

Cruise Weekly today

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

Celeb's new SVP

ALFREDO Suarez has been appointed by Royal Caribbean Group as the new senior vice president for Celebrity River Cruises, effective 03 Aug.

Reporting directly to Celebrity president Laura Hodges Bethge, Suarez will be responsible for growing and scaling the river business.

He has been with Royal Caribbean Group for 10 years, and has served in a number of roles with the company.

Suarez most recently served as chief strategy and commercial officer, newbuilding and innovation.

Burghart Lell, Celebrity River's Basel-based MD, will report to Suarez.

Uniworld's "historic" three-ship expansion

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises has announced three more newbuild vessels, which will launch in 2028 (**CW** breaking news yesterday).

The line will introduce *Helen*, *Clara*, and *Mekong Mystique* across Europe and Asia, bringing its fleet to a total of 22 ships.

Helen and *Clara* will sail across the Danube and Rhine rivers, while *Mekong Mystique* will cruise along her namesake river in Southeast Asia.

The news builds on the momentum of Uniworld's last fleet expansion announcement nine months ago (**CW** 29 Oct 2025), which will see the cruise line add four new ships next year.

"This is one of the most significant periods of investment and growth in Uniworld's history," president & chief executive officer Ellen Bettridge said.

"As demand for immersive



travel continues to grow, every new ship we build allows us to continue raising the bar for luxury river cruising.

"It's also an opportunity to create deeper, more meaningful connections between our guests and the destinations we sail."

The additions will see Uniworld

continue its tradition of themed ships, with *Helen* paying tribute to Helen of Troy; *Clara* named after painter Clara Peeters, and *Mekong Mystique* inspired by Asia's third-longest river.

Bookings for Uniworld's 2028 season are now open. *MS*

Pictured: interiors of *Clara*.



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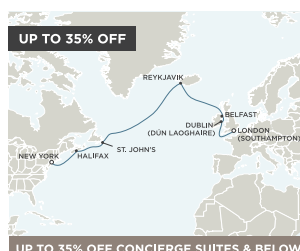
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Fred's big journey

FRED. Olsen Cruise Lines has announced a new 87-night Grand Voyage aboard *Borealis*, sailing round trip from Southampton, departing on 05 Jan 2028.

Calling at 28 ports across 17 countries and five continents, highlights of the voyage will include excursions in Manaus and Santarem along the Amazon River, a circumnavigation of Cape Horn, and a three-day cruise in the Antarctic Peninsula.

The voyage also features overnight stays in Rio De Janeiro and Buenos Aires, as well as Samana Bay and Dominica in the Caribbean.

Martin Lister, head of product innovation at the cruise line, said the "incredible" voyage had been "carefully crafted."

"This is our first return to the Amazon for nine years, and has been designed to offer something truly distinctive, with scenic cruising along one of the world's greatest rivers, bringing guests closer to the rainforest and its diverse wildlife, from colourful birdlife to pink river dolphins," he said.

"In contrast, Antarctica offers the chance to experience a region few ever visit, with three days of scenic cruising past ice-strewn waters, vast glaciers and snow-capped peaks," he added.

Marina tees up for Ryder Cup



A LUXURY, all-inclusive Ryder Cup experience will be offered aboard Oceania Cruises' *Oceania Marina* (pictured) next year during the biennial golf competition between Europe and the United States.

Packages will include accommodation aboard the vessel, which will be docked at Shannon Estuary, as well as dining and a four-day Ryder Cup ticket to Adare Manor Golf Club, including daily transfers.

Passengers can embark on a round trip voyage from Southampton on 12 Sep for the full 10-night voyage to Shannon Foynes, returning on 22 Sep.

Guests can also choose to board at Shannon for a five-night stay during Ryder Cup week.

Luxury cruise travel agency Panache Cruises helped broker the deal, the company's vice president of business development Matt Busby said.

"We became aware that Ryder Cup Travel Services were trying to find a partner to help

them charter a [cruise ship] to accommodate golf fans heading to the Ryder Cup.

"We immediately leveraged our contacts and identified three possible ships of the right size that were in the British Isles at that time of year."

Ryder Cup Travel Services director of business strategy Richard Parker said *Marina* will offer golf fans a rare opportunity to experience the event.

"Guests can enjoy world-class golf at Adare Manor by day, before returning to *Oceania Marina* for first-class dining, all-inclusive hospitality and evening entertainment," he said.

"This premium experience is designed for visitors from across the island of Ireland and around the world who are seeking a truly memorable way to be part of golf's greatest team contest."

The 2027 Ryder Cup will mark the 100th anniversary of the competition, which is hosted alternately in Europe and the United States. *MS*

Plant a Wiggly tree

ROYAL Caribbean is taking its partnership with The Wiggles to the next level with the launch of a tree-planting initiative to celebrate National Tree Day on 26 Jul.

The duo has teamed up with Planet Ark to plant a tree in New South Wales or Queensland for each of the first 1,000 who book one of three Wiggly-themed sailings during the summer 2026/27 season, in a contribution worth \$20,000.

