

Cruise Weekly today

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

Masts up for OE

ORIENT Express' upcoming yacht *Corinthian* has had her masts raised, as the ship takes her final shape before her first departure next year.

Corinthian's three carbon masts are 69 metres high, with a total air draft of 100 metres above the waterline.

Each of them support a 1,500m² rigid sail, as part of the SolidSail system developed by Chantiers de l'Atlantique.

The first-ever ship for the Orient Express brand will be able to reach speeds of 17 knots under sail alone, with the vessel to be hybrid-powered with a dual-fuel engine, which will run on liquefied natural gas.

This will be used as a backup or support system depending on conditions.

Corinthian will set sail in Jun, with bookings opening for the first time later this month.

The ship will be the world's largest sailing yacht, with her first itineraries being between two and eight days, taking travellers into smaller ports in the French and Italian riviéras, among other departures (**CW** 13 Mar), before she makes her debut in the Caribbean.

Better serving cruisers



TRAVELMANAGERS' new Fastbook wholesale platform is helping travel advisors to understand their clients better, General Manager Cruise Jeff Leckey has told **CW**.

The platform was launched around last year's TravelManagers' conference a year ago (**CW** 13 Sep 2024), with Leckey revealing its adoption rate has been "incredibly high".

He said to **CW** at this year's annual meeting in Nusa Dua the Fastbook technology can spot an opportunity to move a passenger from one fare category to another, allowing TM's Personal Travel Managers (PTMs) to identify what suits their passengers best.

"We always say 'suits the right client to the right cruise', but it's also suits the right type of fare and the right inclusions as well," Leckey explained.

The result can often see a passenger move to a balcony or a

mini-suite for as little as \$5 a day, unearthing value that can often otherwise be hard to spot.

"It's great from a PTM perspective to be able to offer your customers better value... it really adds value to what your services are," Leckey explained.

The TravelManagers cruise head believes this aspect of Fastbook will become even more important as new entrants to the sector - particularly from the hotel industry - bring different offerings to the slate.

"It's understanding the product as well, because as you get more into that yacht space, it's not as all-inclusive as perhaps Regent Seven Seas Cruises, or Crystal, or Explora Journeys, because it is very much based on the hotel model of 'user pays'.

"People need to understand what the inclusions are on a Ritz-Carlton versus Scenic." **MS**

Pictured is Leckey (centre) with the TravelManagers cruise team.

Cruise Month guide

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has released a video guide for Cruise Month, which aims to help travel advisor members get involved and make the most of the campaign, which begins next month (**CW** 23 Jul).

The video provides a short, practical walkthrough hosted by CLIA Marketing Executive Antonia Vrdoljak, covering key themes and dates, the marketing resources available in CLIA's Cruise Month Toolkit, and the main elements of the month, including advisor competitions and webinars.

This year's campaign will encompass social media activity, digital advertising, education opportunities, and other initiatives designed to generate interest in cruise and direct consumers to their local CLIA travel consultant.

Cruise Month will kick off on 05 Oct with ocean cruising as the first weekly theme, followed by river cruising (12-18 Oct), expedition cruising (19-25 Oct), and luxury cruising (26 Oct-01 Nov).

The new video guide is contained within the Cruise Month Toolkit, which contains digital assets designed to help agents plan their own activities and be part of the campaign.

CLIA members can access the resource via the CLIA Members Hub **HERE**.

Virgin VOYAGES book via **VOYAGE STORE**

70% OFF + **UP TO \$920**
SECOND SAILOR INSTANT SAVINGS

*Terms and Conditions Apply, contact for more information

Voyage Store
BONUS EXCLUSIVE
Up to
US\$100
Sailor Loot

OFFER ENDS SOON

BOOK NOW



Maiden dual-ship season for Aranui

ARANUI Cruises has launched its first-ever two-ship program for 2027, with the season featuring the line's newly-built *Aranoo* (CW 03 Apr) alongside *Aranui V*.

Joining the fleet in Mar 2027, *Aranoo* (pictured) will launch with a 13-day Austral Islands cruise, including a visit to Rapa Iti at the far southern edge of French Polynesia.

The addition of the smaller *Aranoo* will see Aranui expand its hybrid passenger and cargo services in the region, with the latest arrival offering a total of 18 departures in her debut year.

Each itinerary will visit Tubuai, Rurutu, Rimatara and Raivavae - the latter described as the 'Bora Bora of the south' - where she will remain at anchor overnight.

Rapa Iti will be available to visit on six itineraries, with the line working to develop a sustainable tourism industry for the tiny



community of 500 residents.

Voyages will also visit Raiatea in the Society Islands along with Bora Bora on the return leg.

Aranoo will operate five dedicated passenger itineraries across the season, including a trip to the Marquesas Islands in Dec for its annual arts festival, and two 12-day voyages to Pitcairn Island and the Gambiers.

Aranui's Australia and New Zealand representative Laurent Wong said the arrival of *Aranoo* marks a new and exciting chapter for the line.

"Just as we put the Marquesas

Islands on the map after 40 years of cargo cruising in the northern region, we are excited about working with the Austral Islands to slowly and responsibly introduce tourism to these remote island communities, while allowing a small number of guests to discover their vibrant landscapes and rich culture."

Aranoo will offer capacity for 198 travellers, with two restaurants, two bars and pools, and a fitness centre all on board.

