Spain and while in Spanish territorial waters, but also applies to speciality restaurants on board NCL ships.

Apparently the government in Madrid has ruled that since tourists on land-based holidays pay tax on their food and drink, the same should apply to those taking cruises.

HAL gets fresher

HOLLAND America Line has announced a new global fresh fish program which promises seafood from "port to plate in less than 48 hours".

The cruise line has partnered with 60 ports worldwide, with HAL chief Gus Antorcha saying "we know fresh fish is part of our guests' daily lifestyle, and when they come on board we are excited to expand their options beyond what they have access to at home".

Azamara's new fab four

AZAMARA has released four new itineraries featuring special holiday celebrations across Spain, Portugal, Asia, and more.

The new seven-night voyages will visit the Seville Fair in Spain, as well as the end-of-year celebrations in Singapore and Vietnam.

The Asian Holiday Voyage on board *Azamara Journey* sets sail from Singapore on 05 Dec, offering almost 100 hours in port.

Guests will enjoy two overnight stays in Ho Chi Minh City to stroll through local markets ahead of Tet, which is considered the most important celebration in Vietnamese culture.

Guests will also have an overnight stay in Singapore to attend 'Christmas on a Great Street', with sparkling lights, decorations, and local holiday performances.

The St. Patrick's Day Iberian Voyage on *Azamara Pursuit* sails from Lisbon on 16 Mar, offering guests 80 hours in port, during which they can celebrate St. Patrick's Day, exploring Irish pubs alongside locals in Portimao.

The cruise also includes a total of four Extended Destination Days and an overnight stay in Lisbon.

The Celebration of Spanish Culture & History Voyage on *Azamara Quest* will offer guests a Spain-focused cruise, embarking from Lisbon on 01 Apr.

Guests will have almost 70 hours in port, including an



overnight in Seville, to visit the Seville Cathedral.

Travellers will also be able to explore one of the few circular castles in Europe, Bellver Castle in Palma.

Rounding out the additions is the Spanish Wine Discoveries Voyage on *Azamara Quest*, on board which travellers can celebrate the first day of Seville Fair with traditional music, flamenco dancers, as well as customary meals.

This Spain-intensive voyage will set sail on 08 Apr from Barcelona, giving guests 83 hours in port, and conclude with an overnight stay in Lisbon. *MS*

Le Boat to Canada

EUROPEAN boat rental operator Le Boat is expanding into Canada with the launch of a new base on the Trent Severn Waterway in central Ontario, connecting Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay.

Initially the company will offer a fleet of eight luxury Horizon Cruisers on the Parks Canada-operated historic lock system which features 44 conventional locks, two hydraulic lifts and a "marine railway", which transports boats between the upper and lower sections of the river.

Le Boat's new base at Horseshoe Bay Marine will open in May 2024, with the company's North American Marketing Manager, Lisa McLean, saying the expansion follows strong demand from past passengers for cruises in the spectacular Ontario area.

Prices will start at CA\$2,800 for a week on a Horizon 1 Cruiser sleeping up to five, with Le Boat providing full training and suggested itineraries - see leboat.com.



The Chat with Jenny
A Conversation with Robyn Sinfield
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