



Cruise Weekly today

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

Hapag programs

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises has unveiled its new pre- and post-cruise programs for the 2027/28 season.

Available across the fleet, travellers can choose from three program styles: guided, private and tailor-made.

There are a range of experiences on offer, including city tours in destinations like Rio and Tokyo, activities such as hiking and kayaking, cultural and nature-focused excursions, premium hotel stays, and private multi-day tours.

Solstice sails into Sydney



CELEBRITY Solstice arrived in Sydney Harbour yesterday for the first time since the vessel's upgrades (**CW** 04 Mar).

The 317m ship set sail from Marina Bay in Singapore on a 14-day trip to Sydney, and is now embarking on a 16-night voyage to Honolulu, visiting New Caledonia, Fiji and Samoa.

She is set to return to Sydney in Oct as part of her 110-night Grand Voyage from Alaska to Asia (**CW** 13 Dec 2024), calling at 55 destinations across 15 countries.

Speaking with **CW**, Celebrity's vice president and marketing director for Australia and APAC Tim Jones said the reason that *Celebrity Solstice*, along with Celebrity's wider fleet, keeps coming back Down Under is due to Australians' love of the line.

"*Solstice* was here back in 2012, so it was a long love affair with the Celebrity brand with Australian markets and audience," he said.

"In Q4 this year, we'll have two ships here at the same period of time, with *Solstice* operating in Australia and New Zealand at the same time as *Edge*."

With almost 3,000 guests on board, *Celebrity Solstice* has returned with an abundance of new dining, entertainment and social spaces such as the Boulevard Lounge & Bar, the upgraded Parlor sports bar, the

Italian Trattoria Rossa, Fine Cut Steakhouse and the new Sunset Park on the top deck.

Celebrity Solstice has also undergone a major revamp of her staterooms, with an extra 54 rooms added, along with four new categories.

Jones said the new offerings, which are tailored to the cruise line's most loyal travellers, have had a "sensational" reception in their first three sailings.

"*Solstice* has got this beautiful mix of new things, new experiences for people to do, but also their firm favourites from when they cruised on *Solstice* or *Edge* the last time."

Jones also informed **CW** that Celebrity Cruises is still looking for a replacement for former director of sales Trevor Thwaites (**CW** 17 Mar). *JB*

New Ponant policy

PONANT Explorations Group has introduced a Serenity Policy to provide flexibility for new bookings that are made by 30 Apr 2026.

The policy allows customers to change or postpone their bookings free of charge for a departure within the same year or earlier.

Certain conditions apply - **CLICK HERE** to learn more.

Silversea loyalty

SILVERSEA will launch an enhanced Venetian Society program with new loyalty tiers and benefits from 01 Jul 2026.

As well as continuing to award one VS Day for each cruise sailed, the line will now also reward members with one VS Day for every day spent on Silversea land programs and city stays, and one extra VS Day per cruise day for solo guests.

The loyalty program will also recognise members earlier with two new milestones - 15 VS Days and 50 VS Days.

Members who achieve 15 VS Days will receive a one-time welcome offer, while those who reach 50 will get \$150 on board credit on new bookings.

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Tauck's double addition

TAUCK held christening ceremonies in Lyon, France recently for its two new riverboats, *ms Lumière* and *ms Serene* (**CW** 05 Feb).

The ceremony for *ms Lumiere* took place first on 27 Mar, and was attended by around 50 guests, including Tauck leaders, travel agents, supplier partners and members of the media.

The vessel was blessed by co-godmothers vice president, Tauck director operations Kristen Mack and Tauck director manager Brenna Shay.

A separate, private christening took place a couple of days later for *ms Serene*, led by godmother and Tauck vice chair of the board, Jennie Norman.

Ms Lumière (pictured) is now offering sailings along the Rhone River, while *ms Serene* is operating River Seine itineraries, such as 'Family Fun Along the



Seine: Paris to Normandy'.

"The addition of *ms Lumière* and *ms Serene* represents a significant step forward for our river cruising portfolio," said Tauck president Jeremy Palme.

