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Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of the latest cruise industry news, plus a cover wrap from **Quark Expeditions** and a full page from **Silversea**.

A Quarking offer

WITH 75 departures, more adventure options and new expedition extensions, cruisers are invited to explore more with Quark Expeditions - find out more about the 2028-29 expeditions on the **cover page**.

Save with Silversea

SAVE up to \$8,400 per suite with Silversea for bookings before 02 Nov.

For two weeks only, enjoy extra savings with reduced deposits also available from 15% - see the **back page**.

Virgin set to add to Australian team

VIRGIN Voyages is preparing to bring on more Australian talent, as it promotes Matt Lebbern to market director, overseeing a region which is excelling for the cruise line.

Lebbern will oversee sales, trade partnerships, distribution and market development, and continue reporting to senior vice president growth & international sales Stephen Hopkins.

Australia's head of sales David Clark will report to Lebbern, who previously oversaw the region from his position as director of sales for Europe & new markets.

The promotion recognises Lebbern's influence across the brand's commercial performance and his leadership of the successful commercial strategy across his remit.

Australian revenue is currently tracking 30% ahead of last year, while Europe is 27% ahead.



This growth is set to see Virgin expand its Australian team, with the cruise line promising more details in Q4.

Lebbern said passengers from Australia are continuing to book further ahead than before, with average lead times of 12 months.

"Whilst we continue to focus on our growth in Europe, the last year has been about removing barriers and laying foundations for growth in Australia, and

having David on the ground says we're here for the long haul," Lebbern said.

"You'll be seeing a lot more of us across both regions: in market, in front of first mates (travel advisors) and at the heart of the trade community.

"Our first mates are the driving force behind our growth, and our job now is to keep giving them everything they need to sell us with confidence." *MS*



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Scenic takes flight

SCENIC Luxury Cruises & Tours and Emerald Cruises have partnered with Cathay Pacific to reward members who purchase eligible luxury river and yacht cruises.

Cathay members in Australia will receive 1 Asia Mile per \$1 spent when they make a booking with Scenic or Emerald Cruises.

Marking the companies' respective anniversaries, Cathay's partnership with Scenic and Emerald will be available to Australian residents until 31 Mar 2028.

To celebrate the new partnership, the brands are also giving Cathay members the chance to win 500,000 Asia Miles - the equivalent of two return business class airfares from Australia to Europe.

Kicking off yesterday, the lucky draw is on until 16 Nov.

Havila targeting Australian cruisers

NORWEGIAN coastal route operator Havila Cruises has identified Australia as one of its key priority global markets and is stepping up local promotion.

Founded just over six years ago, Havila has a fleet of four identical vessels, each with capacity for around 330 passengers and the line's global head of sales, Matthew Valentine, has been in Australia for the past week to showcase the brand.

About 100 travel advisors were hosted by Beyond Travel Group at a special event in Sydney last night, when Valentine highlighted features such as large modern staterooms, innovative dining options, creative excursions (including optional two- or three-night stays in the Lofoten Islands) and the cruise line's strong sustainability credentials.

Valentine believes Havila's product is "superior to what



is normally seen operating" between Bergen and Kirkenes.

The overall return voyage takes 12 nights, visiting 34 ports, and in sensitive areas, the ships can operate almost silently on electric power due to their advanced propulsion technology.

It is the first time that Havila has ventured Down Under for a sales mission, with Valentine telling **CW** that Aussie cruisers are particularly valued because they typically choose premium stateroom options and spend

more on dining and excursions as part of their Norway experience.

While European cruisers are currently the largest segment for Havila, Valentine is keen to expand into other markets including the US and Australia.

Pictured at last night's event are, Beyond Travel CEO Michael Lavilles; Matthew Valentine, Havila Cruises; Alana Hunt, Groups by Beyond; Matt Symonds, Beyond Travel; and Sue Watts, Finnair.

See beyondtravel.com.au. BP



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Nominations are open to all CLIA Travel Agent members and close Friday, 20 November 2026.



PASSENGERS on board *AIDAnova* got a money-can't-buy experience on Sun afternoon when the German cruise ship responded to a distress call while sailing from Kiel to Norway.

AIDAnova had more than 5,200 passengers on board when she was alerted to reports of smoke and then flames coming from a fishing vessel in the strait between Norway and Denmark.

The ship adjusted her course and sent crew via a fast launch out to the four people who had been aboard the fishing boat, and had already abandoned their vessel and were in a lifeboat.

They were thankfully uninjured and taken aboard the cruise ship.

Passengers got front-row seats to the rescue, with many posting videos and pictures of the scene.

Viking founder slams LNG

VIKING founder Torstein Hagen has ridiculed claims by the wider cruise sector that liquefied natural gas (LNG) is an environmentally-friendly fuel, saying his cruise line's approach is much better for combatting greenhouse gases.

Speaking during a briefing at last week's naming ceremony for seven new river ships (**CW** 16 Oct), Hagen said, "We're very concerned about the environment, and we have been operating on diesel fuel with so-called exhaust gas cleaners, and that's a very environmentally-friendly solution."

"In the future, we can operate with hydrogen fuel cells, so the [ocean] ship that we will take delivery of next month will have hydrogen fuel cells, and that's absolutely clean."

"I don't want to spend too much of your time bothering you about how terrible LNG is...but if you do care about greenhouse gases, well, there's nothing 'natural' about LNG...it's methane, and methane is 30 to 80 times [worse than] CO₂ for the environment."

