



Cruise Weekly today

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

HAL Alaska 2026

HOLLAND America Line (HAL) will commence its 2026 Alaska season tomorrow, with the arrival of *Eurodam* to the Port of Seattle.

The line will offer more than 100 sailings across six ships, featuring 25 new shore excursions, including the 'Adventure to Norris Glacier: Floatplane, Paddle and Hike' in Juneau and the 'Exclusive Eland & Friends Moose Discovery' in Anchorage.

Each Alaska cruise includes a Glacier Day - a visit to one or more of the state's glacier destinations, such as Endicott Arm or Dawes Glacier.

Also new for the 2026 Alaska program, HAL will introduce the Teen Ranger program to all ships, offering special age-appropriate experiences on Glacier Day to guests between the ages of 13-17.

"From new shore excursions and enhanced programming to our industry-leading fresh fish offerings, every detail of our 2026 season is designed to help guests connect more deeply with Alaska's natural beauty and cultural heritage," senior vice president Alaska operations Robert Morgenstern said.

Celeb committed to Aus



CELEBRITY Cruises remains committed to the Australian market, vice president international Giles Hawke has told **CW**, as the country continues to suffer through a post-COVID loss in ship capacity.

Hawke stated that Celebrity's continued deployment of some of its newest ships in Australian waters was proof of the importance of the local market, which he said "makes sense" for the cruise line.

"We're focused on and committed to this market," Hawke affirmed.

"The fact that we can introduce our newest ships here - and we will continue to do so - it's really important to us."

Celebrity's two Australian home ported ships, *Celebrity Edge* (pictured) and *Celebrity Solstice*, both arrived Down Under just a few seasons after their inaugural sailings, despite most other cruise vessels being far older when first deployed locally.

Edge made her Australian debut in 2023 (**CW** 21 Sep 2021), just five years after rolling off the

production line at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard.

Solstice was first introduced to Australia in 2012, when she was, at the time, the newest-built ship in local waters.

The Australian cruise sector's biggest obstacle for *Edge*, Hawke explained, was locals getting in early enough to book the ship during her seasonal deployment.

"The big challenge for *Edge*, particularly in the Australian market, is to get in early enough, because for other markets, this is a long haul destination - they book earlier," he explained.

"The risk is that we just don't have enough capacity for the local market because it's taken by the international markets who are booking earlier," the Celebrity VP added.

Vice president & managing director Australia & APAC Tim Jones added: "we have a really healthy mix of guest nationalities on board, which I actually think gives the whole ship a dynamic that she's global and international, which I think people really like." **MS**

No CW on Monday

THERE will be no issue of **Cruise Weekly** on Mon, due to the observance of the ANZAC Day public holiday in New South Wales, ACT and WA.

The next issue of CW will be published on Tue 28 Apr.

APT Canada 2027

APT has announced its full Canada program for next year, with the guest-favourite 22-day 'Rockies Odyssey & Alaska Cruise' returning.

The itinerary, back by popular demand, includes a rail journey through the Rockies in Rocky Mountaineer's luxurious GoldLeaf service, followed by an Inside Passage cruise with Holland America Line.

A number of signature experiences exclusive to APT are featured, including a traditional First Nations breakfast and guided visit to the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre in Whistler.

It will also feature an exploration of Lake Louise with an expert guide.

Guests can also visit the wonders of Eastern Canada through the returning 17-day 'Eastern Canada and New England Cruise'.

New APT Signature Experiences for this season include dinner with panoramic views at CN Tower, and a winery lunch in Niagara Falls.

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RSSC unveils its Legendary Journeys

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has unveiled its 2028-29 Legendary Journeys Collection of three cruises ranging from 61 to 101 nights in length.

Spanning multiple continents, from Europe to Asia and Australia, the voyages visit the historic canals of Amsterdam, the coastal charm of Lisbon, the cultural treasures of Athens, the tropical allure of Bali, and the iconic shores of Sydney.

The collection begins with 'Grand Pathways of Europe' a 101-night voyage aboard the newly refurbished *Seven Seas Mariner*, sailing from Barcelona to Amsterdam on 30 May 2028.

Four overnight stays are included on an itinerary which explores destinations such as Valencia, Bordeaux, the British Isles, Iceland, Greenland, Scandinavia, and the Baltics.

Highlights include a transit of

the Kiel Canal and an overnight in Copenhagen, Denmark.

There is also a second 101-night cruise, the 'Grand Hemispheres Journey' aboard *Seven Seas Explorer*, sailing on 21 Oct 2028 from Athens to Auckland.

