



CRUISE

WEEKLY

delivered daily!



cruiseweekly.com.au

cruiseweekly.co.nz

Thursday 26th February 2026

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a full page from Ponant Explorations.

Discover Ponant

PONANT Explorations is set to host discovery sessions across five Australian cities over Mar and Apr.

Travel advisors in Brisbane, Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra can hear from Ponant over the next two months, with a range of new incentives to be introduced.

These include the chance to win a luxury expedition family to the Kimberley or French Polynesia, while those who attend the event can also unlock exclusive savings for their clients.

Head to **page 4** of today's **Cruise Weekly** for more information, and to register.

Oceania introducing referral program

OCEANIA Cruises is introducing the Oceania Club Ambassador Program, a new referral initiative designed to reward loyalty guests for encouraging their family and friends to book with the line.

When an Oceania Club member refers someone who books their first-ever voyage with the cruise line, both the referring member and the new guest will enjoy US\$200 in savings.

The referred guest must complete the ambassador referral form (**CLICK HERE**) within 14 days of their deposit to ensure the savings are applied.

Credits may be applied to existing or future reservations that have not yet reached final payment, and Oceania Club members may apply up to four US\$200 credits per booking.

Referring and referred guests do not need to sail together, with credits valid for a period of three



years from the date of creation.

"The Oceania Club Ambassador Program invites Oceania Club members to introduce new guests to the intimate luxury, immersive itineraries and genuine hospitality that define an Oceania Cruises voyage," chief luxury officer Jason Montague said.

"The program embraces the joy that comes from sharing a

travel experience that feels truly personal and rewarding."

The program follows Explora Journeys launching a similar initiative two months ago, the Explora Club Referral Programme.

The initiative extends a range of benefits to existing members, as well as those who accept an invite to join the Explora Club loyalty program. *MS*



VIKING

EXPLORER SALE

FLY FREE, FLIGHT UPGRADE OR SAVE UP TO \$5,000 PER COUPLE



THE CHOICE IS YOURS

FLY FREE

ECONOMY CLASS

OR

UPGRADE

BUSINESS CLASS AIRFARE CREDIT

OR

SAIL FOR LESS

BOOK ONLINE & DOWNLOAD MARKETING ASSETS AT **VIKING.COM/ADVISOR** OR CALL **138 747** TO SPEAK TO OUR LOCAL CRUISE RESERVATIONS TEAM

*Terms and conditions apply.

Discover Italy
with Travel Daily
Training Academy

Click here to
discover more

Travel Daily



ENIT
SPA

Vega to visit Brazil

SWAN Hellenic has unveiled three different cultural expedition voyages to Brazil for next year.

Vega will navigate the Amazon Mouth Breves Narrows, a part of the river inaccessible to larger vessels.

The variety of cruises will offer passengers the opportunity to venture upriver to explore the mouth of the Amazon and heart of the rainforest, navigating the secluded Breves Narrows, where the pink Amazon river dolphin resides, exploring historic Portuguese forts, the dunes of the UNESCO heritage site Lencois Maranhenses National Park, and more.

Other highlights include the Rio Cajari Extractive Reserve - publicly owned land, but the inhabitants have hunting and fishing rights.

Passengers can also visit the Abrolhos Marine National Park, a sanctuary of biodiversity and a breeding ground for humpback whales.

The first cruises will depart in Apr 2027, with three more to set sail in Oct and Nov.

These latter three voyages can be daisy-chained to create an immersive 29-night exploration from Bridgetown, Barbados to Paramaribo, Suriname, and then the Salvation Islands and the coastline of Brazil, before the trip concludes in Rio.

Fogg named chair

PEARL Expeditions general manager Mick Fogg has been named chair of the Kimberley Marine Tourism Association.

Fogg will lead the representation of more than 30 licensed commercial marine tourism operators across one of Australia's most significant cruise destinations.

Heritage to add new ship



HERITAGE Expeditions has announced a new ship, *Heritage Discoverer* (render pictured), will join its fleet in May 2027 (**CW** breaking news).

The former Silversea ship, once known as *Silver Explorer*, was sold by the luxury cruise line three years ago to French expedition brand Exploris, and now sails as *Exploris One*.

Discoverer features seven decks and 82 staterooms, including 12 suites, and carries a maximum of 130 passengers.

The ship features a dining room, outside grill, presentation and observation lounge, bar, fitness centre, two outdoor Jacuzzis, a gift shop, and more.

She will also sail with an expedition team of 15, and will feature a fleet of 14 Zodiacs.

The ship was refurbished and upgraded in 2023, when Silversea sold her, and again this year.

"*Discoverer* combines decades of exploration, on expeditions from the Northwest Passage to navigating remote tropical waters, islands and atolls, and south to Antarctica, with a 1A ice class rating and wrapped in luxurious, spacious surrounds," co-owner and co-director Aaron Russ said.

The ship's arrival will also see Heritage expand its program with

new expedition cruise itineraries.

"*Discoverer* allows Heritage Expeditions to resume our renowned, authentic High Arctic Tundra and Antarctic Peninsula adventures, and the return of our unique, expedition-style of travel to these regions," co-owner and co-director Nathan Russ said.

"Her arrival also heralds new opportunities to explore European, African and South American shores announcing an exciting, truly global offering for Heritage," he added.

Maiden voyages will be released shortly, with a number of cruises during the 2027 season already chartered to Polar Latitudes Expeditions - the line which merged with Albatros Expeditions last year (**CW** 03 Apr).

