

MSC summer vibes

SIX MSC Cruises ships will sail from four US home ports as part of the line's newly launched 2027 northern summer in the Caribbean.

Miami, Port Canaveral and Galveston will offer itineraries to the Bahamas and Caribbean on one ship each, with another ship based in Seattle and cruising to Alaska, with all itineraries now on sale.

Seabourn's new loyalty club



SEABOURN Cruise Line has enhanced its Seabourn Club loyalty program to better "reflect the needs and preferences of today's luxury traveller".

The enhanced program launches on 20 Oct, and has been shaped by past guest and trade partner feedback.

Passengers will earn one Club point for every day sailed under the revised structure, but can earn an additional point per night for staying in a penthouse or premium suite.

Club members can also earn an additional point for every US\$500 in eligible onboard and pre-cruise online purchases.

The new earning system replaces the prior calculation, which rewarded guests solely on how many days they sail with the cruise line.

Each level's threshold has also been lowered, with Silver now unlocked at 15 points instead of

20 points.

The program will offer accelerated access to each loyalty level, and feature a more refined cruise award structure, the cruise line said.

Members will now earn a seven-day complimentary cruise at 350 Club Days and a 14-day cruise at 460 Club Days, with an additional seven-day reward offered every 110 Club Days beyond that.

New benefits will include an upgraded streaming wi-fi package beginning at Silver, and complimentary laundry beginning at Gold.

Diamond and Diamond Elite special events have been also reinstated on every voyage.

This change is likely to see a number of members move up in Club level when the changes come into effect.

Seabourn Club members will need to join the updated program **HERE** by 20 Oct, with points balances to reset after this date for those who have not opted in.

Passengers will also lose their loyalty status if they go three years without sailing with the cruise line. *MS*

Greece tax coming

GREECE is preparing to implement its cruise tax from Mon (**CW** 25 Jun 2024), with passengers to be slugged an extra €20 per head (A\$35) when visiting popular ports such as Santorini or Mykonos.

The amount will be a significantly lower €5 in other destinations - **CW** has contacted a number of lines to gauge their response.



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HX expands activities in Antarctica

HX HAS announced its largest-ever kayaking and camping program in Antarctica, with the cruise line to double its camping spots and almost quadruple its kayaking capacity.

Access for solo travellers has also been expanded ahead of the new season, kicking off in Oct, with HX now not requiring a partner for either activity.

Also being introduced this season is Discovery Kayaks - an industry first.

The new solo, inflatable, self-guided kayaks will also have no language requirements.

These are in addition to HX's standard hard-shell Sea Explorer Kayaks, which will be guided by two expedition leaders, and are built for longer-range paddling.

There is also a new 'Bivvy Bag' camping experience: a lightweight overnight experience beneath the stars.



Other activities guests will be able to participate in include snowshoeing, polar plunge, and extended hikes, where available.

All kayaking and camping bookings will be managed on board by the expedition team for the Antarctica 2025/2026 season on a first-come, first-served basis.

This eliminates the previous lottery system, and allows for flexibility based on weather and guest preferences.

A pre-booking system is in development for future seasons.

"We're not just adding more spots, we're reimagining how guests experience Antarctica," Vice President of Expeditions Development Karin Strand said.

"With expanded kayaking and camping capacity, plus greater flexibility and access - we're opening the polar regions to more adventurers.

"It's about making these once-in-a-lifetime moments available to everyone on board, while delivering them in small, intimate and responsible groups." *MS*

CLIA appointments

TWO new senior executives have been installed in new roles at CLIA Global as part of a restructured and strengthened leadership team.

In a newly-created role, Niels Wammen-Jensen has taken on the position of Executive Vice President, International Regions, based in Brussels.

Wammen-Jensen will join CLIA next month from MSC Cruises and will report directly to CEO & President Bud Darr.

His key duties will include overseeing cross-functional coordination in regions outside North America, and working closely with CLIA Australasia Managing Director Joel Katz and his global counterparts.

