

Cruise Weekly today

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

Disney remains icy

DISNEY Cruise Line has extended its preferential access to Icy Strait Point in Hoonah, Alaska with a new 15-year deal.

The agreement with Huna Totem Corporation ensures Disney passengers will continue visiting the indigenous-owned destination through to at least 2041.

The agreement secures Disney preferential docking for one vessel each week and includes a minimum annual passenger guarantee.

Wildlife viewing and outdoor recreation are some of the highlights of a visit to Icy Strait Point, where the cruise line has been calling since 2017.

"Disney Cruise Line has been an important part of the Icy Strait Point story for nearly a decade, and we're grateful to build on that relationship through this agreement," Huna Totem president Howard Sherman said.

"Each Disney Cruise Line visit helps support local jobs, businesses and economic opportunity in Hoonah while creating meaningful connections between guests and the people who call this place home."

Explora III christened



EXPLORA Journeys has taken delivery of *Explora III*, which was officially delivered to the cruise line overnight.

The transfer of the ship to Explora marks the halfway milestone in the delivery of the line's six-vessel fleet, with three ships now sailing.

Explora III is the first LNG-capable ship in the cruise line's fleet, and will also be the company's most spacious, introducing enhanced public areas and expanded wellness and culinary experiences.

The ship was delivered at Fincantieri's Sestri Ponente shipyard in Genoa, with the traditional handover ceremony attended by Pierfrancesco Vago, executive chairman of the Cruise Division of MSC Group; Anna Nash, president of Explora; Biagio Mazzotta, president of Fincantieri; Pierroberto Folgiero, chief

executive officer & managing director of Fincantieri; and Luigi Matarazzo, GM of Fincantieri's Merchant Ships Division.

Celebrations included a performance by Italian dance group Urban Theory before the traditional parade of *Explora III*'s officers and the Fincantieri shipyard workforce, paying tribute to the craftsmanship behind the vessel.

Joined on stage by Captain Serena Melani, Vago and Folgiero presided over the ceremonial change of flag, marking the official transfer of the ship from builder to owner.

Following the ship's blessing, *Explora III*'s godmother Maya Aponte, daughter of MSC Cruises chair Diego Aponte, concluded the ceremony with the traditional ribbon-cutting and bottle-breaking, celebrating the newest addition to the Explora fleet. *MS*

Lack of Labadee

ROYAL Caribbean has once again suspended visits to its private island in Labadee, Haiti, to Jun 2027, as political unrest in the country persists.

The cruise line confirmed the suspension in a statement, saying the country lacked the "ability to deliver the best vacations responsibly".

"This decision was made with the safety and well-being of our guests and crew members in mind.

"We have communicated these changes directly with guests, remain committed to our Labadee team members and are working to ensure they feel informed and supported," the line said.

The news comes off the back of the suspension extension announced in Jan (**CW** 15 Jan), cancelling all visits to Labadee across this year.

Previous suspensions were announced last year (**CW** 04 Aug), as well as 2024, when the crisis in Haiti reached its peak (**CW** 15 Mar 2024).

Since 2024, the Caribbean nation has been in a national state of emergency as a result of protests, violent crime, and humanitarian issues.

Smartertraveller currently lists Haiti at level 4 'do not travel' status, with Australians warned of gang violence, violent crime, murder, armed robbery, and more.



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Carnival donates

CARNIVAL Corporation launched its surplus meal donation program in The Bahamas this week, one year after the opening of Celebration Key on Grand Bahama (**CW** 20 Jul).

More than 144 kilograms of prepared, unserved meals were offloaded from *Carnival Freedom* and *Carnival Conquest*, as part of the company's Less Left Over food waste reduction strategy.

Food was delivered to the Grand Bahamas Children's Home, as well as to the Urban Renewal Authority, where it was distributed within the local community.

The meals were collected, rapidly chilled, stored and transferred ashore using food safety protocols.

"This expansion in The Bahamas is really about the strength of the partnerships we've built across the Caribbean," said Marie McKenzie, Carnival's senior vice president, government and destination affairs.