Heritage earlier this month announced two new voyages exploring rarely-visited destinations in Micronesia and the Kimberley (**CW** 19 Jan).

'Micronesia's Atolls & Islands Odyssey' will depart in Mar 2027, exploring Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Palau.

Meanwhile, the new 'Kimberley Coast Adventure Cruise' will depart in Jul 2027.

Heritage also announced new departures for its 2027 New Zealand season late last year (**CW** 05 Dec). *MS*

Downey's Adventure

AMERICAN actor Robert Downey Jr has been named the godparent of Disney Cruise Line's new ship *Disney Adventure*, set to begin sailing from Singapore next month.

The *Iron Man* star said being selected as *Adventure's* godparent is an honour.

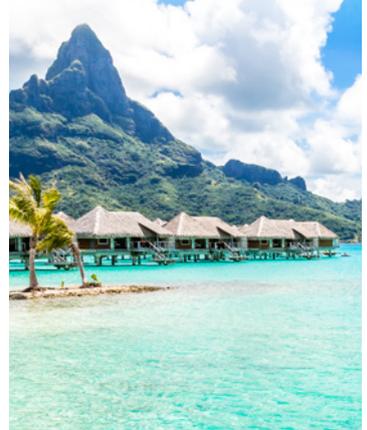
"As the largest ship in the Disney fleet, a gargantuan blessing must be bestowed - I'll do my darndest," he said.

Downey was named a 'Disney Legend' in 2019 for his portrayal of Tony Stark/Iron Man in 10 movies.

Adventure guests will be able to enjoy the 'Ironcycle Test Run' a ride honouring the popular character.

WINDSTAR
CRUISES

CRUISE
Beyond
-TAHITI-



MORE VALUE.
MORE INCLUDED.

FREE pre-cruise hotel night, Up to US\$1,000 onboard credit & FREE All-Inclusive Package*

VIEW OFFER

*T&Cs apply, view offer to learn more

Contact 1300 749 875 or
email reservations@windstar.com.au



MANY cruisers are used to seeing seals taking a nap near their ship's terminal, usually owing to the warm water and infrastructure required to support such vessels.

However residents of a small Jersey Shore town were not expecting to see a seal napping in the middle of a road in their town - particularly not in the middle of winter.

The local Harvey Cedars Marine Mammal Stranding Center was forced to come to the rescue when the seal was found wandering through the middle of Long Beach Blvd.

Officials kept traffic at bay as the seal made her way to Middlesex Avenue, where she settled down for a nap.

She was taken to a local pool for rest and relaxation.



Uni's Egypt agent famil



UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises is inviting travel advisors to win a trip for themselves and a travelling companion to Egypt as part of its 'Golden Anniversary Charter', on an itinerary alongside its partner brand Luxury Gold.

The line has chartered the ship exclusively for agents to sail on its 'Splendours of Egypt and the Nile' itinerary, in celebration of Uniworld's 50th anniversary.

Departing from 05-15 Sep, the cruise travels round trip from Cairo, and includes seven nights of sailing and three nights in the Egyptian capital.

Every new Uniworld and Luxury Gold booking made before 30 Jun will enter advisors into the draw

to win a spot on the trip - **CLICK HERE** for more information.

Egypt and the Nile are Uniworld and Luxury Gold's fastest-growing destinations, with sales up more than 300% this year, and growth tracking even higher for 2027.

The destination is so popular that managing director Alice Ager (**pictured left** with president & chief executive officer Ellen Bettridge) said capacity may eventually become a problem .

"We're trying to get the trade to understand that if they have got customers who want to go to Egypt, they just need to book it...don't leave it because then they're going to be disappointed," she told **Cruise Weekly**. MS

Avalon France swap

AVALON Waterways will sunset its Bordeaux sailings, instead expanding its selection of itineraries along the Seine next year.

The cruise line's *Avalon Artistry II* will be redeployed from Bordeaux to the Seine, meeting the demand of travellers for the river.

Avalon's current season of Bordeaux voyages will be completed, but following this, the cruise line will move to strengthen what is one of its most in-demand destinations.

Paris and Normandy remain among Avalon's strongest performers, according to president Pam Hoffee.

"Avalon is committed to growing with purpose," the cruise line's head said.

"That means listening closely to our guests and aligning our fleet of Suite Ships with destinations where river cruising delivers the greatest depth, diversity and demand.

"France continues to outperform, particularly along the Seine, and we're making moves to support that."



OUT NOW:

2025 Year in Review Special Report

» **CLICK HERE TO READ**



DISCOVERY SESSIONS

11 March - **Brisbane**

17 March - **Adelaide**

25 March - **Sydney**

31 March - **Melbourne**

1 April - **Canberra**



NEW INCENTIVES FOR VALUED PARTNERS:

- The chance to win a luxury expedition famil to the Kimberley or French Polynesia*
- Go in the draw to win \$200 Dinner Voucher on PONANT EXPLORATIONS!^
- Attend the event to unlock exclusive event only savings for your clients
- Invite your clients to be inspired and have a taste of PONANT's signature style.

REGISTER TODAY

*Prize is for two guests sharing a Prestige Stateroom (Cruise Only) on a 2026 or 2027 voyage. Submit your request to SalesAPAC@ponant.com. Space is confirmed 2 months prior to departure. Not transferrable to another person or redeemable for cash. VALUE of Prize: Kimberely \$36,160 French Polynesia \$26,000.

^Prize is \$200 Dining Gift Card and is not transferrable for cash. Winners will be notified by email and card will be sent by express post to your Agency address. Contact your state manager or salesAPAC@ponant.com for full information.