

NEW ZEALAND

5th President's Cruise from Sydney to Auckland
January 12, 2018 - 25 days



a world to experience



Fares Per Person: based on double/twin

\$11,545 Inside Category I

\$11,805 Oceanview Category E

\$13,770 Verandah Category BB

> Please add 0.1% GST.

> Other categories available along with single fares.

> **Early Bookers:** \$300 discount on first 12 seats; \$150 on next 8

> **Experience Points:** Earn 157 points from this tour.



Includes

- Transportation to/from Vancouver Airport
- Flight from Vancouver to Sydney
- Current air transport taxes, fees & fuel surcharges
- 8 nights hotel accommodation & taxes
- Transfer from Sydney airport to hotel
- 2 days of coach transportation in Sydney area
- Locally-guided half-day tour of Sydney
- Lunch cruise on Sydney harbour
- Tour of Sydney Opera House
- Locally-guided all-day tour to Blue Mountains
- Featherdale Wildlife Park
- Blue Mountains Scenic Cableway, Skyway, Jungle Walkway, and Funicular Railway
- Transfer from Sydney hotel to cruise terminal
- 14 days & nights on board MS Maasdam
- Cruise gratuities, port charges & cruise taxes
- Reservation in the Maasdam's Pinnacle Grill
- Entertainment & expert lecturers on Maasdam
- Locally-guided half-day tour of Melbourne
- Royal Botanic Gardens
- Locally-guided full-day tour in Tasmania with Cradle Mountain National Park
- Locally-guided full-day tour of Dunedin
- Royal Albatross Centre with Observatory
- Lanarch Castle and Gardens
- Locally-guided full-day tour of Christchurch
- Punting on the Avon River
- Locally-guided half-day tour of Wellington
- Lady Norwood Rose Gardens
- Te Papa National Museum
- Locally-guided half-day tour of Napier
- Tour of Craggy Range Vineyard with wine tasting
- Locally-guided half-day tour of Tauranga
- Elms Mission Station
- 4 days of coach transportation in New Zealand
- Waitangi Treaty House
- Cruise in Bay of Islands with Hole in the Rock
- Gannet nesting colony
- Boat ride in Waitomo Glow-Worm Caves
- Mitai Cultural Experience with Hangi meal
- Te Puia Maori Centre
- Pohutu Geyser
- Hobbiton Movie Set
- Flight from Auckland to Vancouver
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director throughout tour and cruise
- Gratuities for all local guides and drivers
- Luggage handling at hotels and ship
- **57 meals:** 21 breakfasts, 19 lunches, 17 dinners

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MS Maasdam

Named for the Maas River in the Netherlands, the **Maasdam** is the fifth Holland America ship to bear this name in the company's 142-year history. A sister ship to the *Veendam*, *Ryndam* and *Statendam*, the **Maasdam** was built in Italy in 1993, and is 218 metres long with gross tonnage of 55,000. Among today's cruise ships, the **Maasdam** has one of the highest ratings for space per passenger, since it carries only 1266 guests. With some ships now being built to carry over 3000 passengers, Holland America's ships are intimate by comparison! On the **Maasdam's** 10 decks, you will find six lounges or bars, casino, duty-free shops, movie theatre, Culinary Arts Centre, Showroom at Sea, library, beauty shop, games room, whirlpool spa, and two swimming pools (one outdoor, one with a sliding roof that opens on pleasant days). The three-storey Grand Atrium is dominated by a monumental fountain created by Italian sculptor Gilbert Lebigre. The **Maasdam** features a \$2 million collection of art and artifacts, including treasures from the 17th to 19th centuries themed to Dutch worldwide exploration.

Dining is one of the highlights of a cruise. The elegant two-floor Rotterdam Dining Room serves breakfast, lunch and dinner with full choice of menu. The Lido Restaurant offers buffet-style serving stations for breakfast, lunch, dinner and the 11 pm snack. The intimate Pinnacle Grill and the Canaletto Restaurant offer extraordinary service, reserved seating, and gourmet menus for an extra charge. You can also dine in the privacy of your stateroom by ordering from the complimentary room service menu.

Staterooms have twin lower beds (some convert to queen-size double), TV, music, telephone, and bathroom with toilet, sink and shower or bathtub. A crew of nearly 600 ensures top-quality service and entertainment. Every day has a full schedule of optional activities: dance class, bridge, bingo, shuffleboard, table-tennis, karaoke, board games, and fitness activities. The Wajang Theatre shows recent movies several times a day. Every evening, there is live stage entertainment in the Showroom at Sea.

