



CRUISE

WEEKLY

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Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Riviera Travel River Cruises**.

Riviera turning 40

RIVIERA Travel River Cruises is turning 40, and is showering everyone with birthday presents to celebrate.

The cruise line's guests can score \$1,000 per person off any 2024 or 2025 itinerary of seven nights, or \$1,500 per person off any of Riviera Travel's 2024 or 2025 10 to 14 night itineraries.

There are gifts available for travel advisors too - see **p4**.

Praise for cruise plug-in



INDUSTRY technology giant Traveltek is basking in praise from launch clients enjoying boosts in productivity, thanks to its new Rapid Deploy white-label cruise booking website.

The recently launched plug-in cruise booking widget is available to travel advisors around Australia as either a fully bookable website with live inventory and availability or as a search-only widget, packed with details on itineraries from 35 different lines.

Stephen West from Gold Coast-based agent Interline Travel said the company had identified automation as key to its growth strategy and found Rapid Deploy ticked its boxes as a system that is well recognised and works with the agency's large industry membership base.

"With the Rapid Deployment website, we will be able to service members 24/7 and reduce the number of quotes we do, given live availability and booking functions," West said.

"Our key partners provide live data to this TravelTek product allowing us to be first to market with specials and pricing."

Traveltek worked closely with front-end partner Digitaltravel.io to develop the Rapid Deploy API.

In addition to a modern website, the plug-in features live pricing,

stateroom selection, discount management, booking reports, secure payment and more.

Traveltek APAC Head of Sales Christian Sansom told **Cruise Weekly** agents will notice a clear difference in the ease of use and functionality of Rapid Deploy.

"We have a whole content team that manage things like images, itineraries, descriptions, all of that is constantly maintained and then fed through to this website.

"The flexibility it gives as well is based on colour, branding, contact details, terms, conditions.

"Travel agents own their bookings [and] control it."

Once they have the booking and customer details, agents can add on flights and hotels.

"There is a real demand for an independent cruise website solution which is modern, mobile responsive, excellent value and allows travel agents to utilise their own commercial relationships with cruise lines."

Pricing for the platform is competitive, Sansom added, with a one-time setup fee of \$2,000, a monthly operating and maintenance charge of \$300 plus \$5 from each booking.

Traveltek has partnered with a number of lines over the past few years, including Disney Cruise Line (**CW** 04 Jul 2023) and Virgin Voyages (**CW** 05 Jul 2022). *ML*

WA cruise funding

TOURISM Western Australia has committed to increased funding for cruise tourism of \$1 million over four years.

The spending initiative was announced as the Western Australia government handed down record funding for tourism in the 2024-2025 state budget, with financing for Tourism WA to reach a record \$201 million in the coming fiscal year.

The funding comes at a time when the Western Australian cruise sector is booming.

Recent developments include the potential expansion of border services at the Port of Broome to solidify it as a port of entry (**CW** 08 Mar).



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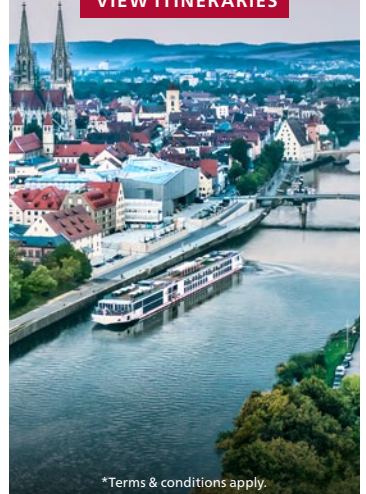


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Seabourn Alaska

SEABOURN Cruise Line has kicked off its 2024 Alaska season, with *Seabourn Odyssey* departing from Vancouver to some of the most popular ports throughout the Inside Passage.

Odyssey will embark on 12 seven-day voyages from May to Aug, alternating between northbound and southbound routes connecting Vancouver and Juneau, with the option to combine the two cruises for a 14-day round-trip from BC.

The season will also mark *Odyssey's* final season with Seabourn, before she sets sail under the new Japanese Mitsui O.S.K. Lines cruise brand (**CW** 13 Oct 2023).

NCL double appointment



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has announced the expansion of its Aussie sales team, off the back of the company's strong business performance (**CW** 03 May).

The cruise line has appointed two new business development managers, Brad Hanna and Aaron Dodkin (**pictured**), who will report in to Director Field Sales Angela Middleton.

Hanna will become Norwegian's first South Australia-based Business Development Manager, and will also serve the Western Australia market.

He has years of prior industry experience, including working with local and global travel companies, including most recently serving as a Business Development Executive for Chapman Freeborn Airchartering.

Hanna will commence his role from Jul, while Dodkin has joined Norwegian as its new BDM for New South Wales & ACT.

"I'm delighted to join the NCL team at such an inspiring time for the brand and the broader cruise industry and I can't wait to tap into the growing demand," Hanna said of his appointment.

