



Cruise Weekly today

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

Ponant wants it all

EXCURSIONS are now included across all Ponant voyages, after the cruise line recently announced it is going all-inclusive on Kimberley cruises (**CW 08 Sep**).

"At Ponant, we are constantly evolving to provide our guests with seamless and enriched experiences," GM Sales & Marketing Deb Corbett said.

"This enhancement not only streamlines our offerings but also immerses our passengers in the heart of each destination's culture and natural wonders even more, making every Ponant journey a captivating and uniquely enriching adventure."

Ama "energised" about Australia

EXCLUSIVE

THE imminent entrance of AmaWaterways to the Australian and New Zealand market (**CW 17 Aug**) has seen Director Gary Murphy (**pictured**) in both countries this week to meet with prospective commercial partners and work on establishing the new local operation.

Murphy told **Cruise Weekly** this morning he is energised at the opportunity presented by the Australian market, with the company having already produced an introductory brochure for local travel advisors.

Systems are now in place for the launch, including the ability to make a reservation in Australian dollars, while a dedicated website is "ready to go", Murphy said.

However, while the business is ready to start taking local bookings, Murphy added he is keen to also have an Australian-



based reservations team in place to ensure high service levels.

Murphy said he is also excited about promoting AmaWaterways' entire product range "in one of the most important markets in the industry".

Key points of difference highlighted in the AmaWaterways trade flyer include having an average of 156 guests on board, larger staterooms and suites, and spacious common areas.

Murphy highlighted the double-width *AmaMagna*, which offers

four restaurants, a large wellness studio, an onboard cinema and even a full-sized pickleball court.

The overall AmaWaterways fleet comprises 29 ships including new vessels on the Nile and the Douro, with the line also excited about next year's launch of two ships on the Magdalena River in Colombia.

Murphy has also met with the local Virtuoso team, which today formally welcomed AmaWaterways to the market.

Virtuoso General Manager Fiona Dalton said "as a launch partner for AmaWaterways' expansion in Australia, we are collaborating closely with their executive team to fully harness the potential of our global partnership".

Murphy has personal ties to Australia, having met his wife in Cairns, and is looking forward to being able to "add Australia on my travel schedule more frequently." *BP*



CLUB ROYAL



CONNECT

Coming to you with a wrap up of the Royal Caribbean trade focused training event that took part across Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane at the end of August. This event was a remarkable opportunity for travel agents to dive deep into the world of Royal Caribbean, acquiring invaluable sales and marketing strategies that elevate them in attracting and retaining cruise loving clients.

Agents immersed themselves in a wealth of knowledge, mastering the art of utilising Royal's cutting-edge booking and management systems – Espresso and Cruising Power. The sessions also covered strategies to allure new-to-cruise clients, along with effective methods to market the Royal Caribbean experience to their client base and leveraging tools like NextCruise and Club Royal Rewards.

As a token of Royal Caribbean's appreciation, attendees were treated to exclusive incentives and were able to earn valuable CLIA points for their active participation in these enlightening sessions.

We look forward to welcoming more travel agents at our future events!



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A-ROSA additions

A-ROSA River Cruises has added two new ships to its fleet, with *A-ROSA ALEA* and *A-ROSA CLEA* to sail on the Rhine from Apr.

The 110-metre-long premium ships will provide additional capacity on A-ROSA's most popular itineraries, before one of the vessels is transferred to the Seine, cruising from the heart of Paris to Le Havre on the Atlantic coast.

This will allow *A-ROSA VIVA*, currently cruising on the Seine, to return to the Rhine.

The second new vessel will be moved to the Gironde and Garonne in the Bordeaux region of France in 2026, marking A-ROSA's debut on the rivers.

"We are really excited to have contracted two more ships into our fleet at short notice and this move really couldn't have come at a better time," Chief Executive Officer Jorg Eichler said.

"It is predicted that by the end of the 2023 season we will have set new guest and revenue records, even surpassing the previous record year of 2019.

"This season we have also continued to consistently achieve high occupancy levels on all departures, and it looks really likely that we will set a record level of over 90% of cabin capacity sold for 2023."

Explora adds two more



EXPLORA Journeys has confirmed its order of two new hydrogen-powered ships to join its fleet in 2027 and 2028.

The cruise line's new *Explora V* (pictured) and *Explora VI* will have new state-of-the-art energy efficiency measures and will be capable of using alternative fuels such as bio and synthetic gas as well as methanol.

The ships will employ hydrogen-powered fuel cells for zero emission operations while in port, with Explora to investigate additional new and advanced environmental technologies for the vessels, such as carbon capture, and more advanced waste management systems.

They will also feature a new generation of LNG engines that will further tackle the issue of methane slip with the use of containment systems.

The deal with shipbuilder

Fincantieri has completed Explora's total investment in six luxury ships, worth €3.5 billion (A\$5.8 billion).

