



CRUISE

WEEKLY

delivered daily!



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Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise news, including a photo page from MSC Cruises.

Nerthus is delivered

VIKING has taken delivery of its newest river ship in Europe, *Viking Nerthus*, which will join its sister ships on the cruise line's popular Seine voyages.

The 168-guest ship was presented to Viking at the Neptun Werft shipyard in Warnemuende, ahead of her debut on the eight-day 'Paris & the Heart of Normandy' itinerary, and the new eight-day 'Christmastime in Paris & Normandy' cruise.

"We are proud to welcome the *Viking Nerthus* to our growing fleet of award-winning Viking Longships," Chair & Chief Executive Officer Torstein Hagen said.

Avalon ships to undergo refresh

AVALON Waterways is taking its Suite Ships to the next level, with a fleet-wide refresh.

The reinvigoration will include fresh new interiors, upgraded outdoor spaces, Starlink wi-fi, and much more.

The project will take place over the next two years, and include every ship in the fleet, with the exception of *Avalon Alegria*, *Avalon View*, and *Avalon Envision*, which were built in the enhanced style of the refresh.

There will be fresh decor in every public space, from flooring to furniture; a second Starlink antenna for better high-speed internet; and new furniture and a chic makeover for the Sky Deck.

There will also be an enhanced Observation Lounge; and upgraded fitness rooms featuring new Kinesis weight machines and an expanded selection of weights.

Each ship will also boast 15 new



bicycles and four new e-bikes.

Ships already refreshed include *Avalon Passion*, *Avalon Imagery II*, *Avalon Poetry II*, *Avalon Panorama*, and *Avalon Vista*; while *Avalon Artistry II*, *Avalon Impression*, *Avalon Illumination*, *Avalon Tapestry II*, and *Avalon Tranquility II* will undergo works this year.

Meanwhile, *Avalon Expression* and *Avalon Visionary* will be refurbished next year.

"We believe the perfectly

designed river cruise starts with a perfectly designed ship, inviting guests to explore the world in comfort and style," President Pam Hoffee said.

"With our fleet-wide refresh, we're elevating details - from drapes on the widest-opening windows in river cruising and decor of our Panorama Lounges to fit-for-purpose fitness centers and fleet of new bikes - ensuring that our Suite Ships continue to set the standard." MS



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CRUISE WEEKLY

On location on
Norwegian Aqua

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line, which will host us aboard *Norwegian Aqua* for her inaugural cruise from Lisbon, Portugal.

WE ARE excited to be invited along to the first sailing of Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Aqua*, the latest innovation in the cruise line's celebrated Prima class.

While en route to Lisbon where she is about to dock, we have been eagerly reading up on all of the ship's highlights, and it's hard to go past the all-new Aqua Slidecoaster.

This unique adrenaline-pumping attraction is billed as the world's first hybrid rollercoaster and waterslide.

Stay tuned for more updates as we explore *Aqua*.

Queen Elizabeth's new look



AFTER a three-week drydock renovation in Singapore, Cunard Line has pulled back the curtains to reveal a host of new features on board *Queen Elizabeth* (CW 04 Dec).

The 2,000-passenger ship now sports a range of new-look public spaces and wellness offerings following maintenance, which concluded at the Seatrium Admiralty Yard in Singapore on Fri.

Guests staying in the popular Grills Suites will enjoy a redesigned stateroom featuring new furnishings, such as new balcony tables and chairs.

Brand-new to *Queen Elizabeth* is The Pavilion Wellness Cafe, a concept taken from sister ship *Queen Anne*, which serves a plant-based menu, alongside sustainable meat, fish, and dairy.

Signature spaces such as the Commodore Club, the Queens Room, Garden Lounge, and The Pavilion have each received major updates, including new carpets and al fresco dining spaces.

Cunard's new *Harper's Bazaar* Wellness at Sea program, first seen on sister ship *Queen Anne*, is now available on *Queen Elizabeth*, featuring a three-day program tailored to relaxation and restoration.

Work also included a spruce-up of outdoor decks, with new sun shades installed at the ship's aft.

After a short series of voyages in Japan and Alaska, *Queen*

Elizabeth will reposition to Miami, where she will complete Cunard's first full Caribbean winter.

"As *Queen Elizabeth* begins this exciting new chapter, we are delighted to offer guests an even more refined experience on board, with beautifully updated spaces that combine classic Cunard style with modern comfort," President Katie McAlister said.

Queen Elizabeth is set to become the first-ever Cunard ship to spend a full season in Miami later this year. ML

Oceania skincare

OCEANIA Cruises will debut bespoke new Aquamar Bath + Skincare Essentials in all guest staterooms later this year.

The new collection encompasses a full suite of products including shampoo, conditioner, body wash, soaps, and body lotion.

Aquamar Bath + Skincare Essentials is an extension of the Oceania's in-house wellness brand Aquamar, which was unveiled in 2020 with the launch of the Aquamar Spa + Vitality Center (CW 19 Feb 2020).

"We are thrilled to introduce the new Aquamar Bath + Skincare Essentials range to all guests across our fleet of eight award-winning ships beginning in spring 2025," Chief Luxury Officer Jason Montague said of the new range.

"This is an exciting milestone for us as it marks another evolution of our Aquamar wellness brand, a reflection of our commitment to creating a truly rounded wellness journey on board and ashore for our guests," he said.

