

Cruise Weekly today

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

Charters training

QUARK Expeditions has added a new specialisation module focusing on charters and group bookings to its travel advisor learning platform PolarPRO.

The new Groups and Charters module has been designed to help agents unlock revenue opportunities and learn more about how to sell and customise group travel and charter experiences in the polar regions.

Agents will learn about flexible booking terms, payment options, and see case studies from ideas on how to maximise group benefits, as well as commissions.

They can also pick up knowledge on exclusive discounts starting at 5% for groups of six or more on select voyages, FOC berths for eligible groups of a certain size, and access to a dedicated group specialist.

The charters segment shows how advisors can craft a fully bespoke itinerary featuring themed onboard programming, custom cuisine, and curated itineraries.

PolarPRO also features AI-driven support to help agents navigate and complete lessons.

Imagining better relationships



"CORRECTING misconceptions" about Imagine Cruising will define much of the early work done by the package business, newly appointed Director B2B Katrina McAlpine has said (**CW** 25 Aug).

The former Cunard Commercial Director recently announced her new role with Imagine, and has spent much of her first two months on the job face-to-face with travel advisors to ensure they understand what the business' relatively new B2B proposition (**CW** 25 May) offers.

McAlpine told **Cruise Weekly** her goal is for Imagine to ultimately become "the number one trusted partner for travel advisors for package products".

"There were a lot of misconceptions around the business...there's certainly some areas where we want to make sure that we are building trust, and a lot of the discussions that I've been having with travel

agents has been around putting the customer first," she explained to **CW**.

"This is a big piece of what our BDMs are doing at the moment: going out and really asserting, ramping up our position in the market to communicate these values to our travel agent partners," McAlpine added.

Some of these trust-building strategies include establishing a new trade-specific booking platform to ensure advisors and their clients are not retargeted; and offering periods of exclusivity for B2B bookers which are inaccessible to the general public.

"That means that there's no competition in terms of competing for the same guests for the same product," McAlpine told **CW**. *MS*

Pictured are Imagine BDM Cam Marsh, advisors Delwyn Robinson, Leisa Steele, and Gay Mathis, and McAlpine.

NYK reveals 2026

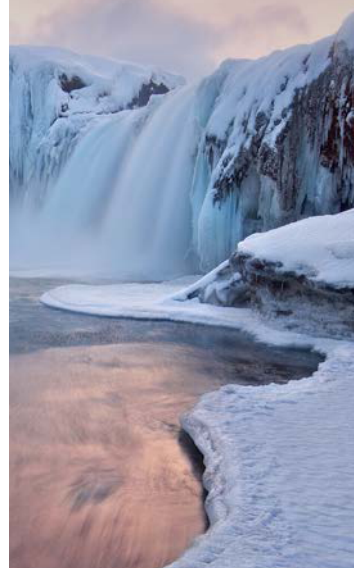
JAPAN'S NYK Cruises has revealed itineraries for next year for *Asuka III*.

The ship, which made her maiden voyage in Jul, will embark on 17 cruises around Japan and South Korea.



FULL CIRCLE ICELAND

ARCTIC 2026



BOOK YOUR CLIENTS NOW



WINDSTAR
CRUISES

TRAVEL IS BETTER WHEN YOU'RE *ALL-IN*

MORE VALUE. MORE WINDSTAR. ALL ON US

Complimentary select wine, beer, cocktails, Wi-Fi, and gratuities
VALUED up to \$2,060 per couple on a 7-night cruise*

VIEW OFFER

*T&Cs Apply, view for more information, offer ends 30 September 2025

For more information, contact 1300 749 875 or email reservations@windstar.com.au



Travel to Italy
with Travel Daily
Training Academy

Click here to
learn more

Travel Daily

Some Brilliant news

VIRGIN Voyages made waves in New York City this week, with the launch celebration of its new ship *Brilliant Lady* (**CW** 21 Aug) at Pier 90.

The charge was led by Virgin founder Richard Branson, with more than 4,000 guests, celebrities, athletes, creators, and pax flocking to the launch.

Virgin took over the waterfront with one of its famous 'Scarlet Nights', which saw the cruise line introduce a fresh line-up of entertainment, including new productions and interactive performances.

Following her New York City debut, *Brilliant* will sail a series of autumn itineraries to Canada during peak foliage season, before repositioning to Miami and the Caribbean.

Other future itineraries will showcase iconic American destinations including Los Angeles and Alaska.

Royal's fourth Icon underway



THE keel-laying has taken place at the Meyer Turku shipyard in Finland to mark the start of construction of Royal Caribbean's (RCI) fourth Icon-class ship.

A traditional layer of coins inserted before the keel was lifted into place, with the ceremony also seeing the ship's first block placed into her building dock.

The unnamed vessel will now take shape over the next two years and is on track to welcome its first guests onboard in 2027.

Royal Caribbean's latest construction milestone comes one week after its third Icon-class ship, *Legend of the Seas*, touched water for the first time, as she was floated out of the construction dock (**CW** 03 Sep) ahead of her debut in Aug.

Like her predecessors, Royal Caribbean said the fourth Icon ship will deliver "more of the

unmatched combination of experiences that defines the game-changing Icon-class".

The ship, one of three on order for Royal Caribbean, is currently slated to be the last in the Icon-class, which at this stage will be the cruise line's largest.

RCI is currently developing a new ship class, revealed Chief Product & Innovation Officer Jay Schneider (**CW** 23 Jan 2024).

"The new class of ships will not be the world's largest class of ship, we are starting smaller and have not put a size to it yet but it will definitely be a 'mic drop ship' [like Icon]," Schneider noted.

Royal Caribbean also has an agreement with French shipbuilder Chantiers de l'Atlantique for another Oasis-class ship, the seventh to be built.