CLIA Global has also officially promoted Nikos Mertzaniadis to the role of Executive Director for Europe - a role he has been acting in for a few months.

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MAYBE its the insurance premiums, but cruise lines are getting ever more specific when it comes to recruiting talent for its stage shows.

It's not often you see a job advertisement seeking an applicant with "double sword and double dagger experience", but that's what Disney Cruise Line is on the hunt for.

General martial arts and parkour skills will also be viewed favourably, Disney said, with the role rumoured to be for a new *Avengers* stage show.

Titanic II set to resurface?



THE planned *Titanic II* (render pictured) has been resurfaced by Blue Star Line, the company overseeing the project.

A 2027 launch date for the 2,435-guest-ship has been listed by Blue Star, after more than a decade of uncertainty (**CW** 26 Mar 2015).

The Clive Palmer-led project is claiming it will set sail from Southampton in Jun 2027, more than 115 years after the original *Titanic* departed the same port.

No shipbuilder is attached to the project, with Blue Star seeking proposals from interested parties.

Titanic II plans to recreate the iconic *Titanic*, from its grand interiors to class-based accommodations, with the new vessel to be about 20% larger, at nine decks and 269 metres.

Onboard amenities will mirror the original *Titanic*, including a grand staircase, period-style first-class dining rooms, Turkish baths, and recreation decks.

The new vessel will meet modern safety standards, including an extra deck solely dedicated to lifeboats, and improved visibility from the bow.

"We are very pleased to announce that after unforeseen global delays, we have re-engaged with partners to bring the dream of *Titanic II* to life," Palmer said in a statement.

Construction was originally set to begin in 2014 (**CW** 05 Mar 2013), with an intended launch date of 2016, but the project has faced multiple delays.

Titanic II attracted enormous interest when it was initially announced, with Emirati firms said to be interested in bringing the ship to the destination (**CW** 25 July 2013). *MS*

The Beachcomber

MARGARITAVILLE at Sea has revealed the name of its third and largest ship, set to debut in late 2026 or early 2027, as *The Beachcomber* (**CW** 15 May).

The ship, currently sailing for Costa Cruises as *Costa Fortuna*, can accommodate 3,470 passengers at full occupancy.

Beachcomber's home port and itineraries will be announced later this season.



Rallying around success

HAVING announced our biggest-ever line-up of international speakers for CLIA's Cruise360 Australasia conference, we're looking forward to an inspiring two days in Brisbane next month.

We'll be able to learn from some of our industry's most respected executives on the opportunities available in cruising, while at the same time gaining insight into some of the challenges ahead.

Though the economic benefits of cruise tourism are at record levels right now, our industry still needs to work hard to highlight the vital contribution we make in destinations worldwide.

In Australia, this means more than \$8 billion a year for our national economy, supporting 26,000 local jobs.

CLIA is striving to ensure governments understand this contribution, and to achieve the regulatory settings needed to strengthen our industry.

We depend on our wider cruise community to help reinforce this work, and we'll be talking more about what you can do to help.

Bringing our CLIA members together at Cruise360 is a fantastic opportunity to rally around our industry's future prosperity, and with an exciting program of speakers on the way, we know it will help inspire success for our members and the broader cruise economy.



Spirit to Canary Is

WINDSTAR Cruises has announced *Wind Spirit's* debut season in the Canary Islands in winter 2026/27.

From Nov 2026 through Jan 2027, *Spirit* will offer new nine-night voyages exploring the archipelago, with more immersive port stays, upgraded onboard spaces, and new marina access.

The yacht-style sailings also introduce the line's first-ever visits to Porto Santo, Portugal and El Hierro, Spain.

Highlights include camel rides through Lanzarote's moon-like dunes; a Toboggan run in Madeira; stargazing in La Palma; and hiking El Hierro's dramatic coastline, and more - **CLICK HERE** for further info.