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Monday 10th Mar 2025

CLIA gives thanks

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) is thanking the travel and cruise industries for their support during Sat's 22nd annual industry Awards. Head to the **cover page** to see all the contributors.

Stars shine at CLIA Awards

THE Australian cruise industry's stars have shined at the 22nd annual Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Awards in Sydney over the weekend, with hundreds of guests gathering to celebrate the flourishing sector.

The gala dinner & presentation night, held at Sydney's Star Event Centre, was hosted by Australian actor Luke Jacobz, with 15 travel agencies and individuals awarded for their success selling cruise.

Winners on the night included Samantha Renvoye of Clean Cruising, named Australia's Cruise Consultant of the Year;

and Michael Middleton of Ignite Travel Group, named Cruise Champion Australasia.

Ignite was also awarded in the agency categories, named the Multi Location/Brand Cruise Agency of the Year; while Destination HQ took out Cruise Agency of the Year.

Also honoured was P&O Cruises UK's Chief Commercial Officer Stuart Allison, who was named as the latest inductee into the CLIA Hall of Fame.

CLIA's Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz said this year's awards reflected an increasingly diverse travel agent community participating.

"We can see new faces and first-time winners in this year's awards," he said.

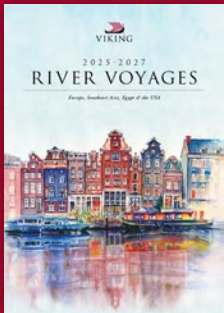
CLIA Awards media partner **Cruise Weekly** will be producing a special issue covering all the winners later today - for the full list, **CLICK HERE**. *MS*

A sale fit for a king

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises has unveiled an exclusive Europe Edition 2025 offer, providing savings of up to 40% on select itineraries this year, when booked from now until 30 Apr.



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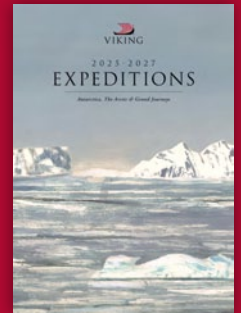
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AmaWaterways celebrates first b'day

AMAWATERWAYS celebrated the first anniversary of opening its local office last week with a party in its Bligh St Sydney office.

Vice President of Sales and co-owner, Gary Murphy, was joined by MD Australia & New Zealand, Steve Richards, to mark the special occasion.

A raft of senior industry leaders were in attendance including, among many others, CLIA Australasia MD Joel Katz, Virtuoso General Manager Australia & New Zealand, Greg Treasure, ATIA Director of Membership Experience, Richard Taylor, and special guest, Barbara Gross, Director of Sabra Travel in Bondi, who made the very first booking via the Australian office.

"We couldn't have done this without the support of the trade and the media as well - you're our biggest advocates," Richards told assembled guests.



"We're at the point now where we have doubled the size of the reservations team - they're not in here now because of all this noise, we had to send them downstairs," he joked.

"There were nine of us that set this up a year ago, we hit our targets in our first year and we're so grateful we have this opportunity."

Murphy added: "He hit his targets first year, and on the call with head office, because he hit it, they said he could add another

few million on top".

The co-owner told the crowd it was always nice to do business with "people you like to do business with" and that they were continuing to adapt to how to market the product in Australia, but they were grateful for the support.

The river cruise brand now sets into its second year, with loftier targets and more incentives expected for Australian agents, with the company recently launching its 2025/26 brox. *DF*

MSC seven heaven

BOOKINGS are now open for MSC Cruises' 2026/27 northern winter US season, with seven ships set to ply the country's three coastlines.

Highlights for the season will include Drew Barrymore's (*CW 07 Mar*) newly christened *MSC World America*, which will offer alternating east and west Caribbean cruises from Miami.

Alongside *MSC Meraviglia* and *MSC Grandiosa* operating trans-Atlantic crossings from Europe, *MSC Poesia* will also offer a repositioning from Seattle to Miami including a transit of the Panama Canal.

Meraviglia will be based in New York City, with *MSC Grandiosa* in Port Canaveral, while *MSC Seascape* will ply its trade from Galveston, Texas.

Most cruises will include a visit to Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve in the Bahamas.

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Monday 10th March 2025

ROYAL Caribbean was thrilled to sponsor the official afterparty of the 2024 CLIA Cruise Industry Awards, held in Sydney over the weekend.

Following a night of celebrations, guests partied with an unforgettable set performed by none other than DJ Dorothy and friends, including Anthony Wiggle, Evie Wiggle, Henry the Octopus, Wags the Dog, Buddy, and TikTok superstar, Tree of Wisdom.

The afterparty entertainment highlighted what guests may expect on board *Quantum of the Seas*, sailing 06 Apr from Brisbane to Sydney, as well as the six Wiggly Friends sailings during the 2025-2026 Australian season.



THE Wiggles pumping up the CLIA afterparty.



