

Cruise Weekly today

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

GFOB hires Baron

GLOBUS family of brands has appointed a new business development manager for NSW/ACT, former APT Travel Group BDM Barbara Baron.

She brings more than 30 years of travel industry experience across the cruise sector, as well as in retail consulting, wholesale call centres, sales leadership, and airline account management.

Baron is the back-to-back winner of the Most Outstanding Sales Executive (Cruise) category in the NTIAs, which she won in both 2024 and 2025.

She will work closely with NSW and ACT travel advisors to drive GFOB sales.

Low water levels impacting river cruises

NEAR-RECORD low water levels are disrupting river cruises in Europe, with a number of ships stranded and one having run aground in Germany.

Water levels on the Danube are currently within inches of an all-time low, data from Hungary's water authority showed, leaving a number of cruises suspended.

Summer heatwaves and dry spells have caused the low water levels, forcing cruise lines to modify schedules, cancel departures, and introduce alternative travel arrangements.

Although the river is expected to rise next week, one local tour operator, MAHART-PassNave, told Reuters water levels have increasingly been falling below operational limits.

Meanwhile, low water levels on the Rhine saw *Thurgau Gold*, operated by Swiss cruise line Thurgau Travel, run aground in



Bonn last week.

Gold was conducting a docking manoeuvre on Fri morning when the ship made contact with a sandbank, local authorities in Germany reported.

An inland barge eventually pulled *Gold* free later that night, with no injuries reported.

Avalon Waterways told Reuters it had been forced to cancel a small number of upcoming departures on both the Danube and Rhine rivers because of low water levels.

Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours is also currently warning passengers

about the issue.

"Water levels on parts of the Danube, Rhine and Main rivers are lower than usual," a statement published on Scenic's website reads.

"At present, reduced water levels are affecting sections of the upper Danube, including Budapest and areas between Regensburg and Passau near Pfelling," the statement said.

"Conditions are also impacting parts of the Main and Rhine rivers, where some stretches are currently not suitable for navigation," it read. *MS*



35
aurora
expeditions

Certified
B
Corporation

35 YEARS CHASING WONDER

Save up to 30%
and receive up to
\$5,000pp air credit
for a limited time*

BOOK NOW

*T&Cs apply



A year of celebrations



CARNIVAL Cruise Line (CCL) is celebrating the one-year anniversary of the opening of Celebration Key on Grand Bahama (**CW** 21 Jul 2025), its newest private destination, which has welcomed 2.4 million guests to date.

Since its opening, Celebration Key has supported around 1,000 local jobs with 80% of food and retail operators being locally owned, including Bahama Mama Seafood Pit, Flippin' Fritters, and Mini Donut King.

In addition, the island became the first cruise destination to earn Sensory Inclusive Certification (**CW** 07 Apr) through its partnership with KultureCity, reinforcing CCL's commitment to providing accessible experiences for all guests.

The destination was designed to acknowledge the cultural

heritage and natural beauty of Grand Bahama and the Bahamas as a whole, allowing guests to both connect with the unique spirit of the islands and enjoy the signature fun of Carnival.

President Christine Duffy said the cruise line had built something special and long-lasting with Celebration Key. "Our goal is to create unforgettable memories for our guests, and in its first year, the destination has done exactly that for more than two million people."

"We're proud to be part of those moments while also creating real, lasting impact in the local community."

"As we look ahead, we're excited to continue building on this momentum, creating new experiences for our guests and deepening our commitment to Grand Bahama and its people." *JB*

Ponant digs deep



PONANT Explorations celebrated Bastille Day on 14 Jul with its valued travel partners.

The group was treated to an exclusive culinary experience in Victoria's Yarra Valley, enjoying a truffle hunting experience at Truffle Valley.

Attendees were immersed in the world of truffles, learning about their cultivation, the different varieties and their value, as well as how they are carefully fossicked and stored.

The celebrations continued with an exclusive truffle-themed luncheon at the renowned Levantine Hill Estate. *MS*

MEANWHILE, Ponant is currently offering limited-time savings on close-to-home voyages, with up to \$3,000 off available at present.

