



Cruise Weekly today

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

Carnival speeds up

CARNIVAL Cruise Line is rolling out express dining, aiming to deliver a full culinary experience in the main dining room in under half an hour.

The program is now available on 15 ships and will be fully implemented across the Aussie fleet by the end of May.

Available each night, Express Dining offers a faster multi-course dining experience for groups of six or less guests.

Express Dining complements Carnival's traditional dining experience, giving guests the choice of a streamlined service that significantly reduces service time with a slightly abbreviated selection of meals.

New RSSC president's first Aus trip

NEW Regent Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) president Wes D'Silva said his appointment will allow chief luxury officer Jason Montague to focus on long-term strategy for NCLH's luxury brands, as the group prepares to bring almost 10 new ships online over the next 10 years.

Speaking to *Cruise Weekly* during his first visit to Sydney since taking the role last week (**CW** 05 Mar), D'Silva outlined how he will work alongside Montague and newly appointed global luxury ambassador Steve Odell (**CW** 09 Mar).

"[Montague's] focus on the Regent brand is going to be more so the high-level strategic vision.

"Absorbing that much capacity over the next several years, especially in the ultra-luxury sector, is no easy task, so we want to ensure that we're doing it very mindfully and strategically."



Helping D'Silva in Australia will be Odell, serving in a dual-branded role with both RSSC and Oceania Cruises.

"Having a representative that's intimately involved and intimately knowledgeable with both brands on this side I think is going to be really helpful," he said.

"Ensuring people understand where both brands are going from a strategic vision, from a high-level vision, and him being able to speak to it," D'Silva said of Odell's role. **MS**

Pictured is D'Silva with vice president sales & general manager Lisa Pile.

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Galapagos 2028

CELEBRITY Cruises has opened bookings for 2028 Galapagos expeditions aboard its 100-passenger superyacht *Celebrity Flora*.

On itineraries that last between seven and 16 nights, guests can explore the Galapagos on outer loop and inner loop sailings, while land journeys are offered in Quito, Ecuador and destinations across Peru, including Lima, Cusco, Sacred Valley, and Machu Picchu.

The voyages feature activities such as snorkelling with sea lions, kayaking with sea turtles, exploring coastlines along towering cliffs, and encountering giant tortoises.

Additionally, travellers can do their part to help restore the natural habitats of the island archipelago, with each itinerary including a visit to a Scalesia reforestation area to plant seedlings under the guidance of naturalists from the national park.

"The Galapagos is one of the most extraordinary places on earth, and we are privileged to offer our guests an elevated and intimate way to explore the region on the award-winning *Celebrity Flora*," said Laura Hodges Bethge, president of Celebrity Cruises.

"Beyond delivering once-in-a-lifetime experiences, we are also committed to supporting the long-term conservation of these remarkable islands through our sustainability initiatives and community projects."

APT celebrates its VIPs



APT Travel Group has revealed its next exclusive Agent Mega Famil will take place in Portugal in Oct 2027, coinciding with the brand's 100th anniversary.

Hosted by APT's senior leaders, 100 top-selling travel advisors will join the trip, selected based on sales performance during the centenary qualifying year.

Chief sales officer Scott Ellis said: "The Agent Mega Famil is not only a celebration of success, but also a tangible investment in the agents who continue to drive our growth and who have played such an important role."

The announcement was made during the brand's annual VIP Dinners, which have now officially wrapped up.

Hosted over three weeks across Australia, the events brought together APT's highest-performing travel partners.

The series kicked off in Victoria in Feb, taking place at a Melbourne venue designed by Hecker Guthrie - the same studio responsible for the interiors of APT's newest European river

ships, *APT Ostara* and *APT Solara*.

Across the series, 157 Platinum agencies were recognised for exceeding \$550,000 in sales during 2025, alongside 62 Diamond agencies achieving more than \$1 million.

Additionally, nine agencies earned McGeary Club status for surpassing \$2 million in annual sales, while nine individual consultants qualified for Million Dollar Club recognition, each generating more than \$1 million in sales across APT, Travelmarvel, and Botanica.

The award recipients were presented with art pieces created through APT's long-standing partnership with the Imintji community in the Kimberley.

"These VIP Dinners were about more than recognising performance - they were an opportunity to express our genuine gratitude to the partners who continue to place their trust in APT year after year," Ellis enthused. *JM*

Pictured: Attendees at the VIP Dinner in WA.

