

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features six pages of all the latest cruise industry news including a special feature from **Imagine Holidays**.

Reimagine Imagine

IMAGINE Cruising has embarked on a rebranding exercise, which has yielded significant success in its first year, according to GM Trade Sales, Craig Spiga.

"The reception received in our first 12 months collaborating with travel agents has blown me away," Spiga said.

Strong demand for the wholesaler's cruise products and experiences is now seeing it recruit and grow further.

For more from Imagine Cruising, including a look at its journey to date, see **page 5**.

Fiji enticing cruisers for "main meal"

TOURISM Fiji Chief Executive Officer Brent Hill shared his optimism for the island nation's cruise sector at the Fiji Tourism Exchange this week, describing it as "a standout success".

"We like to talk about cruise because it's a really important part of our business," Hill said.

"Just a few days ago we welcomed Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) and Silversea cruises, and those NCL turnaround cruises are a significant step forward for cruise in Fiji."

Turnaround cruises bring up to 2,000 visitors who fly in and out for their sailings and need local accommodation on either side of their trips.

Those cruises are also serving Fiji as the "entree" for plenty of tourists, who may wish to return for their "main meal", he added.

"Our job is to try and get as many people on those cruise



ships onto shore excursions because to some degree, if they're just wandering through Lautoka and Suva, it's not quite the experience that we're after," Hill explained, "we want people to actually go out and do the shore experiences".

Hill also pointed to the innovations taking place, including the opening of Nawi

Island's new beach club at the marina in Savusavu, as well as the recently announced FJ\$6 million upgrades at Port Denarau, aimed at turning Fiji into a key regional superyacht destination. **JHM**

Pictured: Fiji Airways Senior Manager Global Sales Operations & Support Vara Natuilagilagi and Deputy Prime Minister Viliame Gavoka with Hill.

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On location in
Nadi Bay

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of the Fiji Tourism Exchange (FTE), which is taking place this week at the Sheraton Fiji Golf & Beach Resort.

THE final day of FTE has kicked off this morning, and it's been a jam-packed couple of days as delegates have heard from industry leaders, including Fiji Airways MD Andre Viljoen and Tourism Fiji CEO Brent Hill.

They also met with a range of hotels and operators such as Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa, Nawi Island Marina, Captain Cook Cruises, and plenty more.

Tonight, they'll celebrate the end of FTE at Crowne Plaza's Urban Sugar Beach Club.

Explora to head to Alaska in 2027

EXPLORA Journeys has debuted its new itineraries for summer 2027, with maiden ports in the Mediterranean, a new ship, *Explora IV*, and the introduction of Alaska to the line's destinations.

"We are thrilled to be introducing Alaska for the very first time and to be offering many of our 2027 journeys on two of our ultra-elegant new ships, *Explora III* and *IV*," President Anna Nash said.

The new season will unfold from Mar to Nov 2027, with *Explora IV* to be introduced with redesigned spaces, including generous outdoor decks and an increased number of expansive suites.

Explora IV will spend her first season based mostly in Northern Europe, with a range of departures from Reykjavik, Southampton, and Copenhagen.

The ship's inaugural cruises will



depart from Italy and Portugal, and she will round out her first program with a range of voyages between Quebec City and New York City, before heading to Miami for her first journeys out of Florida.

Meanwhile, the upcoming *Explora III*, which will set sail next year, will spend her second summer sailing in Alaska, with a number of departures from Vancouver, Canada.

Guests will spot humpbacks, orcas, dolphins, and seals, as

they visit landmarks such as the Mendenhall Glacier and Misty Fjords National Monument.

The season will also introduce unique experiences such as learning the significance of totem poles; savouring Dungeness crab; kayaking Sitka Sound; and a visit to the blue-domed St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Cathedral - the earliest of its kind in the New World.

The season will also see the cruise line's first two ships, *Explora I* and *Explora II*, sail more than 60 journeys in the Mediterranean, discovering the Ottoman palaces of Istanbul, the Casbah of Algiers, the seaside village and cliffs of Amalfi, the archaeological treasures of Olbia, and more.

New ports include Croatia's Trogir with its medieval town centre; and Topor, Slovenia's in Venetian coastal gem. *MS*



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G, what great news

G ADVENTURES has announced a new expedition ship will be introduced for the upcoming Antarctica season, with *Ocean Adventurer* to replace the tour operator's current vessel, *Expedition*.

Ocean Adventure, which is currently operated by Quark Expeditions, will embark on her first G departure to Antarctica in Oct, according to media reports.

