



Cruise Weekly today

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

P&O documentary

“CRUISE-FLUENCER”

Honida Beram, known for her ‘Cruising with Honey’ social media pages, is filming a mini-documentary on the final days of P&O Cruises Australia.

Beram will be interviewing passengers on one of the cruise line’s final voyages, departing 06 Mar aboard *Pacific Adventure*.

She is also inviting those from around the local cruise industry to share their best memories of P&O Australia, and what they love most about the once-tagged home-grown cruise line.

Those interested in taking part are urged to visit the documentary’s page [HERE](#).

Del Rio Jr out as Oceania President

OCEANIA Cruises President Frank Del Rio Jr has stepped down after more than 20 years with the business founded by his father, Frank Del Rio Sr.

The move comes just a month after Oceania’s former leader, Jason Montague (**pictured**), was announced to return to the cruise line’s parent company Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) as its newly appointed Chief Luxury Officer (**CW 07 Jan**).

The new role sees Montague head up Oceania, NCLH’s premium brand, as well as its luxury sister marque Regent Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC).

However the new leadership structure apparently only lasted a matter of days, with Montague having started his new role Mon.

The new NCLH CLO said he wished the best for Del Rio Jr in his next professional chapter.

“Both Frank and his father, our



company’s founder, have left an enduring legacy on Oceania Cruises and the broader industry,” Montague said in a statement issued to travel partners.

“I want to personally thank Frank for his outstanding stewardship of the brand, positioning it for an incredibly bright future, and for assembling an exceptional leadership team.”

The leadership change means there will be no member of the

Del Rio family involved with cruise line it helped found.

Oceania and RSSC will together see five new ships join their respective fleets by 2029 (**CW 09 Apr**), beginning with the former brand’s newest vessel *Allura*, later this year (**CW 02 Jul**).

Alongside the Del Rio family, Montague played a key role in the formation of Oceania in 2003, and has since held a variety of senior roles with the line. *ML*



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CRUISE WEEKLY

On location on board
Diamond Princess

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Princess Cruises, which is this week hosting us on a trip to Sydney aboard *Diamond Princess*.

IT'S day three of our trade marketing fam'l with the Princess team and today, we're exploring Newcastle.

Some of the highlights of the city include its many beaches, Port Stephens, the Hunter Valley and a vibrant cafe and restaurant scene, including the Merewether Surfhouse right on the beach.

Tonight, we'll gather at the International Dining Room and over dinner, we'll share our experiences and highlights of the day.

New Sky for the NT

TOURISM NT has welcomed *Viking Sky* to Darwin for the first time this week.

The ship brought more than 800 passengers to the city, as part of the ship's 138-day world cruise.

"Cruise tourism plays a key role in supporting our tourism industry, bringing economic benefits and driving visitation during the low season," Tourism NT said.

A Legend at Royal Caribbean



ROYAL Caribbean will name its third Icon-class ship *Legend of the Seas*, with the ship on track to debut seven-night Western Mediterranean itineraries from Barcelona in Jul 2026.

After her initial shakedown season in Europe, *Legend* will cross the Atlantic to join her two sisters, *Icon of the Seas* and *Star of the Seas* in Florida.

While *Icon* will remain based in Miami and *Star* farther north at Port Canaveral, *Legend* will cruise year-round from Fort Lauderdale from Nov 2026.

The newest ship will alternate six-night southern Caribbean and eight-night western Caribbean itineraries, both of which will visit Perfect Day by CocoCay.

Ports on *Legend's* schedule will include Oranjestad in Aruba; Falmouth in Jamaica; and

Willemstad in Curacao.

Members of Royal Caribbean's Crown & Anchor Society loyalty program will gain first access to book *Legend* from tomorrow, with sales to the general public opening later.

Royal Caribbean President & Chief Executive Michael Bayley said one year after debuting the Icon-class, the line is excited to be naming its third ship.

"*Legend of the Seas* is the next bold step in this exciting era of vacations and the continuation of the Icon-class legacy, and we look forward to bringing the revolutionary lineup of experiences to more families and adventurers across Europe, the Caribbean and beyond," he said.

Legend will also become the line's fourth ship to be powered by LNG fuel. *ML*

A Whisper of Asia

SILVERSEA'S *Silver Whisper* has departed Singapore on her 70-day Grand Voyage through Asia, which will visit 34 destinations in nine countries, including six overnights.

Whisper will call in destinations including Malaysia; Thailand; Vietnam; China; Japan; South Korea; the Philippines; and Singapore.

Three exclusive events will enhance the experience for guests, including a bon voyage reception in The Glasshouse, an immersive overnight in Bangkok, and a geisha-hosted luncheon in Kyoto.

