



Cruise Weekly today

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

Drama in Turkiye

TURKISH maritime authorities have blocked an American LGBTQ cruise from docking in the port town of Kusadasi, citing implications to the country's "moral standards" and "family values".

The voyage was organised by Atlantis Events on Virgin Voyages' *Scarlet Lady*.

However Turkish officials have cancelled the event, saying the charterer is "known for behaviours incompatible with the fabric of our society and our moral values."

Carnival stands up



CARNIVAL Cruise Line has told **CW** it remains confident in the living and working conditions provided to its crews, after the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) submitted a complaint to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) earlier this week alleging breaches of international labour standards.

The cruise line told **CW** its standards meet, and in many cases exceed, the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention.

"Our crew are further supported by free accommodation, meals, medical care, training, transportation, and other benefits," Carnival said.

"We have nothing to hide; Carnival has always, and will continue, to cooperate fully with AMSA and remains confident in the living and working conditions provided to our crew."

MUA organiser Shane Reside accused Carnival of forcing its crews to work "excruciatingly long hours without a day off for months and months at a time".

The union also alleges Carnival's staff are poorly paid and "systematically" denied their basic legal rights.

AMSA said it is reviewing the complaint and will advise the MUA of the outcome once its assessment is complete.

The union did not specify which provisions of international law it alleges Carnival breached.

Reside said "hundreds" of crew members working on board

Carnival's three Australian-based ships have come to the MUA in an effort to receive "more pay, better quality food, and at least one day off a week".

He said a number of ex-Carnival crew members had accompanied the MUA on its trip to Canberra to submit its complaint.

The union's complaint is the latest chapter in its ongoing disagreement with the cruise line, which began earlier this year.

MUA officials were denied access to *Carnival Adventure* in Mar (**CW** 18 Mar), as they attempted to board under the *New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

The law allows permit holders to enter a workplace in NSW to consult with and advise workers on safety matters, however Carnival told **CW** at the time it was under no obligation to allow the MUA officials entry.

Carnival said the officials lacked the authority to board the ship under maritime law and that allowing them on board would have created a security risk.

AMSA in Feb also inspected and cleared another of the cruise line's ships, *Carnival Encounter* (pictured), of any deficiencies, following whistleblower concerns in Darwin (**CW** 10 Feb).

Carnival has consistently characterised the union's actions as an "aggressive, misleading and organised membership campaign" by the CFMEU, of which the MUA is a division. *MS*

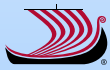
Ponant's new CMO

PONANT Explorations has announced the appointment of Nicolas Gronier as chief marketing officer.

He will lead Ponant's recently established global marketing organisation within the company's commercial and growth division.

The changes are part of the implementation of Ponant's North Star strategic plan, aiming to reposition the company from cruise operator to hospitality-led luxury brand.

Gronier is well-known to the Aussie travel industry, having worked in NSW with Accor and the Sydney Opera House in marketing roles, before returning to France in 2023.



VIKING

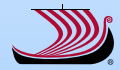
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MSC's taste of Asia

MSC Cruises has unveiled its new Pan-Asian dining concept onboard *MSC World Asia*, which will integrate three concepts into one.

The venue will combine a specialty restaurant, bar, and lounge, as well as complimentary on-the-go offerings, providing guests flexibility throughout the day.

Its restaurant includes both indoor seating and a rooftop setting, serving traditional Asian dishes inspired by communal dining practices, as well as regional bottled beer, bubble tea, and juices.

Dishes on offer include Singapore-style shrimp, shiitake mushroom fried rice, and wok-fired specialties, created by chefs Xiao Wang and Luca Cesarini, both with extensive kitchen experience across Asia.

The bar and lounge features several Southeast Asian-inspired cocktails such as jasmine mojitos, rose, and strawberry daiquiris.

For the on-the-go offerings, guests can grab complimentary bites through a window, serving street food staples including crispy seafood balls and fluffy bao buns.

The new concept will launch 04 Dec, alongside *MSC World Asia's* seven-night Mediterranean itineraries (CW 29 Apr).