"Demand for France continues to be exceptionally strong, and these ships allow us to expand our presence on these rivers while welcoming more guests in the years ahead."

The addition of *ms Lumière* and *ms Serene* is part of Tauck's broader river cruise fleet expansion, which is set to boost river cruising capacity by more than 30% compared to 2025. *JM*

Apollo Maritime

FLORIDA-BASED hospitality company The Apollo Group has tapped former Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) executives to lead its newly launched Maritime Services division.

Led by NCL's former EVP newbuild and refurbishment Robin Lindsay, the new business will provide technical and marine management, regulatory compliance, procurement and fuel sourcing, itinerary planning, and port operations, as well as project-based consultancy, such as newbuild supervision and refurbishment management.

Lindsay, who will work alongside former NCL VP of Safety & compliance Marco Fantasia, said: "Our expansion into Maritime Services reflects where the industry is heading - and where we see the greatest opportunity to add value."

Vista Down Under

OCEANIA *Vista* made her debut visit to Australia yesterday, kicking off her inaugural 'Around the World' voyage (**CW** 08 Mar 2024).

The first of Oceania Cruises' Allura-class ships, *Vista* arrived in Sydney Harbour from New Caledonia before departing yesterday evening on an 18-night voyage to Singapore.

She will call at Mooloolaba, Whitsunday Beach, Townsville, Cairns and Darwin before continuing through Indonesia and arriving in Singapore at the end of Apr.

Vista is scheduled to visit a total of 43 countries during the 180-day voyage. *JM*



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A CRUISE can offer travellers the ultimate relaxation but it can leave them looking frazzled if they do not take precautions, Fresha beauty expert Danielle Louise has warned.

Factors like sea breeze, sun exposure, pool chlorine, frequent showering, and cabin air conditioning can strip the skin of moisture and leave the hair feeling dry and hard to manage, Louise explained.

Beauty-conscious cruisers will be happy to know that they can take some steps to offset any potential negative effects on their appearance.

In addition to slip-slop-slapping, Louise advised travellers to apply a rich moisturiser after showering, rinse hair after pool use, and drink water regularly.

She also pointed out that balcony cabins, while more luxurious, can leave hair and skin more exposed than other room choices.

Cheers to a decade, RSSC



REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) invited VIPs and partners to a celebration at the InterContinental Sydney on Wed night marking 10 years of Asia Pacific operations.

On 01 Apr 2016, the luxury cruise brand officially switched from a GSA model to a corporate operation, with long-standing local chief Lisa Pile last night regaling guests with what life was like in those early stages.

"The first booking we ever took was at 6.27am [via] Cruise World from New Zealand...a \$225,000 world cruise," Pile recalled.

"I knew we were going to have good karma from that moment, and it has been an absolute superb ride from then on."

Another executive who was key to the brand's growth in Australia

was Steve Odell, who flew back to the country only a few nights ago to take up his new ambassador position representing both the RSSC and Oceania Cruises brands for Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (**CW** 09 Mar).

Speaking in front of guests, Odell said he felt honoured to be part of the genesis story for RSSC, reminiscing about the fledgling office team and how it has since grown to become a cruise powerhouse in Australia.

Odell also said that he was excited to be part of RSSC as it continued to make big gains Down Under.

"My role is really to participate in B2B and B2C events to be the face of the company, but also to advise on the international business as well." **AB**



CRUISE WEEKLY

On location in Amsterdam

Today's issue of *Cruise Weekly* is coming to you courtesy of Trafalgar, which is this week hosting us aboard *Trafalgar Verity* for the brand's first-ever river sailing.

THIS week we are in the Netherlands for Trafalgar's first-ever river cruise, which will take place over the next three nights aboard *Trafalgar Verity*.

Today the new ship will be christened, after crossing over from sister marque Uniworld Boutique River Cruises, in a cocktail party led by deputy chief executive Melissa DaSilva.

The ship's inaugural river cruise with her new brand will see her sail up to Hoorn and back, offering travellers a taste of what's to come with the world's newest river cruise line.

Cruise Weekly is lucky to be the only trade media invited along on this trip - stay tuned this week and the next for all the updates from on board.



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