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Joe Hockey the ambassador of fun at Lindsay Fox birthday

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Australia's Ambassador to the US, Joe Hockey, has taken time out from his busy schedule to celebrate the 80th birthday of businessman Lindsay Fox.

Mr Hockey was snapped in the Mediterranean with mining billionaire Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest, and actress Deborra Lee-Furness.

The former Treasurer is friends with Mr Fox's daughter Lisa, who is based in New York.

Mr Fox, who turns 80 in April next year, is sailing a collection of friends from Athens to Venice to celebrate. Other high-profile guests include Eddie McGuire, Jeff Kennett and Greg Norman.

They are passengers on a luxury liner called Seabourn Odyssey, which has been chartered at a reported cost of about \$200,000 per day for the seven-day cruise.

More than 450 guests are believed to be on deck for the birthday bash.

Trucking magnate Mr Fox told Andrew Denton in 2007 that he liked to celebrate milestone birthdays because "my father got to 62. I never thought I'd get anything past 62."