



# CRUISE

## WEEKLY

*delivered daily!*



cruiseweekly.com.au  
cruiseweekly.co.nz  
Tuesday 21st Jan 2025

### Cruise Weekly today

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

## Turning Japanese

**ASUKA III**, the first Japanese-commissioned cruise ship in around 30 years, has left her building dock at the Meyer Werft shipyard.

The ship, which is being built for NYK Cruises, is being constructed for the Japanese market, with features including a spa area equipped with a Japanese-style open-air bath.

*Asuka III*, which has a capacity for 740 passengers, is set to be delivered later this year, with the float-out representing the completion of the ship's exterior.

Attention will now turn to the LNG-powered *Asuka III's* interior outfitting.

## Brisbane welcomes 2 million passengers

**BRISBANE** International Cruise Terminal (BICT) has sailed past two million passenger movements, since its opening in Jun 2022 (*CW* 03 Jun 2022).

P&O - the same line which christened the new BICT - also helped with the latest milestone, with *Pacific Encounter's* recent call at the port (pictured).

The ship was the 346th call at BICT, with Port of Brisbane Chief Exec Neil Stephens describing the milestone as "remarkable".

"Achieving two million passenger movements through our world-class terminal highlights the integral role of the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal to Queensland's cruise tourism industry," he said.

"Over the last 12 months, we've continued investing to enhance the cruise terminal - expanding on-site car parking, adding more shade to outdoor seating areas



and increasing taxi rank capacity."

The port's Chief Executive Officer said Brisbane expects to welcome more than 150 cruise calls from 13 different cruise lines in the 2024/25 season, as cruising grows in popularity in the Queensland capital.

"Every time a vessel calls in Brisbane, it contributes around \$1 million to the state's economy, with many of these ships visiting other Queensland ports, supporting valuable opportunities for regional communities,"

Stephens declared.

"Every vessel call, around 130 hardworking staff from all our partners - including cruise staff, stevedores, security, border agencies, baggage drop, cafe and retail, cleaning and others, as well as our own port team - are on hand to help ensure passengers enjoy their experience.

"We're grateful for the ongoing support of our cruise industry partners and Queensland's cruising community, which is key to the BICT's success." *MS*



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**SOJOURN TO OZ**  
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*Seven Seas Explorer\**

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## Euro Waterways purchases Irish vessel

EUROPEAN Waterways has expanded its fleet with the purchase of Irish luxury barge *Shannon Princess* (pictured).

The vessel has been cruising Southern Ireland's Shannon River since 2003, owned and operated by husband & wife duo Ruairi and Olivia Gibbons.

European Waterways guests have been able to book *Shannon Princess* for many years, and she will continue to follow the same itinerary, now fully under the cruise line's ownership.

Guests will enjoy curated experiences such as private whiskey tastings at historic distilleries, guided tours of ancient castles, and walking and fishing opportunities.

Exclusive 'Insider Experiences' will include onboard cooking demonstrations, live traditional Irish music, and private visits to stately homes.



European Waterways also plans to extend bookings beyond the current allotment, supported by the cruise line's sales & reservations team.

The 10-guest *Shannon Princess* features spacious en suite staterooms, a panoramic saloon, and an expansive sun deck, with a spa pool for al fresco dining.

*Shannon Princess* will also afford the traditional blue, yellow and red European Waterways' livery ahead of the 2025 cruise season.

European Waterways will gradually enhance *Shannon Princess*' experience, with future

amplifications being planned including refined interiors, expanded excursion options, and bespoke onboard experiences.

"We are thrilled to welcome *Shannon Princess* to the European Waterways family," Managing Director Derek Banks said.

"Her charm and character align perfectly with our commitment to luxury and cultural immersion.

"This acquisition further enhances our ability to offer our guests unforgettable journeys through Ireland's stunning landscapes and historic waterways," he added. *MS*

## Celestyal 10 years

CELESTYAL Cruises is celebrating its 10-year anniversary with a year of agent rewards and incentives. More than 1,000 experiences will be on offer to travel advisors across the year, such as cash prizes, cruises, as well as tickets to concerts and sports events.

The experiences will be won each month through booking incentives, as well as being gifted to advisors who complete training modules on the new agent portal, Celestyal Compass (*CW* 16 Dec 2024).

Advisors will also be able to join the first in a series of 'Celestyal Lives' on 13 Mar, the cruise line's 10th anniversary, where they will hear updates from the brand's senior leadership team, including news, giveaways, and the latest incentives.



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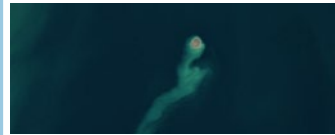


**THE** struggle to continue to find new destinations for cruise lines is real, but one solution has quite literally just popped up out of nowhere.

A “ghost island” has emerged in the middle of the ocean, approximately 25 kilometres off the coast of Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea.

The island has actually been “playing a centuries-long game of peekaboo”, having first been documented in 1861, before disappearing the next year.

It came and went again at least six times in the 20th century, and unfortunately, it looks as if it’s about to do just that again, as records show it rarely sticks around for longer than two years.



## So’ton pax record

**SOUTHAMPTON** welcomed a record three million cruise passengers last year, cementing its place as the UK’s cruise capital.

The new passenger record was not the only milestone Southampton set for the year, increasing the uptake of its shore power by 50%.

Southampton is planning to increase its shore power capability in the coming years.

## Flora begins to bloom



**CHINA’S** second domestically-built large cruise ship is taking shape, with the first phase of *Adora Flora City’s* construction now complete.

The new vessel is being built for Adora Cruises, a Chinese company controlled by China State Shipbuilding Corp (CSSC), with Carnival Corporation as a minority investor.

With a capacity of 5,232 passengers, *Flora City* (pictured) will be 17.4 metres longer than *Adora Magic City* (CW 02 Jan 2024), weighing 141,800GT.

A celebratory ceremony was held last week at the ship’s builder, CSSC-owned Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Co.

“It took us less than nine months to complete the hull structure assembly, two months sooner than the first one,” explained the shipbuilder’s Chairman, Wang Qi, during a presentation at the ceremony, where it was also highlighted that the speed of construction for the cruise ship is “on par with our European peers”.

*Flora City* is an enhanced version of the original design, boasting an optimised passenger stateroom design, with a new variety of suites, and the addition of 19 cabins for a total of 2,144.

The size of *Flora City’s* atrium lobby is being doubled, while the ship’s public spaces, entertainment, and leisure areas have been “fully upgraded”.

*Flora City* will also feature a ‘Sea Street Garden’, an open multi-function social space inspired by its namesake city, Guangzhou near Hong Kong.

It will be a space for entertainment, leisure, and a cafe, with the venue to evolve based on the time of day.

According to CSSC, the new cruise ship will move into the second phase of construction now, including interior decoration, equipment installation, and commissioning.

The next milestone, the first dock flotation test, is expected to occur at the end of Apr, with *Flora City* set to be delivered by the end of next year. *JM*

## Star spotlights art

**ROYAL** Caribbean has unveiled the next edition of its Artist Discovery Program, which will spotlight up-and-coming Caribbean artists on *Star of the Seas* later this year.

The group of budding artists will be commissioned to paint large-scale murals in four prominent locations, with each artist to receive a grant of US\$20,000-\$100,000.

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