CRUISE WEEKLY
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Wednesday 25th Nov 2026

Cruise Weekly today

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

Unforgettable AI

SMALL ship cruise line Unforgettable Croatia is creating a dedicated AI & Automation division, promoting head of marketing Nick Talbot to lead it.

He will join the executive team in the newly created role, reporting to co-founder Graham Carter as it centres AI in its growth plans. *MS*

Avora files for bankruptcy

RESIDENTIAL cruise line Avora Residences, managed by the same leadership as the recently shut down Villa Vie Residences, has filed for bankruptcy, becoming the second cruise line of its kind to do so in less than a month (***CW*** 28 Oct).

Avora filed for bankruptcy on 23 Nov in Florida, reporting debt of just over US$3.4 million and estimated assets in the range of US$10 to US$50 million.

Bankruptcy filings show funds will be available for distribution to unsecured creditors.

Avora was a startup founded by Mikael Petterson and Kathy Villalba - the same executives behind Villa Vie - and had planned to convert Regent Seven Seas Cruises' former *Seven Seas Navigator* into a residential ship named *Avora Lumina*.

The cruise line was planned as a more upscale, premium tier above Villa Vie, which last month suspended operations in Cambodia, in an effort to pursue restructuring and recapitalisation due to "extraordinary" fuel costs.

Avora in Mar announced a nine-year charter with a nominal purchase option for the *Navigator* from Regent Seven Seas (***CW*** 04 Mar), which the line had been attempting to phase out of its fleet for a number of years, first through a charter with another luxury residential cruise line, Crescent Seas (***CW*** 07 Nov 2025).

The plan was to take over *Navigator* late next year and convert her into a luxury residential ship, to be launched in Jan 2028, sailing on a three-year global voyage departing Lisbon to more than 400 ports in around 150 countries.

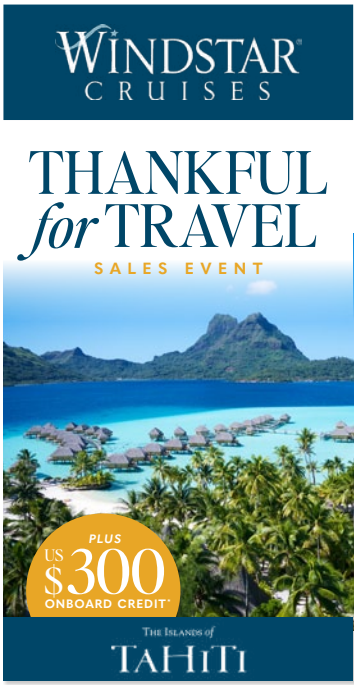
Lumina had planned to offer 242 residences, ranging from approximately 28m^2 to 109m^2, with a starting price of US$545,000 for full suite ownership plus approximately US$8,000 a month in fees, or US$219,600 for five-year ownership plus approximately US$9,000 a month in fees. *MS*

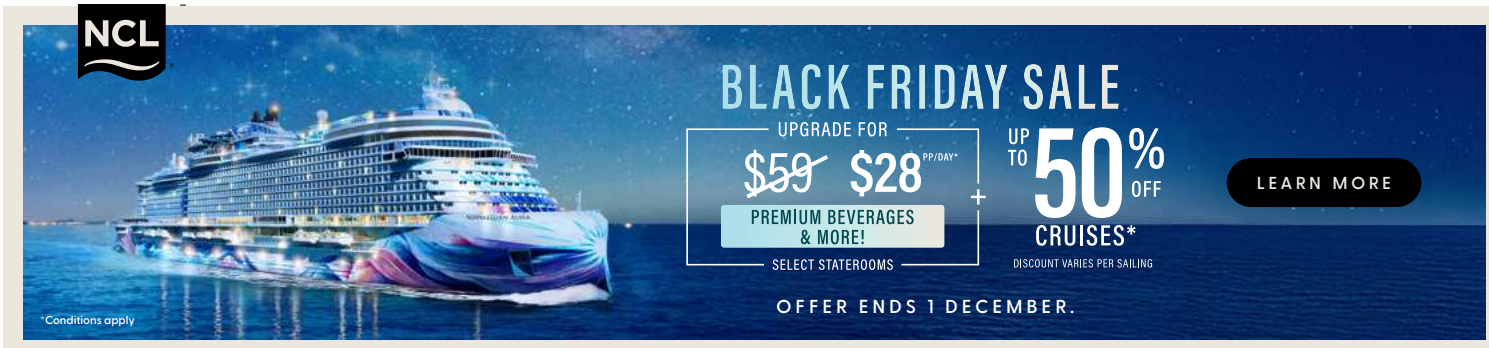
Ponant savings

ENJOY extra savings this festive season, thanks to Ponant Explorations, plus a reduced 10% deposit.

