

Cruise Weekly today

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

Celebrity elevation

CELEBRITY Cruises has launched an improved range of inclusions for guests staying in its 'ship within a ship' precinct known as The Retreat.

Eligible guests will now be able to communicate with butlers via a new 'Butler Chat' feature and have access to a dedicated shore excursion expert and 'suite to car' butler escorts for booked Private Journeys excursions.

Access to a private lounge prior to shore excursions is also now open to Retreat guests, while those in Royal Suites and above will also enjoy unlimited laundry and garment pressing services.

Cruise pax knocking on 2019's door

PASSENGER volumes on cruise ships in the Australasia region are now within 1% of pre-pandemic numbers, according to the latest *State of the Cruise Industry* report published by CLIA Global.

The official full-year snapshot of the global cruise industry shows that in 2023, passenger numbers in the Australia/New Zealand and Pacific region totalled 1.34 million, slightly down on the 1.35 million that set sail in 2019.

The local market is now on par with Italy in fifth place among the sector's highest source markets.

In the wider Asian region, China recorded a 92% decline on its 2019 levels, however this was attributed to the local market only reopening in Sep 2023.

By far the global leader in cruise passenger sources was again the United States, which surged 19% on its 2019 result, with nearly 17 million Americans holidaying at



sea in 2023.

Globally, the cruise sector completed its pandemic recovery in 2023, reaching 107% of 2019 levels with a grand total of 31.7 million people heading to sea.

CLIA said this exemplified the strength of cruising as a holiday option, with overall international tourism arrivals still 12% down on the final full pre-pandemic year.

Ongoing growth in cruise remains strong, with numbers expected to nudge 40 million in the next three years.

CLIA's report showed 46 was the average age of cruise travellers,

with 36% under the age of 40 and 58% made up of either Gen X, Gen Z or Millennials.

Other key trends identified in the report show 27% of overall passenger numbers took their first cruise in the past two years, up 12% on the prior year.

One-third of cruisers sailed with at least two generations in their party, while 28% had between three and five generations aboard.

The Caribbean overwhelmingly dominates the global cruise space in terms of capacity, with 44.2% of the CLIA fleet sailing here.

As a result, cruise lines are investing heavily in private islands, with five new or enhanced beach clubs opening by 2026.

Expedition and exploration cruises were marked as the fastest growing segments, with this itinerary style seeing a 71% increase in patronage from 2019 to 2023. *ML*



up to 4 CATEGORY UPGRADE SALE

BOOK NOW. LIMITED-TIME
OFFER EXPIRES 1 JULY 2024

plus simply MORE™

- FREE** Gratuities
- FREE** Shore Excursions
- FREE** Champagne, Wine & More
- FREE** Gourmet Speciality Dining
- FREE** Unlimited WiFi

[VIEW VOYAGES](#)



OCEANIA
CRUISES®
YOUR WORLD. YOUR WAY.®

THE FINEST CUISINE AT SEA®. CURATED TRAVEL EXPERIENCES. SMALL SHIP LUXURY.
VISIT OCEANIACRUISES.COM OR CALL 1300 355 200 (AU), 0800 625 691 (NZ)

[DOWNLOAD TOOLKIT](#)

*Visit OceaniaCruises.com/terms for full Terms and Conditions.



Love what you do
Earn what you deserve

Earn up to 95% commission with TravelManagers

Find out more 



TravelManagers
As individual as you are
join.travelmanagers.com.au

Coral hires two

CORAL Expeditions has beefed up its commercial leadership team further, following its appointment of Andrew Thwaites earlier this week (**CW** 22 May).

Two new roles will drive Coral's growth opportunity in the rapidly growing expedition sector, with Chris Jahnsen recently joining the team as Marketing Manager, and Katherine Plohl coming on board as Reservations & Revenue Manager.

Jahnsen joins the team with a wealth of experience in destination marketing, having previously worked in marketing with Tourism Tropical North Queensland.

Plohl has extensive experience leading reservations teams, including at local businesses Shangri-La The Marina, Cairns and Skyrail Rainforest Cableway.

Bocelli singing for Anne



ITALIAN tenor Andrea Bocelli (pictured) will take centre stage at Cunard Line's *Queen Anne's* naming ceremony in Liverpool at the city's waterfront.

Bocelli will be the on-shore highlight of the celebration on 03 Jun, headlining a stellar line-up of performers celebrating *Queen Anne's* maiden call to Cunard's "spiritual home".

The legendary opera singer will be joined by some of the city's finest talent, including the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts.

The naming ceremony will be hosted by English musician Matt Willis and his wife, English broadcaster Emma Willis.

The hosts will be joined on stage by special guests and Fincantieri's Roberta Mundula, the official godmother for the naming of *Queen Anne*, a moment that is signified by the traditional smashing of a bottle of champagne against the 249th ship to carry the Cunard name.

The event will draw to a close with a performance from Bocelli.

Celebrations will then continue with additional performances from local musical talent including DJ Lauren Lo Sung.

The festivities will then shift to a lively funk and soul set

by entertainer Craig Charles, ensuring the celebration continues until the grand finale, when *Queen Anne* will depart to a backdrop of fireworks.

The celebrations are expected to draw thousands of attendees, marking another significant moment in the history of Cunard.

The cruise line's ships have previously drawn more than one million spectators to the River Mersey's banks, notably for *Queen Elizabeth 2's* maiden call in Jul 1990, and the 2015 'Three Queens Royal Rendezvous' which marked Cunard's 175th anniversary and saw the entire Cunard fleet, then comprising three ships, all meet in Liverpool.

"Liverpool is known the world over as Cunard's spiritual home, and we are thrilled to announce maestro Bocelli as part of our incredible line-up of talented artists and performers for this special event," President Katie McAlister said.

