



Cruise Weekly today

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

More RCI open jaw

ROYAL Caribbean has launched a new 'open-jaw' holiday format for *Spectrum of the Seas* 2027/28 season, in response to demand from Australian travellers for multi-stop cruises.

The one-way voyages allow guests to arrive in one city and depart from another, unlike a traditional round trip, eliminating the need for internal flights.

This gives travellers the chance to turn the cruise into a broader trip with extra land travel pre- or post-sailing.

Among the new open-jaw offerings is the eight-night 'Best of Japan and Korea' itinerary, which departs from Shanghai on 09 May 2027 and concludes in Tokyo, priced from \$2,021 per person for a balcony stateroom.

This allows Australians to visit Shanghai, Seoul, Mount Fuji, and Tokyo as part of a Royal Caribbean cruise, without needing to retrace their journey.

Travellers can also join the 10-night 'Best of Japan & Korea' sailing, which sets off from Shanghai on 11 Oct 2027 and finishes in Tokyo, with balcony staterooms available from \$2,683 per person.

Highlights of the itinerary include exploring Bukchon Hanok Village in Seoul, and relaxing in hot springs.

Budget slammed by cruise



THE Australian Govt will raise the Passenger Movement Charge to \$80 as part of its 2026/27 Budget - a decision that Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) has described as "yet another burden on travellers".

The impost - which applies to people leaving Australia by air or sea on international trips - is currently \$70 per passenger, with the nearly 15% increase to come into effect from next year.

It marks the second Passenger Movement Charge hike since 2024, when it was raised from \$60 to \$70 (CW 10 May 2023).

CLIA said the price hike comes during a time when the country's tourism industry is facing great challenges, pointing out Australia already charges travellers some of the highest fees in the world.

"This increase is particularly disappointing at a time when the cruise community has been highlighting Australia's loss of cruise tourism to other regions, and it is a further blow to the country's competitiveness," the association stated.

"CLIA continues to support calls for Passenger Movement Charge revenue to be reinvested in the

modernisation of Australia's border processes for aviation and cruise," it added.

The Australian Cruise Association supported CLIA's calls for reinvestment of the money collected into modernising the country's borders, while itself slamming the raising of the PMC.

"The increase to the Passenger Movement Charge adds further pressure to Australia's competitiveness as a cruise destination at a time when global deployment decisions are finely balanced," chief executive officer Jill Abel told *Cruise Weekly*.

"Even modest cost increases can influence where cruise lines choose to deploy ships, particularly in a highly competitive int'l market."

Abel said the disappointment over the PMC increase is compounded by reduced funding for Tourism Australia, which plays an important role in building demand for cruise to Australia.

ACA has an MOU with Tourism Australia (CW 10 Sep), which it uses to understand demand and convert it into guest bookings, Abel explained, supporting long-term deployment decisions. MS

Serenity dry dock

CRYSTAL'S *Crystal Serenity* will undergo a dry dock this Oct, which will add a new pool bar and a collection of upgraded guest suites and public areas.

The three-week dry dock will focus on the onboard experience through various updates to the Aquamarine Classic Suite category, as well as several key public spaces.



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Australia can be Lindblad's #1

NATIONAL Geographic- Lindblad Expeditions' goal is to be the number one brand of its kind in Australia, chief executive officer Natalya Leahy has told *Cruise Weekly*.

The Lindblad Expeditions head, in town to celebrate the line's 60th anniversary (pictured), said her brand's ambition for Australia matched the growing size of the local adventure travel market.

"I very deeply and passionately believe that our brand could be so much bigger in Australia... we should be the number one expedition company for Australian guests," she said.

"The Australian expedition market is one of the fastest-growing markets and we are very committed to the market, and making our brand more known and available to Australian guests," she added.

One of the ways Lindblad is



targeting Australian passengers is through more attractive fly-cruise options, Leahy explained.

This has seen Lindblad add more Vancouver round trips on its Alaska product - one of Australia's most popular destinations.

Lindblad now offers a 14-day Vancouver round trip option in Alaska, as well as seven-day segments between Vancouver and Sitka.

"That direct airlift for Australian guests is one of the things we definitely keep in mind for this

market as well, to make it more accessible," Leahy explained.

"It is symbolic of our deep commitment to making Australia one of our most strategic markets in the world."