The initiative also marks the arrival of the 'Tree of Wisdom', - the Wiggles' dancing tree character - on board *Quantum of the Seas* and *Anthem of the Seas* Wiggly Cruises.

Guests who join the special voyages will enjoy an action-packed line-up of activities, including a sail away party featuring DJ Dorothy, live shows, and ultimate family discos, along with photo opportunities and meet-and-greets with characters from The Wiggles.

The Wiggly sailings kick off with a four-night *Quantum* getaway from Brisbane to Airlie Beach, departing on 30 Nov 2026.

"We are thrilled to bring the joy of a Wiggly holiday together with a meaningful environmental action," Royal Caribbean senior marketing director Kathryn Lock said.



SAILING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

CLIA Australasia executive director

Joel Katz on the growth in cruise.

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WHILE there are a range of apprehensions some have about cruising, a water tornado is not typically one of them.

TikTok user Megan Watts shared a video while aboard a Royal Caribbean ship, depicting two waterspouts in the distance with the caption, "new fear unlocked".

The viral video has since been viewed over 4.2 million times.

Waterspouts are described as tornadoes that form over water or move from land to water, usually lasting between two to 20 minutes, moving at speeds of 10 to 15 knots.

As intimidating as they seem, most modern cruise ships have advanced satellite and tracking systems to identify and avoid waterspouts before they cause any kind of damage - it looks like there will be no sharknados today.

Respecting the Heritage



HERITAGE Expeditions recently sent a group of travel advisors on its 'Asian Island Odyssey' itinerary aboard *Heritage Adventurer*.

The famil took the advisors to remote islands across Indonesia and the Philippines, where they got to experience an array of wildlife and diverse cultures, and learn about the history and traditions of each destination.

"This voyage with Heritage Expeditions took us to some of the most remote and breathtaking corners of the Philippines and Indonesia – places that still feel wild, untouched and incredibly special," said Danielle Burroughs from Expedition Partners.

"I've definitely ticked off another bucket-list experience."

Main Beach Travel's Vicki Carmichael called the famil "a journey full of first experiences, from swimming with whale sharks and stingless jellyfish to encountering green sea turtles, sea snakes, rare wildlife, and heartfelt welcomes from remote

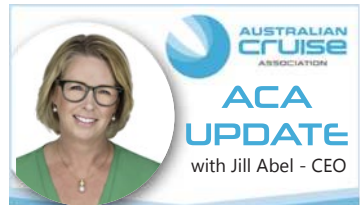
island communities."

Globe Trotter Travel's Lori Burns said the cruise was a "truly amazing experience".

"From the warm, family-run hospitality and dedicated crew to the loyal guests who make each day one to remember, then there are the unique shore excursions, Zodiac cruises, snorkelling, hiking, birding, kayaking, and visiting villages with friendly locals."

Heritage's Asian voyages range from 14 to 19 days, operating through some of the world's most remote regions, including Indonesia, Melanesia, Micronesia, the Philippines and Borneo. *JB*

Pictured: Cathy Schroder, Southlands Travel & Cruise Mawson; Phoebe Fardell, Travel Associates Toronto; Chris Le Roux, Heritage Expeditions; Sienna Gardner, Travelling Places Tamborine Mountain; Jeanette Fardell and Lori Burns, Globetrotter Travel; Vicki Carmichael, Main Beach Travel; Danielle Burroughs, Expedition Partners Eltham.



Cruise Ready Victoria

LAST week I had the pleasure of participating in the Victorian Cruise Industry Workshops, a fantastic initiative showcasing the depth and diversity of experiences available to cruise guests visiting The Garden State.

Over three days, more than 40 tourism businesses showcased their products while gaining valuable insights from cruise lines and ground handlers on what it means to be "cruise ready".

Our first day in Melbourne featured presentations from operators, followed by a guided tour of the city's famous laneways - a reminder of why Melbourne remains one of Australia's great cultural port cities.

Day two took us to Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula to experience local attractions first-hand, including the newly opened Quiddity Place, where exceptional hospitality meets a remarkable private art collection.

We then crossed Port Phillip Bay aboard Searoad Ferries to Sorrento's impressive Alba Thermal Springs.

Our final day focused on the Mornington Peninsula and concluded at the spectacular Pt. Leo Estate, where world-class food, wine and an extraordinary sculpture park create a memorable visitor experience.

The workshops reinforced the remarkable range of experiences available within easy reach of both Melbourne and Geelong.

From vibrant city precincts to premium food, wine, wellness, art and nature-based experiences, Victoria offers the diversity today's cruise guests are seeking.

As cruise lines continue to refine Australian itineraries, the state has a compelling case to feature more prominently in future deployment.

NCL free at sea

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has launched its first-ever half-price, 'free at sea', 50% off balconies flash sale.

Cruisers can currently score up to 50% off balcony staterooms and above, which can be paired with Norwegian's half-price 'free at sea' offer.

The deal provides guests with premium beverages, speciality dining, and more.