

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a full page from Silversea.

Save with Silversea

TRAVELLERS can save up to \$7,000 per suite on Silversea's all-inclusive voyages when they make a booking before 02 Nov 2026.

The cruise line is also offering reduced deposits from 15%, helping travel advisors to boost their bookings.

Guests will enjoy spacious accommodation, premium beverages in-suite and throughout the ship, multiple complimentary dining options, free wi-fi, and personalised service, with nearly one crew member for every guest.

To find out more about Silversea's latest offer, head to the **back page**.

Queen Mary 2 prepares for a royal facelift

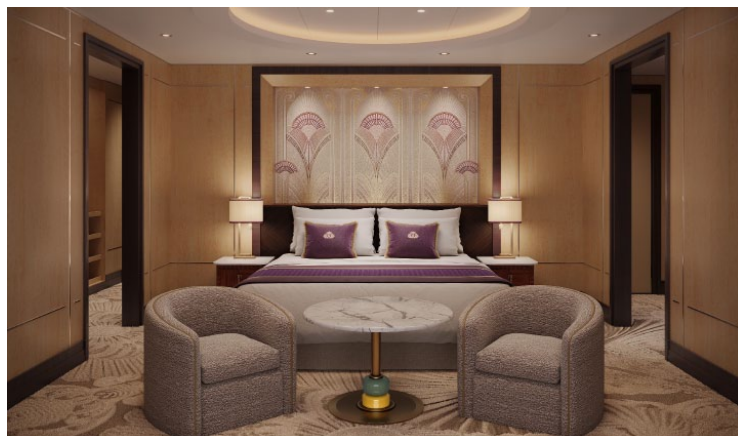
CUNARD'S *Queen Mary 2* is set to undergo a refurbishment, entering dry dock in the northern spring in 2027 (**CW** breaking news yesterday).

The news follows months of speculative reports about the ship's transformation after deckplans were updated on Cunard's website and additional staterooms went on sale in May.

Queen Mary 2's transformation will arrive just in time for her voyages departing from May 2027, including her signature Transatlantic crossings and special event voyages, as well as itineraries across the Caribbean Northern Europe and Canada.

As part of a fleet of elevated enhancements, 31 new staterooms will be added, including 16 new Cunard Princess Grill suites & 15 new staterooms in the Britannia category.

Additional outdoor deck space



and relaxation zones will be featured on the ship, as well as redesigned kennels for guests' pets, with increased capacity, a refurbished owners' lounge and expanded outdoor walking area.

Mareel Wellness & Beauty spa will also be transformed, and new luxury stores will be introduced.

"This is a significant investment in *Queen Mary 2*, and every

decision has been approached with deep respect for her heritage, her character and the sense of occasion that only *Queen Mary 2* can offer," Katie McAlistair, president of Cunard enthused.

"We are not reinventing what guests love about her; we are refining it beautifully and ensuring she carries it forward," she added. *JHM*

Regent

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Gluten-free cruise

OCEANIA Cruises has announced its first entirely gluten-free voyage, which is set to sail aboard *Oceania Vista* in 2028.

Developed in partnership with Celiac Cruise, the 12-night journey will sail England, Scotland and Ireland while giving guests the opportunity to experience the line's full culinary program without needing to navigate menus, question preparation practices or worry about cross-contact.

All of the ship's onboard dining venues will offer entirely gluten-free menus, with guests also able to indulge in afternoon tea, in-suite dining and enjoy freshly baked pastries from The Bakery without having to limit their choices.

"As a brand with food at its heart, we believe every guest should be able to experience the joy and discovery that define dining with Oceania Cruises," Jason Montague, chief luxury officer, said.

The round-trip voyage from Southampton will explore the landscapes and historic cities of England, Ireland and Scotland, with calls including Cork, Dublin, Glasgow, Stornoway in the Hebrides and Edinburgh, and exclusive private shore excursions.

Find out more about the gluten-free cruise, which departs 28 May 2028, [HERE](#).

LTC hails top performers



THE cruise sector was one of the big winners in the Luxury Travel Collection's (LTC) inaugural Pinnacle of Luxury Awards, hosted yesterday evening on Makepeace Island in Noosa.

Among a sea of winners from around the cruise sector was Ross Quigly from Luxury Cruise Escapes, who took home three individual honours, including the prestigious Pinnacle of Cruise award, as well as the LTC Advisor Product Award and the Galeries de Luxe Advisor of the Year.

Luxury Cruise Escapes and Flat Beds Tour + Cruise were also big winners, recognised across both business categories (LTC Business Product Award and Galeries de Luxe Business of the Year) in their respective tiers.

