



Cruise Weekly today

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

Lisa departs MSC

LISA Teiotu has left MSC Cruises, after five years with the brand, it has confirmed.

Teiotu joined MSC in 2019, and last year was appointed as local Managing Director.

Vice President International Sales Antonio Paradiso thanked Teiotu for her achievements with MSC.

"We are grateful for her efforts and contribution during this time and wish her every success in her future endeavours," he said.

Paradiso will be providing strategic direction for the Australian market, alongside Explora Journeys VP/Head of Sales, Nicole Costantin.

Mexico to become too expensive for cruise?

THE Mexican government has voted to charge cruise ship passengers US\$42 per head for port calls, in a move which could greatly reduce the destination's cruise appeal.

The levy will now be ruled on by Mexico's upper house, after the Congress of the Union, the legislative arm of the country's govt, approved the change.

Cruise ships have previously been exempt from the US\$42 immigration fee, as they provide lodging to their visitors, some of who do not disembark.

"It is necessary to eliminate the exemption from immigration document payment for foreign passengers who enter Mexico aboard cruise ships," the new law reads, according to the United States' Associated Press (AP).

The Mexican Association of Shipping Agents said the charges could make Mexico



"uncompetitively expensive" for cruise ships, according to the AP.

"If this measure is implemented, it would make Mexican ports of call among the most expensive in the world, severely affecting their competitiveness with other Caribbean destinations," the association said in a statement.

Cozumel (pictured) has been one of the world's busiest ports

of call for years, welcoming about four million cruise passengers each year.

Most of the world's major cruise lines, including Royal Caribbean and Carnival Cruise Line, call into Mexico, with the former even planning to introduce a new private destination, Perfect Day Mexico, in Mahahual on the Costa Maya (CW 11 Oct).

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CRUISE WEEKLY

On location in
Torgau

Today's issue of CW is coming to you courtesy of Viking, aboard *Viking Astrild* as part of a Christmas Along the Elbe itinerary in Europe.

OUR journey through the former East Germany continues with a visit to the charming village of Torgau, famous for being where Allied and Russian forces joined from the west and east during the final days of World War II.

A Soviet-era monument commemorates the historic meeting, with this edifice a stark contrast to the charming 15th century architecture of the village which was home to the family of Reformation hero Martin Luther.

Viking's guests enjoyed a twilight guided walk, arriving just as the tiny Christmas market in the town square came to life - the perfect excuse for a cup of Gluhwein.

There's also been plenty of opportunity for scenic cruising through the bucolic landscape, dotted with dormant trees, farmhouses and frosty fields.

The final night on board will see us visit the historic city of Wittenberg, famed for being where Luther kicked off the Reformation by nailing his "95 theses" to the cathedral door.

Eight new ACL cruises



AMERICAN Cruise Line (ACL) is preparing for its 2025 season, which will see more than 20 of its small ships visit 125 ports around the United States.

The season will feature eight new itineraries on the Mississippi, Columbia, Snake, Potomac, and Hudson rivers.

New ports of call include Port Canaveral, West Palm Beach, Portsmouth, Cleveland, Port Royal, Alexandria, Lewiston, Madison, Sag Harbor, and Albany.

The program will also include the longest river cruise in the country, the 51-day 'Great United States', while American continues to grow its menu of increasingly popular coastal voyages.

Shore programs will include visits to a number of national parks in destinations such as Alaska, Wyoming, and the Great Smoky Mountains.

American is also offering a range of drive-to-cruise itineraries

from convenient departure ports including Boston, Providence, Washington, New Orleans, Portland, Seattle, and Juneau.

The cruise line's pricing for next year includes port charges and fees, as well as tips and gratuities.

The news comes alongside American's recent announcement of its agreement for four more newbuilds with Chesapeake Shipbuilding, taking its total order book to 10 vessels due over the next three years (CW 05 Nov).

