



Leckey to lead new HOT Cruise venture

HOUSE of Travel (HOT) has announced the creation of a new Cruise Product and Wholesale Team for its businesses in Australia and New Zealand, with Jeff Leckey (pictured) to head up the new venture as General Manager Cruise - Australasia.

Bruce Parton, who is HOT NZ CEO and Chair of HOT Australia, said Leckey brings decades of experience within the cruise sector to his new role.

Over the last six years he has been HOT NZ Cruise GM, which has seen the company become NZ's leading cruise retailer.

HOT businesses include TravelManagers Australia, House of Travel retail outlets across NZ, Hoot Holidays, Orbit World Travel, and Travel Advocates.

Joe Araullo, CEO of House of Travel Australia, said he was excited at the opportunities presented by the initiative.



"House of Travel Group's new cruise strategy is an indication of its commitment to the cruise sector, and will allow us to capitalise on the combined volumes and expertise we already have," Araullo said.

"There is massive potential for growth, and we're excited to enter this new phase in building our cruise business."

Lia Malone, currently TravelManagers Cruise Product Manager, will also join the new

team, which aims to develop exclusive cruise product that will be taken to market through House of Travel and TravelManagers travel advisors.

Leckey said he is thrilled to be working with Malone "and the amazing team of cruise experts we have assembled on both sides of the Tasman".

"As an organisation, we have totally embraced cruise and we are looking forward to capitalising on the ever-increasing number of Kiwis and Aussies who are excited by the concept of cruise holidays," he added.

The company noted predictions by CLIA indicating that global cruise capacity will increase by almost 20% over the next five years, with the new venture aiming to ensure the group is well-resourced to "capitalise on the sector's immense potential for expansion". *BP*

Cruise Weekly today

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

Meraviglia returns to Eastern Canada

MSC Meraviglia is returning to Eastern Canada for the first time in four years, with the cruise line pledging to "boost local economies and provide memorable vacations at sea".

The 5,642-guest ship is calling at Saint John in New Brunswick today, followed by visits to Sydney, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island's Charlottetown and Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Meraviglia is also scheduled to operate in the region for several months next year.

The new **MSC Euribia**, currently in northern Europe (see p2), is the last of five Meraviglia-class ships.

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The Chat with Jenny Travel Daily



A Conversation with Michelle Mikan
of Abercrombie & Kent
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On location in Alesund

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of MSC Cruises, as its brand-new *MSC Euribia* undertakes a northern European voyage.

ALESUND is a fascinating collection of seven islands connected by bridges and extensive underwater tunnels. *Euribia* is docked in the town centre, enabling guests to easily stroll into the town or access shore excursions. A popular option is the Alesund Tourist Train, which gives a 70-minute guided overview of the town's fascinating history, including its 1905 destruction by fire and subsequent recreation in unique Art Nouveau style.

Ponant unveils new Christmas cruises

PONANT has unveiled brand-new enchanting Christmas voyages for next year at the "gateway to the Arctic Circle". The cruise line has crafted seven voyages aboard *Le Commandant Charcot* (pictured), three of which will explore the polar night and the aurora.



These cruises offer the opportunity to partake in activities such as enchanting sleigh rides, led by either reindeer or dog, as well as indulging in a spot of ice fishing or an invigorating kayak adventure.

Guests will explore Lofoten on horseback, and have the possibility of catching a glimpse of the ethereal northern lights.

There will also be four departures offering an immersion into the realm of Scandinavian Christmas traditions. Passengers will experience the Xmas markets, from local craft

stalls to the aroma of spiced mulled wine, and cinnamon cookies; as well as outings with naturalist guides exploring the snowy landscapes of the Gulf of Bothnia and Lapland. Curious children from the age of six are not forgotten, with kids on board able to participate in activities supported by a team of highly motivated activity leaders who organise a range of fun

creative, sports, and educational activities, and more.

"With the introduction of three innovative polar night itineraries and four captivating Scandinavian Christmas departures aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, Ponant's dedication to delivering unparalleled experiences is guaranteed to be nothing short of spectacular," Chief Executive Officer Chris Hall said. *MS*

- Hailing a cab in NYC
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Travel Daily

Quark goes global with CLIA

QUARK Expeditions has become a global member of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), expanding on its already existing regional membership in Australia (*CW* 28 Mar 2022).

The cruise line's President Andrew White said "we're extremely proud to be a new member of CLIA, an industry association whose values are so closely aligned with ours".