Featuring five overnight stays and extensive included shore excursions, the voyage traces the shores of East Africa and the Arabian Sea, with an overnight in Mumbai, India.

Guests will experience the vibrant culture of Bali, sail along Australia's iconic coastline, and island hop across the South Pacific, including calls to Pago Pago and the Bay of Islands.

Guests can further explore Asia in depth on the 61-night 'Grand Silk Seas Passage' aboard *Seven Seas Splendor*, sailing on 04 Nov 2028 from Tokyo to Hong Kong.

The cruise features five overnight stays and spans Japan,

Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Highlights include overnight stays in Shanghai, Ho Chi Minh City, and Bangkok, along with an extended stay in Bali.

The cruise is timed for the festive season, offering a unique opportunity to celebrate the holidays in Asia, before concluding with an overnight stay in Hong Kong.

Each voyage features hundreds of shore excursions, among a number of other inclusions.

Guests will enjoy a one-night pre-cruise hotel stay with dinner, an exclusive shoreside event, and door-to-door luggage service.

The Grand Voyages also include unlimited valet laundry with dry-cleaning and pressing, a commemorative gift to serve as a lasting reminder of the journey, and more - reservations open on 29 Apr. *MS*

Atlas is confident

ATLAS Ocean Voyages has introduced its new Atlas Assurance Program, designed to provide greater confidence and flexibility in today's evolving travel environment.

Those booking voyages departing now through to the end of Aug can "cancel with confidence" up to 15 days prior to departure, meaning they can choose to receive a future cruise credit equal to 100% of the cruise fare paid.

The program is eligible for bookings made by 15 May, and is valid for cruisers sailing on Arctic, Mediterranean, and Northern Europe voyages.

Future cruise credits may be applied to new bookings within 12 months and used for travel through to the end of 2027.

The offer requires payment in full prior to cancellation.



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THE rescuing of a beached whale has captured the hearts of the German public.

Affectionately dubbed 'Timmy', the marine mammal became stuck on a beach on the German island of Poel in the Baltic Sea around three weeks ago.

Saving the aquatic beast involved rescuers clearing sand away from where he was stuck, then sending a tugboat to pull him free.

The plan also involved using inflatable cushions to lift the whale from the seabed, transporting him on pontoons back to the North Sea.

However, Timmy miraculously swam free on his own on Mon, swimming away from Poel before...becoming stuck again on another nearby sandbank.

All is not lost though, with rescuers interpreting Timmy's ability to right himself in the first place as a sign of health.

Small vessel cruising is getting much bigger

OPINION

Graham Carter is the co-founder of small ship cruise line Unforgettable Croatia.



AFTER reading the impressive statistics in CLIA's recently released *Global Source Passenger Market Report*, which showed almost 10% more Aussies took a cruise in 2025, I wondered if it was time for the small ship sector to further highlight everything it offers and all the benefits of scaling down.

Earlier this year, we dug up some data and it seems small ship cruising is also expanding.

In partnership with digital travel marketing agency Adido, we analysed four years of Australian search behaviour from 2022 to 2025 and found small ship demand isn't just rising, it's accelerating rapidly.

Searches for 19 small ship and luxury cruise brands (each carrying fewer than 250 guests) have increased by 64% over the past two years, with a further

22% jump from 2024 to 2025.

Broader category searches, such as 'small ship cruises', 'luxury small ship cruises', 'yacht cruises' and 'expedition cruising' have climbed 56% collectively.

“
Searches for small ship cruise brands have increased by 64% over the past two years — and are still accelerating
”

Meanwhile 'small ship cruises' searches have doubled since 2022 and 'expedition cruising' has quadrupled over four years.

This data represents sustained, multi-year growth across both awareness and intent and signals that the niche small ship market is making a move into the mainstream, perhaps following in

the footsteps of its counterparts.

River operators have experienced double-digit growth and undergone major fleet expansions, as that sector of the industry has boomed over the past 10 years.

In recent years we've seen the arrival of new small ship cruise lines, and more small ships taking to the seas, including our very own 36-guest *Aretis* which launched in 2025 and has quickly become a favourite with Australian guests, who make up a quarter of all bookings on the sleek vessel.

While we've been offering seven-night small-ship sailings along the Dalmatian Coast since 2015, in the past few years we've seen growing demand Down Under, and we opened our first Australian office in 2024 to cater to the increased interest.

Local numbers have been steadily growing and Australians now account for 20% of guests.

As more and more Australians discover the simple, unhurried joys of small ship cruising, it's clear this is a trend being felt across the sector.



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