



NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

CRUISE CONSULTANT
OF THE YEAR

AGENCY/AGENT CRUISE
PROMOTION OF THE YEAR

MOBILE CRUISE CONSULTANT
OF THE YEAR

NETWORK CRUISE
PROMOTION OF THE YEAR

RISING STAR

CRUISE MONTH
PROMOTION OF THE YEAR

NOMINATE YOURSELF OR A COLLEAGUE TODAY

For more information on Award Criteria and how to nominate, please visit cruising.org.au.
Nominations are open to all CLIA Travel Agent members and close Friday, 20 November 2026.

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of cruise news, plus a cover wrap and a full page from **Cruise Lines International Association**.

Nominate for CLIAs

NOMINATIONS have opened for next year's Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Awards, with members able to make their submission by 20 Nov.

Both self-nomination and peer nominations are being invited, with 15 award categories to be judged this year, including 10 open to submissions from members.

The award winners will be announced at a gala celebration on Sat 13 Feb 2027 at ICC Sydney.

"The Annual Cruise Industry Awards are about celebrating the brightest stars of our Australasian CLIA community, and they are a fantastic opportunity for members to boost their profile and gain valuable recognition," the Association's executive director Joel Katz said.

"We want to hear about the achievements that deserve acknowledgement, whether through exceptional sales performance, outstanding customer service, innovation, business growth or an impactful cruise promotion.

"Our CLIA members in Australia and New Zealand are among the most dedicated and professional travel advisors in the world, so we want to honour their hard work."

CLICK HERE for more information on the awards.



Cruise stars shine at NTIAs



VIKING has won its fourth consecutive Most Popular Ocean Cruise Operator award at Sat's National Travel Industry Awards, while a new champion of the river cruise sector was crowned.

The Basel-based line continued its dominance over its ocean competitors, having won the award every year since it was reintroduced in 2023 following the COVID-19 pandemic.

However it could not repeat its back-to-back double of last year (**CW** 20 Oct), with Avalon Waterways winning the Most Popular River Cruise Operator category for the first time.

Other big winners on the night included Clean Cruising, which was honoured in both a company and individual category.

The Brisbane-based firm was awarded Most Outstanding Independent Leisure Travel Agency, while one of its young guns, Jordan Heinrich, was named Most Outstanding New Talent.

Meanwhile, Cruiseco was named champion in the Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service category, winning the award for a second year running.

The Helloworld-owned business has now been awarded for three consecutive years, with Jackie Gordon winning the Most Outstanding Sales Executive

- Wholesaler award in 2024, representing Cruiseco.

The final cruise-specific category, Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Cruise, was won by Rebecca Setchell from Hurtigruten, who became the Norwegian brand's first winner in the category.

Other winners from around the cruise sector included Norwegian Cruise Line, which was awarded with the Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign - Supplier gong, winning for its 'Choose Calm Over Kids Clubs' push, centred on its locally based *Norwegian Spirit* (**CW** 19 Dec).

HX also won the Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Program for its partnership with the University of Tasmania (**CW** 14 Jul). **MS**



En route to Amsterdam

Cruise Weekly is today coming to you as we travel to Europe for the naming ceremony of seven new Viking longships in the Netherlands.

VIKING is acknowledging the longstanding support of the global travel advisor community this week as it formally names the latest additions to its river fleet.

Vessels in the Netherlands, France, Germany and Egypt will all be officially welcomed live and by video, and Australia and NZ's contribution is being particularly recognised with Virtuoso's Michael Londregan and Danielle Galloway from Flight Centre becoming the ceremonial godparents of two of the ships.

Senior Viking executives will be in attendance, and after the festivities, the Aussie contingent will be treated to a mini voyage aboard the *Viking Rota*, taking in iconic experiences in Kinderdijk, Delft and Rotterdam.

The milestone joint naming ceremony comes as Viking marks its 29th year in operation - see **Cruise Weekly** and **Travel Daily** this week for all the action as it happens.



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Royal flash sale

ROYAL Caribbean has unveiled new deals on its upcoming summer season on *Anthem* and *Quantum of the Seas*, including a 'New Zealand Holiday', now priced from \$1,999pp until Fri 16 Oct.

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Vic in Princess' sights



PRINCESS Cruises has revealed plans to return to Melbourne as a homeport in 2028-29, with the season expected to generate around \$40 million in economic benefit for Victoria.

The announcement was made as the line kicked off the state's summer 2026-27 season, with *Crown Princess* arriving in Port Phillip Bay yesterday morning.

