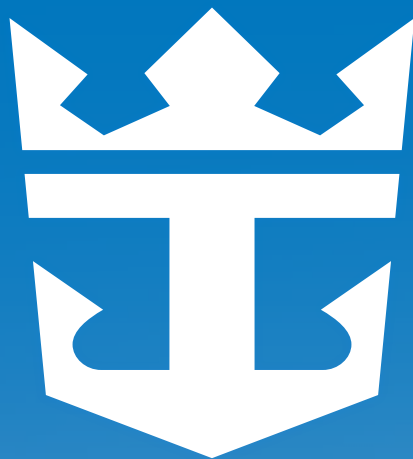




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Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of the latest cruise news, plus a cover wrap from **Royal Caribbean**, and a full page from **HX**.

A standing Ovation

ROYAL Caribbean's *Ovation of the Seas* has been recently revamped and is ready to operate sailings from Brisbane starting next year.

The vessel's redesign is highlighted by a range of new food and beverage options including Pesky Parrot, Izumi Teppanyaki, Giovanni's Italian Kitchen, Starbucks, Sound Cellar, and Casitas.

Guests can also enjoy the new Ultimate Family Suite with multi-purpose dining tables, an in-suite cinema, and a slide between both levels.

See more on the **front page**.

HX's big birthday

HX'S 130TH anniversary sale is still running until 31 Aug, with savings up to 25% or a free suite upgrade.

Notable itineraries include 'Highlights of Antarctica' departing 30 Oct from \$14,592pp, the 'Discovering Greenland - From Reykjavik to Nuuk' journey departing 02 Jun 2027 from \$12,537pp, and the 'Alaska's Inside Passage - Fjords of the Great Land' itinerary departing 22 May 2027 from \$7,916pp.

Agents will also be in the running to win an Antarctica famil on new bookings.

See more on the **back page**.

Cruise to host Olympic guests?



QUEENSLAND Tourism Industry Council chief executive officer Natassia Wheeler has called for cruise ships to plug the potential gap in accommodation for the 2032 Summer Olympics in Brisbane (**pictured**).

Wheeler, in a move backed by the Australian Cruise Association and the Port of Brisbane, told *The Courier-Mail* cruise ships offer both a practical solution and an interesting opportunity.

"At this point we know that our hotels will be full...every part of our accommodation sector's going to be full and we're still likely to have a shortage, so let's get wild with our ideas," she said.

"Why can't we drag in two or three cruise ships? That could get you 7,000 extra rooms straight up," Wheeler suggested.

Projections from the Property Council of Australia and commercial real estate firm CBRE estimate a deficit of more than 10,000 rooms for the Olympic Games, which would require the equivalent of one new hotel opening every month for the next six years to fill the void.

Confirmed projects in the development pipeline would deliver less than a quarter of that, it is believed.

Port of Brisbane chief executive officer Neil Stephens confirmed that "initial discussions" had already taken place with the Brisbane Organising Committee for the Games and the Queensland Government on the viability of hosting multiple cruise ships during the event.

The Brisbane International Cruise Terminal has capacity to handle only one ship at a time, but there is scope for further expansion of the facility.

Other ships could anchor in Moreton Bay during the Games, it has been suggested, with guests tendered to shore.

Australian Cruise Association CEO Jill Abel said cruising has made a similar contribution to "almost every Olympic Games for the last 40 years".

"Working with the cruise sector for the 2032 Games could have long-lasting benefits for the cruise and broader tourism sectors for decades to come," she said. *MS*

Oceania savings

CRUISERS can score 40-45% off winter Mediterranean itineraries aboard *Oceania Allura* from 2026-2028.

The ship's 'Luminous Mediterranean' seven-day itinerary, departing 31 Oct from Barcelona to Rome, is currently available for \$3,564 per guest for a verandah stateroom, which is 40% off until 09 Sep.

