



Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Travel the World Windstar Cruises**.

P&O body located

NSW Police Marine Area Command have retrieved the body of a man who fell overboard from P&O Cruises' *Pacific Adventure* as the vessel approached Sydney yesterday.

The ship was returning from a three-day Elvis-themed music cruise when the alarm was raised at 4:30am, sparking a full-scale search involving rescue helicopters, which located the body at 10:30am.

After delaying its arrival into White Bay to assist with search efforts, *Pacific Adventure* departed on its next voyage - a four-night Queensland cruise.

Queen Anne royal debut

THOUSANDS of spectators lined the shore in Southampton late last week to witness the debut of Cunard's *Queen Anne* (pictured) as she departed on her maiden voyage.

Amid a grand display of fireworks, the 249th ship to sail for Cunard meandered along The Solent and out into the English Channel on her inaugural seven-night cruise to Lisbon, Portugal, followed by a 14-night exploration of the Canary Islands.

"*Queen Anne's* maiden voyage signals the dawning of a new era in luxury ocean travel and her historic sail away from Southampton was a very special moment for everyone connected with Cunard," said Cunard President, Katie McAlister.

"Here in the UK and across the globe, Cunard is famous for our beautiful iconic Queens.

"With *Queen Anne* joining our



fleet, she marks not just a new icon but the completion of a perfect quartet alongside *Queen Mary 2*, *Queen Elizabeth*, and *Queen Victoria*."

Celebrations are set to continue onboard the 3,000-passenger ship throughout the sailing, with highlights including a performance by tenor, Russell Watson.

Ahead of her departure, the new ship enjoyed a grand arrival into Southampton as she was escorted into the harbour by a convoy of locals in private boats.

An official blessing and plaque exchange took place at Mayflower Terminal as part of the official ceremonies. *ML*

Windstar incentive

AGENTS can secure a free Windstar cruise for themselves and a guest in a new incentive launched in the Aussie market.

The 'Sell Three, Sail Free' promotion encourages agents to sell three qualifying 2024 cruises to receive a free berth for the agent and a guest.

Qualifying bookings must be made by 31 May, with full payment received 130 days prior to sailing.

Eligible free cruises for top-selling agents can be up to 10 days in length on any ship in the Windstar fleet, departing before the end of 2024.

Windstar's fleet of six boutique ships carries no more than 342 guests on any voyage, allowing access inside smaller ports that larger ships cannot reach.

For more information on the incentive, see **page four**.



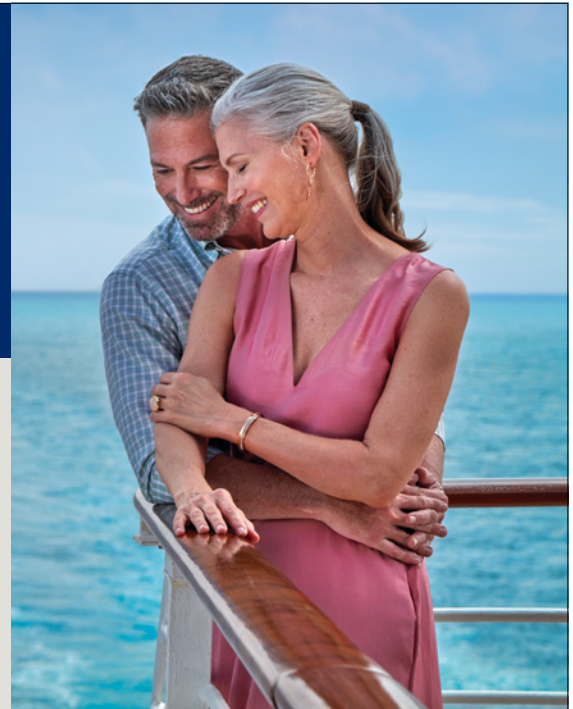
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Tauck teasing 2025

THREE new itineraries will be introduced by Tauck across its ocean and river cruise range, with the company teasing details of next year's selection.

Strong demand for river cruising on the Seine will see Tauck redeploy its 110-metre *MS Esprit* following its 2024 Rhine and Danube season, doubling its French presence.

Two new options will debut in Tauck's ocean cruising range, starting with a 12-day exploring of Italy's west coast.

Beginning in Rome, the tour includes a seven-night Ponant cruise from Rome to Valetta, with shore excursions included in Amalfi, Trapani, Palermo, Taormina, Siracusa and Gozo.

Elsewhere, the 14-day Aegean Voyage travels from Istanbul to Athens and includes an eight-day voyage on Windstar's *Star Legend*.

River lines push back on Amsterdam

EXCLUSIVE

ONE leading river cruise line says it was caught by surprise when Amsterdam city officials announced plans to slash berth space in the city by half by 2028 as a means to combat overtourism (*CW* 26 Apr).

A spokesperson from Avalon Waterways told *Cruise Weekly* it will confidently advocate on behalf of the river cruise industry as decisions are made.

