

Cruise Weekly today

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

New MSC webinar

MSC Cruises will host an exclusive webinar on MSC Yacht Club next Wed for its travel partners.

There will be two sessions for the webinar: one at 8:30am AEST, and another at 10:30am.

The 20-minute webinar will be followed by a five-minute interactive Q&A session designed to provide travel partners with comprehensive insights into world of MSC's "ship-within-a-ship" concept.

Travel advisors attending the event will gain invaluable knowledge about MSC Yacht Club, enabling them to better serve their clients - register in advance [HERE](#).

Japan to host new Disney ship

DISNEY and Japanese tourism company Oriental Land Co (OLC) have announced a new agreement to launch cruises in the country.

The expanded relationship between the two, which currently sees OLC own and operate Tokyo Disney Resort (**pictured**), will bring year-round Disney cruises to Japan.

The recently signed agreement will see OLC build and operate a Disney-branded cruise business, which is expected to commence by early 2029.

The ship will be constructed at Meyer Werft shipyard, and is expected to accommodate about 1,250 staterooms.

The vessel will be a sister ship to *Disney Wish*, and will feature many guest-favourite venues and experiences with select modifications specially designed



for Japanese guests.

More details about the maiden voyage, itineraries and onboard experiences will be announced at a later date.

"Disney Cruise Line has ambitious plans to bring family vacations and Disney storytelling to more guests around the world than ever before," Disney Experiences Chairman Josh

D'Amaro said.

"We are thrilled to continue the success of this expansion as we collaborate with Oriental Land Co to introduce another distinctly Disney vacation experience to families and fans in Japan."

OLC head Yumiko Takano said he is proud his company will work with Disney to create a "world-class" cruise business in Japan.

"Oriental Land will use their know-how from the theme park business to continue pushing boundaries and provide family entertainment cruise experiences filled with inspiration and surprise," he said.

Disney's new Japanese venture comes after the cruise line last year announced a memorandum of understanding with the Singapore Tourism Board to host a new ship in the city-state (**CW** 30 Mar 2023). **MS**



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DNSW readies the state for cruise

DESTINATION NSW (DNSW) Cruise Ready Workshops are getting the state's visitor economy businesses cruise-ready, following sessions in Sydney, Newcastle, and Eden.

More than 180 visitor economy stakeholders joined the DNSW Product Development team and cruise industry experts to learn more about the shore excursion opportunities at and around the state's cruise ports.

The full-day workshops focused on maximising bookable experiences, including learning about the cruise distribution network, markets and demographics; how to create cruise shore excursions; and DNSW cruise resources.

Shore excursions make a valuable contribution to the New South Wales visitor economy, with data from Cruise Lines International Association



suggesting each domestic cruise passenger spends \$197 per day on average while in port.

Eden's summer cruise season for 2023/24 was the busiest on record, with arrivals up more than 20% compared with the previous summer season.

There were 41 ship visits to Eden, which brought more than 70,000 passengers and 30,000 crew members into the state's largest rural cruise port.

The arrivals injected an estimated \$19 million into the region's visitor economy.

Newcastle saw 16 cruise ship

arrivals, more than 20,000 passengers and 10,000 crew members sail into its port during the season, injecting more than \$6 million into the economy.

"Destination NSW is committed to investing in industry resources that help NSW visitor economy businesses create world-class shore experiences for cruise passengers," Destination NSW acting CEO Ian Maltman said.

"Cruising injected more than \$2.7 billion into NSW in the 2022-23 financial year and plays a vital role in driving visitor economy growth." *MS*

Ponant Starlink

PONANT has connected to the Starlink Satellite Network to enhance the cruise line's wi-fi experience on board.

The move maximises guests quality internet access anywhere in the world, no matter the conditions.

The entire Ponant fleet was fitted with the equipment throughout last year.

"With Starlink, our guests enjoy high-speed wi-fi access even in the most remote regions of the planet," Chief Guest Experience & Product Officer Benoit Carassou-Maillan said.

"*Le Commandant Charcot* was the first vessel to test Starlink antennas at the Geographic North Pole."

"This new totally free facility is part of our commitment to provide the best quality service to our guests".

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THERE really is a world championship for everything these days...even pizza making.

But when you're good at something, you might as well be the best, which may be why Princess Cruises has tapped 13-time World Pizza Champion, Tony Gemignani, as its latest celebrity culinary collaborator.

Gemignani has designed five exclusive pizzas available across the Princess fleet and will help the line with its promise to serve the 'best pizzas at sea'.

Princess is so excited about its new partnership that it has decided to make an attempt at a Guinness World Record for the World's Largest Pizza Party.

The attempt will take place on 12 Jul and will see the line host massive pizza parties on its fleet of ships worldwide.

Cruiseabout's first conference



FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) recently held its first Cruiseabout conference, which was attended by almost 40 team members of the new division.

The conference brought together Cruiseabout's leadership team, its remote contact centre team, and its three retail teams from the division's new stores, as well as two from the soon-to-open West Lakes shopfront.

It took place at FCTG's Brisbane head office on Sat, and included updates from the leadership, product and marketing teams.

The conference was followed by an awards lunch sponsored by Norwegian Cruise Line, where Cruiseabout's top four

consultants, Aaron Perrett, Lynnette Thompson, Angie Reilly, and Kat Logan, were recognised for their achievements.

The Cruiseabout conference was one of a number of FCTG cruise events taking place around the weekend's Flichella festival, held by Cruise HQ and My Cruises.

Pictured: The Cruiseabout team assembles for its inaugural conference. *MS*

Rescued by Royal

ROYAL Caribbean has begun delivering emergency supplies to Grenada after the island was badly hit by Hurricane Beryl, with *Rhapsody of the Seas* offloading 15 tons of fuel to power essential services.

Seabourn snaps

SEABOURN has launched a new onboard program designed to help budding and experienced photographers hone their skill in Antarctica.

The 'Image Masters' will begin from next month and is available from \$2,000pp on top of the cruise fare.

Participants will gain priority access to the ship photographer and embark on exclusive excursions to learn in-the-field skills on camera techniques, editing and more.



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Asia goes ahead

CRUISING has made a strong comeback in Asia and excitingly, several countries are now showing some of their best cruise figures in years.

It's an encouraging trend in a very important region for international cruising - Asia is one of Australia's favourite regions for fly-cruise travel and continues to show huge potential for Australian travel agents.

This week, I'm in Jeju, South Korea, for the 2024 Asia Cruise Forum, where we have an opportunity to unite our Asian cruise community and discuss our path ahead.

Although the revival of cruising came late in some parts of Asia, many of the major markets have regained considerable strength and are now following the same upward trajectory as the rest of the world.

Source markets like Singapore, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam all exceeded pre-pandemic passenger levels during 2023, while countries like Japan and South Korea have shown very strong progress towards recovery.

Asia's future success relies on a united approach to create the right environment for cruising to thrive, and CLIA will continue to take a leading role in achieving that - in Asia, Australasia, and around the world.



No free RCI wi-fi

ROYAL Caribbean International will not offer free wi-fi on its ships, President & Chief Executive Officer Michael Bayley insisted.

The cruise line's 'VOOM' wi-fi comes at a per device, per day cost, and according to the unofficial *Royal Caribbean Blog*, Bayley recently told cruisers free wi-fi isn't going to happen any time soon.

Bayley said Royal Caribbean pays "a ton of money" for its at-sea internet coverage.

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