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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**.

The Royal journey

ROYAL Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* will be sailing across Brisbane, Sydney, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Tokyo during 2027 and 2028.

The vessel will operate trips from Brisbane ranging from two to seven nights through the South Pacific, calling at Mystery Island, Port Vila, Luganville and Noumea, along with the chance to visit the new Royal Beach Club Lelepa.

From Sydney, she will embark on a 10-night Christmas sailing to New Zealand, with ports of call including Picton, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and more.

See more on the **front page**.

Oceania expands enrichment program

OCEANIA Cruises is elevating its onboard enrichment program across its fleet with an enhanced roster of expert speakers, special interest programming and engaging new experiences.

The new program will roll out across the fleet from next year, with dedicated speakers added to every sailing, and longer voyages of 12 days or more to offer additional special guests.

Speakers will specialise in heritage, culture, or history, as well as astronomy, sports, artificial intelligence, technology, health, longevity and other contemporary topics.

Guests on voyages including three or more sea days will also feature specialist-led experiences, including either American mahjong classes, or contract bridge instructors.

Sailings featuring six or more sea days will include additional



onboard activities such as creative workshops and an inclusive dance program.

"Today's luxury traveller is seeking more meaningful ways to engage with the world around them," Oceania's chief luxury officer Jason Montague said.

"By expanding our speaker program and introducing additional opportunities for

cultural exploration, wellness, and special-interest learning, we are creating even more ways for guests to personalise their luxury experience and make the most of their time at sea."

Cruisers can score 40-45% off winter Mediterranean itineraries aboard *Oceania Allura* across the next few years, with savings running through until 09 Sep. *MS*



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Coral sailing solo

CORAL Expeditions has expanded its solo traveller program, with new departures with no solo supplement on select staterooms.

Dubbed 'Hosted Solo Traveller Group departures', each voyage is suited towards first-time solo passengers, featuring dedicated crew hosts, and providing multiple opportunities for pax to connect with one another.

Some of the departures on offer for those travelling alone include the 13-night 'Saltwater Country & Culture' tour from Darwin to Cairns, departing 02 Oct; or the 12-night 'Frontier Lands of Papua New Guinea' itinerary departing 16 Oct from Cairns.

All departures offer pre-cruise accommodation, a welcome event, and special extras as a standard inclusion.

There is also a new solo traveller landing page [HERE](#).

According to research from Tourism Australia, solo travellers account for 34% of all domestic overnight trips in Australia, with the global solo market tipped to grow 14.3% annually through to 2030, and the APAC region projected to grow even further at 16.1%.

Additional research from the Tourism & Transport Forum reveal that 40% of 45 to 64-year-olds and 41% of over-65s opt for solo travel.

Cadets making waves



AUSTRALIAN Maritime College students have spent the past year gaining real-world experience aboard the Ponant Explorations fleet as they work towards becoming maritime officers.

The program, which has taken students from the Indian Ocean to the North Pole, aimed to address the sea-time barrier many aspiring seafarers face.

Navigation and engineer cadets have collectively completed more than seven years at sea across nine Ponant vessels since the partnership was established 12 months ago (**CW** 14 Nov).

Rather than simply observing, they became part of the working shipboard team, gaining practical navigation, engineering, safety and operational experience while sailing to some of the world's most remote destinations.

Skills gained by cadets this year extended well beyond core navigation and engineering, including hands-on training with onboard equipment that builds

real troubleshooting ability, as well as the opportunity to build confidence through public speaking, technical presentations, and more.

Cadets also picked up a broader range of practical skills over the course of the year, from safety drill coordination, vessel maintenance and regulatory compliance reporting to celestial navigation, and conversational French language skills.

One of the cadets, Finn Arnold, spent four-and-a-half months sailing from the Seychelles to Iceland earlier this year.

During his placement aboard *Le Bellot*, he helped design and run a new fire-drill scenario before leading the crew debrief.

Arnold will return to sea later this year for another four-and-a-half months travelling from Darwin to the Ross Sea, Micronesia, and Japan, as he works towards completing the 18 months of sea time required to graduate as an officer. *MS*

Swan is flying high

SWAN Hellenic has reported a record-breaking Jul, with revenue up 170% year-on-year in what was its strongest operational month on record.

Polar expedition voyages have driven the massive growth for Swan Hellenic, alongside fast-rising demand for new Asia-Pacific and Africa itineraries, as the cruise line's demand from international markets increases.

Arctic revenue tripled year-on-year, while guest volumes to the White Continent more than doubled (+125%).

The new Asia-Pacific itineraries achieved very impressive 373% year-on-year growth, while the latest Africa itineraries also performed well, growing at 98%.

Swan Hellenic has witnessed a rise in returning guests too, with repeat passenger share more than doubling in the past two years.

A number of these returning guests have enjoyed three or more expeditions so far.

The latest figures for this month show the strong numbers continuing too, with the upcoming Antarctica season pacing 32% ahead of last year, and total year-to-date growth at 268%.



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MANY river cruisers in Europe this summer have experienced the continent's water crisis first-hand. However, river levels are now so low that an ancient bridge in Rome is now visible.

Pons Neronianus, which is usually confined to the bottom of the Tiber, has emerged, following weeks with virtually no rain in the region.

The bridge, named after Roman emperor Nero, was built to connect the western part of what was once downtown Ancient Rome to the opposite side of the Tiber, where the imperial family owned land.

The Tiber's flow has fallen below 80 cubic metres per second, about half the historic average for the month of Jul, according to Giovanni Giganti, coordinator of the Rome civil protection service's centre for water management.

All Vor one and one Vor all



MORE than 100 advisors attended Viking's latest Vor Night on the Gold Coast last week.

Held at The Glasshouse at The Island Gold Coast, Vor Nights are designed to educate and engage travel advisors in a relaxed and interactive setting.

Advisors learned more about Viking's river, ocean and expedition voyages while connecting with the local sales team, with the evening geared towards those who are new to the cruise line.

The event delivered a mix of product insights, destination inspiration and interactive

activities, while advisors also had the chance to win a range of prizes, including 16 river and ocean voyages.

One lucky advisor secured an Antarctic expedition voyage, while others took home either \$250 or \$50 worth of Rewards by Viking points.

The cruise line also recently announced it is honouring two Australian travel partners as godparents of two of its new river ships, with FCTG's Danielle Galloway and Virtuoso's Michael Londregan set to officially welcome the new vessels to the fleet in Oct (*CW* 25 Aug). *MS*

Azamara reveals

AZAMARA has provided a first look at its 2029 World Cruise Collection, highlighted by the 195-night World Cruise aboard *Azamara Quest* from San Diego to Copenhagen.

The voyage features 126 ports, 12 of which are maiden calls, across 40 countries and overseas territories.

Almost two-thirds of the sailing will be spent in port, with 16 overnight stays and 60 late nights.

In addition to the epic journey, guests can also embark on two shorter voyages, which include a 139-night sailing from Sydney to Copenhagen, featuring 43 late nights, 11 overnight stays, and 12 maiden ports.

Alternatively, travellers can hop aboard the 179-night cruise from San Diego to London, offering 52 late nights and 16 overnight stays.

Further details on the itinerary will be released in due time.

Bookings for the 195-night cruise will go on sale 23 Sep, with the other two on 14 Oct.

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HX Expeditions' **Amber Wilson** on inspiring travellers to take action.

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