American Legend, one of the 10 new ships, made her debut last week in Florida (CW 26 Nov).

The cruise line's ships include Starlink wi-fi, and most also offer complimentary alternative casual dining venues.

All American cruises also include complimentary onboard entertainment, wine and beer with both lunch and dinner, and a cocktail hour with hors d'oeuvres each evening. MS

Diana malfunction

THE Antarctica leg of a 21-day Swan Hellenic cruise from Cape Town has been abandoned following a malfunction with *Diana*.

A fault in one of the ship's two electric motors was discovered in South Georgia, just as *Diana* was about to visit the Antarctic Peninsula, forcing the Captain to divert directly to Ushuaia last Sat.

Guests were offered a 50% refund on the price of the cruise, as well as a 65% credit on any Swan Hellenic cruise.

Not all guests were satisfied with the outcome, with some even turning to a hunger strike, Swan Hellenic noted.

Montenegro cruise

PETER Sommer Travels has launched its first gulet cruise in Montenegro, which will visit towns and villages along the Adriatic Sea.

Passengers will travel in a traditional masted wooden sailing vessel, visiting Lake Skadar and the Bay of Kotor, and discovering the influence of the ancient Illyrians, the Greeks, the Roman Empire, Venice, and the Ottomans.

The eight-day 'Cruising the Coast of Montenegro' tour departs 15 Sep, 22 Sep, and 29 Sep 2025, priced from £3,895 per person (A\$7,612) based on double occupancy.



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CARNIVAL Cruise Line has banned pineapples on its ships - but hold up before you send the company an angry missive detailing your enthusiasm for this tropical fruit.

Many experienced cruisers will be aware of the significance of a pineapple aboard a ship, and it's not as a key ingredient in a pina colada.

An upside-down pineapple affixed to a stateroom door indicates a couple looking for a third to join them - at least until Carnival banned them.

"Those are definitely no longer allowed on the ships and they will be removed from any cabin door," Brand Ambassador John Heald said recently on Facebook.

Not so fast before accusing Carnival of acting as the fun police, though - the cruise line is merely discouraging strangers from entering each other's staterooms.

Celestyal gets hearts racing



SIX Australian travel advisors on Celestyal Cruises' inaugural Arabian Gulf cruise (**CW** yesterday) had the chance to meet British former Formula 1 driver David Coulthard.

The five-day F1-themed "super fam" included the opportunity to attend a speaking session with Coulthard, and Formula 1 presenter Laura Winter, on board *Celestyal Journey*.

Guests attended the Qatar Grand Prix, during the three-night land stay component of the famil.

The program also included local excursions, such as a visit to the Arabian Travel Market, as part of Celestyal's MOU with Visit Qatar (**CW** 11 Nov).

Each 'Desert Days' itinerary, departing Doha, will feature calls to Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Khasab, and Sir Bani Yas. **MS**

Pictured are Janet Parton, Celestyal; Coulthard; Caitlin Rooney, Flight Centre; Jayden McDonald, Flight Centre; Adam Mackin, Inspiring Vacations; and Paul Polyviou, Sun Island.

Cunard art tour

CUNARD Line has teamed up with the hosts of the *Talk Art* podcast, Russell Tovey and Robert Diament, to help guests explore *Queen Anne's* iconic art collection.

The new collaboration sees Tovey and Diament host an immersive, self-guided Art Tour to celebrate *Queen Anne's* many masterpieces - almost 4,500 in all.

The tour launched last month, and forms part of *Queen Anne's* activities program, showcasing more than 40 individual pieces of art across the ship.

Tovey and Diament will introduce each piece on the tour, including Micheal James O'Brien's Gilbert and George portrait in the Golden Lion, and Susumu Kamijo's Poodles series in Aji Wa, delving into the inspiration behind the artists' work, combined with exclusive interviews and their own interpretations.

"We're also passionate about making contemporary art more accessible," President Katie McAllister said.

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