

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise news, plus a full page from Cruiseco.

Agents looked after

THE newest player in the high-end European river cruise space, Riverside Luxury Cruises, is giving Australian travel advisors an exclusive offer to experience its vessels.

The rate of \$375 per person for twin share on select cruises is on offer, as well as \$490 per person for a solo cabin.

Use code 'TIR25' to access.

Earn a \$100 credit

ONLY a few weeks remain for agents to secure a \$100 onboard credit from Cruiseco for clients booking a Royal Caribbean cruise departing Singapore - see **page four**.

Cruise360 to explore further down the river

RIVER cruising will take a larger spotlight at Cruise360 in Brisbane this year, with this month's conference to dedicate a series of sessions to the thriving river sector across the world.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) has programmed a 'River Takeover' as part of this year's sold-out conference in Brisbane, offering delegates a deeper look at the opportunities presented by this surging branch of the industry.

A number of sessions will make up day two's River Takeover, beginning with a focus on the latest trends in river cruising.

International guest speaker Kristin Karst, Chief Brand Ambassador & co-owner of AmaWaterways, will discuss new opportunities in river cruising, in a conversation with Phil Hoffmann Travel Chief Operating Officer Michelle Ashcroft.



Karst will bring to life the rapid evolution and emerging opportunities in the river sector.

There will also be a panel of regional river cruise leaders, who will provide a myth-busting masterclass, responding live to traveller video clips to address common misconceptions about the lesser-known sides of river.

Panelists will include Tauck Managing Director David Clark; Avalon Waterways Head of Commercial Brett Simon; Uniworld Boutique River Cruises Managing Director Alice Ager;

APT Chief Sales Officer Scott Ellis; and Scenic Group Director Sales & Agent Programs Robert Kalemba.

CLIA Managing Director Joel Katz said the expansion of Cruise360 from one day to two has allowed a more comprehensive focus on river.

"This year's Cruise360 will help bring river cruising to life, allowing us to have a more detailed conversation about the latest developments and opportunities presented in a very innovative area of travel," enthused Katz. *MS*

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UNRIVALLED at sea™



Newcastle welcomes almost 10,000 cruisers

NEWCASTLE has wrapped its 2024-25 cruise season, which saw the destination welcome nearly 10,000 passengers.

Almost two-thirds of arrivals were sourced from overseas, primarily from markets such as the United States and Europe.

Highlights of the season included maiden visits from Princess Cruises' *Diamond Princess* and Phoenix Reisen's *Amadea*, along with four calls from Viking.

"It is exciting to see cruise passengers eager to spend time in Newcastle and the surrounding regions, which results in a more dispersed flow of tourists,"

Destination Sydney Surrounds North GM Glenn Caldwell said.

"Every cruise passenger had the opportunity to explore Newcastle's rich history, stunning coastline, and vibrant culture.

"Half of them also ventured beyond the city to discover



exceptional food and wine, breathtaking natural experiences, and renowned attractions in the Hunter Valley, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Central Coast, Maitland, and Morpeth."

Next season is expected to be even bigger, with a record-breaking 19 ship visits scheduled to call in the NSW city, bringing approximately 24,000 passengers to the region.

Notable upcoming visits include maiden calls by Silversea's *Silver Nova* (Oct 2025), Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Edge* (Dec

2025), and Princess' *Crown Princess* (Mar 2026).

Also arriving in Dec will be *The World*, home to 165 private luxury residences at sea. *MS*

HAL's expert touch

HOLLAND America Line (HAL) has enhanced its 2026 Solar Eclipse cruises with onboard astronomy experts, Boston University Professor Meers Oppenheim and San Diego Professor Adam Burgasser, on select sailings.

Lux cruise boom

CRUISE bookings are projected to be one of the quickest risers among Virtuoso's travel categories in the coming months.