For *Aranui V*, regular service will continue through 2027 to the Marquesas Islands, with 20 voyages scheduled to the northern region, visiting Hiva Oa, Nuku Hiva, Ua Pou, Ua Huka, Tahuata, and Fatu Hiva.

The line is celebrating the arrival and the new season with earlybird deals of up to 15% available on 2027 departures when booked by 31 Dec. ML

New ports for Sun

PRINCESS Cruises has added new ports of call to its previously announced seven-day Western Mediterranean voyages in 2026-27 onboard *Sun Princess*.

Departing between 04 Apr 2026 and 17 Oct 2027, the 16 enhanced cruises now include visits to Mallorca and Corsica, as well as an overnight stay in La Spezia.

In Palma, guests can join a vintage train that winds through the Tramuntana Mountains to Soller, before exploring the olive traditions of a 16th-century mill.

Other experiences include a Rapallo foodie walking tour and a pesto-making class in Portofino, and plenty more.

To allow for these additional port of calls, Princess Cruises has removed Gibraltar from the itineraries.



S.S. Emilie – coming in 2026

2027 OPEN FOR SALE

with up to 20% off

Coming to our website soon

PLEASE CALL US TO BOOK!

1300 780 231

reservations@uniworldcruises.com.au
UNIWORLD.COM/AU

UNIWORLD
BOUTIQUE RIVER CRUISES.



MUSICIANS sometimes take their songs in strange, all-too-literal directions.

If you remember the 2003 hit *Milkshake*, which catapulted singer Kelis to stardom, you're probably singing it right now.

While the track certainly didn't infer a liking for a flavoured dairy drink, don't tell that to Virgin Voyages.

Sir Richard Branson's cruise line has signed Kelis to perform her hit on board the maiden *Brilliant Lady* sailing to the Caribbean next month.

For those who follow Kelis' career closely, the r'n'b star has also become an accomplished chef, graduating from esteemed culinary institution Le Cordon Bleu.

Virgin is also tapping into this speciality, with Kelis performing on board, and also creating her own ice cream sundae, which will be available at The Wake exclusively on the eight-night sailing.

"Virgin Voyages gets that music and food tell stories, and I'm excited to share both sides of my passions with sailors on this incredible Miami celebration," the singer said.

Brilliant will depart Miami on 17 Oct, bound for the 'ABC Islands' of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, along with a visit to Ocho Rios on the way back - a cruise certain to bring the boys to the yard.

Sydney's that way, Capt



IN JUST over two months, Australia will have a new 'newest cruise ship', as Princess Cruises' *Discovery Princess* makes her way into Sydney Harbour on 06 Dec.

The title of 'Australia's newest cruise ship' is rapidly growing in prestige as a measurement of the success and evolution of the destination as a cruise hotspot for the world's major lines.

Discovery takes the title from Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Edge*, with the Princess ship having first set sail three-and-a-half years ago (CW 03 May 2022).

Currently, *Discovery* is completing her final sailing of the season in Alaska before she begins her trans-Pacific journey, which will begin with a short stay in Japan.

From there, *Discovery* will head to Singapore and into her first scheduled dry dock for some routine maintenance and a top-toe sparkle and shine.

From there, she is off to Australia, where the Princess ship will embark on a range of sailings exploring Australia's coast, New Zealand, and the South Pacific.

At the end of the annual peak

season next year, *Discovery* will be one of the last ships to leave local waters, setting sail in Apr for her return trans-Pacific journey to her seasonal home port of Vancouver, Canada.

To mark the countdown, the ship's Bridge team, led by Captain Alessandro Genzo and its resident koala, snapped the above photo to highlight their excitement as they prepare to arrive in their new home of Sydney. ML

Seven free nights

SMALL-SHIP agency Cruise Traveller has unveiled a new package offering seven free nights in hotels either side of a two-week Europe river cruise.

Available for bookings made by 30 Oct, the 'Majestic Danube' package is helmed by twin 14-night river cruises from Vilshofen to Giurgiu on *AmaBella* or *AmaVerde*.

Packages depart on either 07 or 21 Aug 2026 and include three nights pre-sailing in Prague, two post-cruise in Brasov, Romania and a final two in Bucharest.

It's almost *Destiny*

DISNEY Cruise Line's newest ship, *Disney Destiny*, has completed her conveyancing along Germany's Ems River.

Departing from the Meyer Werft shipyard in Papenburg, the vessel has docked in the Dutch city of Eemshaven and will now conduct her sea trials.

Once complete, the ship will be handed over to Disney Cruise Line for a trans-Atlantic voyage to her home in Fort Lauderdale, where she will sail to the Western Caribbean.

Galveston doubled

CARNIVAL Cruise Line will double its fleet in Galveston for the 2027/28 northern winter, with four ships deployed to the Texas port to offer a range of itineraries.

The line will base *Carnival Horizon* and *Carnival Spirit* in Texas for the season, joining the existing *Carnival Breeze* and *Carnival Jubilee*.

Highlights of the season will include extra seven-day voyages to the Caribbean, new Bahamas sailings that include the line's new Celebration Key private island, and longer Carnival Journeys itineraries including the Panama Canal.

One of the new additions, *Carnival Spirit*, will complete her 2027 Alaska season and reposition to Galveston via the Panama Canal to begin a series of four-, five- and six-night Western Caribbean cruises.

Carnival Horizon will operate a similar schedule, adding capacity on popular cruises to Cozumel and Progreso.