

### Cruise Weekly today

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

### Cloud floats to Aus

**SILVERSEA'S** 'Grand South Pacific Expedition 2025' is now underway, with *Silver Cloud* taking guests on a 75-day cruise through Australia, Asia, and the South Pacific.

The ship, which departed from Perth yesterday, will visit 58 destinations in 11 countries, including the Kimberley, Darwin, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Fiji and many more, before arriving in Chile on 02 Nov.

Three overnight calls in the Houtman Abrolhos, Pitcairn Island, and Easter Island will enable travellers to venture deeper ashore to connect with local cultures.

Guests will also enjoy two exclusive events, including an exploration of the vast wetlands of the NT at Finnis River Lodge.

"From the remote shores of rarely visited gems like Palmerston Island, Adamstown, and Robinson Crusoe Island, to the iconic Kimberley Coast, Bora Bora, and Easter Island, the variety of experiences available to our guests during the Grand South Pacific Expedition 2025 is entirely unique," President Bert Hernandez said.

## Royal's new Star rises



**ROYAL** Caribbean has officially introduced *Star of the Seas*, 'the ultimate family vacation', with the new ship celebrated at her naming ceremony in Florida.

*Star's* newly announced godmother, Kellie Gerardi (**CW** 18 Aug), was joined by Royal Caribbean crew members, executives, guests and more in the ship's AquaTheater (pictured), as the astronaut and social media influencer bestowed safekeeping onto the vessel.

"I'm honoured to celebrate Royal Caribbean's new *Star of the Seas* in such a beautiful naming ceremony as godmother - a tradition that is close to my heart and a spirit that spans both sea and space," she said.

"A vacation on *Star* is the perfect combination of two of my biggest passions in life - a spirit of exploration and quality time with family, and I can't wait for this journey to begin."

*Star* debuted last week, with **Cruise Weekly** joining the ship for a preview voyage from Port Canaveral (**CW** 19 Aug).

The ship will now set sail with her first paying passengers, with her debut season to feature seven-night adventures from her home port Port Canaveral, visiting destinations in the eastern and western Caribbean, including Perfect Day at CocoCay.

"*Star of the Seas* represents the next bold step in our journey to reimagine vacations," Royal Caribbean Group President & CEO Jason Liberty declared.

"[She] brings together the best of our innovation, signature experiences, and the most sought-after destinations into one unforgettable vacation.

"With *Star*, we're not just launching a ship, we're advancing our mission to create the world's best vacations responsibly for guests of all ages." **MS**

### New Celestyal tool

**CELESTYAL** Cruises has enhanced its cruise and land package tool, renaming it 'Celestyal Sail & Stay'.

The improved tool is available via the cruise line's trade booking system, enabling advisors to book cruise and land packages for their guests both at the time of booking or at a later date.

The new functionality gives advisors the ability to book pre- and post-cruise hotel stays at a selection of almost 20 properties in Athens, with private transfers included.

The service is now available for all sailings departing from the Greek capital, with plans in place to expand the offering to Celestyal's Arabian Gulf programs in due course.

Hotels offered are predominantly four-star and above, with some three-star options available, while a private car or minivan transfers passengers to and from the airport, hotel, and port.

Advisors are also provided with downloadable guides to the six Athens locations where the hotels are situated, ensuring they are equipped with expert local knowledge.

Locations include Omonoia Square, close to Athens' main attractions; Metaxourgeio, close to the metro station; and the Glyfada Riviera, for easy access to the sea and the port.

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### Royal Asia debut

**PRINCESS** Cruises' *Royal Princess* is set to make her debut in Southeast Asia from Singapore in Oct 2026, before her Australian season.

*Royal* will undergo a two-week dry dock in Singapore, before embarking on two cruises from the destination.

The ship will sail a nine-night Southeast Asia cruise visiting Ho Chi Minh City, overnighing in Bangkok, before sailing to Ko Samui.

This will be followed by a 13-night Southeast Asia voyage which also includes a stop in Lombok.

These two cruises can be combined into a 22-night Southeast Asia & Australia voyage visiting Darwin, Yorkeys Knob, and Brisbane.

### Celestyal playing key role in ME

**CELESTYAL** Cruises is playing a key role in broadening the Middle East's tourism distribution, Director of Business Development Asia Pacific Jarrod Zurvas (**pictured**) said, as the line prepares for its second season in the Arabian Gulf (**CW** 24 Jul).

Zurvas, who was promoted last month to be Celestyal's chief representative in Australia alongside Ascend Travel Group (**CW** 30 Jul), believes the cruise line's Arabian Gulf product is the ideal way for the region to showcase its tourism offerings.

He said it is also ideal for Australian cruisers, who typically seek a deeper cultural experience than many other destinations are able to deliver.

"For Australians, the shorter cruises are attractive as a stopover product," he told **CW**.

"The compact geography of the Arabian Gulf means travellers can visit multiple countries in a relatively short time, experiencing a variety of cultures, cuisines and landscapes all in one cruise.

"While airlines created the pathway for Australians to visit Qatar and the UAE, cruising is driving a broader tourism curve to explore the region more deeply and Celestyal is at the forefront of that".

