

Cruise to Australia on the Queen Victoria. February/March 2024

25 February.

We boarded the Queen Victoria in Auckland for our cruise to Sydney.

The Queen Victoria has about 2000 guests on board and is unashamedly traditional in its décor, activities and approach to cruising. We are in 4167, a balcony cabin that was upgraded from a guaranteed obstructed balcony. Very nice. We had dinner at the Britannia (relatively formal and outstanding food), then went to a sand art show by The Sandman (Marcus Winter). Afterwards we enjoyed Irish songs in the pub and watched some impressive ballroom dancing.

We very much fit the demographic for the passengers on board! About 300 joined the ship in Auckland, but most are on a route that takes them right around the world.



26 February. At sea.

In the morning we walked a lot and further got to know the ship, then had lunch in the Lido buffet. Our cabin developed a bad creak which was fixed in the afternoon. In the evening we had another lovely dinner at the Britannia and watched a show by the ship's singers and orchestra – songs from the musicals.



27 February. Wellington.

After breakfast we took a shuttle into Wellington, then caught the East West ferry over to Days Bay. We walked to Eastbourne then met Sarah for lunch. We then caught the bus back into Wellington and rejoined the ship. (All travel on the Gold Card!).



Later we had afternoon tea with all the trimmings (including cucumber sandwiches and cream scones!) – a Cunard tradition.



In the evening we had dinner at the Lido then watched a show by tenor Ben Makisi – fabulous. Overnight we sailed from Wellington to Lyttleton, Christchurch.

28 February. Christchurch.

After breakfast we took the shuttle into Lyttleton and then a bus into Christchurch. We had a bit of an explore around the city centre much where earthquake damage is still in evidence.



We then took a bus back to Lyttleton and explored the township before catching the ferry over to the little settlement of Diamond Harbour. A wonderful day, and all on the Gold Card!



After another excellent dinner at the Britannia we listened to music and watched some lovely ballroom dancing.

Thursday 29 February. At sea.

We had breakfast at the Britannia (very nice), then went to an enrichment seminar by Michael Robotham, a famous crime fiction writer. He described how he came up with ideas for plots in his novels.

After lunch at the Lido we wandered around the decks, played some games, went to a singalong, and then watched a model boat competition around the Lido pool. Hilarious. Lots of people were out by the pool enjoying the sunshine. After a session at the gym and some work on our video we went to dinner at the Golden Lion pub. Traditional English



pub fare and environment! In the evening we went to another excellent show by classical musician Annie Gong. A great day at sea.

Friday 1 March. At sea.

In the morning we went to an interesting lecture by Peter Price on cybercrime. After lunch we went to a concert by Hardy and Hay (piano and clarinet). Wow! One of the best musical experiences we have ever been to. In the afternoon we did our AGM then put on our most glamorous clothes for Gala night. Dressing up for dinner at the Britannia is a Cunard tradition, and we fitted right in with our bow tie and sequins. After dinner we went to great show by the Vallies, singing the songs of Frankie Valli and the Jersey Boys.



Saturday 2 March. At sea.

In the morning we watched two enrichment lectures: one on counterfeit goods, and the other on lying (which everyone does multiple times a day!). We had lunch at the Britannia and dinner at the Lido, but most of the day was spent exercising, reading and working on our cruise video. In the evening we went to a show by the ship's company singing "Sting", and more amazing accordion playing by Annie Gong.

Sunday 3 March. Sydney.

We anchored in Sydney harbour then after breakfast took a tender into the city centre. After sorting out our Opal cards we decided to go to Manly on the ferry. Good choice! We had a great time exploring Manly on foot and very much enjoyed the beach and the vibrant atmosphere. Back on board we had a spa, packed our bags and had our final meal in the Britannia restaurant. In the evening went to a show by singer Dale Burridge, and afterwards went outside to enjoy the views of Sydney by night.





Overall, our cruise on the Queen Victoria was most enjoyable. The ship was elegant, the cabin clean and comfortable and the food outstanding. The music and shows were consistently of a very high standard and we especially appreciated how Cunard catered so well to the needs of older guests, and ones like us who are experienced cruises. Everything was done well with countless special touches to make our cruise more pleasant. Even though we were just on one short leg of a round the world cruise we loved everything that we experienced. Well done Cunard. Well done Queen Victoria.

Monday 4 March.

After breakfast we disembarked from the Queen Victoria and wandered around the Sydney Harbour foreshore – from the bridge through Circular Quay to the Botanic Gardens. The harbour really is spectacular. We then took the train to the airport and flew Virgin to Melbourne.

