



THE 2024 OZSKY "ALUMNI" STAR SAFARI

SEPTEMBER 30 – OCTOBER 7, 2024

BINDA, NSW, AUSTRALIA

WWW.OZSKY.ORG | INFO@OZSKY.ORG

LAST-MINUTE REMINDERS

With only two weeks to go until your upcoming trip to Australia and The OzSky "Alumni" Star Safari, you've undoubtedly got everything booked, confirmed, and planned by now, however the following brief list offers some last-minute checkpoints which might be useful in ensuring you're fully prepared for your trip. This list is by no means exhaustive but is merely intended to be a helpful guide.

TICKETS, PASSPORT & VISA / ETA

- Have you booked/confirmed your airline tickets?
- **Important:** Is your passport packed, and valid for at least 6 months after your return date?
- Have you taken a photocopy or scan of your passport, credit cards etc, packed them separately from your passport and cards, and/or left a copy with someone at home?
- **Important:** Have you obtained your Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) or Australian Visa. If you haven't, or don't know what this is, visit: <http://www.eta.immi.gov.au> ASAP.
- Have you booked/confirmed your **Rental Car**?
- Have you considered optional or additional car **insurance** for your rental car?
- Have you packed your **driver's license**? You will need to carry it with you whenever driving.
- If you're car-pooling with other OzSky folks, have you confirmed and shared details with those people?
- During your time in Sydney, if you do not have a contactless (PayWave-enabled) Credit Card or payment-enabled smart phone, **pick up an "Opal Card"** as soon as you arrive and load some money onto it.
 - This will get you onto all public transport in Sydney, including Trains, Buses, Trams, Ferries and Tardis – all using the one card.
 - Using either a PayWave-enabled credit card, a smart-phone or an Opal card means you can hop on and off whenever you like without needing to buy separate tickets each time.
 - Opal Cards are available at the train station at Sydney Airport or at any other train station, as well as many newsagents and convenience stores. The card itself is free – just load money onto it.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- **Important:** there is no cell phone coverage at the OzSky "Alumni" observing site, but there is coverage in town and in nearby areas for most cell providers.
- If you're bringing a cell-phone or 3G/4G device, have you considered activating global roaming on your account? While you may not intend using it here in Oz, it could be useful to have in the case of emergencies, and in most cases does not cost anything to activate if you don't actually use it.
- Once you've arrived in Oz, consider purchasing a local SIM card for your cell phone which you can use while in Oz, at local call rates! Make sure your cell phone is not locked to your home carrier though. We normally suggest using Telstra as it typically has the greatest coverage in the remote areas you are most likely to be during your trip.
- If you don't already have global access to your emails via webmail, smart-device or other methods, have you considered setting up a free worldwide email account that you can access while travelling, for example with Gmail, Hotmail or Yahoo (*just to name a few*).
- **Important:** If you have security settings on your webmail account, be sure to check that your security settings will allow you to log in from other countries! For example, you may need to remove your cell phone number from those existing security options if you're not using global roaming, as this is often how your email provider will send you a security message to confirm your identity, and if you don't have roaming activated, you won't receive that message or confirmation code.
- WiFi is available on-site at the OzSky "Alumni" site, however, due to the remoteness of the site, please expect connectivity to be intermittent from time to time, and do not place reliance on consistent connectivity if your circumstances require significant consistency.

MEDICAL AND TRAVEL INSURANCE

- Have you considered combined medical/health and travel insurance?
- Have you packed all your pills / medications?
- Remember to organize any prescriptions or medications you will need during the trip and add these to your carry-on luggage. The prescription bottles should have the same name as your passport.
- There are pharmacies (drug stores) and limited medical services available at Crookwell, however the nearest major hospital is at Goulburn (*approx. 1-hour drive from the OzSky "Alumni" site*).
- Have you packed your glasses/spectacles, contact lenses, hearing aids or other medical equipment?
- Have you packed any spare or special batteries? (*for hearing aids etc*).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Have you considered registering and activating a PIN number on your credit or debit card?
- An easy way to get money in Australia is simply to use the ATM machines, or get cash out with purchases in major supermarkets, etc.
- Many folks agree that you'll probably get the best exchange rates doing this. However, check with your bank before you depart to make sure your card will work for such withdrawals and that you have a registered and activated a PIN number for your cash withdrawal card.
- **Important: Have you notified your bank that you will be in Australia and that you might be using your card(s) in Australia?** The last thing you want is for your credit card to be blocked because your bank's security team detects purchases coming from a remote country town in Australia.
- Make sure you've got a few AUD \$\$\$ in emergency cash for taxi / van / train ride from the airport (*there are Automatic Teller Machines at the airport*).

ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS

- **Before and after OzSky:** Have you booked your accommodation in Sydney (*or elsewhere*)?
- **On-site accommodation during OzSky:** No need to confirm – just check-in to your assigned room upon arrival and enjoy your stay.

LUGGAGE RESTRICTIONS

- Make sure your airline ticket has a sufficient baggage allowance for each leg of your journey to, from, and within, Australia.
- Remember when travelling by air, there are a whole host of restrictions around what you can and cannot carry on or put in carry-on (and checked) luggage these days. Triple-check your luggage before arriving at the airport!

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO BRING

- Favourite Eyepieces and Filters (*optional*). *Each OzSky telescope includes a limited set of eyepieces available however many folks often like to bring their own preferred eyepieces and/or filters.*
- **DIM RED** Flashlight (but NO "head lights", please!)
- Binoculars, cameras/tripods, Star Charts, etc
- Travel Scope, Sky Tracking camera mount, etc
- Chargers for your camera, phone, computer, etc
- Warm clothes and extra layers for cold weather, as well as suitable clothes for hot weather
- Reusable or disposable Hand Warmers – Extremely handy for cold nights, or when you want to keep your eyepieces warm!
- Swimsuit (*yes, there is a swimming pool at OzSky!*)
- Sun hat (*or buy an "Akubra" hat when you arrive*)
- **Here's a link to a universal packing list** which might be helpful in packing your bags.

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS

- You can usually buy warm, woollen Ugg Boots in Crookwell at a footwear store. You can also buy a great Aussie Akubra-style hat, along with a variety of other sun hats at many local stores.
 - There are shared laundry facilities at the accommodation site, so feel free to pack lightly knowing that you can wash your clothes during the week.
 - Sunset is just after 6:00pm, and Astronomical Twilight ends around 7:30pm.
 - **Important: Official "Dark Out" provisions will apply from 7:00pm each night at OzSky.** Absolutely no lights will be permitted after 7:00pm, and all room curtains are to be fully drawn closed.
 - **Daylight Savings Time** officially commences at 02:00am on the morning of **Sunday October 6th**, so be sure to adjust your devices accordingly.
-