



Cruise Weekly today

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



On location on board
Avalon Envision

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Avalon Waterways, which is hosting us aboard **Avalon Envision** for her training charter.

AVALON'S training charter today arrived in Strasbourg, one of the most popular stops for European river cruises.

Advisors will explore the highlights of the Franco-German city, including its the Palais Rohan and the Palais du Rhin buildings, as well as the Petite France district.

Avalon won't chase capacity

AVALON Waterways will never chase capacity as the river cruise sector continues to grow, president Pam Hoffee has revealed to **Cruise Weekly**.

Speaking aboard Avalon's training charter on the Rhine this week, Hoffee said the cruise line will continue to strengthen at a rate which befits its demand, rather than attempting to flood the market with ships.

Viking is the world's largest river cruise line, operating almost 100 ships, while new entrant Celebrity River Cruises has an order for 20 vessels, which is set to be fully realised by 2031 (**CW** 30 Jan).

"We're never going to be that big," Hoffee said of some of Avalon's competitors.

"We believe in intentional growth, growing at the pace that our demand requires.

"I think that's best for the communities that we visit, it's

best for advisors because it keeps price points at a good level."

However, Hoffee added Avalon also does not want to stagnate at a size which means it could book out too quickly.

Another factor determining the line's considered growth is its onboard teams, Hoffee said.

"We want our crew to be able to deliver the experience that our guests count on, and we're able to do that because 80% of our crew come back every year...if we were to build 20 new ships, how do we build that culture?"

Hoffee believes if the sector grows in the correct manner, there will be plenty of market share for all lines.

This will mean growing Europe's destination map, she told CW yesterday (**CW** 25 Mar 26).

"The industry's future is much bigger, and if we do it right, it's not a problem," she said. *MS*

Record results

FINCANTIERI has revealed a record €117m (A\$1.94m) net profit in its 2025 financial results, four times higher than the previous year.

The cruise manufacturer also had a €20.3b (A\$33.8b) order intake, 32.4% up on its 2024 record levels, driven by 42% growth in shipbuilding.

Revenue grew 13.1% to €9.2 million (A\$15.3m) and EBITA hit €681m (A\$1.13b), a 33.9% increase compared to 2024.

Meanwhile, 24 vessels were delivered, with 97 in the order book and deliveries scheduled up to 2037, including the order NCLH signed in Feb 2026.

"We are very pleased with the record results achieved in 2025 in economic, financial and commercial terms, even in a complex global environment," said CEO and MD Pierroberto Folgiero.


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 **ROYAL CARIBBEAN**



Cruiseabout means business

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group's Cruiseabout has relaunched its Business Ownership Scheme (BOS), offering team leaders the chance to buy into the stores they run and share in the success.

The invitation-only scheme is aimed at team leaders who have a track record of impressive leadership, performance and ability to run a store as an owner.

Participants directly share in their store's profit and gain a seat on the Owners Advisory Board.

"The scheme is rooted in a founding principle of FCTG - that people who feel genuine ownership of their business outperform and outlast all others and we want to bring this opportunity to our Cruiseabout team leaders," explained General manager Brad Kennedy.

Australia's cruise market continues to grow, and Cruiseabout is scaling to meet



demand - making the ability to attract and retain exceptional people more critical than ever."

The first two leaders to enter the business' relaunched scheme are Kate Moulton from Cruiseabout North Lakes and Christina D'Agostino from Cruiseabout Whitford (pictured).

"Having been there from day

one, building the store with such a wonderful team and seeing the success it continues to achieve has been so rewarding," explained D'Agostino.

"I've never taken a leap like this before, so backing myself and becoming a BOS owner is something I'm incredibly proud of," she added. *JHM*

Thwaites' new role

FORMER Celebrity Cruises exec Trevor Thwaites is joining Global Touring as director of Sales in Jun, marking his first move into the touring sector.

With 20 years of experience under his belt in the premium travel sector, Thwaites

(pictured) previously held leadership roles at Princess Cruises and Oceania Cruises

He began his career at P&O Cruises in reservations, where he progressed into sales and executive positions.

"Bringing someone of [Trevor's] calibre into the touring space is incredibly exciting, particularly as we look to learn from the cruise sector and apply those insights to drive growth across our brands," Anna Fawcett, general manager APAC at Global Touring, enthused, adding the appointment helped to set the business up for a phase of growth.

According to Global Touring, Thwaites' hire follows "a recent realignment of the sales function and reflects Global Touring's continued investment in strengthening its trade sales capability across Australia and New Zealand".



