



From the ACA desk:

We are now at the end of our summer or "Wave" season and the last of our international vessels are making their way back to Europe and the USA.

Around 70 cruise ships – including those from newcomers like Disney and Virgin have visited our icon cities and regional ports over the past few months with many cruise lines reporting that this will have been a record-breaking season. We are seeing a range of cruise passenger guests enjoy the spectrum of offerings from family friendly to adults only and expedition to luxury.

I loved the recent column by Quentin Long, publisher at International Traveller magazine. Self-proclaimed "cruise convert," Quentin wrote that one of his top three travel experiences of all time was a two-week cruise and his kids' favourite holiday in 2023 was also a cruise as "they were happy, independent and entertained."

Australia has always been a much-loved destination on cruise itineraries with high quality shore excursions showcasing wildlife, history, spectacular landscapes, Indigenous culture and our strong culinary scene. During our ACA operator roadshows this year, I continued to witness firsthand the diverse and high-quality offerings right across our country. The number of port calls per itinerary is growing as a result of what is being offered onshore. Having just returned from Seatrade Cruise Global, where we had a record delegation of ACA members in attendance, I can happily confirm that interest in our region is at an all time high.

And the good news is that the cruise sector has a strong future as well. A survey released a couple of months back by the Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) reported that a younger wave of cruisers was coming online. Apparently 35% of Australians under 35

are planning to cruise in 2024. This will mean a renewed focus by our onshore operators to deliver services and experiences to cater to that market, many of whom will be "new to cruise" and looking for highly engaging, high-quality services to meet their particular interests. And the value for money offering of cruising is not lost on anyone right now as the cost-of-living plays into holiday choices.

Back onshore those economic benefits are reaped every time a ship pulls into port at food and beverage outlets, tour companies, transfer operators and hotels where guests enjoy pre and post cruise nights.

And while the international carriers may have left, the good news is that there are many Australian based cruise lines to meet the needs of our cruisers until wave season comes around again.

Further Details - and all media enquiries:

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