"The entire river cruise industry is working together to determine how we can help the city to achieve their goals of lessening the burden of overtourism on their community, while at the same time allowing river cruise guests to still visit in the sustainable and respectful way they have been doing for years," Avalon's spokesperson told *CW*.

Amsterdam City Council has set a maximum of 1,150 river cruise



ships entering its inner-city canals per year and says it will begin gradually enforcing this threshold in the years leading up to 2028.

Avalon Waterways said the council's decision was perplexing, considering its fleet has been awarded the Netherlands Green Award - a certification program that acknowledges its approach to sustainable standards and one that was a prerequisite in order to dock in central Amsterdam.

"Corporate sustainability is a commitment we've made company-wide to limit the effects of tourism on climate change as well as over-tourism," the line emphasised to *CW*.

"As a destination partner, we help our guests see and experience places like Amsterdam – and undiscovered towns and villages – in responsible, respectful and thoughtful ways that connect people to places, cultures and traditions.

"We look forward to the opportunity to showcase these key Avalon differences with decision-makers on this measure."

APT Travel Group said it was awaiting further details from the city council regarding the specifics of its announcement, but that there could be an alternative.

"As it stands, there are many ports in the vicinity of Amsterdam that we have used and could use if changes are made to any current arrangements," APT said.

Cruise Weekly also attempted to contact Scenic and Viking to seek their view, however both declined the opportunity to comment. *ML*



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IF INSTAGRAM has taught us anything, it's that everything can be polled and ranked.

Waterfalls are the latest natural wonder to fall victim to social media's 'Best Of' curse, and despite plenty of amazing water wonders around the world to choose from, Niagara Falls (pictured below) emerged as the overwhelming winner.



Judged by the number of hashtagged 'Gram' posts, Niagara Falls earned more than 4.2 million posts, a staggering 1,015% higher than Africa's Victoria Falls in second place.

Victoria Falls only garnered 381,614 hashtags - pitiful in comparison don't you think?

The competition heats up for the lower placings, with much smaller gaps between Iceland's Skogafoss in third (348,836), Iguazu Falls (326,010) next and Gullfoss (307,381), also in Iceland to round the top five.

Iceland appears twice more in the lower half, along with falls in the USA and Philippines.

However when you look at the results more closely and see the data was extrapolated by Niagara Falls Tickets and Tours, the emphasis is clearer.

Meeting demand head-on



SOARING demand from the travel trade has led Ponant to shuffle its professional deck chairs and introduce a revised commercial team structure, which includes some fresh faces.

Effective this week, Ponant Asia Pacific Director of Sales, Julie Rogers, has promoted Annabelle Brown to State Manager Vic/Tas.

At the same time, Janelle Ramsey has taken on the same role for Qld and NT, with Kristina Sambaher overseeing NSW and the Australian Capital Territory.

Ponant will be ramping up its focus on Western Australia and South Australia, appointing Kate Hansen as State Manager WA/SA, who will start later this month.

The four state managers will be supported by highly experienced cruising expert, Sandra Cahill, as Inside Sales Executive.

Hansen's appointment will allow Brown and Ramsey to focus on their core states, having previously shared responsibility for managing WA and SA.

New to the organisation is Alan Wilcock, who steps into the

role of Business Development Manager NZ, replacing Bianca Bratton, who has embraced a new passion outside the industry.

Ponant's new team will be overseen by General Manager Sales and Marketing, Deb Corbett.

"These structural enhancements signify Ponant's dedication to meeting the evolving needs of our valued trade partners in the Asia Pacific region," Corbett said.

"We are poised to deliver exceptional service and support as we embark on this exciting phase of growth, exemplifying Ponant's ongoing efforts to nurture talent and expand its influence in key markets by leveraging the team's experience and proven contributions."

The changes will also allow Rogers time to fine-tune strategy for the Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand market following an internal promotion for the India and Southeast Asia market. **ML**

Pictured above is Sandra Cahill, Kristina Sambaher, Julie Rogers, Deb Corbett, Annabelle Brown and Janelle Ramsey.

Change at Aurora

AURORA Expeditions has confirmed the departure of its Chief Marketing Officer, Hayley Peacock-Gower, who has left to pursue new opportunities.

In three years with the line, Peacock-Gower has helped to amplify Aurora's brand globally and establish it as one of the premier expedition cruise lines.

Peacock-Gower said she was looking forward to watching Aurora Expeditions and its global teams reach new heights and successes with the launch next year of its third expedition ship, *Douglas Mawson* (CW 03 Apr).

Guaranteed lights

PRINCESS Cruises has launched its 'North to Alaska' program for the 2024 season, which this year includes a new Northern Lights experience.

As the line celebrates its 55th year sailing in America's 49th state, a new planetarium light show in the Princess Theatre will provide a front-row seat to the Aurora Borealis.

Princess is sailing 14 unique itineraries this season, with 158 departures taking cruise guests to 17 destinations.

Highlights of the season include the debut of 'Cook My Catch' in the new speciality 'The Catch by Rudi' restaurant, which allows guests to enjoy a fish they caught during an associated shore excursion.

Thirteen new shore tours have been added to the range, including a metal-torching art class in Sitka.

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