Meanwhile, *Allura's* 'Artists and Aristocrats' 10-day cruise, sailing 07 Nov from Rome to Barcelona, is available from \$4,928 per guest for a verandah stateroom, which is 45% off until 09 Sep.

Cruise ship arrests

ELEVEN cruise ship crew members have been arrested for sex crimes in the United States after American officials boarded two ships in Boston.

Customs and border protection said the arrests came after searches of Holland America Line's *Volendam* and Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Breakaway* as part of Operation Tidal Wave.

Nine Filipinos, one Indonesian, and one Nicaraguan are accused of receiving and disbursing child sexual abuse material and child sexual exploitation material, according to NBC.

Operation Tidal Wave also saw 28 cruise ship crew members across eight vessels detained in San Diego over a number of days in Apr on similar charges.



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AK gets its *Equinox*

CELEBRITY Cruises' *Celebrity Equinox* will make her Alaska debut in 2028, joining *Celebrity Edge* and *Celebrity Millennium* in the region.

According to Celebrity's recently released deployment report, the cruise line will operate seven-night itineraries between Vancouver and Seward, allowing guests to experience "local cultures, snow-covered peaks, glaciers, and coastal towns".

Celebrity added that guests can extend their trip with a land tour; stays at luxury lodges, trips along remote roads and railways; and stops including Anchorage, Talkeetna, and Denali.

Also in the deployment report, *Millennium* will return to North America for round trip Vancouver sailings, following the past few years in Asia.

Edge is set to operate her fifth consecutive summer season in Canada and Alaska.

Alongside her Alaska debut, *Equinox* is set to offer new round trip sailings to Hawaii from Los Angeles, with bookings available to the public from 01 Sep.

Celebrity's 2028 deployment is highlighted by increased capacity in both Europe and Asia, with *Celebrity Solstice* spending her first summer sailing in Japan and *Celebrity Ascent* returning to the UK.

Silversea heads south



SILVERSEA has recently set sail on its 'Grand South Pacific Expedition 2026', a 77-day journey from Fremantle to Valparaiso aboard *Silver Cloud*.

The voyage will visit 57 ports across 11 countries, heading along the Kimberley Coast, before travelling across the South Pacific to Easter Island, and finishing in South America on 04 Nov.

Guests will also enjoy two exclusive experiences, a staple of Silversea's Grand Voyages.

On 06 Sep, guests will head to the Finnis River Lodge outside of Darwin, where they will enjoy a driving tour of the property, and a heli-flight over the wetlands, escarpments and the Finnis River, with lunch to conclude.

The second exclusive experience is on 26 Oct on Easter Island, where guests will spend an afternoon at Toki Rapa Nui, which includes a concert from pianist

Mahani Teave, followed by a traditional Hoko warrior dance.

"Our Grand Voyages are the fullest expression of what makes Silversea the leader in destination immersion - the rare luxury of time, paired with unmatched access to the most remote corners of the world," president Bert Hernandez said.

"This expedition carries guests from the Kimberley coast to Pitcairn and Easter Island all in a single, continuous journey.

"As we close the season in the Kimberley, we're carrying that same spirit of exploration into the South Pacific," he added.

The 'Grand South Pacific Expedition' marks the conclusion of the cruise line's 2026 Kimberley season, which comprised 10 sailings between 08 May and 06 Sep.

Its next Grand Voyage to the Med kicks off 18 Sep. *JB*

Windstar eclipse

WINDSTAR Cruises' *Wind Surf* is set to sail into the path of totality of the last solar eclipse visible from continental Europe for decades.

On 02 Aug next year, for close to three minutes, guests will be able to view the eclipse as part of a nine-night round-trip 'Total Solar Eclipse from Greece and Malta' departing Athens on 27 Jul.

During the cruise, guests will also have the opportunity to enjoy astronomer-led briefings, look through eclipse glasses, and take part in a glow-in-the-dark celebration.

The journey will also visit Syracuse in Sicily, the medieval fortress town Monemvasia in Greece, and Malta's capital city Valletta.

