



Cruise Weekly today

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

Istanbul is out

PRINCESS Cruises has removed Istanbul from multiple cruises next year. The line cited "deployment changes" as the reason for the schedule alterations. Amended itineraries were set to sail aboard *Enchanted Princess* and *Sun Princess*, including an overnight stay on the former ship.

The revised itineraries also replace other ports in Turkey and Greece with destinations in Croatia.

"These updates enable us to continue delivering high-quality Mediterranean experiences while preserving strong guest access to our core ports," the cruise line told **CW**.

Princess said it is proactively working with impacted passengers and travel advisors to manage any travel adjustments, including applicable fare protections on modified voyages.

"Pre-cruise arrangements such as shore excursions, dining and spa reservations will be refunded or rebooked where possible to support a seamless cruising experience, with a continued focus on taking care of our guests throughout the process."

Virgin pops Alaska cherry



VIRGIN Voyages' *Brilliant Lady* (pictured) is set to chart 17 Alaska voyages across 12 destinations this summer, with itineraries starting this month.

The season will run through until Sep, with Alaska representing the grand finale of *Brilliant Lady's* sold-out inaugural year in North America.

She will depart from Seattle and Vancouver on seven- to 12-night itineraries, with the 'MerMaiden' voyage of the season to visit Ketchikan and Prince Rupert.

Brilliant Lady relocated from Portsmouth to North America in Sep, and has since been sailing in Bermuda, Canada, the Caribbean, and New York.

"We have incredibly high repeat rates, so our 'sailors' are always challenging us to seek new horizons; they always want to know 'where else can we sail with Virgin?'" chief executive officer

Nirmal Saverimuttu said.

"This brand is charting new paths, and the sold-out response to our 'Front(ier) of the Line' passes showed us just how sought-after our Alaskan itineraries are."

Once *Brilliant Lady* concludes her season in Alaska, she will commence her second year in North America, heading to Los Angeles in the autumn and Miami in the winter.

These two seasons will be linked by an iconic 16-night Panama Canal sailing.

MEANWHILE, Virgin sales manager Pamela Nielsen recently announced she will be departing the cruise line (**CW** 18 May).

Nielsen, who is based in Brisbane, has worked with Virgin for two-and-a-half years – first with its local representatives Travel The World, and then with the cruise line itself. *MS*

Experience Explora

BOOKINGS are now open for Explora Journeys' new cruise collection, sailing from Nov 2026 through Mar 2027.

The star of the collection is the President's Journey, which will see the cruise line's head Anna Nash welcome guests on board *Explora II* from 09-15 Dec 2026 for a sailing from Barcelona to Lisbon.

Passengers on the voyage will be able to engage directly with Nash and connect more deeply with the brand.

Explora will also offer four- to nine-night escapes in the Mediterranean, with experiences on offer that allow guests to immerse themselves in the region's art, gastronomy, and history.

Savings of 30% are available until 27 May.

An Alaskan Encore

SEABOURN Cruise Line is introducing a locally inspired culinary program for *Seabourn Encore's* inaugural Alaska Season, which saw her sail on her maiden voyage in the region last week (**CW** 18 May).

Highlights of the program will include glacial ice cocktails, seafood boils, and an intimate fisherman's table.

Menus will also feature regional ingredients including Weathervane scallops, Copper River salmon, and king crab.

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Viking sessions

VIKING has announced new Virtual Explorer Sessions featuring Alaska and Europe, with the sessions now open for registration.

Four dates will take place from Jun to Sep, designed to inspire clients, drive future bookings, and allow travel advisors to earn Viking Rewards points.

First is Alaska & The Inside Passage (25 Jun, [CLICK HERE](#)), alongside sessions focused on France (16 Jul, [CLICK HERE](#)), Scandinavia (20 Aug, [CLICK HERE](#)), and Eastern Europe (24 Sep, [CLICK HERE](#)).

The sessions will provide an immersive introduction to the Viking experience.



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CLIA Live program sells out



THE biggest-ever CLIA Live wrapped up its national tour on the Gold Coast this week, having brought together hundreds of agents for in-person training across the past two months.

This week's event at the QT Gold Coast was the last of a number of two-day seminars held in cities across Australia over Mar, Apr, and May.

Around 40 different cruise lines took part in this year's CLIA Live program with about 800 tickets booked, making it the biggest seminar program ever offered by the Association.

The series visited Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Sydney and the Gold Coast, as well as a number of cities in NZ.