"CLIA supports policies and practices that foster a secure, healthy and sustainable cruise environment, promoting positive travel experiences for guests around the world.

"That mission mirrors the values that have fuelled the passion and expertise of Quark Expeditions since we took our very first guests to the North Pole in 1991.

"One of our main drivers at Quark Expeditions is our commitment to 'go beyond', a

philosophy deeply ingrained in the CLIA network of travel professionals," he added.

CLIA President Kelly Craighead said the addition of Quark as a global member helped highlight the growing significance of small-ship expedition cruising, which she said "is one of the most dynamic and exciting areas of cruising's growth".

"We're delighted to have Quark Expeditions join our global community at a time when there's so much energy and innovation in the sector," she said.

MEANWHILE Quark has also expanded its executive team with the promotion of Beth Mercier to become Senior Director of Global Partnership Sales, aiming to drive relationships with global consortia and strategic accounts.

Quark has also appointed Becky Francis as its new regional Sales Director for EMEA. *BP*

Ponant is cooking...

PONANT has refuelled its *Le Champlain* with a special batch of biodiesel B100, which is 100% produced from recycled cooking oil.

The fuel was taken on board during a technical stop in Cherbourg, France last week, with Ponant Newbuilding and R&D Director, Mathie Petiteau, saying the move was part of the line's roadmap to sustainability and decarbonisation.

The biofuels "are produced from used cooking oils, can be incorporated directly into engines and are available now".

"We want to help demonstrate that it is a credible alternative that can contribute to decarbonising PONANT's fleet and the entire maritime industry," he said.

The recycled biofuel has a carbon footprint just 10% of conventional marine fuels.

Azamara reveals 2026 World Cruise

AZAMARA has unveiled details of its 2026 World Cruise which is scheduled to depart in early Jan 2026 from Miami.

The 155-night voyage to Barcelona will visit 36 countries, allowing guests to visit all Seven Wonders of the World: Chichen Itza, Mexico; Brazil's Christ the Redeemer; the Taj Mahal in India; Machu Picchu in Peru; Rome's Colosseum; the Great Wall of China; and Petra, Jordan.

Azamara President Carol Cabezas noted the itinerary includes 55 late nights and overnights, 60 Extended Destination Days, three exclusive World Cruise events and 10 AzAmazing events.

The Azamara World Cruise will call at ports in Australia in Feb and Mar 2026.

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PORTRHOLE

CRUISERS visiting the North Atlantic's Faroe Islands should keep their eyes peeled for a huge new creature of the deep.

No it's not a giant octopus or even a Kraken, but a massive underwater "kite" which forms the key component of a tidal power system.

Dubbed the Dragon 12, the aerodynamic-looking "wing" (pictured) has just been completed by ocean energy developer Minesto in Uddevalla port, Sweden, and is now en route to a production site in Vestmannastrandir in the Faroe Islands.

The 12m-wide object is tethered to the seabed, and rides tidal currents in a figure-eight trajectory using an automated control system which pushes water through the device's turbine to generate electricity.

Normal tidal flows are not strong enough to power conventional turbines, but the innovative design of the Dragon 12 allows even low-velocity marine currents to be harnessed for clean energy production, Minesto says.

A video of the assembly is at cruiseweekly.com.au/videos.



Ponant's partners party



PONANT hosted some of its trade partners at an exclusive gathering in Melbourne earlier this week (pictured).

The event in Richmond was held to express the company's appreciation for the trade's support of Ponant and its sister line, Paul Gauguin Cruises.

Ponant Chief Executive Officer Chris Hall hosted the get-together alongside Anabelle Brown, BDM for Vic/Tas/SA, with guests including Geelong Travel's Stuart Coffield; Mark Langhorne from Freedman Langhorne & James Travel Associates; Hawthorn Travel & Cruise's Heather Testro; Jamie Davison from Croydon Travel; and Debra Carr from Helloworld Surrey Hills.

Also in attendance were Sue Heine of Toujour France; Toorak Village Travel's Judy Quigley; Emma Whiting from Emma Whiting Travel; TravelDream's Paul Mercuri; Hayley Serebro from FBI Travel; Julie Avery from

Brighton Travel; and Ines Inestia from Journey Beyond.

Key topics of conversation included Ponant's recent addition of new inclusions such as air and transfers on 2024 Kimberley voyages (CW 08 Sep) as well as bundling daily excursions into all departures globally including the Mediterranean, Caribbean and Great Lakes, plus established expeditions in the Kimberley, Japan & polar regions. *BP*



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