

## 2017 Alaska Hand Spinners Cruise Frequently Asked Questions

You are about to embark on a wonderful travel experience that combines the peaceful art of hand spinning and the beauty and excitement of cruising! Friends and family who are non-spinners are also welcome! Knitters, weavers...you are welcome also! Whether you are a first-time cruiser or a more experienced traveler, these FAQs have been assembled in hopes of providing you with answers to questions that might be on your mind. This is not an exhaustive list of information but is intended as a guide in helping you plan for your cruise and avoid unexpected "surprises". This list will be updated periodically as the tour date draws closer. I am here to help and am happy to answer other questions you may have. You can contact me at [deb@fibergarden.com](mailto:deb@fibergarden.com), or phone 715.284.4590. I look forward to traveling with you!

### Pre-cruise:

- **Are the reservation and payment dates negotiable?** It is VERY important that you adhere to all stated deadlines for making reservations and payments. These deadlines are set by the cruise line. Our group will lose its reserved spaces onboard the ship if deposits and final payments are not made on time. In addition, there are a limited number of spaces available. Staterooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Can the price of the cruise be increased?** The prices listed for this cruise are guaranteed and cannot be raised. However, the cruise lines are frequently offering special promotions. If there is a promotion running at the time you send in your reservation for the cruise, you will be charged either the advertised rate for our cruise (see the chart below) or the promotional rate, whichever is lower.
- **What do I need to include when planning my budget for the trip?** Trip cost is a concern to most of us. Here are some guidelines here of some known and optional costs to assist you in developing a realistic budget for the trip.
  - Let's start with the basic trip costs. The chart below can also be found in part two of the cruise reservation form. A description of what is included is detailed in the top box of the table. As you can see, you get a lot for your money! That's why cruising is such a good value for your dollar. To make sure there are no surprise "hidden" fees, included are taxes, gratuities and port fees in these prices. Many times when you see an advertised cruise price, these items are not included...and they amount to a significant percent of your total cruise fare!

Price includes stateroom, meals, prepaid gratuities, receptions, one evening group specialty dining, port fees, cruise taxes, \$50 on-board credit per stateroom. Spinners package also includes all materials and instruction for on-board spinning workshops during three days at sea, special cruise memento gift, group photo.

|                                      | Spinner double occupancy per person | Spinner single occupancy | Non-spinner double occupancy | Non-spinner single occupancy |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Interior stateroom</a>   | 1630                                | 2649                     | 1405                         | 2424                         |
| <a href="#">Ocean View</a>           | 2110                                | 3609                     | 1885                         | 3384                         |
| <a href="#">Ocean View w/Balcony</a> | 2410                                | 4209                     | 2185                         | 3984                         |

- Travel insurance. A copy of the insurance policy can be found on the cruise web page. Please carefully read the information on travel insurance and consider how it may help protect your investment and provide peace of mind should something outside of your control force you to cancel your trip. The Fiber Garden will provide you with a price quote which varies by the age of the traveler and trip cost. If you have questions regarding the policy and its coverage, please contact Travel Guard directly at 1.800.826.1300

