

### Explora V moment

**EXPLORA** Journeys' *Explora V* has reached a significant milestone, with the launch of her bow section at Fincantieri's Palermo shipyard, and the ship shifting from land to water for the first time.

She will enter service with her sister *Explora IV* next year, followed by *Explora VI* in 2028.

"As we grow, we are introducing more guests to a new expression of ocean travel," enthused president Anna Nash.

"We now look ahead to the delivery of *Explora III* this Jul and her inaugural journeys, from the Mediterranean to Northern Europe, Iceland and Greenland," she added.

## Scenic's biggest season yet



**SCENIC** Luxury Cruises & Tours' *Scenic Eclipse II* is set to return to Australia during the 2028/29 season, offering voyages across the Kimberley, Asia, the South Pacific, and East Antarctica.

The 2028/29 Discovery Yacht season, released yesterday, will be Scenic's most extensive to date, spanning all seven continents, more than 100 countries, and 600 ports of call.

Returning to Asia-Pacific and Oceania will be *Eclipse II*, which will sail in the Kimberley and East Antarctica's Ross Sea, as first foreshadowed last month (**CW** 17 Apr).

*Eclipse II*'s return follows the strong demand created from her two highly successful local seasons in 2024 and 2025 (**CW** 05 Dec).

Another defining moment in the program is the inaugural season of *Scenic Ikon*, which will join *Eclipse II* and *Scenic Eclipse* (**CW** 21 Oct).

The upcoming Discovery Yacht will embark on her sold-out inaugural voyage from Venice in Apr 2028, with the rest of her maiden season through to Mar 2029 spanning 110 ports across the Mediterranean, the Aegean, Egypt, Antarctica, and more.

Pre-registration interest for

*Eclipse's* 2028/29 voyages has reached record levels, Scenic said, while early booking momentum for the Kimberley season is already building, following last year's sold-out program.

"Scenic's 2028/29 collection represents an extraordinary season for the brand, with three Scenic Discovery Yachts offering guests more choice, more destinations, and more ways to experience the world in truly all-inclusive ultra-luxury," VP deployment product & port operations Tom Batchelor said.

"The arrival of *Scenic Ikon* marks the next evolution of our Scenic Discovery Yacht fleet, while the return of *Scenic Eclipse II* to Australia, the Kimberley, Asia, the South Pacific, and East Antarctica offers guests even more opportunities, to explore both enduring favourites and exciting new frontiers."

Launching alongside the new collection is the new 'Expeditions Voyages & Land Journeys' brochure, available **HERE**.

The new release showcases Scenic's ultra-luxury cruises in Antarctica and the Arctic, complemented by specially designed land journey extensions across South America, Greenland, Iceland, and Northern Europe.

A companion brochure, arriving at the end of the month, will cover voyages and touring extensions across Europe, the Mediterranean, the Americas, Australia, and Oceania. *MS*

### Prestige program

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has unveiled its shore excursion program for Seven Seas Prestige, which launches in Dec (**CW** 10 Dec 2025).

There are up to 141 included shore excursions available across the ship's 56 voyages, on sale through Apr 2028.

Highlights include a catamaran sailing across Antigua's Deep Bay Beach, complete with flowing champagne and a lobster lunch; delving into the thriving art scene of Guatemala's village of Comalapa; a guided walk through the historic town of Rouen on the Seine, and an exploration of an open-air archaeological site in Mykonos.



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## Princess Academy receives refresh

**PRINCESS** Cruises has refreshed its Princess Academy training program, giving agents even more opportunities to build product knowledge, strengthen sales confidence and be rewarded.

The updated Academy now features a new four-tier ranking structure, refreshed learning modules, and specialist destination training designed to help agents better sell the Princess experience across different traveller segments and the different regions it cruises.

Princess Academy now includes 25 modules in total, comprising 12 required courses, 12 elective courses, and a final exam.

Topics include destinations, fare options, onboard experiences, and sales tools.

There is also specialist training across regions including Asia, the Mediterranean, Alaska, Japan, Europe, Australia, and NZ.

