



Cruise Weekly today

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

Viking back at NTIA

FINALISTS in the 2025 NTIAs will again enjoy a dedicated celebration thanks to the support of Viking.

The cruise line has confirmed its sponsorship of the special event, which will occur at The Star Brisbane's Leisure Deck.

First introduced in 2023, the special event has evolved into a popular new tradition as part of NTIA week, giving finalists a chance to unwind and network prior to the NTIA gala.

"There's something special about coming together to honour our finalists, whether they're agencies, advisors or suppliers," said Viking Australia and New Zealand Managing Director, Michelle Black.

TM targeting massive cruise uplift

CRUISE will be one of the key markets TravelManagers (TM) will focus on over the next year, with Executive GM Michael Gazal floating massive targets for the company's travel advisors.

The TravelManagers boss, opening this year's annual conference in Nusa Dua, said cruise's extreme growth, and the resources the company has behind the sector, make it a key priority for this year.

"We have a goal to increase cruise sales by 18% off a very healthy base...we know that this is achievable with the tools we now provide through Fastbook, our cruise booking website; and our new cruise affiliate B2C website," Gazal enthused.

TravelManagers first introduced Fastbook last year, as revealed at the time by **Cruise Weekly** (CW 19 Sep), representing the company's first-ever in-house



wholesaler for the sector.

Earlier this year, the mobile advisor network launched a new customer-facing cruise tool (CW 28 Mar), providing real-time inventory and information from more than 30 different ocean, river, and expedition lines.

TravelManagers is confident

it can hit the significant cruise growth thanks to "extraordinary" output, which earlier this year saw the company hit \$500 million in turnover annually.

Meanwhile, TravelManagers' top 50 advisors average \$310k in commission, while the top 100 averages around \$250k. MS

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NCL no show fees

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has become the latest line to introduce fees for passengers who no-show a reservation at one of its speciality restaurants.

After a 15-minute grace period, diners will be hit with a US\$10pp charge if a booked table is not cancelled or the time updated within two hours of the scheduled reservation.

The move follows a similar 24-hour cancellation window initiative imposed earlier this month across the Royal Caribbean fleet (**CW** 09 Sep).

HL goes bilingual

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises has confirmed its five ships - *Europa*, *Europa II* and three Hanseatic vessels - will operate with both English and German as primary languages, with the move effective from 01 Jan.

Brands fall into autumn

FELLOW Carnival Corporation brands Holland America Line (HAL) and Princess Cruises have launched their 2027 Canada and New England seasons, both featuring extensive exposure to the region's autumn foliage.

Sailing from May to Oct, HAL will offer 20 departures of 13 itineraries across *Volendam* and *Zuiderdam*, with voyages ranging between seven and 14 days.

Nearly every itinerary will include scenic cruising along the St Lawrence River, with calls in Montreal or Quebec City.

One highlight of the season will be the new nine-day 'Lighthouses and Harbours of Canada and New England' itinerary, which will offer visits to 10 lighthouses across 22 available shore excursions, sailing from Montreal to New York.

An 11-day cruise from Montreal to Boston will allow travellers to visit five national parks in one



voyage, with late-night departures from St John's and Halifax.

Meanwhile, Princess Cruises has scheduled 17 voyages in Canada and New England, running from 21-30 Oct 2027.

Regal Princess will operate a series of seven-day round-trip cruises from New York, visiting Boston, St John's and Halifax, while *Caribbean Princess*' season will feature longer 10- and 11-day sailings, an overnight in Quebec and scenic cruising in Saguenay Fjord and the St Lawrence River.

Travellers can also extend their cruise holidays with land-based 'Cruisetours' to Washington DC and Niagara Falls. *ML*

Aqua to the Arctic

SVALBARD and the Arctic Circle will be graced by Aqua Expeditions' new icebreaker-turned-luxury-superyacht *Aqua Lares* (**CW** 08 Aug) as part of its maiden deployment.

The 30-passenger ship will sail the far northern region from Jun to Sep 2026 following her debut in East Africa.

Itineraries in the Arctic will range from five to 14 nights, focusing on remote routes incorporating Svalbard, the Lofoten Islands and Tromso.