"We know how much our Victorian guests value being able to start their holiday closer to home, and we have heard loud and clear they have missed having a Princess ship based in Melbourne," Princess vice president Asia Pacific Matthew Rutherford said.

"Today's arrival of *Crown Princess* marks the start of what promises to be an exciting summer cruise season for Victoria and highlights the important role cruising plays in supporting

local tourism, businesses and communities," he added.

The 3,080 guests on board *Crown Princess* will enjoy everything Melbourne has to offer as part of the 28-day 'Round Australia' voyage, which will also visit Adelaide, Albany, Fremantle, Broome, the Kimberley Coast, Darwin and Brisbane before returning to Sydney.

During the Australian 2026-27 season, the line will operate 62 departures across 42 itineraries.

"For 50 years, Australians have trusted Princess to create memorable holiday experiences, and Melbourne has long been an important part of that story," Rutherford said.

Princess will unveil its full 2028-29 Australia summer program, including the return of its seasonal Melbourne homeport, on 28 Oct, with the itineraries on sale 11 Nov. *JM*

River is the focus

RIVER cruising is in the spotlight this week as part of Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) Oct Cruise Month initiative, now in its second week (*CW* 01 Oct).

Under the banner #LoveCruise, CLIA and its members will highlight the increasingly diverse choice of travel options along inland waterways around the world, as well as the advantages of booking a cruise through a CLIA-certified travel agent.

Running throughout the month, the social media campaign will be aimed at new-to-cruise travellers as well as established cruisers, with imagery and videos posted across Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram, while CLIA-certified advisors can attend an expanded program of Cruise Month training webinars.

"A lot is happening in river cruising right now...river cruising is one of the most dynamic areas in travel right now, and we're seeing a huge amount of innovation and investment as a result," said executive director Joel Katz.

"Lines are introducing spectacular new ships, while new operators are entering the market and new experiences are being offered to give travellers a greater connection with the destinations they visit," he added - see **page 4**.

RACE THE BDM AND WIN A \$250 GIFT CARD!

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Ready, Set, GoooooooCCL!

*Video Submission Terms and Conditions Apply. Visit GoCCL.com.au for full details. Promotion starts at 12:01am 1/9/2026 and ends at 11:59pm 3/10/2026. Open to registered travel agents aged 18+.

ENTER TODAY





A CANADIAN buoy was recently found on the shore in Ireland, having floated around 5,000 kilometres across the Atlantic Ocean.

Mayo County Council said the approximately 3.8-tonne Canadian Coast Guard buoy was recently found washed ashore on Achill Island, located off Ireland's West Region.

The council is now working on plans to have the buoy moved from the coastline to a more secure location, with officials saying they are concerned it could wind up back in the water and pose a danger to boats and local infrastructure.

Off the cards however is Ireland shipping the buoy back to Canada - an exercise that wouldn't come cheap.

"Should the Canadians wish to see their buoy again, they may have to make a special trip to Mayo to collect it," Mayo County Council said.

You can't forget Asia

UNFORGETTABLE Travel Company has launched a travel advisor-first Asia specialist, Unforgettable Asia, following a more than 200% surge in demand for the destination.

The new luxury Asia specialist is designed to make complex travel across the region easier to sell for advisors, and launches with 11 destinations and 50 itineraries, including a range of cruises.

Initial destinations covered by Unforgettable Asia include Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Malaysia and more.

Further destinations will be added later this year.

"Cruising in Asia is already an exciting prospect for Australian travellers, and we see an opportunity to make the journey around the cruise as memorable as the sailing itself," Unforgettable founder Graham Carter told **CW**.

"Our expert destination specialists know the region first-hand and work with our local teams to create experiences that can define the whole trip.

"We bring the cruise, immersive experiences, and complex land

arrangements together through one point of contact, with complimentary concierge service and 24/7 support for clients as they travel."

The launch follows significant growth in demand for Asia travel at Unforgettable between 2022 and 2025, with agent bookings now accounting for 54% of the destination's bookings.

Experiences have been designed to take travellers beyond familiar highlights, with launch itineraries including meeting TV personality and resident monk Misaka-san - known as the 'Merry Monk' - for a personal blessing at Hase-dera temple in Kamakura.

Travellers will also be able to enjoy after-hours access to The Intan private Peranakan home museum in Singapore, and spend time with one of Taiwan's few female tea merchants before tasting the year's champion oolong with local experts.

Carter said this support gives advisors the confidence to offer ambitious journeys across borders, and their clients a trip that feels personal and seamless - **CLICK HERE** for more. *MS*

New Disney device

DISNEY Cruise Line is trialling new wristbands on a *Disney Treasure* sailing, which departed Florida on 10 Oct.