"With Explora Journeys we have created a luxury brand that has been successful at redefining luxury at sea," declared Pierfrancesco Vago, Executive Chairman of the cruise division of parent company MSC Group.

"We are seeing continued growth in the luxury segment and the investment in these two new ships shows our commitment to continue to grow within this sector as well as to invest in ships of the future.

"Together with Fincantieri we will study the newest technology that the world has to offer and continue with our commitment to introduce these technologies to drive efficiencies across the whole spectrum of ship performance." *MS*

Cunard film-fest

CUNARD Line has announced a three-year partnership with the British Film Institute (BFI) centred on the company's newest ship *Queen Anne*.

The collaboration will see a curated program of short films and beloved blockbusters shown exclusively on the outdoor screen in The Pavilion aboard *Queen Anne*.

The BFI will show 10 films every month on the cinematic LED screen, while specially selected films will be shown in guests' staterooms.

Cunard will also be a main sponsor of the BFI London Film Festival.

"We are absolutely thrilled to be partnering with the British Film Institute, with our shared dedication to providing immersive experiences aligning perfectly," President Katie McAlister said.

"We're hugely proud of our long-standing affiliation with the silver screen, with some of Hollywood's biggest names having sailed in style with Cunard, from Charlie Chaplin to Meryl Streep.

"As the first cruise line to host an on board film premiere with the launch of *The Greatest Showman* on *Queen Mary 2* in 2017 (*CW* 18 Jan 2018), we are incredibly passionate about the power of timeless storytelling."



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THE importance of the travel advisor has come to the fore since the pandemic, but clearly, not enough people out there have gotten the message yet.

A recent post on Royal Caribbean Blog, an unofficial website chronicling the cruise line, has revealed some of the top searches related to the brand - a stunning amount of which could be answered quite simply by an agent.

Searches like "Royal Caribbean cruise 2024" and "Royal Caribbean drink package 2023" show interest in the line is high, and there are bookings out there to be made.

However one search Royal Caribbean marketers will be scurrying to combat is "Carnival Celebration", which, yes, is one of the top terms linked to RCI - hopefully these Googlers soon worked out they are two different products.

Silversea heeds demands

EXCLUSIVE

SILVERSEA Cruises guests have been demanding longer and deeper exploration, which prompted the line to redesign its Kimberley program (*CW* 21 Sep), Senior Vice President & Managing Director Adam Radwanski told *Cruise Weekly*.

The line undertook analysis on the future of its Kimberley deployment, and what its guests want, as the region becomes highly competitive.

The result was strong demand for off-the-beaten-track itineraries which immerse its guests within nature, as well as remote and unique destinations. "This is broadly reflected in the strength of our expedition sales in this market and around the world," Radwanski said.

Silversea guests are also seeking longer itineraries, he added, with the average booking length in Australia around 15 days.

These factors prompted Silversea to its extend its Kimberley season up to Indonesia and down to Perth, with other destinations featuring throughout



the program including Fiji, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea.

Silversea has also chosen to anchor its Kimberley season between its home ports of Bali, Darwin, and Perth - destinations which offer a good hotel base and air connectivity for both Australian and int'l guests.

Radwanski recognised what Silversea is doing is bold, compared to its competitors in the Kimberley, but ultimately hopes this will help the cruise line stand out within the market.

"It's daring, it's new, it doesn't come without risks, but Silversea has been always at the forefront of our industry, especially when it comes to innovative itineraries," he enthused.

"This is an example where we are trailblazing something new here in Australia, and we're very confident we will be successful."

One of the risks of Silversea's new program is the higher price point, which Radwanski noted has seen its cruise packages extend from around \$14,500 to well over \$20,000.

He said Silversea will help educate the trade about the new itineraries, and why the higher costs are worth it, particularly as the Australian market continues to boom. *MS*

Radwanski is **pictured** with Marketing Dir Philippa Walker.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY		
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>		22 Sep
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>		22 Sep
BRISBANE		
<i>Coral Princess</i>		22 Sep
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>		23 Sep
BROOME		
<i>Le Ponant</i>		24 Sep
DARWIN		
<i>Coral Geographer</i>		25 Sep
<i>Le Soleal</i>		26 Sep
AUCKLAND		
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>		22 Sep

A new Heritage

HERITAGE Expeditions has appointed Sharon Salmons as Trade Sales Executive for its 18-guest expedition yacht *Heritage Explorer*.

Commercial Director and Expedition Leader Aaron Russ said Salmons' impressive industry credentials, contacts, and extensive knowledge of both the New Zealand and international markets in a career spanning more than 20 years made her the ideal candidate for the newly-created position.

"We're incredibly excited and fortunate to have Sharon join the Heritage Expeditions family in this dynamic role, her working knowledge of the trade space and understanding of both the New Zealand and int'l tourism markets."



The Chat with Jenny
Travel Daily

A Conversation with Robyn Sinfield
Home Travel Company

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