Captain Kate is back

FOUR Seasons Yachts has appointed Kate McCue as Captain of its inaugural vessel *Four Seasons I*.

McCue previously spent nearly a decade with Celebrity Cruises, where she most recently served as captain of *Celebrity Beyond*, and played a key role in increasing female representation on ship bridges to more than 30% across Celebrity's fleet.

She made history 10 years ago as the first American female captain of a large cruise ship (CW 14 Jul 2015).

She has also held numerous other maritime positions across her career, from cadet and deck officer to Master Mariner, sailing with Royal Caribbean International and Disney Cruise Line.



MSC Magnifica visits Sydney on World Cruise

Wed 19th March 2025

MSC Cruises' *MSC Magnifica* brought a taste of the Mediterranean Down Under on Fri 14 Mar, as she sailed into Sydney Harbour as part of her 120-night World Cruise, which began in Rome and visits 46 destinations across 21 countries and five continents.

MSC Cruises offers World Cruises every year, departing Europe in Jan.

MSC Magnifica's arrival into Australia comes as new data from the European cruise line reveals the Mediterranean is the top destination for Aussie cruise lovers, with over 60% of MSC Cruises' guests choosing to cruise in the region.

Over 80 trade partners enjoyed a ship walk around, presentation and lunch on board.

THE best spot on the ship with views of Sydney city.



MSC Magnifica in Sydney Harbour.

ENJOYING lunch at Quattro Venti, hosted by Sharlene Neist of MSC Cruises.



JOE Karbo with the itravel contingent.



STEVE Brady of Helloworld and David Ninham of Creative Cruising.



SENIOR Sales Manager, Brigita Devries and Key Account Business Development Manager, Bronwyn Knight.



SUCH a 'Seasational' day together.



PORTHOLE

SCIENTISTS have been yearning to explore more of the deepest parts of Earth's oceans for generations, but researchers on a recent dive encountered more than the creatures they expected.

Utilising a Chinese submersible called *Fendouzhe*, a group of researchers recently plunged 10,900 metres into the sea to collect biological samples in the Yap and Mariana Trenches.

Along with some of the strangest marine life surviving in extreme conditions, the deep dive also encountered human trash - namely beer bottles, soft drink cans, plastic bags and a laundry basket that was in near-perfect condition.

According to *Science* journal, the researchers put a positive spin on the finding, saying deep sea microbes have a way of breaking down pollutants and using them as energy.

Shanghai Jiao Tong University Extremophile Microbiologist Weishu Zhao, who was on board, said discovering the garbage at the bottom of the ocean may in fact yield new solutions to environmental pollution problems.

The journey down into the hadal zone provided excellent research for scientists to continue upon their return, but there's no word if they brought the trash back with them.

Agents tune into Symphony



CRYSTAL Cruises recently hosted a famil on board *Crystal Symphony* from Kota Kinabalu to Singapore for 16 travel advisors and their companions.

The five-day segment, part of a longer nine-day cruise from Manila to Singapore, was hosted by Key Account Manager Jacqui Tufala and Sales Director Alison Banks, and included a call in Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei.

The journey featured world-class dining, such as Japanese/ Peruvian fusion at Umi Uma, Northern Italian cuisine at Osteria D'Ovidio, global street food at Beefbar, and formal dining at Waterside, which served caviar and lobster.

Entertainment featured Crystal's 'Icons of the Sea' stage show, and a performance by Grammy-nominated vocalist Christine Allado, one of the stars of the hit musical *Hamilton*. *MS*

Pictured at Osteria D'Ovidio restaurant during white night

with their travelling companions are Santo Montalto, Emma Whiting Travel; Jacqui Tufala, Crystal Cruises; Anita McGaw, Helloworld South Melbourne; and Kirilly Plum, Destination HQ.

Carnival solar park

CARNIVAL Corporation has switched on two new solar parks, which will allow for renewable energy to power the majority of port operations and reinforce the company's commitment to sustainability.

The park at Mahogany Bay Cruise Centre in Roatan, Honduras features 400 high efficiency panels and will supply up to 70% of the port's total energy needs.

Meanwhile, the second park in Puerta Maya Cozumel, Mexico, will see the cruise terminal itself - excluding private businesses - powered fully by renewable energy.



Plenty to celebrate

THE cruise sector's broad-reaching impact was evident recently when I attended the Cruise Lines International Association Awards in Sydney.

I was honoured to serve as a judge, and while my core role with the Australian Cruise Association focuses on connecting cruise lines with destinations, it's also valuable to understand the work done within the travel agency sector.

The judging process consistently showcases the passion of those selling cruise products, as well as their land-based expertise.

It reinforces the significant role they play in the economic contribution of the cruise industry.

In the same week, celebrating International Women's Day further emphasised the vital contributions of women across all areas of the cruise industry - from ship captains and engineers to boat drivers, destination specialists, tour operators, guides, travel advisors, and administrators - I feel privileged to be part of such a diverse and dynamic industry.

Looking ahead, I am participating in key Tourism Australia events this week, including Regional Tourism Organisation workshops and the Destination Australia Conference.

These gatherings provide an excellent opportunity to engage with industry leaders, explore global tourism trends, and gain insights into future outlooks.

I look forward to celebrating cruise as an integral part of the broader tourism economy and continuing to advocate for the industry's growth and innovation.