



### Cruise Weekly today

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

### APT early booking

APT has frozen the prices of its 2026 European cruising season at 2025 prices for a limited time for early bookings on a suite of new experiences.

For 2026, the company has extended its Christmas and New Year itineraries to 16 days and added a stop in the Slovakian capital of Bratislava.

Savings of up to \$1,000 per couple are also available on three new river cruise ships sailing the Rhine, Main, Danube, and Douro for bookings made by 13 Dec.

The line's flagship 15-day 'Magnificent Europe' voyage is available on board newbuilds *Solara* and *Ostara*, both set to debut next year.

Also returning will be the 15-day 'Western Front Explorer', visiting fabled war sites.

### Ungerer to A-Rosa

EUROPEAN river cruise brand A-Rosa has unveiled some senior managerial changes, with CEO Jorg Eichler opting to step down from the line to take on a new task in tourism, to be replaced by its co-founder and former Explora Journeys CEO Michael Ungerer.

In his 11 years at the helm, Eichler has overseen the brand's growth from 10 to 15 ships and set the structure for regularly topped sales records.

Meanwhile, Ungerer will also take on the role as Chair of the A-Rosa Advisory Group.

Ungerer said being nominated as Chair was "a real honour" and that he was excited to help the line strengthen its leadership position and focus on the next sustainable growth phase.

## Ponant gets Crooked



### EXCLUSIVE

PNANT and Crooked Compass have partnered to launch a one-of-a-kind itinerary, 'Perfection at Sea', which will explore Papua New Guinea by land and sea, *Cruise Weekly* can reveal.

The 16-day itinerary is only bookable through Travel Associates, and will see passengers voyage from Mount Hagen to New Britain with five nights on land, curated by Crooked Compass.

Guests will spend two nights in Kumul Lodge, and visit the villages of Huli Wigmen.

They will also witness the ancient practice of the "cane swallowing" initiation for boys, and walk to the ancient caves of the Asaro Valley to see locals perform traditional dances.

Guests will then head to Madang to board *Paspaley Pearl*, which will cruise to Cape Gloucester to see the Big Witu and Mt Tavorvur.

They will then explore Kimbe Bay, home to 60% of the coral species in the Indo-Pacific, and Ataliklikun Bay, to learn about the Duk Duk society and their arcane Baining Fire Dance.

The itinerary also takes passengers to the Duke of York Islands, Jacquinet Bay, and the Tami Islands, rich in European and World War II history.

"I'm thrilled to announce that Crooked Compass is entering into a partnership with the brand-

new *Paspaley Pearl* by Ponant for their luxury expeditions in Papua New Guinea," Crooked Compass founder Lisa Pagotto told *Cruise Weekly*.

"Together, we are offering the ultimate in high

class, experiential travel, allowing travellers to experience this frontier destination both by land and by sea.

"This collaboration promises to be the most comprehensive and educational way to explore the diverse landscapes and cultures of Papua New Guinea available on the market with a connection to culture and nature on the next level," Pagotto added.

Travel Associates General Manager Rachel Kingswell told *CW* it has been a dream to collaborate with Ponant and Crooked Compass to bring the one-of-a-kind Papua New Guinea cruise to life.

"Blending culture and luxury through carefully curated itineraries is what we do best," Kingswell said.

"Travelling on board Ponant's *Paspaley Pearl* is an unforgettable experience in itself, but pairing this with Crooked Compass' exclusive tour through Papua New Guinea makes for a truly special travel experience and one that's only able to be booked through Travel Associates.

"Some of my personal favourite parts of the trip would have to be soaking up the culture of Mindima Village, swimming in the crystal blue waters of Duke of York Island and of course, capping the day off with a cocktail on the ship's sunset lounge."

