

Cruise Weekly today

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



On location on board
Discovery Princess

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

IT IS day three of our Malaysian getaway cruise on board *Discovery Princess* and today we are exploring Langkawi, surrounded by sandy beaches, dramatic cliffs and rich wildlife.

Passengers can choose from a number of excellent shore excursions, including a mangrove cruise, kayaking across the Kilim River, or catching a cable car ride up to Langkawi's highest peak, overlooking spectacular jungle waterfalls and virgin rainforest.

Tonight, we will farewell Langkawi and set sail for our next port of call, Penang.

Recovery two years away



AUSTRALIAN Cruise Association (ACA) Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel believes this year's downturn in economic output for the sector (**CW** yesterday) may take as long as two years to recover.

Abel, speaking to **CW** in the wake of this week's economic impact report, said the extended scheduling timeline the cruise sector works on means the industry should not expect to see figures jump straight back up.

"I think it's going to take a couple of years...we are doing projections, we believe this is going to take another 12 months to 24 months before we start to see that growth," Abel conceded.

However the ACA head said the Australian cruise sector should not take any return to form

for granted, and that industry and government needs to work together to reverse the course.

"We need to act and be proactive right now, and not rest on our laurels and think it's all going to come back on its own," she said.

Cruise Lines International Association MD Joel Katz told **CW**: "An individual state or territory or region can't work in isolation when it comes to cruise.

"We need to bring it all together under a national framework so that we can absolutely maximise the potential here in Australia, get those policy settings correct, reduce the red tape, and give the cruise lines the certainty they need for that long-term planning so that we can get those ships back Down Under." **MS**

Regent gives back

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises is bringing back its Annual Travel Advisor Appreciation Month in Nov, with the line hosting two free webinars to equip agents with digital marketing skills - **RVSP HERE**.



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Melissa disrupts

HURRICANE Melissa, a category five storm bearing down on Jamaica, has forced several ships, including *MSC World America*, to cancel port calls in the affected islands.

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NT's big cruise win

THE NT's Minister for Tourism Marie-Clare Boothby said yesterday's national cruise economic impact report (**CW** yesterday) was a fantastic result for local businesses, as the Territory hailed a record-breaking 24/25 cruise season.

"While other states have seen a downturn, the Territory is bucking the national trend as the only jurisdiction to record an increase in cruise-related activity, with our total output rising 13.3% to \$206 million," Boothby said.

"The growth in visits, turnaround calls, and cruise line spending shows the industry's strong confidence in the Territory as a key destination, and that our unique experiences are resonating with visitors.

"What makes this even more valuable is that many of these cruise visits happen during our traditionally quieter tourism months, giving local businesses a welcome boost in the off-peak season."

The result comes as Darwin today welcomes Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Solstice*, following the season's kick-off late last month with Silversea's *Silver Nova*.

Darwin will host 15 cruise ships before 2025 is out, bringing more than 21,000 tourists to town; next year will see 37,000 passengers welcomed to the NT.

LNG issues in our region



THE Southern Hemisphere's cruise facilities are holding the region back, according to one of Ponant Explorations' most experienced leaders.

Captain Etienne Garcia (**pictured**), who helms the cruise line's icebreaking *Le Commandant Charcot* (**pictured**), said facilities in the south, particularly the region's energy capabilities, cannot compare to what is on offer in the north.

This may impact the south's ability to attract newer vessels, with Garcia particularly noting fuel supply issues.

"We cannot bunker energy everywhere, for example, in the Northern Hemisphere, almost everywhere, but in the Southern Hemisphere, in Ushuaia, you don't, so I think it's still a challenge," he explained.

"They want us to go ahead, but

we don't have the facilities."

Bringing vessels south may prove increasingly challenging, as cruise lines more greatly consider their environmental impact.

Garcia, in Australia last week to speak at Ponant's Discovery Sessions (**CW** 21 Oct), also discussed balancing the cruise line's need to expand while maintaining the unique personality its guests appreciate.

"We have to continue to find new itineraries, but we have to not be tempted by the growth capacity, to remain human-size, with around 200 guests maximum," he said.

Other brand pillars Ponant must continue to observe, Garcia added, include itinerary specificity, continuing to highlight its French style, and the relationship between its crews and its passengers. *MS*

RCG ups guidance

ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) has upped its full-year guidance for this year, with the company now expecting an adjusted earnings per share in the range of US\$15.58-\$15.63.

The figure represents 32% year-over-year growth, and is driven by the cruise giant's better-than-expected third quarter performance, which saw it bring in a net income of US\$1.6 billion, or \$5.74 per share, compared to \$1.1b, or \$4.21 per share for the same period in the prior year.

