



Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise news.

Aurora roadshow

AURORA Expeditions is preparing for another national roadshow which will see the brand share details of its latest offerings with agents and explorers around Australia.

Over the next two months, the company will visit six cities and host a virtual event for those unable to attend.

Each event will feature the latest on Aurora's third ship *Douglas Mawson*, which sets sail in Australia and New Zealand later this year.

Other highlights include details on upcoming Women's Only voyages, new Scientist Discovery Tours, photography expeditions and special voyages in Greenland to see the 2026 solar eclipse.

Speakers at each event will include company founder Greg Mortimer and experienced expedition leaders.

Aurora's roadshow will kick off with a **VIRTUAL** event on 19 May at 2:30pm.

In-person events will begin in **SYDNEY** on 21 May before heading to **MELBOURNE** on 22 May; **BRISBANE** on 10 Jun; **GOLD COAST** on 11 Jun; **PERTH** on 18 Jun and **ADELAIDE** to close on 24 Jun - click on your chosen city above to RSVP.

CLIA sets election goals

EXCLUSIVE

CLIA Australasia Managing Director Joel Katz has wasted no time setting the cruise industry's agenda for returned Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the 48th Federal Parliament.

Following Labor's overwhelming victory over the weekend, Katz said he is looking forward to advancing priorities that will support cruise in Australia.

Katz said cruise tourism is now worth \$8.43 billion to the Australian economy and supports more than 26,000 full-time jobs.

"Australia is among the world's most passionate cruise markets, and we have a huge amount of diverse and rewarding cruise experiences to offer.

"Our cruise lines and industry stakeholders have worked hard to create a strong cruise industry in this region, and so CLIA is focused on achieving the right settings for our industry to prosper into the future," Katz said.

Australia's competitiveness on the world stage is high on CLIA's priority list, particularly in terms of stemming increasing costs and regulation, to ensure cruising and the wider tourism sector can continue to grow and flourish.

Other priorities, Katz told **CW**, include securing permanent provision for cruise ships under the *Coastal Trading Act* to ensure lines can plan their itineraries in Australia with confidence.

"The current system requires



a ministerial exemption to be renewed on a regular basis, creating regulatory complexities and uncertainty," Katz said.

"We are also advocating for Broome to become designated as a first port of entry (**CW** 06 Feb), which would open up huge potential for Australia's north-west by allowing ships to arrive directly from overseas instead of having to come via capital cities."

As well as individual efforts, CLIA Australasia will continue to lobby jointly with ATIA to support investment in cruise infrastructure, enhanced Border Force resources and the ongoing development of a skilled agent workforce, which Katz said is also one of ATIA's priorities.

"Importantly, we also work hard to encourage greater collaboration between governments, ports, destinations, cruise lines and other industry stakeholders, so that we are aligned on practices that encourage deployment in this region," Katz added.

The CLIA local boss added it is vital future policies continue to drive long-term opportunities. *ML*

Avalon incentive

ONE lucky agent can win their own exclusive 'After Dark' experience at this year's Vivid Sydney festival in a new trade competition launched by Avalon Waterways.

Celebrating the brand's recent launch of 'Avalon After Dark' (**CW** 02 Apr), the river cruise line is giving away a luxurious cruise on Sydney Harbour, paired with a four-course dinner and drinks.

Winners will be able to soak up the Vivid atmosphere and admire the city during the famous annual light festival.

The experience also includes two nights' accommodation in a CBD hotel so winners can explore Vivid's many other activations at their leisure.

To enter, advisors need to answer two questions about Avalon After Dark, with entries open until 16 May.

The prize must be taken from 31 May to 02 Jun.

CLICK HERE to take the quiz or for more information.

Avalon After Dark is the line's new onboard river cruise program featuring exclusive entertainment and after-dark port adventures including dinners under the stars.

The program is aimed at showcasing various port cities after the sun goes down and dispel the myth that there is little to do on a river cruise after the sun goes down.



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Port of Townsville sets a record

CRUISE travellers and crew members spent nearly \$7 million on dining, retail, and experiences in Townsville this cruise season, in what local leaders have described as its most successful year yet.

Port of Townsville saw 21 ship visits amounting to more than 30,000 visitors, with five ships making their maiden calls, including Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Sun*.

Of these, three were large ships accessing the port, thanks to the \$251 million channel dredging and upgrade project.

This included Townsville's biggest-ever ship, Cunard Line's *Queen Elizabeth (CW 14 Jan)*.