Antarctic damage

POLAR expedition ship *Ocean Victory* was damaged on a recent trip to Antarctica, which saw the vessel rocked by waves of seven-10 metres.

The 20 Jan departure, operated by Albatros Expeditions, encountered rapidly developing severe weather in the Drake Passage, which saw the captain alter the itinerary, with the ship visiting Antarctica for only one out of the four days scheduled.

Albatros' parent company Polar Latitudes said the damage to the vessel was not structural, and did not affect her seaworthiness or operational certification.

A number of staterooms experienced minor water ingress during heavy seas, Polar Latitudes told **Cruise Weekly**, with guests on the affected voyage also reporting to this masthead leaks throughout communal areas.

Ocean Victory has since completed several voyages without incident.

CW understands passengers are currently negotiating with Polar Latitudes on a partial refund, which would include 20% of the fare paid.

Polar Latitudes said safety remains its highest priority. "In remote regions such as Antarctica and the Drake Passage, itinerary adjustments due to weather are not uncommon and reflect responsible command decision-making rather than vessel limitation," the company said.

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PORTRHOLE

IT IS already quite the feat to sail solo around the world, but another thing to do it on a boat that you built yourself.

That is exactly what South Australian Dan Turner achieved, having returned to land last week after spending 16 months at sea and travelling 28,000 nautical miles.

Using a yacht he built in his garage called *The Immortal Game*, he came second out of 15 competitors in the Mini Globe Race.

"The welcoming was just insane," Turner said, reflecting on reaching the finish line.

"There were boats everywhere and people honking horns; it's something that I couldn't have even imagined."

Turner experienced his fair share of challenges though.

"I felt selfish being away from my family, so it was very difficult at times," he said.

"I [also] had big storms...there were 70 knots of breeze near Tahiti and a 12-hour storm cell that was just crazy windy."

A highlight, however, was being able to visit hard-to-reach, exotic islands.

"Meeting some of these people and eating food with the locals was just amazing."

Turner now plans to return to a "normal life", and has found a buyer for his boat - another Aussie who plans on competing in the next Mini Globe Race.

Ritz releases more in 27-28



THE Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection has unveiled a new summer 2027-28 season of voyages aboard *Evrima*, *Ilma*, and *Luminara* (pictured).

The new program will feature more than 60 voyages, with expanded sailings across Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific.

Fourteen new ports of call will be introduced, including Culebra, Norman Island, Rangiroa, Fakarava, Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan, Zihuatanejo, and Puerto Chiapas.

Evrima will sail throughout Hawaii and the Pacific before returning to the Caribbean to join *Ilma*, where the ship will visit vibrant beach towns and tucked-away anchorages across almost 30 ports.

The season will also introduce a 13-night voyage from Los Angeles to Panama City, as well as two seven-night voyages from San

Juan to Panama City, which offer the opportunity to pass through the Panama Canal.

Meanwhile, *Luminara* will return to Asia-Pacific, where her voyages will connect the region's capitals and seaside towns.

The season will feature a slate of longer itineraries of up to 14 nights, including a Hong Kong to Singapore voyage, which will make overnight calls to Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City.

"Our Winter 2027-2028 season reflects our continued focus on creating journeys that feel both expansive and personal," president & chief executive officer Ernesto Fara said.

"By introducing new destinations across Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific, we're offering guests more ways to explore at their own pace while enjoying the care and connection that define our experience," he added. *MS*



CLIA UPDATE

with Joel Katz
MD, CLIA Australasia

Cruise360 will sell out

This year's Cruise360 Australasia conference is already shaping up to be one of our biggest and brightest events ever held in this region, and tickets will almost certainly sell out.

More than half of tickets have already been booked by travel agents in just a few weeks, and super earlybird rates will expire on Fri - so now is the time to act if you would like to secure a seat at CLIA's flagship event of the year.

Cruise360 Australasia will be held on 17-18 Sep at the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney, with an enhanced two-day program that will bring a sharpened focus on the needs of our travel advisor community.

We are already planning an event that is designed to deliver real relevance, new ideas, practical takeaways and a whole lot of buzz.

Right now, tickets are only available to CLIA travel agent members, but from Sat bookings will open to other CLIA members.

Super earlybird rates for travel agents cost A\$360 for the two-day event, including the welcome party and networking drinks - but only until the end of Fri.

Listen out for more announcements soon.

For further details and bookings, [CLICK HERE](#) to visit Cruise360 Australasia 2026.

