

# Stargazing **GUIDE**

Welcome aboard Spirit of Tasmania! This guide will help you, our spirited travellers, to navigate the night sky as you sail across Bass Strait. Follow these simple steps to get the most out of your stargazing experience on board Spirit of Tasmania.

## **HOW TO USE YOUR STARGAZING MAP**

When sailing from Geelong to Devonport, point the top of the map toward the back (stern) of the ship, and when sailing from Devonport to Geelong, point it toward the front (bow). Hold the star map above you with the proper orientation. This will help you roughly match the map to the sky above you.

The star map shows the sky as it appears in the middle of the month at midnight near the middle of the journey. Depending on the exact date and time of your journey, there will be some slight differences, especially near the horizon. Use this map as a rough guide for what you might see on a clear night sailing across Bass Strait.

Please note, planets are not shown on the star map. To locate planets, look for bright objects that don't match the star patterns on the map. Check if these objects are steady and not twinkling. If so, you've probably spotted a planet!

The best views are on clear nights, so keep an eye on the weather forecast. Find a spot on the ship with minimal light interference for the best stargazing experience.

We hope you enjoy your celestial journey as you sail with Spirit of Tasmania.  
Happy stargazing!



# SEPTEMBER STARGAZING TIPS

In September, the centre of the Milky Way galaxy is well on its way to setting beyond the western horizon. The Southern Cross is getting very low in the southern part of the sky, almost completely upside down. Fun fact: the brightest of the two Southern Pointer stars, and the furthest from the Southern Cross, is Alpha Centauri, the closest star to the Solar System at just 4 light years away. One of the brightest stars highest in the sky, at the end of the Eridanus constellation, is Achernar, roughly 140 light years away. Achernar spins so rapidly that its width is about 35% larger than its height, making it the least spherical star known in the Milky Way.

