



B2B Tour Atlas

AUSTRALIAN technology firm Tour Atlas has today announced the launch of “the first B2B hybrid platform in the travel space” to help travel advisors access land- and river-based product in one place.

Co-founder Alex Obleshchuk said the expanded offering allows agents to tap into suppliers with live availability and an API, alongside those which are featuring brochured product, all in a single tool.

Travel advisors still connect with suppliers to book direct and keep 100% of commission, with the update expanding on Tour Atlas’ offering of a sustainable long-term solution for digital distribution and printed brochures.

For more information and to join the platform see tour-atlas.com, and to list product email alex@tour-atlas.com.

Murray River reopens to cruise

THE NSW State Emergency Service on Fri lifted an Emergency Declaration for the Murray River from the Hume Weir downstream to Echuca, with the move hailed by Murray River Paddlesteamers Director Craig Burgess.

The downgrade follows closures which have been in place due to heavy rain and high water levels since 18 Oct, with Burgess saying “this news is very welcome for our staff, our guests and the entire local community which so heavily relies upon tourism”.

Burgess said the lifting of the declaration was the result of a collaborative effort between commercial operators, Resilience NSW, NSW SES, Maritime NSW and cross-border councils.

The river has now peaked and is expected to fall further to below minor flood levels next week, with no rain forecast in upper catchment areas for some time.



PS Canberra resumed her sightseeing cruises on Sat, while *PS Emmylou* overnight voyages have resumed today from Echuca.

“Our lovely heritage town and meandering, gum-lined Murray are now open again and a sight to see as the river runs high, ready to charm visitors again,” he said.

To celebrate the reopening, Murray River Paddlesteamers is offering savings of 15% for couples, a reduction of the solo passenger surcharge to 45% and free wine, souvenirs and gift vouchers for bookings made on

three-, four- and seven-night cruises in 2023 or 2024.

The commissionable “Resilience Sale” offer is valid for bookings confirmed by 15 Dec, and includes next year’s first-time one-way voyages which include coach transfers between Echuca and Torrumbarry Weir.

See psemmyloucruises.com.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

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Princess returning to Japan

PRINCESS Cruises has announced it intends to resume homeporting in Japan from 15 Mar next year.

Diamond Princess, which was quarantined at the Port of Yokohama at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in Mar 2020, will operate the new season, offering a total of 57 departures ranging from five to 19 days.

Diamond was designed for the Japanese market, with features including a large open-air onsen bathing and garden complex.

Princess President, John Padgett, said "the reopening of Japanese ports to the international cruise industry is an important and welcome development that not only vastly expands the vacation opportunities available to guests but also helps to significantly strengthen the Japanese tourism economy".

MEANWHILE Princess is also

rolling out additional features for its "Princess Plus" and "Princess Premier" packages, effective for sailings after 20 Feb 2023.

The enhancements include new "decadent" Princess Premium desserts, as well as complimentary onboard fitness classes as part of the recently announced partnership with Xponential Fitness (**CW** 13 Sep).

Princess Plus includes the Plus Beverage Package, a single-device wi-fi plan, two crafted desserts, unlimited juices, free pre-cruise Medallion shipping and two fitness classes per day.

Princess Premier features a four-device wi-fi plan, a photo package, two nights of speciality dining, unlimited desserts and fitness classes, reserved seating in the Princess Theater and more.

The new packages will be available for booking after 14 Dec, the company said.

New Coral voyage

CORAL Expeditions has announced a new "World Heritage islands of the sub-Antarctic" itinerary.

The one-off *Coral Geographer* expedition is scheduled to depart Bluff on NZ's South Island on 31 Jan 2024, taking guests on a 12-night adventure south before disembarking guests in Melbourne.

The journey will include the Snares Islands, the Auckland Islands of Enderby Island and Carnley Harbour, Campbell Island's Perseverance Harbour and the World Heritage sanctuary of Macquarie Island, which sits halfway between Tasmania and Antarctica.

