



Cruise Weekly today

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

The UK's new Apex

CELEBRITY Cruises' *Celebrity Apex* has home ported in Southampton for her first-ever season from the UK.

Apex has set sail for her debut season from Southampton, becoming the first Edge series ship to call the United Kingdom home.

Her season kicks off with an eight-night Norwegian Fjords cruise, visiting destinations including Bruges, Geiranger, and Kristiansand.

Other itineraries cover destinations from Northern Europe to the Canary Islands, as *Apex* bases herself in Southampton in the UK from May to Oct.

Viking floats out new Nile River ship

VIKING has announced the float out of its newest Egypt ship *Viking Sobek*, which is set to debut in autumn.

The ship will be the cruise line's sixth on the Nile, sailing Viking's popular 12-day 'Pharaohs & Pyramids' itinerary.

The 82-guest *Sobek* floated out at Massara shipyard in Cairo, and will now move into the final stages of her construction, which will see her move to an outfitting dock for her interior buildout.

"Egypt has always captivated curious travellers with its rich culture and history, and it continues to be a destination of interest for our guests," Viking Chair & Chief Executive Officer Torstein Hagen said.

"We believe *Viking Sobek* and her sister ships are by far the most elegant vessels on the Nile, and we look forward to welcoming even more guests to



explore this fantastic region."

The new, state-of-the-art *Sobek* features 41 staterooms, and the cruise line's signature Scandinavian design.

Sobek is an identical sister ship to *Viking Osiris*, *Viking Aton*, and *Viking Hathor*, which is scheduled to debut this summer.

She features several aspects familiar to Viking guests, such as a distinctive square bow and an

indoor/outdoor Aquavit Terrace.

The Pharaohs & Pyramids itinerary cruises round trip from Luxor, and features visits to the tombs of Nefertari and Tutankhamun, as well as excursions to the Temple of Khnum, the Dendera Temple complex, Abu Simbel, the Aswan Dam, and Nubian village, where guests can visit a traditional elementary school. *MS*

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AmaWaterways a cut above



AMAWATERWAYS officially cut the ribbon on its brand-new Sydney office on Bligh Street yesterday (**CW** 14 Mar), in a ceremony that included Managing Director Steve Richards and co-owner Gary Murphy.

The office features impressive views out towards Finger Wharf and a spacious open-plan layout.

Richards said, "I wanted to be in the heartbeat of Sydney where I could bring the best talent easily to work on public transport, and I wanted it to be a fun, great place to work where we could feel this vision and passion for cruise to come alive."

He added that in the six weeks AmaWaterways has been in the office, "the phones have been ringing and it's been getting busy, busy, busy each day" with an increase in bookings.

Murphy said, "We saw this opportunity and Steve and I know we have to take advantage of it."

"It's so great to see not only what you've done, Steve, but the team you've put together."

Richards has led the AmaWaterways charge since Nov when he was appointed Managing Director (**CW** 18 Dec), having previously been in leadership roles at Silversea and Wendy Wu Tours. **DF**

Carnival food bill

IT HAS been a record year for Carnival Australia supporting the country's businesses, with the company spending a record amount on locally sourced F&B.

Carnival spent approximately \$250 million in the past 12 months sourcing food, beverage, and hotel amenities from Australian suppliers, a massive increase on the \$70 million spent in the year prior to the pandemic.

The company hosted more than 100 suppliers on board P&O Cruise Australia's *Pacific Adventure* in Sydney this week to thank them.

APT Europe 2025

APT has launched its new fleet for next year, which will sail the cruise line's Rhine, Main, and Danube voyages.

The two new ships, *APT Solara* and *APT Ostara*, will sail for APT for the first time, following the line's split from AmaWaterways (**CW** 07 Mar).

The two new ships will feature a "world-first" innovation in river cruising, "levitating restaurant" The Gruner Bar & Dining, which can raise from Deck 3 to the Sun Deck and back.

"The whole venue lifts and becomes level with the Sun Deck and actually opens out onto the deck itself," APT Travel Group Chief Executive Officer David Cox explained.

"Imagine when you have docked in Budapest, and that becomes the back venue... you can sit there at sunset and have one of [our] various specialty cocktails."

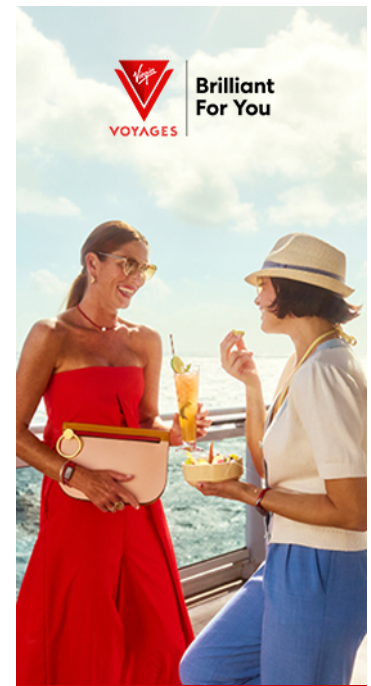
Three well-appointed suite categories are available, including Owner's Suites, Balcony Suites, and Twin Window Suites, which all feature luxury plush linens, tea and coffee amenities, a fully stocked minibar, in-suite entertainment, and more.