5th President's Cruise

Roland and Anne Neave invite you to join them for this exciting cruise from Sydney, Australia, to Auckland, New Zealand. About once a year, the Neaves choose a cruise route somewhere in the world and host their President's Cruise. Roland founded Wells Gray Tours in 1972 and is the company's President. The first President's Cruise went to the Eastern Mediterranean in 2013, the second through the Panama Canal, the third to the Norway Fjords, and the fourth, titled *Around the World in 30 Days*, cruised from Dubai to Singapore in 2016. There was no President's Cruise in 2017 because the Neaves and the Wells Gray staff celebrated the company's 45th Anniversary on board the Norwegian Jewel with nearly 700 customers. During this 5th President's Cruise, Roland and Anne will host receptions and social gatherings most days. They look forward to renewing old acquaintances or meeting you for the first time.

Tour & Cruise Notes

Shore excursions included: On many cruises, shore excursions are a significant additional expense during your holiday. On this cruise, Wells Gray Tours has arranged private guided tours at Melbourne and the island of Tasmania in Australia, and Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Napier, and Tauranga in New Zealand. In addition, there are three nights in Sydney before the cruise with two days of touring, and four nights on New Zealand's North Island with four days of touring to its best known attractions. If you booked these tours on your own or through the ship, the cost would be nearly \$2,000 but you can enjoy the benefit of Wells Gray's group buying power to take these tours for a lot less.

Please book early: Holland America has confirmed a block of staterooms for this tour and they are normally held until three months before sailing (early October 2017). However, any unsold staterooms can be taken away from us at any time when the ship fills. This 14-day cruise is very popular and so our stateroom block could be reduced. When this has happened before, we had to waitlist disappointed customers, even though we still had seats available on the coaches and planes.

Visa: An Australian Electronic Travel Authorization is required and is applied for on-line before you leave. A visa is not required for New Zealand.



Activity Level: Light activity most days including short distances to walk and some steps, during the shore excursions and pre- and post-cruise tours. Some days or attractions require more activity and could be rated as Level 2 — examples are the walks in the Blue Mountains, Cradle Mountain Park, the Rotorua thermal area, and Hobbiton. There can be longer walks in the airports; request a cart or wheelchair in advance if this could be an issue for you. If you think you may have difficulty participating in Activity Level 1, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, local guides and drivers have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

* HIGHLIGHTS & PORTS OF CALL *

SYDNEY
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
BLUE MOUNTAINS
MELBOURNE
TASMANIA'S CRADLE MTN PARK
MILFORD SOUND
FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK
DUNEDIN
CHRISTCHURCH

PICTON
WELLINGTON
NAPIER
TAURANGA
AUCKLAND
BAY OF ISLANDS CRUISE
WAITOMO GLOW-WORM CAVES
ROTORUA GEYSERS
HOBBITON MOVIE SET

Itinerary

Friday, January 12:

Transportation is provided to Vancouver this afternoon, and we stay overnight at the Blue Horizon Hotel on Robson Street.

Saturday, January 13:

Most of the day is at leisure. While it may seem unnecessary to travel to Vancouver the day before your flight, winter storms can shut down the ferries or cancel flights from Victoria. Our flight to Sydney leaves about 6 pm.

Sunday, January 14:

We cross the **International Date Line** and lose one day.

Monday, January 15:

We arrive in Auckland, New Zealand, and change planes, continuing to **Sydney, Australia**, for an arrival about 8:30 am. Our coach and driver meet us after the Immigration process and we travel into central Sydney for a stay of three nights at the Park Royal Darling Harbour Hotel. The rest of the day is leisure time after our long flight.

Tuesday, January 16:

Meals: B,L

We start with a driving tour of Sydney highlights such as the historic Rocks district, Darling Harbour, the Parliament House, Hyde Park, Mrs. Macquarie's Chair, and popular **Bondi Beach**. Next is a lunch cruise on the spectacular **Sydney harbour** with views of the Harbour Bridge, Sydney Opera House, Fort Denison, Point Piper, and Watson's Bay. A smorgasbord of fine Australian cuisine is provided while listening to live commentary about the passing sites. After the cruise, we walk to the **Sydney Opera House** for a guided tour. This is Sydney's most recognizable building and officially one of the seven wonders of the 20th century, completed in 1973. Joern Utzon, the Danish archi-

tect, said the inspiration for his masterpiece was the sails of yachts on the harbour.

Wednesday, January 17:

Meals: B,L,D

An all-day coach tour features the scenic **Blue Mountains**. At Featherdale Wildlife Park, we meet Australian animals such as koala, kangaroo, and wallaby. Along Cliff Drive, there are panoramic views of the Three Sisters, Katoomba Falls and Jamison Valley. We descend 600 metres by cablecar into the rainforest, then stroll the jungle walkway, ride the funicular railway up to the rim, and marvel at the views from the Skyway tram.