Hagen claimed the price of LNG



is the driving factor behind the cruise sector's acceptance of LNG.

Viking's new hybrid hydrogen solution (**CW** 14 Sep) has both a liquefied hydrogen fuel cell and diesel engines, with the 6MW fuel cell able to provide power for the vessel's hotel load as well as low-speed propulsion.

The vessel will feature movable cryogenic tank containers to ease the start-up of the supply chain.

While hydrogen is still expensive, it is expected to become more competitive, with production costs expected to fall by roughly 50% to 60% by the end of the decade due to supply chain scaling, larger electrolyser manufacturing capacity and government backing.

Renewable hydrogen and other "true zero" e-fuels also receive highly favourable regulatory credits under EU clean energy and transport frameworks. *BP*

MSC WC 2029 open

DISCOVER the world in 119 nights aboard MSC Cruises' 2029 world cruise, with bookings open now for the global journey.

The world cruise will explore 45 destinations in 21 countries, with highlights including nine overnight calls and 15 included excursions.

MSC Magnifica will make a circumnavigation of Australia and an extended voyage through Indonesia, from Bali and Lombok to Java.

Guests will visit Sydney and Perth, where the ship will overnight, as well as Melbourne, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide, Broome and Darwin, before heading to Bali.

Guests will be able to enjoy destination-inspired activities, themed dining nights, local food pairings and port-inspired cocktails, along with live music, large-scale productions, language and dance classes, and more.

There will be four departure ports, with guests able to choose from Rome, Genoa, Marseille and Barcelona.

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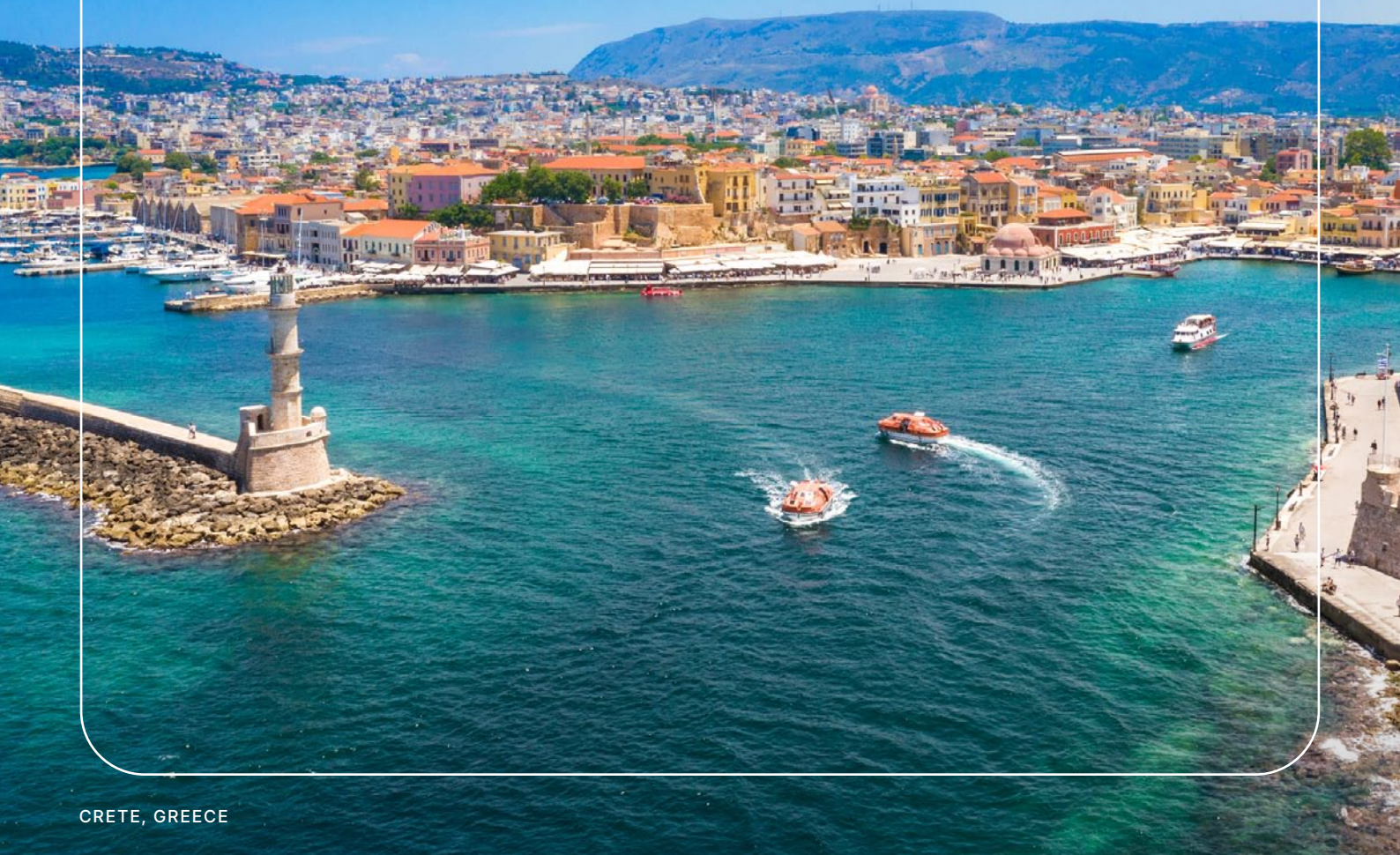
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