"There really is a cruise for everyone, and multigenerational and group bookings offer a huge growth opportunity for travel partners," he added.

Meanwhile, Dodkin brings a wealth of experience to NCL from a range of travel sectors, including hotels, air, and touring.

He spent a decade in Dubai with Emirates, and has delivered in a



number of BDM roles locally.

"It's no secret cruise in Australia is booming and NCL is in a major growth phase," Dodkin enthused.

"I have had first-hand experience cruising with NCL and am excited to spearhead the brand's sales efforts in the pivotal NSW & ACT markets.

"I'm keen to boost awareness of NCL's unique value proposition and share practical insights with agents to help grow their business," he added.

Middleton said this expansion underlines NCL commitment to this region.

"Both Brad and Aaron bring deep travel sector know-how and an innovative mindset to our team and I am confident they will quickly make an impact and add real value to support, engage and grow business with our travel agent partners in NSW, ACT, SA and WA as demand for cruising continues to rise." *MS*

Emerald events

EMERALD Cruises is inviting travellers to join its Jun Travel Lounge information sessions, which will take place across four states.

There will be 10 information sessions in New South Wales/ACT, nine in Victoria, eight in Queensland, and one in South Australia, covering both urban and rural locations.

Attendees will learn more about Emerald's collection of river cruises in Europe and Southeast Asia, as well as its luxury yacht cruises in the Mediterranean, Seychelles, and the Caribbean.

For more information on the Travel Lounges, and to RSVP **CLICK HERE**.



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Princess US cruise

PRINCESS Cruises has added a historic America cruisetour for 2025, ahead of the country's 250th anniversary.

The 14-night land and cruise experience highlights the United States' roots, showcasing Washington DC, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, and more.

The tour will be available on the 2025 Canada & New England cruise out of NYC.



SOME of us who have been on polar cruises have been lucky enough to have a whale breach next to them, and a few lucky fishermen in Western Australia recently enjoyed that thrill off the coast of Broome.

As the two men focused on their fishing lines, a massive humpback whale burst through the ocean's surface, mere metres from their boat, in a moment one of the anglers described as "surreal".

"The whale leaped so high and was so close, I thought, 'this is it, our boat is going down,'" one of the men said.

"A massive wave followed the whale's leap, rocking our small boat violently" - [CLICK HERE to view the video.](#)



NT hosts Cruise Forum

CARNIVAL Corporation and Silversea were just some of the cruise representatives present at the Territory Cruise Forum in Darwin last week.

The meeting at the Vibe Hotel Darwin Waterfront also brought together the Australian Cruise Association (ACA), Tourism NT, Tourism Top End, and more than 100 local businesses to explore the "sea of opportunity" within the Territory's tourism sector.

Attendees gained insights from industry experts and inbound operators, and had the opportunity to connect and present their products directly with cruise lines and their shore excursion providers.

"We know our cruise industry plays an important role in the Territory's tourism industry, contributing over \$65 million to the economy this year, and we will continue to market and develop Darwin as a distinctive cruise destination," NT Minister for Tourism Joel Bowden said.

"The annual Territory Cruise Forum provides local tourism operators and businesses with the opportunity to connect with

tourism industry leaders and take advantage of our growing cruise sector," he added.

"We want to amplify what an amazing place the Territory is to potential cruisers around the world, support our tourism, hospitality and retail businesses and continue to create work for Territorians," Bowden said.

ACA Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel described the Forum as a massive triumph.

"What a successful event it was and how spreading the knowledge with local businesses and stakeholders is vital in growing the economic benefits to the region," she said.

"Cruise continues to grow as an important part of the visitor economy in the Northern Territory and Australian Cruise Association is pleased to play its part in this growth."

The past 12 months have seen the NT host its largest cruise season yet, with more than 100 ships docking in Darwin.

A number of the calls were maiden visits to the NT, including ships from Royal Caribbean's International and P&O. *MS*

HX Norway cruise

HX (HURTIGRUTEN

Expeditions) has unveiled a new Norway expedition for winter 2026, a seven-night journey spent entirely above the Arctic Circle.

The cruise, which is inspired by the "Friluftsliv" art of open-air living, will explore Norway's natural wonders and cultural heritage in the country's north.

The 'Ultimate Norway - Arctic Expedition Under the Northern Lights' will launch in Jan 2026 at the peak of the aurora season, exploring four iconic regions in Northern Norway: the Lyngen Alps, Senja, Lofoten, and Vesteralen.

There will be 10 scheduled sailings from Jan to Mar aboard *Spitsbergen*.

Guests will delve into experiences unique to HX, including a bonfire under the polar night, an exclusive evening at the Hurtigruten Museum in Stokmarknes, and a traditional Scandinavian sauna session followed by a polar plunge.

There will also be kayaking, whale watching, and more.





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