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# UPCOMING

## 2026 EVENTS

ONLY 8 WEEKS LEFT  
TO GET YOUR TICKETS

THURSDAY  
**MARCH  
5TH**

### NETWORKING PARTY PRE EVENT

7:00-9:00 PM | SOFTEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH  
DRINKS & CANAPÉS INCLUDED | CHARITY EVENT

**\$20** + GST

FRIDAY  
**MARCH  
6TH**

### A FORCE FOR GOOD HUB EVENT

8:00 AM - 6:00 PM | SOFTEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH  
18+ SPEAKERS | ALL DAY EVENT | LUNCH & DRINKS

**\$395** + GST



SYDNEY 6TH MARCH 2026 A FORCE FOR GOOD HUB EVENT - SPONSORED BY

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### Cruise Weekly today

**CRUISE Weekly** today features three pages of cruise industry news, plus a front cover from **A Force for Good**.

### Eight weeks to go

**THERE** are only eight weeks left to get your ticket for A Force For Good, which will span two days in Mar.

The main event will be held on Fri 06 Mar at Sofitel Sydney Wentworth, featuring almost 20 speakers, as well as lunch and drinks.

There will also be a networking party pre-event the night beforehand, also held at Sofitel Wentworth, including drinks and canapes.

The main event is priced from \$395 and the networking event leads in from \$20.

Head to the **cover page** of today's **CW** for more info.

## Royal Caribbean Group's points revolution

**ROYAL** Caribbean Group has introduced 'Points Choice', which will see guests with Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises, and Silversea able to earn points across each brand, and apply them to the loyalty program of their choosing.

Points Choice launches this month, connecting Royal Caribbean's Crown & Anchor Society, Celebrity's Captain's Club, and Silversea's Venetian Society, allowing cruisers to continue to build status where they prefer, or accelerate their loyalty with one particular cruise line.

Members will continue earning points as they do today, with the option to move points up to 14 days after their sailing.

Guests can make the choice of where their points go online.

The new program builds on the success of Royal Caribbean Group's Status Match, introduced



in May 2024 (**CW** 31 May 2024), which allows loyalty members from its family of brands to enjoy equivalent tier status across all three brands.

This means guests keep their hard-earned benefits when they sail with any brand in the Royal Caribbean Group family.

The two programs aim to create the most integrated and rewarding loyalty ecosystem in the sector, at a time when other loyalty programs reduce benefits, Royal Caribbean noted.

Points Choice will be available on sailings departing on or after 30 Jan. **MS**



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## Muse refurbished

**SILVERSEA** has completed a major refurbishment of *Silver Muse*, introducing its hallmark S.A.L.T. culinary program to the ship.

*Muse's* first major dry dock since launch brings elevated suite options, redesigned spaces, and enhanced food and beverage offerings to the ship, including the S.A.L.T. Kitchen and S.A.L.T. Bar.

*Muse's* revitalisation in Italy has introduced key enhancements including an Italian-inspired aperitivo experience at Dolce Vita.

The serene Arts Cafe has introduced elevated pastries and Ronnefeldt tea selections, while La Terrazza has debuted a tableside martini cart, new signature cocktails, and non-alcoholic options to complement its authentic Italian menu.

Meanwhile, The Grill has enhanced its selection of poolside classics, while guests can now benefit from an upgraded in-suite dining program, offering a refreshed dinner menu and all-day butler-served favourites.

*Muse's* refreshed interiors and public spaces include a new pickleball court, a putting green, and a refined pool deck, among other features.

The ship was launched in 2017, and features space for almost 600 guests.

## Azamara moves Forward



**AMAZMARA** Cruises will embark on its largest-ever renovation program this year, with ship-wide upgrades and reimagined dining and bar venues across its entire fleet (*CW* breaking news yesterday).

Dubbed 'Azamara Forward', the project includes new suites debuting exclusively aboard *Azamara Quest* in Dec.

The ship will receive an all-new Penthouse Deck on its highest level, which will feature 10 Grandview suites and two ultra-luxurious Panorama Suites, offering 270-degree ocean views, a walk-in closet, an oversized spa-inspired bathroom, and more.

Other upgrades across the fleet include a newly dedicated Chef's Table restaurant, which expands on the brand's French, Italian, and Signature Chef's Table concepts, and introduces a rotating series of themed menus inspired by the regions the cruise line visits.

Following its debut aboard *Azamara Onward*, the line will also introduce the Atlas Bar (**pictured**) across the fleet.

