



13 Day Lightning Ridge & Outback Queensland Tour

Tuesday 19th to Sunday 31st May 2020

\$3,850 per person twin / double share

\$4,620 single room

Day 1: Tuesday 19th May

Welcome to our 13-day outback Queensland tour. We have so much to see and do! Sit back and enjoy the service and facilities aboard our touring coach as we head north west to Guyra where we stop for lunch at the Guyra Bowling Club. This afternoon we travel to Moree which is the centre of a rich pastoral region

Overnight: Country Comfort Burke & Wills Motor Inn, Moree Morning tea, lunch and dinner included

Day 2: Wednesday 20th May

Following a cooked breakfast, we visit something else Moree is also well known for - its artesian bore baths, which are used by people from far and wide and renowned for relieving rheumatic and other muscular complaints. Once any ailments are taken care of, we depart Moree and head to our destination of Lightning Ridge, a sandwich lunch will be provided. We then meet our local guide for a tour of town. With its stark and scarred landscape this town has a peculiar fascination for visitors. During our tour we'll view an open cut mine, the Bore Baths, the Astronomers Monument and Coopers Cottage. This authentic miner's camp was built in 1916 and is a genuine historical display of early pioneer living. Our final visit this afternoon is Amigos Castle. This huge Italian style castle was built by one man – a fascinating project by Vittorio Stefanato, locally known as "Amigo". After tiring of opal mining Amigo decided to build a place that reminded him of his home in Italy stone by stone and this is the result! Time to check into our accommodation and freshen up for dinner this evening after what has been a very eventful day.

Overnight: Lightning Ridge Outback Resort Breakfast, morning tea, lunch and dinner included

Day 3: Thursday 21st May

Our first appointment this afternoon is the Chambers of the Black Hand. Opened in April 2007, this is a unique tourist mine, 11.2 meters down. Local artist Ron Canlin has created the most amazing paintings and sculptures, including The Last Supper, Archangel Gabriel the Chinese Terracotta Warriors. Ron is constantly carving new work such as a samurai warrior, so there are changes every day as there is no end to his talent. The second level is a mine that has been worked for over 100 years and all the old shafts and drives that were dug by the old timers are still there. On this level you get a Geology tour on the different strata's opal formation, which is an experience not to be missed. Later this morning we visit the Opal Cave before returning to the motel.

Overnight: Lightning Ridge Outback Resort Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 4: Friday 22nd May

We say farewell to our hosts and Lightning Ridge as we set off on another outback adventure today. After crossing the Queensland border, we arrive in the little town of Hebel, once known as Kelly's Point because it is believed that Ned Kelly's brother Dan and fellow Kelly gang member Steve Hart lived here under an alias. Just goes to show you never really know who your neighbours are! Today we spend a bit of time in a real Outback Pub, the Hebel Hotel. Originally a Cobb and Co changing station / hotel in 1894 The Hebel Hotel has had the same name and still features the original hitching rail and displays some quirky artwork since it opened. Legend has it members of the Kelly gang drank at this very watering hole, so take the opportunity to soak up both the hotel's hospitality and colourful history. There is not much action in this part of the country now, so we express to our overnight destination of St George, located on the banks of the Balonne River. The town was named by Major Thomas Mitchell who crossed the river on St George's Day in April 1846. Upon arrival we have time for lunch. We visit an interesting venture this afternoon at The Unique Egg. This is a world class collection of hand carved illuminated emu eggs, handcrafted by Steve Margaritis over a period of more than 40 years. Steve's private collection has been displayed at World Expos but is permanently housed in St George. This truly fascinating attraction has to be seen to be believed! The rest of the afternoon will be spent travelling to Roma, our overnight stay.

Overnight: Roma Explorers Inn

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 5: Saturday 23rd May

Right after breakfast we board the coach and travel west. In approximately 3 hours we should arrive in Charleville. On arrival we will spend time at one of the cutest attractions yet. Bilbies are well adapted for survival in the semi-arid and arid areas of Australia, but they are under threat. They are listed as vulnerable nationally and endangered in Queensland. Charleville is the bilby capital of Australia and is proud to have a breeding population of bilbies. They are being bred for reintroduction into Currawinya National Park. Save the Bilby Fund offers a unique experience to meet bilbies and learn about these endearing, endangered marsupials. We top off our day with a locally guided tour to see what else the town offers. It is time to relax for the evening at our overnight accommodation.

