



Cruise Weekly today

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

CCL promotes Loeb

CARNIVAL Cruise Line (CCL) has promoted Anton Loeb to the position of Assistant Vice President, Sales & Marketing - a move the company said reaffirms its commitment to the local market.

Loeb had been in the role of Senior Director Sales & Marketing since 2021.

He also led the then newly formed CCL trade sales team across Australia and NZ as Director of Sales, upon first joining the cruise line in 2013.

"Anton's steady hand, strategic mindset, and passion for the business have helped set the foundation for future growth," SVP Sales and Trade Marketing Janet Wygert said.

Celebrity Xcels and Xcites at the same time

CELEBRITY Cruises has taken delivery of its new ship *Celebrity Xcel*, and has announced its next ship set to join the fleet, called *Celebrity Xcite*.

The cruise line celebrated two major milestones at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard today, welcoming *Xcel* to the fleet, and cutting the first steel on *Xcite*, its next Edge-class ship.

Executives from both Royal Caribbean Group (RCG) and Chantiers de l'Atlantique were present for the event.

This included RCG President & Chief Executive Officer Jason Liberty, Celebrity President Laura Hodges Bethge, the shipyard's General Manager Laurent Castaing, and *Xcel* Captain Kyriakos Matragkas.

They were joined by more than 1,600 of the ship's crew members in the celebration.

The milestone was marked



with time-honoured maritime traditions, including a formal signing ceremony, the symbolic changing of flags aboard the vessel, and a celebratory toast in the ship's spectacular three-storey Grand Plaza.

Xcel will set sail next month, offering seven-night itineraries alternating between the Bahamas, Mexico, the Cayman Islands, Puerto Plata, St. Thomas,

and St. Maarten.

"*Celebrity Xcel* has been designed with our guest as our north star, we even involved them in the design process through the *Xcel* Dream Makers program, so we know she will be the happy place of vacationers globally," Hodges Bethge said.

Xcel will be joined by *Xcite* in 2028, which is scheduled to be the last ship in the Edge-class. *MS*

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Nightmare fuel

PANIC is rippling through Miami over the uncertain fuel supply situation in the city.

Royal Caribbean Group Chief Executive Officer Jason Liberty recently addressed the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, noting the industry's concern following the recent sale of the city's Fisher Island fuel depot.

The facility was PortMiami's sole source of bunker fuel, but has now been acquired by private interests which are planning to redevelop the site, with no guarantees regarding supply moving forward.

"Even if we identify land, the amount of time it will take for the permitting, the building, it's not 24 months," he said.

"In the short- to mid-term, without that fuel farm, it's pretty tough to certify the fuel is going to be available to us."

Royal cuts steel on next ship



ROYAL Caribbean has this week celebrated the first milestone for its seventh Oasis-class ship, with construction now underway.

The first piece of steel was cut today for the soon-to-be-named vessel, which is scheduled to debut in 2028.

A ceremony was held at Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in Saint-Nazaire, with

representatives from Royal Caribbean and the shipyard in attendance for the event.

Also there on the day were the teams of innovators, naval engineers, architects, designers and more working to bring the ship to life.

Details about the seventh Oasis-class ship, including its name, will be revealed at a later date. *JM*

Celestyal BDM out

CELESTYAL Cruises BDM Mary Williams (**pictured**) is set to depart the line, **Cruise Weekly** can confirm.

Director of Business Development Asia Pacific Jarrod Zurvas described Williams as "the face of Celestyal" during her six-year run with the cruise line.

"We are thankful for her service and contribution to the company...we wish her the very best as she embarks on this next chapter of her career," he said.

Ascend Travel Group's Lynda Wallace and Julie Primmer will continue to manage trade services for Celestyal in the local market.



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NOT to be dramatic, but one Carnival Cruise Line guest believes a fellow passenger wearing jeans in the dining room on formal night would ruin the cruise for them.

This guest, writing to Carnival's full-time Brand Ambassador and part-time advice columnist John Heald, said they not only believe jeans are inappropriate on formal night, but suggested they be completely banned from the cruise line's ships.

"I have a complaint: if you don't want to dress up, don't [go to the Main Dining Room] on formal night, don't ruin it for others," the guest wrote.

"The more casual formal night has essentially ruined what used to be a very special part of the cruise for me and my wife.

"Jeans - ban them - they have no place on a Carnival cruise," they wrote.

NCL skewing older in Aus



OLDER guests are flocking to Norwegian Cruise Line's Australian product, as many other companies around the industry chase younger passengers.

Vice President & Managing Director Ben Angell told *Cruise Weekly* the passenger demographic aboard the cruise line's locally based *Norwegian Spirit* is defying global trends.

"Our average age is staying the same, but in some destinations - the South Pacific is a good example - we're still older.

"We might skew from high fifties up into even the sixties, and what we're hearing is that

there is a gap in the market that no one's filling here.

"It's older couples primarily that have a lot of free time, they're often retired, they have a lot of disposable income, and they want a cruise experience on a smaller ship with a huge amount of variety."

Other cruise lines are not meeting the needs of these passengers with their local programs, Angell offered.

"If you look at the large ship cruising in this market, they're skewing younger and younger in the guests they are marketing to," he said. *MS*

Quark goes early

QUARK Expeditions has launched its 2027 Arctic and 2027/2028 Antarctica seasons early, unveiling new voyages and expanded science and discovery programs.

Bookings are now open earlier than ever, reflecting strong demand for Quark, and underscoring the cruise line's growth and continued strength in polar travel.

There will be new immersive voyages and experiences in the Antarctic Peninsula, including a rare exploration of the Weddell Sea.

Meanwhile, the new 'Falkland Island & South Georgia, 20-day Wildlife Adventure' will see guests spend extended time in this difficult-to-reach region.

Quark is holding a polar event next month at the Australian Museum in Sydney to celebrate the launch of the new season.

The 12 Nov event will also see one lucky attendee win a trip to the Arctic.

CLICK HERE for more information and to register.



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