



Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of the latest cruise industry news, plus full pages from:

- Ponant Explorations
- Scenic

Join Ponant in Oct

JOIN Ponant Explorations this month as it hosts discovery sessions in a number of cities across Australia

Ponant will head to Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, and Perth - more info on **page 4**.

Scenic earlybird

SCENIC has launched a super earlybird offer for its 2026 Europe voyages, with travellers able to enjoy included economy flights or a business class air credit of up to \$4,500pp.

For more details, see **page 5**.

Scenic announces *Ikon-ic* new ship

SCENIC Group has unveiled *Scenic Ikon* (pictured), set to join its Discovery Yacht fleet in Apr 2028 (**CW** breaking news).

First flagged by **Cruise Weekly** earlier this year (**CW** 16 Jun), the ultra-luxury vessel will host up to 270 guests in 135 all-verandah suites across five decks, making her bigger than the 228-pax *Scenic Eclipse* and *Eclipse II*.

Scenic Ikon will be purpose-built for both polar regions and warm-water destinations, with a Polar Code 6 rating and an Ice Class 1A super-strengthened hull.

The ship will be decked out with two Airbus H130-T2 helicopters, a custom-designed Triton AVA submersible, Zodiacs, and superyacht Fassmer tenders.

On board, guests can enjoy 15 dining venues, expansive lounges and social spaces, as well as a 1,700m² two-level Senses Rejuvenation Spa complete with



world-class fitness offerings.

Scenic Ikon will also offer exclusive helicopter landings at golf courses, local restaurants, and historic landmarks, as well as some of the world's most remote wilderness regions.

These experiences are included for Chairman's Club members and for guests in the Penthouse and Owner's Suites.

"*Scenic Ikon* has been conceived, engineered and built with our in-house ship building division at MKM Yachts and will be operated entirely by our own

dedicated Scenic crew," said Glen Moroney, founder and Chairman of Scenic Group.

"This remarkable vessel is the result of more than three years of passion, innovation and development by our team, and we are delighted to share the Discovery Yacht with our valued guests, travel advisors and partners," he added.

"Every element of *Scenic Ikon's* design has been optimised to deliver unrivalled experiences across diverse destinations and environments, from its primary base the Mediterranean to the wilds of Antarctica."

The upcoming Discovery Yacht will embark on her sold-out inaugural voyage from Venice in Apr 2028, with the rest of her maiden season through to Mar 2029 spanning 110 ports across the Mediterranean, Aegean and Egypt, Antarctica, and more. *JM*

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REGISTRATION PAGE

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Ponant Europe '26

PONANT Explorations has announced its 2026 Europe Collection, made up of a selection of small-ship voyages visiting the continent.

Highlight destinations during the season include the Greek Islands, Italy, the Adriatic Coast, Scotland, Ireland, and the Arctic Circle.

Ponant is highlighting three key programs for the season, including 'European Grand Voyages', which range from 14 to 19 nights.

Guests can go back-to-back on itineraries and save 10% on the second voyage.

Ponant is also offering 'Cruise & Land' packages during the season, which combine a European sailing with a curated city stay, guided tours, and transfers.

The program is available in destinations such as Paris, Valletta, Edinburgh, and Dublin, with travellers receiving an additional A\$800 Ponant Plus credit.

Also being highlighted this season are the cruise line's 'Iconic Croatia sailings'.

Guests can currently enjoy up to 30% off these cruises with the Ponant bonus on selected itineraries, including voyages aboard the cruise line's sailing yacht *Le Ponant*.

These offers are valid for new bookings made before 15 Dec and are subject to availability.

Sydney gets its *Edge* back



CELEBRITY *Edge* has officially begun her third Australian season, with 17 sailings on offer departing from Sydney and Auckland between Oct 2025 and Apr 2026 (**CW** 01 Oct).

The ship arrived in Sydney early this morning following a 19-night transpacific sailing from Honolulu, and will depart later today on an 11-night journey to explore the Great Barrier Reef.

Guests can choose from a selection of itineraries ranging from four to 14 nights, with seven itineraries dedicated to exploring New Zealand, including a 13-night festive cruise visiting the Milford, Doubtful, and Dusky Sounds, plus seven port stops across the North and South Islands.

