

Cruise Weekly today

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

Seabourn opens '29

SEABOURN Cruise Line has unveiled its 2029 ocean voyages, which will see the brand return to Egypt for the first time since 2024.

Sailing from Mar through Nov 2029, select *Seabourn Ovation* cruises will feature an overnight stay in Alexandria, providing guests the opportunity to explore Cairo, the Great Pyramids of Giza, and more.

The full season features over 200 destinations across the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, Alaska, Canada and New England.

Other highlights include a new seven-day Gulf of Bothnia voyage in Northern Europe.

Two Carnival ships to leave Aus in 2028

CARNIVAL Cruise Line's *Carnival Adventure* and *Carnival Luminosa* will depart Australia in Mar 2028, leaving the brand with just two ships Down Under (**CW** breaking news yesterday).

Luminosa, which has sailed seasonally from Brisbane since the industry restarted cruising in 2022, will make her final voyage from Sydney on 15 Mar 2028.

Meanwhile, *Adventure*, which was set to begin operating seasonally only in Australia (**CW** 27 Feb), will instead depart for good on 20 Mar 2028.

Carnival Splendor and *Carnival Encounter* will continue to sail year-round from Sydney and Brisbane respectively, the cruise line said.

The company cited a range of factors for the decision, including the importance of long-term certainty and globally competitive operating conditions, which

support long-term itinerary planning and investment.

Although the federal government recently extended the cruise sector's statutory right to sail between Australian ports until the end of 2028 (**CW** 06 Oct), Carnival Corporation country manager Peter Little said the brand's significant local deployment left it highly vulnerable to economic and regulatory headwinds.

"As the only cruise line with ships dedicated year-round to Australia, Carnival has greater exposure to changes in local market and operating conditions than cruise lines with a seasonal or more limited presence.

"We will continue to work constructively with the federal government as it develops the future arrangements for cruise ships operating in the Australian market," he said.

Carnival's decision comes as the federal government works toward a replacement coastal trading framework, with the current exemption due to expire at the end of 2028.

CW understands the timing of the departures reflected the need for Carnival to make fleet deployment decisions before the future coastal trading framework is settled, and that no decision has been made on the future deployment of *Splendor* and *Encounter* beyond the soon-to-be published 2028/29 schedule.

In a statement, CLIA connected Carnival's decision to a broader decline in Australia's cruise competitiveness, citing an uncertain regulatory environment and rising costs.

The Association claimed that the loss will have significant economic consequences for Australia's visitor economy. *MS*



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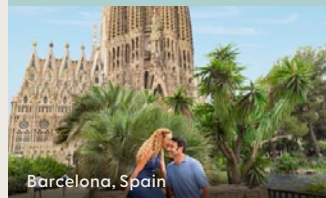
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Meet the godparents...



AUSTRALIA now officially has its first Viking godparents, with Michael Londregan of Virtuoso and Flight Centre Travel Group's Danielle Galloway each christening one of the cruise line's new ships in Amsterdam.

The pair both paid tribute to Viking, with Galloway saying it was "the honour of a lifetime".

"I want to say a huge thank you to (MD) Michelle Black and to all the Australian team," she said.

"Ships don't just carry people... ships carry dreams, and today [*Viking Sjofn*] has made my dreams come true.

"She will make many passengers and crew have their dreams come true over the lifetime of travel on the seas ahead.

"So I officially name *Viking Sjofn*...may her crew and passengers always be safe, and

may she always have a hand's width of water beneath her keel."

Londregan meanwhile named the *Viking Ptah*, one of two newbuild Nile vessels, acknowledging the support of Virtuoso members.

"I'm here because of the incredible work that hundreds of our travel advisors do in supporting this wonderful product, and I appreciate and take this honour on their behalf."

The pair were joined by five prominent American travel industry members who each named their ships in France, Germany and the Netherlands.

Famed Norwegian songstress Sissel treated guests to an intimate performance at a gala dinner afterwards, where the godparents are **pictured** beneath a giant Viking logo projection. *BP*

A Sunny new venture

SUN Island Tours has introduced Cruise Smaller, a new specialist cruise brand and online marketplace dedicated to small-ship cruising and private yacht charters around the world.

