

Cruise Weekly today

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

No CW will be published Monday

THERE will be no issue of **Cruise Weekly** published on Mon due to the observation of the Labour Day holiday in New South Wales, South Australia, and the ACT.

Mon will also see Queensland observe the King's Birthday holiday.

The next issue of **Cruise Weekly** will be published on Tue 06 Oct.

From everyone at the Business Publishing Group family, enjoy your weekend.



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Cruise contract scrutiny



AUSTRALIAN law may override many cruise contract clauses, according to a new University of Queensland (UQ) study.

Australians booking a foreign cruise and entering into an overseas cruise contract do not automatically lose their local consumer protections, even if the contract says otherwise.

Rosemary Gibson from UQ's law school analysed the legality of class action waiver clauses in cruise contracts and found their enforceability under consumer law is largely overstated.

"A key finding was that these clauses are almost certainly going to be void in consumer contracts in Australia," she told **CW**.

"That will be the case even if the company has carried on business in Australia - for example, by promoting their products to Australian consumers - even if the contract itself is formed overseas, and even if the customer themselves is actually from a different country."

Cruise contracts usually include strict fine-print clauses that heavily limit a passenger's ability to sue, or make it very difficult to do so.

This usually includes 'forum selection' requirements, which require lawsuits to be filed in specific courts - usually in the United States - regardless of the passenger's nationality or the

cruise's destination.

The rigidity of consumer law Down Under has, in some cases, allowed foreign passengers, including Americans, to join Australian class action suits, Gibson found.

The findings extended beyond class action waivers, she said, potentially encompassing other unfair contractual provisions, including arbitration clauses.

"Any unfair contract term the court decides is unfair, the effect of the Australian consumer law is that term is void," Gibson said.

However, Chambers Russell Lawyers partner Vicky Antzoulatos told **CW** these protections are not universal.

Antzoulatos, who prosecuted the successful *Ruby Princess* (pictured) class action (**CW** 25 Oct 2023), said there must be a local basis to bring about a lawsuit in Australian court.

"There would need to be an assessment made on whether an Australian court was the appropriate forum for the determination of the passenger's dispute, including whether the claim or cruise had any connection with Australia," Antzoulatos noted.

However, travel advisors should not necessarily assume that a foreign cruise contract's terms are the final word on their Australian client's rights, Gibson said. *MS*

Family river incentive

SEND someone you love to Europe with Travelmarvel's latest travel advisor incentive.

Sell five 'European Gems' staterooms and unlock never-to-be-repeated family rates on the itinerary of \$1,495 per person twin share and \$1,995 for a solo.

Those qualifying for the incentive can also score a family rate on a Mekong cruise of \$995 per person twin share or \$1,495 for a solo.

The incentive period covers staterooms booked and deposited on European Gems departures between now and the end of the year.

For more information on the incentive and terms and conditions, **CLICK HERE**.



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Walker ships out

SILVERSEA marketing director Philippa Walker has moved on from the line, she has announced on LinkedIn.

Walker spent almost four years in the role, after moving over from the cruise line's sister brand Royal Caribbean, where she served as partnerships manager.

All up, she spent almost five years with Royal Caribbean Group, telling her LinkedIn followers of the exciting achievements of her tenure.

"It's been a privilege to lead marketing and communications strategy across the APAC region, and I'm proud of what we built.

"To our media & travel trade partners, agencies and communications collaborators, thank you for your trust, your ideas and for helping bring some incredible stories to life across the region."

NCLH strong results

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) said on Wed it expects Q3 results to exceed its guidance, driven by better-than-anticipated revenues.

The company said it expects to beat both of its earnings per share expectation of US\$0.90 and its EBITDA projection of US\$874 million.

However, NCLH said it is holding on its FY26 guidance.

Crystal's new global push



CRYSTAL has introduced 'That Crystal Feeling', a new global brand campaign aimed at capturing the "effortless and carefree experiences" that define the cruise line.

The campaign represents an evolution in how the line tells its brand story, emphasising the experience on board rather than the destinations.

Designed to be "dreamlike, impressionistic and deeply sensory", the campaign encapsulates the rhythm of life at sea, with a focus on Crystal's highly personalised service, dining, enriching entertainment, and beautifully designed spaces.

