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Travel + Leisure's World's Best Cruise Line is visiting Australia for the first time this month *Immersive onshore experiences bring the true flavour of Australia to guests*

Sydney, 7 February 2018 – *Viking Sun*, the newest addition to the Viking Ocean Cruises fleet, will be visiting Australian shores for the first time this month as part of its world cruise which commenced in Miami on 15 December.

Visiting 65 ports and 35 countries over 141 days travelling from Miami to London, *Viking Sun's* voyage marks the first ever World Cruise for Viking, and its first foray into Australia and New Zealand.

CEO of the Australian Cruise Association, Jill Abel, said,

"Viking is the embodiment of the future of cruising in Australia. Their focus on providing an extensive array of interesting destination activities echoes our research with cruise passengers who tell us they are now selecting their cruise lines to enjoy the onshore offerings as well as the onboard experience.

With many exciting experiences on offer showcasing the history, natural beauty and iconic wildlife in Australia, communities are welcoming the economic impact made by ships like the Viking Sun," said Ms Abel.

Melbourne will be the ship's first Australian port of call on Thursday 8 February 2018, followed by Sydney, Brisbane, The Whitsunday Islands, Cairns, The Great Barrier Reef, Thursday Island and Darwin, then onto Indonesia on its journey northwards towards London.

Viking Sun will offer its 930 guests the opportunity to experience a wide variety of immersive onshore excursions to truly explore the food, culture, people and customs of Australia.

44 tours will be offered across the seven ports, with guests able to uncover the best Australia has to offer; from Melbourne's café culture and vibrant laneways, to climbing the iconic Sydney Harbour bridge, or venturing deep into Darwin's crocodile country. Viking Cruises has ensured the Australian experience for its guests will be authentic, in-depth and memorable.

With no casinos, kids, umbrella drinks or buffet meals, guests can focus on refreshing their historical and cultural knowledge on board with a resident historian before each port of call, allowing for a more enriched experience than cruising might usually permit..

Viking will start home-porting from Australia in December 2018, spending three months of the year cruising between Sydney and Auckland, offering Australians the chance to experience Viking right from their doorstep.

- Ends -

Notes to Editors

The cruise will visit seven ports across Australia on the following dates:

8 February: Melbourne, Victoria
10-11 February: Sydney, New South Wales
13 February: Brisbane, Queensland
15 February: Hamilton Island, Whitsundays
16 February: Cairns, Queensland
18 February: Thursday Island, Queensland
21 February: Darwin, Northern Territory

For additional information, contact Viking Cruises at 138 747 (Australia) or visit www.vikingcruises.com.au. To join the Viking Cruises community online, visit www.facebook.com/vikingcruisesAUNZ.

About Viking Cruises

With the arrival of *Viking Jupiter* in 2019, Viking will be the largest small ship ocean cruise line in the world with six 930-passenger ocean ships, and able to offer Australian travellers new opportunities for exploration in Australia, Alaska, Asia and the Caribbean. Viking's popular features include a no children policy, destination-focused itineraries and a free shore excursion in every port. Their state-of-the-art, all-veranda ocean ships are engineered at a scale that allows central docking in most ports. With a focus on cultural immersion, Viking has moved away from onboard casinos in favour of a choice of 10 dining venues at no extra cost. Guests can relax in the glass-backed infinity pool cantilevered off the ship's stern and enjoy the Spa drawing from the holistic philosophy of Nordic culture.

Viking welcomed *Viking Sky* and *Viking Sun*, the company's third and fourth ship, in early and late 2017. *Viking Orion* will be delivered in 2018, and their sixth ship – *Viking Jupiter*, in 2019, at which point they will become the world's largest small ship ocean cruise line. They are also the world's leading river cruise line; since its 1997 inception the company has grown to a fleet of 69 river vessels, offering scenic cruising along the rivers of Europe, Ukraine, Russia, Egypt, China, and Southeast Asia.

Viking has been honoured multiple times in Travel + Leisure's "World's Best" Awards and Condé Nast Traveller's "Gold List" as well as recognised by the editors of Cruise Critic as "Best River Cruise Line," with the entire Viking Longships fleet being named "Best New River Ships" in the website's Editors' Picks Awards. Viking was recently named The World's Best Ocean Cruise Line by Travel + Leisure, 2016 and 2017.

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