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Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features four pages of the latest cruise industry news, plus a cover wrap from **Royal Caribbean** and a full page from **Ponant Explorations**.

Ovation to Brissy

AUSSIE travellers will soon be able to experience Royal Caribbean's newly revitalised *Ovation of the Seas* on 2027/28 sailings from Brissy. More on the **cover page**.

Ponant goes solo

PONANT is offering solo staterooms at no extra cost on more than 200 sailings.

The offer applies to itineraries such as the 'Polar Odyssey between Northeast Greenland & Spitsbergen'.

More info on the **back page**.

Ponant sails science into the Kimberley

PONANT Explorations has unveiled an expanded science program this month, with a series of scientific missions set to take place aboard expedition vessel *Le Soleal* in the Kimberley.

The cruise line will welcome researchers from the CSIRO, University of WA, Echos d'Océans and Sydney Institute of Marine Science/IMOS on board the ship across two Aug voyages to undertake research into blue-carbon ecosystems, marine plastic pollution and sea turtle habitat utilisation.

Projects will include mapping blue-carbon habitats, analysing marine plastics in remote areas and surveying sea turtle nesting sites, with the aim of fostering longer-term environmental understanding and conservation in the Kimberley.

Guests travelling on the 'Iconic Kimberley' voyages will have



the opportunity to learn about the work through onboard presentations and informal science sessions.

They will also be able to interact with the researchers, gaining insights into the Kimberley's ecosystems, culture and wildlife.

"I am thrilled that we can welcome researchers in the Kimberley region for the second year, a region that we care very much about as part

of our Australian small-ship deployment," Deb Corbett, CEO Asia Pacific for Ponant, said.

"Enabling new discoveries and giving back to the Australian communities continues to be one of our core objectives and commitments," she added.

Ponant Explorations has been operating scientific missions in the Kimberley since 2023.

Find out more about the upcoming departures **HERE**. JM



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Explore with Viking

VIKING is reminding agents of its upcoming Virtual Explorer Session, which will take place this Thu at 11am AEST.

Designed to inspire future travel plans and drive bookings, the free online event will spotlight the line's signature 'Viking Homelands' voyage.

Travel advisors can encourage their clients to register and join live, with attendees going into the draw to win a companion cruise fare valued at up to \$15,000.

If an agent's client takes home the prize, the referring agent will also receive \$1,000 in Rewards by Viking points.

Additionally, agents will earn \$10 in points for each client who attends a Virtual Explorer Session via their referral.

If that client books within 14 days of attending, agents will receive an extra \$50 in bonus points - to qualify, agents must email their clients' names to infosessions.anz@viking.com prior to each session.

Register for the event [HERE](#).

Free nights on land

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises is offering complimentary land stays on select 2027 departures in Europe, for bookings made before 31 Aug.

Find out more about the promotion [HERE](#).

Farmers capitalise on cruise



FARMERS and food producers around Australia are being urged by the National Farmers' Federation to build relationships with the cruise industry following the launch of the Australian Paddock to Port Alliance earlier this month (**CW** 04 Aug).

According to a report in *The Advertiser*, National Farmers' Federation CEO Mike Guerin said the cruise industry provided direct financial benefit to producers "in the order of hundreds of millions of dollars".

"When ships are provisioned in Australia, they create demand for fresh produce, meat, dairy, seafood, wine and other Australian goods," he explained.

"Cruises may start at the port, but the economic activity reaches back to paddocks, processing facilities, transport networks and regional businesses."

Guerin pointed out that cruise companies were "always looking for producers with good supply

chains that can help them promote our fresh, green and healthy food".

"The cruise lines also have long lead times, they plan 12 months ahead - that is great for producers," he added.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) CEO Joel Katz, who is part of the Paddock to Port Alliance, emphasised that the industry needed support in order to stay afloat, pointing out that the sector's economic contribution has dropped by almost \$1 billion.

"Cruise lines have been warning that Australia is becoming uncompetitive as a destination and risks losing cruise tourism to other countries, due to regulatory uncertainties and rising costs," Katz said. *JM*

Pictured at the Paddock to Port Alliance launch event in Sydney: Matthew Rutherford, Princess Cruises; Lynne Clarke, MSC Cruises; and Katz.

APT cruises into US

APT Travel Group is preparing to launch its river cruises in the US market, providing North American travellers with access to its sailings in Europe.

One of the itineraries on offer is the seven- or 15-day 'Magnificent Europe' journey between Budapest and Amsterdam, operated by *APT Solara* and *APT Ostara*.

"Nearly a century after APT Travel Group began with a single bus in Melbourne, bringing our river cruises to the United States marks an exciting new chapter for our family-owned business," Lou Tandy, director of APT Travel Group, said.

American's latest

AMERICAN Cruise Lines has revealed the name of its new riverboat set to launch in 2029 as *American Rhapsody*.

Designed to navigate the Columbia and Snake Rivers, the ship will offer nine-day itineraries between Portland, Oregon and Clarkston, WA.

American Rhapsody will feature six decks, private balcony staterooms, top-deck lounges, dining venues and large fitness centres.

The announcement follows the company's naming of *American Beauty*, scheduled to enter service in Sep 2028.