The wearable device is designed to replace the line's Key to the World card, which serves as an all-in-one room, on board charge, and identification card.

Guests with a DisneyBand+ from one of Disney's parks check in as usual while Disney activates their bands, and guests without one will receive a wearable Key to the World wristband.

"We are testing these new wristbands as we continue to look for ways to make a Disney cruise vacation even easier," the line said.

"Unlike DisneyBand+, they will only work on this sailing and are not applicable to other Disney experiences."

The line is yet to reveal whether the devices will be tested on additional cruises or if there are further plans.

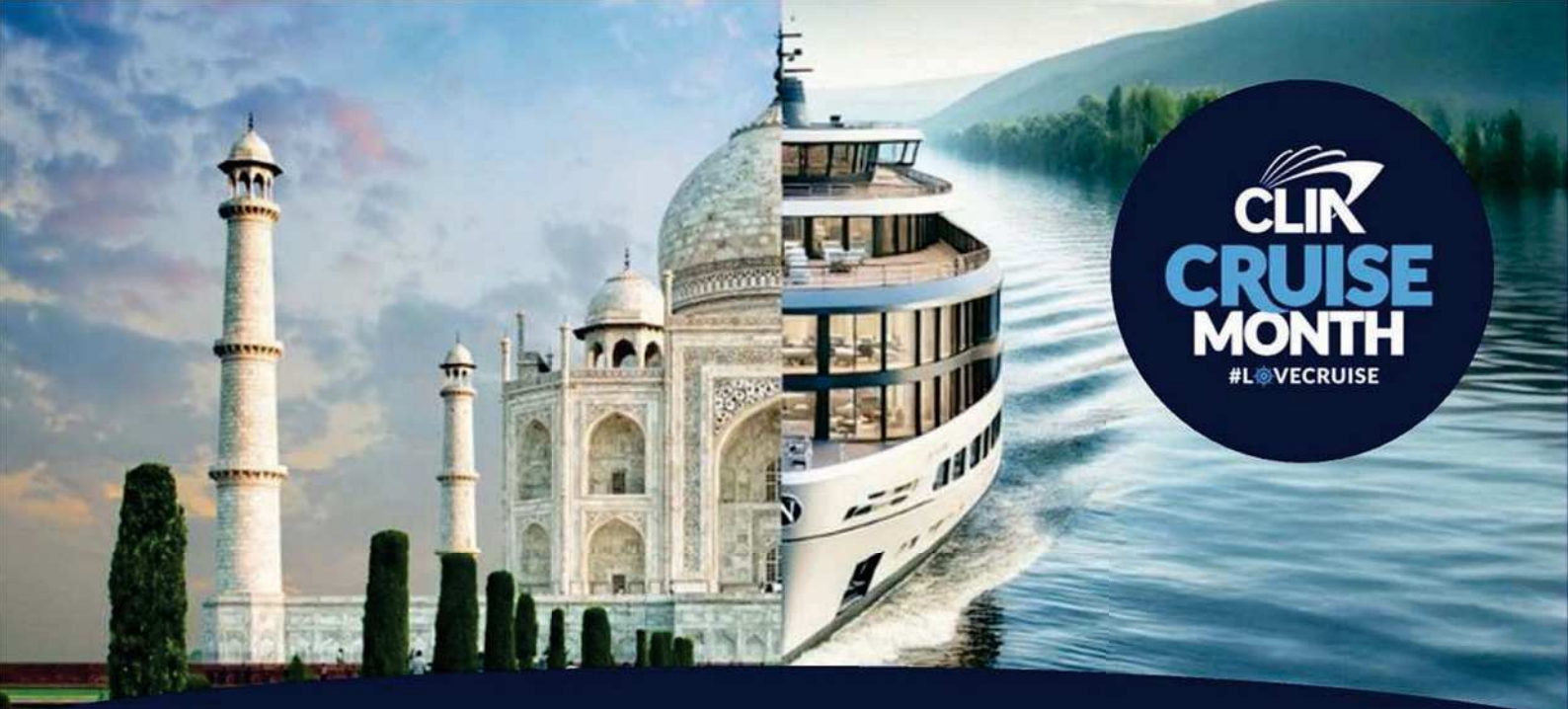
Guests will be required to return the wristbands at the end of their journey.

RIVER CRUISE CHANGES COURSE

Here is how the booming sector is entering a new era.

» CLICK HERE TO READ

Travel Daily



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