

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a full page from **Paul Gaguin Cruises**.

Paul is tempting

PAUL Gaguin Cruises' latest travel advisor incentive, 'Tempting Tahiti', offers a \$200 gift card for each booked passenger for a limited time.

Travellers also receive €1,000 shipboard credit on all sailings across the next two years.

Those who reserve select voyages by the end of the month to claim their credit can also enjoy up to 30% bonus savings when booking early.

Paul Gaguin sails across French Polynesia's five archipelagos, including the Societys, Tuamotus, Marquesases, Gambiers, and Australs - for more information, head to **page 4**.

Travelmarvel filling a market gap

TRAVELMARVEL believes it has identified a gap for a premium small ship offering that provides value, leading the brand to commission the construction of its first-ever ocean vessel.

Chief operating officer Mladen Vukic told **CW** that owning the vessel will give Travelmarvel greater control over the product and guest experience.

Vukic said the investment is one of the most significant Travelmarvel has made to date.

"Owning a purpose-built vessel means we can design the experience from the ground up around what Travelmarvel guests actually want, rather than working within someone else's."

"It gives us control over the product and lets us deliver the quality, comfort and value the brand is known for, at a standard we set ourselves."

"This is exactly the kind of



investment we want to be making as we head toward our centenary in 2027."

Vukic said the ship will appeal both to existing small-ship cruisers and to Travelmarvel's established customer base, including those who may never have considered a cruise before.

"We expect her to appeal to travellers already interested in small ship cruising, but her

appeal extends well beyond that market," he explained.

"We also have a large, loyal guest base looking for their next travel experience, and for many of them this will be a natural step forward," Vukic added.

"Growth for us has always come from doing both well, bringing in new guests and giving loyal ones a reason to stay with the brand," he enthused. **MS**

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Quark's incentive

QUARK Expeditions is incentivising travel advisors making a new booking in Oct and Nov by offering a stateroom on its 'Essential Patagonia' voyage in Mar - **CLICK HERE** for more.

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SpongeBob aboard *Hero*



ROYAL Caribbean has announced the *SpongeBob SquarePants* musical will be coming to *Hero of the Seas* when she launches in Aug (**CW** 28 Apr).

The show will be the first-ever at-sea production of the musical, which is based on the Nickelodeon animated television series of the same name.

It will bring the vibrant world of the titular character's home, Bikini Bottom, to life in *Hero's* Royal Theatre, where he and his friends race against time to save their town from total destruction.

"At Royal Caribbean, we're focused on creating incredible experiences that bring families of all ages together in meaningful, memorable ways," the cruise line's VP entertainment Christi Coachman said.

"Our entertainment lineup on *Hero of the Seas* is designed with something for everyone.

"The *SpongeBob* musical delivers on that by bringing generations together through a story families know and love,

while showcasing the creativity, cutting-edge technology, and world-class production that can only be experienced on a Royal Caribbean vacation."

SpongeBob SquarePants is the latest musical to feature on a Royal ship, following other Broadway adaptations including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Hairspray*, and *Grease*.

Royal Caribbean also recently partnered with The Wiggles for a run of themed cruises, which is set to enter its second season in 2026/27 (**CW** 09 Dec).

Other family friendly production shows offered by Royal Caribbean aboard its ships include ice-skating spectacles, AquaTheater high-dives, glowing puppet shows, and more.

Hero will take vacationers on seven-night eastern and western Caribbean adventures from Miami when she launches in Aug, with every cruise visiting Royal Caribbean's Perfect Day at CocoCay private destination in The Bahamas. *MS*

Searching for a God

TRAFALGAR has launched a search for a godmother for *Trafalgar Dreamer* ahead of her Seine debut next year.

The cruise line is inviting past guests to share their most meaningful travel stories for a chance to become *Dreamer's* godmother, with the winner and their travel advisor to also join the inaugural sailing.

Trafalgar is encouraging travel advisors to support the search for *Dreamer's* godmother by sharing the opportunity with their clients, with the winner to christen the ship in Paris in Apr.

The line's other two ships, *Verity* and *Reverie*, were also christened by travel advisors.

Susset out at HLC

ISOLDE Susset will hand over the reins of Hapag-Lloyd Cruises (HLC) to Salika Kobschull, who will be the cruise line's new managing director from next year.

Susset has been with the German luxury cruise line for around 30 years, and is set to retire at the end of 2026.

The long-tenured cruise executive has had a particularly significant influence on Hapag-Lloyd's expedition segment, playing a key role in the development of *Hanseatic Nature*, *Inspiration*, and *Spirit*.



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IF YOU'VE been looking forward to trying Royal Caribbean's secret bar menu available on its Icon-class ships, you may be disappointed.

The secret menu, which did the rounds on social media earlier this year, is now being refused by the ships' bartenders, the unofficial *Royal Caribbean Blog* reports.

Consisting of 15 drinks, the menu was available at Rye & Bean, the coffee-and-cocktail bar found inside the AquaDome on Royal Caribbean's Icon-class ships.

However the cruise line has now apparently discontinued the practice, according to passengers who have tried for one of the secret tipples.

"I'm on *Star [of the Seas]* currently and was told they are no longer allowed to do the secret shots," Janet Hepler-Good shared on Facebook late last week.

Play it again, *World Asia*



MSC Cruises has revealed the entertainment program coming to *MSC World Asia*, with the ship to feature six theatrical shows, including three brand-new productions in the World Theatre (pictured), and an all-new Panorama Lounge spectacular.

La NoTte, *Sensoria* and *Ritmo Divino* will all premiere in the World Theatre, while *Sunset Symphonic* will debut in the Panorama Lounge.

Live music will be a defining feature aboard *World Asia*, with 33 performers playing daily across the ship, including strolling musicians, solo artists, live bands, and MSC's popular duelling

pianos experience.

Meanwhile, *World Asia's* Luna Park, The Harbour, and the new Clubhouse venues will also host entertainment experiences.

There will be returning guest favourite shows on *World Asia* too, such as *Hall of Fame* and *Queen Symphonic*, which will debut in the Mediterranean for the first time.

World Asia will offer seven-night sailings to some of the Mediterranean's most sought-after destinations, including Barcelona, Marseille, Genoa, Civitavecchia, Messina and Valletta, when she sets sail later this year. *MS*

Viking Rota arrives

VIKING has taken delivery of its newest river ship in Europe, *Viking Rota*.

The 190-guest vessel will sail the cruise line's itineraries on the Rhine, Main, and Danube.

Rota features elegant Scandinavian design, including a patented square bow that enables three full decks, the indoor/outdoor Aquavit Terrace, and Viking's proprietary asymmetric corridor layout that allows for true two-room suites.

"The delivery of the *Viking Rota* marks another milestone for our award-winning river fleet," president & chief executive Leah Talactac said.

"As interest in river travel continues to grow, we remain focused on creating more opportunities for curious travellers to explore the world in Viking comfort.

"We look forward to welcoming guests on board this elegant new river vessel."

Viking expects to take delivery of 18 additional river ships by 2028, as well as 11 ocean ships by 2032.

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