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Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of the latest cruise news, plus a cover wrap from **Royal Caribbean**.

Rise of a legend

BOOKINGS are now open for Royal Caribbean's newest vessel, *Legend of the Seas*, now sailing in Europe.

The new ship is divided up into eight distinct neighbourhoods including Surfside, Thrill Island, The Hideaway, Chill Island, Royal Promenade, Aquadome, and Central Park.

Reservations for *Legend* can be made through the CruisingPower platform.

See more on the **front page**.

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Carnival reveals its *Destiny*



CARNIVAL Cruise Line has unveiled *Carnival Destiny* as its newest ship and the first vessel in its next-generation Ace-class (render **pictured**).

Destiny was revealed in Italy over the weekend, launching Carnival's new ship design - its largest ever - alongside shipbuilding partner Fincantieri.

Construction recently began on the upcoming vessel, which will weigh approximately 230,000 gross tonnes and be capable of carrying nearly 8,000 passengers.

This will be significantly larger than Carnival's Excel-class ships *Carnival Jubilee* and *Carnival Celebration* - currently the largest in the cruise line's fleet - which carry 5,374 guests and weigh 183,521 gross tonnes.

Destiny is set to arrive in winter 2029, the first of three vessels in the new ship class, with the other two scheduled to join the fleet in 2031 and 2033.

Carnival's announcement event also showcased a 3D hologram offering a first look into the future of the fleet and some of *Destiny's* onboard highlights.

This includes more than 70% of *Destiny's* venues and attractions as being entirely new concepts for Carnival, spanning reimagined dining, next-generation bars and lounges, immersive entertainment, and vibrant outdoor spaces.

With the caption 'More Sea to See', *Destiny* is promised to

be the "most outward-facing megaship at sea", featuring Carnival's highest amount of ocean-view balcony cabins, a reimagined lanai deck, and more than 1.8 hectares of glass, including multi-storey glass walls, which will open up sightlines across the vessel.

These elements are aimed at creating ocean views from more places on board than on other Carnival ships.

Destiny will sail to destinations in the Paradise Collection by Carnival, the line's portfolio of exclusive Caribbean locations.

The ship will be the second in Carnival's history to bear the *Destiny* name, the first of which was retired in 2013 following the renaming and refit of *Carnival Sunshine* (**CW** 08 Aug 2013).

Additional details on *Destiny's* features and experiences will be released later this year.

"*Destiny* builds on a legacy that changed cruising once before, reimagining what guests can experience at sea," president Christine Duffy said.

"With this ship, we're elevating the guest experience again creating a ship that feels more expansive, while helping guests feel more connected and ultimately have more fun."

Carnival is currently building two other ships, the Excel-class *Carnival Festivale* and *Carnival Tropicale*, which are due to enter service in the next two years. *MS*

Explora's Honors

EXPLORA Journeys has partnered with Hilton to allow the hospitality group's loyalty members to earn and redeem points across the cruise line's luxury ocean journeys.

Hilton Honors members will enjoy benefits including special member rates and onboard perks across all Explora itineraries.

The partnership was first unveiled late last year as part of the debut of Hilton Honors Adventures - a curated set of partners offering Hilton Honors members access to immersive travel experiences (**CW** 11 Dec 2025).

The loyalty program is free to join - find out more **HERE**.

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Ponant unveils 2027-28 itineraries

PONANT Explorations has opened 2027-28 bookings for the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, and the Atlantic Islands.

The cruise line will operate more than 150 departures, including four Cape Verde voyages, aboard its three-masted sailing yacht, *Le Ponant*, in Oct and Nov 2027.

Guests will enjoy immersive shore experiences throughout the journey, such as exploring Santo Antao, discovering the crater villages of Fogo, and spending time on the beaches of Maio.

The Atlantic Islands collection also includes two itineraries dedicated solely to the Azores in Jul 2028, and a wine-focused voyage from Lisbon to Bordeaux in May 2028, including optional visits to renowned caviar house Prunier and Chateau Latour.

