

Cruise Weekly today

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

Zuiderdam opens

BOOKINGS have opened for the first voyages of Holland America Line's (HAL) *Zuiderdam* following the ship's transformation through the brand's Evolution program in 2028 (**CW** 15 Jul).

The first cruises on the newly renovated ship will showcase the Mediterranean and Atlantic coastlines, Norway's fjords, Iceland, and more.

Zuiderdam's enhancements will debut on 02 Apr 2028 on a cruise from Civitavecchia, while she will spend most of the rest of the season sailing from Amsterdam.

HAL's Evolution will see the cruise line invest more than US\$500 million across its ships.

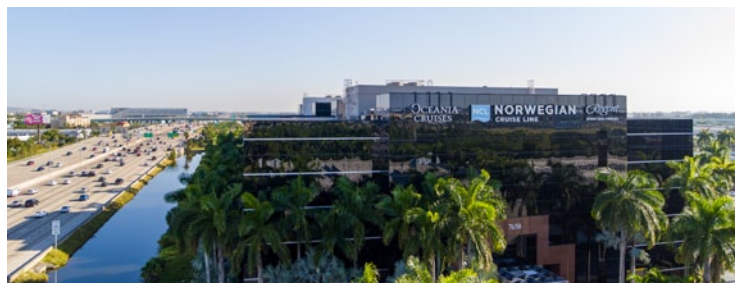
NCLH records earnings boost, sells ship

SECOND-QUARTER earnings results for Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) have provided the business with some respite from recent difficult news (**CW** 05 May), with the business recording total revenue up 4.9% year-on-year to US\$2.6 billion (A\$3.7b).

It managed to deliver better-than-expected profitability for the quarter, with adjusted EBITDA of US\$666 million (A\$947.6m), adjusted net income of US\$222 million (A\$315.9m), and adjusted EPS of US\$0.48 (A\$0.68).

The business reported it had identified an additional US\$100 million (A\$142.3m) of annualised savings in addition to the US\$125 million (A\$177.8m) it had found last quarter, but admitted it would have a limited impact on this year's finances.

NCLH suggested that the outlook for Q3 could still be quite challenging, with the company



below its optimal booked position for the next 12 months as Norwegian Cruise Line continued to experience softer demand "related to company-specific execution challenges", and also mentioned the ongoing conflict in the Middle East as an issue.

"We are executing with urgency on our priorities including sharpening our brand positioning and marketing execution, strengthening our revenue management and pricing capabilities, driving meaningful cost efficiencies, including

an additional \$100 million of savings, and ensuring we have the right team in place to rebuild commercial momentum over time," John W. Chidsey, chair and chief executive officer, said.

NCLH also announced the opening of Great Tides Waterpark on 04 Sep this year, which will be located at Great Stirrup Cay and span nearly six acres.

Meanwhile, Oceania Cruises' *Oceania Sirena* is expected to leave the fleet in 2028, following the announcement overnight of her sale (**CW** breaking news). **DF**



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On location on board
Viking Fjølvar

Today's issue of *Cruise Weekly* is coming to you courtesy of Viking, which is hosting us aboard *Viking Fjølvar*.

WE HAVE just landed in Paris, the City of Light, where we will soon embark on Viking's 'Paris and the Heart of Normandy' river cruise with several Aussie travel agents.

During the famil, we will enjoy a wide range of Parisian and Norman highlights, including strolling through the capital city's iconic landmarks such as the Arc de Triomphe and Palais Garnier opera house, and learning about the history of Normandy's battlefields.

Cruise Weekly is the only trade media on board, so keep your eyes peeled for more on our trip next week.

Ponant to head south



PONANT Explorations has opened bookings for its 2028-29 Antarctic season, which will feature more than 30 expedition departures aboard *Le Boreal*, *Le Lyrial*, *Le Soleal*, and *Le Commandant Charcot* (pictured).

Highlights of the season include Ponant's 10-night Antarctic Peninsula expedition, which is designed as an ideal introduction to the southernmost continent.

Every departure of the itinerary includes one night's accommodation in Buenos Aires before embarkation, return flights between Buenos Aires and Ushuaia, and all transfers.

There will also be extended voyages exploring South Georgia, the Falkland Islands, the Ross Sea, and New Zealand's remote Subantarctic Islands.

The season will see *Le Commandant Charcot* once again access rarely visited regions including the Weddell Sea, Bellingshausen Sea, and Marguerite Bay, with opportunities to see emperor penguins on select departures.

A standout of the season is *Le Commandant Charcot*'s first-ever full circumnavigation of Antarctica (*CW* 16 Feb), a 62-day voyage covering nearly 23,000 kilometres and visiting the Ross Sea, Mount Erebus, Adelie Land, and more.

Those who wish to experience the adventure in a shorter format can book one of two half-circumnavigations separately, with Ushuaia-Hobart and Hobart-Ushuaia segments both available - click **HERE** for more. *MS*

Up to 40% off MSC

MSC Cruises is offering savings of up to 40% on select sailings booked by 05 Oct.

Guests can also add on the 'best holiday ever' drinks package, which features a range of alcoholic beverages.



Explore More

Arctic 2028 and
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A Cunard bonus

CUNARD Line is offering bonus commission on *Queen Anne*'s South America voyages to the tune of an extra 5%.

The incentive is available on six select *Queen Anne* voyages to South America departing next year, when booked by the end of Sep.

Click **HERE** for more information on them.

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KEEN divers on cruises are always looking out for a rare sighting of some sort of marine wildlife, and photographer Ian Haggerty might just have taken the gold medal for now.

On a recent reef dive he spotted a sea cucumber.

This was not particularly unusual, except that it was doing something quite unique.

Haggerty caught the sea cucumber pooping, a rarity to witness in real life.

Sea cucumbers digest and excrete sediment, which is known as bioturbation, and helps keep the ecosystem healthy - essentially what comes out also looks like the sediment that went in.

"Sea cucumbers can poop over 60,000 tonnes of sediment across a coral reef, approximately the mass of five Eiffel Towers," Dr Vincent Raoult from the University of Newcastle, explained.

Aurora lowers age limit



AURORA Expeditions is welcoming a new generation of young adventurers, allowing children aged six and up to travel.

Guests were previously required to be at least eight-years-old, with Aurora saying those as young as six can now enjoy watching wildlife in its natural habitat, exploring a remote coastline by Zodiac, learning directly from local communities, or listening to the insights of Aurora's expert expedition team.

"Some of life's most meaningful lessons are learned when we step outside the classroom and experience the world for ourselves," chief marketing officer Katie Malone said.

"A child may read about a

whale, a glacier, or a remote community in a textbook, but seeing and experiencing these places can create a much deeper sense of curiosity, understanding, and responsibility.

"By bringing generations together through shared exploration, we hope to create lifelong family memories while inspiring young travellers to care for the extraordinary places, wildlife and cultures they encounter," she added.

The cruise line is currently offering children aged six to 15 savings of up to 50%.

Children aged eight and above have typically had to pay the adult fare under Aurora's previous policy. *MS*

MSC welcomes whale expert

AS PART of a partnership with marine conservation organisation ORCA, MSC Cruises has welcomed marine mammal observer Maria Snell (pictured) on board its Musica-class ship, *MSC Poesia*.

Throughout the peak whale season, Snell will carry out research on responsible passenger ship operations in environments with a strong whale population.

The UK-based conservationist will use a new research protocol deployed by ORCA, which uses a specialised mobile observation rig combining high-powered binoculars and camera technology.

Additionally, Snell will assess shore excursions through a conservation lens and deliver educational lectures and whale-watching experiences to guests.



SAILING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

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

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