



NEWCASTLE U3A CRUISING IN 2019

Dear U3A Members

In 2017 Newcastle U3A started a cruising program. In October / November 2019 we will board the Golden Princess for an 9-night cruising holiday.

This is a slightly complicated adventure, as it involves two back-to-back cruises. You will need to book both cruises and should try to book the same cabin for both.

The Golden Princess departs from Sydney at 6.45 pm on Friday, 25 October. It sails into Melbourne at 6.00 am on Sunday 27 October.

The ship then sails out of Melbourne at 4.00 pm the same day, 25 October. It returns to Melbourne at 6.00 am on Sunday 3 November after stopping at Phillip Island, Port Lincoln, Kangaroo Island and Adelaide (both Phillip Island and Kangaroo Island are tender ports, which means you will be transported to shore).

U3A participants will then need to make their own arrangements for return travel to Newcastle. If you would like to fly, be aware that there is a 12.15 pm Virgin flight from Melbourne which flies directly to Newcastle Airport and arrives at 1.45 pm. You can book this through the cruise company as part of your cruise package – we suggest you also book a transfer from the ship to the airport. Other options include the XPT or coach transport.

Basic details are below. For those who are new to our U3A program, this information is especially important and relevant:

1. Prices are approximate. They vary almost daily. They also vary depending on where in the ship staterooms are situated. Mid-ship is always more expensive.
2. We will set up as many opportunities as we can for the group to get together onboard. These will include sharing some meals and meeting for the occasional pre-dinner drink. We hope that members will chat together and arrange to also meet up for activities that interest them. You might like to explore a port together, set up your own trivia team, enjoy the gym or promenade deck together or see a movie or show.
3. We are not tour leaders. Our aim is to be the U3A contact people onboard who facilitate communication between the group and set up programmed opportunities to get together.
4. We will give you all the information you need to book yourself or through your travel agent. If we have a large group, there might be a group discount, but that is very dependent on the size of the group and probably will not be possible (it was not applicable when our group last cruised in 2017).
5. A cruising holiday is jam-packed with learning opportunities. We aim to offer an affordable opportunity to travel with friends and keep our minds active.
6. If you suffer from sick-sickness, aim for a midship cabin.
7. We will almost certainly have to leave the ship in Melbourne during the stop-over. Make this a port day and book an excursion or plan your own sight-seeing.
8. You will not need a passport for this holiday, but you will need a government photo-ID.
9. Be aware that times ashore may vary
10. The itinerary includes 2 formal nights. You can avoid this by dining in your cabin or the buffet. But maybe you enjoy dressing up!

What is a TWID?

A TWID, or “Travelling With ID” is the unique identifier that means we are recognised by the crew as a group. If there are 16 “lower berth” passengers in our group, we will also all get a discount on our cruise fare (unlikely, but possible). Please use the relevant TWID when making your booking – there is a different TWID for each of the two cruises.

Voyage 5936 - Golden Princess - “2 Days Australia Positioning”				
Friday 25 October to Sunday 27 October 2019				
TWID – AA9				
Day & Date	Destination		Duration	
Fri, October 25, 2019	Circular Quay, Sydney, check-in		12.30 to 3.00 pm	
Fri, October 25, 2019	Sail		6.45 pm	
Sat, October 26, 2019	At Sea		6.00 am	
Sun, October 27, 2019	Arrive Station Pier, Melbourne		6.00 am	
Stateroom Type	Interior	Oceanview	Balcony	Mini-Suite
Share Stateroom per person	\$349.00	\$499.00	\$619.00	\$999.00
Single Rate (no share)	\$698.00	\$998	\$1,238.00	\$1,998.00

Note: These prices will vary according to the location of the ship.

Voyage 5937 - Golden Princess - “7 Days Southern Australia”				
Sunday 27 October to Sunday 3 November 2019				
TWID – AC9				
Day & Date	Destination		Duration	
Sun, October 27, 2019	Station Pier, Melbourne, check-in		12.00 to 3.00 pm	
Sun, October 27, 2019	Sail		4.00 pm	
Mon, October 28, 2019	Phillip Island, Victoria – tender port!		7.00 am to 11.00 pm	
Tues, October 29, 2019 Wed, October 30, 2019	At Sea Port Lincoln, SA		8.00 am to 6.00 pm	
Thu, October 31, 2018	Kangaroo Island, SA – tender port!		7.00 am - 5.00 pm	
Fri, November 1, 2019	Adelaide, SA		7.00 am to 9.00 pm	
Sat, November 2, 2019	At Sea			
Sun, November 3, 2019	Station Pier, Melbourne, disembark		6.00 am	
Stateroom Type	Interior	Oceanview	Balcony	Mini-Suite
Share Stateroom per person	\$1,333.00	\$1,883.00	\$2,401.00	\$3,231.00
Single Rate (no share)	\$2,509.00	\$3,609.00	\$4,145.00	\$6,305.00

Note: These prices will vary according to the location of the ship.

Onboard Tipping

Sometimes a tip is automatically allocated to your account on every day of the cruise. This will not be applicable for either of our cruises.



SOME CONSIDERATIONS:

Before you Book

Are you planning to travel as a couple, in a single cabin or share? **If you are planning to share and would like help finding a compatible travelling companion, let us know so we can introduce to potential cabin-mates.** Booking a stateroom as a single person is expensive, at almost twice the cost of a shared cabin. Sometimes members opt to chare with up to 3 or 4 in a cabin. This is inexpensive but can be quite crowded – you would need to know that you like each other's company.

Booking

When booking a cruise, you will need to provide the following information:

1. What type of stateroom (cabin) you would like – interior, ocean view (porthole), balcony, suite or mini suite. The prices vary enormously.
2. Your bed configuration – single or queen.
3. Your preferred dining type (traditional or anytime dining), time (if you opt for traditional dining) and table size. We aim to negotiate a dining time with the group at the 28 February briefing.

Stateroom Locations

You will be asked where on the ship you would like your stateroom to be located. Some sections of the ship are seen to be more desirable than others and incur a greater cost:

1. Deck – the lower decks are a long way from the buffet which is on the top of the ship. The top decks can be noisy at night, especially if you are under the outside decks. Avoid cabins directly above the Princess theatre if you retire early.
2. Do you want mid-ship (the middle of the ship) or prefer the front or back? Some people prefer the higher decks and aft, especially those who opt for an inside cabin. There are comfortable open decks close by which are quick to access and a wonderful space to spend a day at sea. The library and lounges are also good places to sit and read.

How to Book

1. Travel agent – choose your own
2. Online – let us know if you need help. It is a very easy process.
3. Phone Princess direct on 1300 551 853

Flights Home

Airport Transfer – book prior to the cruise - \$34.00

Melbourne to Newcastle direct flight - \$163.21

Some Additional Important Information:

1. All prices quoted are current at 23 February 2019 – they do vary, often quite significantly. We recommend that you do not hold off booking in the hope of cheaper prices. In recent years, they tend to have increased rather than reduced.
2. Travel insurance is always a good idea. Check the cancellation policy for your individual booking to know the dead-line for having it in place.
3. You are welcome to invite a spouse, family member or non-member friend to join our group if they are sharing your cabin.

Call or email with any questions.

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