Thursday, January 18:

Meals: B,L,D

A transfer is provided in late morning from the hotel to the cruise ship dock and we board Holland America's **Maasdam**. We sail at 6 pm past the iconic Harbour Bridge and the Opera House into the Pacific Ocean. Enjoy your first sumptuous dinner in the Rotterdam Dining Room, followed by entertainment in the Showroom at Sea.

Friday, January 19:

Meals: B,L,D

This is a relaxing day at sea.

Saturday, January 20:

Meals: B,L,D

The Maasdam arrives in **Melbourne**, Australia's second largest city, at 8 am and departs at 5 pm. A morning sightseeing tour is planned. The city has a wonderful blend of architectural heritage, modern skyscrapers, and contemporary designs. We see the Bourke Street Mall, the tree-lined beauty of Collins Street, the splendour of St. Paul's Cathedral, the ornate Princess Theatre, and Federation Square. We take a stroll through the beautiful Royal Botanic Gardens and the Fitzroy Gardens. There is time in Southbank with waterfront shopping and arts. We return to the ship in time for lunch and the afternoon is at leisure.

Sunday, January 21:*Meals: B,L,D*

We cross the Bass Strait overnight and dock at Burnie on the island of **Tasmania** at 8 am. During our all-day tour, we first stop in **Sheffield**, the town of murals, where local artists have painted stories on the buildings. We continue up the winding road into **Cradle Mountain National Park**, an alpine wilderness and wonderland, which is one of Tasmania's most popular destinations. From the visitor centre, we stroll the boardwalk through a cool temperate rain forest with fine views of Pencil Pine Falls. Lunch is at a local lodge, then we board a shuttle bus to **Dove Lake**. Enjoy a boardwalk that circles the lake, offering splendid views dominated by the famous Cradle Mountain.

Monday, January 22:*Meals: B,L,D***Tuesday, January 23:***Meals: B,L,D*

These are two days at sea while we cruise across the **Tasman Sea** from Tasmania to New Zealand.

Wednesday, January 24:*Meals: B,L,D*

The Maasdam arrives on the southwest coast of New Zealand. Its high peaks and fjords have been protected in **Fiordland National Park**, the largest of New Zealand's 12 federal parks, and **Milford Sound** with Mitre Peak is a famous vista that we admire from the ship. During the rest of the day, we cruise through several fjords, enjoying fabulous mountain scenery, then round the southernmost point of the South Island via Foveaux Strait.

Thursday, January 25:*Meals: B,L,D*

We arrive at Port Chalmers, a long inlet from the east coast, at 8 am. A full day tour is included to explore **Dunedin**, a city that has played an important role in New Zealand's history. Long inhabited by Maori, the discovery of gold inland from Dunedin in 1861 transformed the area into the new colony's main commercial centre. First stop is the **Royal Albatross Centre** at Tairoa Head where we learn about this remarkable bird and see nesting albatross in their natural habitat. Next is **Larnach Castle**, built in 1874, which has panoramic views of the Otago Peninsula and spectacular gardens. While returning to the ship, we see some of Dunedin's heritage buildings including the oldest university in New Zealand and the railway station. The ship sails at 6 pm.

Friday, January 26:*Meals: B,D*

We arrive at Akaroa by tender, then drive over the peninsula and through the farming district of the Canterbury Plains to **Christchurch**. It is considered the oldest city in New Zealand, dating to 1856. Our tour includes its best known sights — the University district, historic Mona Vale Gardens, Hagley Park,

and the beautiful flora of the Botanical Gardens. Relax while **punting along the tranquil Avon River**, an eco-friendly way to enjoy Christchurch from a different perspective. Then there is free time to explore the city on your own and you may wish to visit the Canterbury Museum, Art Gallery, or Container Mall. We return to Akaroa and the ship in time for sailing at 6:30 pm.

Saturday, January 27:*Meals: B,L,D*

We dock at **Picton** at 10 am and depart at 8 pm. This is a small town at the north end of the South Island where ferries depart for the North Island. This is a day of leisure, but you may choose to buy a shore excursion.

Sunday, January 28:*Meals: B,L,D*

Overnight we cruise across the Cook Strait to the North Island and dock in **Wellington**, New Zealand's capital city, at 7 am. A morning tour includes the Parliament Buildings, the Beehive, the Lady Norwood Rose Gardens, and Old St. Paul's Cathedral. We visit the **Te Papa National Museum** which has exhibits about the natural environment, the vitality of Maori culture, art heritage, and history. We return to the ship at 1 pm, but you can stay longer in town if you wish (included lunch is on the ship). We sail at 4 pm.

Monday, January 29:*Meals: B,L,D*

Our next port is **Napier** where we arrive at 8 am. Our morning tour stops at a panoramic lookout encompassing Hawkes Bay and Cape Kidnappers. During the drive through town, we see many Art Deco buildings that it is famous for and one suburb has many stylish buildings from that era, now lovingly maintained. A guided tour with wine tasting is included at **Craggy Range Vineyard**. After departing 2 pm, we enjoy a daylight cruise along the coast.

