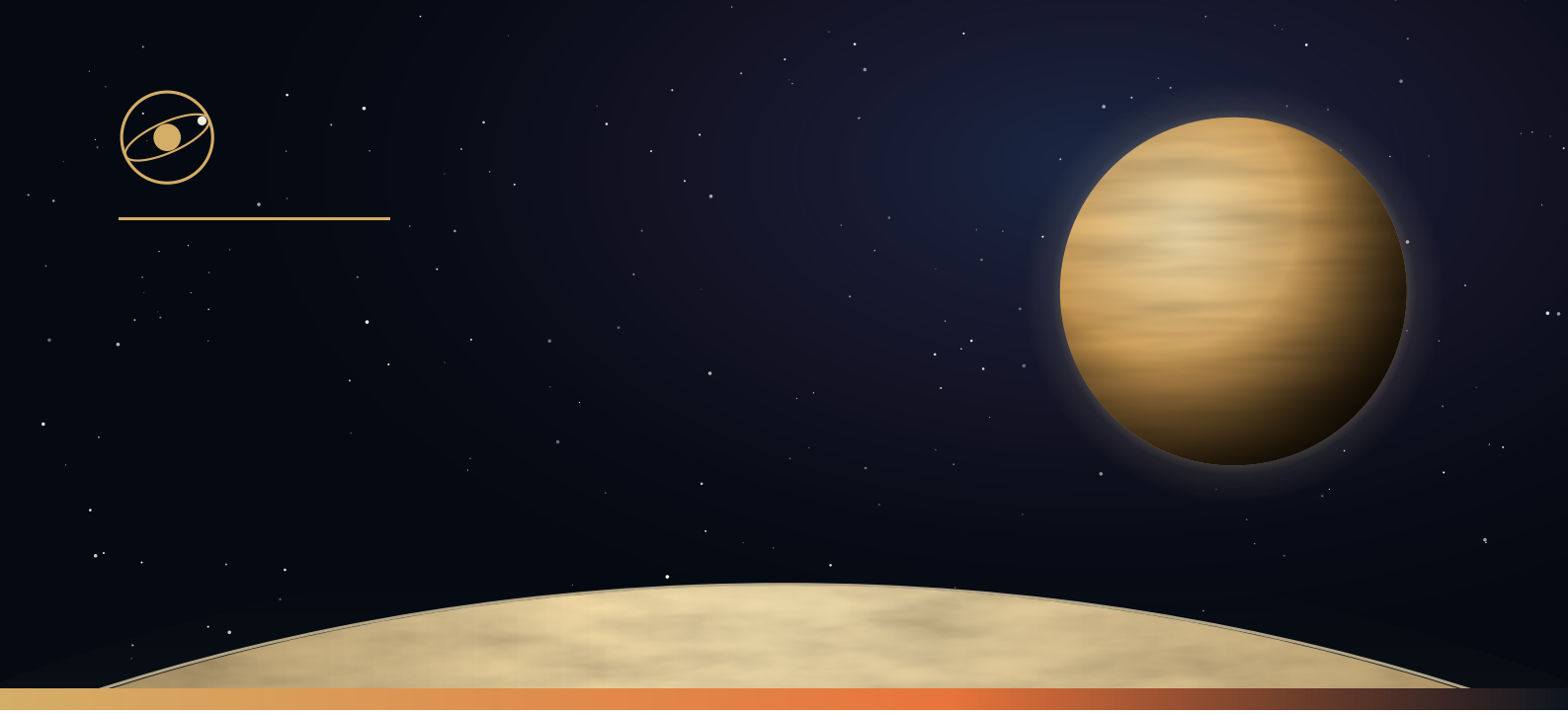


Gondola Descent — Into the Clouds of Venus

Pelorus Voyages · Excursion brochure · 2042–43 season

Leave the station. Enter the atmosphere. Descend 3 kilometres into the Venusian cloud layer.

The gondola detaches from The Aphrodite's lower hull and descends into the upper Venusian cloud deck. The descent takes approximately 15 minutes. You spend 45 minutes inside the clouds before the gondola ascends and redocks. Total time from boarding to exit: approximately 90 minutes.

Inside the cloud layer, the sulphuric acid aerosol creates haze ranging from translucent to near-opaque. The gondola windows fog and clear in cycles as the pod moves through regions of varying cloud density. The temperature outside during descent is approximately 75 degrees Celsius — visible as a slight shimmer on the panel seals. Inside, the temperature is standard cabin temperature. The experience is quiet, slightly disorienting, and unlike anything else on any Pelorus Voyages itinerary.

The gondola is the only vessel in the Pelorus portfolio that physically enters a planetary atmosphere. It is not dramatic in the cinematic sense. It is something stranger: suspension inside an alien sky, 52 kilometres above a surface no human can visit, completely alone in the clouds.

Booking details

The Gondola Descent is an add-on at all cabin classes. It is not included in any base fare. Pathfinder loyalty tier members receive a 48-hour priority booking window before the standard window opens. Loyalty tier is earned through Orbital Points and is separate from cabin class.

Detail	Value
Minimum age	16 years (firm; no parental consent override)

Maximum passengers per descent	8
Booking priority	Pathfinder loyalty tier — 48-hour advance window
Medical clearance	Standard voyage clearance plus gondola-specific cardiovascular clearance
Gondola clearance source	Same physician as standard clearance, or Pelorus-approved flight surgeon
Gondola cardiovascular clearance	Must be obtained before Earth departure; cannot be arranged during voyage
Return ascent deadline	Gondola must begin ascent no later than 90 minutes before departure window
Waiver	Required
Booking deadline	Before departure — add-ons close 48 hours before the Earth departure window; cannot be booked during the voyage

The gondola cardiovascular clearance is separate from and in addition to the standard voyage medical clearance. It specifically assesses the cardiovascular response to the pressure changes during the 3-kilometre descent. If you have any cardiovascular history, discuss the gondola specifically — not just spaceflight generally — with your physician.

Timing: the gondola must begin its return ascent 90 minutes before the departure window. The operator enforces this independently. Passengers combining the Glass Floor Tour and the Gondola Descent should schedule both on different days or with sufficient separation between them.

Book through the Pelorus Voyages account portal before departure. Demand consistently exceeds capacity at popular departure windows.

