



IMPORTANT ASTRO TOUR INFORMATION – PLEASE READ IN FULL

Thank you for your interest in our Astro Tours at the Blue Mountains Observatory! We hope that you will experience an amazing journey through our wonderful universe. At an elevation of 947 meters, the facility boasts pristine skies but close enough too many shops and attractions in the area. The Blue Mountains Observatory is not simply “a tourist attraction”, at the rear of “Observatory Cottage”, is our fully internet remote controlled professional research astronomical observatory, with world renowned telescopes and imaging equipment.

You will receive at least a night of stargazing through the telescope in the main dome on top of the cottage (weather depending), during your stay and a qualified astronomer with 36 years of experience, will travel from Sydney to conduct your tour for you. Tours are only for paid guests staying at “Observatory Cottage”. If you have a casual visitor, the cost is \$50/person, payable to the astronomer, on-site.

Access to the dome, is via a locked hatch in the cottage master bedroom. For your security and privacy, the code for the front door key lock box for the cottage is changed for every booking and the astronomer has no key access.

Tour Start Times:

- **Your group needs to be present at the cottage by sunset, for access.**
- **The viewing telescope and dome must be setup just after sunset.**
- **If your group is not present by sunset, your tour may be cancelled with no refund.**
- **The tour will then commence when the sky becomes fully dark.**

If you can't arrive at the cottage on your first night by sunset, please ensure you notify us at the time of your booking and/or within 7 days of your tour, via email to info@bluemountainsobservatory.com.au In this case the astronomer will travel up from Sydney for your second night. Although this will reduce the chance of clear skies for the total duration of your stay.

The astronomer will knock on the cottage door, just after sunset to greet you, turn off any heating in the master bedroom, open the dome, setup the telescope, turn on the red lights to “dark adapt you” and provide an orientation, before you enter the dome. When fully dark, you will be invited upstairs into the dome. We strongly advise you to avoid bright lights, prior to the tour, to enable you to become “dark adapted.” **Leave all devices downstairs – blue light is the worst light to ruin your night vision! Ensure no late arrivals use high beams when driving up the driveway - this trips light sensors, which automatically close the observatory roof!**

The Tour:

We cater for people 8 years and older, who have never seen through a telescope before, right up to visiting astronomers. A very personal experience offered by no other facility - entirely tailored to your group's interests and enjoyment! This is not an observatory where you are waiting with 40 other people for 2 hours and only see a few objects. Instead, we have structured our tours in such a way that there will be no rush during observing time and you will receive the maximum opportunity for everyone in your group to enjoy the experience of a variety of astronomical objects. The tour is very comprehensive and educational and directed at a High School level. We regret that due to safety, telescope security and insurance reasons, children under 8 years old are not permitted in either of the observatories but are welcome to stay in the cottage and participate in the multimedia presentation and lecture, in the case of bad weather. Ensure you are dressed warmly, as the dome is open to the night air and that you are wearing sensible covered shoes – no thongs or open sandals. ***Any alcohol consumed will constrict your pupil and you will not be able to see faint objects through the telescope.*** The safety of our guests and the expensive telescope remains our top priorities, therefore, the astronomer has total discretion to refuse entry to any person.

- **Please do not approach the rear research observatory door, as you will trip security alarms and/or disturb the astronomer - he often works until dawn and requires sleep during the day. As a personal request - your very kind consideration in reducing noise in the rear parking area during the day is greatly appreciated....**

What happens if there is bad weather?

Obviously, we have no control over the weather. The sky needs to be clear, wind gusts below 29kms/h and relative humidity below 93%, to open the dome. Generally, if the first night is cloudy, then the tour will be postponed to the second night. If the second night is also cloudy, it will be postponed to the third night and so on, unless if similar poor conditions occur on your final night, you will be given a “technical tour” of the rear research facility and a very educational multimedia presentation in the lounge room of the cottage. Be assured that you will still have a wonderful educational experience, in any event! When you have received your one night of star gazing or technical tour - that will be the end of the astronomer’s commitment to you and he may then depart. Please provide him with exit access to the driveway.

Useful Internet Links & Contacts:

Our Home Page: www.bluemountainsobservatory.com.au

Cottage Bookings and Payments:

www.bluemountainsgetaways.com/accommodation/leura/observatory-cottage

Local sunset times: www.timeanddate.com/sun/@2160297

Local Weather Forecast: www.weatherzone.com.au/nsw/central-tablelands/leura

Our Live Weather Status: <http://users.tpg.com.au/users/stevencw/>

Astronomer’s email: hasen.williams@gmail.com

Astronomer’s phone: 041 88 66 179 (2pm-10pm only)

(The Astronomer, Dr. Hasen, can’t answer questions about bookings or costs - only AstroTours)

Conditions of Entry to Observatories:



DO NOT TOUCH THE TELESCOPES



TURN DEVICES AND PHONES OFF
(The screens ruin your night vision)



CHILDREN UNDER 8 YEARS ARE NOT
PERMITTED IN THE OBSERVATORIES



NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY
NO HIGH BEAMS IN DRIVEWAY



NO ADMITANCE IF AFFECTED BY ALCOHOL

The Management reserves the right to refuse any person.