

Cruise Weekly today

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

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Silversea also recently announced the reorganisation of its suites into four categories (**CW** 17 Sep).

Australia shows the *Spirit* of resilience

THE value of the Australian guest to Norwegian Cruise Line is different to anywhere else in the world, chief int'l sales & marketing officer Jason Krimmel said, reflecting on the resilience of the market during a challenging period for the sector.

Speaking to **Cruise Weekly** at last week's Cruise360 conference in Sydney, Krimmel praised Norwegian's Australian operation for maintaining its strong booking figures throughout the Iran war, which prevented many travellers from reaching Europe.

During this time, the cruise line relied on the work it had done to establish *Norwegian Spirit's* home port season, particularly its short two- to five-night 'taster' cruises (**CW** 24 Mar).

"The resilience of this market has been phenomenal during that period," Krimmel enthused.

"The early days of the [Iran



war] presented some challenges, but we've moved beyond that now, and what we're seeing is the return of Europe business, particularly in Q3.

"We really capitalised on that Q2 period and then into Q3 by bringing *Norwegian Spirit* to life."

Director of sales Angela Middleton added: "We really capitalised on the season ahead, focusing on those four-day sailings to present it as a new opportunity for people who weren't necessarily as confident to travel overseas at that time."

Krimmel noted this home port

product even bucked lead time trends seen across the world in other domestic cruising markets, describing Australia's booking curves as "phenomenal".

"We would have assumed that the booking curves for the short cruise down here would have mimicked US or Europe short cruise deployment, which books very close in, and nothing could be further from the truth."

Middleton told **Cruise Weekly**: "We have had a really successful selling period over the last two quarters for *Norwegian Spirit*, and that continues." **MS**

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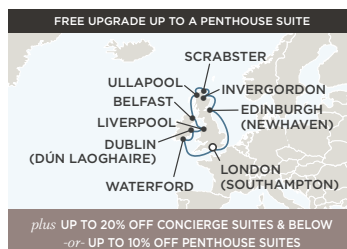
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German river line launches in Aus

GERMAN river line Viva Cruises has launched in Australia, appointing Cruise Traveller as its local representative.

The company is tasked with driving Australian bookings for Viva, with the local river sector representing 15% of the cruise market Down Under, up from less than 5% a decade ago.

Viva operates year-round with nine ships, and is a specialist in winter and holiday itineraries like Christmas market cruises.

Cruise Traveller managing director Joe O'Sullivan said Viva offers a blend of relaxed and friendly service, premium comfort, and extremely competitive pricing in AUD.

Viva's fares include beverages, locally sourced cuisine paired with regional wines, wi-fi, gratuities, and two shore excursions per sailing.

"At Cruise Traveller, we're



passionate about sharing boutique journeys on the water with Australians, and the unique experiences and itineraries Viva Cruises offers across Europe are exactly what we specialise in," O'Sullivan said.

"We're excited to introduce this innovative brand to the Australian market with affordable packages and product that allow guests to relish the charm and grace of Europe from its storied rivers."

To mark the new partnership, Cruise Traveller is offering free

stateroom upgrades on selected sailings next year on bookings made by 11 Oct.

The deal is available on sailings aboard *Viva Moments*, *Viva Tiara* (pictured), and *Viva Two*, departing in Jul and Aug.

Customers will receive a free stateroom upgrade from an emerald deck double cabin with window to a ruby deck double with French balcony, or from a ruby deck double with French balcony to a diamond deck French balcony double cabin. *MS*

MSC eyes Meyer

MSC Cruises' namesake parent company has expressed its intention to potentially acquire German shipbuilder Meyer Werft, in a move that would strengthen the cruise line's control over future shipbuilding capacity.

The company is said to be looking to take over 80% of Meyer Werft, which is currently in the hands of the federal and state government in Germany.

A total of €400 million (approximately \$644m) of public money has been invested into the shipbuilder to rescue it from financial troubles during the pandemic (*CW* 13 Sep 2024).

MSC is currently Meyer Werft's largest customer after reaching an agreement last year that will see it build as many as six vessels for the line.



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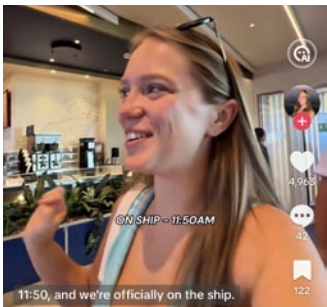
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CRUISE lines, like most travel businesses, are experts at logistics, so much so that it is often one of the most understated-yet-impressive parts of a trip.

One TikTok user, known as 'Jordin', is going viral at how impressed she was for how quickly it took her to board Royal Caribbean's *Star of the Seas*, the largest cruise ship in the world.

It took her only 25 minutes from parking at the cruise terminal to having her passenger card scanned by the crew on board - not bad at all.



Travelmarvel goes solo



TRAVELMARVEL has joined its sister brand APT in launching dedicated solo departures, with the announcement of two 'European Gems' sailings in 2027.

Departing on 07 Jun 2027 and 21 Oct 2027 respectively, the 15-day itinerary between Budapest and Amsterdam takes guests through the Danube, Main, and Rhine rivers.

While each guest will enjoy a private stateroom, there will be plenty of opportunities to connect with other solo travellers through shared sightseeing, dining, and onboard experiences.

"We're seeing growing interest from guests who want to travel solo but still value the comfort and convenience that comes with a guided experience," APT Travel Group chief executive officer David Cox explained.

"Travel preferences continue to evolve, and the introduction of solo departures opens up more opportunities for those who might otherwise choose not to travel at all."

Pricing for the itinerary starts from \$16,995pp for the 07 Jun departure and \$14,295pp for the 21 Oct departure. *JB*

Aroya expands European season

AROYA Cruises has added new Mediterranean destinations across the next two years, with two 14-night itineraries for 2027.

The two cruises will depart on 05 Jun and 17 Jul 2027, with the former departing from Istanbul to the Mediterranean on an east-west voyage, including Greece, Italy, Tunisia, and Malta.

One month later, Aroya will depart Istanbul again, this time on a Aegean/Adriatic cruise, which will include Greece, Albania, Montenegro, Italy, and Croatia.

Aroya's 2027 European summer season will also see it add two new destinations: Antalya and Nafplio, while Alexandria will become a second embarkation port.

Selected itineraries will allow passengers to start or finish their cruise in Alexandria rather than Istanbul.

The season will also see Aroya will make its first overnight calls at the major port in the Nile Delta.



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