Australia is so important to Lindblad, Leahy said, because the market's travellers are the perfect fit for the cruise line's immersive and educational travel style.

Other top destinations for Lindblad out of the Australian market include Antarctica, the Arctic, and the Galapagos. *MS*

Aussies head to WA

THE federal government is finalising plans to bring the Australian passengers home from the hantavirus-hit *Hondius* (CW 11 May), with the five guests said to be "in good health".

Passengers are hoped to be repatriated from their hotel quarantine in the Netherlands to Perth within 24-48 hours.

They will fly to Pearce Air Force Base in Perth, before being "transported immediately" to a nearby quarantine facility for at least three weeks.

Premier of WA Roger Cook said the risk is "next to zero" for people living near the Bullsbrook quarantine facility, and in the wider community.

Oceanwide Expeditions said no one remaining aboard *Hondius* is exhibiting any symptoms of hantavirus.



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HAVE you come home from your Mediterranean cruise dreading a return to the bleak Australian autumn?

Maybe you don't quite have the time or money available this year for a full cruise along the French Riviera?

A new initiative from Uber now lets users book a private boat in Europe.

The service will launch over the northern summer, with the partnership between Uber and Click&Boat allowing users to reserve a skippered boat trip directly from the Uber app.

It will be available across France, Spain, Italy, Croatia, and Portugal, covering more than 20 cities in total and giving users access to a fleet of approximately 4,000 boats.

The offer focuses exclusively on day trips with a skipper included, meaning no boat licence or technical knowledge will be required.

Prices displayed in the Uber app will be identical to those on Click&Boat.

The experiences on offer range from sunset cruises and water sports to aperitifs at sea, boat parties, and access to coves and beaches which are reachable only by water.



Carnival launches new videos



CARNIVAL Cruise Line has launched its first-ever Accommodation Video Series, giving travel advisors an easy way to match their clients with their ideal ship.

The walkthrough videos provide a clear overview of accommodation offerings on board *Carnival Adventure*, *Carnival Splendor*, and *Carnival Encounter*, featuring all main stateroom categories; what's included in every room; suite benefits and added perks; accessible room options; and five-berth family suites plus interconnecting rooms.

Designed to support trade partners with quick, easy-to-digest content, the new video series brings Carnival's accommodation offering to life, helping agents sell with greater confidence and clarity.

Assistant vice president sales & marketing Anton Loeb said the series was created in response to advisor feedback for more visual, practical tools to support the

sales process. "This series is all about making it easier for our trade partners to feel confident when recommending accommodation.

"We know that when agents can clearly see the differences between room types, they're better equipped to match the right guest to the right stateroom and that leads to a happier holiday," Loeb added.

CLICK HERE to access the series through CCL's website.

MEANWHILE, *Carnival Pride* is back sailing from Baltimore following a recent dry dock, which delivered refreshed spaces across the ship.

The three-week works in the Bahamas saw *Pride's* casino refurbished with updated decor, while enhancements across retail areas, including a refreshed Effy Jewelry boutique, will offer a greater selection of onboard shopping for guests.

Pride is currently offering seven-day cruises to the Bahamas and Bermuda. *MS*



Adelaide abuzz with cruise

REPORTING from Adelaide this week, the city is certainly buzzing with a mix of industry engagement and vibrant community activity.

A highlight was the opportunity to meet with SA's Tourism Minister, Emily Bourke, who also holds the climate and environment portfolio, alongside key cruise stakeholders.

It was a constructive discussion, with strong interest in the role cruise continues to play in supporting the visitor economy, regional dispersal and local supply chains, as well as the significant advancements being made in technology and environmental performance.

Across the sector, this progress continues at pace, driven by ongoing investment in next-generation ships, operational efficiencies and collaboration between cruise lines, ports and destinations.

We also held the ACA board meeting, ensuring we remain focused on delivering the priorities outlined in our Strategic Action Plan and maintaining momentum across key areas of advocacy.

A key focus this week is Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE), where ACA has once again partnered with CLIA.

Now in our fourth year of collaboration, this joint presence reflects the strength of our partnership under the MOU with Tourism Australia, working collectively to promote Australia's cruise offering to global buyers.

ATE provides an important platform to showcase the breadth and diversity of cruise experiences across the country, reinforcing Australia's position as a world-class destination and ensuring cruise remains a key part of the international visitor story.