Overnight: Mulga Country Motor Inn, Charleville

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 6: Sunday 24th May

We wake up ready to hit the road again making our first stop in Blackall. This was home of the legendary gun shearer Jack Howe. In 1892 he shored a total of 321 sheep at Alice Downs Station in 7 hours and 40 minutes, a record for hand shearing that still stands and was only broken by a shearer using a machine-driven handpiece in 1950. A bronze statue stands as a monument to the man and his achievement. Our lunch venue today is at the massive Wool Scour, housed in the Visitor Information Centre. This is the only steam driven wool scour (wool washing facility) remaining of the 52 once operating across the country. From here we travel onto Longreach. There is plenty to see in Longreach but tonight we just settle into our rooms. The slab huts have been constructed using traditional pioneer techniques and feature many local crafts and quirky features that help tell the outback story. This is a unique accommodation experience.

Overnight: Longreach Motor Inn

Breakfast, morning tea, lunch and dinner included

Day 7: Monday 25th May

This morning we experience the remoteness of this country as we visit the Longreach School of Distance Education. "Imagine a classroom more than twice the size of Victoria, where the playground is as vast as the outback and the partnership between home and school is legendary." There are definite disadvantages, but I do believe the advantages are there also to be schooled this way. Which would you prefer? We observe the children as they begin their day. Today we will also enjoy two of Longreach's most iconic attractions. First is The Stockman's Hall of Fame which is a fantastic presentation of the life of a stockman. Here we will see outback antiques, videos that make use of modern technology to tell old stories, an 1866 settlers hut and the entire stockman's paraphernalia is on show. It is easy to become immersed in this museum and spend hours marvelling at the achievements of these Aussie icons. We now have some free time at leisure to explore and purchase lunch at the café. Late afternoon our second iconic visit is to the Qantas Founders Outback Museum, adjacent to the historic 1922 Qantas hangar, which has been restored. The complex houses the museum, theatre and exhibition hall, visitor information centre and restaurant. Historic photographs, memorabilia and multi-media interactive displays eloquently tell the inspirational stories of overcoming the problems of long-distance travel in Outback Australia. A Boeing 747-200, donated by Qantas Airways Ltd, is included in the exhibit and forms a spectacular part of the museum's outdoor display. Our visit provides us with an appreciation of the vision and achievements of the Qantas Founders, which is "that Qantas would one day become one of the world's greatest airlines." Our visit is made even more significant by the fact we are the only ones here! We have the whole museum to ourselves and our exclusive dinner is right in the middle of the museum displays. A unique event, to say the least. After a wonderful day I believe we will have fallen in love with this town.

Overnight: Longreach Motor Inn

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 8: Tuesday 26th May

Heading back into town we really step back in time – at Kinnon & Co in the main street. Their Station Store has an amazing range of traditionally made leatherwear and a treasure trove of historic nostalgia. We are on the road again with our next stop in Barcaldine where we visit the Worker's Heritage Centre, the only national attraction dedicated to celebrating the lives and proud heritage of ordinary working people. The displays tell the stories of the railway workers and blacksmiths, the farmers, nurses and teachers who shaped our nation. There is time to pick up some lunch before we reboard the coach to complete the days travel to Emerald.

Overnight: Emerald Maraboon Motor Inn

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 9: Wednesday 27th May

After a good nights' sleep and an enjoyable breakfast, we pack our bags for another day of surprises. We will be spending some time in Rockhampton and the best way to see a town is through the eyes of a local. We meet our guide who steps onto our coach for a tour of the best spots to see in Rockhampton. We say farewell and make our way to Archer Park Rail Museum. The complex opened in 1899 with the station being recognisable by the large curved carriage shade roof. In 1903 there were 25 daily trains from Brisbane to Rockhampton but as the need for the station declined it was closed to passengers in 1970. It was then transformed into the attraction that it is today in 1999, one hundred years later. One of the features of the museum is the Purrey Steam Tram. Our afternoon is spent getting to Gladstone.

