CRUISE WEEKLY
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Thursday 5th Nov 2026

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Cruise Lines International Association**.

Get your vote in

NOMINATIONS are now open for the Cruise Lines International Association's Cruise Industry Awards.

See the **back page** for details.

Azamara unveils '28

AZAMARA Cruises has unveiled 85 new cruises across all four ships, 81 countries and 210 ports of call - including 94 overnight stays - from 29 Oct 2028 through 19 May 2029.

The season is highlighted by the return of *Azamara Onward* to Africa and the Indian Ocean following a multi-year absence - explore more itineraries **HERE**.

Celebrity pax looking beyond traditional ports

CELEBRITY Cruises' Australian guests are looking beyond Europe's traditional ports, according to vice president and managing director Tim Jones.

Speaking to ***Cruise Weekly*** aboard *Celebrity Solstice* this week, Jones said Australian guests tend to favour longer sailings in Europe, but are also interested in more unusual or less-familiar ports.

"Australian guests sail with the Celebrity brand because they are so destination-focused - they want to immerse themselves in the destination," Jones explained.

"They tend to go for longer cruises and the longer cruises that go to the more interesting and exciting ports because most of the time, a lot of our guests have done all the mainstream ports, and they're looking at those extra ports that they haven't been to before."



This itinerary design philosophy continues through the cruise line's sailings in Australia, with this week's *Solstice* trip visiting ports such as Hobart and Kangaroo Island.

"On a global scale, these places are relatively small, but what we are looking for is a deep, rich, immersive, elevated experience, and these destinations offer that in spades," said Jones.

"The tourism experiences are so rich in this part of the world, and that is why it has that appeal to keep people coming from overseas, but also for Australians to explore and re-explore and find a different angle every time they visit."

Similar to the trend seen in river cruising of late, Celebrity's Australian guests are also pushing against the margins of the traditional tourist season, booking more cruises for May, Sep and Oct.

MEANWHILE, Celebrity has opened bookings for the debut season of its next ship, *Celebrity Xcite* (***CW*** 24 Oct 2025).

The new ship (**pictured**) will join the brand's most expansive Caribbean lineup ever, sailing from four Florida ports in 2028 and 2029 alongside *Celebrity Beyond, Celebrity Eclipse, Celebrity Xcel, Celebrity Silhouette, Celebrity Reflection* and *Celebrity Apex*.

Xcite will make her highly anticipated debut with seven-night sailings from Miami, while *Beyond* will sail on the Edge-class' first-ever short cruises, with new three-night weekend escapes from Fort Lauderdale. *MS*



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More NCL exits

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has announced the departure of chief sales officer, John Chernesky, who will exit at the end of 2026 after three years with the company.

During his tenure, he gained favour with agents when he abolished non-commissionable fares (***CW*** 21 Jan).

Brennan Quesnele, SVP strategic accounts and trade marketing, will look after North America sales in the interim while the line searches for Chernesky's successor.

Meanwhile, Katie Kania, senior director of agency sales for North America, revealed she is also leaving NCL.

The departures come amid the company's ongoing corporate restructure, which also saw the departure of senior director sales strategy & operations for APAC, Damian Borg (***CW*** 16 Jun).

Aurora adds new journeys for '28



AURORA Expeditions has announced its 2028/29 season, featuring four all-new expeditions and seven Special Edition voyages.

The cruise line will operate 37 voyages exploring Antarctica, South Georgia, the Falklands, Malvinas and Patagonia across three of its purpose-built small ships - *Greg Mortimer*, *Sylvia Earle* and *Douglas Mawson*.

A standout of the program is 'Antarctica: Behind The Lens', a documentary-themed expedition with wildlife and conservation experts, alongside an activity-inclusive journey combining South Georgia and Antarctica and an exploration of South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

Also new is the 'Gentle Giants of the Antarctic: A Whale's Tale' itinerary, a 10-day roundtrip from Buenos Aires during peak whale-watching season.

"Antarctica remains at the heart of Aurora Expeditions, and this season is about creating even more meaningful ways for travellers to experience it," Justin Ewin, Aurora Expeditions' global head of product, said. *JM*

Nile Seray sets sail

ABERCROMBIE & Kent's (A&K) new luxury riverboat *Nile Seray* has embarked on its inaugural voyage in Egypt (***CW*** 14 Aug 2025).