G said *Ocean Adventure* is more fuel-efficient than her predecessor, thanks to newer engines, which will lower the tour operator's overall carbon footprint per person per day by up to 30%.

"The new ship marks an exciting leap forward, one that will allow us to continue delivering life-changing expeditions for our travellers," founder Bruce Poon Tip said.

Carnival's *Miracle* returns to service

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has welcomed *Carnival Miracle* (pictured) back into service following an extensive dry dock in Cadiz, Spain.

The newly enhanced vessel has kicked off the cruise line's summer season in Europe, with the first guests boarding the ship in Lisbon over the weekend.

Miracle boasts several enhancements, including new venues such as the Heroes Tribute Bar & Lounge, as well as redesigned public spaces.

Now featured on 15 Carnival ships, Heroes Tribute serves as a gathering place celebrating active-duty military and veterans.

The vessel also received an all-new Carnival Adventures store, giving guests an updated space to plan and book experiences ashore.

Miracle's mini-golf area and nightclub were also remodelled with new layouts and designs.



Guests are able to enjoy an expanded casino, and a revamped Camp Ocean youth area and teens club, which now features a bright, refreshed design and new enhancements.

Other upgrades include a dedicated Chef's Table venue on deck 1, serving as a new space for Carnival's signature culinary experience; a new Dreams Studio; and the refresh of several

public spaces, such as Cloud9 Spa, Serenity adult-only retreat, Club 02, Java Blue coffee shop, and Lido marketplace.

Upon arriving in London following her current seven-day sailing, *Miracle* will offer a series of nine- and 12-day cruises across the British Isles, Scandinavia, the Baltic, and Northern Europe.

Miracle will then reposition to Tampa in Nov. *JM*

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Hapag heads south

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises will set sail for Central and South American, from Costa Rica to the Panama Canal and the fjords and channels of Chile, in Nov and Dec.

The three expeditions on board *Hanseatic Inspiration* can be booked now, with guests able to choose from the 11-day 'Expedition Central America with the Panama Canal', departing 08 Nov; the 16-day 'South America Expedition with Panama Canal', departing 19 Nov; and the 15-day 'Chilean Fjords Expedition', departing 05 Dec.

Highlights include visits to the Embera people, an indigenous community in the heart of Panama; a trip to Punta Leona; and Zodiac trips to Patagonian glaciers.

CLICK HERE for more information on the season.

Azamara releases 70 cruises for 2027

AZAMARA Cruises has announced its 2027 voyages, with almost 70 sailings on offer.

The season's six Grand Voyages are a highlight of the program, with cruises ranging from 35 to 41 nights, visiting multiple countries and continents.

Itineraries include Miami to Venice, Copenhagen to New York City, Kobe to Vancouver, and Athens to Lisbon.

Every Grand Voyage also includes complimentary airfare, shore excursion credits, wi-fi for two devices, weekly laundry service, and an upgraded beverage package.

Nearly half of all cruises for the season feature late nights or overnights, allowing travellers to immerse themselves in authentic local culture after dark, whether on one of the cruise line's signature AzAmazing Evenings, a guided night tour, or savouring a



Destination Celebration Dinner under the stars.

Azamara's smaller ships allow the ability to reach off-the-beaten-path destinations larger cruise vessels cannot, such as Dartmouth and Fowey, which are returning to the line's schedule for the first time since 2009 and 2018 respectively.

Other niche cruises include 22 new PerryGolf voyages, as well as 10 new 'Country-Intensive Cruises', which allow travellers to dive deep into a single country.

Guests will enjoy expanded Azamara Ashore programming, including shore excursions and overnight land programs created alongside local tour operators.

Australians obsessing over Japan can join one of *Azamara Pursuit's* cherry blossom season cruises, in destinations such as Hiroshima, Kanazawa, Tokyo, Kobe, and more.

Other itineraries will offer access to events, such as the Monaco Grand Prix and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. *MS*

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Tuesday 13th May 2025

Content produced
in collaboration with
Imagine Cruising

IMAGINE CRUISING, now sporting a fresh new look and feel continues to dedicate itself each and every day to quality, meaningful supplier partnerships, and delivering outstanding holidays to travellers worldwide.

This rebrand from the former Imagine Holidays isn't just about a change in window dressing - it reflects the company's evolution and its significant growth trajectory, reinforcing its dedication to travel experiences you can truly call your own.

While Imagine Cruising's range of global adventures stands for itself, the brand's core remains all about delivering memorable



cruise experiences.