APT scores big with a B



APT Travel Group has achieved B Corporation certification, becoming just the third major cruise operator to do so.

The certification means APT has met B Lab's verified standards for social, environmental, and governance business practices.

Cruise Weekly was first to flag APT's application for B Corp status almost 12 months ago (CW 27 Aug), with the business now joining fellow Australian cruise companies Aurora Expeditions and Chimu Adventures.

B Corp certification is an independent verification confirming a company balances profit with strict social and environmental standards.

Certification evaluates performance across five pillars:

governance, workers, community, environment, and customers, and is revisited every three years.

APT believes the certification is a validation of the values that have always underpinned how the business operates.

"This isn't something we pursued because it was on trend, it's a reflection of how we've always believed a business should be run," chief executive officer David Cox said.

"With genuine accountability to the people inside it, the communities around it, and the world it operates in, we have been doing this for nearly a century and this certification helps us formalise what is already in our DNA." MS

Pictured: *APT Solara*

Rowing to Newy

VIKING recently took its Viking Vor Nights event to Newcastle, attended by more than 100 people.

The Vor Nights events are designed to educate and engage travel advisors, showcasing the latest on Viking's ocean, river, and expedition cruise offerings, combining product insights and interactive elements, while also providing attendees with a three-course meal as well as drinks.

Multiple prizes were also handed out throughout the night, including a few ocean and river voyages, one expedition voyage to Antarctica, as well as champagne and Rewards by Viking points.

The evening also saw the Viking team get everyone in attendance to partake in the Viking Row - see more on **page three** of today's *CW*.



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PORTHOLE

CRUISE lines have been getting into the World Cup spirit of late, particularly with the Norwegian team's 'Viking Row' celebration (**CW** 29 Jun). Last week Hurtigruten's crew got in on the act aboard its newly refurbished ship *Vesteralen*, and this week, it was a Viking cruises event in Newcastle, which saw the entire room break out into the viral celebration.



More extensions, more exploration

CRUISE lines are seeing a growing interest in pre- and post-extensions, as guests look to add more depth and flexibility to their trips, several executives have shared with **Cruise Weekly**.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) research shows almost two-thirds of cruise guests book some sort of pre- or post-cruise travel arrangement.

Managing director Joel Katz told **CW** it is an area that offers a lot of potential to develop further.

"It's a huge opportunity for travel consultants to lift the value of their cruise business and enhance the experience for their guests," he said.

Viking MD Michelle Black said Aussie travellers to Europe especially want to make the most of their time and are looking for a more complete journey.

"We are seeing a clear shift toward slower, more considered travel, where people value having extra time before or after their sailing," she told **CW**.

Extensions also take the pressure off travellers by removing the need to fit everything into the cruise itself,



Black added.

A pre-cruise extension gives clients time to ease into a destination and recover from jet lag, while a post-cruise extension allows guests to keep exploring without the rush.

Viking has recently expanded its pre- and post-cruise offerings for clients, such as the new five-night Morocco extension on its 'Pharaohs and Pyramids' itinerary.

"It gives guests the chance to experience a completely different culture, from the souks of Marrakech to the Atlas Mountains, before arriving in Egypt, all within one continuous, fully guided journey," Black said.

More cruise lines are also launching creative new expanded touring programs to accompany their itineraries, many of which go beyond extended port stays and feature regional or international touring, Katz said.

For example, these may include land and sea voyages, river and ocean combinations, and rail and cruise packages.

"Importantly, travel agents have the opportunity to inject their own creativity or the products offered by their wholesale travel partners to enhance their client's voyage," Katz added.

Earlier this week, Celebrity launched a range of before- and after-cruise stays in cities including Prague, Budapest, Amsterdam, and Lausanne, based around its much-anticipated, soon-to-launch river cruises (**CW** 01 Jul).

In Amsterdam, a local modern artist will lead guests through the city's art scene, before they are given the chance to co-create a piece of street art.

Over in Prague, history buffs will enjoy exploring the city's medieval walls, secret bunkers and Cold War shelters.

"These stays are designed to deepen connection - to the cities, to the people who bring them to life, and to each other," president Laura Hodges Bethge said. *JHM*

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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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