- Transportation. You will need to plan costs for transportation to and from Seattle, WA and the cruise port ([Port of Seattle](#)).
- If you fly to Seattle, you will need transportation directly to the cruise port if you are flying in on the day our cruise departs. You can get a cab to the cruise terminal or we can arrange other ground transportation for you through a shuttle service. Expect to pay \$50-\$75 for a cab, the cost of which can be split among all riders or you can use a shared shuttle service for approximately \$25 per person. The other option is to purchase a "transfer" from the cruise lines. If you have a transfer, a representative from Princess Cruises will meet you at the airport baggage claim area, signage in hand, and escort you to a shuttle that will take you to the cruise terminal. The cost for the transfer is currently \$48 one way per person (price subject to change ). (Pre AND post cruise transfers are available). Port of Seattle parking is \$26/day if you drive directly to the cruise port. Parking can be reserved on-line prior to your arrival.
- If you fly (or drive) into Seattle the day prior to the cruise, we will have a block of rooms reserved at a Seattle hotel. Location and rates will be posted on the cruise webpage. If you choose to spend the night of August 13 in Seattle rather than heading home that day, we will also have a block of rooms reserved for that evening.
- You may choose to arrive more than one day prior to your cruise for some pre-cruise exploration of the area. Likewise you might want to extend your trip after the cruise. These costs will need to be included in your budget. Deb is happy to help you plan these added adventures if you need/want assistance.
- Once you are onboard the stunning Emerald Princess, there will be some additional expenses, if you choose. All of our evening meals will be served in the beautiful main dining room and are included in your cruise fare. You may also get breakfast and lunch there. In addition, there are several other complimentary eating options on the ship! You can get food most anytime of the day or night without paying anything extra. There are other options for both a light snack or beverage, or an elegant dinner in which there is an additional charge. You might choose to splurge some evening and make a reservation at one of the specialty restaurants instead of joining our group meal in the dining room. [The choice is yours.](#)
- Beverages. Plain coffee (not specialty coffees), iced tea, and water (non-bottled) is available at no charge. Soda, juice, and alcoholic beverages are all at an additional charge. If you are addicted to soda, or you think you will be enjoying a variety of beverages daily throughout the cruise, there are beverage packages you can purchase. These packages can get pricey, so make sure you'll get your monies worth. Otherwise just pay for each beverage individually.
- Shore excursions. If you'd like to participate in a cruise-line or Fiber Garden sponsored shore excursion during our days in port, you will need to budget for these. They vary in price. Deb can assist you with shore excursion reservations prior to the cruise.
- There will be some optional fee-based programs and activities provided by the cruise line. But there will also be the majority of on-board activities which will not have an additional fee including many educational and social programs, entertainment and much more!
- Spa and salon treatments. Princess offers the Lotus Spa on board their ships. If you want to be pampered in the spa, there will be a cost. (Tip: check for spa specials during the days in port. Because many people are on shore that day, if you want to relax onboard the ship there may be some special deals.)
- Internet service. If you want to stay connected to the outside world through your own computer, tablet, smartphone or one of the ships computers there will be a charge and costs vary based on the number of minutes you purchase.
- Be sure and budget for those treasures you'll want to purchase to remember your trip. There will be lots of interesting shops to explore all throughout our trip.
- Gratuities. The pre-paid gratuities included in the cruise fee (\$90.65) are divided among your stateroom, housekeeping and dining staff. In addition, there will be a 15% gratuity added to bar service beverages and spa/salon services during your cruise. (More about gratuities in the "during your cruise" section below.)

- This list is not all-inclusive, but should provide the major expenses you need to consider when planning the budget for your trip. Once onboard, there are many, many options for eating and activity that will cost you nothing additional.
- **What is the refund policy if I need to cancel my trip?** The following schedule applies to individuals who must cancel their trip reservation:
  - Cancellations prior to May 24, 2017: Full refund less a \$50 administrative fee.
  - May 24 – June 10, 2017: Cancellation fee is \$10% of total trip cost
  - June 11 – July 8, 2017: Cancellation fee is 50% of trip cost per guest
  - July 9 – July 22, 2017: Cancellation fee is 75% of trip cost per guest
  - July 23 and later: Cancellation fee is 100% of trip cost per guest

Reservations may NOT be transferred to another individual if you need to cancel. Check your travel insurance policy for trip cancellation coverage.

