

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news.

NCL eliminates NCF

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) is aiming to better reward and empower trade success, eliminating all non-commissionable fares.

The change comes into effect for sailings departing from May, allowing travel advisors to earn on the entire cruise fare (excluding taxes and fees).

NCL previously eliminated NCFs between 2022 and 2023, before bringing them back (**CW** 19 Dec 2023); the line has not said whether this latest move is temporary or not.

The cruise line is also introducing its biggest-ever Partners First Rewards incentive, offering 1 million points up for grabs.

Oceania to transition to adults-only

OCEANIA Cruises has announced its transition to an adults-only onboard experience (**CW** breaking news), with the line to become exclusive to travellers aged 18 and over.

The policy will apply to all new reservations, with existing bookings to be honoured in full.

Oceania said the change followed extensive research from its guests and travel partners, which showed the line's "serene atmosphere, sophisticated service, and unhurried pace" are its most sought-after traits.

"Our guests have consistently shared that the tranquil environment aboard our ships is one of the primary reasons they return time and time again," the cruise line's head Jason Montague said.

"By transitioning to an adults-only experience, we are enhancing the very essence of



the Oceania Cruises journey - one defined by sophistication, serenity and discovery."

Oceania is the first brand within NCLH to enact such a rule, with its ultra-luxury sister line Regent Seven Seas Cruises continuing to welcome children.

Supervised youth activities are available with Regent during peak travel periods, although its ships lack dedicated kids' clubs.

Fellow luxury cruise line Viking and premium marque Virgin Voyages are the two cruise lines

most famous for their no children policy, while certain ships from other companies, such as Marella Cruises and P&O Cruises, also do not allow kids on board.

Contemporary brand Carnival Cruise Line has also trialled adults-only voyages in the past (**CW** 26 May).

Other luxury brands such as Seabourn Cruise Line and Silversea also welcome children without catering toward them, with no kids programs and no family facilities. **MS**



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Bradbury promoted

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has announced the promotion of Nicole Bradbury to the role of senior marketing manager.

The Sydney-based public relations expert has been with the cruise line for more than four years, and was previously brand, media, and content marketing manager.

Prior to joining Carnival in 2021, Bradbury held marketing positions at Princess Cruises and Cunard Line.

Fred's new OBC offer

AN ONBOARD spending credit bonus has been announced on dozens of Fred. Olsen Cruise Line voyages through its Australian general sales agent Cruise Traveller.

Those booking by 29 Jan can access the exclusive offer, which provides £200 (approx A\$400) of credit per couple.

The offer is available on dozens of sailings through to May 2027, including a 15-night winter cruise to Norway.

All voyages will also include selected drinks with lunch and dinner, as well as guided walks and onboard gratuities.



Royal Beach Club opens



ROYAL Caribbean's Royal Beach Club Paradise Island has officially opened, welcoming its first guests on 23 Dec.

The grand opening took place a few days after the Beach Club's official ribbon-cutting ceremony, which saw Bahamian government officials, VIPs, and community members join Royal Caribbean executives to celebrate the milestone.

Guests who visit the new destination can enjoy two beaches and three pools complete with umbrellas and lounge chairs, as well as the world's largest swim-up bar, live music, and local artisan huts.

There is also an abundance of dining options available on the island, including three beach grills and 10 waterfront bars.

"Guests told us they were looking for more ways to make the most of their vacations in The Bahamas, and that's exactly what we've created with Royal Beach

Club Paradise Island," president & CEO Michael Bayley said.

"Whether it's a chill day on the island's two pristine beaches or the ultimate beach party at the world's largest swim-up bar, we've crafted a destination that caters to every mood.

"The opening of our first Royal Beach Club introduces a bold new kind of beach experience, and it's just the start of what's to come in our growing destination portfolio," Bayley added.

Royal Beach Club Island is just the first in a line-up of upcoming destinations set to open, including the highly anticipated Royal Beach Club Lelepa in the South Pacific early next year.

Also set to open are Royal Beach Club Cozumel, Royal Beach Club Santorini later this year, and Perfect Day Mexico in late 2027.

CLICK HERE for more information on the new destination, including day passes and bundles. *JM*

Concerns easing?

THE Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association has insisted itineraries in the Caribbean are now operating normally, after a slate of recent cancellations and reroutings surrounding the United States' strikes in Venezuela earlier this month.

Itineraries with Windstar Cruises (**pictured**), Virgin Voyages, and Norwegian Cruise Line have recently been affected by the strikes, which saw the US capture Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro (**CW** 05 Jan).

"Cruise itineraries in the Caribbean are currently operating normally," a statement from the FCCA said.

"Lines work closely with global security experts and government authorities, actively monitoring planned routes and itineraries to make adjustments if needed, always prioritising safety and security."

"Our mission at Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association is to work alongside our cruise line members to help Caribbean and Latin American destinations thrive while ensuring guests have amazing experiences, safely and securely," the statement said.



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CRUISE lines may not like to hear one key piece of advice being given out by a cruise expert who has made a living working on ships.

"If you see a door, go in - the worst that's going to happen is they're going to ask you to leave," cruise ship lecturer Rachel Kolsky told the *Daily Mail* recently.

"See a staircase? Go up. See an alleyway...[go down it]."

Many areas on board cruise ships - typically hidden behind unspectacular doors - are prohibited for passengers, and used only by crew members to navigate the ship more quickly.

Kolsky, who has worked on board cruise lines such as Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, Cunard Line, Oceania Cruises, and Viking, also revealed her favourite port: the Italian town of Chioggia, also known as 'Little Venice', which she says far eclipses the real thing.



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Great Stirrup Cay gets greater



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has offered a first look at the enhancements to its private island in the Bahamas, Great Stirrup Cay.

The destination now features a 5.7km² pool area boasting an expansive heated pool that is larger than two Olympic-sized pools combined, and features a beach-style entrance.

Great Stirrup Cay includes Splash Harbor splash pad for young guests and adults-only Vibe Shore Club which features private cabanas and a private bar, and is accessible via an all-day

pass, available from \$138.

The destination is also now home to a new welcome centre and a tram system to make it easier to get around the island.

"Great Stirrup Cay has always been a favourite for our guests, and these new enhancements make it even easier for guests to trade the winter weather for the warm tropics and enjoy an 'escape to the great life,'" said Harry Sommer, president & CEO of Norwegian's parent NCLH.

The island will also debut a new water park later this year. *JM*

Ambience upgrade

AMBASSADOR Cruise Line has sent its first ship *Ambience* to the United Kingdom for a scheduled dry dock.

The vessel will undergo a three-week program of technical and refurbishment works at shipbuilder A&P Tyne.

Ambience will receive several passenger-facing enhancements, including the refurbishment of carpets in staterooms and common areas, as well as new furniture and fittings rooms, and additional plug sockets and USB ports.

The Green Sea Spa will also undergo a refresh, including new flooring, tiling, artwork, and greenery.

Additionally, *Ambience*'s windows will be replaced to create better visibility.

Meanwhile, the technical upgrades include a series of internal pipework, HVAC, and mechanical improvements to ensure guest comfort.

Ambience is expected to return to service in her home port in London Tilbury later this month.

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