Commercial Director Jeff Gillies said the unique new itinerary was expected to be popular among loyal past guests - coralexpeditions.com.

Polaris freak wave

REPAIRS are now under way after Viking Cruises' *Viking Polaris* was impacted in a "rogue wave incident" as it crossed the Drake Passage returning from a voyage to Antarctica last week.

Photos from the ship show several windows on Deck 3 were smashed, with one passenger dead and four others injured.

A statement from the company said "it is with great sadness that we confirm a guest passed away following the incident".

"We are investigating the facts surrounding this incident and will offer our support to the relevant authorities.

"Our focus remains on the safety and wellbeing of our guests and crew, and we are working directly with them to arrange return travel," Viking said.

The next scheduled departure, the 05-17 *Antarctic Explorer* itinerary, has been cancelled while the ship is repaired.



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High Arctic offer

A **NEW** package from Cruise Traveller combines an Adventure Canada voyage in the remote Arctic with free return flights to Canada.

The new 13-night trip departs 24 Jul 2023 and includes travel ex SYD, BNE or MEL to Toronto for a night's stay followed by a charter flight to Kangerlussuaq in Greenland.

The *Ocean Endeavour* voyage then brings guests to Canada's Resolute Bay, followed by a charter flight and post-night in Ottawa and then the return back to Australia.

It's priced from US\$16,520 per person twin share, with significant discounts also on offer for solo travellers.

See cruisetraveller.com.au.

Venezia to Carnival

COSTA Venezia has operated her final voyage under the Costa Cruises banner, with the Vista-class ship to now undergo a transformation as it transitions to sister brand Carnival Cruise Line.

The ship, which was built just three years ago, will be adapted to "Carnival Fun Italian Style" which combines the signature Carnival experience with the ship's original Italian theming.

Venezia was initially designed for the Chinese market, with public spaces and decor inspired by Venice.

In 2024 Carnival also plans to debut *Carnival Firenze* as another "Italian style" ship.

MSC hits the harbour



MSC Cruises hosted some of its key industry partners for a cruise of a different kind on Sydney Harbour last week.

The relaxed gathering aboard the *Ghost I* superyacht provided guests with an update on the line's newest ship, *MSC Seascope*, which will be named in New York later this week.

Seascope, which is a sister ship to *MSC Seaside*, will operate two seven-night eastern and western Caribbean itineraries, offering 2,270 cabins, 11 dining venues, 19 bars and lounges and six swimming pools.

The ship also offers expansive public spaces along with "cutting-edge amusement options", a 540-metre waterfront promenade and the glass-floored "Bridge of Sighs" on Deck 16 offering a unique view of the ocean.

It's also equipped with the latest environmental technologies.

MSC's guests are **pictured** above luxuriating in the glorious Sydney spring sunshine, while **inset** are Lia Malone and Tanyu Cilek from TravelManagers with MSC's Lisa Teiotu.



AQV all-inclusive

AMERICAN Queen Voyages (AQV) has released a new fare structure with pricing inclusive of port charges, taxes, service fees and crew gratuities.

The change will also see travel agents earn commission on previously non-commissionable fees (NCFs).

AQV is part of Hornblower Group's "overnight division" headed up by Journey Beyond CEO Chris Tallent.



SPOILER alert! Cruisers aboard *Disney Dream* will be able to feel particularly safe from alien invasions and super-villains, with an expanded array of Marvel characters set to appear on board as part of the line's "Marvel Day at Sea" experience.

The "New Black Panther" (**pictured**) and "Okoye, General of the Dora Milaje" from the newly released *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* movie join other warriors for "what is already shaping up to be the largest assembly of super heroes and villains from the Marvel universe," Disney said.

Marvel Day at Sea is an action-packed 24 hours taking place as part of a five-day *Disney Dream* itinerary, during which guests can enjoy all-day entertainment events including heroic encounters, stage shows, film and TV screenings, unique merchandise, and plenty of themed food and beverage offerings.



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