



Cruise Weekly today

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

HOT new team

THE House of Travel (HOT) has announced the team that will implement its new cruise strategy, which sees three existing staff members move into newly created roles.

Led by Jeff Leckey as General Manager Cruise - Australasia (**CW** 28 Sep), Matt Nicholl has been appointed as Groups Manager, while Pauline McLennan, who has been with HOT for more than 12 years, is tasked with creating Fly/Cruise packages and Group deals.

Rounding off the team is Jacqui Kennedy, who brings a wealth of knowledge after nearly a decade as HOT Cruise Reservations Team Leader.

New Star takes shape - and bookings

MURRAY River Paddlesteamers' new *Australian Star* is beginning to take shape, with new images released (**pictured**) of the bow and superstructure of the luxury \$6.75 million vessel.

The ship is set to launch on the Murray River from Echuca in Vic effective from Apr 2025, with the company saying it's already fielding strong levels of enquiries both from consumers as well as the wider travel sector.

Murray River Paddlesteamers Director, Craig Burgess confirmed fares for the 38-guest vessel will be released later this month.

"Many people have already registered on our VIP registration list which gives them the opportunity to be amongst the first to sail aboard *Australian Star* with exclusive offers.

"And we've had very strong interest from tour companies and travel agents wanting to book



group space aboard the vessel for their own holiday packages," Burgess said.

Fares will be commissionable at 10% for travel agents booking *Australian Star* sailings, he confirmed, along with bonuses for multiple bookings.

"It's obvious already that *Australian Star* will prove incredibly popular and successful,

drawing new high-yield domestic and international visitors to the Murray region as well as lucrative tour group business," he said.

The ship will feature 19 all-ensuite staterooms, an elevator for easy access to all levels, air conditioning, wi-fi and a deluxe contemporary lounge.

To register interest **CLICK HERE** or call +61 (0)3 5482 5244. *BP*

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Oceania Riviera to cruise Alaska

OCEANIA Cruises will deploy its recently "re-inspired" ship, *Riviera*, to Alaska in 2025.

The 1,250 passenger vessel will sail "the last frontier" for the first time over the Australian and NZ winter season, kicking off on 13 May with an eight-day voyage from Vancouver to Whittier.

Iconic ports visited will include Sitka, Ketchikan, Kodiak and the Hubbard Glacier, with itineraries ranging from seven to 12 days and almost 300 excursion choices.

"The decision to elevate our presence in the Alaska region was easy," said Frank Del Rio, Oceania Cruises President, with guests also set to enjoy Oceania's trademark culinary offering at seven open-seating gourmet restaurants - more on 1300 355 200.

Stoking Venice mystery



UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises wrapped up its consumer roadshows last night in Sydney, with the final Aperitivo at The Pictures event.

Guests were invited to sip on a champagne aperitivo while hearing about the brand's new 2024/25 offerings, before enjoying a private screening of recently released mystery, *A Haunting in Venice*.

Uniworld Key Account Manager, Jen Pagett, shared that the cruise line had seen a "huge spike in Egypt bookings" after a similar

event last year, featuring the film *Death on the Nile*, noting that the release of another Agatha Christie film was the perfect opportunity to once again connect with its valued customers.

Pagett also presented the many highlights of Uniworld's 2024/25 program including the SS. *La Venezia* based in Venice, the brand's all-inclusive offering, and the Rivers of the World Cruise, which is returning after a successful inaugural season. **AP**

Pictured: Uniworld Boutique River Cruises team members.

A-Rosa on the Rhine

A-ROSA Cruises has opened bookings for two additions to its European river cruise fleet: *A-Rosa Clea* and *A-Rosa Alea*.

Set to begin their inaugural seasons in Apr next year, itineraries will feature the Northern and Southern Rhine as well as the Moselle, with seven-night voyages until Oct and then shorter four- and five-night options.

Introductory prices are available for bookings made by 30 Nov, with a Get-to-Know Bonus discount of 20% along with A-Rosa's Super Early Booking Discount.

Alea will cruise roundtrip from Cologne from 05 Apr including the famed Loreley passage, while *Clea* will debut on 07 Apr and head north to Belgium and the Netherlands.

For more details and pricing see arosa-cruises.com/au.




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PORTHOLE

AN AUSTRALIAN cruising couple is making headlines in the USA after it emerged they had spent more than 450 days straight aboard Princess Cruises' *Coral Princess*.

Marty and Jessica Ansen from Brisbane (pictured) told their travel agent "to book as many cruises in a row as possible" and set sail in Jun last year.

"We think it's for us; it's more cost effective than a retirement village," Marty told *A Current Affair*, with the seafaring pair booked on the ship through until at least Aug 2024 at this stage, on more than 50 back-to-back departures.

Princess Cruises Australia highlighted the couple's oceangoing odyssey when it kicked off last year, and the story was recently picked up by the *New York Post* which noted they had stayed on board longer than most of the crew.

Before booking their current two-year-plus trip the cruise veterans had already enjoyed 31 Princess voyages for a total of 1,173 days at sea.



APT extends Nile cruise



APT has introduced its 2024/25 Egypt, Jordan, and Israel journeys, headlined by a seven-night luxury cruise along the Nile River aboard the *MS Sun Goddess*.

Extended from its previous four-night itinerary, the Luxor return sailing now allows for deeper immersion at a more relaxed pace, with guests to visit Egypt's key attractions including Tutankhamun's tomb, Philae Temple and the temples of Edfu and Kom Ombo.

The cruise is a major component of the 26-day Epic Egypt, Jordan and Israel holiday from Cairo to Tel Aviv, which starts from

\$25,895pp, including earlybird savings, available for bookings until 31 Mar 2024.

For more details and to make a booking, [CLICK HERE](#). JM

A Star is born

ROYAL Caribbean has revealed the name of its new Icon Class ship, *Star of the Seas*, ahead of her 2025 debut.

Currently under construction in Finland, the vessel signals "the start of a new era of holidays, in the boldest way", according to Royal.



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Celebrity ascends

CELEBRITY Cruises' fourth Edge Series ship, *Celebrity Ascent*, has successfully completed her sea trials.

The tests were carried out in the Bay of Biscay near the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in St. Nazaire, France, where the 3,260-pax ship has been under construction.

Celebrity Ascent will embark on two preview voyages in Nov, before setting sail on her maiden voyage from Ft. Lauderdale on 03 Dec for her inaugural Caribbean season.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY		
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>		08 Oct
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>		09 Oct
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>		13 Oct
BRISBANE		
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>		13 Oct
CAIRNS		
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>		12 Oct
AIRLIE BEACH		
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>		11 Oct
BROOME		
<i>Le Soleal</i>		07 Oct
<i>Coral Geographer</i>		08 Oct
DARWIN		
<i>Coral Discoverer</i>		10 Oct
<i>Le Laperouse</i>		10 Oct
AUCKLAND		
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>		09 Oct
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>		13 Oct
PICTON		
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>		11 Oct