Required learning modules include key product areas such as the fleet, the MedallionClass, Sanctuary Collection, cruise fare options, as well as 'What's New & Next' updates.

Elective modules allow agents to tailor their learning across additional destinations such as the Panama Canal and South America & Antarctica, and specialist segments including families, first-time cruisers, and Land & Sea Holidays.

Upon completion, agents progress through four recognition tiers: First Officer, Staff Captain, Captain, and Commodore.

Agents who reach Commodore status are eligible for a Graduation Cruise and Elite-style benefits when meeting annual sales and refresher requirements.

Princess is celebrating the Academy's relaunch with a new trade incentive campaign, 'Earn

Your Stripes & Win', running up until 15 Aug.

The promotional period will see agents who register and achieve a Princess Academy rank go into the draw to win a range of prizes.

Commodore-level agents can score the major prize, which will be one of five balcony staterooms aboard a *Crown Princess* sailing from Brisbane to Sydney from 02-04 Nov, with two Princess Plus packages for two guests included.

Minor prizes up for grabs include two \$500 future cruise credits, two Princess gift boxes, and two July luggage sets.

Agents can enter by registering via OneSource and achieving a Princess Academy rank between 01 May and 15 Aug, then submitting a 25-word entry on how they will use their training to sell and support Princess.

**CLICK HERE** for more on Princess Academy. *MS*

### Latest on *Hondius*

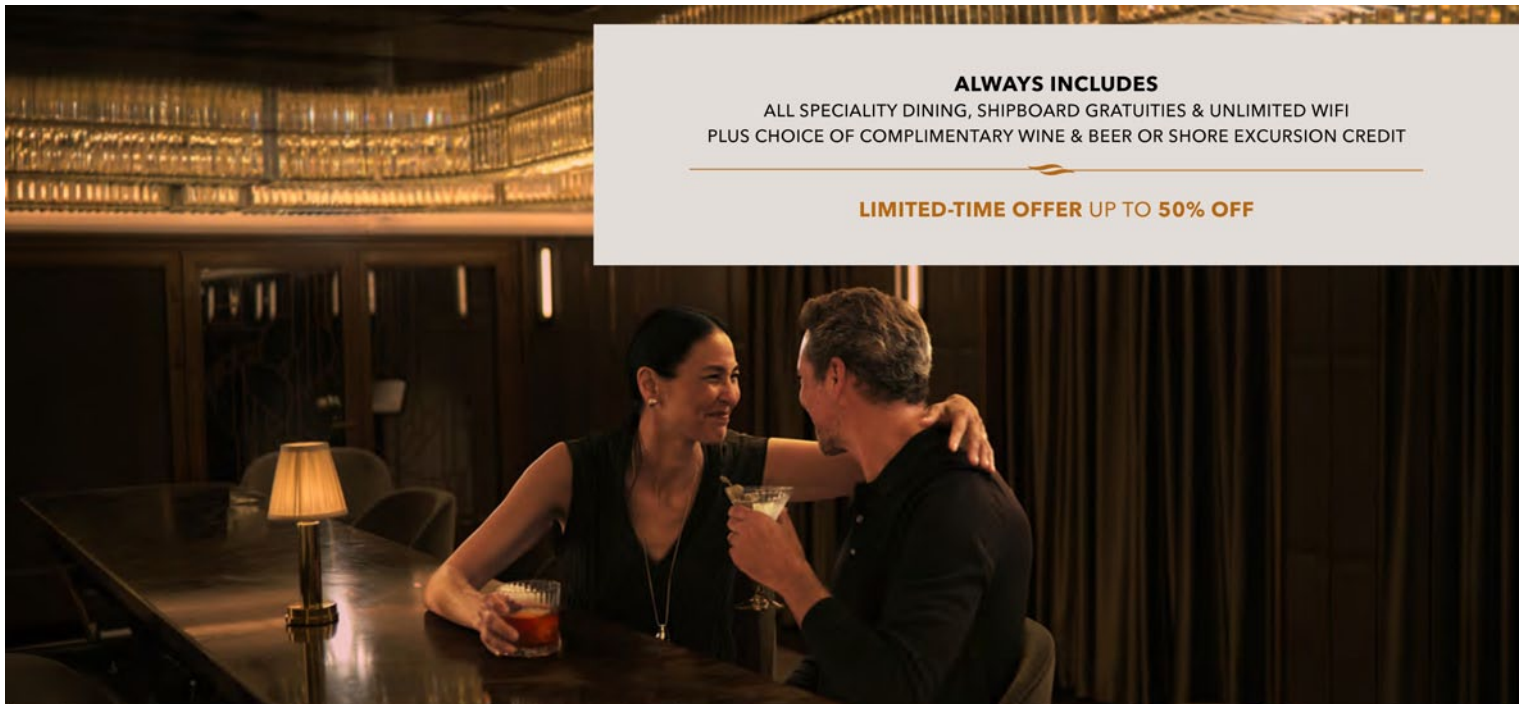
**NO INDIVIDUALS** with symptoms of hantavirus remain on board *Hondius*, Oceanwide Expeditions has confirmed in its latest update.