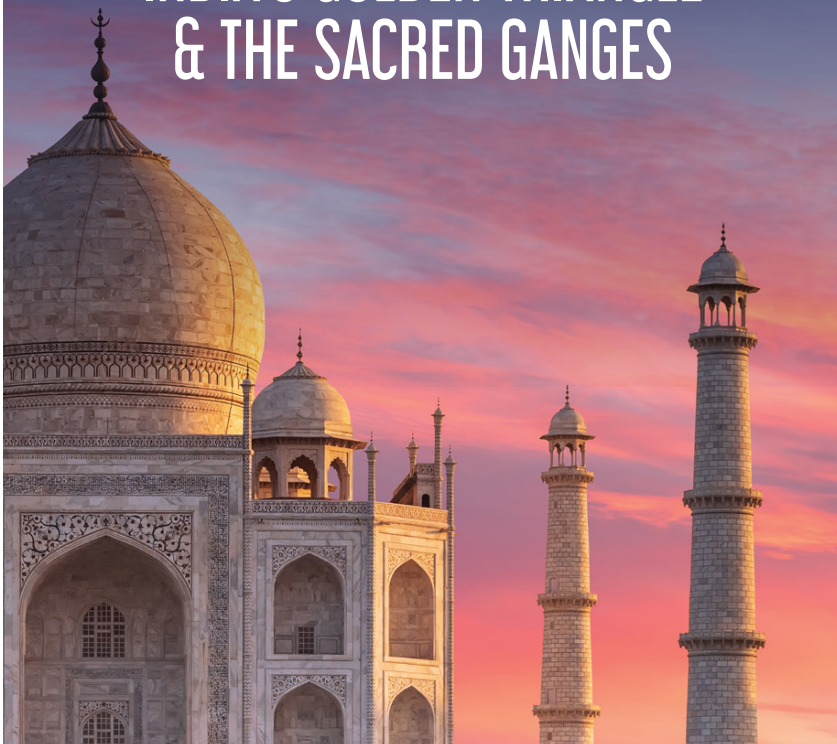
The travel network revealed the trend during Virtuoso Travel Week in Las Vegas, stating that between 20-30% of luxury travellers will book a cruise within the next year.

Future cruise sales for Virtuoso that are one to two years out that exceed \$50,000 per booking are up 43% compared to the same time last year, the network added.

That figure outpaces overall future travel bookings in the \$50,000 and above category, which are also up 35% compared to last year.

The US continues to buck perceptions, still rating highly with Virtuoso's luxury clientele across the globe.

INDIA'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE & THE SACRED GANGES



A Journey Like No Other

No journey through India is complete without time on the sacred Ganges river.

Uniworld's voyages showcase India's most decadent hotels by Oberoi, and India's most luxurious ship, the Ganges Voyager II.

Book your clients on Uniworld's India's Golden Triangle and the Sacred Ganges and **save up to 20% in 2026 and 2027.**

To further deepen your knowledge, join a Pintxos with Uniworld – bite-sized training session.

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HOLLAND America Line (HAL) is continuing to plant its flag as the cruise company of choice for picklers, celebrating National Pickleball Day last week with fleetwide festivities and an onboard tournament.

The day of recognition for the supposedly fast-growing sport is 08 Aug, and HAL celebrated the occasion with a friendly competition, themed activities, and a specialty cocktail.

Guests aboard *Rotterdam* got in on the action with a spirited pickleball tournament, complete with round-robin matches, with prizes for the most successful picklers.

Tournament winners took home a special package featuring new paddles, shirts, and hand towels.

The celebration also included pickleball lessons led by the ship's sports director, and a pickleball-themed cocktail: the Backspin Spritz, made with De Lijn Gin, St-Germain elderflower liqueur, Holland America Line's branded sparkling wine, club soda, lemon juice, mint leaves, and cucumber ribbons.



Crystal ventures ashore

CRYSTAL Cruises has formally launched its new range of shore excursions and pre-/post-cruise land adventures curated by sister brand Abercrombie & Kent.

The experience collection will be known as 'By Abercrombie & Kent' and pairs multi-day itineraries matched with Crystal cruise schedules.

In some cases, guests can leave their ship mid-journey to undertake their land adventure, then rejoin afterwards.

Experiences are available in Africa, Asia, the South Pacific and the Mediterranean, and have been designed to immerse guests in culture, nature and history, with overnight stays in places such as an 11th century castle.

Single-day shore excursions include activities such as truffle

hunting in Tuscany and visiting temples in Angkor Wat.