The vessel will be delivered to Royal Caribbean in 2028. **MS**

Windstar on theme

WINDSTAR Cruises has dropped anchor on new themed cruises, launching just in time for the northern 2025-26 season.

The Themed Voyages Collection will see passengers paint with celebrated artists, enjoy daily yoga on deck, and even pilot one of Windstar's tall ships.

One of the highlights of the program will be Windstar's Masterpieces at Sea voyages, which will sail with an artist from Miami residency Fountainhead, who will be on board painting a mural on a large installation in real time.

A second artist will also join each voyage as an instructor, transforming Windstar's Screening Room into a hands-on art studio.

Meanwhile, on Windstar's 'Knot Your Average Crossing' voyages, guests will be able to step up to the bridge and take the helm of the ship.

The vessel's officers will lead hands-on workshops in knot-tying, chart-reading, and star-mapping.

Rounding out the Themed Voyages Collection will be Windstar's 'Mind Body, Spirit Collection', offering a range of transformative wellness experiences from renowned yogini Debbie Dixon.

She will lead daily meditation, yoga, and more.

Royal canx fees

ROYAL Caribbean has this month begun applying no-show fees for speciality dining reservations fleetwide.

A 24-hour cancellation period will be enforced for all speciality dining reservations and culinary experiences, excluding 'Star Class' and 'Dining Package' reservations.

Fees will be different for each venue, with US\$50 for Supper Clubs, Omakase, and others.



FLASH SALE

SAVE UP TO 30%
on selected voyages*

*T&Cs apply. Offer available on selected 2025-26 voyages. Book between 1 - 15 September 2025. Offer is combinable with the Ambassador Loyalty Discount. See website for full details.

NORTHERN LIGHTS PROMISE

MADE BY HURTIGRUTEN

Save Big on Norway Voyages!

For a very limited time, enjoy up to 30% off all-inclusive Signature voyages and up to 25% off Original voyages. This offer won't last. Secure your voyage today before it's sold out!

Don't miss out. Call our local Coastal Specialists on **1300 151 548** or visit hurtigruten.com/en-au/agents

HURTIGRUTEN
Live the legend of Norway



BATEMANS Bay, on the NSW South Coast, is apparently due to welcome luxury yacht *Scenic Eclipse II* tomorrow, according to CruiseMapper.

That might come as a surprise to plenty, considering Batemans Bay doesn't have a cruise port.








So either CruiseMapper has made an error, or *Eclipse II* may be the fastest cruise ship on the planet.

She would have to be, in order to fit in a visit to NSW as part of her current itinerary, where she is sailing the coast of Western Australia.

The website (pictured) shows the progress and location of *Scenic Eclipse II*, among countless other cruise ships, with the 'discovery yacht' midway through a 14-day expedition sailing from Fremantle to Broome.

According to the error, the ship called at Dirk Hartog Island yesterday, and today is cruising the Kimberley.

But on 10 Sep, the ship is listed for her visit to Batemans Bay (after firing up the rocket thrusters overnight) before calling in Exmouth on the 11th - that is some serious speed.

-   Dirk Hartog Island Australia
-   Kimberley Coast, Western Au
-   Batemans Bay NSW, NSW Au
-   Exmouth WA, Western Austr

Broome pushes for first point



WESTERN Australia's Minister for Tourism Reece Whitby said his department plans to impress on the Federal Government the importance of Broome receiving 'first point of entry' status (**CW** 08 Mar 2024).

The designation would allow cruise ships to make their first call in Australia in Broome, rather than going to Perth or Darwin.

This change would alter the dynamic of Western Australia's cruise sector, Whitby told **CW** at a press conference at the Australian Cruise Association (ACA) conference in Fremantle on Fri.

"It opens up enormous opportunities for cruise lines operating in Western Australia," Whitby said.

"We're going to take that issue up with the Federal Government...there's strong advocacy coming from the industry, and I'll be making sure the Federal Government is aware of the issue," he added.

The newly inaugurated tourism minister did not offer a time frame for the decision's approval, but said the state needed action "as soon as we can".

Another issue Whitby will be raising with the Federal Government will be the cost of doing business for cruise.

"Obviously there needs to be a fair value charge for services, but in terms of other operating costs, I know we're going to be taking the issue further with the Federal Government in terms of how they can have an impact on those costs as well," Whitby said.

He said Western Australia would also seek to further invest in its ports, in an effort to ensure the state is as cruise-competitive as can be.

Fremantle played host to the annual ACA conference for the first time in 20 years last week, where Princess Cruises announced *Sapphire Princess* (pictured) will sail from the city from 2027 (**CW** yesterday). *MS*

Departure lounge

GLOBUS family of brands (GFOB) has launched its 2026 Departure Lounge events, inviting agents to learn about the latest updates for brands such as Avalon Waterways.

Events will take place across Australia and New Zealand through Oct and Nov, and focus on the latest brochure releases for Avalon, as well as Globus and Cosmos.

The series will kick off on 06 Oct at Eureka Tower in Melbourne before spreading to major cities and regional towns around the country.

Events will be run by the sales team and feature updates by BDMs Josh Galea, Kate Jury, Shaun McIntosh, Jake Jones, Darren Sinclair, Ant Potter, and Matt Beggs.

Depending on the venue, events will either be hosted breakfasts, canapes or dinners, each designed to equip agents with the tools they need to sell Avalon and other GFOB tours.

Presentations will include details on new itineraries, company updates, insights into the most popular cruises on offer and an inside look at what is being planned for 2026.

Globus family of brands Head of Commercial Australasia, Brett Simon, said trade partners play a huge role in the success and these events are all about celebrating and nurturing these relationships.

Attending agents will also have a chance at each event to pick up a range of prizes.

CLICK HERE to view the list of events and RSVP to attend.