Guests will also be able to discover the region's authentic culinary cultures during experiences ashore through Silversea's Sea and Land Taste (S.A.L.T.) culinary program, for the first time on a Grand Voyage through Asia.

Special culinary experiences will include a deep dive into Thailand's healthy diet and lifestyle with a Michelin-starred chef in Bangkok; an exploration of the local culinary traditions in Aomori; and, in Hakodate, the chance to learn about the art of Japanese kaiseki dining.

Other experiences will see guests discover the cultural heritage of Kuala Lumpur, test their Thai cooking skills at Koh Samui's Nora Beach Resort & Spa, and more.

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PORTHOLE

WHILE it is expected for a cruise ship to have an onboard chef, we bet you haven't heard a cruise line say "BYO chef".

Well, Albatros Expeditions is now offering Indian groups the opportunity to bring their own chef or Maharaj with them on their cruise.

The new Chef-on-Board option is being met with an "enthusiastic response", the cruise line said, as it allows travellers to savour home-style meals or gourmet Indian cuisine during their expedition.

Cordelia to add

CORDELIA Cruises is planning to expand its fleet with two new ships.

The Indian line plans to raise 800 crore (A\$14.5 million) through an IPO, to fund its growth and attract investors.

The cruise line's current ship, *Cordelia Empress*, is operating close to full capacity.

"We are in discussions with major cruise companies from the US & Europe, who are looking to divest ownership of their smaller ships with passenger capacities ranging between 2,000 to 2,500 guests per ship, as they transition to newer vessels with capacities of 5,000-7,000 guests," Cordelia President & Chief Executive Officer Jurgen Bailom told the media.

Princess brand evolving



FROM taking advantage of new opportunities to the evolution of cruise, travel professionals are currently on board Princess Cruises' *Diamond Princess* hearing about the latest industry news, and experiencing the product while at sea.

The five-day famil is made up of almost 50 travel advisors, as well as 13 travel marketing professionals, sailing from Brisbane to Sydney.

Yesterday, the groups attended presentations from NSW/ACT State Manager Rachaelle Tyrell; National Accounts & Trade Support Manager Heather Pryde; Trade Marketing Associate Julian De Carlo; and special guest, Peter Kollar, CLIA Head of International Training and Development.

Pryde shared with attendees the evolution of the Princess brand and new offerings in the market, diversifying its passenger mix from markets such as newlywed couples and older travellers.

"They were really outdated misconceptions of cruising and that it was just for the wealthy and elite, it wasn't accessible.

"We had a few brands on the market, but there isn't nearly the diversity we have today.

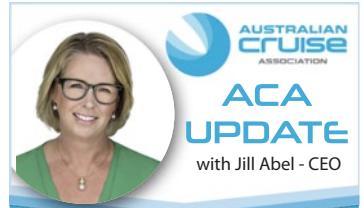
"Over the years, we have really evaluated ourselves and tried to figure out who we are, where we sit in the modern market and who are our modern customers... we've done a lot of exploration into that."

Princess has also recently launched its Sphere-class ships, with *Sun Princess* debuting last year (**CW** 01 Mar 2024), and *Star Princess* to begin her inaugural sailings in Aug (**CW** 25 Oct 2024).

Each ship features 21 decks, 4,300 passengers, 1,500 crew, 1,500 balconies and more than 30 restaurants and bars, and the new Sanctuary Club, a ship-within-a-ship top-deck retreat.

"The feedback has been overwhelming, even from our fiercely loyal elite guests who don't like change very much," Pryde said. *JHM*

Pictured on board: Bonnie Turner, Princess; Peter Kollar, CLIA; Julian De Carlo, Princess; Heather Pryde, Princess; and Rachaelle Tyrell, Princess.



Brisbane sets sail

IT WAS a pleasure to return to sunny Queensland earlier this month to present on the state of the cruise industry at the Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA) Cruise Accelerator Program forum.

A full house of operators from across the Brisbane region attended, eager to explore new opportunities in the cruise market.

The Cruise Accelerator Program is an exciting initiative aimed at expanding and enhancing immersive cruise experiences across the Brisbane region.

This program supports 15 local tourism operators in becoming cruise-ready, equipping them with the tools to develop high-quality, market-ready experiences.

Brisbane-based consultancy Tonic Tourism Solutions has been appointed to lead the program, working closely with each business throughout Apr and May.

Their expertise will guide operators through the planning, design, development, and activation of cruise experiences that align with best practices and authentically represent Brisbane's unique brand essence.

Brisbane's cruise industry has experienced remarkable growth in recent years, largely driven by the opening of the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal.

This state-of-the-art facility, designed to accommodate the world's largest cruise ships, recently welcomed its two-millionth passenger - a testament to the city's growing appeal as a premier cruise destination.