Accommodating 64 guests across 32 suites, the vessel will operate four-night sailings between Luxor and Aswan, with daily excursions exploring temples, tombs and more.

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On location on board
Celebrity Solstice

CW **is today coming to you from on board Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Solstice*, which is this week sailing the 'Australia Wine & Tasmania Cruise'.**

CELEBRITY *Solstice* has today arrived in Adelaide, marking the second call in SA the ship will make this cruise.

Port Adelaide is expecting almost 20 arrivals this season from Oct to Apr, with guests embarking on shore excursions around the city and into nearby wine areas such as the Adelaide Hills, the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale.

Fifty-four cruise ships will visit SA this season - a very strong and highly valuable season for the state's economy.



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PORTHOLE

GUESTS at Shanghai Disney Resort can get a taste of *Disney Adventure* at a new pop-up experience available through to 15 Jan.

Set up in the resort's Disneytown area, the pop-up features a series of activations inspired by the ship's seven themed areas.

Visitors can enjoy multiple interactive activities, photoshoot opportunities and a replica of the ship's bow, with Disney characters appearing through the portholes.

A grand opening for the experience was hosted by Disney Cruise Line vice president and regional general manager Sarah Fox, alongside president and general manager of Shanghai Disney Resort Andrew Bolstein.

"[This will give] guests and fans in Shanghai a preview of what awaits aboard *Disney Adventure*, introducing them to another side of Disney storytelling and giving even more reasons to visit the resort," Bolstein said.

Travellers will still need to go to Singapore for the real thing.



APT, Ponant's Kimberley collab



APT Luxury Travel and Ponant Explorations have teamed up to bring a new chapter of cruising to the Kimberley, inking a partnership that will see APT exclusively charter *Le Jacques Cartier* in 2028.

The purpose-built expedition ship will offer an intimate way to explore the Kimberley's remote coastline, with guests to enjoy immersive shore landings, Zodiac explorations and carefully curated cultural encounters.

Select departures can be paired with APT's 4WD Kimberley tours, which explore iconic locations including the Bungle Bungle Range, Mitchell Falls, Zebedee Springs and more.

"APT has played a leading role in Kimberley cruising for many years, and we're excited to be joining forces with Ponant Explorations once again for the 2028 season," Mladen Vukic, chief operating officer at the APT Travel Group, said.

"The Kimberley continues to captivate guests from around the world, and by working together we can combine our destination expertise with an exceptional expedition vessel." *JM*



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On Board: *Celebrity Solstice*

Boulevard Lounge

Celebrity Solstice's Boulevard Lounge is a brand-new, multi-use entertainment space not yet found on any other of the cruise line's ships.

Added following *Solstice*'s multi-million-dollar revitalisation earlier this year, the Boulevard Lounge hosts cabaret, live daily trivia, bingo and evening duelling piano performances.

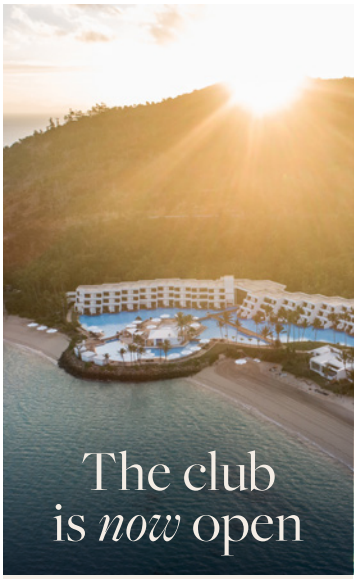
Located on deck 4, the venue also includes an accompanying bar for passengers to enjoy a drink alongside a performance.

Crown concerns

GUESTS aboard *Crown Iris* were stuck on the Greek island of Syros on Tue when a bomb threat forced an evacuation of the vessel.

No explosive device was found and the ship received clearance yesterday to continue her voyage to Israel.

The incident followed a bomb threat in Europe on Tue, briefly closing Warsaw Chopin Airport.



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For more information on Award Criteria and how to nominate, please visit cruising.org.au.
Nominations are open to all CLIA Travel Agent members and close Friday, 20 November 2026.