

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Cruise Lines International Association**.

It's expedition week

IT IS expedition week as part of Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) Cruise Month, with the organisation offering advisors more ways to get involved.

Register to attend one of CLIA's Cruise Month webinars; read the CLIA newsletter and Cruise Month EDMs; and follow, share, and comment on CLIA's social media posts to get involved this month.

Read more on the **back page** of today's **Cruise Weekly**.

Prestige-ious taste

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has introduced a collection of immersive tastings and culinary pairings aboard *Seven Seas Prestige*.

The collection is headlined by the Grand Table Experience, part of Regent's Connoisseur Wine Lunches series and exclusive to *Prestige*, which will showcase some of the world's most celebrated labels through a five-course event.

Guests sailing on *Prestige* can also enjoy an ultra-luxury champagne-pairing experience and a pre-dinner event which will pair Grey Goose martini experiences with caviar.

Those staying in the Skyview Regent Suite will be offered a personalised beverage experience centred on Louis XIII Le Jeroboam, the three-litre Baccarat crystal decanter.

Regent will also introduce four additional five-course Connoisseur Wine Lunches across the fleet, including a French-focused meal.

Celebrities coming to town



CELEBRITY Cruises has kicked off its local 2026-2027 season from Sydney, with *Celebrity Edge* (pictured) launching the program on Sat.

Edge is in her fourth season Down Under, while her fleetmate *Celebrity Solstice* will also sail out of Sydney in 2026-27.

Highlights aboard *Edge* include her signature Magic Carpet, the world's first cantilevered floating platform at sea, and Infinite Veranda staterooms designed to bring the outside in.

Meanwhile, *Solstice* returns to the region following a visit earlier this year (**CW** 10 Apr) with three local sailings as part of her landmark 110-night 'Grand Voyage', which will sail to almost 60 destinations.

Solstice's 26-27 season follows her revitalisation earlier this year (**CW** 04 Mar), which introduced eight new experiences, including four new spaces: Trattoria Rossa, Sunset Park, The Parlor, and Boulevard Lounge - alongside a new Retreat Sundeck and refreshed accommodation across all staterooms.

Together, the two ships will offer 20 local sailings spanning four to 14 nights across Australia and the South Pacific.

Highlights of the season will include overnight stays in Port Vila, Cairns and Auckland, while

Celebrity will return to Luganville for the first time since 2019

There will also be two Asia repositioning voyages and two transpacific sailings on the two ships following their local season.

"We're thrilled to officially kick off another Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific season, with not one but two incredible ships welcoming guests," MD Tim Jones said.

"*Edge* continues to offer guests a diverse range of itineraries, and this season we're excited to reintroduce the revitalised *Celebrity Solstice* to the region.

"Together, the two ships will give guests more opportunities than ever to experience this part of the world with the premium design, elevated service, and immersive experiences *Celebrity Cruises* is known for." *MS*

HAL debuts Bar 1873

HOLLAND America Line (HAL) has unveiled Bar 1873, a new two-storey atrium venue inspired by the cruise line's 150 years of history.

The new venue will debut as part of *Oosterdam's* Evolution transformation (**CW** 11 Sep), which HAL recently revealed more details about.

Bar 1873 will be built around *Oosterdam's* central atrium on deck 2.

It will be highlighted by a soaring illuminated tulip sculpture; curated displays of Holland America's heritage; and lounges designed for cocktails, conversation and intimate entertainment.

The venue will become a hallmark of the Holland America Evolution program, and will be rolled out across all ships which undergo the transformation, with different vessels to offer their own interpretation of the venue.

Oosterdam's Bar 1873 will draw from the 1958 christening of historic former ocean liner *Rotterdam V* by the Netherlands' Queen Juliana.

A reimagined Crow's Nest and expanded live entertainment experiences will also debut as part of the major refresh, with new music programming and greater flexibility for activities throughout the day.

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN



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.



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Riverside unveils *Mahler's* return



RIVERSIDE Luxury Cruises has opened reservations for 2028, highlighted by the return of *Riverside Mahler* (CW 05 May), which will begin sailing itineraries along the Rhine, Main and Danube from May '28.

The fleet addition will allow the line to increase its cruises through the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal to 12 departures in 2028, compared with four this year and two in 2027, while also giving it more capacity and flexibility to manage high- and low-water situations, including ship swaps when necessary.

