



CRUISE

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Oceania dines out

OCEANIA Cruises has unveiled some of the dishes which will be served at La Table par Maitres Cuisiniers de France, which will debut aboard the new *Oceania Sonata* next year (**CW** 04 Dec). Highlights will include Granny Smith apple and langoustine tartlets and escargot-stuffed Dover sole with vegetables and white wine sauce.

Cruise ships escape the Gulf



CRUISE ships stuck in the Arabian Gulf have finally escaped through the Strait of Hormuz, after almost 50 days trapped.

MSC Cruises confirmed its *MSC Euribia* (pictured) departed her docked location in Dubai and safely transited through the Strait over the weekend.

The waterway was briefly open for less than 24 hours on Sat, before being shut again by Iran the following day.

"*Euribia* is on course to resume her Northern Europe season," the line confirmed.

"The passage was completed in close coordination with the relevant authorities.

"As the ship will now be able to return sooner than previously anticipated, MSC Cruises confirms that the cruise departing on 16 May from Kiel (and 17 May from Copenhagen) will now operate as originally scheduled,

with all subsequent sailings operating as planned," the cruise line said.

MSC added guests whose cruises were cancelled will have the option to transfer their booking to this sailing should they wish, and will be contacted directly with further details.

Celestyal Cruises' two ships, *Celestyal Discovery* and *Celestyal Journey*, have also exited the Arabian Gulf, following an almost two-month period during which the line had to cancel the start of its European season (**CW** 27 Mar).

Maritime trackers now show *Discovery* on route to the Suez Canal and *Journey* heading to Cape Town.

One ship which remains in the Arabian Gulf is Terra Nova Expeditions' *St. Helena*, which is due to dry dock in Dubai over the next couple of weeks.

While works are slightly behind schedule, chief executive officer & founder Greg Carter confirmed to **CW** that following the dry dock, *St. Helena* will be moved when it is safe to do so. *MS*

Atlas' new position

ATLAS Ocean Voyages has positioned its product as 'all-suite accommodation', which it believed would better align with the experience offered on board its ships.

"This evolution reflects the consistency of our onboard delivery and allows us to stand behind our place within the luxury expedition landscape," CEO James Rodriguez said.



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Royal Asia 2027

ROYAL Caribbean has announced a line-up of new voyages across Asia on board *Spectrum of the Seas* for the 2027-28 seasons.

Travellers can choose from getaways of between three and 11 nights spanning 22 destinations including Japan's famous ski city of Sapporo, the volcanic landscapes of Jeju in South Korea, historic sites at Da Nang and Hue in Vietnam, and hotspots like Busan and Mount Fuji.

Highlights include a spring blossom journey in May 2027, an autumn foliage escape in Oct 2027, and festive sailings from Hong Kong.

"This new line-up reflects our continued commitment to the China market and our ambition to deliver more diverse and immersive vacations," said Benjamin Bouldin, Royal Caribbean's president of Greater China.

"These longer, more immersive itineraries are designed to meet the evolving preferences of Chinese vacationers seeking deeper connections with loved ones, while also enabling international travellers to easily explore Asia's most iconic destinations and seasonal highlights from China."

Bookings for the 2027-28 season are now available on Royal Caribbean's website.

Play it again, Viking



VIKING has hosted travel advisors at the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra's 'Choral Splendor' concert series across two evenings.

Hosted as a thank you to advisors during a demanding period for the industry, the events showcased Viking's ongoing commitment to supporting and partnering with the trade.

The series began in Sydney on 14 Apr, where Viking hosted a select group of travel advisors at Choral Splendour at the City Recital Centre.

Advisors were treated to exclusive pre-performance drinks and canapes at Establishment Bar, hosted by Viking's national commercial manager Shaun Kavanagh, offering guests a

relaxed opportunity to connect ahead of the concert.

Viking then hosted advisors at the Melbourne Recital Centre on 16 Apr, with guests welcomed to Miss Pearl Bar + Dining for pre-performance drinks and canapes hosted by Victorian commercial manager Joanne Cullen, followed by the uplifting evening performance.

Viking's partnership with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra will continue to give the cruise line's guests and advisors enhanced access to its performances, including premium tickets, VIP events, and exclusive behind-the-scenes experiences (**CW** 03 Feb).

Pictured is Kavanagh (back) with advisors in Sydney.

Carnival tragedy

ONE passenger has died and another has gone missing while on a cruise from Sydney aboard Carnival Cruise Line's *Carnival Splendor* last week.

The deceased passenger was snorkelling on Moreton Island, however **Cruise Weekly** understands she was not on a Carnival shore excursion.

Shortly afterward another passenger jumped overboard while the ship was departing her destination.

Splendor assisted authorities in the search for the passenger, whose family had alerted the ship's staff.

The vessel was involved in the search until 3pm Sat, with efforts now being overseen by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

It is not believed the two incidents are linked.

Silversea World '29

SILVERSEA has unveiled its World Cruise 2029, 'A Pacific Awakening' - a 125-day voyage on board *Silver Whisper* exploring more than 60 destinations.

Departing San Diego on 05 Jan 2029, the sailing will feature six signature events and one overland experience, with highlights including an island celebration in the Philippines and a private evening at Honolulu's Iolani Palace.

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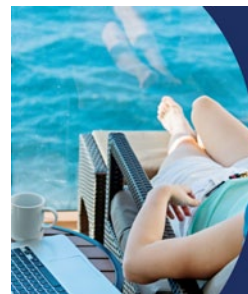
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NOT your typical cruise itinerary, but someone's vessel managed to end up miles from the nearest drop of water.

Michelle Fort, who works for a trash removal service in Wyoming, said a yellow boat marooned in the middle of the desert was one of the most puzzling things she had ever come across.

She said the former owner must have gone to a huge effort to load, haul, and dump the hard-topped power vessel - particularly considering that they could have taken it to landfill free of charge.

"This is the first time that we've gone out and (recovered) something to this extent...it's not in our usual wheelhouse," she told local media - quite the shore excursion.



NZ is on show - now it must be competitive

OPINION

Joel Katz is the executive director Australasia of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).



AT SEATRADE Cruise Global in Miami this week, there was a clear and important signal from New Zealand.

For the first time, the country's Minister for Tourism and Hospitality Louise Upston joined the Australasian delegation and met with global cruise leaders, including CLIA president and chief executive officer Bud Darr.

That presence matters.

In a global industry where deployment decisions are highly competitive and planned years in advance, confidence and certainty are everything.

New Zealand has never lacked demand. The appeal of the destination is as strong as ever.

What has been missing is the confidence that cruise

lines need to commit ships - confidence shaped by regulatory clarity, cost settings, and ease of operating.

That is why Minister Upston's presence at Seatrade is

“
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”

significant.

It demonstrates alignment between government and industry and shows that New Zealand knows what is needed.

Across the world, destinations are actively working to attract cruise tourism, offering predictable and viable operating

environments.

Where that certainty exists, ships follow - where it does not, they leave.

The conversations in Miami focused on these forces, and the importance of consistency.

This is not just about New Zealand, as Australia and New Zealand function together in cruising, and the strength of one supports the other.

Together they benefit from more than \$8 billion in economic impact generated by cruise tourism.

As CLIA's latest data showed this week, record numbers of people from Australasia are cruising, but Aussies and Kiwis are increasingly flying to other countries to cruise because of reduced deployment at home.

Minister Upston has recognised Seatrade as a critical platform to engage with cruise lines and show that New Zealand is open for business - it's an important step.

Maintaining competitiveness in the long term is what will ensure ships keep returning.

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