Guests can save on select 2027 'Kimberley and West Coast Odyssey' departures aboard *Le Soleal* and *Le Jacques Cartier*, exploring Australia's northern wilderness, towering cliffs, cascading waterfalls, and crocodile-lined rivers.

Travellers can also enjoy exclusive savings across all staterooms and suites on two different NZ voyages. *MS*

Pictured are Annabelle Brown (Ponant state manager Victoria/Tasmania), Judy Quigley (Toorak Village Travel), Tanya Van Angeren (Sorrento Travel), Cathie Sullivan (Eastern Hill Travel), Edwina Brierley (Inflight Travel), Sally Anne Matthews (Bunnik Tours), and Ines Iniesta (Journey Beyond) with hosts from Southern Star.



UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL: Join Our Mentoring Program and Ignite Your Success!

TIME is a Career Advancement Path for all Employees in Travel, Tourism, Hospitality, Cruise and Aviation Industry including Regional, and Rural Areas across Australia

**WHAT TIME CAN
DO FOR YOU...**

- Further develop your management and leadership potential
- Develop confidence and networking opportunities
- Strategic career planning
- Increase your knowledge of organisational culture & processes

For more information visit - www.travelindustrymentor.com.au



A GRAND Canyon river rafting guide has broken several world records after rowing from California to Hawaii in just under 44 days.

Kelsey Pfendler took off from Monterey on her 6.4-metre boat *Lily*, arriving in Honolulu on the night of 05 Jul, with hundreds gathering to celebrate her achievement.

Pfendler was the first US woman, as well as both the youngest and fastest woman, to complete the journey of more than 3,862km solo.

She beat the previous women's world record holder by 22 days and the men's world record holder by eight days.

Throughout the journey, Pfendler posted her experiences on social media, explaining how she intended to cross the ocean and her means to survive on the high seas, struggling through blistered hands and unfavourable winds.

Carnival brings cheer



CARNIVAL Encounter's cruise director and Fun Squad have given patients at the Queensland Children's Hospital a Christmas in July surprise, organising a visit from Dr Seuss characters The Cat in the Hat and The Grinch.

Young patients were treated to a meet and greet, along with craft stations, a puppy play area, and plenty of sweet treats, culminating in a day of celebration and creativity.

During the event, Carnival Cruise Line (CCL) presented the hospital with a donation of \$135,000 raised by guests aboard *Carnival Encounter*, supporting programs and services for sick

children and their families.

The cheque was presented to Queensland Children's Hospital Foundation's senior partnerships manager Pete Breuer and his partnerships team by CCL's national sales manager Mark Richards, director of entertainment Jeremy Barnes, members of the *Encounter* Fun Squad and cruise director Franco Spies.

CCL has supported the hospital since 2019, hosting recurring events such as Conga for Kids on board *Carnival Luminosa* since the vessel began sailing from Queensland in Nov 2022 and *Encounter* since Mar 2025. JB

Time for take-off

PORT Canaveral outside Orlando is expanding its cruise terminal to meet growing demand, unveiling plans for a larger facility and a new parking garage.

Cruise Terminal 5, which primarily hosts Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean, will nearly double in size.

A new 13-storey parking garage will also be built next to Cruise Terminal 6, adding 3,700 parking spaces to the port's existing capacity.

The facility's chief executive officer John Murray said the investment is necessary to ensure it is able to meet future capacity commitments.

Celebrity sale

SAVE up to \$1,000 and get up to 75% off a second passenger with Celebrity Cruises' latest offer.

Travellers can currently also score an extra \$150 off European sailings as part of the deal - [CLICK HERE](#).



SAILING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

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

READ THE CRUISE GUIDE



cruiseweekly.com.au
cruiseweekly.co.nz

Cruise Weekly is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Cruise Weekly is Australasia's leading travel industry cruise publication.

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



Cruise Weekly is a publication of Cruise Weekly Pty Ltd ABN 73 123 041 485. All content fully protected by copyright. Please obtain written permission to reproduce any material. While every care has been taken in the preparation of the newsletter no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions. Information is published in good faith to stimulate independent investigation of the matters canvassed. Responsibility for editorial comment is taken by Damian Francis.