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GLOSSARY

New Year’s Eve – the holiday celebrated on December 31; the night before the New Year (January 1)

* Normally their children go to bed early, but on New Year’s Eve they’re allowed to stay up until midnight.

harbor – an area of ocean water near the land that has strong walls to protect boats from bad weather

* The storm destroyed the boats that were on the ocean, but the boats in the harbor weren’t damaged at all.

cruise – a relaxing journey on the ocean, usually for a vacation

* After they were married, they went on a two-week cruise in the Caribbean.

fireworks – small objects that explode in the sky with a loud noise, producing bright lights in many colors, usually used for celebrations

* Many American towns and cities use fireworks to celebrate the country’s Independence Day on the fourth of July.

marina – a harbor (an area of ocean water near the land that has strong walls to protect boats) that is built especially for small boats, often with wooden walkways over the water to get access to the boats.

* Pedro and his uncle often fish in the marina where the fish are used to small boats coming and going.

to board – to get on a ship, airplane, bus, train, or another large vehicle for many people

* Melissa was a little bit nervous as she boarded a plane for the first time.

this was no... – this was not a...

* He took a long time getting dressed, because he knew that this was no ordinary day.

boat – a vehicle that floats and moves on the water and carries people or cargo (good and products)

* During the summer, they take their boat to the lake every weekend.

upper / lower – located above (upper) or below (lower) something else

* Unlike the lower floors, the upper floors of this office building have wonderful views of the city.



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deck – a floor or level of a ship or bus

* Some busses in London have two decks. Tourists like to sit on the top deck so that they can see the city.

crew – the staff or workers on a boat or ship

* Did all members of the crew return to the ship by 5 p.m.?

on board – on or inside a boat, ship, airplane, train, or bus

* Move aside, please, so everyone can get on board.

life jackets – vests (jackets with no arms) that people wear so that they will float if they fall into the water, usually filled with air or other material

* These boats are supposed to have enough life jackets for everyone on board.

captain – the highest-ranking (most important and powerful) member of the crew; the person who leads, runs, or manages everything on a boat or ship

* It looks like a bad storm is coming! Does the captain seem worried about it?

passenger – a person or guest traveling on a boat, ship, airplane, train, or bus

* Their boat is small and can only hold seven passengers.

seasick – a bad feeling in one’s stomach and dizziness caused by being on moving water, usually when one is on a boat or ship

* Andrea gets seasick very easily, so she always has to take a pill before she steps onto a boat.

Coast Guard – a part of the U.S. military that protects the people and land along the country’s coasts (where water and land meet)

* Our boat’s motor stopped working while we were a mile from land, so we had to wait for the Coast Guard to come help us.

on shore – on land; off of a boat or ship

* Do you know what time we’ll be able to go on shore?

to walk the plank – to walk down a long, flat piece of wood that goes out from a ship over the water; in stories, pirates (thieves in ships who steal from other ships and boats) made people walk down the long, flat piece of wood to their death

* In many movies about pirates, a beautiful young woman is forced to walk the plank, but someone always saves her before she falls into the water.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did the friends decide to take a harbor cruise on New Year’s Eve?
 - a) Because they didn’t get invited to any parties.
 - b) Because it’s how they celebrate the holiday every year.
 - c) Because they wanted to try something new.

 2. The cruise was:
 - a) On the ocean near the city.
 - b) On a lake near the city.
 - c) On a river that runs through the city.
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

cruise

The word “cruise,” in this podcast, means a relaxing journey in a luxurious or fancy boat: “He asked her to marry him while they were on a romantic harbor cruise.” As a verb, “to cruise” can mean to take a cruise: “They saw a lot of monkeys while they were cruising down the Amazon River.” The verb “to cruise” can be used informally to mean to move in a car at a constant speed: “They were cruising at 85 miles per hour when they were stopped by a police officer for speeding.” Many cars have “cruise control,” which is a small button near the steering wheel that the driver can turn on to have the car maintain a constant speed without the driver having to constantly step on the gas or brake pedals.

board

In this podcast, the verb “to board” means to get onto a boat, ship, airplane, train, or bus: “When he boarded the bus, he was disappointed to see that there weren’t any empty seats.” To be “on board” means to be on a boat, ship, airplane, train, or bus: “They had planned to be on board the 7:00 train, but there weren’t any seats.” As a noun, a “board” is a long, flat piece of wood that is used to build floors, fences, walls, and other things: “He bought some wooden boards to build a doghouse.” “Boards” are also used for equipment used in some sports, such as snowboarding or surfing: “Surfing can be dangerous if the board hits you on the head.” A “board” is also a group of people who lead an organization: “This month, the board of directors is deciding whether it will sell the company.”



