

JOIN THE 60th ANNIVERSARY SOUTHERN AURORA

The original journey - Sydney to Melbourne and return;
Anzac Day at Puffing Billy in the Dandenong Ranges;
Victorian High Country wineries and food

Saturday 23 – Thursday 28 April 2022



Highlights include:

- Six day/five night rail cruise to Melbourne and return
- Celebrate the 60th year of the *Southern Aurora*
- *Southern Aurora* private sleeping compartments
- Meals in the *Southern Aurora* Dining cars
- Enjoy drinks in the *Southern Aurora* Lounge Cars
- Anzac Day at Puffing Billy in the Dandenong Ranges
- Recreate the Sydney to Melbourne rail experience
- Two nights in Melbourne at a 4.5 star hotel
- Violet Town Southern Aurora Memorial visit
- Victorian High Country food, wines & produce
- Simple ceremonies in Sydney, Albury & Melbourne
- Breakfast along the Moss Vale to Wollongong line

The ‘Southern Aurora’ – a 1960’s icon of the nation— the gleaming, stainless steel ‘Southern Aurora’ pioneered luxury overnight rail travel on the Sydney – Melbourne standard gauge rail line in the 1960’s. Sixty years since it began, the ‘Southern Aurora’s’ comfortable sleeping, lounge / bar and restaurant cars continue to provide a unique experience to enjoy civilised rail travel.

Freshly prepared meals in the restaurant cars - aboard our train, high quality food is served. Meals in the stylish air-conditioned restaurant cars are a journey highlight, providing a unique and civilised culinary experience, accompanied by panoramic views. Quality table d’hote modern Australian meals are prepared by experienced chefs and served by friendly, efficient waiters. Breakfasts feature fresh fruits, muesli, cereals, juices, a hot savoury course, toast and preserves. Luncheons and dinners aboard are quality two course meals, freshly cooked on the train – main courses, with tempting desserts and tea/coffee. Enjoy included premium Australian wines with your meal, and afterwards relax in the lounge car with a cleansing ale or glass of port. Retire to your sleeping compartment at your leisure and sleep comfortably for the night.



Licensed 'Southern Aurora' lounge / bar cars provide a spacious and social environment to relax in comfort and enjoy the views with a range of alcoholic and soft drinks. Enjoy your favourite drink with friends as the afternoon light illuminates colours and silhouettes of the Australian landscape.

A night out aboard the 'Southern Aurora' - overnight aboard features restful travel in cosy sleeping cabins. The well-appointed sleeping cabins provide a private and comfortable wide vision sitting room by day and are easily converted to a cosy bedroom at night. Watch from your private bedroom as the night sky passes outside your compartment window, and be lulled to sleep by the 'rhythm of the rails.' The train generally remains stationary from late evening until early morning to ensure a restful sleep. The air-conditioned 'Southern Aurora' offers single ('roomette') and twin ('twinette') cabins – twin cabins have ensuite toilets, washbasins and hot showers, whilst single cabins have their own washbasin, with two large shower / toilet rooms at the end of the car. Sleeping berths are prepared with freshly laundered bed linen and blankets, with all cabins having fresh towels, luggage storage, power points, main, reading and night lights, cupboard and mirror. Complimentary toiletries are provided and tea and coffee is also available on board throughout the rail journey.

OUR JOURNEY THROUGH SOUTHERN NSW AND NORTH EAST VICTORIA

In April 2022 we offer the comfort and elegance of rail travel in lounge, dining and sleeping cars of the Southern Aurora, with the opportunity to celebrate sixty years of the famous train. Combine this with Anzac Day in the Dandenong Ranges, Victoria, aboard the famous preserved steam train journey Puffing Billy, visit the Violet Town Memorial Park with its Southern Aurora memorial, and experience some of the fine food, wines, craft and scenery of the Victorian High Country around Benalla and Wangaratta. You'll explore and taste gourmet foods and wines of the King Valley and Milawa, as well as the scenery of Victoria's north-east. Featuring visits to wineries, local gourmet producers, as well as the offering of great tastes aboard, prepared in the Aurora's kitchens by talented chefs and served to you in the dining car.

MARK THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTHERN AURORA

We are planning simple ceremonies in Sydney, Albury and Melbourne to commemorate sixty years of this famous train – as well as marking the unfortunate accident involving the Southern Aurora at Violet Town, Victoria, in February 1969.