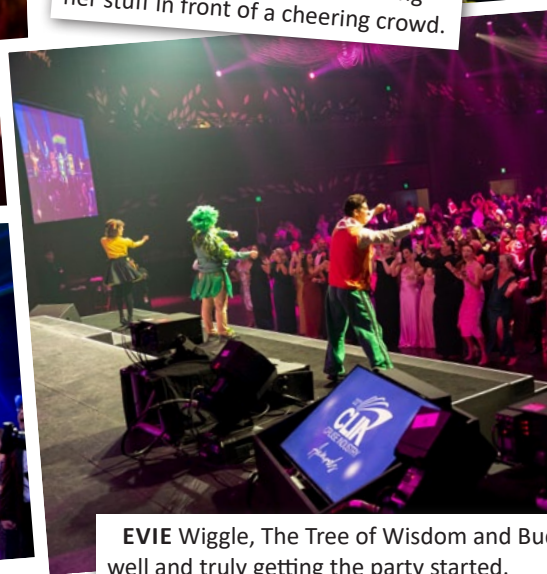
DOROTHY the Dinosaur strutting her stuff in front of a cheering crowd.



ANTHONY Wiggle plucking the strings on stage during the surprise performance.



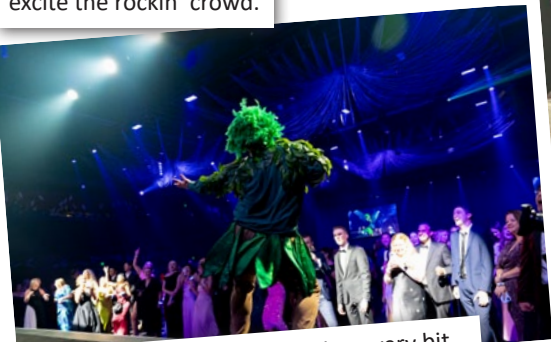
HENRY the Octopus raises all eight arms to excite the rockin' crowd.



EVIE Wiggle, The Tree of Wisdom and Buddy, well and truly getting the party started.



TIKTOK superstar The Tree of Wisdom showing the crowd why he is a viral success.



THE Tree of Wisdom imparting every bit of sage advice in front of an elated crowd.



ANTHONY Wiggle rocks out with his Wiggly Friends.



DJ DOROTHY dropping some serious beats at the Royal Caribbean sponsored afterparty.



CLIA Australasia and Royal Caribbean played one of the biggest blunders in recent history when it managed to surprise attendees of the 22nd CLIA Awards this past weekend with a performance to cap off the night by The Wiggles.

Emcee for the evening, Luke Jacobz, introduced the iconic Australian children's entertainers at the very end of the night, with DJ Dorothy (Dorothy the Dinosaur) taking the stage with other famous Wiggles characters including Evie Wiggle, Henry the Octopus and the energetic Tree of Wisdom (pictured).

For fans of the original quartet, blue Wiggle Anthony Field took the stage as well, as the group belted out Wiggles' classics like *Big Red Car*, plus more adult tunes including Tina Turner's phenomenon, *Nutbush City Limits*.

The group played a range of songs to an enthusiastic audience, many of whom packed the dance floor at the front of the room to join in on the action before the night continued at the after party.



SA's Edge-y new partnership



CRUISE passengers enjoyed the best of Adelaide Central Market and Adelaide Fringe on the weekend, in a first-of-its kind collaboration between SA's cruise and tourism industries.

Passengers on board *Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Edge*, calling Adelaide on Sat, were offered a taste of South Australia's festival season, with a bespoke shore excursion designed to complement the cruise's food and wine theme.

Passengers enjoyed a tour of the Adelaide Central Market, before a two-course lunch at Gluttony, the venue hub for the Adelaide Fringe festival (pictured).

Also accompanying the shore excursion were tickets to 'In Pour Taste' and 'The Gin Flight Red Hen' at Ayres House.

The collaboration represents a significant first for cruise tourism in South Australia, being the inaugural partnership between a visiting cruise line, one of the destination's iconic attractions,

and a major SA event.

South Australia's Minister for Tourism Zoe Bettison said the state's focus remains on growing the number and range of cruise lines and ships bringing in visitors to the destination.

The state is welcoming a total of 21 first-time voyages over the 2024-25 cruise season, including visits to remote coastal locations such as Cape Donington and Flinders Island in the Eyre Peninsula, American River on Kangaroo Island, and Robe on the Limestone Coast.

"This innovative collaboration sees three important tourism sectors - cruise, retail and events - come together to really showcase why South Australia is a destination worth returning to.

"I know this excursion will be the talk of the *Celebrity Edge* ship, helping promote not just the Adelaide Fringe, but South Australia as a must-do destination, which is a key benefit of the cruise sector." MS

New APT city stay

APT has unveiled a new Budapest two-night city stay for 2026, showcasing its rich culture and history, as well as its iconic landmarks and culinary experiences.

The city stay is a new extension of the 14-night 'Magnificent Europe' river cruise on board *APT Solara* or *APT Ostara* from Budapest to Amsterdam, which includes stops in Vienna, Salzburg, Regensburg, and more.

"This Budapest city stay promises an unforgettable addition to our most popular 'Magnificent Europe' river cruise," Nathan Walker, Product Manager Europe at APT told *Cruise Weekly*.

Passengers will kick off their Budapest city visit with a tour of the neo-Renaissance Hungarian State Opera House, followed by a private recital.

Next on the agenda is a Signature Experience in Etyek, where guests can enjoy wine tastings paired with lunch, a guided tour of the Hegedus Cheese Workshop and a visit to Sonkamester, where they will learn about the art of traditional ham-making and sample some of the produce.

On the second day of the itinerary, visitors will explore historical monuments Fisherman's Bastion and Matthias Church, followed by lunch overlooking the Danube River and the neo-Gothic Hungarian Parliament Building.

While in Budapest, guests will also stay at Matild Palace - [CLICK HERE](#).