

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news plus a full page from **Linblad Expeditions**.

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WATCH, learn, sell, and win with National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions' Expedition Masters program.

Five lucky winners will secure a stateroom for two aboard Lindblad's 'Exploring Galapagos' 10-day adventure, departing in Mar.

Winners will have earned the most points from watching Lindblad webinars, learning about the line, and more.

Expedition Masters is designed to help boost travel advisors' knowledge and sharpen their sales skills, with the reward of an adventure of a lifetime - more on **page 5**.

Geraldton's "massive" cruise concerns

THERE are "massive concerns" in Geraldton over the lack of cruise ship calls in the coming few years (**CW** 30 Jul), as local tourism operators face massive wipeouts of their business, says David O'Malley, CEO of the region's DMO, Australia's Coral Coast.

O'Malley told **CW** the upcoming call of Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours' *Scenic Eclipse II* is much welcomed by the community.

The ship's arrival is set to precede a two-year gap in Geraldton's cruise schedule.

Visits from ships such as *Eclipse II* benefit towns as far away as Dongara and Kalbarri (64km and 155km from Geraldton respectively), O'Malley said.

Cruise brings much-needed business to local transport and tourism operators, he explained, which is set to dry up across the next two years.

"It's really good business, it's

really important for them, but they notice the decline in their business when the ships aren't coming in," he told **CW**.

"Because they're generally higher-value travellers, the ships are really good for that retail component, it really gives them a boost as well.

"A lot of time and effort has gone into cruise ships over the years in Geraldton, and when they lose them, it's really disappointing," he added.

O'Malley also emphasised the return visitation and dispersal effect that cruise has on Geraldton and the Coral Coast.

Many travellers who first visit the destination on a cruise ship come back later, often as drive tourists, he said.

"It's a massive injection into the local economy," O'Malley added.

"They'll actually come back and travel the entire length of the

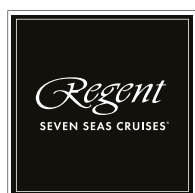
region, which is perfect, so [there are] a lot of ongoing benefits from cruise ships that are not just on the day.

"We're exposing the likes of Geraldton, Exmouth, Ningaloo Reef, to a market that wouldn't necessarily come our way."

O'Malley hopes the arrival of international cruise ship executives brought to WA by the Australian Cruise Association Conference in Sep will offer the Coral Coast the opportunity to showcase its tourism product to the right people (**CW** 23 Jul).

"Actually getting the decision-makers from the various cruise lines up to Geraldton...you can't underestimate the value of somebody actually seeing what you're talking about," he said.

Twelve cruise ship calls to Geraldton have been cancelled of late, due to itinerary changes, withdrawals, and more. **MS**



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Pikardt promoted

CARNIVAL Corporation has announced the promotion of Alex Pikardt to Senior Director Sales for both Holland America Line and Seabourn Cruise Line.

Pikardt joined the team just over 12 months ago, and since then, his strong strategic vision has fostered and expanded key alliances across the trade for the two brands, Carnival said.

"Alex's promotion is a testament to his results-driven approach, deep trade relationships, and strategic mindset," Senior VP Sales Rob Coleman said.

"He has made an immediate impact since joining the team, and I have no doubt he will continue to elevate our presence across the region."

Pikardt (**pictured**) said it is a privilege to lead the sales efforts across the two brands.

"I'm looking forward to continuing working closely with our valued trade partners to bring our unforgettable cruise experiences to these highly engaged markets."

Pikardt joined Carnival Corp in 2010, and since arriving, has also worked across brands including P&O Cruises Australia and Cunard.



NCL and TTC to hit the road



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) and The Travel Corporation's (TTC) tour brands are set to hit the road again, with their 'Worldwide Rendezvous 2026 - Travel Trivia Series'.

Advisors and their clients are invited to join a new series of fun-filled dates combining travel trivia, expert insights, and more.

The events will take place from 10 Sep to 12 Nov in almost 40 locations across Australia, with "one night only" offers available for travellers at each event.

Each event will kick off with a trade-only session to educate, inspire, and equip consultants with the tools to offer a range of exceptional worldwide travel experiences across 2026.

Clients are then invited to join in for a fun-filled occasion of trivia, expert insights, and more.

The events will be open to registration in a few weeks' time, and will visit New South Wales in locations such as Sutherland Shire (10 Sep), The Hills Shire (16 Sep), Macarthur (23 Sep), Tamworth (08 Oct), Port Macquarie (13 Oct), Central Coast (21 Oct), Newcastle

(22 Oct), Wollongong (28 Oct), Canberra (04 Nov), and Albury (12 Nov).

Norwegian and TTC will visit Victoria in the Mornington Peninsula (30 Sep), Geelong (01 Oct), Greensborough (13 Oct), and Beaconsfield (16 Oct).

Queenslanders can join in the Sunshine Coast (23 Sep), Bundaberg (24 Sep), Townsville (01 Oct), Gold Coast (07 Oct), northern Brisbane (09 Oct), Toowoomba (14 Oct), southern Brisbane (21 Oct), and southwestern Brisbane (22 Oct).

Western Australia dates will include Perth (27 Oct), southern Perth (28 Oct), Bunbury (29 Oct), and Busselton (29 Oct).

South Australia will get in on the mix in the Riverland (15 Sep), Port Lincoln (17 Sep), northern Adelaide (22 Oct), and southern Adelaide (23 Oct).