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CULTURE NOTE

In the United States, many people enjoy owning a boat and using it with their families on the weekends, boating on the country’s lakes, rivers, and “coastal waters” (the ocean water near land). However, owning a boat is a big responsibility and there are many boating laws in the U.S. The laws are different in each state, but they have many things in common.

Many boating laws are related to safety. Most states have laws requiring that life jackets or specific safety equipment be carried on the boat. There are also laws about using lights at night and “minimizing” (keeping low) noise. In addition, there are laws that “prohibit” (not allow) people from driving a boat if they are “drunk” or drank too much alcohol.

The owners of boats with “motors” (a machine that moves a vehicle) and large boats without motors usually need to register their boats with the state government. This usually requires presenting identification, proof that you own the boat, and an “annual fee” (a payment of money made every year).

Often the boat “operators” (the people who drive a boat) must have a boating “license,” a document that permits them to drive a boat. Whether someone needs a license depends on the type of the boat and the speed of the boat. The laws and the requirements to get a license “vary” or are different by state, but they all require that a person pass a test about boat laws. Getting a license also may require taking a class about boat safety.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – a



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ESL Podcast 230 – A New Year’s Cruise

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 230: A New Year’s Cruise.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 230. I’m your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California. Today we have a special New Year’s edition of ESL Podcast. Our topic today is going to be talking about “A New Year’s Cruise.”

Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com. There you can download the Learning Guide for this episode that contains all of the vocabulary, sample sentences, additional vocabulary and a complete transcript of this podcast. Now let’s get started.

[Start of story]

My friends and I decided to do something a little different this year. Instead of going to a crowded club or throwing a party on New Year’s Eve, we decided to take a harbor cruise instead. The cruise would be four hours long, and it included dinner, music, dancing, and a great view of the fireworks.

On that day, we drove to the marina and we were among the first to board the ship. This was no little boat. It was a large ship with an upper and a lower deck. The crew helped us get on board and showed us where the life jackets were in case of an emergency. Even the captain came out to welcome the passengers.

We had a great time. I didn’t get seasick as I’d feared, and we didn’t have to call out the Coast Guard, either. We had so much fun, we didn’t want to go back on shore. Finally, the captain joked that if we didn’t leave, he’d make us walk the plank!

[End of story]

Today, we learned what Lucy and her friends did on New Year’s Eve; they went on a New Year’s Cruise. A cruise, “cruise,” is usually a relaxing trip that you take on an ocean, usually for a vacation. Here in Los Angeles, you can take a cruise down to Mexico - down to the Baja region of Mexico. You can also take a cruise to Hawaii, which will take you a couple of days, and you go on a very large ship.



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Well, this is a cruise not of Hawaii or down to Mexico; this was just a short cruise that Lucy and her friends went on. I, apparently, was not invited, which is a little sad!

Lucy says that her friends and she “decided to do something a little different this year. Instead of going,” she says, “to a crowded club or throwing a party on New Year’s Eve,” they “decided to take a harbor cruise instead.” Normally on New Year’s Eve, which is the evening before New Year’s - the evening of December 31st - they go to a club, which would be a dance club - a place to dance to music - or they throw a party. Notice the expression to throw, “throw,” a party, means to put on a party - to have a party at your house or your apartment. But instead of doing those things, they “decided to take a harbor cruise.”

The harbor, “harbor,” is an area in the ocean that is next to the land. Usually it has walls that are built to protect the boats and the ships. So, it's the place where you can think of the boats and ships parking; it's sort of a parking lot on the water for ships and boats.

The harbor cruise then was a cruise on a boat around the harbor - around the other boats. Usually those are short cruises; in this case, I believe it was “four hours long.” The cruise “included dinner, music, dancing, and a great view of the fireworks.” The fireworks, “fireworks,” (always plural) are little things that you shoot up into the air and they explode and you see a light. Fireworks are very common for many celebrations - big celebrations: the Fourth of July - and in some cities, there are fireworks on New Year’s Eve. In Los Angeles, there are places that have fireworks on New Year’s Eve.

Lucy says that on the day of New Year’s Eve, they “drove to the marina and were among the first to board the ship.” The marina, “marina,” is a harbor that is built especially for smaller boats, and usually there are walkways - sort of wooden sidewalks - to walk out and get on the boat. We have a very large marina here in Los Angeles called Marina del Rey - the Marina of the King - and the marina has fireworks, where they have fireworks out over the ocean or near the ocean.

