

Cruise Weekly today

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

Exploring Ningaloo

ECLIPSE Expeditions has launched 'Ningaloo Coast Voyager', a seven-night luxury sailing experience exploring the Northern Ningaloo Coast and the remote Montebello Islands.

Accommodating a maximum of eight guests, the voyage will offer departures from Exmouth in Mar and Apr and Oct and Nov each year, aboard new catamaran *Eclipse*.

Guests will explore quiet beaches and sheltered coral lagoons, enjoying activities such as fishing and snorkelling.

Explorations expansion?



EXCLUSIVE

DESPITE one well-sold charter preparing to embark later this year, and a recently announced follow-up in 2027 (*CW* 09 Jan), Ignite Travel Group is not looking to buy a ship and operate cruises on its own.

Ignite's recently announced second 'Explorations by Norwegian' full-year charter, sold through its My Cruises brand, will take over Oceania Cruises' *Oceania Regatta* (pictured), with the first voyage to set sail in Sep.

However, this does not mean Ignite is looking to buy the ship outright, the company's general manager cruise Michael Middleton told *CW*.

Ignite is content to let the maritime experts handle the operational side of the venture, while My Cruises continues to successfully sell and market the product, he said.

"They're the experts in running a ship... we'd rather let them take care of that piece, let us take care of the sales, the marketing, and getting the people on the ship."

"Obviously we've had some fantastic conversations and have been able to give a bit of influence as to how we want the product to play out."

Middleton however did not rule out My Cruises expanding its charter operations further, possibly across more ships, saying

"anything's possible".

"Nothing's off the cards, but let's get [the first two charters] under way first before we start looking at that," he said.

"The business is all about innovation and this was a really innovative thing for us to do, so it will be great to see where it ends up in the long term."

Changes made from the first charter to the second include broadening access to the best-selling segments, and improving airlift to embarkation and disembarkation ports.

"The confidence and how well the product resonated with the Australian customer, they're loving the ability to do multiple sectors," Middleton said.

"The first 12 segments [of the first charter] are very heavily booked already, which is great."

"Some of those are 90% sold now, which is fantastic, so that's what's given us the confidence to go ahead and extend the charter for another year."

My Cruises is also going to enable guests to continue cruising by allowing them to extend their voyage at a dedicated future cruise desk on board *Regatta*.

Guests will be able to book more segments and even change their flights with My Cruises consultants while on board.

The first of the charters embarks on 01 Sep. *MS*

Haiti off the cards

ROYAL Caribbean has cancelled all of this year's scheduled visits to Labadee, its private destination in Haiti, impacting dozens of itineraries across 12 of the line's ships.

The decision was made due to ongoing civil unrest and widespread violent crime in the Caribbean country, which has been in a state of emergency since 2024.

Royal Caribbean has replaced Labadee with an alternative port on most itineraries, however some have been swapped out for a sea day.

The cruise line also scrapped calls into the Haitian port for several months in 2024, and again in 2025 (*CW* 04 Aug).

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Uniworld to glitter

EVERY European Uniworld Boutique River Cruises sailing this year will feature an onboard 'Golden Party', as the line commemorates 50 years of sailing.

The elegant evening event will be among a number of other anniversary celebration moments throughout the year, the cruise line teased.

Uniworld has also launched a 50th anniversary sale to mark the milestone, offering up to 30% off select departures.

The cruise line is ushering in the milestone with the debut of *Emilie* (pictured), its first newbuild since 2021 (CW 14 Mar 2024).

She will sail the Danube across eight itineraries, featuring a one-of-a-kind restaurant and lounge, and an innovative two-bedroom suite.

The anniversary year will also introduce two new Mystery Cruise sailings, Uniworld's first-ever Grand Mystery Cruise combining both departures; a 50-night Rivers of the World cruise spanning three continents and four ships; and additional Generations Collection family sailings.



Trafalgar to add the Seine



TRAFALGAR will offer Seine cruises next year, adding a third ship to its river fleet.

The tour operator is launching its river cruise operations later this year aboard *Trafalgar Verity* and *Trafalgar Reverie* (CW 06 May), with a third ship, *Trafalgar Harmonie*, launching in 2027, sailing a Seine itinerary that includes Paris and Normandy.

Trafalgar had initially committed to expanding its fleet in 2029 (CW 04 Jun).

According to reports, the itinerary will include visiting local families at cider farms in Normandy and a trademark 'Make Travel Matter' experience in Paris, focused on history preservation and sustainable urban planning.

Travellers will also visit Claude Monet's House & Gardens, as well as the Battle of Normandy landing points.

Trafalgar has not stated where

it will source its new *Harmonie* ship from; however it said the vessel will accommodate 126 pax in seven stateroom categories.

Verity and *Reverie* will be chartered from sister brand Uniworld Boutique River Cruises, and will sail the Rhine and Danube respectively.

"As Trafalgar expands its river cruise fleet, debuting on one of Europe's most iconic waterways is a natural next step," Trafalgar vice president river cruise Damien O'Connor said.

"France remains a perennial favourite among our travellers, and this new Seine itinerary offers a fresh way to experience the destination through immersive river cruising, brought to life with Trafalgar's signature experiences and storytelling."

Bookings for *Verity* and *Reverie* are now open, and also feature land extensions in Lucerne, Prague, and Budapest. *MS*

Mein Schiff 5 refit

TUI Cruises' *Mein Schiff 5* has entered dry dock in Dubai to undergo a refit, which will see the ship temporarily pause her Middle East deployment.

