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Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a cover wrap from **Royal Caribbean**.

Ama female focus

AMAWATERWAYS has unveiled its first dedicated women's river cruise, in a move the line says is a response to growing demand for female-only hosted departures from the travel advisor community and guests.

The specially curated 'Colours of Provence Wine Cruise' will depart 19 Aug 2027, sailing the south of France aboard *AmaKristina* combining a seven-night voyage with optional three-night pre- and post- stays in Barcelona and Paris.

Exclusive features include curated wine tastings, a Whispering Angel Rose Sundeck Party and a Miraval Champagne breakfast.

"This is one of those ideas that has come directly from our travel advisor community," said AmaWaterways MD for Australia and New Zealand, Steve Richards.

The cruise features a limited number of dedicated solo occupancy staterooms, making it attractive for both groups and independent travellers.

Reservations are now open - more info 1800 867 126 (AU) or 0800 005 636 (NZ).

Katz: NZ cruise opportunity

NEW Zealand has very strong potential to harness the benefits of global cruise tourism, but must "create the conditions needed to secure its share", according to CLIA Australasia executive director Joel Katz.

Speaking this morning at the New Zealand Cruise Association (NZCA) annual conference in Auckland, Katz noted that cruise lines were committing "extraordinary amounts of capital to new ships and new technology" while consumer demand was also strong.

"I believe the opportunity is considerable, but it cannot be taken for granted," he said.

"From a cruise perspective, NZ has something many destinations would dearly like to have: genuine global appeal - for international cruise guests, NZ is not simply another port call, it is often one of the principal reasons for choosing the itinerary."

Cruise "should be considered as part of NZ's broader visitor

acquisition, destination marketing and regional dispersal strategy," he urged, noting that the country is competing for cruise business with global regions like Alaska, Japan, the Mediterranean, Northern Europe and more.

To ensure cruise lines keep coming "NZ needs to offer the industry three things: confidence, certainty and competitiveness".

"Confidence means cruise lines must believe that NZ wants cruise tourism and recognises its wider value...a mature long-term partnership in which the industry is viewed as part of the visitor economy and not simply as a convenient source of additional charges," he said.

"Certainty means clear, coordinated and durable policy settings...and competitiveness means operating conditions and costs should be transparent, proportionate and internationally competitive," Katz added.

More from the NZCA conference in tomorrow's **Cruise Weekly**.

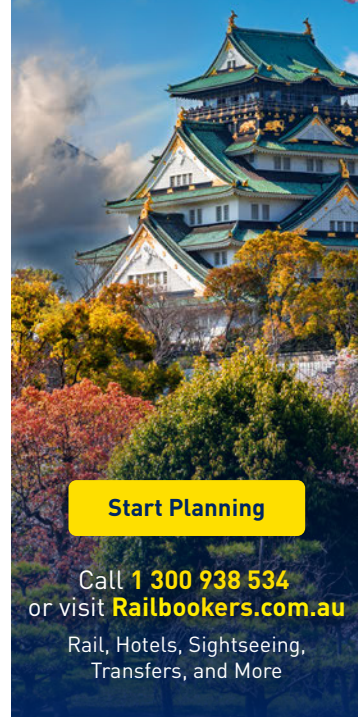
GM of *The World*

RESIDENTIAL ship *The World*, *Residences at Sea* has named 18-year veteran Saikumar Baddi as its new general manager, promoting him from his former role as senior F&B director.

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Seabourn releases 28/29 Caribbean season

SEABOURN has opened bookings for its 2028/29 season in the Caribbean which will see *Seabourn Quest* and *Seabourn Ovation* operate 10 voyages across the region.

Itineraries range from seven to 12 days, and together visit 21 ports across 20 countries and island territories, operating

between 28 Dec 2028 and 29 Mar 2029 and visiting smaller ports such as St Barts, Bequia and Little Bay in Montserrat, as well as several UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Seabourn president, Mark Tamis, said the Caribbean remained one of the line's most sought-after regions - 13 24 02.



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Royal boosts fleet in Australasia, Asia

OVATION of the Seas will expand Royal Caribbean's Australian presence in 2027/28, cruising locally alongside *Voyager of the Seas* and *Anthem of the Seas*, the company announced this morning (**CW** breaking news).

The brand's largest-ever local season will see *Ovation* arrive fresh from a makeover, with the three-ship deployment described as a "major milestone for our region" by Royal Caribbean VP and MD for Australia and NZ, Gavin Smith.

Anthem of the Seas will cruise out of Sydney offering both short escapes and family holidays to the South Pacific as well as nine- to 12-night New Zealand cruises.