**Pictured:** Oma Masalai Skeleton Dancers. *MS*

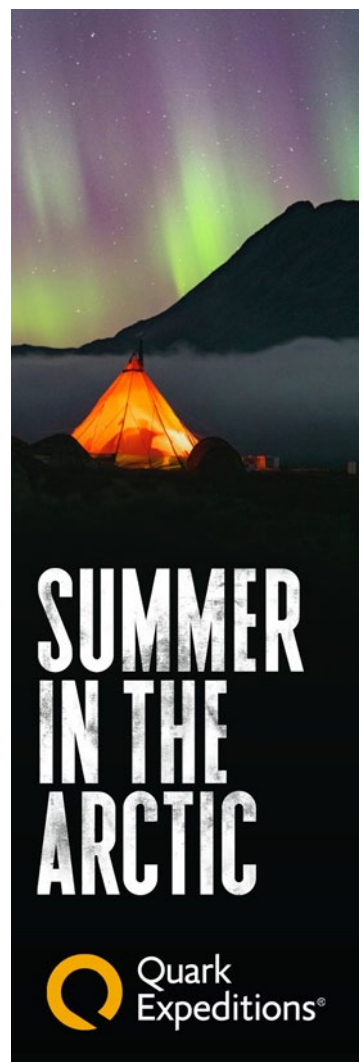
### CLIA on the hunt

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has launched a recruitment drive for a new Membership Coordinator to manage and build its advisor database.

The successful applicant will take ownership and be the primary conduit between the association and its travel advisor membership.

Working closely with the Director of Membership and Events along with the wider team, the role involves developing acquisition and retention strategies and meeting annual membership goals for the region.

For more information and to apply, [CLICK HERE](#).



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## We're on a ship

**FLIGHT** Centre is hosting its strategic leadership conference on board P&O Cruises Australia's *Pacific Encounter* this week.

Leaders from Australia, as well as Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and New Zealand, are cruising to the Whitsunday Islands from Brisbane over four nights.

The conference, themed 'The Flight Centre Way', is focused on growing its cruise market share, with the travel network being the largest Cruise Lines International Association-accredited agency globally.

Flight Centre Global Managing Director Andrew Stark said the conference was an opportunity to bring his leadership team together in-person to focus on the company's strategic plans.

"We have winning aspirations for our iconic Flight Centre Brand, famous for flights plus more, and the past week was the perfect opportunity to come together as a global leadership team and do what we do best; communicate in person, build our culture, network and collaborate on how best we continue to deliver the joy of travel to our customers," he said.

"The conference focused on the emergence of trends at play, [and] product lines for the future," Stark added.

## Oceania event series



**OCEANIA** Cruises has unveiled a new series of 'Exclusive Cruise Events' across Australia, showcasing the line's latest news, fleet updates, and its new season.

The 'Exclusive Cruise Events' will be held over 11 days, with up to two sessions per day, from 15 Oct to 27 Nov.

Events will run in Adelaide, Gold Coast, Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Perth, Newcastle, Central Coast, Sydney, Hobart, the Mornington Peninsula, and Melbourne.

Trade partners can savour canapes and beverages while the Oceania team spotlights the cruise line's diverse destinations, itineraries, and tours.

Oceania will also share the latest news, including the launch of its newest ship *Allura*, set to sail next year.

"Our special Exclusive Cruise Events series is a great opportunity for us to reconnect in person with our valued travel advisors and showcase how our

captivating new voyages and fleet enhancements will continue to enhance the ultra-premium travel experience for our guests," Vice President International Sales Jason Worth said.

Those wishing to register should call 1300 355 200, or **CLICK HERE**.

Travel advisors can also **CLICK HERE** to utilise Oceania's Exclusive Cruise Events toolkit, which includes flyers, invites, banners and more.

The cruise line also recently unveiled its Specialty Cruises for next year, which will feature a number of exclusive hosted voyages, hosted by esteemed guests like Claudine Pepin, Sara Moulton, and Aisha Ibrahim.

The cruise line's own Culinary Directors Eric Barale and Alex Quaretti will also host voyages next year, which will feature expert-led onboard programming including enrichment lectures, live cooking demonstrations, and more (**CW 27 Sep**). *MS*

## A new Heritage

**HERITAGE** Line's boutique luxury ship *Violet* has been completely redesigned, and is set to return to her sailings in Ha Long Bay on 31 Oct.

*Violet's* private and public areas have been transformed, while Heritage has also introduced a new private dining concept, boasting a specially curated menu, and designed to accommodate small groups of up to four.

