

19 Day Beach & Bush

DAY 1 Sydney to Central Coast

From Sydney, we set course north and head for the Central Coast. We'll make a quick stopover in Kempsey (home of the "Akubra" hat), before arriving at the unspoiled beaches of our destination. Take in the glittering Pacific Ocean with a surfing lesson, or just kick back and enjoy the natural scenery. (D)

DAY 2 Central Coast to Byron Bay

We hit the beach early for another surf lesson, before heading up the coast. We'll check out Coffs Harbour, the Banana Capital of Australia, before reaching Byron Bay, the easternmost point on the mainland. World renowned for its shimmering beaches and eclectic lifestyle, it's a resort town *par excellence*. (B)

DAY 3 Byron Bay

A full day in Byron leaves you with a veritable cavalcade of options: try out sea kayaking, diving or even skydiving, perhaps? Maybe you'd prefer to experience the arts and crafts of the local area, or take a walk to Cape Byron. Then again, the beach could be calling your name... (B)

DAY 4 Byron Bay to Gold Coast

We start the day with a gourmet brunch – "Topdeck Style", before we make the short trip to the Gold Coast, one of Australia's most popular destinations. On the way we stop at the "Natural Arch", a spectacular waterfall and an extraordinarily beautiful site. Then get a taste of the best nightlife this side of the equator, as we hit the Gold Coast. (B, D)

DAY 5 Gold Coast

We've got a free day today – take advantage of the endless shopping options, thrill your inner adrenalin junkie with a visit to the theme parks, or make some new friends with a visit to Australia Zoo. Whatever you choose, you're bound to enjoy a slice of true Australian hospitality. (B)

DAY 6 Gold Coast to Fraser Island

We stop off in Brisbane today, capital of the state of Queensland. Enjoy a walking tour of the city, indulge in a spot of shopping or just relax over a coffee. Then we pass through the Glasshouse mountains before catching the ferry across to Fraser Island, where our stop for the night is nestled amongst the eucalyptus trees. (B, D)

DAY 7 Fraser Island – Great Sandy National Park

A World Heritage site and the world's largest sand island, Fraser Island continues to amaze visitors with its natural beauty. Travel through sand dunes hundreds of metres high, explore rainforests teeming with wildlife. Then join our half-day 4-wheel drive tour that stops at pristine inland lakes ideal for swimming. (B)

DAY 8 Fraser Island to Kroombit Park

We return to the mainland today, heading for Central Queensland and a taste of "Outback hospitality" on a 10,000 acre cattle station. Expect to see kangaroos bounding over wide open spaces, with views that stretch on for miles. Perhaps try your luck on the mechanical bull? Then this evening we'll gather round the campfire and swap stories. (B, D)

DAY 9 Kroombit to Emu Park

Try your hand at some optional activities this morning: goat mustering, quad bike riding or

trap shooting, before we take off from the farm. Pay a visit to Rockhampton, the beef capital of Australia, before we arrive in the coastal resort town of Emu Park. Swim in the pool, walk along the dazzling beach and prepare yourself for a “reef & beef” dinner tonight. (B, L, D)

DAY 10 Emu Park to the Whitsundays

Today we're heading for some of the most beautiful islands found anywhere in the world, the Whitsundays. We drive to the lively resort town of Airlie Beach, before boarding the yacht we'll call home for the next two nights. Prepare to be impressed by the spectacular scenery on show. (B, D)

DAY 11 The Whitsunday Islands

Ladies and Gentlemen, we have arrived in Paradise. Sail across azure waters, discovering remote beaches and colourful coral reefs. Soak up the sun, swim in the tropical ocean, take a turn at the helm and indulge in some stargazing by night. (B, L, D)

DAY 12 The Whitsundays to Cairns

Taking our leave from these idyllic islands, we set sail for dry land and Airlie Beach. Then we'll head north, travelling through Townsville to our final destination of Cairns. Get a feel for the local nightlife with dinner at a local restaurant (own expense) and a visit to the night markets. (B)

DAY 13 Cairns

An exhilarating combination of reef meets rainforest, Cairns offers fun for all kinds of visitors. Today you've got plenty of optional activities to choose from, including diving on the Great Barrier Reef, white water rafting, skydiving, quad biking or even hot air ballooning! Tropical North Queensland is your oyster – tell us all about it over dinner (own expense). (B)

DAY 14 Cairns

Get a feel for the rainforest today, as we visit the nearby village of Kuranda – discover the community's arts and crafts. We'll all visit Koala Gardens and get up close and personal with some of the local wildlife, including an optional koala cuddle. Then you can take the optional Skyrail back to Cairns, which glides metres above the rainforest canopy. (B)

DAY 15 Cairns to Alice Springs

This morning we fly from our tropical surrounds to the outback climate of Alice Springs. After checking into our accommodation, you're free to spend the day exploring at your own pace. We'll meet up at sunset to feed the friendly Rock Wallabies near our lodge. Note: internal domestic flight not included in tour price. (B)

DAY 16 Alice Springs to Ayers Rock

We commence our voyage by heading south to the Outback Camel Farm, for an optional camel ride. Then we head to our Yulara accommodation, before meeting fellow travellers from the nearby airport. Get a feel for Uluru (the traditional owners' name for Ayers Rock) in the afternoon, with a guided tour of the rock's base and the ancient paintings that abound. (B, L, D)

DAY 17 Ayers Rock to Kings Canyon

We start early today, in order to catch the sunrise at Kata Tjuta (The Olgas). This dramatic collection of 36 domes is a world-renowned site of natural beauty, with plenty of flora and fauna to discover. Then we'll pay a visit to Kings Creek Station, a working cattle farm in the

middle of the Red Centre, before arriving at our destination of Kings Canyon Lodge. Cool off with a swim before dinner perhaps? (B, L, D)

DAY 18 Kings Canyon to Alice Springs

Bring your walking shoes today. We go for a hike through Kings Canyon, visiting towering sandstone cliffs, idyllic watering holes and lush greenery on the valley floor. It's a true highlight of the trip, bringing the natural world to bear in all its magnificence. After lunch back at Kings Canyon Resort, we head over rolling sand dunes towards "the Alice". (B, L)

DAY 19 Alice Springs

Get a taste of the bright morning sky with an optional hot air balloon ride today – the views are spectacular! Take in the MacDonnell Ranges, including the towering Simpsons Gap, and the foreboding Standley Chasm (it's over 5 metres wide). We'll return to Alice for lunch before saying goodbye to each other. (B)