After sailing a 25-night Seattle-Brisbane sector visiting Honolulu and French Polynesia, *Voyager of the Seas* will operate from both Brisbane and Sydney before heading to Asia with new sailings



from Hong Kong and Tokyo.

Meanwhile *Navigator of the Seas* will have her debut Singapore season extended until Oct 2027, marking a year-round deployment in the region.

Navigator will offer short escapes to Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand as well as a 12-night sailing from Tokyo to Singapore, which Royal Caribbean said was "ideal for Australian guests looking to explore Asia".

The capacity expansion comes as work continues on Royal Caribbean's newly created Royal Beach Club Lelepa private island destination in Vanuatu, which was announced seven years ago (**CW** 16 Oct 2019) and is expected to debut in Oct next year.

Bookings for the newly announced *Ovation* and *Navigator* seasons will open on 19 Aug - more details on the cover page of today's **CW**.

Croatia incentive

BEYOND Travel has launched a new travel advisor incentive to reward both top performers and agents booking 2027 Croatia cruises with the company for the first time.

The top seller of cabins booked and deposited between 01 Aug and 30 Aug will win a cabin for two aboard the exclusive 'Best of Dalmatia' itinerary, while agents can also earn a \$50 eGift card for every double or triple cabin booking, or \$30 for solo passengers.

CEO Michael Lavilles said "as a wholesaler, agent partners are at the heart of everything we do at Beyond Travel, and this incentive is about recognising the hard work they put into selling Croatia".

He said Croatia continues to be one of Beyond's most in-demand destinations - more info at beyondtravel.com.au.

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Wind Spirit refresh

WINDSTAR Cruises has announced a new four-night roundtrip sailing from Malaga, Spain aboard its *Wind Spirit* once the sailing yacht completes its refurbishment early next year.

The itinerary takes guests between Europe and Africa, calling at Almeria, Gibraltar and Tangier through British, Spanish & Moroccan territory.

Guests who book now will receive a complimentary All-Inclusive Package covering gratuities, unlimited wifi and select beverages, along with a reduced deposit offer.

More details from Travel the World on 1300 749 875.

Legendary talent

AMERICA'S Got Talent LIVE on stage has debuted aboard Royal Caribbean's newest ship, *Legend of the Seas* which is cruising in the Mediterranean.

Other onboard acts include an ice skating show, gravity-defying AquaTheatre performances and Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Princess Alaska 2028 out

PRINCESS Cruises has opened sales for its 2028 Alaska season, which will see a total of eight Princess ships operating in the region offering 185 departures.

Vessels will include the new *Star Princess* as well as *Discovery*, *Emerald*, *Royal*, *Coral*, *Crown*, *Island* and *Ruby Princess*, which together will offer 14 unique itineraries visiting 16 destinations as well as scenic cruising through Glacier Bay National Park, Hubbard Glacier, College Fjord, and Endicott Arm & Dawes Glacier.

"Alaska is one of the world's most awe-inspiring destinations, and Princess has spent nearly 60 years helping guests experience it in a way few others can," said Princess Cruises chief commercial officer, Jim Berra.

The voyages are offered in conjunction with Princess' comprehensive land-based cruisetour and wilderness lodge programs to take travellers into



the heart of the remote state.

The hallmark itinerary is the popular one-way 'Voyage of the Glaciers' between Anchorage and Vancouver, while a variety of roundtrip Inside Passage voyages will depart from Seattle, Vancouver, San Francisco and Los Angeles, targeting guests from key west coast homeports.

Other highlights of the program include an exclusive direct-to-the-wilderness rail service between Whittier and the Denali area, featuring custom glass-topped railcars to maximise viewing.

It is also possible to add on three easy-to-shop cruisetour collections: Denali Essentials, Denali Explorer and Denali Escorted - see princess.com.



WE'VE all heard stories of messages in bottles - but there may be a lot more information in a rare undersea find off the coast of Dover, England.

While exploring a shipwreck last year, Belgian underwater photographer Stefan Panis found a bottle of Guinness believed to date back to 1864.

Samples from the bottle are now being analysed, according to the *BBC*, in the hope that researchers will be able to recreate the original recipe of the famed Irish dark brew.

The optimistic diver added that "there is a possibility that it's still drinkable" if sea water has not seeped in.

It is also likely that there may be a bit to go around, with Panis saying he believes many more bottles may be buried in the sand around the wreck.

He is planning to recover more when conditions allow - or also if he gets a little thirsty.

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