Additionally, staterooms will undergo a refresh, and the Cabaret Lounge, Discoveries Restaurant, and spa treatment rooms will all be given a facelift.

"Azamara Forward is Azamara Cruises' vision for thoughtfully elevating the onboard experience while honouring the hallmarks that have long defined the brand," chief executive officer Dondra Ritzenthaler, said.

"This transformation reflects years of listening to our guests and travel partners and an extraordinary amount of creativity and collaboration across our teams.

"Azamara Forward is designed to deepen destination immersion, elevate comfort, and create even more meaningful moments at sea," Ritzenthaler added. *JM*

## Kaia passes trials

**EMERALD** Cruises & Tours' *Emerald Kaia* has completed her successful sea trials in advance of her inaugural season, which begins in Apr.

Sea trials were conducted out of Scenic Group's Ha Long Bay shipyard, marking a major milestone ahead of *Kaia's* inaugural 11-day 'Cyprus to the Acropolis' sailing.

The trials confirmed *Kaia's* performance, manoeuvrability and seaworthiness.

"This milestone is a testament to the dedication of everyone involved in the project," general manager ocean operations James Griffiths said.

"Operationally, this sea trial has delivered excellent results and allows us to proceed with the final phase of commissioning with confidence," he said.

The ship will now move into the final fittings and delivery.

"We've been delighted by the strong demand for our luxury yacht cruise collection, and the addition of the next-generation yacht *Emerald Kaia* provides much-needed capacity to support this growth," the cruise line's director of sales & marketing Angus Crichton said.



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## 2025 Year in Review Special Report

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**ANTARCTICA** has been one of the world's most special destinations ever since people started visiting, but it may have just gotten even more special.

A new map of the bedrock of Antarctica has revealed a hidden world of lakes, valleys, and mountains buried beneath kilometres of ice.

The map shows diverse geological features shaping Antarctic glaciers from below, which can improve climate models of ice melt, according to a new study published in academic journal *Science*, available to read [HERE](#).

This polar landscape below the ice has long been one of the inner solar system's least mapped planetary surfaces, with new research providing more intel into it in the past.

A clearer picture of this makeup could help scientists predict how ice changes in response to warming.

## Feel the Aura with NCL

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line (NCL) has unveiled the largest ship in its Prima-class, *Norwegian Aura* (pictured).

The recently named vessel's first sailings will depart from May 2027, and are now available to be booked.

*Aura* will accommodate 3,840 guests at double occupancy, larger than the 3,571-guest *Norwegian Aqua* and *Norwegian Luna*.

The ship will home port in Miami, offering seven-day Caribbean sailings, with a call to Great Stirrup Cay, NCL's newly enhanced private island in the Bahamas (*CW* 08 Jan).

One of the highlights of *Aura* will be Ocean Heights, an open-air activities complex, which will switch from fun by day to a vibrant, laid-back atmosphere at night, creating a lively space for the whole family.

*Aura* will also feature the most slides of any NCL ship, as well as a ropes course, overhanging cabanas, and more.



The ship will debut in Europe, sailing a seven-day Mediterranean voyage from Trieste to Barcelona.

*Aura* will then embark on a 14-day transatlantic voyage, after which she will commence a Caribbean season from Miami.

*Aura* will sail seven-day eastern Caribbean voyages from May to Oct 2027, with calls to island destinations including the Dominican Republic, the Virgin Islands, and Great Stirrup Cay.

The winter will see *Aura* offer seven-day western Caribbean voyages taking guests to tropical destinations like Honduras; Costa Maya and Cozumel in Mexico; and Harvest Caye, another of NCL's private destinations. *MS*

## Celeb to go Euro

**CELEBRITY** Cruises will introduce four new European-inspired festivals on *Celebrity Xcel*, which will debut in time for the ship's inaugural European season in May.

The new festivals will take place at The Bazaar, a transformative venue designed to bring the sights, sounds, and flavours of the Mediterranean on board, through a blend of artisan markets, hands-on activities, and regionally inspired cuisine.

Among the four new festivals are the Opa Festival, a celebration of Greek culture; La Dolce Vita Festival, centered around the flavours, beauty, and romance of Italy; Salud Festival, a lively celebration of Spain's colour, rhythm and flair; and Silk & Spice Festival, a sensorial journey of spices, teas, music, and dances inspired by the vibrant cultures of Morocco.

Celebrity will also introduce destination-inspired dining, inviting guests to explore the Med through elevated dishes at *Xcel's* cooking school.



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