"Working alongside government leaders and community organisations, we're able to connect what happens on board our ships with real needs on shore - creating a simple, reliable way to get high-quality surplus meals to people who can benefit from them."

Cruise adjusts to water levels



EXCLUSIVE

RIVER lines are monitoring conditions in Europe, as near-record low water levels continue to disrupt operations throughout the continent (**CW** 20 Jul).

AmaWaterways, which is preparing to host a mega famil on the Danube, told **CW** its focus is on adapting to the conditions.

"This may include adjustments to the order of ports, alternative transportation between certain destinations or, in some cases, a ship swap," AmaWaterways said.

"Every decision is made with our guests' comfort, safety, and overall experience in mind."

Deb Gibb from the Luxury Travel Collection's Why Travel is currently sailing in Europe with AmaWaterways, where her departure aboard *AmaPrima* (pictured) has been disrupted.

The ship's planned Amsterdam to Luxembourg route has been changed to a custom Zaandam-Brussels itinerary, and Gibb said

AmaWaterways had kept her and the group both well-informed and re-accommodated.

Guests are also being offered forward transport to the cruise's initial disembarkation port to continue their onward travel, as well as a cruise credit.

Meanwhile, Viking told **CW** it is focusing on implementing ship swaps where necessary to combat water level problems.

"Viking strategically deploys sister ships on the same itineraries in opposite directions," Viking said.

"When river conditions require it, Viking may implement a ship swap, allowing guests and their luggage to transfer to their exact same stateroom on an identical sister ship positioned on the other side of the affected section of river.

"This approach helps preserve itineraries and reduce disruptions to the guest experience," the cruise line said. *MS*

Antarctica savings

LAST-MINUTE savings for Antarctica are available for this Nov with small ship specialist Cruise Traveller.

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IT TURNS out a career at sea can come with unexpected perks - just ask the P&O Cruises crew members who found love on board.

Rene Palguta and Yricka Espinosa Fausto recently tied the knot on board *Iona*, three years after they met while working aboard *Azura*.

The pair hit it off after Palguta, who is a customer services manager with P&O, showed Espinosa Fausto around on her first day as assistant shore excursions manager.

"Getting married on board felt like the perfect way to celebrate our story because it's where everything began," Espinosa Fausto said.

"We joined P&O Cruises to build our careers, but we found so much more."



Carnival beats climate target



CARNIVAL Corporation has reached its 2030 greenhouse gas intensity goal five years early, achieving a 20% reduction in FY25 from its 2019 baseline, despite carrying more passengers.

The milestone was revealed in the company's new *Sustainability Report*, which also sets out a new 25% reduction target.

Nearly three-quarters of the Carnival fleet (74%) can now plug into shore power, up from 70% a year earlier, the report said.

Food waste was cut by almost half (47%), while nearly 90% of onboard water was produced

from seawater, with passengers using just 193 litres of water per person per day - around 38% less than the average American's daily water use.

Carnival Corp now has 11 LNG-powered ships, representing 21% of fleet capacity, with another seven on order through 2033.

Looking ahead, Carnival's sustainability roadmap includes increasing shore power capability to 80% of its fleet by the end of the decade, and continuing its long-term ambition of achieving net carbon-neutral ship operations by 2050. *JM*

Oceania savings

OCEANIA Cruises currently has savings of 50% on select cruises sailing before the end of the year.

The 'Iberia Celebration' voyage on 30 Aug aboard *Oceania Nautica* is on sale now, currently \$5,410pp.

Sailing from Bilbao to Rome, the 14-day trip showcases the best of Spain and Portugal, visiting cities such as Alicante, Barcelona, and Menorca, in addition to extended stays in Lisbon and Seville.

Nautica will then embark across the rest of the Western Mediterranean with stops in Saint-Tropez, and Tuscany, before finishing in Rome.

Another cruise on sale is the seven-day 'Tropical Retreats' itinerary, sailing round trip from Miami from 07 Dec, currently \$2,415 per guest

Calls include Cozumel, Roatan, Harvest Caye, and Costa Maya, known for their beaches and vibrant cultures, with culinary experiences such as a tequila and taco pairing seminar, as well as tasting tours across Mexico.



SAILING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

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

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