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Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a cover wrap from **Coral Expeditions**, and a full page from **Disney Cruise Line**.

Explore with Coral

CRUISE, fly, and explore, with Coral Expeditions' Kimberley Explorer package next year.

The 10-night, all-inclusive cruise departs Darwin and Broome from Apr to Sep.

Head to the **cover page** for more information.

Disney Magic Ahoy

WHAT can you do on a Disney Cruise Line virtual voyage? It turns out quite a lot - head to **page 4** of today's *Cruise Weekly* for more info.

Cruisers looking for their 'wow' moment

EXCLUSIVE

CRUISERS are increasingly seeking more immersive experiences, Helloworld has found, with passengers leaning toward "event sailings".

Head of Cruise Steve Brady (pictured), speaking exclusively to *CW*, said once-in-a-lifetime moments are now inspiring where pax are sailing to next.

"We've seen strong demand for packages that include a cruise to see the solar eclipse off Spain in 2026," he said.

"With the solar maximum underway, it's a perfect time to see the Northern Lights and cruising Norway is a popular way to do it.

"Now more than ever, combining bucket-list experiences with cruise is a great opportunity for agents to differentiate."

Brady also called out the increasing popularity of river



cruising in Australia, as a travel style that brings passengers closer to the destination.

"River cruise in particular provides in-depth experiences where clients are very close to the destination.

"Europe remains very popular with customers wanting to wake up and explore the heart of medieval cities or cycle through wine regions.

"We also see this river

destination interest extend further afield to the Mekong River, the Nile and now on the Magdalena River in Columbia."

Brady believes there is still capacity for this market to grow with travel advisors.

"There are agents and stores who are still early on in their cruise selling journey and we're supporting them as they increase their sales in this part of the market," he added. *MS*

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*TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Information and itineraries are correct at time of print. *Prices are based on our All-Inclusive Cruise Fare, per person based on 2 guests sharing. For further information on this offer visit RSCC.COM/CAPTIVATING-CULTURES



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CLIA noms open

NOMINATIONS have opened for the 22nd annual Cruise Lines International Association Awards (CLIA), with the countdown now on to the industry's night of nights.

The awards will help recognise the pivotal role agents have played in achieving record levels of cruise travel, with 15 categories up for judging, including Cruise Agency of the Year, Online Agency of the Year, Cruise Consultant of the Year, and more.

The awards will be handed out on Sat 08 Mar 2025 at a gala celebration at The Star Event Centre in Sydney.

Ten of the awards are open to self-nomination or peer-nomination, with those interested in finding out more invited to **CLICK HERE**.

The awards are open to all current advisor members of CLIA, with nominations closing on 29 Nov.

"Australasia is one of the world's most prosperous cruise regions, and our travel agent community has played an enormous part in building that success," Managing Director Joel Katz said.

"Our 22nd Annual Awards will be a salute to travel agents throughout Australia and New Zealand, as well as honouring the brightest stars from among our CLIA membership."

Silver lining in NZ clouds

EXCLUSIVE

THERE is fresh hope the New Zealand cruise industry's fraught relationship with the country's government has turned a corner, with the NZ Customs Service hailing its willingness to work with the sector moving forward.

The Customs Service last week increased its cruise border processing levy from NZ\$16.03 to NZ\$27.82, which the New Zealand Cruise Association (NZCA) said will result in more than NZ\$3 million in unbudgeted costs for cruise lines this season.

However, Customs has said it wants to work alongside the New Zealand cruise sector to better understand its needs.

NZCA Chief Executive Officer Jacqui Lloyd told **CW** she believes the future of the cruise sector's relationship with its government is now on the way up.

Although future levy increases are unavoidable, the sector can help inform Customs on acceptable timing, and the understanding of the cruise booking window.

"Customs are very keen to connect with the industry and with NZCA to talk through and find the best way forward.

"There will be future levy changes, there always is; usually reviews are in about a three-year cycle...they want to work closely with the industry to ensure that they get the timing right for levies when they go up or down in



future," Lloyd said.

This cooperation will be important, as Customs noted levies are slated to rise in the future, even though they are typically based on a cost and expense recovery model.

"It was based on forecasts that Customs had made on what they thought were going to be the amount of cruise and air passengers over the last three years, and the cruise growth was much higher than what they forecast," Lloyd explained.