Capacity for the third quarter was up 2.9% year-over-year, and the company delivered vacations to 2.5 million guests - up 7% from the year prior.

Looking ahead, capacity in the fourth quarter is expected to increase 10.3% compared to fourth quarter 2024, driven by the introduction of *Star of the Seas* during the third quarter, *Celebrity Xcel* mid next month, and fewer dry dock days.

"We continue to see strong momentum across our business, powered by accelerated demand, growing loyalty, and guest satisfaction that is at all-time highs," said President and Chief Executive Jason Liberty.

"Looking ahead, while it's still early in the planning process, our strong booked position gives us confidence for 2026 and beyond."

HIT THE BRAKES

Why is slow travel on the rise?

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Travel Daily



WINTER cruising just got a whole lot steamier in Chicago, with hot tub boats to soon fill the city's waterways.

Next month, the Chicago Boat Company will bring back its fleet of bubbling boat-baths, which went viral back in the winter of 2023.

Yes, the vessel is literally a floating hot tub pool, and it's supposed to be a cosy and fun way for locals and tourists to explore the Windy City.

The unique vessels cruise up and down Chicago River at a maximum speed of around two kilometres an hour, and are steered by passengers using a hand lever.

The floating spas cater to up to six people aged 13 or older, and are equipped with a cooler for beverages, waterproof phone pouches, floating cup holders, a Bluetooth speaker, storage for belongings, and safety equipment.

Guests can bring a drink of their choice on board, provided it isn't in a glass bottle.

The hot tub boats are available to book from Nov through to Mar, with rates starting at US\$300 (A\$455) for a 90-minute cruise.



2027 set to be a Royal summer



ROYAL Caribbean has unveiled its line-up of European holidays for the 2027 season, headlined by the soon-to-open Royal Beach Club Santorini (**CW** yesterday).

Guests on *Brilliance of the Seas*, *Rhapsody of the Seas* and *Odyssey of the Seas* can enjoy the ultimate beach day as part of a complete Santorini experience, combining a day of exploring the gems of the island, such as Oia and Fira, with access to the new private destination's beaches, cabanas, local cuisine, and more.

Travellers can choose from a selection of short getaways and longer adventures, ranging between two and nine nights from Barcelona, Spain; Rome (Civitavecchia) and Ravenna, Italy; Athens (Piraeus), Greece; and Southampton, England.

The 2027 season will see *Legend of the Seas* (pictured) make her return to Europe, where she will offer seven-night sailings visiting bucket-list destinations throughout the Mediterranean.

Additionally, *Mariner of the Seas* will make her Southampton

debut and *Brilliance* is set to visit new sun-drenched spots like Porto (Leixoes), Portugal; and Tangier, Morocco.

Other highlights include seven-night holidays across the Eastern Mediterranean on board *Rhapsody*, featuring overnights in Istanbul, Turkey, or Alexandria, Egypt, and visits to Mykonos and Santorini's best spots.

Additionally, travellers can join week-long voyages across Italy, France, Spain, Croatia, Montenegro, and the Greek Isles on board *Odyssey*, with several memorable experiences on offer, from wandering Dubrovnik's Old Town and discovering the charm of Provence, to exploring the ancient history of destinations such as Athens and the Acropolis.

Bookings for the European 2027 season are now open **HERE**.

MEANWHILE, Royal Caribbean has confirmed its Lelepa private destination in the South Pacific will debut on schedule in 2027, despite yesterday's suggestion the timeline had been pushed back to 2028. **MS**

A Ritzy summer

THE Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection has opened up bookings for its summer 2027 Mediterranean and Northern Europe itineraries aboard *Evrina* and *Ilma*.

Sailing from Apr through Oct, the season will introduce 50 new voyages that explore the beauty, history, and culture of Europe's coastlines.

Each itinerary combines marquee cities with lesser-travelled ports, offering extended time ashore and a curated selection of excursions.

The season will feature 12 new ports of call across France, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Spain, and Italy, including La Rochelle, France, and Zadar, Croatia.

The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection has also added Tilbury, London as a new turnaround port, providing convenient access from the city centre for voyages across Northern Europe.

Shore experiences include a private lunch at a chateau in Bordeaux, a sky-to-cellar helicopter journey soaring above Mallorca's Serra de Tramuntana, and a guided stroll and regional tastings through the charming streets of Porto.

"With the season introducing several first-time calls, the voyages invite deeper exploration and connection with the culture, history, and beauty of the Mediterranean and Northern Europe," said Ernesto Fara, President of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection.