



AUSTRALIAN  
CRUISE  
ASSOCIATION

# NEWS

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## *Message from the Chairman*

**As you delve into this edition of our newsletter, we find ourselves approaching the culmination of our 2023/24 cruise season, which appears to be on track to set new records for Australian ports and destinations.**

We've had the pleasure of hosting some of the latest and most advanced ships in our waters, including Virgin's Resilient Lady, Celebrity's Eclipse, and Seabourn's Pursuit. The upcoming arrival of Scenic Eclipse 11 in April will mark the conclusion of a remarkable season featuring many maiden calls.

Disney enthusiasts have delighted in the presence of Disney Wonder, experiencing its enchantment while indulging in the finest offerings from Australia and New Zealand in their restaurants.

Across our States and Territories, the commitment to enhancing the cruise

sector and visitor experiences is evident through the ongoing rollout of future cruise strategies.

The success of our 25th Anniversary conference, held in Wollongong in September 2023, underscored our collective efforts to build a sustainable and prosperous cruise sector.

Our strategic partnerships with Tourism Australia, CLIA, and our counterparts in New Zealand at NZCA continue to foster a unified approach essential for future growth, notwithstanding the challenges posed by geopolitical dynamics and governmental policies.

As we prepare to attend Seatrade Cruise Global 2024 in Miami South Beach, we eagerly welcome our regional members from Papua New Guinea and Fiji, alongside longstanding partners from New Zealand.

With representation from all states and territories, our team stands ready to provide firsthand insights into port infrastructure developments and exciting new shore experiences.

Join us at booth #1015 on Wednesday afternoon for our 'down under BBQ' at 4:30 PM.

I eagerly anticipate reconnecting with many of you at the event as we continue our collaborative efforts to nurture an exceptional cruise industry in Australia.

**Philip Holliday**  
Chairman

# ACA Conference Adelaide 4 – 6 September 2024

After a record attendance in Wollongong last year we are excited to be heading to Adelaide for our 26th annual conference.

For the curious of mind and the adventurous in spirit, in South Australia it is easy to scratch under the surface and get more than you expect. Think world class wine served by a legendary winemaker, experiencing an abundance of wildlife up close and personal in its

natural environment, great tasting seafood sourced sustainably from the purest of waters and road trips where you uncover the truly undiscovered.

Adelaide has changed significantly since the ACA Conference was last held there in 2009. We look forward to the opportunity to showcase this city and port to members and cruise line executives and discuss the options to present on relevant issues.

Registrations will be open soon.



Broome

## 'Game Changers' for Broome and Western Australia

The Australian Government agrees to progress First Point of Entry (FPOE) status for the Port of Broome, as works begin on the new floating terminal.

The Kimberley Ports Authority has been working toward establishing Broome as a FPOE and, in February, received confirmation that the Australian Government has given the green light to the expansion of border services.

FPOE status for Broome will not only allow for the expansion of cargo services, but it will have a major positive impact on tourism, providing the ability for cruise ships to come directly to Broome on international itineraries and support coastal trading requirements.

The Australian and Western Australian Governments are now working on the design and development of essential biosecurity infrastructure and a resourcing plan to facilitate vessels

arriving in Broome as a first point of entry to Australia in the coming years.

Led by Kimberley Marine Support Base (KMSB) Pty Ltd, the construction of a state-of-the-art floating port terminal in Broome is now underway. Anticipated to be fully operational by the second half of 2025, this "game-changing" facility will easily accommodate larger cruise vessels, providing a seamless and enjoyable experience for travellers.

The \$200 million privately funded facility will include a 165m x 50m floating wharf which is currently under construction in South East Asia. The 300m dual causeway from the shoreline to the floating wharf has completed preliminary geotechnical works, with



## Empower your teams to better sell Australia

US Travel Trade publication Travel Weekly announced Tourism Australia as the Gold Winner for Best Destination Marketing Education Program, in the 2023 Magellan Awards.

Tourism Australia works in partnership with all eight State and Territory Tourism Organisations (STOs) on delivering the Aussie Specialist Program to more than 30,000 qualified agents across the globe. The training program features inspiring content and a range of useful sales resources including training modules on Australian destinations and experiences, webinars, an interactive map, suggested itineraries and much more.

Empower your teams to better sell Australia at [www.aussiespecialist.com](http://www.aussiespecialist.com)

civil work to commence in mid 2024. The floating nature of the wharf overcomes the problems caused by Broome's large tidal movements and allows continuous and efficient passenger embarkation and disembarkation.

FPOE and the new floating terminal will not only be game changers for Broome and the Kimberley, but will also provide strong economic benefits for the rest of Western Australia and enable new cruise itineraries along the breadth of WA's 20,000km coastline!

For updated progress information on the KMSB project, visit our website [www.cruisebroome.com](http://www.cruisebroome.com)



Sydney Harbour

## NSW First Workshops: Cruise Ready

**Destination NSW continues to work with the cruise sector to develop new opportunities for Sydney and regional NSW.**

Destination NSW will host a series of Cruise Ready Workshops in Eden (4 April), Newcastle (12 June) and Sydney (3 July) in 2024, providing an opportunity for visitor economy businesses to hear from cruise industry experts and learn more about how to make the most of future cruise visitor opportunities.

The Cruise Ready Workshops are available for NSW visitor economy businesses which offer bookable experiences, located in or within 45 minutes' drive of these ports. Workshop topics include:

**Cruise opportunities**, including learning about the cruise distribution network, markets and demographics

**How to create** compelling shore excursions

**Panel discussions** with industry experts

**Cruise resources** and support

The workshops are part of Destination NSW's **NSW First Program**, delivered to assist visitor economy businesses to develop, promote and sell world-class visitor experiences.

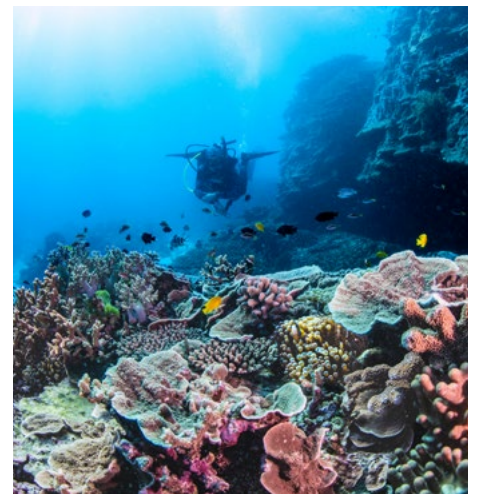
## Gladstone - Gateway to Southern Great Barrier Reef

**The Gladstone Region is thrilled to present an exciting new Southern Great Barrier Reef experience tailored to cruise ship passengers.**

Gladstone serves as the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef, providing visitors with an unforgettable opportunity to discover its breathtaking islands and vibrant coral reefs, brimming with diverse marine life. However, access to it could be tricky for cruise ship passengers who are restricted with time.

Thankfully Dive, Spear, Sport, located in Agnes/ Town of 1770, who ensure safe and memorable adventures guided by proficient experts, have come to the rescue.

Dive, Spear, Sport are committed to conservation and responsible tourism and offer tailored intimate, or larger group snorkel excursions, during which they immerse their guests in pristine reef environments. Providing an experience beyond a typical snorkelling trip, there will also be a commentary focusing on conservation/reef education. Departing from the Gladstone Marina guests will be kitted up with mask, snorkel, fins and wetsuits and then travel 1.5 hours to Polmaise Reef to dive/snorkel the Southern Great Barrier Reef. Snacks, lunch, and drinks will be provided.



Llewellyn Reef

# Exciting new excursions around Geelong

There is no doubt the Geelong and Bellarine Peninsula are emerging as exciting destinations for shore excursions. Whether anchoring off Geelong or travelling from Melbourne, Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula are easily accessible options.

The region is renowned for its produce, fine wines and distilleries and some of the best views of Melbourne from locations such as Jack Rabbit and Terindah Estate Wineries or from the water.

One not to be missed tour is on board the Valerie mussel boat to see, experience and feast on Portarlington Mussels as part of the Portarlington Mussel Tour. With owner and captain Lance at the helm visitors will be taken out to the mussel farm and will get to see how mussels are farmed and then sample both oysters and mussels, with delicious local produce and accompanied by wines from the region.



Valerie mussel boat

Nearby you can sample locally distilled gin and whisky in the beautiful gardens at the Whiskery.

For those that prefer to dine at a local winery restaurant, there are several choices, but Jack Rabbit and Terindah Estate serve food with a view.

The Q Train brings together locally produced food and beverages served

on board the train as it traverses the Bellarine Peninsula. A perfect way to see the Australian countryside.

A great local transport solution to see all of the Bellarine Peninsula is Explore Australia, a local coach operator can take visitors from the ship to all of these locations.

[visitvictoria.com.au](http://visitvictoria.com.au)

## Southern Daintree Explorer

Enjoy a half day experience showcasing the highlights of the Southern Daintree rainforest.

Our experienced guides will take you to the best spots of the Southern Daintree region on this personalised adventure in our modern and air-conditioned vehicles.

Marvel at the guided rainforest walk at Mossman Gorge, visit historic sites, embark on a Daintree River wildlife cruise allowing you to spot native wildlife in their natural habitat before arriving back into Port Douglas.

Guests will enjoy an air-conditioned bus driven by an experienced guide. Pick up and drop off point will be from the Crystalbrook Marina (where the cruise ship tenders dock). Guests will have an opportunity to be dropped off on the main street to explore the picturesque town before walking to the marina to catch a tender back to the cruise ship.



Southern Daintree Explorer

### Highlights:

- Visit world-famous Mossman Gorge in the Daintree National Park
- Guided rainforest walk
- Scenic crocodile and wildlife spotting river cruise

More information, visit: [www.reefunlimited.com](http://www.reefunlimited.com)



Viking Orion in Port of Townsville

## Port of Townsville

The relaxed city of Townsville is climbing the ranks of Australia's must-cruise destinations as it prepares to warmly welcome large class cruise vessels from 'Aussie Summer' 2024.

Nestled between the well-loved tourism hotspots of Cairns and Airlie Beach, Townsville is earning a name as one of the most friendly and authentic cruise stops on Australia's eastern seaboard. From this Aussie Summer, even more cruise passengers will be able to delight in Townsville's stunning natural landscapes, as the Port of Townsville rolls out the welcome mat for larger vessels, following completion of its \$251 million Channel Upgrade project.

Townsville's vessel length limit is increasing from 238m to 300m and cruise lines are already taking advantage of the improved access to this dynamic city, with record bookings secured for the next two seasons.

Port of Townsville CEO Raneë Crosby said the city, the port and the region's tourism operators are preparing for the accelerated growth of cruise visits and passenger numbers in the coming years.

"Visitors to Townsville always receive the warmest welcome, beginning on arrival

at the cruise terminal with handmade markets, live music and Australian wildlife encounters," Ms Crosby said.

"As we ready for much larger passenger numbers, we're investing an additional \$10 million to improve connectivity between the cruise terminal and local tourism experiences. These enhancements will be led by an overhaul at our bus and taxi rank to increase capacity three-fold and the construction of a ferry pontoon to allow direct access to experiences including Magnetic Island, John Brewer Reef and the Museum of Underwater Art."

"Port of Townsville is also investing in battery, solar and energy efficiency upgrades at Quayside cruise terminal. We recognise sustainable tourism is a shared responsibility and are eager to do our part to reduce our carbon emissions and assist visiting cruise lines to do the same," Ms Crosby said.

The Channel Upgrade project and bus rank upgrades are on track for completion later this year, with further improvements to follow.

With endless opportunities for exploration, passengers arriving in Townsville can experience an array of adventures.

## Unexpected Townsville North Queensland

### Dive into the Museum of Underwater Art

Join an ecotour with SeaLink and dive into an inspiring adventure where you can marvel at pristine coral coves and internationally renowned underwater sculptures including the world's largest underwater building, the Coral Greenhouse, and the Marine Science Snorkel Trail.

### First Nations art, food and culture

Learn about world's oldest continuous living culture on one of the region's guided experiences with the local First Nations peoples. Join Gudjuda Aboriginal Tours to taste unique bush tukka flavours just south of Townsville, or travel north to uncover ancient rock art at Mungalla Station.

### Journey to the reef, rainforest and outback all from a single port

Are you up for unexpected? Townsville North Queensland invites you to share in our hidden treasures, and magical natural beauty – discover something new, or familiar but with a twist, in the capital of the North.

[www.townsvilleport.com.au](http://www.townsvilleport.com.au)



Taronga Zoo

## Experience the Best of Australia at Taronga Zoo Sydney with Our Exclusive Group Tours!

At Taronga Zoo Sydney, we take pride in showcasing the unique and diverse wildlife of Australia.

And now, we're thrilled to offer group tours that are tailor-made for the cruise market! Whether you're here for a day excursion or an evening adventure, we have the perfect tours to suit your schedule.

**Walkabout Tour:** Join us during our operating hours for a Walkabout Tour that dives deep into the heart of Australian wildlife. Led by our expert guides, you'll explore the diverse habitats of our native animals, from kangaroos to koalas and everything in between. Learn

about our conservation efforts and get up close and personal with some of Australia's most iconic creatures.

**Sunset Tour:** For a more exclusive experience, the Sunset Tour is the perfect option. As the day winds down, we'll take you on a journey through the zoo's quieter hours, where you can enjoy a serene atmosphere with fewer crowds. Delight in the magnificent views from Centenary Theatre platform, overlooking glittering lights of Sydney's skyline at sun set.

Both tours offer a chance to see Australian animals in their natural habitats, with our knowledgeable guides providing insights into their behaviors and the conservation efforts that protect their future.

Don't miss out on these unforgettable experiences at Taronga Zoo Sydney. Book your group tour today and discover the beauty and diversity of Australian wildlife in one of the most iconic zoos in the world!

## Bumper cruise season for NSW ports

The cruise sector in NSW has experienced a bumper summer, with a record number of maiden calls surpassing the 2022-23 season, underscoring the significant role the sector plays in the NSW Government's goal for NSW to be the premier visitor economy of the Asia Pacific.

A total of 12 cruise ships made their Sydney Harbour debut including

Celebrity Cruises, Disney Cruise Lines and Virgin Voyages bringing in thousand of visitors from around the world with the opportunity to enjoy local experiences and contribute to the growth and vibrancy of the NSW visitor economy.

When the 2023-24 cruise season draws to a close at the end of April, it is anticipated NSW ports will have welcomed more than 330 cruise calls, an increase of approximately 16% on last season.

Ovation of the Seas, with almost 5,000

passengers, is one of the biggest ships to sail into Sydney.

Visitor economy businesses in regional NSW have also been reaping the benefits of additional cruise visitors. By the end of the 2023-24 cruise season, Newcastle will have welcomed a total of 16 cruise calls, two more than the previous season, while Eden on the NSW South Coast is anticipating a record number of ships and an \$18 million injection into the local economy.

# A Thank you from Bob Wood Cruise Group

When Bob started the company back in 1982 with little more than a list of contacts, a notepad, a pen and a telephone, he couldn't possibly have foreseen the incredible number of ships and land tours that the Bob Wood Cruise Group has successfully serviced this year.

As a locally owned and operated company our approach is one of collaboration and communication. This has allowed us to foster long-term partnerships with our suppliers. Together we work to create and deliver memorable experiences for our guests.

These relationships also afford us the required adaptability when situations arise such as weather, flight delays and the many other unforeseeable circumstance that we've all experienced this season.

From the CEO to our Operations Team, we are a "hands on." The Bob Wood Cruise Group team is available to our clients and their teams whenever they need us. We are on the ground working alongside the onboard ships teams to ensure the success of their touring program in addition to creating longstanding relationships.



The BWCG team with P&O Cruises crew member

As this record-breaking season draws to a close, we would like to thank all our suppliers and other stakeholders for their efforts along with their endless support.

Our Supplier and stakeholder relationships are the key to success!

To our wonderful clients, thank you for the continued partnership. While we are unable to attend Seatrade, we will be in touch to confirm our annual visits with

you all. For those that may be interested in catching up with us please feel free to reach out directly.

It is our privilege to be a part of this great industry and to work with each and every one of you. We look forward to another amazing cruise season ahead.

Jay, Carmen and the Bob Wood Cruise Group team

[www.sthfactours.com.au](http://www.sthfactours.com.au)

## New Faces in Port Authority of NSW

Port Authority of NSW has welcomed Peter Lipman, Manager Regional Cruise and Lana Wills, Supervisor Eden Cruise Operations to its cruise team.

Focusing on driving growth and overseeing operations in Port Authority's regional cruise ports, Peter and Lana

look forward to working with industry and local stakeholders.

For more information on Port Authority's regional cruise ports contact:

Peter Lipman  
[plipman@portauthoritynsw.com.au](mailto:plipman@portauthoritynsw.com.au)





Norfolk Island Dancers

## Norfolk Island - The Bounty Destination

**Norfolk Island is home to the descendants of the Bounty Mutineers, who began their journey sailing to Tahiti in 1789 onboard the HMS Bounty.**

They also sailed to Pitcairn Island in that same year. 1856 saw them resettle onto Norfolk Island, again sailing the South Pacific, this time aboard the ship The Morayshire. Cruising is in their veins. When P&O pioneered cruising from Australia in 1932, the first cruise to Brisbane and Norfolk Island sold out in just one day!

Norfolk Island is unique in the fact they have their own language which is a mixture of old English and Polynesian Tahitian. It boasts the second southernmost coral reef in the world with an abundance of fish and coral, in pristine waters. It's home to the magnificent Norfolk Island Pines and 14 different endemic species of birds. To call Norfolk Island unspoilt would be an understatement.

The Island has some of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in the Southern hemisphere. These are found in the World Heritage Listed Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area, a result of the two convict settlements. The area is also the site of an earlier Polynesian settlement.

Norfolk's major industry is tourism, which means the Island is a playground for visitors with so many things to do. Tours and experiences for day visitors have been created so that whatever your interest, there is something for everyone. Take your pick from activities like Island Adventures by 4WD, a Snapshot of Norfolk, seeing if you can spot one of Norfolk's rare birds on the Bridal Track Coastal Walk or Botanical Garden Walk, visit the World Heritage Listed area in Kingston to explore Norfolk's history or view our pristine coral lagoon. We love to showcase the most pristine Island in the South Pacific that is steeped in history and beauty.

The Island is very committed to developing the cruise industry. The Federal Government purchased three Passenger

Transfer Vessels in 2019 in the hope of increasing the landing rate of visiting cruise ships. The 2023 cruise season saw, for the first time in history, a 100% discharge success of eight large vessels (2,000+ capacity) and one expedition ship. 2024 has a similar number of calls scheduled, however further bookings are expected as Norfolk Island emerges as a relatively untouched cruise destination. February 2024 saw the season kick off with two successful expedition ships with the larger vessels set to unload from July - October.

The private sector has been busy improving existing experiences, building new experiences and importing more buses to get more people around the Island on the day of operation.

Norfolk Island - our gem in the Pacific promises your cruise passengers an experience of a lifetime!

Contact Burnt Pine Travel:

Phone 1800 501 128 / +67 232 2195  
[cruise@burntpinetravel.nf](mailto:cruise@burntpinetravel.nf)  
[www.burntpinetravel.com](http://www.burntpinetravel.com)



# NEW dreamy experiences in Western Australia

Whether you're an animal lover or adventure seeker, WA is dreaming up a plethora of new shore experiences accessible from our 10 port destinations.

In 2024 the spotlight is shining on:

**WA Wildlife** - A rescue, treatment and rehabilitation centre has opened its doors to visitors. Wildlife enthusiasts can get up close and personal with Australian animals and have a real-life experience at the animal hospital facilities and meet its residents. Located only 20 minutes from Fremantle Port, WA Wildlife is becoming increasingly popular with visitors, and caters to specialised tour groups. And it's for a good cause - with all proceeds injected back into the facility to help more wildlife. [wawildlife.org.au](http://wawildlife.org.au)

**Exmouth Adventure Co** - This local guided kayak touring company operating in the pristine Ningaloo Marine Park has upped the ante with the introduction of a number of new tours, ranging from sea kayaking, trekking and snorkelling tours. This unique World Heritage-listed area boasts stunning marine and terrestrial ecosystems, that can be easily accessed via the town of Exmouth and the adjacent Cape Range National Park. [exmouthadventureco.com.au](http://exmouthadventureco.com.au)

**Swan River Seaplanes** - Join the new Ultimate Pink Lake and Abrolhos



Ventur Atlas Tours

Islands Seaplane Adventure luxury tour, departing from the heart of Perth city. Soar up the coast, north of Geraldton, to the world-renowned Pink Lake and the untouched paradise of the Abrolhos Islands. Touch down for a private behind-the-scenes tour of the Liddon Pearls and a delicious lunch. On the return flight, spot the Batavia shipwreck and iconic attractions of Perth.

[swanriverseaplanes.com.au](http://swanriverseaplanes.com.au)

**Scenic Helicopters** - Scenic Helicopters have expanded their reach with flights now available in Albany to explore the Great Southern region of WA. Whether you're seeking magical sunset flights, rugged helifishing adventures, beach

romance packages, or wine tours, they have something for everyone.

[scenichelicopters.com.au](http://scenichelicopters.com.au)

**Ventur Atlas** - Tailored specifically for cruise ship guests, Ventur Atlas offers a unique selection of tours, providing a glimpse into the Kimberley's finest highlights including - Horizontal Falls, Twin Flame Falls, Pippa's Pool, Bell Gorge, Windjana Gorge, Lennard Gorge, Tunnel Creek, Mount Hart, Cygnet Bay, Broome and much more. The all-inclusive packages feature exclusive helicopter and land safari tours, premium dining, dedicated guides, and intimate access to renowned Kimberley landmarks.

[venturatlas.com.au](http://venturatlas.com.au)

## New Australian Ground Handler

Shorex Australia has successfully completed its first cruise season since launch in August 2023.

Shorex Australia is a 100% locally owned Australian Inbound Tour Operator with a commitment to service delivery and a passion for truly local experiences. Having shared many wonders of Australia with their cruise guests visiting the Australian shores this season, Shorex Australia has partnered with the very best Australian products to share the enthusiasm and benefits cruise ship calls bring to region and community.

The team are growing from strength to strength and increasing their

already exceptional knowledge and expertise to ensure clients receive a personalised and truly local experience customised to suit their brand promise.

Shorex Australia partners with local and state tourism organisations, tour suppliers and Eco Tourism Australia to ensure guests have the best experience, and all levels of the supply chain are supported through the journey and see benefit in

SHOREX AUSTRALIA  
TRULY LOCAL

welcoming cruise ships to their destinations.

Specialising in shore excursions, pre and post cruise extensions and overland adventures, Shorex Australia is here to stay and very excited to be the newest ground handler to shake things up down under.

For more information, email James [james@shorexaustralia.com](mailto:james@shorexaustralia.com)

# Cruising into Paradise: A Day in Yeppoon and Great Keppel Island, Southern Great Barrier Reef

Welcome aboard, cruise adventurers!

As you anchor in breathtaking Keppel Bay on the Southern Great Barrier Reef, Queensland, get ready to embark on an unforgettable journey filled with sun, sea, and exploration.

Your port of call... The enchanting town of Yeppoon located just under 10 nautical miles from the pristine shores of Great Keppel Island.

This unique destination, situated on the Tropic of Capricorn, shares a latitude with Rio de Janeiro to the East and Mauritius to the West and celebrates sub-tropical climates and safe year-round swimming.

From stunning white beaches to vibrant marine life, this corner of the world offers a treasure trove of experiences waiting to be discovered. Let's dive in!

## Yeppoon: Where Coastal Charm Meets Adventure

Yeppoon is a charming seaside town that is alive and bustling with a cosmopolitan allure yet laced with a majestic sense of harmony and calmness.

Only a short 30-minute ferry or tender trip from the iconic Keppel Islands, Yeppoon offers a delightful array of activities and attractions for visitors of all ages, interests and abilities.

Spend the day soaking up the sun and swimming in the spectacular Yeppoon Lagoon, or exploring the vibrant waterfront esplanade lined with cafes, restaurants, boutiques, and local galleries. Enjoy a leisurely stroll along the shoreline or relax in the shade of palm trees overlooking your ship on the horizon in Keppel Bay.

Visit unique and award-winning attractions such as the Capricorn Caves, Koorana Crocodile Farm, and Cooberrie Park Wildlife Sanctuary.



Great Keppel Islands

Experience canoeing through pure rainforest waterways and take a short stroll through Mother Nature's lush masterpiece.

## Great Keppel Island: Nature's Playground

Known for its pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters, and vibrant marine life, Great Keppel Island offers visitors a quintessential island getaway experience.

With some of the most beautiful beaches in Australia, you can spend your day lounging in the shade, swimming in the clear waters, or snorkelling among colourful coral reefs teeming with marine life.

Embark on scenic hikes and nature walks to explore the lush interior, and discover hidden coves, secluded beaches, and panoramic viewpoints offering 'instagrammable' moments.

Enjoy a variety of water sports and activities, including kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding and discover the island at your leisure, or book a tour with some of the island's best operators.

Indulge in beachfront dining and refreshments and embrace the laid-back pace of tropical island living.

Whether you are exploring the charming streets of Yeppoon or immersing yourself in the beauty of Great Keppel Island, your journey in Keppel Bay promises to be nothing short of magical.

In the embrace of Keppel Bay, a day filled with diverse experiences awaits cruise ship passengers, leaving them with a sense of awe and a treasure trove of memories from the enchanting Yeppoon, Great Keppel Island, and the wonders of the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

For more information go to [www.visitcapricorn.com.au](http://www.visitcapricorn.com.au)

#visitcapricorn  
#southerngreatbarrierreef

Email: [marycarroll@capricornenterprise.com.au](mailto:marycarroll@capricornenterprise.com.au)

Phone: +61 7 4927 2055 / +61 417 669 286

# A Culinary Symphony: Exploring the Taste of The House at Sydney Opera House

Wine and dine your way around Sydney Opera House restaurants and bars to experience the culinary delights of some of Sydney's best chefs.

While renowned for its world-class performances, the Sydney Opera House also boasts a culinary experience that is nothing short of spectacular. The "Taste of The House" is an exquisite dining experience that complements the grandeur of the venue, offering guests a symphony of flavours to savour.

**Embrace your inner bartender at Opera Bar** - Escorted by your own personal Sydney Opera House guide from Stage Door, start your journey with a cocktail-making class hosted by one of Opera Bar's master mixologists. Learn to craft a House favourite, the Sydney Sling, and then take a moment to enjoy over a fresh seafood tasting plate – courtesy of their in-house Raw Bar.

**Get hands on at House Canteen** - Make your way to Sydney's all-day, canteen inspired dining venue for dumplings and beer. Then learn something new and enjoy an open air chef-led class on how to master hand-rolled sushi. The best part? You get to eat it afterwards.

**Settle in for a leisurely lunch at Midden by Mark Olive** - our newest venue with an Indigenous Australian inspired menu, will dish up braised wallaby shank with



Sydney Opera House

a range of sides, paired with matching wine. We can't think of a better spot for lunch with some of Sydney's best harbourside views.

**Come behind the scenes between courses** - Entering through Stage Door, you will be led through backstage spaces and onto the Boardroom balcony, where you will be served Sgroppino, a citrus sorbet palate cleanser with Archie Rose gin and Prosecco as you enjoy the uninterrupted views of Sydney Harbour.

**Indulge in dessert and jazz at Bennelong** - Last stop is under the sails at Bennelong Restaurant for a signature dessert by Executive Chef Peter Gilmore. Indulge in the iconic Bennelong chocolate crackle, a decadent dessert full of flavour, texture

and a bit of nostalgia. This indulgent dessert is paired with the Bennelong Martini and music performed by Australian jazz musicians, part of the Bennelong Presents Sunday Jazz series.

With a range of dining options that cater to diverse tastes, this experience complements the grandeur of the iconic venue. Whether you're a local resident or a visitor from afar, exploring the Taste of The House is an essential part of the overall Sydney Opera House experience – a feast for the senses that leaves a lasting impression

The Taste of the House Tours run on the last Sunday of the month. Bookings [www.sydneyoperahouse.com/tours-and-experiences/taste-of-the-house](http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/tours-and-experiences/taste-of-the-house)

## Destination NSW partners with Earthcheck

To assist visitor economy businesses on their sustainability journey, Destination NSW has partnered with EarthCheck to offer free access to Sustainability Skills Micro-credentials.

The three training modules cover the foundations of sustainability for business operations and how to meet the changing visitor needs and drive cost savings.

Destination NSW has also partnered with Ecotourism Australia to offer free access to the Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard to evaluate business

practices and embark on the pathway to sustainability.

Both programs can be completed by 30 June 2024.

[www.destinationnsw.com.au](http://www.destinationnsw.com.au)

# Intercruises: A compassionate approach to animal welfare

Intercruises, a global leader in cruise services, has set sail on a mission to protect animals and their environments. With a robust Animal Welfare Policy, they are making waves in the industry by championing the well-being of creatures great and small.

Intercruises recognises that animals play an integral role in our ecosystem and our hearts. Their policy is not just a set of guidelines; it's a heartfelt commitment to safeguarding the lives of animals across the globe. They collaborate closely with zoos and animal sanctuaries worldwide. Their teams work hand-in-paw with these institutions to ensure that animals receive the care, enrichment, respect they deserve and prioritise providing environments that allow animals to express their natural behaviours, ensuring a life that closely mirrors their habitats in the wild.

Company relies on ABTA's animal welfare guidelines, an internationally recognised standard as a framework for the development of its animal welfare strategy. ABTA's Animal

welfare Guidelines were created in 2013, being the first international tourism standard on animal welfare which as Australian ZAA was also developed in consultation with industry experts, zoologist organisations, scientists, and NGOs. The Guidelines are also based on the extended Five Domains model.

Intercruises understands that our actions impact the environment.

They promote sustainable practices within zoos and sanctuaries, emphasising eco-friendly habitats. Australia, with its unique wildlife and diverse ecosystems, holds a special place in Intercruises' heart. From cuddly koalas to elusive quokkas, Intercruises ensures that they only promote these places where animals thrive in harmony with their surroundings.



As you embark on your next cruise adventure, know that Intercruises is more than a service provider—it's a force for good. Their commitment to animal welfare extends beyond business; it's a passion that sails across oceans and continents.

Intercruises Shoreside & Port Services  
[www.intercruises.com](http://www.intercruises.com)

## Crown Currency Exchange

Crown Currency Exchange partners with port authorities and cruise lines to provide convenient foreign currency services.

In a move to enhance convenience and support international travellers, Crown Currency Exchange has forged strategic partnerships with port authorities and cruise lines to establish pop-up foreign currency kiosks.

Crown Currency Exchange aims to streamline the foreign currency exchange process for cruise ship passengers and crew members by offering currency services at ports, catering to the needs of inbound and outbound travellers.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with port authorities and cruise lines to offer tailored foreign currency services," said Emily Palermo, CEO of Crown Currency Exchange. "Our goal is to ensure that passengers and crew members have easy access to the currencies they need, along with exceptional customer service and competitive rates. This ensures they can maximise their shore time for exploring and creating beautiful memories."

Crown Currency Exchange, a 100% Australian-owned company, boasts a nationwide presence with 60 locations throughout Australia. With a diverse range of over 80 currencies available, the company caters to the needs of travellers from various destinations.



Crown Currency Exchange

"Our nationwide network ensures that travellers can rely on us for their foreign currency needs, whether embarking on a cruise or exploring Australia," added Emily. "We take pride in delivering exceptional customer service and offering competitive rates to our customers."

[emily.palermo@crowncurrency.com.au](mailto:emily.palermo@crowncurrency.com.au)  
[www.crowncurrency.com.au](http://www.crowncurrency.com.au)

# Hughes joins the Australian Cruise Association: A voyage of excellence

Hughes proudly announces its new membership with the Australian Cruise Association, bringing over 120 years of distinguished service in the chauffeur industry to the cruising community.

As a seasoned provider of premium transport solutions, we've mastered the art of delivering over a million passengers annually across Australia's vast landscapes, from bustling cities to serene coastal retreats.

Our expansive fleet—featuring a range of high-end, meticulously maintained vehicles—ensures that every traveller enjoys the epitome of comfort and style. Each journey with Hughes is enhanced by the professionalism and expertise of our chauffeurs, who are dedicated to providing a seamless and refined travel experience.

Joining forces with the Australian Cruise Association, Hughes is positioned to contribute to the remarkable cruise



Hughes - Australia's Chauffeur Service

experience for passengers, offering reliable and comfortable ground transportation that complements the unique nature of ocean travel. Our presence across the nation ensures that wherever your cruise may lead, a Hughes vehicle is available to continue your journey onshore.

With Hughes, your travel experience is not only about reaching your destination but also about how you get there. Each trip with us is a chapter in your travel story, crafted with attention to detail and a commitment to uphold our legacy of exceptional service.

For more information please contact [res@hughes.com.au](mailto:res@hughes.com.au)

## New members for ACA

It's been a bumper membership year for Australian Cruise Association with ten new members, and a total of 100!

As a member based organisation, we rely on the support and input from our members to continue driving positive industry outcomes through advocacy and key member events such as the annual conference, cruise workshops across the region and famil programmes with key cruise industry contacts.

Continuing to grow our member base is crucial to the long-term success of the Australian Cruise Association and our industry.

This financial year we have seen interest from a number of new and varied businesses working with cruise,



Cruise Workshop - Brisbane

demonstrating the continued interest in the cruise sector and benefit of us all working together.

Welcome the following members to ACA:

- Geelong Port
- Hughes - Australia's Chauffeur Service
- Kangaroo Island Tourism
- Picture Me
- Sierra Fleet Services
- Smarte Carte Australia
- Spectacular Jumping Croc Cruises
- Sydney Harbour Marriott
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland
- Tourism Whitsundays

# First Take 3 for the Sea shore excursion in Eden

When Norwegian Spirit called to Eden on 23 December 2023, guests were in for a special treat with the first ever Take 3 for the Sea tour taking place at Aslings Beach in Eden, on the beautiful Sapphire Coast of NSW.

The shore excursion was complimentary for passengers onboard Norwegian Spirit, allowing them to give back during the festive season by taking action to combat plastic pollution. Over 50 Norwegian Spirit passengers picked up a total of 5kg of rubbish from Aslings Beach in Eden, and importantly, allowed guests to roll up their sleeves to help the community and enjoy a sense of camaraderie with fellow travellers as they learn about the hidden impact of plastic pollution to our oceans and wildlife and what they can do to reduce it.

Eden was selected as the perfect location to launch this special shore excursion and allow guests an opportunity to give back to this courageous regional community to kick off the Christmas season, while contributing to the town's ongoing rejuvenation as a tourism and cruise destination following the impact of the bushfires and travel restrictions.

The excursion further strengthens the company's connection with the regional town after sister ship Norwegian Jewel was the first cruise ship to visit Eden

following the devastating bushfires of the summer of 2019/20, an historic occasion which saw the ship and guests celebrated in the regional town by the local community and emergency services volunteers.

Norwegian Spirit was on her inaugural cruise of Australian waters and partnered with Take 3 for the Sea to bring this first-time shore excursion to life. Take 3 for the Sea is a not-for-profit organisation that believes in simple actions to tackle complex problems, empowering individuals to 'take 3' pieces of rubbish with them each time they visit a beach, park or bushland area to help stop plastic entering Australia and New Zealand's waterways and oceans. NCL has partnered with Take 3 for the Sea to help reach their ambitious goal of removing 50 million pieces of plastic from the environment by 2025.

"We are absolutely elated to expand our partnership with Take for the Sea and to bring this shore excursion to life in an inspiring first for NCL", said Ben Angell, VP and Managing Director, NCL APAC. "We are committed to driving a positive impact in society and the environment, and we are delighted to offer our guests an authentic opportunity to show their Christmas spirit by taking real action to fight plastic pollution, something which would not have been possible without the incredible support we've received from the community in Eden, and the dedication of our partners at Take 3



Take 3 for the Sea shore excursion

for the Sea. This is a milestone moment for our brand, and something we look forward to expanding in the future."

Jacquie Riddell, CEO of Take 3 for the Sea, said, "We cannot wait to welcome guests of Norwegian Spirit on shore in Eden to join our movement and take simple steps towards significant change. NCL has already demonstrated its commitment to ocean conservation through its Sail & Sustain program and beach clean-up activities with its team and travel partners, and we're thrilled to see them take their dedication to the next level by inviting guests to get involved".

The Take 3 for the Sea shore excursion was so successful that it will run again in Eden, as well as Melbourne and Fiji.

## Western Australia is the place for cruise passengers to connect to the world's oldest living culture.

Cruising Western Australia's 20,000 kilometres of coastline is an ideal way to discover its rich Aboriginal history. Aboriginal tourism operators along the WA coast offer experiences that immerse guests in each region's local culture and history through the eyes of their own experience.

### Broome

Experience traditional saltwater lifestyle in Broome with Yawuru man, Bart Pigram from Narlijia Experiences. Bart offers a 2-hr

relaxed Mangrove Discovery Experience at low tide and Staircase to the Moon tour.

Through the sharing of cultural experiences and story-telling, Broome's Mabu Buru Tours fosters stronger connections and understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Johani Mamid, a proud Karrajari, Bardi, Nyul Nyul and Yawuru man, shares his very personal journey and introduces guests to ancient cultural practices.

The Dampier Peninsula, less than a two-hour drive from Broome, also boasts Australia's official Top Tour Guide for 2023, the award-winning Rosanna Angus

of Oolin Sunday Island Cultural Tours.

### Dampier

Clinton Walker from Ngurrangga Tours is passionate about raising the profile of the Burrup Peninsula and sharing Pilbara| culture and Country with visitors. Experience his guided cultural tour to learn about the ancient petroglyphs of Murujuga, dating back an astonishing 47,000 years.

### Fremantle / Perth

Visitors explore Aboriginal art galleries in Fremantle's historic port precinct or venture up the road to discover more in Perth.

*Continued on page 15*

# Escape on the new Purely Whitehaven experience

Exploring Whitehaven Beach, one of the world's best beaches, in affordable premium comfort is an absolute must when in the Whitsundays.

SeaLink's new half day tour, Purely Whitehaven, takes guests directly to the iconic Whitehaven Beach for an unforgettable experience.

Guests will be mesmerised by breathtaking views and turquoise waters as they cruise in air-conditioned comfort on a modern catamaran, taking in 360° stunning views from a rooftop deck, discovering a tropical paradise that nature took a lifetime to create.

The Purely Whitehaven tour features gourmet morning or afternoon tea with a side of unparalleled spectacular views and is led by experienced guides who share commentary on the fascinating history and heritage of the Whitsunday Islands.

Exploring Whitehaven Beach, guests will create lasting memories as they enjoy a dip in the stunning aqua blue water, take a stroll along the 98% silica sand beach, one of the purest sands in the world, or simply sit back, relax and admire nature at its best.

Guests have full access to the vessel during the day via the custom-built tender to relax and enjoy a beverage in the shade and air-conditioning. SeaLink's renowned for their friendly crew who are on hand to ensure guests experience the Whitsundays in complete comfort.



Purely Whitehaven Tour

Looking for a full-day tour? SeaLink's Big Island Day Tour is a one-of-a-kind, luxurious, air-conditioned scenic cruise that takes guests through places not seen on any other Whitsunday Islands tour. Experience Whitehaven Beach, Hill Inlet, see popular spots like South Mole Island and Hook Island, and enjoy gourmet morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

#### **Purely Whitehaven Inclusions:**

- Morning Tea / Afternoon Tea
- Direct to Whitehaven Beach
- Hours to enjoy Whitehaven Beach
- Return bus transfers to/from Shute Harbour
- Stinger suit use for the day
- Friendly staff and informative commentary

#### **Busselton**

A short drive from Busselton, passengers journey to Ngilgi Cave and will be mesmerised by a live didgeridoo performance deep inside the cave.

Wadandi man, Josh Whiteland of Koomal Dreaming, provides a deeper appreciation of the beautiful and inspiring Capes region of Margaret River.

#### **Albany**

Walk with Larry Blight of Kurrah Mia on the same land that his Noongar ancestors walked thousands of years ago. Larry shares knowledge of local bushfoods, medicines and local stories so all may experience the landscape through Aboriginal eyes.

[www.waitoc.com](http://www.waitoc.com)

#### **Facilities:**

- Modern air-conditioned catamaran for smoother cruising
- Rooftop observation deck providing 360° views
- Full bar service

#### **Morning 'Purely Whitehaven' Cruise:**

- 07:30 Depart Shute Harbour to Whitehaven Beach
- 08:30 Anchor South Whitehaven and transfer guests to the beach. Shade setup, beach games
- 10:30 Begin transfers back to vessel
- 11:00 Morning tea served and bar service available
- 11:00 Depart Whitehaven Beach
- 12:00 Arrive at Shute Harbour

#### **Afternoon 'Purely Whitehaven' Cruise:**

- 12:30 Depart Shute Harbour to Whitehaven Beach
- 13:30 Anchor South Whitehaven and transfer guests to the beach. Shade setup, beach games
- 16:00 Begin transfers back to vessel
- 16:30 Afternoon tea served and bar service available
- 16:30 Depart Whitehaven Beach
- 17:30 Arrive at Shute Harbour

Note, Itinerary subject to change due to tidal restrictions and weather conditions.

Book through SeaLink Whitsundays: 1300 317 445

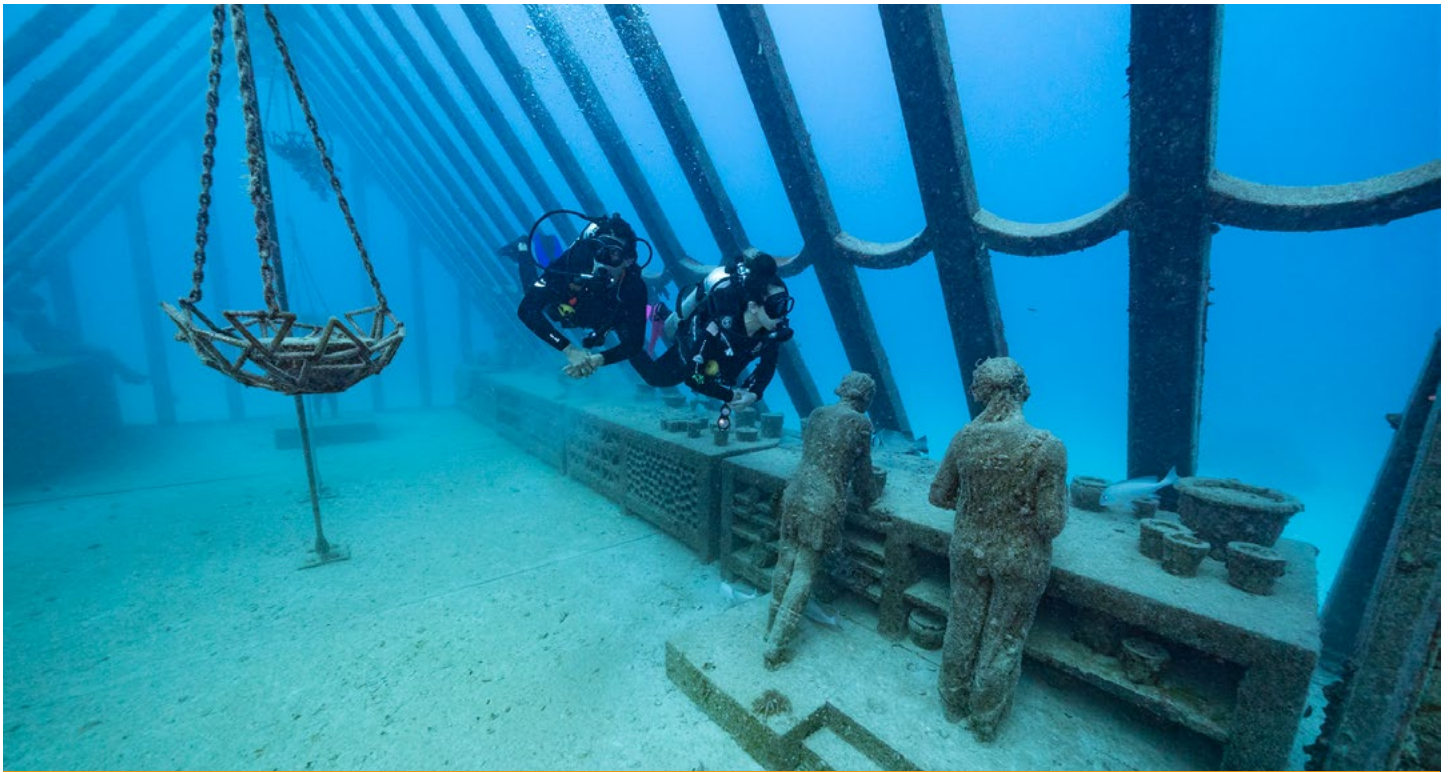
[www.sealink.com.au/whitsundays](http://www.sealink.com.au/whitsundays)

*Continued from page 14*

Steven Jacobs, a proud Whadjuk man, operates In Culture Tours and offers an immersive 90-minute walking tour in both Walyalup/Fremantle and Kings Park.

Join Noongar guide, Nick Abraham from Warrang-Bridil on a one-hour walking tour by the shores of the Derbal Yerrigan (Swan River) and hear stories of traditional Noongar life and ceremony.

Take a trip out to the Swan Valley for Dale Tilbrook Experiences. Cruise visitors can explore the flavours of wild bush foods such as quandong, native limes, sandalwood nuts and local coastal greens in a beautiful setting along the banks of Derbal Yerrigan.



Museum of Underwater Art (MOUA)

## What's new in Queensland

### Queensland has welcomed a raft of new holiday experiences in 2023, including an impressive lineup of firsts:

The first five-star luxury hotel knocking on Townsville's door, the first PADI accredited adaptive dive facility on the Great Barrier Reef and the first vertical restaurant in Brisbane that takes dinner with a view to new heights. Here are just some of the new stays, experiences and tours on offer across the Sunshine State, plus, those coming in 2024 worthy of a mark in the calendar.

Turning up the luxury dial, Townsville is about to welcome an exclusive new retreat on the Great Barrier Reef, accessible by helicopter or private yacht. Enter, Pelorus Private Island. Set to open before the end of the year, the island, which is surrounded by fringing reefs, features a spacious residence with four super swish suites, making it the only luxury private island in the Townsville region. Back on the mainland, \$88 million resort Ardo will be the first five-star luxury hotel in Townsville. Opening in December, Ardo promises to deliver premium accommodation, world-class dining, a deluxe day spa, and a stunning rooftop

pool deck and bar with panoramic views across the Coral Sea to Magnetic Island.

### Great things are happening on the Great Barrier Reef

The second stage of the southern hemisphere's first underwater gallery, the Ocean Sentinels at the Museum of Underwater Art (MOUA), opened in May 2023. Ocean Sentinels is artist Jason deCaires Taylor's latest installation at John Brewer Reef off the coast of Townsville. Each of the eight sculptures are modelled off a leading marine scientist or one of the Great Barrier Reef's most passionate advocates/conservationists and can be experienced by snorkelling or diving. MOUA is a series of large-scale underwater artworks that first opened in 2020 with the aim to connect art, conservation, science and tourism.

Earlier this year the world's first publicly accessible living coral biobank facility, the Forever Reef Project, launched at Cairns Aquarium. Dedicated to preserving Great Barrier Reef coral biodiversity, the biobank is named after of John Rumney, Great Barrier Reef Legacy co-founder, conservationist and eco-tourism leader. Visitors to the aquarium can book a behind the scenes tour of the biobank to learn

about coral conservation efforts on the Great Barrier Reef and see firsthand the world's largest collection of hard corals. Meanwhile, just a 45-minute jaunt across the water, visitors to Fitzroy Island Resort, can help care for injured turtles while also contributing to Great Barrier Reef monitoring programs and the Reef Restoration Foundation's coral restoration work. Also in Cairns, Dreamtime Dive and Snorkel has launched a monthly citizen science initiative called 'Reef Recovery Days' which sees guests assist marine biologists and Indigenous guides to assemble and attach the MARRS Reef Stars at Hastings Reef, promoting new coral growth.

2023 is the Year of Accessible Tourism in Queensland, and Quicksilver Dive in Port Douglas has become the first PADI Adaptive Service Facility in the state, and the only facility of its kind on the Great Barrier Reef, to hold this accreditation. Quicksilver Dive's state-of-the-art diver training centre and PADI Adaptive Service Facility opens the world of diving to ocean-lovers of all abilities.

Travellers wanting to turn up the adrenaline dial should head to the Capricorn coast where Funtastic Cruises high-speed boat, The Kraken, darts across the alluring waters of Keppel Bay. Whip across the

*Continued on page 17*



waves, weaving through sandy channels, past secluded bays, and pristine beaches. Bookings open from November.

### Experience 60,000 years of culture through new Indigenous experiences

Soul-soothing river drift operator, Back Country Bliss is expanding its Daintree Rainforest storytelling with the launch of new Unseen Daintree Heli-Experience. Flipping the experience on its head from river drifting under the canopy to soaring high above it, guests take to the skies to experience the magnificent Daintree Rainforest from above, before landing at Yindilli Campsite where Kuku Yalanji Elder CJ shares his story and rainforest knowledge on a guided walk, finishing with a fresh barramundi cook up.

In Cairns, Mandingalbay Ancient Indigenous Tours' new Deadly After Dark sunset experience runs every Friday, starting with a short cruise across Trinity Inlet. Local guides share stories of how the Indigenous people reclaimed country and regenerated the environment, as guests savour the punchy flavours of canapes and refreshments made from local native ingredients.

Twitchers and intrepid travellers can explore the birdlife and cultural history of Northern Cape York, Horn Island and Thursday Island on Strait Experience's new three-day Wings and Wonders tour. The tour runs across summer breeding months of December and January, aligned to the migration of birds from Papua New Guinea.

### Escape to the great outdoors

Nature is for everyone and in Queensland's Year of Accessible Tourism, Brisbane-based tour company, Nature Freedom has proudly launched a series of new and inclusive accessible visitor experiences for those living with a disability. Led by Founder, Mathew Townsend, who lives with a disability himself, Nature Freedom offers kayaking, canoeing, bushwalking and other nature-based activities for people with disabilities.

Whiz through the Bunya Mountains, 200km north west of Brisbane, and kick up the dirt on 18km of fresh mountain biking tracks with the Bunya Mountains Mountain Biking Trails now open to the public. Trails vary in difficulty and length, from 1.3km to 6.3km, with three trails dedicated to mountain bikes only, and one shared with hikers. Each trail passes lookouts and picnic areas for pitstops with a view.

Make tracks in 1770 and Agnes Water, swapping the beach for the bush on the new BushTracks guided walking Tour at Traveller's Rest 1770. The tour takes place at the brand-new Bushland Boardwalk, a 386m walkway that meanders through native bushland where visitors learn about the plants, birdlife and biodiversity of the area before finishing the walk with tea and snacks. The Bushland Boardwalk is accessible for wheelchair users thanks to the flat, step-free walkway.

### New tourism on the horizon in 2024

The highly anticipated entertainment and leisure destination, Queen's Wharf,

is set to open in a staged approach starting in early 2024. Introducing dozens of food and beverage venues, various retail outlets, public artworks and the restoration of nine heritage buildings, Queen's Wharf will also welcome 6-star Rosewood Hotel, the hotel's first Australian property, The Star Grand (5-star) and the Dorsett Brisbane (4.5-star). Bringing these elements together and making a visual impact on the city's evolving skyline is recently completed Sky Deck sitting atop the architecturally designed arc towers at an imposing 90 meters above the river.

A new citizen science pontoon on the Southern Great Barrier Reef is imminent with the construction of Lady Musgrave Experience's 'Reef Sanctuary' pontoon. The launch of the second pontoon off Lady Musgrave Island is set for 2024, bringing citizen science to the fingertips of Lady Musgrave Experience visitors and data collection scientists. The education hub is being purpose built to offer advanced educational experiences where visitors can join wildlife ecologists and marine biologists as they conduct data collection and monitoring, participate in Marine-Biologist-for-a-Day activities and Reef Keeper program research, coral adoption and transplanting programs and reef health surveys.

Further north, High Valley Dawn Permaculture Farm, near Yeppoon, is already operating as a popular tourism attraction and will introduce 12 tiny house cottages in late 2023 and throughout 2024. In Tropical North Queensland, Rossville Retreat, 20 minutes south of Cooktown at Cape York Peninsula, have completed the first stages of new bush lodges set to open in May 2024 in time for the touring season. Each safari-style glamping tent is eco-friendly and comes with its own ensuite bathroom and private garden area.

There's a plethora of new experiences, stays and tours across Queensland waiting to welcome visitors this summer. Stock up on these and even more fresh holidays at [www.queensland.com](http://www.queensland.com)

*Note: It is recommended holidaymakers check all conditions and official authority advice for their intended destination prior to travel.*



Turtle at Fitzroy Island

# PNG welcomed largest cruise liner in 2023

When the sea borders reopened in late 2022, Papua New Guinea recorded over 50 port calls from October 2022 to March 2023. Pacific Encounter made its maiden call into the famous port of Alotau as the first port of call before continuing her journey to the islands of Kiriwina and Conflict as well as into the port of Rabaul.

The highlight of the return of cruises to PNG waters was welcoming the maiden call of MSC Poesia into Alotau on 5th March 2023. PNG was among the amazing 53 destinations of the 118 days MSC World Cruises last year post pandemic. This was the largest cruise ship to visit PNG to date. The welcome in Alotau was spectacular as the locals prepared the colourful war canoes to welcome the largest cruise liner sailing into Alotau harbour.

MSC Poesia's maiden voyage story: [www.papuanewguinea.travel/msc-poesias-maiden-visit-papua-new-guinea](http://www.papuanewguinea.travel/msc-poesias-maiden-visit-papua-new-guinea)



Papua New Guinea

As new itineraries are planned for 2025 and beyond, our team at PNG Tourism Promotion Authority is looking to review the current cruise strategy. Anticipated completion before the end of 2024, the new cruise strategy will aim to pave a sustainable direction for cruise investment in PNG. The strategy will consider current challenges in the cruise industry to meet changing global trends in the markets.

Our team at Papua New Guinea Tourism Promotion Authority is looking forward to return to Global Seatrade in Miami in April to showcase PNG to cruise lines, shore excursion and development teams, learn more and understand cruise and its demands to bring back exciting discussions to cruise tourism in PNG.

For more information visit: [www.papuanewguinea.travel](http://www.papuanewguinea.travel)

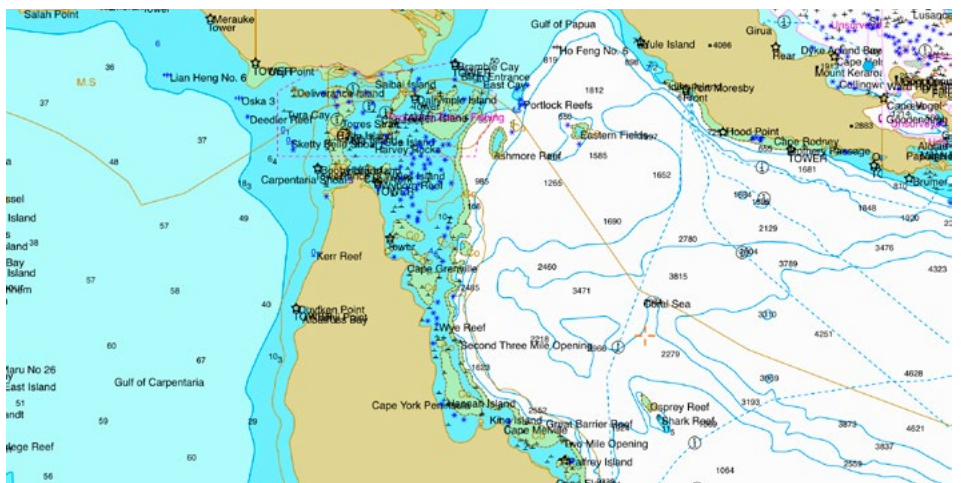
## Auriga Pilots

Auriga Pilots offers specialised pilotage and advisory services for cruise ships in the Great Barrier Reef, in addition to traditional pilotage services.

Our pilot team provides customised guidance to ensure safe navigation through the environmentally sensitive and heritage-listed marine region.

Modern cruise ships are equipped with advanced navigational technology, reducing the need for pilots in non-compulsory pilotage areas, however, our 'Reef Guides' offer expert advice to help cruise ships navigate complex regulations enforced by Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) without breaching the Marine Park Act.

With Auriga Pilots' local knowledge and effective voyage planning, cruise ships can explore the wonders of the Reef while complying with all regulations.



Our team of Reef Pilots, all holding unrestricted licenses in the Great Barrier Reef, work closely with cruise bridge teams to pre-plan voyages and ensure smooth navigation through compulsory-pilotage channels.

In addition to the Great Barrier Reef, Auriga Pilots' cruise ship services extend to other regions such as Papua New Guinea, Northern Territory, and Western Australia's Kimberley region. Our pilots are ready to assist in various

locations, providing valuable guidance and support.

The Master Reef Guide Program is renowned as the premier platform for reef guides and interpreters to showcase the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Our Master Reef Guides provide the most up-to-date information on the Reef, educating visitors about the World Heritage Area, and inspiring action to protect this precious ecosystem.

*Continued on page 19*

# Tourism Super Week

Thriving on the Edge: A Journey  
into Sustainable Adventure

30 April - 3 May 2024

TOURISM FIJI

## Tourism Fiji Cruise Symposium

**On the back of the success of the Cruise Symposium in 2023, Tourism Fiji is holding Tourism Superweek and Cruise Symposium 2024.**

Themed "Thriving on the Edge: A Journey into Sustainable Adventure" the Tourism Super Week is a 4-day program designed to empower tourism SME's and future tourism entrepreneurs with the essential skills, resources, and mentorship necessary to thrive in today's competitive business environment.

The diverse program covers key areas such as sustainability, adventure travel, digital and destination development.

### Cruise Symposium

Two days will be dedicated to the Cruise Symposium, which explores an Earthcheck 'How to' workshop, an introduction to the cruise industry with a local Ground Handler, and a look at local supply chain opportunities.

The Tourism Superweek and Cruise Symposium will feature prominent speakers and offers networking opportunities as well as a comprehensive curriculum that covers areas such as strategic planning, trade readiness – OTAs, marketing strategies, insights on the current trends and analysis, technology adoption, and leadership development.

Tourism Superweek will be held at Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa, Denarau Island with cocktail and gala dinners at nearby iconic venues.

For enquiries email [ddteam@tourismfiji.com.fj](mailto:ddteam@tourismfiji.com.fj)

Register attendance at the Cruise Symposium and Tourism Superweek: <https://corporate.fiji.travel/news/tourism-super-week>

*Continued from page 18*

As part of the program, two Master Reef Guides, employed by Auriga Pilots, are responsible for covering the entire Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

These expert guides incorporate information about the Great Barrier Reef and the Master Reef Guide program into their onboard lectures for cruise pilotage, aiming to raise awareness among passengers.

In addition to onboard lectures, our pilots are available to deliver a variety of presentations upon request. Presentations cover topics such as the Great Barrier Reef, the specific areas in which our pilots operate, or a glimpse into the daily life of a pilot.

Each presentation is followed by a Q&A to further engage and educate passengers.

When not on bridge duties, our pilots are available to present informative sessions to enhance the overall cruise experience.

Trust Auriga Pilots to deliver professional and reliable pilotage services for your next cruise through the Great Barrier Reef and beyond.

For more information, contact us:

[cruise@auriga.com.au](mailto:cruise@auriga.com.au)  
<https://auriga.com.au>



Davidson's Arnhemland Safari Lodge

## Update on Aboriginal cultural experiences in the NT

**Australia's Northern Territory is a place of immense beauty and cultural richness and is home to one of the world's oldest living cultures.**

For over 40,000 years Aboriginal people from more than 110 distinct Indigenous groups speaking over 100 languages have practiced their cultures. Aboriginal people share a profound connection with their environment and preservation of cultural heritage through visitor experiences.

### Larrakia Nation Cultural Services

The Larrakia people are the traditional owners of the Darwin region and extend a warm welcome to all visitors to their land and sea country. A deep, spiritual connection to Country and the preservation of stories and culture is at the heart of Larrakia Land and its people.

Larrakia Nation is one of Darwin's leading community service organisations and is a leading employer of Aboriginal people. A wide range of cultural services are offered including Welcome to Country, smoking ceremonies, didgeridoo

performances, traditional cultural dances and cultural awareness packages. [larrakia.com/larrakia-cultural-services](http://larrakia.com/larrakia-cultural-services)

### Australian Woven Connections

Yolngu woman Rachel Baker founded Australian Woven Connections, a Darwin-based tourism business which aligns with Aboriginal principles and ethics. Her passion for weaving emerged early in life through ancestral family connections. Rachel learnt ancient weaving techniques from master weaving Elders of the Aboriginal community.

Rachel recently joined Celebrity Edge in Darwin for the voyage to Sydney, delivering eight Aboriginal weaving workshops to women from around the world.

[www.australianwovenconnections.com](http://www.australianwovenconnections.com)

**Arnhem Land flight safari day tour** Take a 90 minute scenic flight from Darwin and view Kakadu National Park from a unique aerial perspective before landing at Davidson's Arnhem Land Safari Lodge in West Arnhem Land.

Board an open top Land Cruiser for a wilderness safari through monsoonal

rainforests and paperbark swamps. View ancient Aboriginal rock art sites and take a guided walk to the sacred site of Mount Borradaile. Enjoy lunch at the Lodge overlooking Cooper Creek floodplain which attracts abundant bird and wildlife, then take a refreshing swim in a pristine freshwater swimming hole. [www.kakaduair.com.au/day-tours](http://www.kakaduair.com.au/day-tours)

### Darwin Port

Darwin Port Cruise Ship Terminal facilities can accommodate first point of entry visits to Australia. The city is a popular destination with cruise operators due to the close proximity of Darwin city, with shopping and entertainment areas within walking distance.

Darwin Port continues to undertake infrastructure upgrades to cruise facilities and services. Since the installation of four 150 tonne mooring bollards and upgrades to the western mooring dolphin at Fort Hill Wharf, the port has undergone upgrades to electrical infrastructure and pile wrapping program to prevent corrosion.

*Continued on page 21*

# Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises

Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises has operated from the same site for more than 25 years, and since 2015 under its current 100% indigenous owners, Arirrkki Aboriginal Corporation.

Following on from previous major flooding in 2018 that damaged much of the infrastructure, Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises has seen to evolve itself beyond a cheap tourist thrill ride, to a major tourist attraction with a focus on the appreciation of the king of the Top End water ways, the Saltwater Crocodile.



Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises

is genuine care and compassion from the guides in educating and encouraging the public to view these animals with respect, after almost being eradicated by commercial shooting just a generation ago.

Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises, is looking to improve its offerings to the cruise sector. A recent \$600,000 renovation of guests facilities with a new gift shop featuring unique Top End products, to a tree tops cafe on the second floor set into the trees along the Adelaide river bank. Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises takes its environmental care message seriously, with recent major off grid solar power upgrades meaning that despite the overcast monsoon season, 100% of all power needs have been from the sun.

A zero discharge waste water system means the 50,000 guests per year leaving "something behind", in our Australian standard mobility impaired toilet facilities, don't impact the surrounding environment.

Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises has spent 18 months developing a guest experience on our main tour boat that will bring the views from 7K broadcast quality camera systems to our guests via 50-inch weatherproof LED screens, which will integrate with a digital library

allowing the river experience presentation to be what you see on the day, as well as its changes over the year.

Customising the hardware and software to evolve this small wildlife cruise into the future, will allow safety briefings in multiple languages and closed captioning for the hard of hearing planned to be incorporated later this year. A new tour boat and improved all weather access to vessels is being planned for 2024/25.

After an hour aboard a Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruise learning about the magnificent Saltwater Crocodile and surrounding flood plains, or enjoying the view from the deck with a coffee, your guests and ours can return home knowing their experience was even more worthwhile with profits returning to the Anindilyakwa people of Groote Eylandt. Since 2020, Arirrkki Aboriginal Corporation has used profits from Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises, and other income sources, to return over \$1M to community at a grass roots level, supporting families.

Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises, definitely not the same as the others, its simply Spectacular as the name implies.

<https://jumpingcrocodile.com.au>

These magnificent wild animals inhabit the waters of the Adelaide River and have been conditioned, NOT trained, to interact with cruise boats in a safe and comfortable manner. Their natural behaviours of swimming vertically, not really jumping, to grab prey from overhanging branches, allows guests on board custom built vessels, to experience and view these beautiful and majestic creatures up close, without fear of accidentally ending up in the "lunch position". Outward facing stadium type seating means the entire family has a view, regardless of where they sit.

The emphasis is not on exploiting animals to perform, but rather allowing them to choose to interact or not. All the animals are completely wild, and the amount of food on offer as a reward is generally less than 100grams daily, not enough to be a sustainable food source.

Spectacular Jumping Crocodile Cruises spent considerable time and money to develop an animal welfare policy to meet international expectations ensuring these animals are protected and not exploited.

Each cruise records all interactions and limits them to once per day, per animal. Boat crew are quick to protect their scaly and less than huggable 'work mates'. There

*Continued from page 20*

These upgrades have been necessary to enhance the life span of the wharf and provide improved mooring safety for large vessels during high wind conditions, and will integrate with future wharf extensions.

Darwin Port, as part of the Landbridge Group, provides ongoing support to Clontarf and Stars, two foundations that help young Indigenous people reach their potential through education and life skills. <https://darwinport.com.au>

*We respectfully acknowledge and honour the Aboriginal people of Australia's Northern Territory and recognise the continuation of cultures, connections to lands, water and country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.*  
[northernterritory.com](https://northernterritory.com)



Sierra Fleet Services Hull Treatment

## UV Sea Hull Treatments

### The testing phase for UV Sea Hull treatments is well underway with upcoming tests in Sydney Harbour.

After a long time of tests and more tests and redesigns, Sierra Fleet Services has now have finished products ready to go onto the water.

So far the results from our testing have been exceptional.

Just before Christmas, New Zealand MPI provided a detailed overview of the testing they have undertaken and, most importantly, a testing regime they want Sierra Fleet Services to undertake in partnership with New Zealand MPI and a calibrated set of results.

This is excellent news as the regime is well within Sierra Fleet Services' capabilities and no more onerous than the Covid 19 Sterilisation requirements.

Once MPI and DAFF see these results carried out to the levels per their regimes, Sierra Fleet Services could be

treating hulls in port at a fraction of the cost of offshore divers, with all the boxes ticked for the environment, emissions reduction, safety and being able to navigate into and out of remote areas.

Sierra Fleet Services is setting up for some testing in Sydney Harbour during March with help from the Australian Navy.

Following this, the next move after the Sydney dives on soft and hard bio-foul is to test on plates with Hempel in Copenhagen and Juton in Sadenfjorde then onto Oceaneering's Norwegian base of operations.

The team at Sierra Fleet Services is confident these tests will show no damage to the coatings and in certain instances improve performance (silicon coating) as a curing agent.

**Cruise lines are to encouraged reach out for more information, and to assist with the final testing process.**

### Key benefits of UV Hull Treatments:

- Sierra Fleet Services technology uses GERMii's patented award-winning UV lamps adapted to ROVs and handheld versions with divers for in-water treatment
- Devices instantly inactivate the DNA of invasive microorganisms (flora and fauna) and pathogens, rendering them unable to replicate or survive
- Treatments have already been used successfully globally and further innovated in Australia by GERMii to meet Australian, PNG and NZ controls
- UV treatments are non-abrasive and low-risk treatment in harbours or confined waterways
- no discharge of Biocides from antifoul or coatings applied to the vessel
- living or viable organisms not discharged into the ecosystem; essential in invasive species control
- Robotic UV treatments are 100% effective and fully integrated into reporting requirements for Governments and classification societies with high-resolution images, video and data mapping

[www.sierrafleetservices.com](http://www.sierrafleetservices.com)

# Kingfisher Bay Resort's new health and wellness packages

A healthy and fantastic pre or post cruise option for your guests in 2024!

## Wellness Island Eco Retreat

Kingfisher Bay Resort is dedicating this package to YOU. Relax on a dreamy two-night stay in the heart of nature and wake up to a hot and cold buffet breakfast before embarking on your canoe paddle in the Great Sandy Biosphere, enjoying a nourishing treatment at the Island Day Spa, or take a self-guided walk from the rainforest to the iconic Lake McKenzie.

You're guaranteed to feel refreshed and grounded after some valuable YOU time.

Kingfisher Bay Resort's Wellness Island Eco Retreat Inclusions:

- 2 nights' accommodation.
- Daily hot and cold buffet breakfast
- Ranger-guided Canoe Paddle
- Ranger-guided walks and talks
- Island Day Spa package: Orange cream hair treatment and barefoot botanical
- 4WD transfers to Pile Valley for self-guided walk to Kingfisher Bay via Lake McKenzie
- Picnic hamper and track notes for walk
- Return ferry transfer ex Hervey Bay
- Return airport transfers

## On-Foot Island Adventure Package

Three nights' accommodation and two days of hiking through World Heritage-listed beauty. Discover the rainforests and complex sand dune systems that K'gari is famous for before taking a plunge in crystal-clear freshwater lakes and incredible creeks along the way.

The total distance for two days of hiking is approximately 42.5 kilometres, with stays at the island's premier accommodation



Lake McKenzie

provider, Kingfisher Bay Resort, and remote east coast accommodation provider, K'gari Beach Resort.

Kingfisher Bay Resort's On-Foot Island Adventure Inclusions:

- 3 nights' accommodation
- Return passenger ferry
- Return airport transfers
- Daily hot and cold buffet breakfast
- One-way transfer to trailhead (2 days)
- Picnic hamper
- Detailed track notes/GPS

Walking itinerary:

**Day 1** – Arrive at Kingfisher Bay Resort and enjoy the resort's facilities.

- Day 2** – Get ready to commence your on-foot island adventure, where you will walk a total of 22.4km for the day.
- Drop off at Pile Valley Rainforest

- 2km walk from Pile Valley to Central Station admiring majestic Satinay trees, ancient ferns and lush rainforest growing from sand
- 7.7km walk from Central Station to Lake McKenzie; perfect picnic spot and swim
- 12.7km walk from Lake McKenzie to Kingfisher Bay Resort

- Day 3** – The second day of your on-foot island adventure totals 20.2km
- Drop off at M7 trail point
  - 13km walk to Lake Wabby, swim in emerald-green of island's deepest lake
  - 0.7km walk from Lake Wabby to Hammerstone Sandblow across magnificent sand dune formations
  - 1.5km walk from Hammerstone Sandblow to One Tree Rocks with coastal views
  - 5km walk from One Tree Rocks to K'gari Beach Resort

**Day 4** – Depart Kingfisher Bay Resort.

[www.sealink.com.au](http://www.sealink.com.au)



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