CRUISE WEEKLY
delivered daily!
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Wednesday 11th Nov 2026

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news, as well as a full page from **Norwegian Cruise Line.**

Be first on *Bella*

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line is showcasing its newest ship, *Norwegian Bella*.

For details, see **page five**.

Save on Avalon

AVALON Waterways is offering savings of up to $14,100 as part of a suite of Black Friday deals.

Available to book until 01 Dec, Aussie travellers can enjoy discounts across the line's Rhone, Seine, Rhine and Douro sailings in 2027.

There are also Fly Free offers on select departures.

AmaWaterways & Railbookers team up

RAILBOOKERS has this morning revealed a new partnership with AmaWaterways, building seamless combined itineraries between rail and river cruising.

The news was announced today at the Railbookers Group Global Summit in Vancouver by Railbookers' SVP Andrew Channell, who shared the stage with Ann Chamberlin, senior director at AmaWaterways.

"The beauty of it is that now you call in just one place [with] one team that really brings both areas of expertise together," Channell explained.

Meanwhile, Chamberlin discussed what she thought clients would enjoy most about the new itineraries.

"When [customers] go on a river cruise, they have a great time, they don't want to go home, they want to explore more - that's when this partnership with Railbookers comes in," she said.



"We're expanding on that experience - it's not just a seven-night cruise.

"Sure, we offer pre- and post-land extensions, but nothing as robust as what we're going to be able to do with Railbookers."

The pair also discussed the synergies between rail and river cruise passengers, such as their appreciation of personalised service and unique experiences.

Chamberlin gave attendees an overview of the latest news from the line, such as the new *AmaSofia* and the upcoming *AmaRudi* and *AmaFiora*.

She also discussed the "explosion of river cruising" and AmaWaterways' vision for the future, including its goal to operate 50 ships around the world by 2032, which she described as "our largest expansion yet". *JHM*



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Cruise stars for Luxury Travel Collection

QUARTERLY cruise sales have surged 125% for Flight Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) invitation-only Luxury Travel Collection (LTC) organisation, amid a wider boom in high-end travel.

LTC general manger Nikki Glading, speaking to ***Cruise Weekly*** at the organisation's Remarkable Soiree this week, said the numbers have already considerably outpaced its impressive 76% TTV growth.

Glading specified the growth was made possible through the organisation's highly considered invitation-only strategy.

"Growth is a story, but it is very much about controlled growth," she explained.

"We deliver growth by saying 'yes' to the right members, but also then implementing or introducing members to partners who grow business together.

"It's the organic growth, or the growth by design, with these connections and introductions, as well as inviting new members into the community."



This growth was also made possible by the overall expansion of the luxury cruise sector, FCTG MD luxury and independent Danielle Galloway told ***CW***.

"Even the cruise lines, how they're expanding in terms of what they're doing, all the inventory that's in luxury...it's every segment that is actually investing in elevating their brands and products into this luxury space," she added.

According to Cruise Lines International Association, the global luxury cruise fleet has more than tripled over the past 15 years, rising from 28 ships in 2010 to almost 100 ships in 2025.

More than three dozen new luxury cruise vessels are currently in the pipeline. *MS*

Tamis steps down

SEABOURN Cruise Line president Mark Tamis has quietly resigned from the role, according to industry reports.

Beth Bodensteiner is now acting under the title, while also continuing her duties as the president of Holland America Line (HAL).

According to reports in the media, Bodensteiner commmented that Tamis "joined Seabourn to help bring our brands closer together while strengthening Seabourn's culture and crew experience".

"With those objectives achieved and the brand well positioned for the future, Mark shared with me that he believes this is the right time to pursue another opportunity."

The news comes after Tamis' remit expanded earlier this year to include responsibilities at HAL.

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Save up to 25% (the "Offer") applies to new bookings made from 10 November 2026 to 02 December 2026 ("Offer Period") for selected HX departures from 1 December 2026 to 31 March 2028. Bookings made outside of the Offer Period will not qualify. Any stated savings are reflected in the advertised "From" price. Advertised prices are quoted in AUD, per person and based on double occupancy of a cabin on the specified sailing or Tour Code. Offer is subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time without prior notice. Single supplements may apply and applies to all offer occupancies.

