



Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features four pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from Railbookers.

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NCL names its final Prima-class ship

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has opened for sale its newly named *Norwegian Bella* (render pictured), which will begin sailing from Europe in May 2028.

Bella, the final ship in the cruise line's Prima-class, will sail on itineraries including seven-day voyages to the Mediterranean from Barcelona.

Currently under construction at Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri, the vessel will accommodate 3,921 guests at double occupancy, matching *Norwegian Aura* which is set to debut in May (**CW 14 Oct**), with the pair to become the largest ships in NCL's fleet.

Bella's inaugural season of voyages will include European destinations such as Rome, Florence, Salerno, Marseille and Palma de Mallorca.

"Drawing on the innovations and guest feedback that have shaped the class from the



very beginning, *Norwegian Bella* brings together our most sought-after experiences in one extraordinary ship," president Marc Kazlauskas said.

"From enhanced outdoor spaces and family-friendly attractions to elevated venues for relaxation and connection, every detail

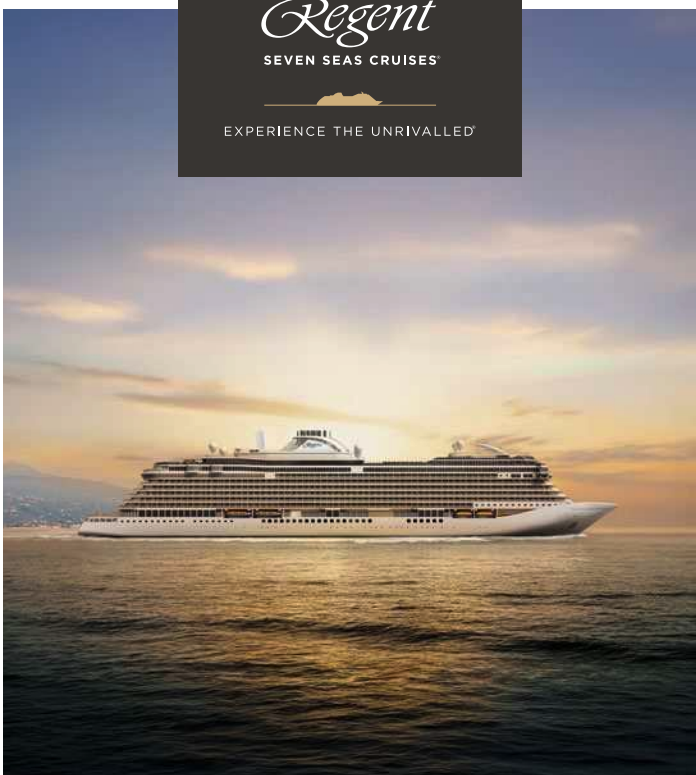
has been thoughtfully designed to give guests the freedom and flexibility to vacation exactly how they want to, without anyone having to compromise.

"We look forward to welcoming guests to discover the Mediterranean with us aboard *Norwegian Bella*." *MS*

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Small Viking ocean ships? No way

OCEAN cruising continues to be the key growth engine for Viking, but do not ever expect the company to move into the burgeoning luxury small ship sector, according to founder Torstein Hagen (pictured).

Speaking aboard *Viking Rota* in Amsterdam last week, Hagen was keen to stress the efficiencies of Viking's existing fleet, which he said are difficult to maintain on smaller vessels.

Asked whether Viking had any plans to emulate some of its new luxury competitors in the 150-300 passenger ocean category, Hagen's blunt response was "good luck with that".

"It's very difficult to make money on that...and you can say by the same token it's not so easy to make an ocean ship make money when it has less than about 1,000 passengers.

"You have to be fairly clever in



the way you design and operate it," he said, pointing to the unique Viking longship river vessel design which can fit 30 more passengers than its competitors, allowing for economies of scale.

"It can always happen that some small [ocean] ship operator makes some money, but I very much doubt it," Hagen concluded.

Chief executive officer Leah Talactac added that "ocean cruising is where we feel that we can continue to serve an underserved population".