Travellers can now book pre- and post-cruise itineraries in 2026 across *Crystal Serenity* and *Crystal Symphony* voyages.

A&K Travel Group CEO Cristina Levis said the new collection is redefining what a luxury cruise experience can be.

"By Abercrombie & Kent isn't just any excursion program - it's a complete reimagining of how our guests discover the world, combining Crystal's exceptional onboard hospitality with A&K's unparalleled destination expertise," Levis said. *ML*

Star back in Alaska

STAR *Princess* will operate its second Alaska season in 2027 as one of eight ships to cruise the region for Princess Cruises.

In what the line said will be its most comprehensive season to date with 187 departures, *Star Princess* will run seven-day Inside Passage sailings based in Seattle.

Ships will also be based in Vancouver, Anchorage, with longer sailings available from San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Four glacier-viewing opportunities will be available across the 17 destinations to be visited, with 85 calls planned to Glacier Bay National Park.

Travellers can also pair their cruise with 28 cruisetour extensions that include stays at Denali-area lodges.

Select northbound voyages calling in Juneau will also offer a More Ashore late departure.

Azamara new CMO

LISA Kauffman has been hired by Azamara Cruises as its new Chief Marketing Officer, tasked with cementing the line's reputation as a leader in destination immersion.

Kauffman joins Azamara from her most recent role as Chief Marketing Officer at Starboard Group, where she led global B2B and B2C sales.

Prior cruise history on Kauffman's CV also includes time with Celebrity Cruises and The Walt Disney Company.

Azamara CEO Dondra Ritzenthaler said Kauffman will complement the line's ability to create immersive, culturally-rich experiences its guests around the world will love.



A better deal for cruise

THIS week I am across the Tasman for the New Zealand Cruise Association annual conference, where a key focus will be our industry's determination to achieve better support for cruise.

Alongside the NZCA and our cruise lines, CLIA has been advocating hard for a better regulatory environment to attract more ships to New Zealand.

It is a message that has resonated, and senior ministers have recently made very positive moves towards creating the whole-of-government approach we have been advocating for.

Our aim is to reverse the decline in ship visits to NZ, which is having a huge impact on local businesses and communities.

CLIA is raising similar concerns here in Australia.

We have consistently warned that a complex regulatory environment and high operating costs mean we risk losing cruise capacity to other markets.

Demand for cruising remains strong, but without action we face a loss of tourism revenue, jobs, and investment to countries with more competitive conditions.

It is important that governments in Australia and New Zealand adopt globally competitive policy settings to support cruising.

We need to create certainty to allow long-term planning.



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To celebrate the launch of our new Book & Go packages, we're offering a **\$100 booking bonus** to the first 100 agents on all **Royal Caribbean** sailings departing Singapore between October 2025 and March 2026.

Simply make a deposited booking via CruiseCO within the offer period to be eligible.

*Conditions apply. Terms and Conditions: This promotion is exclusive to the first 100 Australian agents booking via CruiseCO and Creative Cruising Australia for all eligible sailings. Bookings made within the offer period for any Royal Caribbean sailing ex Singapore between October 2025 and March 2026 are eligible. Agents will receive a \$100 Prezzy eGift card per eligible booking at the conclusion of the incentive offer period. Payment will be made on the first 100 deposited bookings created between 23 May and 31 August 2025. Gift cards are non-transferable and not redeemable for cash. Gift card will be sent by email to the registered email address used when the booking is made. To ensure timely delivery of gift cards, agents are requested to provide full and accurate information to CruiseCO at the time of booking. The total incentive final amount will be advised no later than 30 September 2025. Failure to accurately record agent data including name and email address when booking may result in delays or ineligibility for payment. Changes to booking may result in removal of offer. Offers and prices are subject to availability, cancellation, and change without prior notice at any time. Fringe benefits tax (if any) is the liability of the legal employer of the employee. We recommend that you seek your own independent taxation advice to assess any impact of these prizes on your circumstances. Prezzy eGift Card, Royal Caribbean, Helloworld Travel and CruiseCO website terms and conditions apply. Contact CruiseCO for full details.