There will also be two Tasmania dates: Launceston (28 Oct) and Hobart (29 Oct).

The two brands last year hosted a 'European Rendezvous', visiting almost 50 locations to showcase their range of holidays. *MS*

Aurora now in AUD

AURORA Expeditions has unlocked local currency pricing for Antarctica voyages in Australia, as part of its new booking policy.

The locally based cruise line previously priced its Antarctica voyages in USD, but these are now also available in AUD.

These itineraries are also now available in CAD, EUR, GBP, and NZD, enabling six different markets to book an Aurora Antarctica voyage in their local currency.

This shift allows the exchange rate to be locked in at the time of booking for both the deposit and final payment, avoiding currency fluctuations, and giving travellers full visibility of their total trip cost from day one.

"We're committed to making it easier and more rewarding for our trade partners to sell our Antarctica program," Global Head of Sales David Tanguay said.

"This change empowers agents to offer pricing consistency, greater transparency, and a more seamless booking experience for their clients."

Eclipse is eclipsed

ENVIRONMENTAL protestors have blocked Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Eclipse* while she was docking in Amsterdam.

The ship was attempting to complete an 11-day trip, when protestors in canoes and inflatable rafts positioned themselves in front of the ship.

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Windstar launches bite-size sailings

WINDSTAR Cruises has introduced a new series of short sailings in Europe to whet the appetite of time-poor travellers and new-to-cruise guests.

Departures across the three-to-five-night trips have been scheduled for 2026 and 2027.

Known as 'Quick Getaways', the series features nine cruises and five new itineraries, mixing both iconic and lesser-known ports across the continent.

Itineraries include three-night snapshots of Southern France and Italy, a three-night sailing in Belgium, and a four-night adventure from London to the Cote d'Opale.

Travellers will enjoy a range of iconic moments such as sailing underneath London's Tower Bridge (pictured), and sampling wines in the tiny port of Collioure.

Other experiences include a chance to explore the remote



canals of Belgium, wander quaint Corsican markets, and enjoy wine tastings in Tuscany.

The cruise line said the range is aimed at those looking to squeeze more into a European holiday than just a cruise.

"They're the perfect way to experience the Windstar style

of travel - especially if you're already travelling for work or play in Europe," Director of Itinerary Planning Jess Peterson said.

Windstar said it is planning more short getaways in 2027, with the range to be revealed when the full season goes on sale from next month. *ML*

Oceania steps up

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings has earmarked a plan to elevate the Oceania Cruises brand from premium to luxury, with Regent Seven Seas Cruises moving to ultra-luxury.

"Oceania Cruises is focused on positioning itself firmly within the luxury space, with new branding coming in the near future that better communicates the brand's extraordinary value proposition," NCLH President & CEO Harry Sommer said in a Q2 earnings call.

The coming years will see Oceania advance a fleet transformation process, in which its older R-class ships leave the fleet, replaced by four new Sonata-class vessels.

Oceania operates two newbuild Allura-class ships, which have joined the fleet in the past two years.

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THE Guinness Book of World Records is about as famous for its wacky and bizarre record holders as it is for the more mundane and rudimentary.

Perhaps you, dear reader, can decide which category the 2025 UK Dog Surfing Championships fits into.

Organiser Mark Reeves decided this year's competition would take on several world record attempts, which saw the most pairs of humans and dogs paddleboarding simultaneously.

The attempt was a success, with 10 humans and canines taking part in a 50-metre paddleboard race, which ended in a tie.

As a result, there are now two holders of this record - Matthew Jenkins and his two-year-old shih-tzu Gigi and Ben Gray with Boo, who he calls his "boarder collie".

A second effort focused on how many dogs could be placed onto one paddleboard, with 12 dogs staying in place on the board long enough for judges to deem it another successful world record.

But why stop at two? A third Guinness World Record attempt saw humans and dogs try to complete the 50-metre paddleboard course in the fastest time, and as this was a new entry, another world record was indeed set.

Mexico ends dolphin tours



CRUISE lines are scaling back their dolphin tours in Mexico, as the country introduces new legislation governing marine mammal interactions.

Royal Caribbean has already informed guests booked on affected tours of the change, which will see the end of high-impact interactions between the animals and humans.

This includes holding the dolphin's fins, belly rides, boogie board pushes, foot pushes, and dorsal tows.

Other cruise lines which operate dolphin excursions include Norwegian Cruise Line and Princess Cruises.

These changes apply across Mexico, with Cozumel set to be particularly affected.

The island off the coast of the Yucatan Peninsula is famous for its dolphin encounters.

Other popular destinations for dolphin encounters in Mexico include Isla Mujeres, Puerto Vallarta, and the Riviera Maya.

The update is part of wider

efforts to protect wildlife and guest safety in Mexico, following similar regulations introduced in Honduras earlier this year. *MS*

Revolutionary cruise

AMERICAN Cruise Lines has added a fifth new extended cruise in 2026 to celebrate the US' 250th anniversary.

Next year's Extended Cruises collection will now include a 32-day 'Revolutionary War Cruise', which will sail from 08 Oct-08 Nov.

The cruise will travel from Albany to Washington, bringing on board American Revolution experts who will bring to life the United States' fight for independence.

Guests will sail the Hudson River, docking in destinations crucial to the conflict, such as New York City, Boston, Annapolis, Yorktown, Sleepy Hollow, Newport, Plymouth, and Philadelphia.



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Expedition Masters Competition commences Monday 7 July and ends Tuesday 7 October 2025.

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