



### Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from Cruise Lines International Association.

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CLIA also supports your interests, provides professional development and training, industry recognition, resources and tools, and much more - see **page four**.

## Avalon After Dark sees the light

### EXCLUSIVE

**AVALON** Waterways is introducing its 'Avalon After Dark' program, *Cruise Weekly* can reveal, ushering in a new way to experience river cruising when the sun goes down.

The program will include dedicated entertainment, more after-dark port adventures, and dinners under the stars.

New for next year as part of will be, an open-air dining experience, 'Sky Grill Dinners'.

This will be complemented by an all-new bar menu, which will include a collection of premium and non-alcoholic cocktails.

Each ship's Panorama Lounge will light up as the sun sets, with live music, special performances, themed trivia, karaoke and impromptu dance parties.

Guests are invited to belt out a classic, test their knowledge over nightly cocktail specials, and



enjoy live entertainment.

Avalon After Dark will also encourage guests to experience some of Europe's best destinations, with more overnight docking in cities such as Budapest, Vienna, Amsterdam, Rudesheim am Rhein, and more.

The line hopes the program will help dispel stereotypes that suggest there is nothing to do at night on a river cruise, President Pam Hoffee said.

"For some ocean cruise guests, this stereotype was a barrier, Hoffee told *Cruise Weekly*.

"Of course, river cruising

remains strongly about the destination, so, our nightlife will include opportunities to experience our ports at night.

"A thrill often not possible in ocean cruising where they sail to put the focus on the ship, casino, and often on-board revenue... that simply isn't a driver for river cruising and especially Avalon."

The program's introduction comes as the cruise line posts impressive numbers for its new voyages on the Garonne.

"We launched Bordeaux for 2025 a bit later than the rest of our itineraries so there is room still to book where other itineraries might be fuller, although that gap is closing and we're seeing good numbers for this first year," Hoffee said.

"2026 is selling in line with the rest of our fleet and on track to be another record-breaking selling season." MS



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## American antiques

**AMERICAN** Cruise Lines is bringing back its antiques themed cruise, with the new offering giving guests the chance to attend a taping of the award-winning British TV program, *Antiques Roadshow*.

Guests joining the departure on 16 Jun will get to meet with appraisers from the show and enjoy other antiques-focused enrichment throughout the cruise, which will visit Maine's picturesque coastline and quaint New England villages.

"American Cruise Lines' guests have a common bond with *Antiques Roadshow's* millions of weekly viewers in their shared passion for American culture, and in uncovering the fascinating histories which often exist right in our own backyards," said the line's President & Chief Executive Officer, Charles B. Robertson.

Cruising aboard *American Glory*, guests will enjoy a special opportunity to attend an *Antiques Roadshow* taping event while visiting Boothbay Harbor on 18 Jun, during which they can bring up-to two items to be appraised.

When the ship visits Bar Harbor on 20 Jun, two well-known appraisers and a producer from the show will join guests on board for a look behind the scenes of the popular TV series.

## Marella's first newbuilds



**FINCANTIERI** has signed an agreement with TUI for two new cruise ships for its Marella Cruises brand, marking the first-ever newbuilds for the line.

The ships, which will be delivered in 2030 and 2032, will be designed specifically for the English market, and have a focus on environmental sustainability.

They will aim to "redefine premium cruising" through refined design, high-quality materials, and a variety of spacious accommodations.

"We are proud to welcome Marella Cruises as a new customer and to support its vision as it enters the newbuild segment," Fincantieri Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director Pierroberto Folgiero said.

"This agreement is a testament to Fincantieri's ability to forge strategic partnerships with an expanding client base, reinforcing

our long-term visibility and ensuring a high level of capacity saturation for our shipyards.

"The project will bring together our expertise in ship design, innovation, and sustainability to deliver vessels that meet the evolving expectations of modern cruise passengers."

Fincantieri's new relationship with Marella is the latest development in a long association with TUI Group, with the shipbuilder in Feb delivering *Mein Schiff Relax* (**CW** 11 Feb) for the travel firm's namesake TUI Cruises brand.

The ship is the first of two InTuition-class concept cruise ships dual-powered by liquid natural gas and marine gas.

The second ship, *Mein Schiff Flow*, is currently under construction at the Monfalcone shipyard, with delivery scheduled for next year. *MS*

## Virgin Jams it up

**VIRGIN** Voyages has teamed up with American singer Nicky Jam, headlining the cruise line's first 'Celebration Voyage' from 04-09 May.

