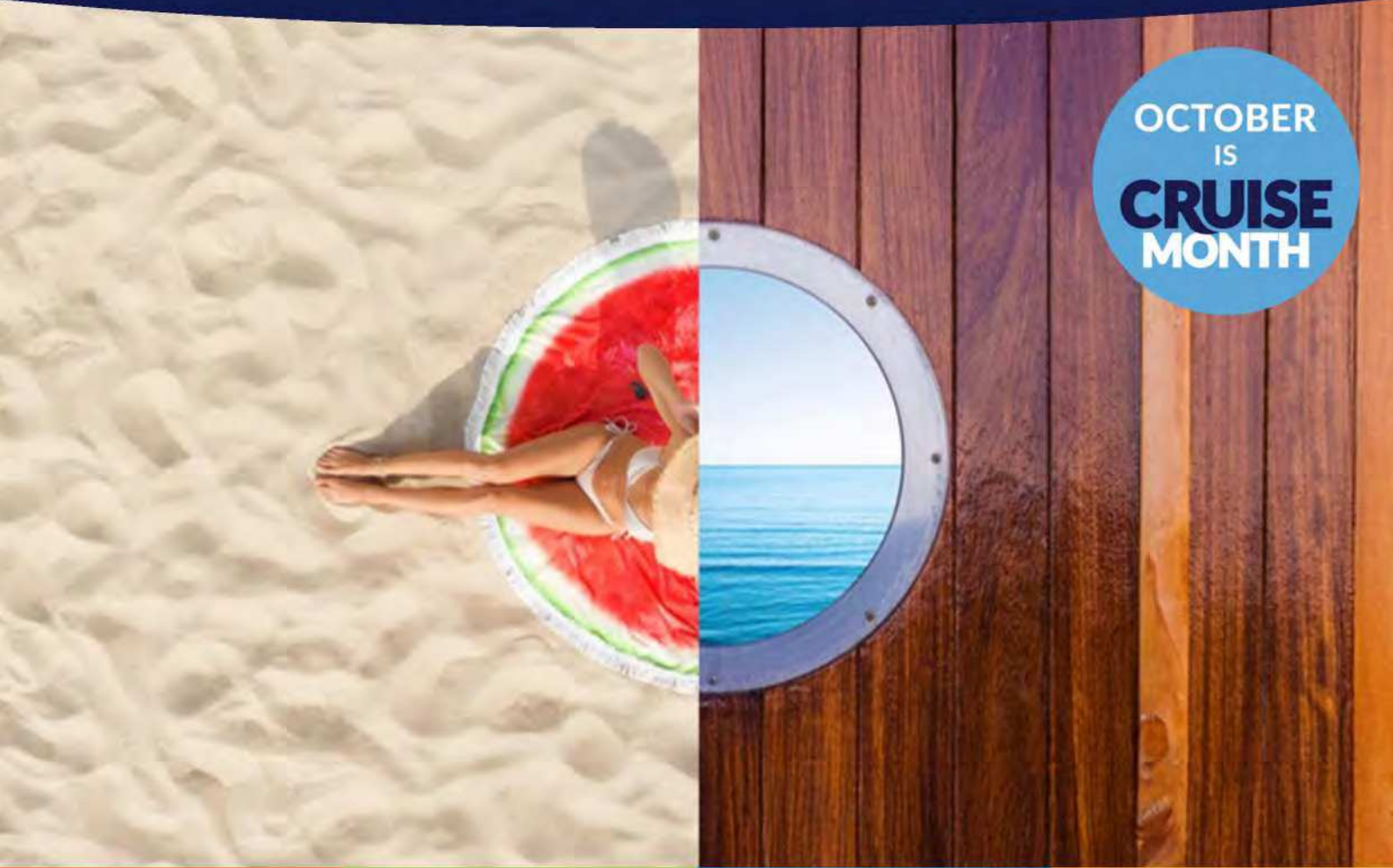




CRUISE MONTH IS HERE!

Get involved in Cruise Month to showcase your cruise expertise, inspire your clients and drive new enquiries and bookings. Use CLIA's ready-to-use marketing toolkit, share Cruise Month content and take part in our dedicated webinar series.

GET INVOLVED >

A composite image featuring a woman in a white bikini lying on a large, watermelon-shaped inflatable ring on a sandy beach. To the right, a circular porthole in a wooden wall shows a view of the ocean. In the top right corner, a blue circle contains the text "OCTOBER IS CRUISE MONTH".

OCTOBER
IS
**CRUISE
MONTH**

Ocean
4-10 Oct

River
11-17 Oct

Expedition
18-24 Oct

Luxury
25-31 Oct

Cruise Month is here

CRUISE Lines International Association's (CLIA) annual Cruise Month is here, under the theme #lovecruise.

CLIA is inviting travel advisors to get involved to showcase their cruise expertise, inspire their clients, and drive new enquiries and bookings.

A ready-to-use marketing toolkit is available too, with more info on the **cover page**.