"To facilitate the increase in passenger numbers on the large vessels, Port of Townsville recently completed a \$5.9 million upgrade to our Quayside Terminal bus and taxi rank to allow our guests a seamless experience from ship to shore," Port of Townsville Chief Executive Office Raneë Crosby said.

"The Norwegian Cruise Line ship is one of three large-class cruise vessels which have been able to access our Port for the first time this season, bringing triple the number of passengers that had ever arrived on any one ship," she added.

Townsville Enterprise Director Visitor Economy and Marketing Lisa Woolfe said day trips to Magnetic Island, Charters Towers, and Hinchinbrook have been



some of the favourite shore excursions booked by travellers.

Woolfe is **pictured** left with local Queensland MP Adam Baillie and Port of Townsville Coordinator Monica Cazzulino. *ML*

HAL back to UK

HOLLAND America Line has returned to the UK for its first home port season in 10 years for a series of cruises ranging from 14 to 42 days.

The line has deployed the 2,666-pax *Nieuw Statendam* to the port of Dover, from which it will offer 10 departures to the British Isles, Scandinavia, Iberian and eastern Med.

The ship will return from Apr to Oct 2026 for a second series of cruises to northern Europe and the Canary Islands.

HAL will base a ship in nine European ports this year.

Crystal teeing off

CRYSTAL Cruises and Troon Golf Management have launched an exclusive golf tournament, with PGA and LPGA professionals Luke Donald and Lexi Thompson serving as brand ambassadors.

The event will see 940 two-person teams competing in 10 local qualifying events at clubs across the US.

Winners will be whittled down to a final field which will compete in Oct at Sea Island Golf Club in Georgia.

Participants have the chance to win cruise vouchers and memorabilia signed by Donald and Thompson.

The tournament's ultimate winners will be rewarded with a 29-night cruise from Singapore to Tokyo onboard *Crystal Symphony*.

Darwin day cruises

JOURNEY Beyond has rolled out a new day cruise program with Darwin Harbour Cruises, with a new Territory Explorer cruise taking visitors on a 1.5-hour harbour sailing which includes lunch onboard.

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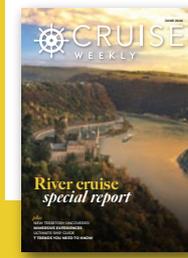
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Battery power ship

A 130-METRE-LONG electric ship, thought to be the world's largest, is being launched by Tasmanian boatbuilder Incat.

The vessel is set to sail between Argentina and Uruguay, and is the "most complex" project the company has ever undertaken.

The electric ship, which was launched on Fri, was constructed for ferry operator Buquebus, and is described as "a giant leap forward in sustainable shipping".

She will carry up to 2,100 passengers and 225 vehicles across the Rio de la Plata estuary, which forms part of the border between Argentina and Uruguay.

TIME brings aboard Ponant



THE Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) has officially partnered with Ponant.

Chairwoman of TIME Penny Spencer said the addition of Ponant as a partner adds to the diversity of travel companies supporting the program.

"TIME is very grateful to Ponant for their support of the program by joining with us to support the industry with the development of future leaders," she said.

The cruise line's Chief Executive Deb Corbett said she was a huge fan of the TIME program.

"Ponant is incredibly proud to be partnering with TIME, which is a pillar of professional growth for our industry," Corbett said.

"It's an honour to support a program that champions connection, guidance, and the next generation of leaders.

"Investing in mentorship isn't just good business; it's how we shape the future of our industry.

"I'm personally proud to be partnering with a program that fosters strong leadership and drives meaningful progress across our sector." *MS*

Corbett is pictured above centre with TIME Committee member Anoushka Kudav and TIME Co-Founder Penny Spencer.

15 for CCL in Seattle

CARNIVAL Cruise Line (CCL) has celebrated 15 years of fun from Seattle with an anniversary celebration aboard *Carnival Luminosa*, highlighting her strong connection to the community and ongoing contributions to the local economy.

The celebration saw Carnival representatives welcome port officials and local leaders, expressing their gratitude for their continued partnership.

Carnival also presented a \$20,000 donation to job training organisation FareStart.

The event coincided with the ship's arrival at the port and the start of the 2025 Alaska cruise season.

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EK ups MSC pact

EMIRATES and MSC Cruises have extended their long-term partnership, aimed at enhancing the air-sea experience and expanding their market reach.