Additionally, guests can book a nine-night 'Australia Wine Journey' along the eastern and southern coasts, exploring renowned vineyards throughout

Hobart, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide, and Melbourne.

The 2025/26 season will also introduce 54 new shore excursions, including experiences in Newcastle, where *Celebrity Edge* will make its first-ever port call this Dec.

Among the Newcastle offerings is a sculpture walk, complemented by a wine tasting and lunch tour, while in Wellington, a new wellness-focused tour invites guests to enjoy a guided visit to a garden, and a yoga session.

"Sailings on *Celebrity Edge* are much more than just a holiday, and we're thrilled to welcome her back to these waters for a third season - providing immersive experiences that showcase all this incredible region has to offer," explained Tim Jones, Vice President and Managing Director, Australia and Asia Pacific, of Celebrity Cruises. *JM*

It's expedition week

CRUISE Month's expedition week is here, which will see Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) highlight new opportunities in the world's most remote locations.

Expedition cruising will take the focus in CLIA's social media activity, digital advertising, educational opportunities, and other initiatives this week, as the third theme for Oct's Cruise Month.

Managing Director Joel Katz said expedition cruising has become one of the richest areas of opportunity in cruising, as specialist operators deploy purpose-built ships.

"The number of people taking expedition cruises grew by 22% last year, reflecting a huge global interest in experiencing pristine destinations in the world's most remote corners," the CLIA MD said.

New Polar website

POLAR Latitudes Expeditions, the parent company of Albatros Expeditions, has launched a new website - **CLICK HERE**.

The company is also hosting an exclusive webinar for trade partners on Wed, which will see CEO Patrick Shaw and EMEA Sales Director Craig Upshall provide an update on the firm - **HERE**.

NEXT ISSUE:

Southeast Asia special report

» Get involved

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WHEN you hear about someone giving up life on land to live on a cruise ship, often it is someone who is retirement age, or close to.

Jack Reynolds has bucked this trend though - he was just 30 years old when he decided to sell his house and base himself off Royal Caribbean's *Utopia of the Seas*, which is currently cruising in the Bahamas.

The British man said the lifestyle switch was inspired by the breakdown of his five-year relationship earlier this year, after which his lifestyle became unhealthy and isolated.

Since starting his trip, Reynolds has lost over 10kg and has made many new friends.

"I get to travel and there is a lot of sunshine, which we lack in the UK," Reynolds told *Metro*.

"But I'm also using this trip as a partial wellness retreat, because I have free access to the gym and better food."

Fly-cruise on the rise



INTERNATIONAL cruises to destinations like New Zealand, Japan, and Europe are up by 15% this year at RAA Travel, the South Australia-based agency reported.

This comes as the number of domestically based ships has dropped, due to cruise lines consolidating and reducing costs, among other things.

Travel Product Development & Projects Manager Anthony Hunter said cruising remains one of the most sought-after vacation choices due to its ease and value for money.

Hunter revealed that a number of overseas destinations were benefitting from the trend, with

Asia, particularly Japan, and Europe, seeing a lot of interest from Australian travellers.

"The growth of international cruises reflects strong demand from travellers keen to enjoy the unique combination of convenience, relaxation and adventure that cruising offers.

"Japan continues to be extremely popular this year, for both ocean cruises and expedition vessels exploring the Land of the Rising Sun.

"In Europe, family friendly cruise lines such as Norwegian Cruise Line and MSC Cruises have seen tremendous growth," Hunter added. *MS*

Ponant cutting CO²

PONANT Explorations Group has cut carbon dioxide emission by 14% from its benchmark year of 2018, the firm has detailed in its latest annual *Sustainability Report*.

The number is three percentage points better than last year, when the cruise line was 11% improved on the reference year.

Ponant is now almost halfway toward the goal it set of a 30% reduction in emissions by 2030.

The reduction is the result of several improvements made in recent years that have come from fleet energy efficiency and the use of alternative energies, Ponant said in its report.

"Our 2024 *Sustainability Report* provides a clear picture of the progress we have made as well as the road ahead," Head of CSR & Sustainability Wassim Daoud said.

"We are continuing on our path towards decarbonisation and are taking concrete steps to reduce our environmental impact...and help local communities," he added.

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