- **What do I need to know about making pre and post cruise transportation arrangements?** The Fiber Garden is happy to help you arrange flights. If you are flying, it is strongly suggested that you consider arriving the day prior to the cruise departure to allow for any unexpected airline delays or cancellations. If you plan to fly into Seattle on August 6 (the date of departure), we will book you using Princess EZair. This is the cruise lines air reservation system. Most important, they monitor your flights. Any flight you reserve must arrive in Seattle **no later than 1:00 on August 6** in order to allow adequate time to get to the cruise terminal and board the ship. Flights for the day of return, August 13, should be **scheduled after 12:00 p.m.** to allow ample time for the disembarkation process, transfer to the airport, and airport check-in.
- **What if I arrive the day prior to the cruise and need lodging?** If you fly (or drive) into Seattle the day prior to the cruise, we have a block of rooms reserved at an area hotel that has a shuttle from the airport. We will also arrange for group transfer to the cruise port on the day the cruise departs.
- **Is there a contract with the cruise line?** By purchasing a cruise, you enter into a contract with Princess Cruises. You can review the [passage contract](#).
- **Do I need a passport?** You will not need a passport for this cruise because it departs and returns from U.S. ports. **However, a passport is highly recommended!!!** Without a passport you will need proof of citizenship which includes a certified copy of your birth certificate and photo ID or a passport card. **A passport is the recommended form of citizenship proof!** Should unforeseen circumstances require you to leave the cruise early and you are in a country other than the U.S., you may not be able to take an international flight without a passport. If you need to apply for a passport or renew your passport, you can do so through the [U.S. Department of the State](#).
- **Where can I park if I drive to Seattle?** If you will be arriving a day or more prior to the cruise departure, you can keep your car parked at the hotel and take a shuttle to the cruise terminal for a fee. Parking is available at the Port of Seattle for \$26 a day. If you want to park somewhere other than in the terminal parking area, be sure to carefully research the parking facility and customer reviews
- **What should I pack?** If you are participating in the spinning workshops, you will need a spinning wheel, bobbins, handcards, any fibers you want to spin during our informal evening spin-ins, and a niddy-noddy. If there are some supplies you need that Deb can bring along for your use or purchase, just let her know in advance. Spinning wheels will be available for rent for \$100 for the cruise if you do not have a wheel that you can travel with or don't want the inconvenience of hauling one. See the cruise reservation form for details.

For the cruise, don't go overboard packing! You'll want casual clothes for the day time. Average temperatures will be about 60 degrees, so plan accordingly with layers of clothing to keep you comfortable. Most evening meals will have a "smart casual" dress code. Dress as you would for dinner at any nice restaurant with shirts and ties for men and dresses, skirts or pantsuits for women. There will be two formal nights on board with attire of suit and tie or tuxedo for men and cocktail dresses for women. Don't go out and purchase a lot of new duds for this trip (unless you have the budget and want to do so!). Tuxedos and fancy evening gowns will be worn by some guests, but they are not the expectation. Pack so that you can make several outfits out of a few pieces of clothing. Bring comfortable shoes for lots of walking, and appropriate shoes and clothes if you plan to use the fitness center. Leave room in your luggage

for the treasures you're sure to pick up along the way! And remember...the staterooms are very small. You don't want to be tripping over lots of luggage all week!

- ***What about a spinning wheel?*** If you do not have a portable spinning wheel that you can travel with, you will be able to rent a wheel for use during the cruise at a cost of \$100. Should you fall in love with the wheel, you will have the option to purchase the wheel at the end of the cruise with your full rental fee being applied to the purchase price. If you'd prefer to order a wheel for purchase prior to the cruise, it can be shipped to you at no charge to arrive at your home prior to your trip OR it can be ordered for you to pick-up when you arrive on board the ship.
- ***What happens to my luggage when I arrive at the cruise terminal?*** Once at the terminal your luggage will be handled by the porters and you will be separated from it. It will be important that you have a small carry-on bag that you keep with you with any toiletries, medications or clothing you will need for your first hours onboard the ship. Dinner the first evening will be more casual since guests may not yet have their luggage. At some point late in the afternoon or early in the evening, you will return to your stateroom and your luggage will have magically appeared! Now you can unpack for our time at sea!
- ***What else do I need to know to prepare for the cruise?*** There is a lot of information that could be shared here, but these are the very basics. The Fiber Garden will work with you every step of the way guiding you through the pre-trip preparations, cruise boarding documents, etc. Once you make your reservation for the cruise, please be sure to thoroughly read any information e-mailed or sent to you by Deb and the Fiber Garden. There is also a lot of information on the [Princess Cruises](#) website that will be helpful and get you excited to set sail!