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Cruise a top performer for Envoyage

LAST weekend's Envoyage Australia conference in Cairns saw cruise come to the fore, with many lines taking the opportunity to update members on the latest developments within their businesses.

Members of the group were also honoured for their performance across the board, with longstanding Sydney travel agency Envoyage Miranda highlighted for its cruise sales - taking home other major awards including touring sales plus a special Envoyage Innovation Award going to agency owner, Gada Selim.

Sponsored by Carnival Cruise Line, Cunard, Princess, Globus/Avalon, Uniworld and TTC Touring Brands, other big cruise sellers honoured during the event gala dinner included Globetrotters Cruise and Touring, which received Envoyage's Marketing Excellence Award.

Tuesday 18th Aug 2026



THE glammed-up team from Mornington Peninsula agency Blake Travel making the most of the Viking photo wall.



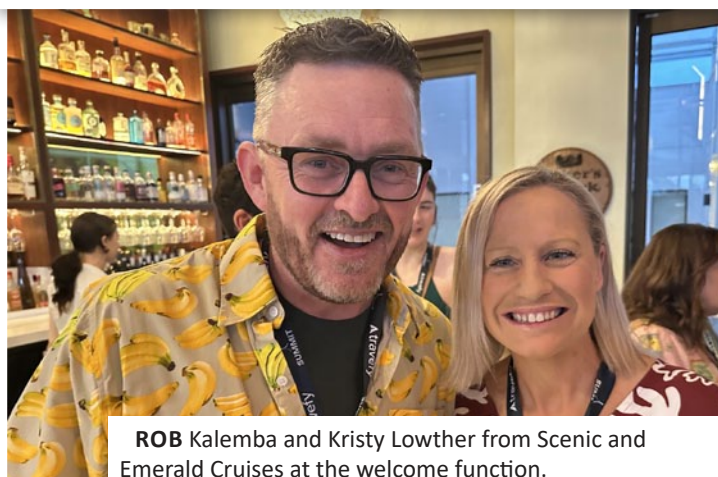
ENVOYAGE Miranda's marketing manager Rachel Harrigan, owner Gada Selim and business manager Kylie Cameron.



ROYAL Caribbean's Brodie Dobson, Mitch Trimble from Celebrity Cruises, and Jo Bingham from Silversea.



SARAH Miller from Carnival Cruise Lines with Tyrone Jost of Princess Cruises and Cunard's Nicky Fardon.



ROB Kalemba and Kristy Lowther from Scenic and Emerald Cruises at the welcome function.



TRACY Buckshall, Envoyage; Nicky Beitey, MyCruises/Ignite; Nicole Francis, Railbookers; and Martine Nunes, Oceania Cruises.



WHAT could be worse than crashing your new sports car on your way home from the dealership?

Sinking your US\$12.5 million (A\$17.6m) yacht just days after it was delivered to you.

It was the pain known by an Italian businessman, whose brand-new, ultra-luxury 98-foot yacht sank into the Mediterranean Sea last week.

An engine failure aboard the *Angiola II* sparked a fire and led the ship to take on water while it was sailing off the coast of Porto Cervo, Sardinia.

All were rescued by a nearby ship and miraculously, none of the 14 guests and crew on board were injured.

Footage showed the vessel tipped on its side and submerged below the surf.

The yacht, now secured on the ocean floor to keep it in place, will soon be retrieved by Italian authorities.

Atlas' triple eclipse treat



TRAVELLERS onboard three of Atlas Ocean Voyages' ships enjoyed a rare chance to witness the total solar eclipse at sea.

World Traveller, *World Navigator* and *World Voyager* were positioned across the Mediterranean, Iceland and the North Atlantic last week to give guests prime viewing of the celestial event.

Aboard *World Traveller*, guests viewed the eclipse off the coast of Palma de Mallorca, while *World Navigator* was positioned off the coast of Patreksfjörður, Iceland.

Meanwhile, *World Voyager* was sailing between Greenland and Iceland at the time.

The line also offered special

eclipse programming, including an onboard astronomer to offer insights into the event, as well as special eclipse-themed cocktails.

James Rodriguez, president and CEO of Atlas Ocean Voyages, said the itineraries were two years in the making.

"To see that planning come together across three of our yachts, with our guests gathered on deck sharing this once-in-a-lifetime moment, is incredibly rewarding," he added.

Bookings are now open for the line's next solar eclipse expedition, which departs Barcelona on 27 Jul 2027. *JM*

Pictured: The *World Voyager* crew watches the eclipse.

Carnival for fams

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has backed the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation's new Patient Family Accommodation Program, with donations raised during its Conga for Kids deck parties onboard its Sydney cruises funding an apartment at the new Scape Lachlan Building in Kensington.

Dedicated to families needing accommodation near to the hospital, the unit includes access to workspaces, outdoor areas, a pool, laundry facilities and a 24/7 concierge.

"I know our guests sailing from Sydney will be delighted to see how their generosity is helping families stay close to their children while they receive the care they need," Carnival's assistant vice president guest operations Caroline Bourke said.

Guests can buy a \$20 Conga for Kids t-shirt on all Carnival cruises from Sydney and Brisbane to help support the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation and the Queensland Children's Hospital Foundation.



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Cruise Weekly is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Cruise Weekly is Australasia's leading travel industry cruise publication.

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