



Cruise Weekly today

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

Coral guest dies

A CORAL Expeditions passenger has died during an excursion to Lizard Island in Queensland over the weekend.

"On Sat 25 Oct, the crew notified authorities that a woman was missing, and a search-and-rescue operation was launched on land and sea," CEO Mark Fifield said

"Following the operation, Coral Expeditions was notified by Queensland Police that the woman had been found deceased on Lizard Island.

"While investigations into the incident are continuing, we are deeply sorry that this has occurred and are offering our full support to the woman's family," he said.

Uniworld's largest-ever fleet expansion

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises has announced its largest fleet expansion to date, which will include three brand-new Super Ship-class vessels.

Audrey, Marlene (pictured), and Sao Rafael will be added to the fleet, in news foreshadowed by **Cruise Weekly** (CW 20 Aug).

The first two ships will join the cruise line's fleet in 2027, showcasing interiors inspired by the screen legends they are named for: Audrey Hepburn and Marlene Dietrich.

They will be joined in 2027 by *Sao Rafael*, named after the flagship of Vasco da Gama's armada on his first Indian voyage.

Also set to sail for Uniworld will be Aqua Expeditions' *Aqua Blu*, which will operate newly announced expeditions in Indonesia (CW 15 Oct).

Additionally, there will be several new journeys across



Europe and Asia, including Audrey's 'Paris, Prague & Germany's Hidden Gems' cruise - an 11-night itinerary that will blend stays in Paris and Prague with a voyage through the heart of Germany, along the Rhine and Moselle rivers.

A highlight aboard *Marlene* will be the 16-night 'Grand Highlights

of the Danube' which will sail for 14 nights, with two days in Vienna at the end of the cruise.

"2027 will be landmark year for us at Uniworld as we introduce four remarkable new ships to our guests and a range of itineraries that blend cultural immersion, luxury and adventure," President & CEO Ellen Bettridge said. *MS*

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GLOBAL leaders heading to South Korea for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, which kicked off yesterday and runs until Fri, will be staying on a cruise ship.

The unusual accommodation choice is due to a hotel shortage in the city of Gyeongju, where the conference is taking place, which is around a 90-minute drive from the nearest major international airport.

Along with the likes of US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, around 700 global business leaders are expected to attend, along with roughly 20,000 visitors overall.

While Gyeongju was selected as the host city for its showcase of Korea's cultural heritage, it was never built to cater for major events, particularly at this time of year, which is peak tourist season.

As a solution, delegates have been invited to stay on *Piano Land*, a cruise ship with 850 cabins which, along with a smaller, 270-cabin ship called *Eastern Venus*, will serve as a floating hotel.

Unfortunately, delegates will need to embark on a nearly hour-long commute to the venue each morning.

Organisers are putting a positive spin on the situation, describing the cruise ship as a "unique luxury experience".

Ironically, South Korea's ambassador to Singapore, Hong Jin-wook, had previously said this about the summit: "I'm definitely 100% sure there won't be any major logistic issue in accommodating all those important events."

RCG's new Euro Beach Club



ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) is set to launch Royal Beach Club Santorini next summer (render **pictured**), extending its robust pipeline of private destinations to Europe for the first time.

The new Beach Club will join Paradise Island (The Bahamas) and Cozumel (Mexico), as well as a number of other locations in Royal Caribbean's 'Ultimate Destinations' fold.

Cruisers from both Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises will be welcomed to Royal Beach Club Santorini, which the company boasted will "combine the breathtaking volcanic beaches of this iconic Greek island with the company's signature experiences alongside the vibrant Grecian spirit and culture".

The Beach Club's location in the village of Vlichada will allow cruisers to also explore the rest of the island, from its position 25-40 minutes from Santorini's main settlements of Oia and Fira.

"Expanding our Royal Beach Club Collection to include Santorini - one of the world's most popular and beautiful locations - is a bold step forward in growing our vacation portfolio from two to eight by 2028, giving guests more ways to have unforgettable experiences with us," RCG President & CEO Jason Liberty said.

"We're thrilled to connect guests with Santorini's gems - from its iconic villages to the

Aegean Sea's famous beach club culture - creating a balanced, authentic island experience."

The cruise line's President & CEO Michael Bayley added: "Santorini is an incredible destination that our guests love to explore, and with this new Beach Club, we are able to bring the best of what the island has to offer with the signature service Royal Caribbean is known for."

The announcement also quietly confirmed the delay of Royal Caribbean's highly anticipated Lelepa Beach Club in Vanuatu, which has been moved from 2027 to 2028.

Lelepa is set to be Royal Caribbean's only Southern Hemisphere private destination, and will be visited on almost all of the cruise line's voyages out of Australia (**CW** 18 Aug).

Also set to debut will be Perfect Day Mexico (**CW** 11 Oct 2024), due in 2027. **MS**

Aza's big season

AZAMARA Cruises has unveiled its 2027-2028 program, with the line set to make waves in Australia with an extended local season.

The cruise line will arrive earlier and stay longer than ever in Australia in 2027-28, sailing on more than 20 itineraries featuring a number of new ports.

