

Cruise Weekly today

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

Cleaning up in NZ

NEW Zealand's Ministry of Primary Industries has approved an innovative in-port biofouling solution in the Port of Auckland, which will allow for the cleaning of niche areas of cruise ships.

The technology will be in use this summer, New Zealand's Minister for Biosecurity Andrew Hoggard said.

It will provide cruise lines and cruise operators with the additional confidence they need to operate in New Zealand, he stated.

The technology combats a problem which has disrupted a multitude of itineraries in both NZ and Australia in recent years (**CW** 14 Mar 2023).

Royal's Voyager makes Brisbane debut

ROYAL Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* has made her debut in Brisbane, making her long-awaited return to Australia.

Voyager will deliver 20 cruises across the season, with the line-up ranging from three-night weekend getaways to 12-night adventures, exploring Queensland and the picturesque South Pacific.

Cruisers can have their pick of 10 three- to seven-night itineraries visiting Airlie Beach and Cairns, while there are also two three-night getaways departing on a Fri, travelling over the weekend.

Passengers can unwind with more island time this season, with 10 seven- to nine-night South Pacific adventures visiting New Caledonia and Vanuatu.

Those looking to spend the holidays kicking back on board can celebrate Christmas with a

view on an eight-night getaway, or welcome the new year on a nine-night cruise visiting the South Pacific.

The season's ultimate adventure is a 25-night transpacific cruise to Seattle to end the season, visiting bucket-list gems across French Polynesia and Hawaii.

"Our award-winning *Voyager* is an adventure-seeker's dream, and the perfect holiday match for the spirit of the Sunshine State," MD Gavin Smith said.

"This season from Brisbane is one for the books with more weekend getaways and more island time than ever before across Queensland and South Pacific destinations, reinforcing the unforgettable memories that families can make on a Royal Caribbean holiday."

The cruise line's summer season continues in Sydney, where *Anthem of the Seas* made her

Aussie debut in Oct (**CW** 31 Oct).

MEANWHILE, Royal Caribbean has hosted a ribbon-cutting for its first Royal Beach Club in the Bahamas over the weekend.

The highly anticipated Royal Beach Club Paradise Island will officially open on 23 Dec, with executives and Bahamian government officials gathering at the all-new destination.

It will be the first of three Beach Clubs scheduled to open by Dec 2026, including locations in Santorini and Cozumel.

Paradise Island will feature The Floating Flamingo, the world's largest swim up bar; the laid-back Chill Beach; and Family Beach, a family-friendly destination.

The opening also precedes the debut of the upcoming Lelepa Beach Destination in Vanuatu (**CW** 18 Aug), Royal Caribbean's private destination in the Southern Hemisphere. **MS**

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Not the Werft news

MEYER Werft has appointed Andre Walter as its new Chief Executive Officer.

The incoming CEO will take over from Bernd Eikens from Jul; it has not been announced where Eikens will be headed.

Walter has been Chair of Airbus since 2022, and is a veteran of the aerospace corporation, having began his career there in 2006.

Meyer Werft Chair Klaus Richter expressed his sincere thanks to the outgoing CEO on behalf of the company.

"Eikens took over the management of Meyer Werft in a difficult financial situation," Richter explained.

"With great foresight, he initiated the restructuring process and set the course for a successful turnaround.

"We are delighted to have gained Andre Walter as the new Managing Director of Meyer Werft, who, with his experience, will continue on this path and further advance the shipyard."

Trimarchi promoted

AURORA Expeditions' Lina Trimarchi has started a new position as Director of Trade & Direct Marketing.

Trimarchi was most recently Marketing Manager Trade & Consumer, a position she served in for over three years.

Newcastle gets *Edge-y*



CELEBRITY Cruises has made its maiden arrival into Newcastle over the weekend, with *Celebrity Edge* bringing thousands of passengers to the Hunter.

The 306-metre-long *Edge* (pictured) is the largest vessel to visit Newcastle this season, with more than 4,000 passengers distributed around the region.

Port Authority of NSW Chief Exec John McKenna hailed the arrival of *Edge* into Newcastle.

"From wine tasting in the Hunter Valley, to getting up close with Australian wildlife on the Central Coast and Port Stephens, and exploring Newcastle's historic sites, this visit showcases why the region is a must-visit on Australia's cruise map," he said

"Cruise visitation is a key driver of regional recovery and growth, and the passengers and crew

aboard *Celebrity Edge* will make a significant contribution to the local economy."

Edge will contribute to the approximately 14,000 passengers and crew members set to call in Newcastle this season.

The World, the largest private residential yacht, is the next ship to arrive, calling in on Fri.

Edge's arrival is welcome news for Newcastle, NSW's second-largest city, which last month watched Viking cancel all of its calls in the destination for the remainder of the year due to planned anti-coal protests at the port (**CW** 10 Nov).

This came after a number of local councils and tourism leaders united to chart a course for rural cruise growth in Newcastle, with the aim of enhancing cruise experiences (**CW** 13 Jun). **MS**

HAL-ly holidays

FESTIVE flavours are setting sail with Holland America Line (HAL) this holidays, allowing passengers to indulge in festive bites, sweet traditions, and spirited sips.

