

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news, including an **ACA photo page**.

Cheers, Carnival

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has announced the introduction of a new premium non-alcoholic beverage package, Cheers! Zero Proof.

The offering bundles a wide variety of premium, alcohol-free refreshment options, from mocktails and zero-proof wine and beer, to premium tea and coffee, juices, smoothies, milkshakes and soft drinks.

Cheers! Zero Proof is now available for pre-cruise purchase online from \$39.99 per person per day, and will also be available for onboard purchase from \$44.99 in the coming weeks.

Find out more **HERE**.

WA secures a gem of a ship

SAPPHIRE Princess (pictured) will be the Princess Cruises ship to call Fremantle home in 2027-28, it has been confirmed (**CW** 01 Sep).

The news was announced yesterday morning by Western Australia's Minister for Tourism Reece Whitby, at a press conference at this year's Australian Cruise Association conference, taking place in the port city.

Sapphire will visit a number of destinations along the Western Australian coast, to be named later, with the planned deployment to generate almost \$150m for the local economy.

Whitby said the cruise sector is set to play a large part in the future of WA's tourism economy.

"This is part of our government's intention, our ambition, to grow the economy, to diversify the Western Australian economy, and to make



tourism a major part of that diversification," he said.

Princess Vice President Asia Pacific Matthew Rutherford said the cruise line's return to Western Australia for 2027-28 has been made possible with the support of Tourism WA and the state govt.

"We are proud to reaffirm our commitment to Western Australia, showcasing its breathtaking beauty, from the Kimberley to the Great Southern, to travellers from around the world," Rutherford enthused.

Princess' most recent home port season in Fremantle was *Sun Princess*' 2019-20 summer season from the city. *MS*

New MSC season

MSC Cruises has released a new brochure covering a full year of sailings across Europe from Apr 2026.

The 100-page guide features an extensive collection of voyages across the line's European heartland, covering both the Mediterranean and northern Europe.

Highlights of the new season include the inaugural Med season for MSC World Asia, which will launch in Dec 2026.

Also detailed is the line's Grand Med itinerary, which allows travellers to explore both the eastern and western Mediterranean in one voyage.

Agents eager to learn more about the new season can log into a Grand Med webinar taking place on 10 Sep with sessions available at both **8:30am** and **12:30pm** - click on the time above to register.

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On location in
Fremantle

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of the Australian Cruise Association, which is this week hosting its annual conference.

THIS year's Australian Cruise Association (ACA) conference wraps up today.

The day kicks off with the organisation's annual general meeting and breakfast, held in the Island Suite at the host venue, Esplanade Hotel Fremantle by Rydges.

Guests will then conclude the conference at the member's session, entitled 'Getting the settings right'.

ACA will now shift focus to next year's conference in Brisbane (CW breaking news).

Aurora hits 22 countries

BOOKINGS are now open for Aurora Expeditions' 2027 Small Ship Cruises season, which features 21 unique itineraries that will visit 22 countries.

Trips will range from nine to 17 days and are now available across what will be a three ship fleet, consisting of *Greg Mortimer*, *Sylvia Earle* and its newest vessel, *Douglas Mawson*.

"Our new season goes beyond cruising - it's storytelling at sea," said Aurora Expeditions Chief Marketing Officer, Katie Malone.

Early booking savings of up to 25% are now available for travellers to secure their place on journeys exploring the Mediterranean, Adriatic, Atlantic and African Coast, Central America, Northern Europe and the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Among these are nine new voyages including Valletta to Barcelona, Valletta to Zagreb,



Ireland to Portugal, Nice to Rome and Amsterdam to Copenhagen.

Each adventure caters to no more than 130 travellers and features opportunities to explore local markets, family-run vineyards and distilleries, historic houses, ancient castles and more.

Another newly-developed itinerary will see the *Sylvia Earle* travel between Panama City and San Jose in Costa Rica inclusive of a transit of the Panama Canal.

Itineraries will also feature guest presentations from historians, genealogists, art experts and more, who will share knowledge of destination history.

Beyond boutique

BEYOND Travel has added a new eight-day Greek island-hopping itinerary to its 2026 collection of boutique cruises.

The new eight-day 'Saronic Gems' itinerary takes place onboard the *M/Y Gemaya*, which carries up to 10 travellers in five staterooms.

Cruises explore small islands and towns including Palaia Epidavros, Aegina, Poros, Nafplion, Spetses and more.

Activities available during the itinerary include swimming, snorkelling, paddleboarding, as well as visiting local museums, historic ruins, monasteries and sandy beaches.

"This new Greek cruise is designed for clients who are truly seeking authenticity and the joy of discovering Greece at a slower, more personal pace," said Beyond Travel CEO Michael Lavilles - more **HERE**.

Until 1 December 2025, clients can enjoy free flight offers across selected 2026-2028 river, ocean and expedition voyages.

If clients choose not to take the flight offer, they may receive a discount of equal value in lieu of flights.

RIVER

Fly free on selected river voyages up to \$5,000 per couple*

OCEAN & EXPEDITION

Companion flies free on selected ocean and expedition voyages up to \$2,500 per booking*



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Friday 5th September 2025

THE Australian Cruise Association (ACA) is today rounding out its biggest-ever annual conference, welcoming around 160 delegates to Esplanade Hotel Fremantle by Rydges in Perth.

Western Australia's largest port city last hosted the conference 20 years ago in 2005, when just 49 delegates were present. A broad range of international talent descended on Australia for this year's

conference, while Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel also celebrated 20 years in the role, with the highly respected cruise head having led the organisation since it was 'Cruise Down Under'.