Ponant will also offer cruises throughout the British Isles, the



Norwegian fjords, and the Baltic Sea, including two itineraries featuring the Faroe Islands.

Additionally, guests can choose from more than 80 Mediterranean departures, with itineraries combining calls at lesser-visited ports with embarkation from destinations including Athens, Nice, Valletta, Dubrovnik, and Venice.

The collection includes 14

'Kids Explorers' family-friendly departures featuring workshops and activities for children aged between four and 13, as well as a selection of five-night getaways.

Ponant will also operate themed voyages through the Mediterranean, developed in partnership with prestigious organisations, including Smithsonian Journeys and the Opera National de Paris. *JM*

A brand-new pour

RIVERSIDE Luxury Cruises has unveiled new lunch experiences, wine tastings, and personalised pairings, now available across the line's fleet in its signature dining venue, Vintage Room.

Guests can choose from an expanded selection of wine pairings featuring champagne and premium vintages, with non-alcoholic wine pairings to launch later this year.

Additionally, house-crafted, non-alcoholic botanical beverages are now on the menu, developed exclusively for the Vintage Room.

There is also a new pre-dinner tasting featuring rare vintages, limited-production labels and sommelier-led discussion, as well as a four-course lunch experience with the same pairing options available during dinner service.







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THE opportunity to witness *Cruisey McCruiseface* embark on the high seas may soon be a reality, as Royal Caribbean has asked its past sailors to suggest the name for its newest Discovery-class ship.

Select past guests received an email survey from the company, asking them what makes the new Discovery-class stand out to them, and followed the survey up with a number of questions.

"Imagine you got to name the first ship in the Discovery-class - what are some names you would love to see?" the survey asked.

"Tell us up to five names in the space below."

Royal Caribbean also asked respondents what is important when it comes to naming a cruise ship, along with asking them to rank a set of name-deciding factors from most to least important.

RSSC getting festive



REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) is offering 56 new shore excursions and five multi-day pre- and post-cruise land tours as part of its 2026 holiday season.

Available on select departures aboard *Seven Seas Navigator* (pictured), *Seven Seas Voyager*, and the maiden voyage of *Seven Seas Prestige* (CW 10 Dec 2025), the shore excursions will immerse guests in Christmas markets, seasonal cuisine, and local traditions across European destinations such as France, Malta, Spain, and Greece, starting from US\$119 (A\$171) per guest.

The multi-day land tours are

available aboard *Navigator*, as part of its first full winter season in the Mediterranean (CW 18 Dec 2025), highlighted by trips to festive markets in Barcelona, Rome, and Tuscany, starting from US\$2,399 (A\$3,457) per guest.

"The passion and traditions of the Mediterranean are in full force during the Christmas season and these elevated tours have been designed to entice and excite discerning travellers ahead of the holiday season, allowing our guests to be completely immersed in the spirit," the cruise line's president Wesley D'Silva said of the new program. *JB*

Pandaw on Hooghly

PANDAW Cruises has launched a new sailing on the Hooghly Ganges River, designed for travellers who want to incorporate one of India's most historic waterways into a wider itinerary.

Travellers can choose either a three- or four-night departure beginning and ending in Kolkata, with prices starting from US\$1,440 (A\$2,075) per person.

Guests will cruise past villages, explore the terracotta temples of Kalna, meet the brass craftsmen of Matiari, and visit the palaces, mosques and gardens of Murshidabad.

Uniworld air credit

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises is offering guests up to \$3,000 per person in air credit on 2026 and 2027 bookings made before the end of Aug.

Under the promotion, guests booking any stateroom on any itinerary will receive a \$2,000 air credit, while those booking a suite on a European itinerary will receive \$3,000 air credit.



SAILING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

CLIA Australasia executive director Joel Katz on the growth in cruise.

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