Cruise sales in pole position

LUXURY cruise sales are in a strong position for next year, according to Virtuoso's 2027 *Luxe Report: Australia & New Zealand*, with expedition, ocean, and river sailings all featuring in the top 10 travel trends for next year.

Cruise sales grew by close to 11% overall for Virtuoso in Australia and NZ this year, based on partner sales.

However, expedition cruising remained the strongest selling category locally for the luxury network, ranking second on its list of trends behind only multigenerational family travel.

Antarctica is currently the biggest driver of luxury expedition voyages, topping the latest list of popular itineraries.

The White Continent led the way ahead of the Mediterranean in second spot, followed by the Danube, Alaska, Japan, the Greek Isles, and Northern Europe.

Speaking about the rising popularity of Antarctica cruises at the report's launch in Sydney yesterday, Virtuoso vice president, global public relations Misty Belles (**pictured**) confirmed bookings will continue to grow next year and beyond.

"Everybody is headed there now because it is easier than ever to do so with so much more product there now - it really has added that seventh continent to the list.

"There are a lot of people



speaking about Antarctica and we are seeing everyone gravitating there," Belles added.

Meanwhile, the solo travel category continues to grow rapidly in the luxury travel space, with Virtuoso's latest data revealing that expedition cruising will be one of the more common ways Aussie travellers will seek to book premium solo trips.

It ranked third on the list of most popular solo experiences in 2027, behind health and wellness trips and guided tours.

Japan also made its debut in the top five cruise itineraries for ANZ.

Belles said part of the driver for Japan sailings was attributed to the fact that so many Aussies have already visited the country in recent years, and are now looking to explore it from a different perspective.

"There is so much popularity on land in Japan and when you cruise, you are getting the value and the excursions, which are a little bit harder to plan if you don't do them [by ship]." AB

Discover Celebrity

CELEBRITY Cruises' new 2028/29 season of sailings is here - perfectly timed for travellers to discover Australia, New Zealand, and Asia.

The season will see 23 voyages departing from either Sydney or Auckland, with itineraries ranging between four and 14 nights on board both *Celebrity Edge* and *Celebrity Solstice* - **back page**.

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Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a cover page from CLIA and a full page from **Celebrity Cruises**.

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CCL's record quarter

CARNIVAL Corporation outperformed its third quarter guidance, the company announced, delivering its best-ever revenues, net yields, and net incomes.

The company's all-time high net income of US\$1.9 billion (approximately A\$2.7 billion) demonstrated continued demand strength, with a record amount of bookings providing a strong foundation for 2027.

Next year's booked occupancy and pricing are also at record levels.

The numbers allowed Carnival to announce a full-year operational improvement outlook of more than US\$150 million (approximately A\$215 million) in adjusted net income compared to Jun's guidance, overcoming a spike in fuel prices (**CW** 24 Jun).

Carnival's near-seven percent hike in customer deposits was a record, when compared to the prior year, which was also a record.

"We delivered another quarter of top and bottom-line records, with accelerating demand and even stronger cost discipline driving results ahead of our expectations," chief executive officer Josh Weinstein said.

"This performance reinforces the underlying trajectory of our business."

First peek at AmaMaya



AMAWATERWAYS has unveiled *AmaMaya*, which promises bring a new level of luxury to the Mekong when she debuts in Jan (**CW** 10 Aug).

Featuring a contemporary interpretation of Indochinese design, the 120-guest *AmaMaya* (**pictured**) will journey through Vietnam and Cambodia on AmaWaterways' 'Charms of the Mekong' and 'Riches of the Mekong' itineraries.

Guests will enjoy two dining venues, including the Mekong Restaurant, serving elegant cuisine with international and local influences, and The Chef's Table, an intimate specialty restaurant featuring a multi-course tasting menu.

Culinary highlights will feature Asian flavours and fresh ingredients, with options catering to vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and other dietary needs.

AmaMaya will also feature a fitness room, sun deck pool, and

three massage rooms.

A dedicated wellness host will also lead fitness and mindfulness activities throughout the cruise.

AmaMaya will host AmaWaterways' River of Rewards mega fam in Sep, which will return after this year's highly successful debut.

"The Mekong offers such a special way to discover Vietnam and Cambodia, bringing guests into close contact with the people and traditions of the region," CEO Catherine Powell said.

"With *AmaMaya*, we wanted to build on that connection by inviting guests onto a ship that is inspired by its surroundings and the rivers it sails.

"The ship is contemporary and refined, but you can feel the influence of Indochina throughout...it is a beautiful setting that complements the journey and creates a sense of discovery from the moment guests step on board." *MS*

APT Indochina 27/28

APT Luxury Travel has announced its 2027/28 collection for Vietnam & Cambodia in its latest online brochure, which features a program of river cruises.

Returning next year is the popular 13-day 'Vietnam & Cambodia Highlights' itinerary aboard APT's boutique river ship *Mekong Serenity*, with pricing starting from \$7,995 per person.