OUR ITINERARY

SATURDAY 23 APRIL 2022 (D) – from Sydney via the Main South Line towards Melbourne – meet late afternoon to prepare for boarding the 60th Anniversary Southern Aurora. A simple ceremony on Platform One marks sixty years since the inauguration of the Southern Aurora on 16 April, 1962. Enjoy welcome aboard drinks in the lounge cars, followed by ‘dinner in the diner’ – commencing at the traditional time of 7pm, before our departure at 8pm for Melbourne. A celebratory meal inspired by the original menus of the Southern Aurora - served with included wine and soft drinks - as we roll south through the Sydney suburbs to the Southern Highlands, and into the night. Enjoy a post-dinner drink in the lounge cars before retiring to your freshly prepared bedroom.



SUNDAY 24 APRIL 2022 (B/L) – Albury and to Melbourne – enjoy breakfast in the dining cars as we head south from Junee towards Wagga Wagga, for a mid-morning arrival into Albury. Ten years ago with the late Hon Tim Fischer AC we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Southern Aurora at Albury. This morning we mark sixty years since the opening of the north-east standard gauge line from Melbourne to Albury, eliminating the break-of-gauge between the two capital cities. Reboard the Southern Aurora as we enjoy luncheon in the dining cars travelling south through Wangaratta and Benalla to Melbourne for a late afternoon arrival. At Melbourne’s Southern Cross (originally Spencer St) Railway Station, we cross the road to our 4.5 star accommodation for two nights. (Melbourne’s new Movenpick Hotel or similar.) Enjoy a late afternoon walk along Melbourne’s Southbank, a short distance from the hotel, or a few minutes on the tram. Dinner tonight is at leisure in one of Melbourne’s many simple or fine eateries – a short tram ride will take you to myriad restaurants, or further afield to St Kilda or Fitzroy St, Carlton.

MONDAY 25 APRIL 2022 (ANZAC DAY) (B/L) – the Dandenong Ranges and Puffing Billy – enjoy breakfast in the hotel restaurant, then meet to join the local rail service to Belgrave, where we begin our journey with Puffing Billy. Originally opened in 1900, the 2’6” gauge steam hauled rail line was built to serve the needs of the farming and timber communities of the Dandenong Ranges.



Closed in 1954, the efforts of local enthusiasts, supported by then journalist, railway aficionado, author and SJR traveller, the late David Burke, led to the line re-opening in 1962 for heritage operations. Today we mark Anzac Day with the volunteers and staff at Puffing Billy, enjoying a journey through the Dandenong Ranges and some great photo opportunities. The newly opened Lakeside Visitors Centre provides our luncheon venue – with displays, fine views and the sound of steam engines. In the late afternoon we return to Melbourne, with dinner at leisure, and overnight in our comfortable hotel accommodation.



TUESDAY 26 APRIL 2022 (B/L/D) – Melbourne to Violet Town and north into the night – enjoy breakfast at the hotel before meeting late morning at Southern Cross Station opposite for a simple ceremony with Victorian representatives to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Southern Aurora. Board the Southern Aurora as countless interstate travellers did before you, and enjoy luncheon in the dining cars with wines included, as we head north-east out of Melbourne, through the Melbourne suburbs and then countryside to Seymour, Euroa and to Violet Town. On 7 February 1969 at 0700hrs, the southbound Southern Aurora collided with a freight train – resulting in both loss of life and injury. Today a memorial park has been maintained and expanded opposite Violet Town station, with a Southern Aurora carriage and plaque recording the names of those involved in the accident. We join with representatives of the Southern Aurora Memorial committee as we recall this event. We rejoin the Southern Aurora late afternoon and head north through Benalla and Wangaratta – enjoy a pre-dinner drink in the lounge cars, then join us for dinner in the restaurant cars, with wine included, as we head north into the night. Relax with friends and a post-dinner drink in the lounge cars, and retire for the evening as the sound of the rails rocks you to sleep. The Southern Aurora will stable in the late evening though early morning for a restful sleep.

WEDNESDAY 27 APRIL 2022 (B/L/D) – Victorian High Country and the King Valley – wake this morning as we head south through southern NSW and return into the north-eastern Victorian countryside. Enjoy breakfast in the dining cars travelling through north-east Victoria as thousands did when the train was in regular daily operation – morning fare with views of Victorian countryside.