The ice-class 1B superyacht features 15 staterooms, including three Owner's Suites, numerous lounges, dining areas and a wellness zone, backed by a 1:1 crew ratio.

Aqua Expeditions CEO Francesco Galli Zugaro said *Aqua Lares* will set a new benchmark for expeditions "at the edges of the map".



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NOTHING says 'bon voyage' like a double scoop of SPF 50+, according to Carnival Cruise Line, which has announced the creation of a very unique dessert concept.

In partnership with Van Leeuwen ice cream company, the cruise line has unveiled a sunscreen-flavoured ice cream.

The flavour aims to combat what Carnival calls the 'end-of-summer scaries' or "the bittersweet feeling when the season of sunshine and carefree moments winds down".

Thankfully, sunscreen is not actually on the ingredients list.

Those daring enough to try the new creation will taste coconut, vanilla and sea salt... which actually sounds pretty tasty, if you ask us.

However, the cruise line revealed that the sunscreen ice cream won't be available for public purchase at first.

Carnival is inviting its fans to share their reactions to the new ice cream on social media, with a trial run to come "if the buzz is big enough".

Early reaction though has been mixed, with some of Carnival's vocal fans already calling for it to be banned.



Viking Tonle launches in Asia



VIKING has officially welcomed its newest river ship, *Viking Tonle*, into its fleet (**CW** 15 Nov 2023).

The vessel will sail exclusively on Southeast Asia's Mekong River, operating the 15-day 'Magnificent Mekong' itinerary, which visits Hanoi, Vietnam; Siem Reap, Kampong Cham and Phnom Penh in Cambodia; and Tan Chau, Sa Dec, Cai Be, and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.

Like her sister ship *Viking Saigon*, *Viking Tonle* features the brand's Scandinavian design, and has an 80-guest capacity across 40 outdoor staterooms with a veranda or French balcony.

The three-deck ship also features a pool, a spa, and a fitness centre, as well as an open-air Sky Bar on the upper deck.

"Our guests are thinking people who value learning through travel, and the rich history and traditions of Vietnam and Cambodia make this region especially compelling," said Torstein Hagen, Chairman and CEO of Viking Cruises.

"We are pleased that the

addition of the *Viking Tonle* to our fleet allows us to welcome even more curious travellers to the Mekong River and the cultural treasures of Southeast Asia."

Viking's global inventory is set to grow further, with the line taking delivery of 25 additional river ships by 2028, which will bring its river ship fleet up to 112.

The cruise line is expecting 10 new ocean ships by 2031. *JM*

Behind the curtain

CRYSTAL Cruises has announced the next sailing in its 'Crystal on Broadway' series, which features acclaimed Broadway artists such as Tony Award-winning producer, Kevin McCollum.

Departing New York on 31 Oct 2025 aboard *Crystal Serenity*, the nine-day voyage will take in the autumn foliage of New England and Canada.

Guests will enjoy a cabaret-style concert, performances, and an 'Ever After the Musical' workshop with a Q&A session.



Milestone month for cruise

SEPTEMBER has kicked off with a string of milestones that highlight the strength of our sector.

Our 2025 conference welcomed a record delegation, creating an incredible platform for collaboration across cruise lines, ports, destinations and government.

A standout moment was the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding with Tourism Australia and CLIA Australasia, formalising our joint commitment to increase international cruise calls in Australia and bring more visitors from overseas to cruise in our waters.

It was also very special to award Honorary Life Membership to Thor Elliott, who has been Fremantle Ports' appointed representative for more than 20 years and was present at the ACA Conference in Fremantle in 2005.

Honouring him two decades later in the city again was a fitting recognition of his longstanding contribution to the sector.

WA took centre stage again last week with the opening of the Kimberley Marine Support Base in Broome, a development set to transform cruise operations and bolster Broome's First Point of Entry status.

Broome International Airport was also recognised as a finalist in the 2025 Seatrade Cruise Awards for its trailblazing Cruise Lounge.

Meanwhile in Hamburg, ACA Board Member and Director Cruise at South Australian Tourism Commission, Andrew McKinnon, represented our region at Seatrade Cruise Europe, holding key cruise line meetings on behalf of ACA.