The partnership seeks to strengthen Dubai's cruise proposition, and grow the city's ambition to become a major cruise destination.

Benefits will include passengers being met at arrivals with a dedicated bus transfer to the ship.

On return, they will be able to drop their bags at the cruise terminal and collect them directly once they arrive at their destination.

The partnership was announced at Arabian Travel Market, which is taking place this week in Dubai.

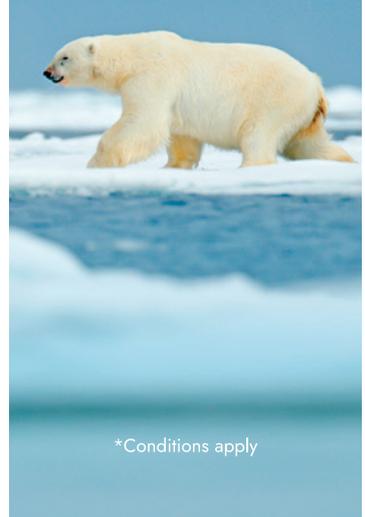
"Our partnership with Emirates is founded on a shared dedication to offering guests unforgettable experiences and high-quality service, with both Emirates and MSC Cruises recognised as leaders in their fields," the line's CEO Gianni Onorato said.

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PORTHOLE

WITHOUT a credit card, paying for things on a cruise requires one eye on your onboard account to ensure it has enough funds to make sure the holiday can keep going.

But a new report from Crypto Casinos has unearthed the weirdest things humans have used as legal tender in various parts of the world.

In Indonesia, remote villages often trade in clove cigarettes, while some tribes in Papua New Guinea still use pig tusks in some social transactions due to it being considered a sign of wealth and social status.

Farther from home, some rural communities in Turkey trade in olive oil, while in South Korea, there's a black market with North Korea in which chocolate pies act as payment.

Of course you'd expect the Russians to be trading in vodka, and the Germans have used beer as remuneration for goods and services.

It gets really wild in Africa, with cattle used to trade in parts of Kenya, while bottle caps can be accepted in parts of Cameroon.

Nigeria even lets people pay in mobile phone credit in some peer-to-peer transfers.

Even in Australia, there's a funeral home offering trade-ins on tombstones which can also be used as a...ahem... downpayment on a funeral.

MRPS on show at ATE



MURRAY River Paddlesteamers' (MRPS) new luxury river vessels were on show at the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) ahead of the fleet's debut in spring.

The first appearance of the new \$7 million luxury paddlesteamer *Australian Star* will usher in an exciting new era for local river cruising and MRPS, which is building the vessel with backing from the Victorian State Government (**CW** 17 Jan).

The 38-guest *Star* will be the first five-star river vessel in Australia, and will offer cruises on the Murray from Echuca of up to one week long.

Star will also be the only wood-fired paddlesteamer in the world. A sister to *Star*, *Australian Sky*, will then debut on the Murray in

2027 in Mildura, as revealed by **CW** recently (**CW** 23 Apr).

The \$7.75 million ship will be supported through the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

ATE is Australia's biggest B2B trade event, bringing together local tourism operators such as MRPS, to meet with around 700 key buyers of travel product from 30 countries. **MS**

Pictured are MRPS Director Craig Burgess and Head of Sales Marketing & Trade Natalie Freeman with Murray River Tourism Board Chief Executive Officer Cameron Sutton.

Cayman says no

VOTERS in the Cayman Islands have rejected a pitch to develop cruise berth facilities.

From more than 18,500 votes cast, 64% cited environmental and socioeconomic concerns as key reasons not to develop a berth for cruise ships to dock.

Disney earlybirds

A **LIMITED** time booking offer has been launched by Disney Cruise Line to get travellers singing Disney tunes ahead of their next cruise holiday.

Prior to the return to local waters of *Disney Wonder* from Oct 2025 to Feb 2026, early bookings on Australia and New Zealand itineraries made by 25 Jul can save up to 30% on the cruise fare.

The offer is valid for selected sailings of three- to 10 nights departing between 19 Oct and 03 Feb from Sydney, Melbourne and Auckland.

Disney Wonder's latest season will again feature Broadway-standard shows including *Frozen*, *The Golden Mickeys* and *Disney Dreams*, as well as top-deck fireworks and exciting parties.

Both adults and children have their own exclusive spaces to enjoy, while families can dine together on Disney's rotational concept which allows guests to experience three restaurants with the same serving staff.



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