The venture builds on the Australian Mediterranean wholesaler's 35-plus years of expertise, developed in response to growing demand for small, more intimate and personal cruising experiences.

Using the Cruise Smaller platform, agents can search, explore and compare a wide variety of cruising experiences in one central marketplace, with advanced filtering by destination, departure date, cruise style, vessel size and a myriad of other preferences.

Advisors who register on the platform **HERE** can claim a \$50 introductory credit.



On location on board
Viking Rota

Cruise Weekly is today coming to you from Amsterdam where *Viking* formally named seven new river ships overnight.

NOW that the major naming event is over, attendees are being treated to a three-night 'mini-cruise' aboard *Viking Rota*, showcasing some of the key experiences offered as part of the line's products.

We are heading initially to Dordrecht, the oldest city in Holland, featuring picturesque waterways and gorgeous decorative bridges.

Guests can engage in a range of shore excursions including, of course, e-biking.



On Board: *Viking Rota*

Coffee corners

As with all Viking longships, *Viking Rota* features two dedicated areas where guests can make their own beverages 24 hours a day. Modern espresso machines make a range of coffees, including decaf, while hot water is available along with an array of teas. Both ceramic and take-away cups are available, and the area also features still and sparkling water dispensers and a selection of tasty pastries to complement any beverage.



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WHEN you move to Miami, life on the water manages to find its way into your bloodstream, and it appears that has happened to soccer legend Lionel Messi.

The Argentinian, who made the move to the Inter Miami club three years ago, recently ordered a new Ultima 88 yacht (pictured), which is currently under construction in the United Arab Emirates.

Ultima 88, which it is believed will be based in the Balearic Islands, is one of a number of yachts owned by the eight-time Balloon d'Or winner.

The 30-metre vessel features as many as five guest staterooms and a signature ocean lounge at the stern.



Roux you believe this?



ENGLISH chef Michel Albert Roux is returning to Cunard Line's *Queen Anne* with exclusive Le Gavroche at Sea residencies across the next two years.

Five exclusive sailings will take place during 2027 and 2028, allowing guests to be the only diners in the world to taste the flavours of Le Gavroche, following the 2024 closure of the land-based London restaurant after more than 50 years.

The Michel Roux Culinary Residencies will take place on seven-night Norway and Norwegian fjords voyages in May, Aug and Sep 2027, with further sailings confirmed on a Norway and Denmark voyage in May 2028 and a fjords voyage in Jun 2028.

At the heart of each residency is Le Gavroche at Sir Samuels, where guests can savour a specially curated tasting menu inspired by the flagship *Queen Anne* restaurant's rich heritage and celebrated dishes.

Limited to just 50 guests each evening, diners will also have the chance to meet twins Ursula and Silvia Perberschlagler - identical twin restaurant managers who worked at Le Gavroche for more than two decades.

Beyond the dining experience, guests can enjoy a program of exclusive events hosted by Roux (pictured), including live cooking demonstrations, Cunard Insights talks, Q&A sessions, book signings and more. *MS*

Ama goes to Peru

AMAWATERWAYS has launched a new six-day Machu Picchu itinerary, marking the line's first-ever Peru journey.

The experience will be offered as a post-cruise extension on the 'Magic of Colombia' itinerary, with select 2027 sailings beginning in Apr.

From 2028, it will be available on every post-cruise sailing of the 'Magic of Colombia' itinerary.

After disembarking in Cartagena, Colombia, guests will fly to Lima, Peru, with airfares included.

Upon arrival, guests will be accompanied to their hotel before discovering Lima.

The journey will continue to Cusco and the Sacred Valley, ending in a privately guided exploration of Machu Picchu, which guests will arrive at via either the legendary Hiram Bingham, A Belmond Train, or first-class Inca Rail.

Other highlights include the ancient Maras salt pans, the hilltop fortress of Sacsayhuaman and Cusco's historic centre.

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