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Tokyo Tokyo Old meets New

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Spirit countdown

THERE is just one month until *Norwegian Spirit* sails into Sydney for her longest-ever Australia and NZ season, which includes Norwegian Cruise Line's (NCL) first-ever 'Tassie Taster' cruises.

There are still departures available for last-minute bookings, including a 14-day Christmas and New Year sailing, which departs roundtrip from Sydney on 23 Dec, available from $4,729.

Travellers can also book an 11-day Sydney to Auckland voyage, which sets sail on 01 Apr 2027 and has spots available from $3,561.

Meanwhile, the four-day Tassie cruise departs roundtrip from Sydney on 21 Jan 2027, priced from $1,346.

Cruiseabout builds

CRUISEABOUT has appointed Alex Whitfield as its new head of marketing, effective Oct.

Whitfield joins from Professionals Real Estate, where he spent seven years leading the marketing division, including the network's major national rebrand.

The appointment comes as the Flight Centre Travel Group business - which now has 11 stores - aims to expand to 18 shopfronts around the country by the end of FY27.

A makeover fit for a *Queen*



CUNARD has unveiled new interiors for *Queen Mary 2* ahead of her return to service in May 2027 (***CW*** 10 Sep 2026).

The redesign is centred around Cunard Deco, a style that draws inspiration from the golden age of Hollywood and the grandeur of Cunard's regal lineage.

All grades of accommodation will be revamped, ranging from Britannia staterooms to the Grand Duplex Queens Grill Suites, in addition to public spaces such as the Princess Grill and Queens Grill restaurants and the Grill Suites Lounge.

Aspects such as custom carpets, wallcoverings, screens and artwork take inspiration from the 1936 RMS *Queen Mary* - where Cunard's ship takes her name from - while each Grill Suite will feature unique layouts and design features that draw on key moments in the vessel's history.

"The process of exploring Cunard's archive in Liverpool, with the drawings and decorative arts of the 1936 *Queen Mary*, gave us both inspiration for the designs and stories to build meaning behind those creative choices," said Chris Finch, founder and CEO of AD Associates, the London-based company leading the new designs.

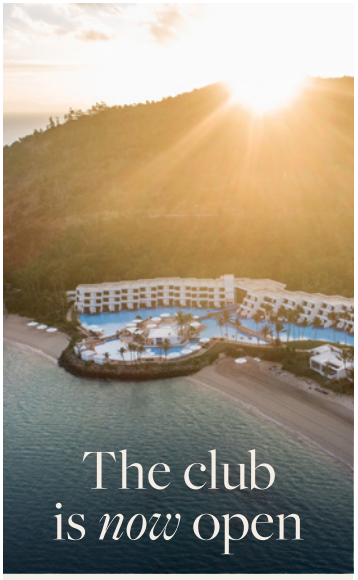
"A guest might not know that the clock design in their suite stopped at the minute *Queen Mary* first set sail, but once they do, they never look at the room in the same way."

The unveiling of the interiors coincides with *Queen Mary 2*'s 450th transatlantic crossing, with the voyage featuring the 450 Club, a theatrical program that pays homage to the history and appeal of transatlantic travel.

She will enter dry dock on 31 Mar 2027, with the refurbishment taking place at Damen Shiprepair Brest in France. *JB*

Arkansas is a hit

AMERICAN Cruise Line's first-ever Arkansas River cruise set sail yesterday aboard *American Serenade*, and has become one of the line's fastest-selling itineraries, with the first two Nov departures nearly sold out.



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PORTHOLE

FLORIDA'S Gulf Coast will be home to the world's largest artificial reef, as plans to sink the decommissioned *SS United States* go full steam ahead.