The campaign follows a day and night on a Crystal cruise, using cinematic imagery and sensory storytelling to evoke the feeling on board rather than solely depicting the places visited.

"Today, we are surrounded by the idea that we need to do more, see more and make the most of every moment - with 'That Crystal Feeling' we wanted to celebrate the luxury of doing the opposite," said Peter Chipchase, chief brand officer of Crystal's parent company AKTG.

"It's the freedom to slow down, to wander without a plan, to linger a little longer and to let the world unfold around you.

"Ultimately, it's about how Crystal makes you feel, not where our ships take you."

Developed by Crystal's in-house creative team, the new assets will be seen across global markets through connected TV, digital and online video advertising, print, DOOH, and social media.

The campaign launched yesterday and will run through 30 Sep 2027. MS

Trafalgar's leg up

TRAFALGAR has updated its river cruise group policy, designed to help Australian travel advisors get a sharper competitive edge.

The new policy introduces greater flexibility, lower risk, and expanded full-ship charter opportunities, allowing for greater commercial returns and a more streamlined booking process.

Group space holds have now been divided into two streams, the first one being soft allocation, which holds pricing at time of quotation based on cabin category, with space subject to availability.

The other is hard allocation, which is guaranteed space and a refundable deposit up to 12 months before departure.

Deposits for soft and hard allocations start at \$350 per person and \$800 per stateroom respectively.

Group bookings (minimum eight guests) under the updated policy will now have access to tailored incentives including one FOC twin-share place for every group of eight or 10 guests, a choice between an exclusive \$200pp group discount or the active in-market tactical offer, and access to exclusive group amenity points.

Trafalgar recommends a booking lead time of 12 to 18 months prior to departure.

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IF YOU are joining a Royal Caribbean cruise this month, you may find yourself rubbing shoulders with vampires, witches and ghouls.

The cruise line has declared month-long Halloween celebrations, with special events and activities planned across its fleet throughout Oct.

The family friendly fun, which Royal Caribbean has dubbed its 'Sea Spooktacular' event, will include a Halloween monster bash, a trick-or-treat kids costume parade, a scary movie night for teens, a pumpkin climb challenge, haunted mini golf, scavenger hunts, and more.

"We're encouraging all our guests to participate in the festivities, so - pack your favourite Halloween costumes and accessories, have fun with your outfits, and get ready to have a ghoulish time," the line told guests in an email.

The kings of Alaska



ROYAL Caribbean has revealed its 2028 summer lineup of Alaska vacations, with seven-night cruises across four ships.

The newly amplified *Ovation of the Seas*, as well as *Anthem of the Seas* (pictured), *Serenade of the Seas*, and *Voyager of the Seas*, will all visit Alaska from Apr 2028.

Cruises will depart from Seattle, Seward and Vancouver, and are available to book now on the Royal Caribbean website.

Highlights will include visits to Skagway, Icy Strait Point, and the Mendenhall Glacier in Juneau.

Guests will be able to take in sweeping views of the glaciers, mountains, and fjords from the all-glass North Star observation capsule on *Anthem* and *Ovation*.

Vacationers travelling through Seward will also be able to enjoy a seamless beginning-to-end journey through Royal Caribbean's new state-of-the-art terminal (CW 17 Jun).

The US\$137 million (approximately A\$194m) terminal features an upgraded double-berth pier and has been built for year-round operations. MS

Seabourn's lineup

SEABOURN has announced its team of polar experts and expedition leaders for the 2026/27 Antarctica season, with 19 departures across *Seabourn Venture* and *Seabourn Pursuit*.

Running between Nov and Mar, each voyage will be accompanied by a crew of 21 experts, from fields including marine biology, wildlife research, conservation, geology, environmental science, and polar history in both Antarctica and Patagonia.

Expedition Leaders for this season include Luciano Bernacchi, Ignacio Rojas, Juan Restrepo, Dom del Rosario, and Fridrik Fridriksson, who boast more than 20 Antarctic seasons between them.

Among the experts accompanying them are marine mammal scientist and polar expert Sean Todd, ornithologist and expedition naturalist JJ Apestegui, and archaeologist and Viking scholar Elizabeth Pierce.

Voyages for the season are now available to book.



SAILING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

CLIA Australasia executive director Joel Katz on the growth in cruise.

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