"That was another concern of ours, because they did mention within the documentation that should the cruise numbers continue to decrease, the levy would increase."

The NZCA is also yet to hear about the government's review of cruise operations in Fiordland, which could potentially see ships banned from the region (**CW** 06 Jul 2023).

"We understand certainly the Minister of Tourism has been very clear in his opposition to a ban, but we're yet to hear anything further," Lloyd said. *MS*

Cruise ads ban?

DUTCH anti-fossil fuel organisation Fossilvrij NL is calling for a ban on cruise industry advertising, as it targets sustainability claims made by the sector.

Complaints from Fossilvrij, alongside Advocates for the Future and Reclamejagers recently saw the Dutch advertising watchdog rule sustainability claims from MSC Cruises as "greenwashing".

Although no penalty has been handed down, Fossilvrij is calling for a ban on fossil fuel-related advertising, including from the cruise industry, and a curb on cruise calls in the Netherlands.

"The cruising sector is pushing for growth - both in size and number - while this comes at a high environmental cost," Fossilvrij Campaigner Hiske Arts told **Cruise Weekly**.

She claims CO2 emissions of the cruise sector are now almost 20% higher than prior to the pandemic.

"It is not possible to scale up alternative fuels," Arts said.

"This is why it is important to tackle the demand for cruises, and why we call for a ban on fossil advertisements (including cruises).

"In addition, the Dutch local authorities should drastically limit the number of cruises that are allowed to come to the Netherlands."

Discover the all new *River Cruise Special Report*





MEXICO, not to be outdone by Italy, has brought its majestic triple-masted navy ship into Australia.

Cuauhtemoc is making a tour around the country, shortly after the Italian navy's *Amerigo Vespucci* made her first visit Down Under (**CW** 30 Sep).

The Mexican ship is named after the last Aztec emperor, and has visited Fremantle, Melbourne, and Sydney.

Cuauhtemoc arrives with some fanfare, with hundreds of crew members climbing up her masts as she sails into port - some up almost 50 metres.

The ship is open to the public during her time in Australia, with visitors treated to traditional Mexican music while on board.



Scenic new APAC office

SCENIC Group has announced a new Asia Pacific office and dedicated team in Singapore, marking a significant expansion within the region.

This global expansion reflects Scenic's strategy to capitalise on the growing demand from the Asia-Pacific region, with the company saying it is also targeting EMEA and LATAM.

Constance Seck (**pictured**) has joined Scenic from Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings as Regional Director Sales & Marketing APAC, bringing more than 20 years of extensive experience in the Asia market, in her new role.

Seck has held various senior leadership roles in luxury hotels, consortia management, and travel agencies, and will report in to Scenic's long-time Australia-based General Manager of Sales & Marketing Anthony Laver.

She will be supported by Business Development Manager APAC Ally Grueter, and Marketing & Services Manager APAC Yee Sher Lim.

Also joining the team in Singapore is Accounting Manager APAC Quoc Huy To, who will



relocate from Vietnam this month, and will be the key contact for the APAC team's finance-related matters.

"We are excited to open our new Scenic Group APAC office in Singapore as part of our ongoing global expansion," Chair & Founder Glen Moroney said.

"With the growth of our Scenic and Emerald Cruises luxury river cruise ships and innovative ultra-luxury yachts, this provides us with the foundation to meet the increasing demand from affluent consumers in the fast-growing markets across this region."

The APAC team will be based at Marina Bay Financial Centre, 10 Marina Boulevard, Singapore. *MS*

Uniworld incentive

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises has launched its new Rivers of Rewards trade incentive, rewarding advisors with gift cards of up to \$1,000.

All agents making a new booking on Uniworld's 50-night 'Rivers of the World' cruise (16 Apr-05 Jun) from Brussels to Amman will receive the \$1,000 gift card.

Cruise bookings for next year will also draw \$300 for a suite booking and \$200 on all other categories - **CLICK HERE**.

Puck-tacular news

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) and the National Hockey League (NHL) have announced a multiyear partnership in the United States.

The agreement is the first of its kind for the NHL, which kicks off its new season today.

The new partnership provides NCL with an array of exclusive marketing rights and designations that will connect the cruise line with the NHL and its fans through the league's marketing, digital, and social media channels.



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