The 2,500-guest vessel is expected to return to service on Tue, following almost two weeks of work, according to maritime industry reports.

Mein Schiff 5's refit includes technical maintenance and a range of upgrades to her guest areas, including the installation of a new LED wall in the theatre, a new sound system, the replacement of the scoreboard in The Arena, new carpeting in the Atlantik restaurant, and updates to several suites.

APT Murray deal

A NEW all-inclusive package with APT has been released for Australia's first five-star river ship, which is set to launch next month (CW 04 Dec).

The package for the brand new *Australian Star* is available to those who book by the end of the month, with APT offering new seven-night round trip voyages from Melbourne throughout 2026 and 2027.

Included is round-trip coach transportation to the vessel in Echuca, onboard meals and beverages, wine tastings, and more - **CLICK HERE**.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Our analysis of the biggest news of the year

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HUNDREDS of Victorian-era shoes have been found during a beach clean-up in Wales. The Beach Academy CIC, based in the country's south, said volunteers working on a tide pool restoration project at Ogmore-by-Sea Beach found about 200 shoes and detached soles late last month.

"We could tell straight away they were old - the shapes of them were clearly old-fashioned, with hobnails in the soles," Beach Academy founder Emma Lampert told *The Telegraph*.

She said local residents told her they have been making their own shoe discoveries on the coast for years.

"Locals have been relating stories of finding strange shoes along the South Wales coast."

One theory suggests the shoes fell from *Frolic*, an Italian cargo ship which was wrecked off Wales' coast in 1831.

Atlas carves a new path



ATLAS Ocean Voyages has unveiled a refreshed brand identity to better position the cruise line as a boutique luxury expedition operator.

The new logo (pictured) is accompanied by a fresh colour palette and updated branding imagery, as well as a shift in the language used to describe the Atlas experience, focusing on "connection, discovery and the boutique hospitality mindset".

Relaxed elegance, Atlas' butler service, premium amenities, and thoughtful design details are highlighted in the new collateral, which was developed by New York-based creative studio Astronaut Monkey.

"Our goal was to ensure

that every touchpoint, from our visual and verbal identity to our marketing and media messaging, accurately reflects the experience our guests have aboard our yachts," commented James Rodriguez, president and chief executive officer of the cruise line.

"This brand evolution is not a reinvention; it articulates what has always made Atlas unique, reflecting our world-class fleet, intimate scale, and the transformative moments that define each voyage."

Atlas is the latest of several lines to evolve its identity in recent months, with Norwegian Cruise Line and AmaWaterways (*CW* 13 Jan) also rebranding. *JM*

NCL raises the bar

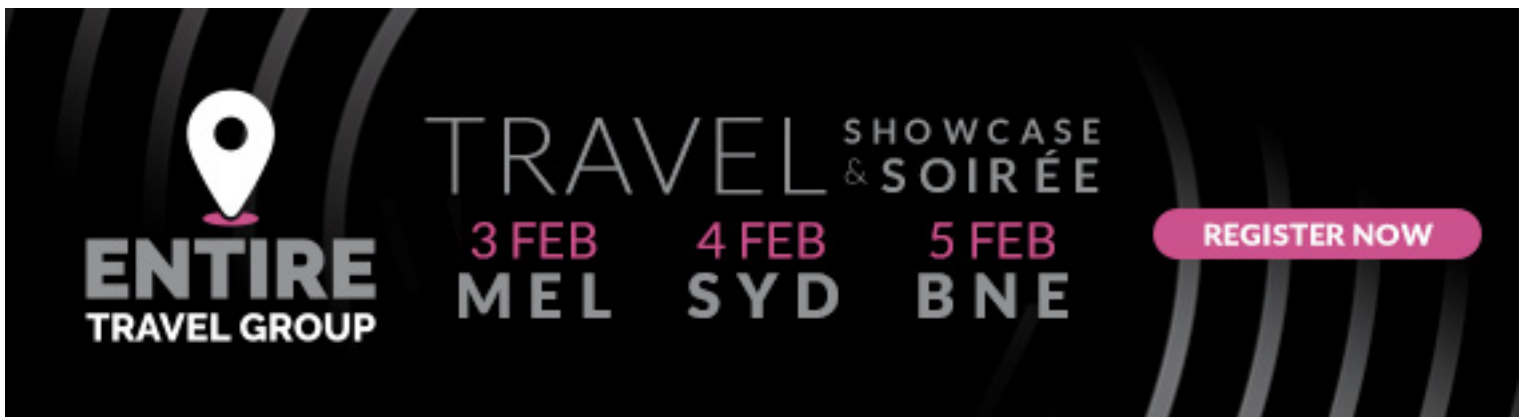
THE American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA) has praised Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) for its decision to permanently scrap non-commissionable fares (NCFs) (*CW* 08 Jan), and is now calling on the rest of the industry to follow suit.

In a statement issued yesterday, the collective describes the removal of NCFs as a trend toward more equitable and fair commission models industry-wide.

"Non-commissionable fares have been one of the most persistent and opaque challenges facing travel advisors," said Zane Kerby, president & CEO of ASTA.

"NCL's decision reflects a growing recognition of the value advisors bring to the distribution ecosystem and the need for compensation models that are straightforward and equitable," he added.

"This is the kind of leadership that moves the industry forward, and ASTA is proud to help unify voices calling for meaningful change."



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