Although Talactac said Viking will continue to assert its

"dominance" in the river market, the cruise line's newbuild program will see it increase to 28 ocean and expedition ships by 2032 (**CW** 08 Oct).

"We have 11 committed ships to be delivered through 2032 for ocean, with an additional four for 2033 and 2034," Talactac noted, along with two more expedition vessels to be delivered in 2030 and 2031.

On the rivers, there are 20 committed orders for delivery in the next two years, with an additional 16 options to 2032 - and an aspirational goal outlined last week to one day operate 200 river ships.

"So Viking continues to grow, Viking continues to expand its product offerings, and we are looking forward to delivering the same type of high-quality immersive experiences for many more people," Talactac said. **BP**

Silversea takes flight

SILVERSEA has kicked off its 2026-27 Antarctica season, which will see it introduce The Cormorant at 55 South - the world's southern-most hotel (**CW** 27 Feb).

Three of Silversea's expedition ships will operate six- to 21-night voyages through Mar.

The season's itineraries range from the Antarctic Peninsula to South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

Silver Endeavour, *Silver Wind*, and *Silver Cloud* will operate 40 voyages in total, including 29 Antarctica fly-cruises, each including a stay at the newly built hotel.

Stays at The Cormorant at 55 South will be supported by charter flights from Santiago, which will feature a three-course meal and Silversea's signature service.



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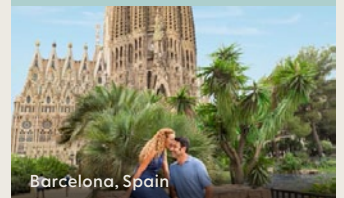
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**NORWEGIAN
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Wednesday 21st Oct 2026

LAST week's naming ceremony of seven new Viking river ships (**CW** 16 Oct) reflected the ongoing contribution of the Australian market to the line's success.

Virtuoso's Michael Londregan is now the official godfather of the Nile-based *Viking Ptah*, while Danielle Galloway from Flight Centre Travel Group is the new *Viking Sjofn* godmother.

The five other vessels were christened by key US travel partners, reflecting the importance of the travel trade to Viking's business.

Two of the ships were at the event in Amsterdam, while the others were named via video link from France, Germany and Egypt, with the help of large red buttons (pictured) which remotely



activated the smashing of a bottle of Norwegian Aquavit on the bow of each vessel.

The formal event was followed by a special gala dinner, where guests were entertained by famed Norwegian soprano Sissel Kyrkjebø. *BP*



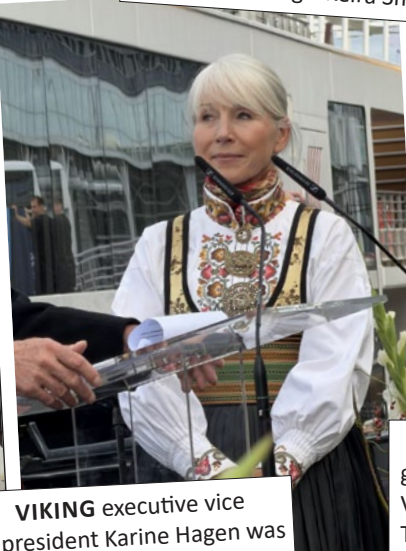
DANI Galloway and some of her family toast the *Viking Sjofn* with Viking's Keira Smith and Michelle Black.



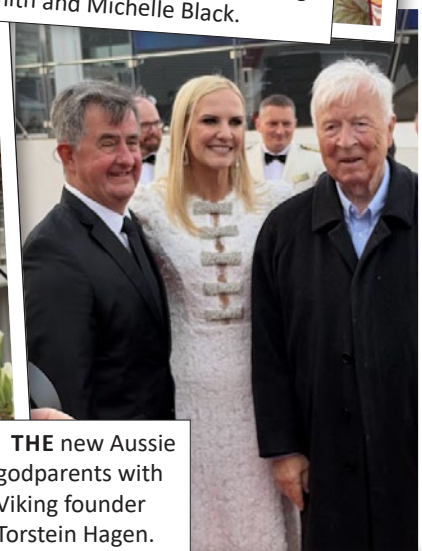
MICHAEL Londregan makes it official alongside the captain of *Viking Ptah*.