Surf is now undergoing a million-dollar refurbishment, set for completion in Dec featuring remodelled suites, updated staterooms, dining, and more.

The next phase will involve updating the remaining staterooms with new furniture, bedding, carpets, interactive TVs, art and decor.



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THE Klondike Gold Rush may have ended well over 100 years ago, but apparently, you can still find gold in Alaska if you look hard enough.

A young Holland America Line guest made a discovery aboard *Zaandam* during a recent sailing in Alaska, helping reunite a fellow guest with a treasured wedding ring.

The nine-year-old guest was spending time in the ship's Lido Pool when something shiny caught his eye at the bottom of the water: a gold ring.

He immediately brought the ring to the vessel's guest services team, who quickly recognised the item as a wedding ring that had been reported lost by a guest on the previous sailing.

The wedding ring was returned to its owner, a Canadian guest, who had been wearing it for 60 years until it came off in the vessel's pool.

Heritage's Aussie roadshow



HERITAGE Expeditions has celebrated the launch of its new ship *Heritage Discoverer* with a sold-out Australian roadshow.

Held in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane, the events reunited Heritage with Australia's leading travel advisors, media, and guests during a series of exclusive lunches and evening events announcing the cruise line's maiden 2027–28 season aboard the ship.

The events showcased the cruise line's positioning within the market, the luxury of experience, and 'only with Heritage Expeditions' opportunities, along with exciting new itineraries exploring Svalbard, Greenland, and Iceland. **MS**

Pictured are commercial director Aaron Russ, marketing manager Isaac Wilson, sales manager Chris Le Roux, and head of sales Robert Halfpenny.

Trafalgar savings

TRAFALGAR River Cruises is doubling rewards for returning guests, with past passengers enjoying additional savings combined with existing offers.

The Double Global Tour Rewards offer allows past guests to double their standard repeat-travel discount for a limited time, saving up to 10% on eligible 2026 and 2027 departures in addition to existing market and early booking offers.

This new promotion doubles the standard 5% repeat-guest loyalty discount to an additional 5% bonus saving, giving returning travellers a total 10% discount on their next guided river cruise booking made by 30 Sep.

Cruisers can also currently save up to 40% on select 2027 river sailings when booking by 30 Sep.

Every traveller who completes a Trafalgar river cruise automatically joins the Global Tour Rewards program, unlocking a range of benefits and savings when they travel with the line again.

RIVER CRUISE CHANGES COURSE

Here is how the booming sector is entering a new era.

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EDITORIAL

Editor - Myles Stedman
Journalists - Adam Bishop, Janie Medbury, James Bale
Editor-at-large - Bruce Piper
Editorial Director - Damian Francis
Associate Publisher - Jo-Anne Hui-Miller
info@cruiseweekly.com.au
Social Editor - Alexandra Lilly

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Head of Sales & Marketing - Sean Harrigan
Business Development Manager
Kara Stanley
advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au

GENERAL MANAGER & PUBLISHER
Matthew Vince

ACCOUNTS

accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: (AU) +61 2 8007 6760 or (NZ) 0800 799 220
Tel: (Int'l) 1300 799 220



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Antarctica	Iconic Antarctica — The Explorer's Route	MS Roald Amundsen	31/10/26	16 Days	\$16,334 pp	\$22,833 pp
Antarctica	Life Returns — Springtime Expedition to Antarctica	MS Fram	16/10/26	23 Days	\$23,754 pp	\$31,894 pp
Greenland	Discovering Greenland — From Reykjavik to Nuuk	MS Fridtjof Nansen	02/06/27	14 Days	\$12,537 pp	\$17,830 pp
Alaska	Alaska's Inside Passage — Fjords of The Great Land	MS Roald Amundsen	22/05/27	10 Days	\$7,916 pp	\$12,377 pp
Iceland	Elemental Iceland — Circular Saga from Reykjavik	MS Fridtjof Nansen	19/05/27	8 Days	\$7,444 pp	\$10,422 pp

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