This year's CLIA Live program had the theme 'Find the Perfect Cruise Match: Discover the Personality Behind Every Brand'.

Sessions provided detailed updates on the latest initiatives of each cruise line, while at the same time explaining the brand

nuances and guest profile most suited to each operator.

Events were designed to suit both new-to-cruise advisors as well as cruise specialists.

CLIA director of membership & events Marita Nasic said this year's program created a deeper understanding of the diversity of experiences available among CLIA cruise lines.

"These events have become incredibly popular, and they help consultants better understand the distinct character and appeal of each cruise brand, from ultra-luxury and adventure to family-friendly, expedition and river cruising," she said.

Details of the 2027 CLIA Live program will be announced later this year. *MS*

Pictured at CLIA Live on the Gold Coast this week are Emma Sheldrick and Chantelle Stewart, from Our Vacation Centre; Marita Nasic, CLIA; and Sayaka Smith and Carolyn Mackley from National Travel Group.

Helm appointed

EUROPEAN Waterways has appointed Helm in Australia as its public relations rep.

The Brisbane-based company will lead all communications activity for the business, with the cruise line's marketing manager Paul Newman saying the brand is delighted to further raise awareness of its cruise offerings.

"The Helm team has a longstanding connection with Europe and has spent years championing the kind of slow, immersive travel that European Waterways delivers so beautifully," he said.

European Waterways operates 17 river vessels along the rivers of Europe.



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IT IS one thing to spend your retirement days living on a cruise ship, but it would be quite another experience to grow up at sea.

A 40-year-old mum from Pennsylvania, Jessie Trondeau, told *People* that her family lives on a cruise ship for six months out a year, as her husband is a crew member - and at this point, her six-year-old son and four-year-old daughter consider it normal.

"For them, this is basically just home - they don't see it as strange," Trondeau said.

She described family life at sea as "fun in an enormous amount of ways".

The kids maintain a daily routine including home schooling, and on the port days, the family explores new destinations together.

Trondeau documents their lives on Instagram, under the username @thesailingwife1.

Cuba ruling overturned

THE United States Supreme Court (USSC) has revived a multimillion-dollar lawsuit against the cruise sector for using ports seized by Fidel Castro's government in the 1960s (*CW* 17 Jan 2022).

The decision brings into play an earlier ruling by a judge in a lower district court that found four cruise companies (Royal Caribbean Group, Carnival Corporation, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, and MSC Cruises) liable for their use of a port in the Cuban capital once controlled by interests known as Havana Docks, which were seized by Castro during the Cuban Revolution.

US District Judge Beth Bloom in Miami had previously in 2022 awarded Havana Docks US\$440 million (A\$616 million) for the cruise companies' use of the port (*CW* 23 Mar 2022).

A subsequent appeal by the cruise companies to a federal court in Atlanta was upheld, overturning the Miami judge's finding (*CW* 25 Oct 2024); the case was then taken to the USSC.

Ruling overnight, the United States' highest court found

against the companies in an 8-1 vote, saying "the cruise lines used confiscated property to which Havana Docks owns the claim".

The case now returns to the Atlanta-based appeals court, with the cruise companies to mount additional arguments that have yet to be ruled on.

Nearly 1 million passengers were carried to Havana by the four defendant cruise companies 2016 and 2019 during the 'Cuban thaw', a period of normalising relations between the Caribbean country and the United States (*CW* 10 May 2019).

The lawsuit is based on the *Helms-Burton Act*, which allows American citizens the right to sue foreign companies which traffic in property confiscated by the Cuban government following the 1959 revolution.

Most major cruise companies are usually not officially based in the US, despite being globally headquartered there, and are often legally based in nations known for highly favourable tax policies and minimal corporate oversight; meanwhile, Havana Docks is based in Kentucky. *MS*

Crystal Approach

CRYSTAL has expanded its travel advisor support with the launch of marketing technology Approach Guides.

The new partnership will empower travel advisors to drive engagement and bookings to promote Crystal voyages and engage clients.

At the heart of this new technology is "content experiences," which are pre-designed, ready-to-use digital marketing pages featuring Crystal's itineraries, destinations, and offers.

Yacht Club offer

MSC Cruises is elevating the MSC Yacht Club experience with an exclusive onboard credit offer.

Those booking MSC's ship-within-a-ship concept can receive \$1,000 in OBC per twin share suite.

The promotion is available for a limited time, and is available across six ships on select departures between Oct 2026 and Mar 2028 - **CLICK HERE** to book.



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