"This celebration is a tribute to our rich history and a testament to the enduring bond between Cunard and the city of Liverpool.

"We look forward to honouring this legacy with a celebration of unforgettable performances that reflect the spirit and vibrancy of both our company and this magnificent city." *MS*

Cruise spend up

COMMBANK customers have spent 22% more on cruise in Q1 2024 compared to the prior corresponding period.

According to CBA's latest *Cost of Living Insight Report*, the bank found cruise led the way in terms of changing spend patterns, ahead of online travel bookings (up 16%), while direct hotel bookings declined 3% and travel agencies remained steady.

The bank noted its 'cruise' category comprises only 5% of overall spend, making for a smaller overall impact.

CommBank said "many people are still making room for travel, albeit that spending growth is starting to plateau".

Fincantieri Arabia

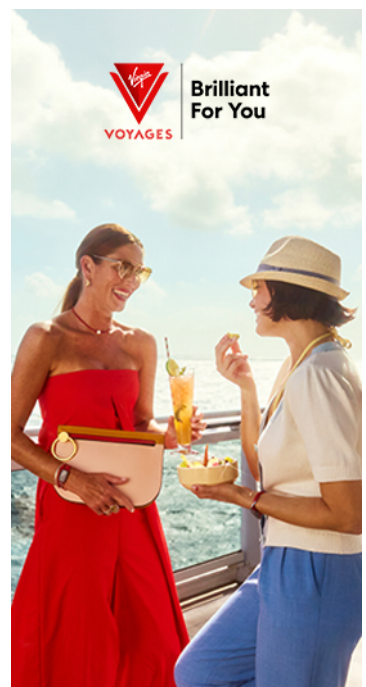
FINCANTIERI has committed to Saudi Arabia with a long-term strategic partnership with the country, in line with the Saudi Vision 2030.

The shipbuilder has pledged to enhance local technological capabilities in Saudi Arabia, as well as transfer knowledge, and create opportunities for local talent.

A new Saudi subsidiary, Fincantieri Arabia, will also focus on developing green ships and digitising shipyard operations through innovations such as digital twins, AI, welding robots, and unmanned vehicles.

CEO Pierroberto Folgiero said Fincantieri's commitment to Saudi Arabia is steadfast.

"We aim to enhance local technological capabilities and create opportunities for Saudi talent," he said.



Brilliant
For You

Up to 80% off
2nd Sailor + free
balcony upgrade.

BOOK NOW



LADY Luck has a way of simply shining down on some people even when it looks like all hope is lost.

A man in the US northeast state of Maine, who had taken his skiff boat out to check on storm damage, found himself in the water when it capsized.

Too far from home, the man swam to a nearby island minus any means of communication and unsheltered from a rain storm that intensified as the night wore on.

It was only after a local lobster fisherman, who said he heard faint, desperate cries for help, decided to trust his instincts and raise the alarm.

Some three hours later, a search involving numerous ships located the man, where he was rescued and taken to a local hospital.

Predatory pricing

VIRGIN Voyages has issued a sternly-worded letter to its US travel agent partners, warning them against dipping into their commissions to offer lower fares to travellers.

The cruise line says this tactic is misleading, as it gives the impression one agent has access to cheaper fares than competitors and the line itself.

Virgin said it reserves the right to limit or ban access to ships for egregious offenders.

More Aussies rescued



THE cruise sector is continuing to come to the rescue of those stranded in Vanuatu, with Carnival Cruise Line set to save a group of Australian citizens in Santo (**pictured**).

The collection of eight Aussies and one Kiwi were visiting Santo when Air Vanuatu collapsed earlier this month.

Carnival responded by offering to bring the group home on board *Carnival Splendor*, allowing them to return safely to Sydney.

The group boarded the ship yesterday morning, and will enjoy a day in Vila before a relaxing four-night sail home.

The rescue is the second by a Carnival Corporation ship this week, after P&O Cruises Australia's *Pacific Adventure* brought home a group of local students who were volunteering in Vanuatu (**CW** 20 May).

"Helping these people get home safely reflects our commitment to community support and humanitarian aid," Vice President Kara Glamore said.

"We are so pleased to provide

this group a safe and enjoyable return home."

Carnival thanked the Vanuatu Tourism Board and the people of Santo for their assistance. *MS*

Aurora invites you

TRAVEL agents and their clients are invited to attend a series of in-person and virtual information events to hear about Aurora Expeditions and its 2025/26 season of voyages.

Two sessions are taking place at 2pm and 6pm in **Melbourne** (20 Jun), **Brisbane** (25 Jun), **Sydney** (26 Jun), **Adelaide** (09 Jul) and **Perth** (11 Jul).

Events will feature a member of Aurora's expedition team, who will share stories about the discoveries travellers can make in various destinations including Antarctica, Tasmania and Greenland.

Attendees will also be able to learn about the line's new ship, *Douglas Mawson*, plus access exclusive discounts on a range of global expeditions.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	26 May
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	28 May
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	25 May
CAIRNS	
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	25 May
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	28 May
AIRLIE BEACH	
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	27 May
BROOME	
<i>Le Laperoise</i>	24 May
DARWIN	
<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	27 May
<i>Coral Geographer</i>	28 May
<i>Scenic Eclipse II</i>	30 May

Aroya's ban list

ALCOHOL will reportedly not be the only thing Aroya Cruises passengers will be unable to pack in their suitcases.

The Independent reports the new Saudi cruise line, which recently launched its inaugural season (**CW** 17 May), has also banned CDs and "magazines that violate public decency".

Sharp objects are also prohibited, including scissors and open razor blades, as are "devices which contain non-removable batteries" - which means passengers carrying a mobile phone or a laptop could be in breach.

Aroya is believed to be the first line on which alcohol is not allowed to be consumed.