The 17-storey vessel will be sunk today (local time), with the $13 million task aimed at providing a place for marine life to "hide, forage and propagate", according to Noah Haag, a researcher with Northeastern University's Marine and Environmental Sciences Department.

The push to create artificial reefs is due to increasing risks to natural coral reefs, with a paper in the *Nature* journal from Oct finding that 44% of coral species are considered endangered, with 33 species deemed critically endangered.

Haag admitted that when it comes to creating artificial reefs, structures with lots of holes such as poured concrete spheres usually work the best.

"But sunken ships get the media's attention," Haag said (***CW*** is now proving his point).

Brought into service in 1952, *SS United States* could accommodate 19,000 passengers and was able to cross the Atlantic in three days and 10 hours (which was pretty fast for the time).

The US Maritime Administration later confirmed that it was secretly built for the Cold War.

MSC puts F1 collab on tap



MSC Cruises has teamed up with Formula 1 and Heineken to release a special beer, now available across MSC's fleet as well as Brazilian duty-free stores.

The specially designed, limited-edition can depicts an F1 car next to an MSC ship, and was unveiled at the F1 Sao Paulo Grand Prix over the weekend.

It will also be available aboard *MSC World Asia,* which will sail the Mediterranean on 04 Dec (***CW*** 15 Sep 2026).

"At MSC Cruises, we are always looking for new ways to enhance the guest experience through partnerships with world-class brands," said CEO Gianni Onorato.

"We have enjoyed a longstanding relationship with Heineken as a trusted supplier onboard our ships, and we are proud to deepen that relationship through this new activity.

"Together with Heineken and F1, we are creating engaging new experiences that bring the excitement of race weekend to life at sea, allowing guests to connect with the sport they love while enjoying unforgettable moments onboard," he added.

There were several activities and activations across MSC's fleet during the Sao Paulo race, with ships including *MSC Seascape*, *MSC Seashore*, *MSC Seaside* and *MSC World Europa* showing live screenings and running race-themed competitions.

MSC ships will air F1 races for the rest of the 2026 season.

The cruise line has been a primary sponsor of F1 since 2022, being the title sponsor of three Grands Prix this year, including the most recent one in Sao Paulo as well as being a sponsoring the BWT Alpine racing team.

Heineken has also been an F1 sponsor since 2016, in addition to sponsoring Red Bull Racing and F1 driver Max Verstappen. *JB*



Celebrating the best of

AS THE 2026/27 summer cruise season gathers momentum, recent tourism award successes highlight the vital role our tourism operators play in the success of Australia's cruise industry.

Cruise ships bring visitors to our shores, but it's the experiences they enjoy on land that create lasting memories, shape perceptions of our destinations and encourage return visits and drive future deployment decisions. It is wonderful to see ACA members recognised at national and state tourism awards.

At the National Travel Industry Awards, APT Travel Group was named Most Outstanding Tour Operator - Global, while Viking secured Most Popular Ocean Cruise Operator for the fourth consecutive year.

At the state level, Art Gallery NSW received Silver for Major Tourist Attractions, while Cairns Adventure Group won Gold for Adventure Tourism and Silver for Major Tour and Transport Operators.

These achievements recognise the innovation, investment and commitment that make Australia's visitor experiences so compelling.

For cruise tourism, quality shore experiences do more than delight guests. They encourage visitors to explore beyond the port, support local businesses and communities, and strengthen Australia's appeal when cruise lines consider future itineraries.

Congratulations to our award-winning members - your achievements demonstrate why tourism operators are essential partners in delivering value beyond the berth.

With further state tourism awards to be announced, we look forward to celebrating more members.

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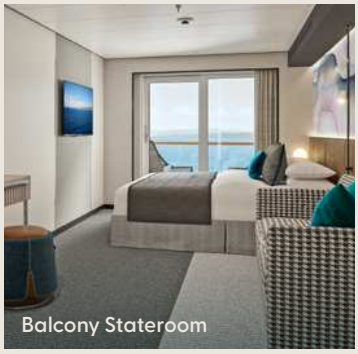
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