The season will also see APT will also sail new Mediterranean itineraries in partnership with Seabourn Cruise Line (**CW** 22 Feb).

Oceania upgrades

OCEANIA Cruises has announced a four-category upgrade sale, which starts today and runs through until the end of next month.

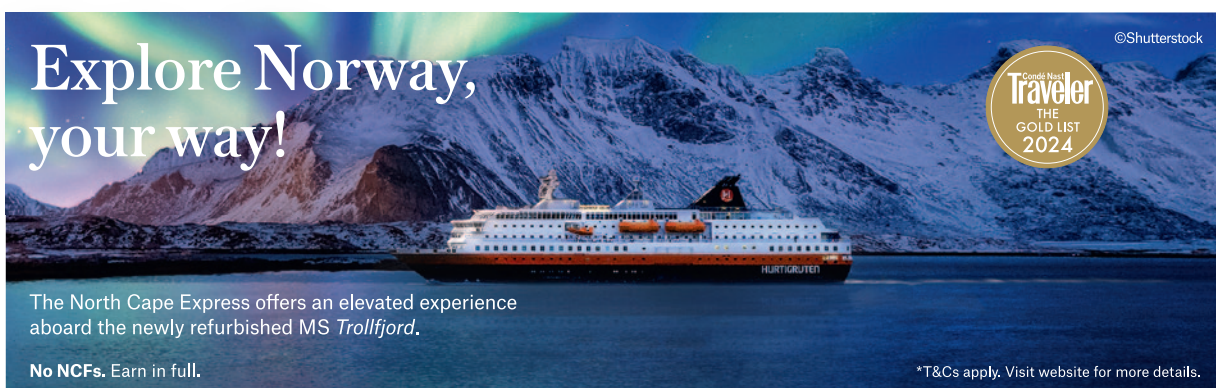
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NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) Chief Executive Officer & President Harry Sommer lived out the dreams of many - **CW's** Editor included - when he threw out the ceremonial first pitch at a recent Miami Marlins game. NCLH is a partner with the local Major League Baseball team, with Sommer flashing a cheeky grin as he showed off his fastball in front of the loanDepot Park faithful. "The energy from the fans was absolutely electric, and it was a moment I won't forget," Sommer said - [CLICK HERE](#) to view the video.



ACA, CLIA to visit ATE

THE Australian Cruise Association (ACA) and Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) are preparing to sail into next week's Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE), the second time the two have attended.

Australia's two most senior cruise representatives, ACA Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel and CLIA Managing Director Joel Katz, will promote the local sector's diversity to the world at the Melbourne-hosted convention, which is expecting around about 2,000 delegates.

Abel said the Australian cruise sector continues to flourish as the market matures.

She said herself and Katz are excited to build on the momentum they rallied last year, when they discovered many overseas buyers had limited knowledge of the local industry.

"Australia boasts an incredible cruise offering to all visitors, including a diverse range of brands operating in this market with a great variety of short mini breaks, seven-to-10-day adventures and long circumnavigation cruises.

"We can't wait to highlight the vast number of cruise products available in Australia, both onshore and off, including ways to combine cruise with the likes of rail travel and central Australia," she said.

Katz said 'ATE24' will give both associations the opportunity to meet with key tourism wholesalers and retailers from around the world to discuss the important cruise developments taking place in Australia.

"With cruise representing such a significant source market for inbound visitation to Australia, ATE provides an unparalleled platform for engaging with key tourism wholesalers and retailers worldwide," Katz said.

"It is an important opportunity for the cruise industry to showcase the significant advancements and opportunities emerging in Australia."

ATE24 coincides with CLIA's latest #wearecruise push, which highlights the role of the local supply chain in supporting the Australian cruise industry.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch the video and to share. *MS*

Silversea champs

SILVERSEA has announced Duval-Leroy as its pouring champagne of choice, a family operated brand with six generations of expertise.

Guests will enjoy three Duval-Leroy champagnes aboard Silversea's ships, including the Brut Reserve, which will be the cruise line's "pouring champagne", greeting guests upon arrival in their suites.

"Duval-Leroy was, for us, a natural choice," Silversea Wine Ambassador Lawrence d'Almeida said.

"It is a long-standing family business, always focused on achieving the highest quality.

"With Silversea, they share an uncompromising commitment to excellence, achieved through attention to detail and passion for its craft."

Duval-Leroy is located in the heart of the Cote des Blancs, in Vertus, Champagne, and comprises more than 200 hectares of vines, planted mainly with Chardonnay on plots classified as 'Grand Cru' or 'Premier Cru'.



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