The ship's two Junior suites and four Imperial suites have been completely refurbished, incorporating a fresher, more modern design, inspired by Ha Long Bay.

The restaurant, library lounge, spa room, and bar have also been refreshed.

The Sun Deck has also been expanded to the back, providing even more space.

Each guest has their own sunbed, with additional cocoon loungers for couples also added.

The ship's Sun Deck allows ample room for private-style outdoor dining with a table-for-two set-up.

"We are dedicated to continually enhancing our vessels to ensure every journey offers a supreme blend of luxury and authenticity," said Andreas Schroetter, Director of Sales and Marketing for Heritage Line - [heritage-line.com](http://heritage-line.com).

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**DISNEY** Cruise Line is set to be one of the stars of the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade this year in New York City.

The 'Magic Meets the Seas' float (**pictured**) will celebrate multiple ships in the cruise line's fleet, including the new *Disney Treasure*.

The bows of seven other ships will also be celebrated, as Disney champions its ever-growing fleet.

The float will feature specially choreographed performances starring characters from Disney, Pixar, and more.



## True North 2026

**TRUE** North's 2026 sailing schedule is now live, with passengers invited to reserve their adventure today.

The cruise line's popular itineraries, such as the seven-night 'Kimberley Snapshot', the 10-night 'Kimberley Waterfalls', and the 10-night 'Kimberley Explorer' are all expected to book quickly.

There are also a number of new adventures for 2026, including conservation-themed trips to the Great Barrier Reef.

**CLICK HERE** to view departure dates.

## CCL completes hull refresh



**CARNIVAL** Cruise Line (CCL) has completed a hull refresh project across its 27-ship fleet with the emergence of *Carnival Panorama* from dry dock in Singapore.

The 4,008-passenger ship has returned to service from her 24-day maintenance, embarking on a 25-day 'Carnival Journeys' repositioning back to Los Angeles, during which the brand will make its maiden visit to Manila.

Once back in LA, *Panorama* will resume multi-day adventures to the Mexican Riviera.

Enhancements made during the dry dock include the addition of a non-smoking section of the casino adjacent to the main gaming floor and a new Dreams photo studio where guests can book shots with *Panorama's* professional photographer.

Shopaholics will also find a new Effy Fine Jewellery store and a redesigned Carnival Adventures

store among the 'Fun Shops'.

On the upper deck, a new mini golf course has also been installed (**pictured inset**). *ML*

## New Croatia cruise

**UNFORGETTABLE** Croatia has launched a new sailing for next year, 'Luxury Croatia Hidden Gems Balcony Cruise'.

The seven-night voyage, sailing from Split to Opatija is available across two departure dates next year.

The cruise sails on the 36-guest *My Wish*, which will take guests to some of Northern Croatia's less-frequented destinations, including Sibenik, Zadar, Plitvice Lakes National Park, Losinj, and Krk.

Highlights of the itinerary include a guided tour of Split's Diocletian's Palace and old town; an excursion to the Dalmatian Hinterland with a sample tasting of local delicacies; and a swim stop and visit to National Park Kornati - **CLICK HERE**.



**CLIA UPDATE**  
 with Joel Katz  
 MD, CLIA Australasia

### Strategy is the key

**CRUISING** should be central to any coastal region's vision for tourism, whether it covers a small port or major cruising gateway like Sydney.

Last week, the NSW Tourism Minister John Graham made clear that cruising would play a key part in the state's tourism development strategy, recognising not only its huge economic contribution but also the valuable role it plays in supporting other tourism services and infrastructure.

At a lunch hosted by CLIA and Business Sydney last week, Tourism Minister John Graham told business leaders that experiences would be key, and that the state's vision would support the development of a strong network of excursions and experiences that will help attract and benefit cruise visitors.

Around the world, wherever we see destinations that are successful in developing a strong local cruise industry, they are inevitably destinations with a comprehensive cruise strategy that brings together the many working parts of the cruise economy.

They provide a detailed road map for the development of cruising, considering aspects like infrastructure, regulation, supply chains, visitor experiences, tourism dispersal itinerary opportunities, and more.

With Cruise Month in full swing, it's the perfect time to be recognising the importance of cruising and its enormous economic significance in this region.