Highlights include witnessing the sunrise over Angkor Wat, travelling by speedboat along the Saigon River to the Cu Chi tunnels, and enjoying a private performance of traditional Apsara Dance.

New for next year is the nine-day 'Luxury Mekong Cruise', combining a hotel stay in either Ho Chi Minh City or Siem Reap with a seven-night sailing through the heart of Vietnam and Cambodia.

Highlights include immersive visits to traditional villages and cultural landmarks along the Mekong, alongside APT Signature Experiences such as a Buddhist blessing ceremony.

For travellers seeking a more comprehensive exploration of the region, the 21-day 'Best of Vietnam and Cambodia' returns by popular demand, offering a more in-depth journey showcasing the history, culture, and landscapes of both countries.



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Thursday 1st Oct 2026

THE annual Signature Luxury Cruise Awards were held on Wed, with Explora Journeys and Silversea some of the biggest winners on the day.

Explora was the champion of the large ocean ships category, recognising cruise lines with vessels carrying between 750-2,000 guests, while it also finished second in three other categories: cuisine at sea, spa & wellness, and 'super suites', distinguishing the sector's biggest and best accommodations.

The Geneva-based cruise line was also one of three brands specifically highlighted for its sustainability initiatives, alongside Hurtigruten and Ponant.

Other big winners included Silversea, which won the boutique ships award (between 25 and 250 guests), finished on the podium in the small ships and luxury expedition categories, and was a finalist for the cuisine, wellness, and super suites awards.



THE Signature Media team.



THE MSC Group team: Michelle Warren, Amy Williams, Lauren Bevan, and Lynne Clarke.



LATTE general manager Kristen Lazaric, Uniworld marketing manager Tanja Zimmermann, and Signature editorial director Christian Barker.



HX SALES & marketing coordinator Rebecca Bussell and senior marketing manager Shannon Davis.



AMAWATERWAYS' head of reservations Ian Lyne and Virtuoso director global partnerships Sophie Treasure.



THE Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection director travel partnerships Anastasia Kotanidis and Travel Associates general manager Rachel Kingswell.



SCENIC director marketing & branded content Katherine O'Neill, Virtuoso director global partnerships Sophie Treasure, and Scenic general manager Anthony Laver.



HOLLAND America Line is set to host the first-ever professional pickleball invitational, with the exclusive competition to take place at its private island, RelaxAway, Half Moon Cay.

Pickleball enthusiasts will be able to combine their love for the sport with a Caribbean vacation during a seven-day voyage departing 07 Mar, which will feature a day of pickleball play on 13 Mar.

The invitational will see professional players battle it out on the island's four new pickleball courts.

Travellers can get in on the action leading up the event by joining one of four Countdown Cruises, complete with pickleball programming and the opportunity to meet pros.



MSC World Atlantic floats out



MSC Cruises has marked the float out of *MSC World Atlantic*, which touched water for the first time at Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard recently (**pictured**).

The ship will set sail from Port Canaveral from Nov 2027, once her construction in Saint-Nazaire is completed.

World Atlantic will now undergo the next phase of construction ahead, which will involve work on her interiors, public spaces, and other technical elements.

When *World Atlantic* is delivered, she will become the 25th ship in the MSC fleet, and the fourth to be powered by LNG.

The ship is designed to blend MSC's signature European style with American comforts, offering seven- and 14-night Caribbean sailings to some of the region's most iconic destinations.

Meanwhile, MSC recently announced it will serve as the cruise partner of the America's Cup in Naples next year. *MS*

Smiles on the Nile

VIKING has taken delivery of its newest river ship in Egypt, *Viking Sekhmet*, with the exchange taking place recently at Massara shipyard in Cairo.

Hosting 82 guests in 41 outside staterooms, *Sekhmet* is built specifically to navigate the African river on Viking's 12-day 'Pharaohs & Pyramids' itinerary, as well as the new 12-day 'Total Eclipse on the Nile' cruise.

Sekhmet and her seven sister vessels that operate on the river feature Viking's Scandinavian design, which includes a distinctive square bow and an indoor/outdoor Aquavit Terrace.

"The Nile has connected people with the history and culture of Egypt for thousands of years, and it continues to be a destination that inspires curious travellers," president and chief executive officer Leah Talactac said.

"With the arrival of the elegant *Viking Sekhmet*, we are pleased to offer even more opportunities for curious travellers to explore Egypt."

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL THAT MAKES AN IMPACT

HX Expeditions' **Amber Wilson** on inspiring travellers to take action.

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ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Head of Sales & Marketing - Sean Harrigan
Business Development Manager - Kara Stanley
advertising@cruiseweekly.com.au

GENERAL MANAGER & PUBLISHER
Matthew Vince

ACCOUNTS

accounts@traveldaily.com.au
info@traveldaily.com.au
Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: (AU) +61 2 8007 6760 or (NZ) 0800 799 220
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