Meanwhile, named in the 2026 Pinnacle of Cruise Collection, recognising elite sales achievements across the sector, were Alana Sale, Flat Beds Tour+ Cruise; Damian Clark, Travel

Associates Burleigh; Genevieve Thompson, Flat Beds Tour + Cruise; Kristy Cornish, Flat Beds Tour + Cruise; Lisa McKenzie, Luxury Cruise Escapes; Natalie Lenarcic, Flat Beds Tour + Cruise; Rachel Styring, Luxury Cruise Escapes; Sarah O'Brien, Flat Beds Tour + Cruise; Sharon Griffin, Flat Beds Tour + Cruise; and Tracey Irving, Tailby & James TA.

Almost 30 stand-out advisors, businesses and partners were recognised in total for their excellence, innovation, and service to their clients.

"We wanted Pinnacles to feel every bit as exceptional as the achievements we were celebrating," LTC general manager Nikki Glading said.

"These are the members and advisors setting the standard for luxury travel across Australia and New Zealand, and they deserve to be celebrated at the very highest level - this is what it means to be part of a house of luxury." *MS*

Steyne up for sale

NSW heritage-listed vessel *SS South Steyne* has been listed for sale as a fully-fitted hospitality and events venue, coinciding with the 88-year anniversary of the iconic ship's arrival in Sydney.

The 67-metre vessel is being exclusively offered by Colliers with Jackie Su and Harry Mitchell managing the campaign, with expressions of interest open until 4pm AEDT on Thu 15 Oct.

Built in Leith, Scotland in 1938, *South Steyne* spent 36 years operating on the Circular Quay-Manly ferry route, crossing the harbour over 100,000 times and carrying more than 92 million passengers on the 11km run.

The vessel later served as a floating convention and hospitality venue, an information and exhibition centre for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and a restaurant and function centre at Darling Harbour.

South Steyne was also recommissioned during Queen Elizabeth II's 1988 visit to Australia, serving as her royal yacht in Melbourne during her time in Victoria.

The steamship features three decks, four function and exhibition areas, and a 500-guest restaurant with alfresco seating, and is designed to be adaptable to different locations.



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A GROUP of scientists taking part in a survey trip on the Great Barrier Reef were treated to a surprise visit by the world's largest fish.

The seven-metre whale shark swam up to the boat, giving the crew an unforgettable encounter with the animal.

The team, including volunteer crew member Jack Marrs, his partner Nadja, skipper Cooper and reef guide Kaz, were carrying out a scientific survey aboard one of Red Cat Adventures' tourist boats.

Whale sharks are more commonly associated with Western Australia's Ningaloo Reef, making the east coast encounter particularly special.

Red Cat sales and marketing manager Dan Gabbert said it was an awesome encounter.

"It was a bit of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity off the east coast of Australia," Gabbert enthused.

Travelmarvel's rapid rail-river rise

COMBINED rail and cruise journeys in Europe are "growing fast", with 30% of travellers booked on a river cruise adding a train itinerary to the mix, APT Travel Group's David Cox has revealed to **Cruise Weekly**.

Meanwhile, 51% of the premium brand's guests booked on a Switzerland itinerary in 2027 have also combined rail and river cruising, and 31% on the brand's new 'Alpine Discovery by Rail' itinerary have extended their trip with a sailing.

"Travellers want to experience Europe from more than one angle in a single itinerary," Cox explained, pointing to the popular 'Rhine and Moselle with Switzerland by Rail' itinerary.

"It is a completely seamless way to see Europe - guests unpack once for the river cruise, then move onto rail without missing a beat, all with one operator and one consistent standard throughout," he explained.

Cox has also observed that a growing number of guests booking rail journeys are well-travelled river cruise passengers who want to experience Europe



on land.

Additionally, the lower levels across some European rivers have inspired some to look beyond the waterways, he added.

"The appetite to travel hasn't dropped - travellers are just finding more ways to do it."

Demand for rail journeys in Switzerland in particular has also surged, with the number of Australians travelling by train in the country rising by 17% in 2025, according to Switzerland Tourism.

Travelmarvel is catering to this interest, with new itineraries such as 'Switzerland by Rail', featuring four panoramic trains including the Glacier Express, Bernina Express, Golden Pass and Gotthard Panorama Express.

Along the way, passengers have the chance to admire spectacular views of tranquil lakes, alpine villages and snow-capped mountain valleys.

"Switzerland has the widest range of rail experiences in Europe, but there are other lesser-known rail destinations which are just as picturesque," Cox said.

He pointed to the remote landscapes of Scandinavia and Scotland's Jacobite steam train, which featured in the *Harry Potter* films.

Meanwhile, despite the Middle East conflict, it is "business as usual" at Travelmarvel, with "strong" forward bookings for rail cruising and rail touring. *JHM*

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