Overnight: Gladstone Palms Motor Inn

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 10: Thursday 28th May

Gladstone is built around a natural deep-water port and because of this, in the 1960s, the city was transformed with the start of a major industrial and community expansion which has continued to this day. We will see why Gladstone is often referred to as the Industrial Land of the Giants! It has the world's largest alumina refinery, Australia's largest aluminium smelter, Queensland's biggest power station, Australia's largest cement operation and the State's largest multi-cargo port. After a brief look around, we head south, arriving in Bundaberg mid-morning. Our first visit is to the Hinkler Hall of Aviation, an aviation adventure experience. The Hinkler Hall of Aviation was developed to display exhibits celebrating the life and achievements of pioneering solo aviator, Bert Hinkler, who was born and raised in Bundaberg. The museum incorporates the magnificently restored historic Hinkler House, situated in the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens precinct. As part of the redevelopment project, Hinkler's cottage has been restored and refurnished with period furniture and artefacts, to convey the personal life behind Bert Hinkler's illustrious and globally celebrated career and accomplishments. We have some time to purchase lunch. Next up we visit the iconic Bundaberg Rum Distillery. This Australian spirit has been rolled out of the production line for over 110 years. Today we enjoy a self-guided tour and tasting.

Overnight: To be advised

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 11: Friday 29th May

Once again, we board the coach after breakfast at the motel. Continuing south today we stop in Maryborough for a tour with a difference! On arrival "Mary Heritage" will greet us warmly with informative and entertaining commentary on the city's famed architecture and fascinating past all with the passion of someone who truly loves where they live! This will also be a good chance to purchase lunch before we hit the road again. We express to our accommodation so we may spend some time taking advantage of the facilities and relax the afternoon away.

Overnight: Oaks Oasis Resort, Caloundra

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 12: Saturday 30th May

Our day begins with a couple of hours of driving after which we arrive on the Gold Coast. The best vantage point to see the entire coast is Skypoint, one of the world's tallest residential buildings. We'll ride one of the fastest elevators in the world to the 77th floor and take in the brilliant views from the observation deck. A bit of free time to look at the shops and pick up some lunch gives us a good feel of the area. Next stop is at our accommodation where we check in and rest up for our evening out. Our day ends with a performance at the Australian Outback Spectacular arena. Saddle up for a remarkable journey to the snow peaked mountains of the high country where legendary yarns come alive and one of Australia's most stirring true stories is reborn as Australian Outback Spectacular commemorates the Centenary of the ANZACS and the heroes of the legendary Australian Light Horse. With more drama, action, humour and excitement than ever before, Australia's favourite dinner and show is more than a night out – it's an experience steeped in courage, tradition and daring Australian spirit. Our farewell dinner will definitely be a highlight!

Overnight: Quality Hotel, Mermaid Waters

Breakfast, morning tea and dinner included

Day 13: Sunday 31st May

Sadly, our touring has come to an end. This afternoon sit back and relax as we travel home, making convenience stops throughout the day, arriving with many wonderful memories of our holiday.

Breakfast and morning tea included

For bookings or further information
please contact Karen at Travel Y's
Booking agent for Newcombe Coach Lines
Mobile: 0413 522 171
Email: karen@travelys.com.au

Tour Highlights

- Opal Cave & Amigo's Castle
- Chambers of the Black Hand
- The Unique Egg
- Save the Bilby Fund
- The Wool Scour
- Stockman's Hall of Fame
- Qantas Outback Museum
- Archer Park Rail Museum
- Bundaberg Rum Distillery

Price Includes

- Return luxury coach travel
- Accommodation as per itinerary
- Meals as per itinerary
- All admission / attraction fees

**\$3,850 per person
Twin / Double Share**

**\$4,620 per person
Single Room**

Tour payments:

*Non-refundable deposit of \$770 per person required seven days after a booking is made

*Final payment will be required by no later than Friday 3rd April 2020

Cancellation Charges:

45 Days or more \$770.00 per person

30-44 days 20% of fare

14-29 days 50% of fare

6-13 days 75% of fare

Note: Less than 6 days there is no refund

Travel Insurance is strongly recommended

We advise passengers to take out travel insurance to cover for any unforeseen circumstance which may arise.

Departure Details

Port Macquarie Highway Service Centre
Coffs Harbour Coach Terminal

Additional pick up's available on request.

All itineraries are subject to change due to occasional restrictions in opening times/days of some attractions e.g. churches, wineries etc.

We cannot be held responsible for any changes due to closures or inclement weather.