SISSEL beautifully sang the Norwegian national anthem as part of the naming ceremony formalities.



VIKING executive vice president Karine Hagen was resplendent in traditional Norwegian dress.



THE new Aussie godparents with Viking founder Torstein Hagen.



GUESTS were whisked to the celebratory dinner on Amsterdam canal boats, to find the building lit up with a golden Viking logo.



KAREN Joyce, GM EMEA at Virtuoso with Michael Londregan.



ROYAL Caribbean and The Wiggles are turning up the excitement ahead of another summer sailing program of Wiggly-themed holidays in 2026-2027, with the children's music group releasing a new song ahead of the season.

Inspired by South Pacific cruises, the brand new song is titled *Sailing Away* and is accompanied by a music video featuring the group's members ([CLICK HERE](#)).

In the video, John Pearce and Lachy Gillespie (purple Wiggles), Tsehay Hawkins and Evie Ferris (yellow Wiggles), Lucia and Anthony Field (blue Wiggles), and Caterina Mete and Simon Pryce (red Wiggles), invite families to turn their living room into a dance floor, practice their best Wiggly moves, and start the countdown for days filled with adventure, laughter and unforgettable memories at sea on a Wiggles cruise.

This summer will see three Wiggly-themed adventures set sail from Sydney and Brisbane with east coast getaways, as well as one itinerary to the South Pacific.



APT's new brochure



APT and Travelmarvel have announced their new 2028 Europe preview brochures, giving guests the opportunity to secure their place on a collection of the brands' most popular cruises.

The new brochures feature a host of returning favourites alongside new additions.

APT has unveiled two new Mediterranean cruise itineraries in partnership with Seabourn Cruise Line, while Travelmarvel has expanded its ocean cruising portfolio with two new Mediterranean voyages alongside Holland America Line.

The release includes APT and Travelmarvel's renowned Rhine, Main and Danube cruises, as well as Douro cruising aboard the recently launched *Estrela*.

Also returning to APT's collection in 2028 is the flagship 'Magnificent Europe' itinerary, the brand's most popular European river cruise journey.

The itinerary travels along the three rivers aboard APT's new-generation luxury river ships, and showcases some of

Europe's most iconic destinations complemented by the cruise line's exclusive collection of Signature Experiences.

Sarah Latimore, GM product & operations international at APT Travel Group, said Europe continues to resonate strongly with travellers because of the variety of experiences available across the continent.

MEANWHILE, Travelmarvel has launched its 2027-28 Vietnam & Cambodia collection, bringing back its popular 23-day 'Natural Wonders of Vietnam & Cambodia' journey for the season.

The trip combines vibrant cities, historic landmarks and regional culinary experiences with a seven-night Mekong cruise aboard *Lotus*.

Guests will spend time in Hoi An, Hue and Ha Long Bay, providing a deeper discovery of the landscapes and cultures of Vietnam as well as Cambodia.

Priced from \$8,895 per person, travellers will explore the region alongside the services of a Travelmarvel tour director. *MS*



Welcome arrivals

AUSTRALIA'S summer cruise season has been arriving at cruise ports all around the country.

After those first international arrivals at the major gateways last month, we are now welcoming ships across the whole country.

Western Australia became the latest state to welcome its first arrival this week, reinforcing the importance of cruise tourism to communities across the nation.

The state's Premier Roger Cook highlighted the value that ships bring, pointing out that cruise is "not only good for tourism and our regional destinations, but it also supports our agricultural and transport sectors".

This is why Australia needs to heed our warnings that cruise tourism will decline if we do not address our competitiveness.

Recent news that Australia will lose two prominent ships in 2028 proves this point.

This is the most important focus of the Association's work and our advocacy efforts are wholly directed at achieving better settings.

Even so, we still have a spectacular cruise season ahead of us.

Australia remains an important cruise region, Aussies are cruising in record numbers, and the opportunities for travel advisors in a thriving global cruise market are enormous.

With the support of our cruise community, we are working to grow those opportunities into the future.



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