## **Onboard the Ship:**

- ***Will I get seasick?*** A common fear for first-time cruisers! Remember...this is a huge cruise ship, not a deep-sea fishing boat! Often you will not even know the ship is moving. Ships are equipped with stabilizers that reduce the side-to-side motion of the ship. You may feel a gentle motion at times. If waters are rough, there will be more motion. If you are concerned about this, we can try and get you a stateroom as close to mid-ship as possible or on a lower deck. If you are concerned about the potential for motion sickness, it is advisable to speak to your pharmacist or doctor before your trip. Once onboard, if you are feeling queasy, you can visit the medical center where medical personnel will assist you in getting back to normal. You can also purchase non-prescription medications from the onboard shops. The cruise along the inside passage of Alaska is generally in calm waters.
- ***How do I pay for things onboard the ship?*** As part of the boarding procedure you will be asked for a credit card that will be used to create your on board account. You will be given a Cruise Card which will serve multiple purposes. It serves as your stateroom key, your identification for each time you board the ship, and your onboard charge card for purchases not included in your cruise price. Anytime you make a purchase, order a beverage, request a fee-based service, you will be asked for your Cruise Card. (The casino is one place onboard where you will need cash.) You will receive a paper receipt for each purchase so you can review your final statement on the last evening of the cruise to make sure everything is correct. You will also be able to review your on-board account through guest services on your stateroom television. If everything is correct, the credit card associated with your Cruise Card account will automatically be charged.
- ***What about gratuities?*** As previously mentioned, your gratuities for dining staff, stateroom stewards, and housekeeping will be pre-paid for you as part of your cruise fare in the amount of \$12.95/day/person. However, in the unlikely event that should you experience poor service, and you would like to reduce the amount of the gratuities you pre-paid, you can do so at Guest Services and your account will be credited accordingly. You are also welcome to tip an amount in addition to what you pre-paid. There will be envelopes available onboard and in your stateroom to leave cash for staff you wish to tip additional at the end of the cruise. (Additional tipping is *not* an expectation; it is completely up to you.) For bar service beverages and on-board salon/spa services you will find an automatic 15% gratuity added to your bill. Again you can add additional tip if you wish before you sign the charge receipt, but you should not feel any pressure to tip beyond the 15%.
- ***Is there internet access onboard the ship?*** Yes, there are various hotspots located around the ship as well as an internet café. There is a charge for these services.

- ***What about luggage at the end of the cruise?*** On the last evening of the cruise, you will need to place your luggage outside your stateroom by the designated time. Again, you will need to keep a carry-on with you with your travel clothes for the next day, medications, toiletries, etc. You will pick up your luggage in the baggage claim area of the terminal after you disembark.
- ***What is meant by a \$50 onboard credit per stateroom?*** This is one of the group amenities we receive. While \$50 won't buy you a diamond ring, it will cover a few of those specialty lattes, or a couple of glasses of wine before dinner, etc. When you receive your final statement of account on the last day of the cruise, this will show up as a credit on your statement. Enjoy with THANKS from the Fiber Garden!

## **Post-cruise:**

- ***How do I get from the cruise terminal to the airport?*** If you have purchased a transfer from the cruise line, you will board a bus that will transport you to the airport. This is the recommended method of transportation. If you do not have a transfer you can take a cab or another form of ground transportation service.
- ***What if I am participating in the post-cruise tour in the Seattle area?*** Arrangements will be made for our group to be transported from the cruise terminal to our post-cruise hotel location after disembarking on the morning of August 13.
- ***What if I want to spend a few extra days in the area after the cruise?*** No problem! The Fiber Garden can help make arrangements for you or you can make your own travel plans. There is lots to see and do in the beautiful Northwest of our country!

Please contact me if there are other questions that you need answered. I'm here to help you have the best of travel experiences! I will continue to update this document and will remain in communication with each traveler as the date of our trip approaches.

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