The X singer will electrify the high seas with an exclusive live performance on board *Valiant Lady*, amplifying Virgin's Scarlet Night celebration.

"Nicky Jam represents the vibrant energy and boundary-pushing creativity that defines Virgin's DNA," Chief Marketing Officer Nathan Rosenberg said.

"This exciting partnership not only reinforces Virgin's long-standing roots in the music world, but also opens the door to potential future collaborations," he added.

## Seabourn scarves

**SEABOURN** Cruise Line has debuted an exclusive polar-inspired collection of scarves and resort wear by accessories brand PeppaRose.

The collection, inspired by the landscapes and wildlife of the Arctic and Antarctica is available exclusively aboard *Seabourn Encore*, *Seabourn Ovation*, *Seabourn Quest*, *Seabourn Sojourn*, and *Seabourn Pursuit*.

The designs are hand-crafted from sustainably produced cashmere, with PeppaRose now working on additional designs for other regions.


## DISCOVER



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## PORTHOLE

**MOST** cruisers are now well aware of the significance of a pineapple on a fellow passenger's door, but how about a pink flamingo?

Apparently, this bright-coloured bird can also stand in as a hallmark for swingers on the high seas, among a number of other onboard codes recently revealed by luggage storage platform Bounce.com.

One code you'll never want to hear on board a cruise ship is "oscar", which signals a passenger has gone overboard.

However, this is also a good code to know, in case you witness the worst case scenario at sea.

Those with more delicate stomachs, including *Cruise Weekly's* Editor, won't want to hear "charlie charlie charlie" either, as this is typically used by crew members to alert each other of severe weather ahead.

"Operation rising star" may sound optimistic or exciting, but unfortunately it is very much the opposite.

This phrase is used to indicate a death on board the ship, or a serious medical incident.

Another potentially misleadingly enjoyable call sign is "red party", which unfortunately involves no party at all.

This signals crew members to a fire or an otherwise hazardous situation on board.

## New Reef Unlimited capacity



**EXPERIENCE Co** has acquired a new catamaran for use on cruise ship to shore transfers and shore excursion for larger ships arriving into Cairns ports.

The 26-metre, 240-passenger vessel known as *Aquarius II* will also be utilised on the company's half-day and full-day Great Barrier Reef tours under its Reef Unlimited brand.

The acquisition is also aimed at capitalising on Far North Queensland's growing business events charter market and special event cruise sector.

*Aquarius II* features three decks, including an expansive sun deck for its adventures to Moore Reef along with a shaded and air-conditioned bar and food service area for buffet service.

The vessel also comes equipped with Starlink wi-fi connectivity and a hydraulic aft pontoon for easy access to the water.

"We have seen strong demand



for our Great Barrier Reef experiences for some time now," said Experience Co Chief Executive John O'Sullivan.

"This has been off the back of continued domestic patronage as well as the return of international travellers [and] we believe that the Great Barrier Reef will always be one of Australia's leading tourism drawcards," he added.

## Big Balcony event

**CUNARD** has launched its 2025 Big Balcony sales event, during which travellers can secure a free upgrade from an Oceanview to a Balcony on new bookings made by 26 Jun.

The offer is available on a variety of eligible sailings including Alaska, Baltic and the Mediterranean, as well as trans-Atlantic crossings on board *Queen Mary 2*.

## ACA UPDATE

with Jill Abel - CEO

### Shining a global spotlight Down Under

IT HAS been a privilege to represent the ACA at key industry events recently, including the Destination Australia conference in Sydney and the Regional Tourism Organisation workshop hosted by Tourism Australia.

These events provided valuable insights into the current Australian cruise tourism landscape, and I am eager to build on these learnings with a specific cruise focus at Seatrade Cruise Global next week.

This year, I will be leading a strong delegation of 20 ACA members, and look forward to a raft of strategic discussions and networking opportunities with a number of key international cruise stakeholders.

Our team will also host the legendary Down Under BBQ at the ACA stand, providing another fantastic opportunity to showcase our region.

ACA's presence will be further highlighted through speaking engagements in the 'Navigating Challenges, Harnessing Opportunities' panel, hosted by Joel Katz (CLIA), where I will join four ACA member representatives as a panellist.

Additionally, we are excited to attend the new Food and Beverage at Sea event, reinforcing our commitment to strengthening Australia's cruise supply chain and driving long-term economic benefits for our members and the broader cruising industry.



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