



Cruise Weekly today

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

New HX Chief Exec

GEBHARD Rainer has been appointed the new Chief Executive Officer of HX, to drive the line's next phase of growth and development. Rainer will join Hurtigruten Chief Executive Officer Hedda Felin as the heads of the two Hurtigruten Group brands, with Daniel Skjeldam, currently CEO of both HX and the entire company, to transition to a role on the board. "With the split between Hurtigruten and HX in its final phase, I believe the timing is ideal to bring in a dedicated CEO for HX to develop the company to its full potential," Skjeldam said.

The sandwich advantage

THE deployment of Silversea's *Silver Nova* to Australia later this year and again in 2025 is testament to the strong strategic value the market holds for the luxury cruise line.

Silversea's local chief, Adam Radwanski, told **Cruise Weekly** Australia is viewed by the brand as a key source of customers for both of its Nova-class ships, with *Ray* to service a strong fly-cruise demand, while *Nova* will whet the appetite of cruise passengers closer to home.

Referring to the duo of new Nova-class vessels as a "double competitive sandwich" when it comes to Aussies, Radwanski believes *Nova* will be the perfect conduit to propel international bookings aboard *Ray* in regions like the Mediterranean.

"We will be able to showcase [Nova-class vessels] to the local market through cruises, and if

you don't want to cruise, we will bring you on board for events with the aim that you will book *Silver Ray* in the Mediterranean or in Alaska," he said.

Radwanski added when *Nova* debuts in local waters from Nov, she will represent a "once-in-a-lifetime strategic advantage" for Silversea because few overseas operators can deploy such a new luxury ship to Australia.

"Whether you're in the airline industry, car sector or cruise, you put your best product on the strategic market and for Silversea Australia is that strategic market and [Nova] will be a statement to the industry and our customers."

There are hopes the local deployment of *Nova* will also spur bookings for overseas Silversea itineraries, gain new-to-brand customers, and build on crucial repeat client bookings, with mini famils also in the offing. **AB**

Travel24 early bird

DISCOUNTED tickets for a brand new travel industry event, Travel24, are closing on Fri 21 Jun.

Taking place on 08 Aug, this unmissable Sydney event will be a deep dive into the opportunities and challenges for the travel industry in the next two years, featuring a stellar line-up of keynote speakers and panelists.

These include TedX speaker and DEI advocate Azure Antoinette; Australian Travel Industry Association Chief Executive Officer Dean Long; Michelle Newton, Head of Cultural Forecasting at Accenture Australia; Ram Chhabra, Group Chief Executive Officer of CVFR; AI expert Tom Pitney, and more.

Early bird tickets start from \$218.90 each. **CLICK HERE** to book.

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Lindblad expands fleet

LINDBLAD Expeditions has expanded its operations in the Galapagos Islands with the addition of two new vessels.

Bookings will open later this month, with the two new ships, currently sailing with Celebrity Cruises, set to switch to Lindblad early next year.

The new names of the two ships, currently *Celebrity Xpedition* and *Celebrity Xploration*, will also be revealed later this month, before they undergo multi-million-dollar revitalisations when the transaction closes in Jan.

The addition of the 48-guest *Xpedition* and 16-guest *Xploration* will double the size of Lindblad's Galapagos fleet, with the two ships joining the 96-guest *National Geographic Endeavour II* and the 48-guest *National Geographic Islander II*.



"We recognise and appreciate the immense privilege our company has to operate and grow our expedition cruise offerings in the Galapagos Islands," Lindblad founder & Chief Executive Officer Sven-Olof Lindblad said.

"By sourcing well-appointed vessels and onboarding the most experienced crew and staff who meet our exacting standards of responsible exploration, we're able to transport guests from around the world to the iconic archipelago and help them understand the importance of protecting and preserving its wonders and wildlife, as a consequence of their personal experience," he added. *MS*

Seek-ing Alaska

WINDSTAR Cruises has revealed its new ship *Star Seeker* (*CW* 11 Apr) will reprise the line's popular routes to Alaska and Japan when she debuts in 2026.

Seeker will sail in Alaska from May through Aug on seven-, 10-, and 11-day cruises between Juneau, Seward, and Vancouver, with pre- and post-voyage land tours to Denali also available.

Windstar will employ expedition leaders on board *Seeker* in Alaska to lead its Signature Expeditions, with guests able to book hiking, kayaking, and skiff expeditions through the ship to enjoy up-close adventures.

Expedition leaders will also give presentations on board the ship, bringing Alaska's rich history, culture, flora, and fauna to life.

After departing Alaska in late Aug, *Seeker* will begin Windstar's popular 10-day Grand Japan cruises, sailing between Tokyo and Osaka, where the ship will remain until Nov.

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has banned a passenger who went viral on TikTok for a not-so-ethical "hack" they thought they'd discovered while on their voyage.

The passenger (@krissy.kross) thought they'd be able to save a few bucks by refilling one of the bottled waters in their stateroom with tap water from the bathroom.

The cruiser posted a video of their hack to TikTok - probably not the safest way to ensure you get away with your misdeed - and predictably, the video attracted millions of views and tens of thousands of comments; fortunately, almost all of them were negative.

Online blog *Cruise* reported Carnival Brand Ambassador John Heald was one of the millions to have viewed her video, and as a result, the passenger is now banned from travelling with the line.

Explore Norway, your way!

The North Cape Express offers an elevated experience aboard the newly refurbished *MS Trollfjord*.

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