Tuesday, January 30:*Meals: B,L,D*

The Maasdam docks in **Tauranga** from 8 am to 11 pm. A morning tour is included which travels along Pilot Bay and the foot of Mount Maunganui. Mount Ocean Beach is the site of major surfing competitions and has many beachfront cafés. We continue along the affluent Marine Parade where some of New Zealand's most expensive homes are located. Next stop is the lookout with stunning views of the city and harbour. We finish at Elms Mission Station for a tour of the gardens and learn about early settlers. The afternoon is leisure time.

Wednesday, January 31:*Meals: B,L,D*

This is a day at sea, cruising in the **Bay of Plenty** and around the Coromandel Peninsula.

Thursday, February 1:*Meals: B,D*

We arrive in **Auckland** and bid farewell to the Maasdam. We drive over the Harbour Bridge and north to the Bay of Islands via the Northern Gateway toll road with 13 bridges and tunnels. Paihia is the main tourist town in the Bay of Islands. We take a tour of the **Waitangi Treaty House**, considered the birthplace of New Zealand where the "Treaty of Waitangi" was signed in 1840 by the Maori Chiefs and the British Crown. We stay overnight at the Copthorne Hotel.

Friday, February 2:*Meals: B,L*

We take a four-hour cruise in the **Bay of Islands** with a stop at iconic Hole in the Rock and a barbecue lunch on board. This afternoon, we drive back into Auckland and stay two nights at the Stamford Plaza Hotel.

Saturday, February 3:*Meals: B,L*

We drive through the wine growing areas of Kumeu and Huapai to Muriwai Beach, and visit a **gannet colony**. This is one of the world's largest seabirds and the colony is situated on the cliff-top overlooking the Tasman Sea. At maturity, a gannet has a wingspan of up to two metres and can reach speeds of around 140 kmh when diving for food. You can take a walk to a black (iron) sand beach and admire the huge waves, a popular place for surfing. Next, we visit a working sheep and cattle farm and watch sheep shearing and mustering demonstrations. Back in Auckland, there is a drive past city sights to the hotel.

Sunday, February 4:*Meals: B,L,D*

We drive south from Auckland through Hamilton and Otoroha to the **Waitomo Caves**. Experience

the magic of the renowned glow-worm grotto during an underground boat ride and explore the spectacular limestone formations of the nearby Aranui Cave. We continue to the thermal wonderland of **Rotorua** where waters and mud are heated below ground under immense natural pressure and we are treated to a continuous geothermal spectacle of erupting geysers and turbulent, swirling pools of mud. We stay overnight at the Novotel Rotorua Lakeside Hotel. Tonight is our farewell dinner at **Mitai Maori Cultural Village**. Enjoy an introduction to Maori customs and traditions, followed by an authentic Hangi meal that is cooked in an earth oven. The performance include songs and dances, tales and legends, displays of weaponry and combat, the grace and beauty of the poi dance, and the spine-tingling haka finale.

Monday, February 5:*Meals: B,L*

We start with a visit to **Te Puia**, including the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, a live kiwi enclosure, the famous **Pohutu Geyser**, and more than 500 geothermal wonders. Then we drive along Lake Rotorua and cross the scenic Mamaku Ranges to reach Waikato. This region is best known as the filming locations for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* and we take a guided walk into the **Hobbiton Movie Set**. It has been returned to its natural state, but hobbit holes and structures used in the films can be seen. This afternoon, we drive to Auckland Airport for an 8 pm flight departure on Air New Zealand. It is 14 hours to Vancouver, but we cross the International Date Line and arrive at noon on the same date. Transportation is provided to your pickup point in Victoria.

Tour Policies

Payments: A deposit of \$1,000 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due October 3, 2017.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$300 discount on first 12 seats and \$150 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after October 3.

Cancellation Policy: Up to August 23, 2017, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$50 per person. From August 24 to October 3, the cancellation charge is \$400 per person. From October 4 to November 3, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. From November 4 to December 4, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After December 4, there is no refund.

Changes to tour: As this tour has been planned nearly a year in advance, changes to foreign currency exchange rates and taxes, and surcharges from airlines, the cruise ship and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours. Air New Zealand will not confirm 2018 fares until April 2017, so the air fare included in this tour has been estimated, based on 2017 fares and could be higher or lower. For all these reasons Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure. Hotels named in the itinerary could change, but substitute accommodation will be of similar or better quality.

Home pickups and dropoffs may be offered in Greater Victoria, depending on the number of people booked and the size of the chartered vehicle. Decision is made about 2 weeks before departure and you will be contacted about your pickup point and time.

Photo Credit: Fraser Neave

e-points: This tour earns 157 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until October 3.

Consumer Protection BC Licence: #65842