The three individuals who were transferred from the ship yesterday remain in the care of medical professionals (**CW** 07 May).

At this stage, the vessel is expected to arrive at the port of Grandilla, Tenerife, in the early hours of Sun 10 May.

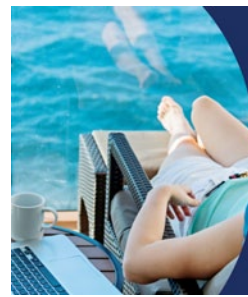
Oceanwide also confirmed it has contacted the 30 guests who disembarked at the island of St Helena on 24 Apr, prior to the first confirmed case on 04 May.

"We are working to establish details of all passengers and crew who embarked and disembarked on various stops of *Hondius* since 20 Mar," Oceanwide added.



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**A THOROUGHLY** unimpressed couple has been caught up in a flash mob of dancing crew members on a cruise ship.

The moment, which is going viral on TikTok, shows two diners attempting to enjoy their evening before becoming engulfed by a troupe of dancing crew members.

Perhaps the pair just got (terribly) unlucky, as they also appear to be the only two diners in the entire restaurant.



## CLIA Live hits Sydney



**CLIA Live** sailed into Sydney this week, offering dozens of agents practical training alongside 28 cruise lines.

Agents were given essential knowledge on each of the brands, and an understanding of how to match the right experience with the right client.

"CLIA Live always sells out quickly, it's a rare opportunity to learn from multiple cruise lines back-to-back," director membership & events Marita Nasic said.

"This year has brought more cruise lines into the program,

including several brands that are taking part for the first time, which means agents gain an even broader view of the opportunities in cruising."

The event followed recent trips to Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, and Adelaide, with a visit to the Gold Coast coming up, offering product updates and sales insights to CLIA members. *JHM*

**Pictured** are Joel Katz, CLIA; Jayden Haselbach, Cruiseabout; Tarleah Carson, Cruiseabout; Paul Rowley, Cruiseabout; Michele Horvath, Cruiseabout; and Marita Nasic, CLIA.

## MSC AI concierge

**MSC Cruises** has unveiled an AI-powered concierge to elevate the guest experience.

The next-generation digital service is available in more than 90 languages, and is fully integrated into the MSC for Me app.

MSC Concierge can answer questions; book services, restaurants, spa treatments, and shore excursions; check account balances; or find the perfect entertainment for any mood.

Offering intuitive, real-time assistance, MSC Concierge can also make personalised recommendations, helping guests to seamlessly manage their cruise.

The tool is now available on the majority of the line's ships, and will be rolled out fleetwide by the end of the month, following a successful pilot program which saw a 93% satisfaction score from more than 170,000 guests.

No paid internet package is required for guests to access MSC Concierge.



## RIVER CRUISE CHANGES COURSE

CLIA's **Joel Katz** on the evolution of the river cruise industry.

**» CLICK HERE TO READ**