Lucy says that she and her friends were “the first to board the ship.” To board, “board,” means to get on a ship or an airplane. You can also board a train or a bus. Anything that carries a lot of people, we say that you board. So, if you're at the airport and they say, “The flight will be boarding in ten minutes,” that means that people will be getting on the plane in ten minutes. So, don't go and buy some coffee, you may miss your flight - you may not get on the plane in time!



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Lucy and her friends boarded the ship. She says, “This was no little boat.” “This was no” is another way of saying this was not a little boat. This is a somewhat difficult expression, “this was no.” It’s used before an object - a noun - in a sentence without any articles - without any indefinite articles, like “a” or “and” or definite articles, like “the.” You can say, “This was no little boat,” meaning this was not a little boat. But, if you use the word “a” or “the,” you would have to say, “not.” “This was no little boat,” “This was not a little boat,” notice the difference.

A boat, “boat,” is something that floats on the water. It stays on top of the water and you can get into it and you can move across the water. If it’s a very large boat, we often call that a ship, “ship.” So, Lucy says in the story here that “This was no little boat. It was a large ship with an upper and a lower deck.” The deck, “deck,” of a ship is the level - think of it as the floor of the ship, so there could be more than one level - more than one floor. We also use that term if you are talking about a bus. If the bus is what we would call a double decker that means it has two decks. These are, or were, popular in London; I’m not sure if they still are. If you go to London, you can probably find a double decker bus - a bus with two decks. The top deck is called the upper deck, and the bottom is called the lower deck.

Well, this is a large ship. “The crew helped” Lucy and her friends “get on board.” The crew, “crew,” are the people who work on the boat - the staff of the boat or the ship. To help someone get on board means to get inside the boat, or a plane or a train. So, they helped them “get on board” - they helped them board would be the same meaning - “and showed us where the life jackets were.”

When you go on a ship, they usually have - in fact, they have to have, according to most state laws, some sort of life jacket. A life jacket is usually just a vest, not an actual jacket; it is like a jacket with no sleeves for the arms, and it floats. So, in case the boat has a problem and you have to go out into the water, even if you can’t swim, if you have a life jacket you can still survive - you can still float on top of the water. So, they showed Lucy and her friends the life jackets in case there was an emergency.

“Even the captain came out to welcome the passengers.” The captain, “captain,” is the person who is in charge of - who is the head of the ship; we call that person the captain. So, “the captain came out,” meaning he went outside and greeted - said hello to the people who were getting on the boat; we would call those people the passengers. A passenger, “passenger,” is anyone who travels on a boat or a ship, an airplane, a train, a bus - any of those things, you can call the people passengers.



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You can even talk about a passenger in a car. We often use the term “the passenger side,” which in an American car would be on the right side of the car. In a car in Great Britain, it would be on the left side.

Lucy said she and her friends “had a great time.” They “didn't get seasick.” To get seasick, “seasick,” means to get sick because of the motion of the water. The words sea, “sea,” is another word for an ocean - it's like an ocean. So, seasick is getting sick, usually to your stomach. You may even get a little dizzy if you are on the water.

Lucy jokes that they “didn’t have to call out the Coast Guard, either.” The Coast, “Coast,” Guard, “Guard,” is part of the United States military. They are the people who protect the coasts of the United States, which are the part where the country is next to an ocean; that would be the coast. Here in Los Angeles, we're on the West Coast; New York City is on the East Coast.

So, the Coast Guard was not called, meaning they didn't have any emergencies. She said that she and her friends “had so much fun, we didn’t want to go back on shore.” To go on shore, “shore,” means to leave the boat and go back on land.

“Finally,” Lucy says, “the captain joked that if” they “didn't leave” the ship, “he’d make” them “walk the plank!” The expression to walk the plank is an old one that you sometimes see in movies about pirates - thieves - people who steal from other ships and boats. A plank, “plank,” is a long piece of wood. In the old days, especially in the movies, if you were somehow caught by the pirates - the thieves - you might be forced to walk out on a long piece of wood and, of course, jump off - you would have to die in the ocean. So, the expression here by the captain is a joke, saying well, if you don't leave, I'll make you walk the plank, just like the pirates did.

If you've seen the famous movie, “Pirates of the Caribbean,” we call it in English, with that really ugly actor - what's his name? Johnny Depp, I think he calls himself - then you know what I'm talking about. I'm just kidding, of course!

Now let's listen to the story, this time at a native rate of speech.

[Start of story]

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[End of story]

The script for today's podcast was written by - who else? Dr. Lucy Tse.

That's all we have time for. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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