We alight at Benalla and join coaches for a day of sightseeing through the Victorian High Country around Whitfield and then into the King Valley for wine tasting, local produce and luncheon. In the afternoon we visit Milawa with its collection of local produce and craft, with time to explore the village, visit local shops and acquire some of the fine local produce. Rejoin our coaches and head to Albury, where the Southern Aurora awaits. Board the train and enjoy a pre-dinner drink in the lounge cars, before our final dinner aboard in the dining car. Served with accompanying wines and soft drinks, we mark dinner aboard for the 60th Anniversary of the famous Southern Aurora. Enjoy a post-dinner nightcap in the lounge cars then retire for your final night aboard.

THURSDAY 28 APRIL 2022 (B) – breakfast on the Illawarra escarpment and to Sydney – wake as we head north through Goulburn and to Moss Vale, and enjoy breakfast as we travel along the scenic Moss Vale to Unanderra rail line, with its sub-tropical vegetation and fine coastal views. Although not the original itinerary of the Southern Aurora, the train was occasionally diverted along this route when the Main Southern Line was closed north of Moss Vale. Enjoy the splendid views across the Illawarra as we slowly descend to the coast, and then through Wollongong and through the southern suburbs to Sydney. The end of our spectacular rail cruise to the Riverina, Central West, North West and Upper Hunter regions of NSW aboard the Southern Aurora.

FARES* (all sightseeing, accommodation, rail/coach travel, meals as indicated, wine/soft drinks with lunch/dinner aboard the train) – fares are per person for two sharing a twinette compartment /hotel room or sole use of a roomette compartment)

Two people sharing a twinette or sole use of roomette \$4,990 per person
(Roomette -single cabin - bookings include sole use hotel rooms)

Supplement for sole use of twin sleeping compartment \$3,990
(A limited number of sole use twin cabins are available - includes sole use hotel rooms)

TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE, please complete the attached booking form and send to:

SJR, PO Box N400, GROSVENOR PLACE 1220 with a deposit cheque payable to St James Rail.

You can also pay by EFT:

Bank:	Westpac	Account name:	Scenic Journeys by Rail Pty Ltd
BSB:	033 364	Account number:	612826

A non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to secure your place. The balance is payable by 1 March 2022. Cancellation charges apply as follows: Cancellation before 1 March 2022, loss of deposit. Cancellation from 1 March 2022 no refund. An insurance policy is available from our travel agent - Jones and Turner, Travel Associates, Paddington, 2021 – please advise if you would like us to forward a policy to you. The advertised itinerary is based on information at the time of printing. SJR reserves the right to amend the itinerary based on operational requirements imposed by the operator of the train and rail network owners. If COVID precludes the operation of the tour, funds paid will be transferred to the SJR April 2023 Aurora Rail Cruise. Full terms and conditions applicable to all SJR (St James Rail) tours are available on request.

Telephone 02 9326 9660 Mobile 0418 585 838 Email sjr@digitor.com.au

**60th ANNIVERSARY
SOUTHERN AURORA
RAIL CRUISE BOOKING FORM
Saturday 23 – Thursday 28 April 2022**

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Name:
Address: Suburb: Postcode:
Home tel: Mobile:
Email:

BOOKING DETAILS

Passenger 1 Name:
Passenger 2 Name:
Passenger 3 Name:
Passenger 4 Name:

PAYMENT

I have enclosed / sent by EFT \$ as deposit (\$1,000 per person) for the above booking and agree to pay the balance by 1 March 2022. Please make cheques payable to St James Rail. A letter acknowledging receipt of your deposit will be forwarded.

SLEEPING CAR AND HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Twin compartment - twinette Hotel Room – Queen/King Bed
Sole use twin compartment Hotel Room – Twin Beds
Single compartment - roomette Sole Use Hotel Room

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please indicate any **dietary** or any other special requirement :
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YOUR SIGNATURE

I have read the reservation conditions outlined above and accept them on behalf of myself and my party by whom I am authorised to make this agreement. I understand cancellation fees may apply. I have enclosed my deposit payment and agree to pay the balance as indicated above.

Signature of person making booking:..... Date:

Payment by cheque payable to St James Rail, or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to:

Bank: Westpac
Account name: Scenic Journeys by Rail
BSB: 033 364
Account: 612826
Reference: Anzac 2022 (and your surname) – some bank transfers cannot accept this, so please email your reference.

If paying by EFT, please send this form marked accordingly, and/or send an email to sjr@digitor.com.au to advise us of your payment.

January 2022