A number of example itineraries, plus more info, are available on **page 4**.







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NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE®

CRUISE WEEKLY

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CRUISE WEEKLY

On location on board
Viking Vela

***Cruise Weekly* is today coming to you from aboard *Viking Vela* as she undertakes a Greek Odyssey itinerary.**

WE'RE all ready for action today as we arrive in Turkiye after a peaceful day on the water yesterday cruising across the Aegean Sea.

Ephesus promises a wealth of antiquities, and it's also intriguing to experience the Turkish culture as local merchants eagerly await the arrival of guests keen for some local retail therapy.

A wide variety of shore excursions are on offer, with Viking's included coach and walking tour giving an overview of the city with local guides.

Atlas goes long

ATLAS Ocean Voyages has released a collection of 17 extended journeys across the next two years, along with a 32-night 'Extraordinary Expedition' in 2028.

The added journeys range from 14 to 32 nights, featuring combined sailings aboard *World Navigator*, *World Traveller* and *World Voyager*.

Destinations range from cities in Morocco and the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands, Northern Europe and the Arctic.

Departing 04 Sep 2028, the 32-night 'Extraordinary Expedition' aboard *World Voyager* will travel from Svalbard in Norway to Lisbon, visiting maritime cities in Northern and Western Europe as well as the dramatic landscapes of Iceland.

Aussies can book through local GSA Cruise Traveller. *JB*

CT conference closes



CT PARTNERS' 2026 conference aboard The Ritz Carlton Yacht Collection's (RCYC) *Luminara* came to a close on Fri.

The five-day event kicked off at W Shanghai before embarking on a cruise to Hong Kong aboard *Luminara*, welcoming 110 independent travel advisors and supplier partners.

Across two of the days, the advisors engaged in one-on-one conversations with 36 of the supplier partners.

Delegates took part in several workshops, including tips for advisors on selling RCYC led by vice president & general manager Seb Seward and director of travel partnerships Anastasia Kotanidis, as well as an AI session from Tasser.ai founder Adrian Giles.

"This has been a year in the making," CT Partners chief executive Matt Masson said.

"We're the first large group of 100 plus on one of these superyachts, and certainly the first Australian travel industry conference on a superyacht."

The conference concluded with a gala awards dinner aboard *Luminara,* with Mark Chaskiel of FBI Travel receiving the CT Partners Spirit Award.

"This journey has been more than half of my life, the travel industry and then CT Partners," Chaskiel said of his win.

CT Partners also announced on the night that the 123-villa Jumeirah Bali resort will host next year's conference.

The conference capped what had been a strong year for the group, with air volumes up 10% and overrides paid to members up 11%.

During FY26, CT Partners recorded TTV of $2.55 billion, making it the third-largest buying group across Australia.

CT is already projecting a big year in 2027, with ticketed air revenue for Q1 up 15%.

"One thing I love about CT Partners is that everyone just gets along," chair Joe Araullo said.

"Everyone's happy to be part of it.

"We never want to be the biggest, but we definitely do want to be the best." *JB*

Pictured: Seb Seward, RCYC; Shady Mikhael, JC Travel; Nicole Boyer, CT Partners; Anastasia Kotanidis, RCYC and Matt Masson, CT Partners.

Miami's record

PORTMIAMI welcomed more than 10 million passengers in FY26, the first time it has surpassed the eight-figure mark in its history.

During the period between 01 Oct 2025 and 30 Sep 2026, the port saw 10,533,854 cruise passengers, compared to 8,564,225 in the previous financial year.

The port has continued its momentum going into this year, seeing 832,142 passengers across 106 calls last month, the highest Oct volume in its history.

It signifies a 19% YOY increase from Oct 2025, which saw 699,043 passengers and 93 ship calls. *JB*



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PORTHOLE

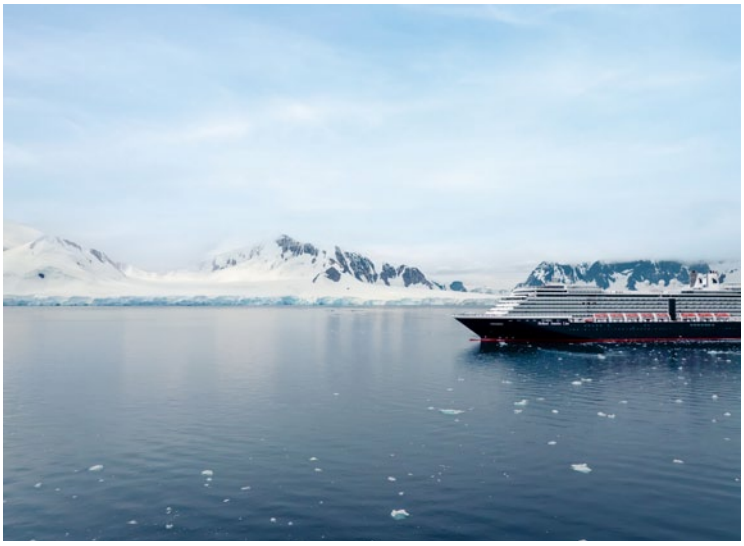
ONE experienced cruiser has shared their best tips for the first night of your cruise on TikTok, and they're going viral.