The cruise line recently completed its first Gulf program (**CW** 16 Apr), and will next season base two ships in the region.

This increased capacity, as



well as greater airlift from Down Under, could make Celestyal's Gulf product an even more attractive proposition for Aussies.

"With Virgin Australia's partnership with Qatar Airways adding 28 weekly flights to Doha, there has never been an easier or more convenient way to get there," Zurvas said.

"Our itineraries also offer exceptional value for time and money which is particularly welcome in this market, especially after a long-haul flight and when the Aussie dollar is taken into consideration...our inclusive model means all meals, soft drinks, wi-fi, port fees and gratuities are included.

"While many luxury cruises focus on onboard amenities and time at sea, often including many sea days, we know Australians want a destination-driven experience, so prioritise time spent ashore as much as time on board," he added. *MS*

### Disney slings in

**DISNEY** Cruise Line has announced *Disney Adventure* will continue to offer short cruises from Singapore, as part of her 2026-27 deployment (**CW** 22 Apr).

Set to debut in the Asia-Pacific region in Dec, the new 6,000-guest vessel will offer a series of three- and four-night cruises throughout the season, with no ports of call.

Nearly 30 new sailings are currently scheduled to take place between Oct 2026 and Jan 2027.

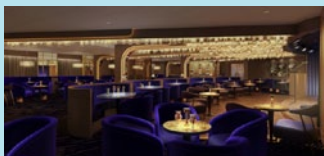
The cruise line's 2026-27 season will also include itineraries in the Caribbean and the West Coast.

### Cunard surcharge

**CUNARD** Line has confirmed to **Cruise Weekly** it has started charging for select shows on board its ships.

The Bright Lights Society shows on *Queen Anne*, 'Fizz' and 'Noir', now attract a US\$20 surcharge.

Cunard said the charge also includes a cocktail and souvenir program.



### APT to Antarctica

**APT** has launched its Antarctica 2027 collection, featuring the return of its 15-night Antarctic Voyage aboard *Seabourn Venture*.

The season features a range of itineraries that combine the white continent with South American destinations such as Machu Picchu, Iguazu Falls, the Amazon River, the Galapagos Islands and the coast of Chile, including a 37-day sailing aboard *Hermes*.

Travellers can book the 2027 journeys before 30 Apr 2026 to enjoy savings of up to \$7,000 per couple on select itineraries - find out more **HERE**.



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**HOLLAND** America Line is giving new life to its used carpet as souvenir coasters, showcasing its commitment to the circular economy.

The set of four coasters are made from upcycled carpet used on board several Holland America ships.

These coasters are the first recycled carpet product ever offered for sale in the cruise industry, and are available exclusively in Holland America's onboard shops.

Around 12,000 coasters have so far been created from almost 1,500 kilograms of carpet retrieved during various dry dock projects on board *Oosterdam*, *Eurodam*, and *Nieuw Amsterdam* over the past two years.

Future plans for the project also include using Holland America carpet waste to create notebooks, postcards, "do not disturb" door signs, and more.

## Explora digging deeper



**EXPLORA** Journeys has unveiled a collection of pre- and post-journey Destination Immersions, following the debut of its northern summer 2027 program.

Ranging from three to five nights, the immersions feature deluxe rail travel, encounters with nature, cultural exploration, and exclusive culinary experiences.

The Destination Immersions collection shines a spotlight on both Canada and Alaska, including a three-night pre-cruise journey into the heart of Alaska via deluxe dome rail and scenic motor coach.

Guests will visit Denali National Park, explore the town of Talkeetna, and encounter local wildlife, culminating with a visit to the headquarters of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

There is also a five-night pre- and post-journey excursion aboard the *Rocky Mountaineer*, with highlights including Banff National Park, glacial lakes, gondola rides over Sulphur Mountain, and fine dining.

The luxury brand said the new land-based excursions give guests the opportunity to delve deeper into the wilderness and heritage of the destinations they visit.

"These Destination Immersions reflect our commitment to offering immersive luxury travel that extends beyond the ship," President Anna Nash said.

"They allow our guests to explore in greater depth, with intention and authenticity, and to connect more profoundly with the places they visit." JM

## MSC drinks refresh

**MSC** Cruises has updated its drink packages this month, with guests now able to select from four options offering 15% or more off on onboard price.

Those who opt for the Easy Package will enjoy classic cocktails and mixed drinks with house spirits; house wine and beer; mocktails; coffee and tea; and soft drinks.

A step up from that is the Premium Extra Package, which includes all drinks up to US\$16 such as premium spirits, wine and champagne by the glass, high-end cocktails, beers, specialty coffee, smoothies, juices, and soft drink.

There is also a minors package available for guests aged 20 and younger, and an alcohol-free package.

While the Easy Plus Package will be retired, it will continue to be honoured on board for all guests who purchased it on or before 31 Jul 2025.

MSC said the change is "part of our ongoing efforts to simplify our product offerings and make decision-making easier for our guests."

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# VIKING

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Cruise Weekly is Australasia's leading travel industry cruise publication.

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