The company holds close ties

with the world's most renowned cruise lines, including Carnival Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean, Norwegian Cruise Line, Princess Cruises, Holland America Line, and Celebrity Cruises, among

others, to name a few, each offering a unique style.

In addition, Imagine Cruising's strong tie-ups with land and rail partners allow it to create holidays far beyond just a cruise.



Be in it to win concert tickets

TO CELEBRATE Imagine Cruising's exciting new look, the brand is offering a special promotion from today through to 30 Jun - [CLICK HERE](#).

For every new booking made and deposited during this period, agents will receive a

\$100 Prezzye voucher.

Further, the agent generating the highest revenue will win two exclusive VIP tickets to see Latino superstar Ricky Martin live in concert, with shows in Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne later this year.

A highly successful first year

A RECORD breaking debut year for Imagine Cruising has been driven by the successful launch of its trade division, which has concluded its first full year on 06 May 2025.

Craig Spiga, Imagine Cruising GM of Trade Sales, has overseen the rapid expansion of the company's cruise division.

"The reception received in our first 12 months collaborating with travel agents has blown me away," Spiga said.

"The desire to openly collaborate on strategies that suit a range of individual

businesses and networks has been inspiring for both the team and myself.

"We've learned that each business or individual has their unique market, challenges and opportunities; keeping adaptable and creative can be challenging but has been the key driver to our success."

Imagine Cruising aims to exceed its first year's success, already hiring several key roles to handle rising demand and evolve its customer offering.

To learn more about the brand's offerings, [CLICK HERE](#).

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ALTHOUGH Lake Macquarie in New South Wales' Hunter region may not have the depth to carry a cruise ship, other vessels from around the destination are being sought out to join an annual flotilla on the body of water next month.

The local council is looking for skippers, friends of boat owners, community groups, school groups, artists, and local residents to help light up the lake by decorating their boat in lights and taking part in the 'Float Your Boat' flotilla later this year.

The council is aiming for a flotilla of 30 boats in 2025, with skippers of 17 years and over encouraged to apply by next Tue.

The flotilla will last for two nights, on 20 and 21 Jun, with the first 20 boats registered also receiving \$400 toward their creative light efforts.

Specifications require a boat a minimum of five metres in length and a maximum of 18, which likely also rules out most cruise ships - sorry, Royal Caribbean's *Icon of the Seas*.

Symphony plans 28 WC



'TREASURES Of The Tides', Crystal's 2028 world cruise, will journey to more than 80 destinations across almost 40 countries on *Crystal Symphony*.

Bookings for the 150-night journey open to the public on 29 May, with *Symphony* to lead her first world cruise since 2018.

Departing round trip from Fort Lauderdale on 11 Jan 2028, the cruise will sail through to 10 Jun 2028, with an option to disembark in Barcelona on 27 May 2028.

Guests will travel the Caribbean, South America, the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, and the Mediterranean, with select shore excursions to be curated in partnership with Crystal's sister brand Abercrombie & Kent.

Among the highlights are a number of first-time Aussie calls,

including Portland, Kangaroo Island, Albany, and Geraldton.

Symphony (pictured) will also make inaugural visits to Huahine, Nha Trang, and Mangalore.

Throughout the journey, world cruise guests will be invited to a series of special celebrations in Lima, Saigon, and Dubai.

Crystal Chairman Fernando Barroso de Oliveira will be joining the world cruise, which he said "will be unlike anything we've done before".

"From overnight stays in the world's most iconic ports to new immersive experiences designed exclusively for Crystal guests, we're setting a new standard for luxury exploration - not just in the destinations we'll be visiting, but in the way we're curating every moment on board and ashore," he said. *MS*

Flap your wings

SWAN Hellenic has launched custom-curated Celebration Voyages, pitched at those commemorating a milestone.

The cruise line is now catering trips designed for those celebrating birthdays, engagements, bachelor and bachelorette parties, honeymoons and anniversaries, new product launches, book publications and album releases, workplace promotions and retirement, and friendship celebrations and reunions.

Every aspect of a Swan Hellenic cruise can be customised, with anything from couples' massages to private fine dining and musical performances, personal expert talks, and unique individual expeditions and excursions.

"We're thrilled to offer this transformative service," Chief Commercial Officer Patrizia Iantorno enthused.

"It's the ultimate expression of our passion to take people to celebrate what's special in their lives with those closest to them, exploring the most extraordinary places on earth."

Full assistance is provided to celebrants by an expert from Swan Hellenic - **CLICK HERE** for more information.



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