Among the highlights are two brand-new Australian destinations, K'gari and Gladstone, while *Azamara Pursuit* will stay for two nights in Hobart over New Year's Eve.

Guests will celebrate Tasmania's Taste Festival and Sydney to Hobart festivities, while passengers can also look forward to the cruise line's return to Brisbane, as well as *Azamara Onward* visiting local shores in early 2028.

Director of Sales Victoria Chigwidden said the news is a testament to Azamara's strong regional partnerships and growing presence.

"The extended 2027/2028 season - including new ports, longer stays, and more local sailings - reflects our genuine commitment to this region.

"We're delighted to welcome *Azamara Pursuit* back for an extended season and look forward to seeing *Azamara Onward* join her in early 2028," she said.



 **CRUISE
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On location on board
Discovery Princess

Today's issue of CW is coming to you today courtesy of Princess Cruises.

WE ARE on board *Discovery Princess* on a fabulous Malaysia getaway, and our first port of call is Port Kelang in Kuala Lumpur, where we will disembark for a fascinating shore excursion.

Some of the highlights of the city include visiting the National Museum and the Lake Gardens, checking out the Petronas Twin Towers and Kuala Lumpur Tower, before wandering Merdeka Square.

At the end of the day, we will have dinner at Crown Grill, then enjoy a show at the Princess Theatre, *Viva La Musica*, which is new to Australia.

CCL to home port in SA



CARNIVAL Cruise Line (CCL) will home port in Adelaide for the first time in 2027-28 (**CW** breaking news), marking the fourth Australian destination the brand will be based in.

CCL's *Carnival Adventure* (pictured) will sail four voyages from the South Australian capital, including three round trips and one ending in Sydney.

The cruises will span from three to five days, featuring destinations such as Kangaroo Island and Port Lincoln, with bookings now open.

The 2027-28 program will also see *Adventure* home port in Auckland, marking the cruise line's inaugural season in the New Zealand city.

The ship will offer Kiwi travellers a new four-night itinerary to Norfolk Island, as well as longer nine- and 10-night journeys to Fiji, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia, for a total of nine departures, ending with a four-night one-way voyage from Auckland to Sydney.

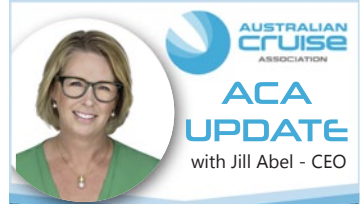
Meanwhile, *Carnival Splendor*

will continue to home port year-round in Sydney, while *Carnival Encounter* will be based in Brisbane, and will be joined by *Carnival Luminosa* in the summer.

"Carnival is sailing from five home ports in Australia and New Zealand in 2027/28 and we remain the only global cruise line committed to sailing in this region year-round," Carnival Corporation's Country Manager Peter Little said.

"Carnival Cruise Line has answered the call from our interstate and New Zealand guests who have been asking for more opportunities to book a convenient and great value cruise holiday, and we're delighted to be offering voyages from Adelaide, Melbourne and Auckland as well as our traditional ports of Sydney and Brisbane."

Overall, the 2027/28 program includes more than 200 cruises across four ships, with 39 destinations to be visited across Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific. *JM*



Vanuatu re-enters the chat

CRUISE tourism in Vanuatu is back with a bang.

Since early Aug, the islands have welcomed more than a dozen cruise calls across Port Vila, Santo and Mystery Island, marking a strong restart following the eight-month pause that followed the Dec 2024 earthquake.

Visitor feedback is outstanding, with operators reporting glowing comments on Vanuatu's cultural authenticity and the signature warmth of the local welcomes.

Communities across the islands are embracing the return of cruise visitors with renewed pride.

Artisans, tour guides and small business operators have reactivated operations with a focus on sustainability and authenticity.

The economic uplift is telling, with market vendors and shore-excursion operators in the outer islands seeing meaningful gains.

The infrastructure upgrades underway in Port Vila, including the provisional tendering site and temporary wharf facilities, signal that this isn't just a bounce-back, but a build-back-stronger process.

Notably, major international ships such as *Carnival Adventure* returned on 08 Aug, with other large-class vessels such as *Anthem of the Seas* and *Voyager of the Seas* scheduled for upcoming visits in the 2025-26 season, with over 100 calls scheduled between Nov and Apr.

With all the pieces now in motion, the 2025-26 season promises to be a defining year in Vanuatu's cruise recovery, built on strong partnerships across government, industry and community.

The message is clear: Vanuatu is open for cruising.

Taking on the world

OCEANIA Cruises has announced its 2027 'Around the World' cruise - a 244-day voyage aboard *Oceania Vista* that has been divided into 17 segments of nine to 20 days.

Featuring more than 125 ports across 53 countries, the journey will include segments such as a 15-day 'Treasures of Two Oceans' option from Miami to LA; an 11-day 'Charms of Northern Europe' leg from Paris to Copenhagen; and a 17-day 'Untamed North Atlantic' segment from Reykjavik to New York.

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