Disney cruise reveal

TOKYO Disney Resort owner Oriental Land Company (OLC) has announced plans to establish the new Oriental Land Cruise Co, which will operate under the name of Disney Cruise Line Japan, slated for launch on 3 Apr.

According to a shareholder notification from OLC earlier this week, the business is planning to launch Disney cruise services "as a pillar for further growth, while pursuing continued growth for Tokyo Disney Resort, its mainstay business".

"As part of this initiative, the Company has decided to establish a subsidiary to accelerate the commercialisation of its cruise business and to manage and operate its future cruise ships in a specialised and agile manner," the notification said.

OLC shared plans two years ago to launch a Wish-class ship, which will begin construction in 2028 for delivery in 2029 and a second ship may also be on its way, the company hinted last year. *(CW 08 May 2025) JHM*

No fuel issues

PEARL Expeditions has confirmed that there will be no surcharges for its 2026-27 sailings and all voyages will operate as planned, despite global fuel challenges due to the Middle East conflict.

Paspaley Pearl's operating model is "fundamentally different" to larger-scale ships and carries a "significantly lower fuel burn per guest per expedition", the line said.

She carries 30 guests and focuses on slow travel, with extended time at anchor and short Zodiac excursions.

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HERITAGE Expeditions has helped veteran conservationist Tim Flannery rediscover an extinct marsupial - the ring-tailed glider, a Lazarus taxa species known as Tous.

It took more than a decade for Flannery to find the animal, which was made possible by gathering evidence from around the globe, including voyages on the 'Indonesian Explorer' itinerary.

"I was also able to scout the coast along the PNG-Indonesian border, where fossils of Tous were found, and plan fieldwork there," explained Flannery.

"Given the remoteness of these regions, the cost involved in getting to them, and the other difficulties involved, I simply could not have undertaken this project without Heritage Expeditions."

Uniworld savings

UNIWORLD is offering discounts off almost all 2027 departures with an added 10% off, unlocking total savings of up to 30%.

The limited time savings are valid for sale until 30 Jun and apply to cruises excluding cruise & rail, cruise & tour and South America trips.

Itineraries include 'Brilliant Bordeaux', 'Delightful Danube' and more.

MSC World Asia details

MSC Cruises has shared details about new leisure spaces on board *MSC World Asia*, launching in Dec this year.

The ship will be the first in the fleet to bring the revamped Harbour concept to European waters, which will serve as an outdoor park where families can play, dine and relax.

Highlights include The Cliffhanger, an overwater swing ride, an adventure trail ropes course, two zip-line style Sky Rails and the Harbour Aquapark.

The ship will also introduce outdoor area The Play Deck and The Tree of Life at The Spiral, the longest dry slide at sea.

Meanwhile, the AquaDeck district will be redesigned, offering wellness activities, entertaining and evening events

Features include seven pools and 13 hot tubs as well as two refreshed pool areas.

Another leisure option is the Manila Bay Pool featuring the Pearl Lagoon Bar, shaded areas and a range of seating options, and entertainment and beverage



service from day to night.

At The Coral Cove, guests can enjoy an indoor pool with a retractable glass roof and lounge by the poolside bar.

MSC World Asia is the third vessel in the World Class series and will sail seven-night Mediterranean voyages in its debut season, with ports of call including Barcelona, Marseille, Messina, Naples, Valletta, and Civitavecchia. *JHM*



CRUISE WEEKLY

Avalon Envision

Panorama Bistro

Avalon Envision's Panorama Bistro is a casual yet intimate dining venue offering a relaxed alternative to the main dining room. It serves smaller, tasting menu-style meals, often featuring afternoon tea with sweets and sandwiches.

This space is one of the most popular with Aussies, who prefer its laidback take on dining.

Terranova team

TERRA Nova Expeditions has welcomed on board Ross Avenell as head of global sales, who previously spent a year at Aurora Expeditions as director of sales and customer service for North America.

According to CEO Greg Carter, Avenell has "deep experience and strong relationships across the expedition cruise industry".

"Ross brings new direction to our sales team and I am truly excited about what he brings to our growing team," he said.

At the same time, the line has also farewelled chief commercial officer Beth Mercier, who is swapping companies with Avenell and embarking on a new role at Aurora Expeditions.

New Explora plan

EXPLORA Journeys has announced that *Explora II* will no longer be deployed in the Middle East during the winter 2026-27 season, and instead sail the Mediterranean, with destinations such as Funchal, Casablanca and Ibiza.

All passengers on amended voyages will be contacted directly and supported with alternate options.

"This decision has been taken well in advance, following careful consideration and reflecting Explora Journeys' commitment to providing guests and travel advisors with clarity and confidence as they plan their future journeys," said the line.