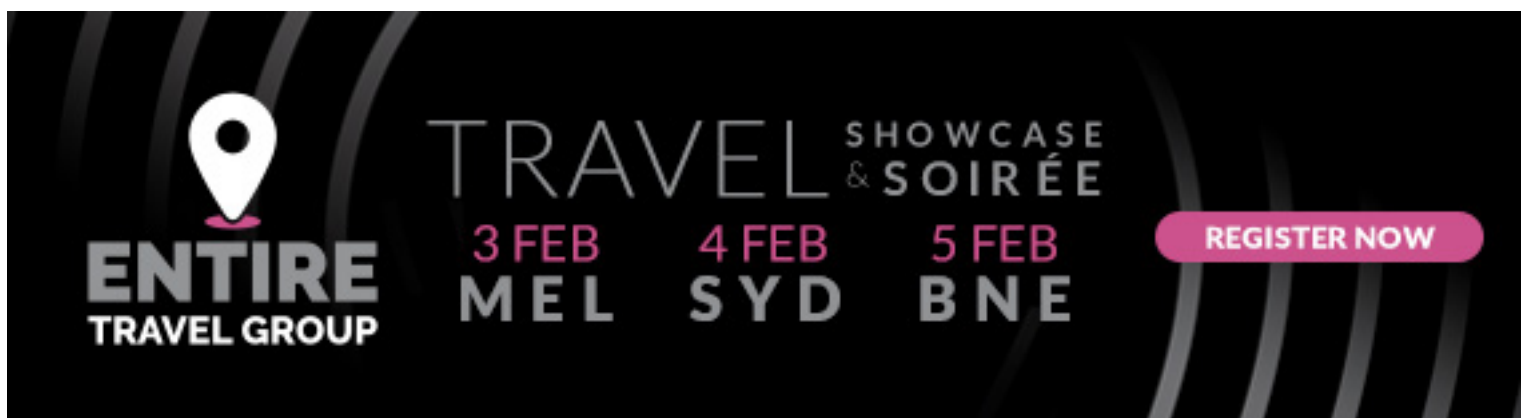
The main Dining Room will feature Christmas Eve- and Christmas Day-themed dinners, with guests who want a more casual holiday dining experience able to head to Lido Market.

This venue will feature similar items to the Dining Room, along with decorative holiday cakes and cupcakes for Christmas Day lunch.

Stollen bread - a traditional European fruit bread - will be served in both the Dining Room and Lido Market for breakfast on Christmas Day, and eggnog will also be available in Lido Market for breakfast on 25 Dec.

Guests seeking a truly distinctive holiday dining experience can reserve a table at Canaletto, Holland America's Italian restaurant, for its Christmas Eve celebration, highlighted by the Feast of the Seven Fishes Risotto - a nod to the classic tradition of seafood-rich holiday feasts.

Meanwhile, the Tamarind Pan-Asian restaurant is also introducing a new Christmas menu, featuring an Asian-inspired dining line-up.



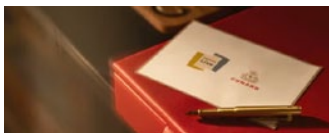


IN AN age of instant messages and DMs, Cunard is slowing things down and revive the timeless romance of letters written at sea.

The luxury cruise line has partnered with Letters Live to celebrate the tradition with a special event on 22 Jan at Queen Elizabeth Hall at South Bank in London.

The evening will see acclaimed performers bring to life a collection of correspondence inspired by travel, creativity, and the enduring art of writing.

Katie McAlister, President of Cunard, said the collaboration "brings together two storytelling traditions, one on stage and one at sea, in a way that feels both timeless and profoundly moving".



MSC unveils 2026 trends

THE Mediterranean and Northern Europe are set to be the top destinations for Australians cruising with MSC in 2026.

The brand has revealed that the Med in particular has grown in popularity by 15% over the last two years - one of six new trends unveiled by the cruise line.

MSC has also recorded new embarkation patterns, with Italy's Bari (pictured) rising quickly in demand, while Rome remains the top choice, followed by Barcelona and Venice.

Additionally, cruise passengers are opting to book a more premium experience, reflected in the strong year-on-year uptake of the line's MSC Yacht Club offering.

They are also embracing indulgent quick trips as a form of self-care, such as four-night itineraries visiting sun-soaked destinations like the Bahamas.

Other trends include 'kidfluencing', with more than 80% of parents saying that their kids help choose and plan their trip; and offseason travel, with more cruisers seeking out milder temperatures, fewer crowds, and more affordable pricing.



Sporting events are also shaping up to be a big driver for MSC customers next year, particularly with the line serving as the title sponsor of three Formula 1 World Championship Grand Prix.

"As we look ahead to 2026, it's clear that travellers are seeking holidays that feel more meaningful, effortless and tailored to their lifestyles," said Antonio Paradiso, Vice President International Sales at MSC Cruises & Explora Journeys.

"Major global sporting events are inspiring fans to turn their trips into full holiday experiences, and with key home ports like Miami and Seattle, MSC is well placed to support this growing wave of sportscursions." JM

A-Rosa opens early

A-ROSA has opened excursion reservations earlier than ever before, with new options available for next year.

One of the new highlights in the 2026 program is a historical tour in Esztergom on the nine-night 'Danube City Panorama' itinerary.

After a walk past impressive buildings and a visit to the historic library of the former capital, a train takes guests up to a hilltop castle.

It is here they will explore Hungary's largest church, the Basilica of Esztergom, and sample traditional desserts.

There are also new experiences on the Rhine, such as a night tour through Koblenz, which takes guests on a walk through the historic alleys of the Old Town.




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