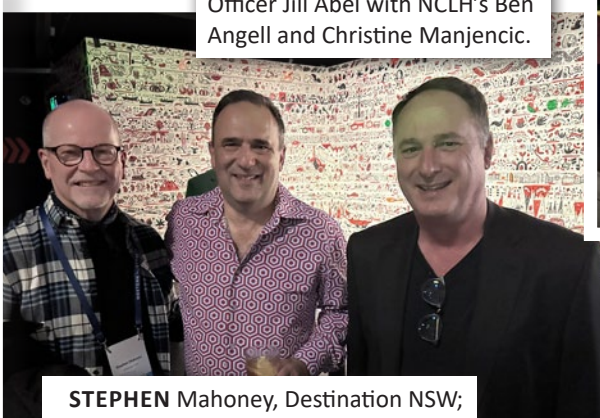
AUSTRALIAN Cruise Association Chief Executive Officer Jill Abel with NCLH's Ben Angell and Christine Manjencic.



SAM Waldron, Tourism NT and Karlie Cavanagh, Inshape.



BRENDAN Connell, Port of Brisbane; Tas Webber; Brisbane Economic Development Agency; and Kristy Little, TasPorts.



STEPHEN Mahoney, Destination NSW; with CLIA's Joel Katz and Jon Murrie.

TIM Jones, Celebrity Cruises; and Gavin Smith, Royal Caribbean.



PONANT'S Fiona Stewart and Deb Corbett with Jason Gelineau, JAG Hospitality; and Steven Biviano, Select Fresh Providers.



THE NT's typically strong ACA delegation: Pina Sommerville, Scott Lovett, Carleen Mitchell, Jason Yule, and Sam Waldron.



MICHAEL Mihajlov, Carnival Corporation with Matthew Rutherford and Meg Koffel from Princess Cruises.



AC/DC superfans James Coughlan, Shorex Australia; and Gemma Axford, ACA.



RIISING water temperatures in the Mediterranean are apparently making local marine life more aggressive, according to Dutch emergency assistance service VHD.

Holidaymakers in the idyllic region popular with cruisers are reporting injuries from close encounters with wildlife in higher numbers, particularly from Mediterranean sea bass.

"It may sound funny at first but it really isn't," said services spokesperson Tamara Voskamp.

"We had several reports of people who needed stitches after an attack because a sea bass had taken bites out of their legs."

Most of the reports are coming from beaches on the French and Spanish coast, with the latter identifying saddled sea bream as the culprits in the popular resort town Benidorm, with around 15 people per day requiring treatment.

Offending fish are understood to be targeting elderly swimmers with moles, warts and skin lesions, along with those wearing shiny jewellery.

Voskamp said thankfully, no injuries have been so serious that they required repatriation to the Netherlands.

So if your Mediterranean cruise holiday includes time to hit the beach, think again before entering the water - or just buy a fishing net.

ACA jams out in Fremantle



THE Australian Cruise Association's (ACA) annual conference came to a close last night, with a rock 'n' roll-themed gala dinner at Freo.Social.

Celebrating Fremantle's history in the genre, which has produced acts such as Bon Scott, Eskimo Joe, and John Butler Trio, delegates suited out in their finest vintage rock attire - some sourced from the port city's many various op shops - for a night of entertainment featuring famous

local cover band Oats Supply Live.

Delegates celebrated the return of the conference to Fremantle after 20 years away, and toasted to next year's event, which will be held in Brisbane.

The conference will wrap today with a morning breakfast, followed by the organisation's annual general meeting.

Pictured are Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia Business Development Manager Narelle Ross and ACA CEO Jill Abel.

Carnival cooks up \$250k for World Kitchen

CARNIVAL Corporation says it has reached US\$250,000 in funds raised through its fleet-wide casino donation program 'Keep the Change' intended for World Central Kitchen.

The program allows travellers on six of Carnival Corp's brands to donate spare change from casino winnings to the cause.

World Central Kitchen works to provide fresh meals to communities following a humanitarian, climate or community crisis.

The organisation recently funded a project to ensure first responders battling the California wildfires of 2025 had access to free, healthy meals.

NCL fire and ice

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has scheduled four departures of its 'Fire and Ice' itinerary which allows travellers to explore Hawaii and Alaska in the same cruise holiday.

The 16-day voyage onboard *Norwegian Spirit* is set to embark from Honolulu on 15 Jul and 16 Aug, or the reverse departing from Vancouver on 31 Jul or 01 Sep 2026.

Each departure visits 10 ports over the 16 days including an overnight stay in Kauai, with stops also in Kona and Hilo.

In Alaska, the voyage calls in Skagway, Juneau, Ketchikan and Icy Strait Point.

"Our fabulous 'Fire and Ice' sailings are perfect for guests who can't decide between an island-hopping Hawaiian experience or the striking scenery of Alaska - or those who want to treat themselves to an extended voyage whilst ticking multiple bucket list destinations off their list," said Norwegian Cruise Line VP and Managing Director Asia Pacific, Ben Angell.

Atlas 2027 program

SEVEN new destinations and 23 first-time ports headline the new 2027 European season from Atlas Ocean Voyages, with bookings now open.

Ports to be visited include the Greek islands of Amorgos, Chios, Symi and Lefkada and towns in the United Kingdom, Germany and Netherlands.

More than 25 overnight stays and 90 late port departures also feature in the schedule.