The user @cruisemagnets has urged passengers to never visit guest services on the first night unless absolutely necessary, noting that the line almost always thins out significantly by the second day.

They also encouraged passengers to avoid the opening night show, which many cruisers treat as a 'one night only' spectacle despite it often being scheduled multiple times each itinerary.



HAL sails to South America



HOLLAND America Line (HAL) has announced its 2028/29 South America and Antarctica season, featuring a new 17-day voyage sailing round trip from Buenos Aires to Antarctica.

The season will run from Oct 2028 through Mar 2029, with voyages spanning between 15 and 32 days.

HAL is set to deploy two of its vessels for the season: *Zuiderdam*, which will sail across the southern part of South America, and *Volendam*, sailing along the Amazon River.

One of the highlights, a 17-day 'South America & Antarctica Circle' itinerary, will depart Buenos Aires on 28 Nov 2028 aboard *Zuiderdam*, and will call at Punta Arenas, Ushuaia and the Falkland Islands.

"South America and Antarctica are regions where having more time opens up so many possibilities," VP deployment & revenue Paul Grigsby said.

"We're able to take guests from vibrant cities to the glaciers and fjords of Patagonia, then into Antarctica or farther inland to places like Machu Picchu.

"We know from our guests that longer cruises are what they want here, and that gives us the opportunity to create journeys that show just how much there is to experience across the region."

Sailings for the season are now available to book. *JB*



CRUISE WEEKLY

On Board: Viking Vela

Manfredi's

Manfredi's Italian Restaurant is a Viking ocean ship favourite, offering guests authentic Italian cuisine in an upmarket trattoria setting.

Available to all guests at no additional cost, a Manfredi's dining experience features classic dishes like insalata caprese, fritto misto di mare, a range of pasta plates including lasagne and risotto, and main courses like bistecca alla Fiorentina and tomahawk di maiale, among others.



Cruising matters to regional Australia

IN RELEASING our 2025/26 *Economic Impact Assessment of Cruise Tourism* report with CLIA last week, we highlighted the impact of reduced itinerary diversity and declining cruise visitation on our regional destinations.

Eden provides a wonderful example of why restoring diversity in itineraries is so important.

On 09 Nov, almost 3,000 passengers arrived aboard *Celebrity Solstice* on her maiden visit to the Sapphire Coast destination, marking the start of a season of 25 scheduled ship visits.

It was particularly pleasing to see Eden's economic output from cruise tourism increase from $14.2 million in 2024/25 to $17.1 million in 2025/26.

As Cruise Eden Manager Debbie Meers said, "More than 600 passengers explored the stunning Sapphire Coast through shore excursions, while our wharf and main street markets, cafes, restaurants and retailers all benefited from our cruise visitors."

Equally important is how Eden caters for guests choosing to explore the destination independently.

This is where community engagement comes to the fore, with 43 volunteer welcome ambassadors and shuttle guides, including 16 local students, enhancing the visitor experience this season.

The collaboration between Port Authority of NSW, Cruise Eden and Bega Valley Shire Council demonstrates what can be achieved through a shared vision for cruise tourism.

As ACA continues to advocate for long-term regulatory certainty to support greater itinerary diversity, Eden serves as a reminder of the economic and social benefits cruise tourism can deliver to regional Australia.

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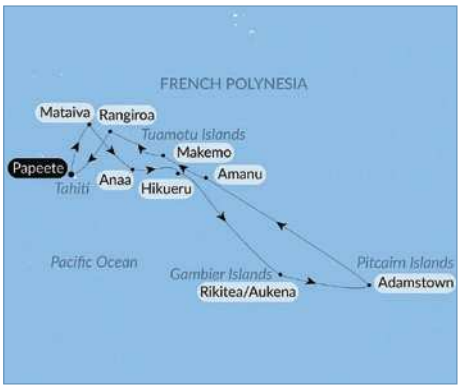

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Papeete to Papeete
12 December 2027

14-nights onboard *Le Jacques Cartier*

from AU$17,230 pp in a Balcony Stateroom including a 20% Early Booking Bonus.^



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