New itineraries for the season include 10 Budapest-Regensburg sailings and 10 Regensburg-Budapest sailings, along with two 'Dutch Waterways' itineraries and three Lower Danube departures.

Travellers can choose from short three-night getaways to extended

23-night journeys, as well as expert-led themed cruises, including *Mahler's* inaugural Christmas sailings.

Highlights include spring tulip sailings through the Netherlands and Belgium on board *Riverside Debussy* and a new seven-night Vienna to Budapest itinerary visiting the Wachau Valley on board *Riverside Mozart*.

"The additional ship means we can offer more departures on some of our most popular itineraries, while new routes and expanded sailings on the Lower Danube and Dutch Waterways give guests even more choice," *Riverside* Luxury Cruises Americas CEO Jennifer Halboth said.

Guests who book any 2028 sailing before 30 Jun 2027 will enjoy savings of 18%, applicable to all suite categories and package types. *JM*

Bank on expedition

SWAN Hellenic has identified cultural expedition cruising as a key growth area among solo travellers, young couples and multigenerational groups, and is encouraging Australian travel agents to capitalise on the opportunity.

The cruise line's overall YOY revenue rose by 170% in Jul, resulting in a record-breaking month, while its total year-to-date growth hit 268% globally.

Swan Hellenic said its core polar portfolio drove two-thirds of this total growth, while its new Asia-Pacific itineraries were up 373% year on year.

"We are seeing triple-digit growth for multigenerational travel, and a strong skew to a younger audience - in fact, the average age of a Swan Hellenic guest is 43, when expedition cruise travellers traditionally skew older," said Mario Bounas, Swan Hellenic CCO.

"For the travel trade, it's important to break free from the idea that expedition travel is a bucket-list item to be ticked off in your twilight years - the market is there."

The trend is backed by *Virtuoso's 2027 Luxe Report: Australia & New Zealand*, which identified expedition cruising as the second-biggest travel trend for 2027, while multi-generational travel was in the top spot.

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AMONG the VIP guests aboard *Viking Rota* in Amsterdam last week (**CW** 16 Oct) was a VIFF (very important furry friend).

CW spotted Karine Hagen with her precious canine companion Finse (pictured) who was on hand to ensure the naming ceremony was paw-sitively shipshape.

Finse is the inspiration of the Finse Terrace, a feature of every Viking ocean vessel.



WA to gain a new gem



PRINCESS Cruises has officially kicked off Western Australia's 2026-27 summer season, with *Crown Princess* sailing into Fremantle yesterday with 3,080 guests and 1,200 crew on board.

The visit comes as the line begins its countdown to the arrival of sister ship, *Sapphire Princess*, which will embark on her debut season in the state next year.

From Oct 2027, the 2,680-guest ship will use Fremantle as her home port for the 2027-28 summer cruise season, making 41 port calls across the state and injecting an estimated \$142

million into the local economy.

"We've been cruising from Fremantle since 2008 and we were the first cruise line to seriously commit to basing ships in Western Australia," Princess vice president Asia Pacific Matthew Rutherford said.

"A highlight of the 2027-28 season will be overnight stays in Broome, giving guests more time to experience the town's famous Cable Beach, rich pearling heritage, local dining and culture, as well as opportunities to explore further afield in the Kimberley through locally operated shore experiences," he added. *JM*

A Pearl of a week

PEARL Expeditions has recorded its best-ever sales week, including a record single day of sales on 06 Oct, with the boutique cruise line seeing strong interest in Raja Ampat, Borneo, PNG and its 2027 Kimberley departures.

According to the company, demand is being driven by the voyages' bespoke options, including fishing experiences, flight-seeing aboard the historic Paspaley Mallard aircraft and visits to Paspaley pearling operations.

"While travellers are spending more selectively on distinctive, hard-to-replicate experiences close to home, it is encouraging to see the large number of new-to-cruise guests," Pearl Expeditions executive chair Sarina Bratton said.

"As we have now established and settled our *Paspaley Pearl* operations into our second year, we are also seeing considerable repeat business as our guests understand the huge difference and benefit in travelling with just 28 other guests," she added.

RIVER CRUISE CHANGES COURSE

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

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