

26 Day Grand Aussie Reverse

DAY 1 Darwin to Mt Bundy Station via Litchfield

We start in Darwin, capital of the Top End, heading south for our first stop at Litchfield National Park – it's an irresistible combination of lofty waterfalls, cool rainforests and peaceful swimming holes. We'll spend some time here, drinking in the oasis, before travelling to our homestead for the night – go for an optional horse ride! (L, D)

DAY 2 Mt Bundy Station to Kakadu

Making tracks early, we stop off quickly at the nearby Adelaide River Inn, before making our way to Kakadu National Park. A World Heritage site and one of the true highlights of any Australian trip, we'll spend a couple of nights exploring the locales. First off is a relaxed Guluyambi cruise along the East Alligator River – expect breathtaking scenery and an introduction to the indigenous culture and mythology of the region. We'll stop in Arnhem Land and be treated to a demonstration of traditional hunting and gathering, before heading back along the river. (B, D)

DAY 3 Kakadu

Get a feel for Kakadu, where wetlands meets sub-tropical wildlife. There's an optional scenic flight in the morning before we travel to Ubirr, an important site for the Indigenous people. Take in the sunset over an inland version of paradise, before trying local delicacies such as crocodile or kangaroo. (B, L, D)

DAY 4 Kakadu to Gunlom

Ease your way into the day, with a relaxing breakfast on us. Then we'll head southwards for Gunlom Falls, a picturesque spot in a National Park absolutely full of 'em! Spend some time exploring the cool, blue swimming pools and soak up the sun. (B, L, D)

DAY 5 Gunlom to Manyallaluk via Katherine

We leave Kakadu behind today, heading first for Edith Falls, a stunning spot of natural beauty, and also a great place to stop for lunch. It's not far from here to Katherine, third largest town in the Territory. We'll grab some supplies before heading for the majestic Katherine Gorge in Nitmiluk National Park – enjoy a canoeing adventure with the crew or upgrade to an optional boat cruise. Expect towering cliffs surrounding lush vegetation, while we sweep across the azure waters. Then in the evening, we drive to the nearby Manyallaluk Community for an insight into the Dreamtime. (B, D)

DAY 6 Manyallaluk to Tennant Creek

Heading “down the track” further we stop in at Mataranka, a beacon of cool amongst the searing temperatures – take a swim in the impossibly blue waters. Then visit the Territory's most famous Outback pub when we roll into Daly Waters. Enjoy a quiet beer with locals, before we arrive in Tennant Creek, a town made rich after discovering plentiful gold deposits nearby. (B, L, D)

DAY 7 Tennant Creek to Alice Springs

The first highlight of today is the Devil's Marbles, a rocky outcropping so spherical in shape that you'd swear they were man-made. We'll also get a feel for the local Indigenous culture of the area. After lunch we'll hit the road once more, stopping for refreshments at Ti Tree, before crossing the Tropic of Capricorn and reaching Alice Springs. (B, L)

DAY 8 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 and some free time: check your emails, go quad biking, even a spot of shopping. Tonight we'll feed rock wallabies just before dinner. (B, D)

DAY 9 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 campsite, 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 10 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 11 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 Alice Springs and our last night in the Outback. (B, L)

DAY 12 Alice Springs to Cairns

We leave the Red Centre behind today, catching a flight to Cairns (own expense). The East Coast Topdeck Crew will be at the airport, and transfer you through to your accommodation. Once checked in, feel free to relax and explore at your leisure. (B) Note: domestic flight not included in tour price, we recommend booking Qantas flight QF1948.

DAY 13 Cairns

Get a feel for the rainforest today, as we visit the nearby village of Kuranda – discover the community's arts and crafts and get up close and personal with some of the local wildlife, including an optional koala cuddle. Take up the option of the Skyrail back to Cairns, which gives you the chance to glide metres above the rainforest canopy. (B)

DAY 14 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 15 Cairns to the Whitsundays

Heading south today, we first reach the resort town of Airlie Beach, the launching point for many a Whitsunday adventure. From here, we'll set sail for the next two nights aboard a charter yacht that'll give you a taste of true paradise. It's the definition of idyllic! (B, D)

DAY 16 The Whitsunday Islands/Whitehaven Beach

For many people, today would be the pinnacle of any holiday. Sail across azure waters, discovering remote beaches and colourful coral reefs. We'll stop off at Whitehaven Beach, truly one of the most spectacular beaches known to man. 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 17 The Whitsundays to Emu Park

Back on dry land, the group heads south for the coastal town of Emu Park. A relaxed locale set smack bang on the Pacific Ocean, take things slow here and enjoy a swim in the pool. Maybe take a walk along the beach, which naturally stretches on for miles in either direction. Tonight we'll feast on a "reef and beef" dinner, a meal fit for a king! (B, D)

DAY 18 Emu Park to Kroombit

First things first, we'll make a brief stop in Rockhampton, the Beef Capital of Australia. Heading inland from here, get a taste of Outback hospitality as we arrive at a working cattle farm spread over 10,000 acres! Explore the tranquil surrounds, possibly with a spot of optional goat mustering,

quad bike riding, horse riding or trap shooting. Then we'll witness the infamous afternoon "goat rodeo", before settling around the campfire and swapping stories. (B, L, D)

DAY 19 Kroombit to Fraser Island

Say goodbye to the Outback for now, as we head for the coast and an island almost totally untouched by humans, Fraser Island. Jumping on the ferry, we'll reach the world's largest sand island in a short time. The place is brimming with natural beauty and sure to leave you with many wonderful memories. (B, D)

DAY 20 Fraser Island – Great Sandy National Park

A World Heritage site, 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 4-wheel drive tour that stops at pristine inland lakes ideal for swimming. This is your chance to connect with nature. (B)

DAY 21 Fraser Island to Gold Coast

From remote wilderness to cosmopolitan charms, we move through to the tourist destination of Surfers Paradise. First though we'll stop off in Brisbane, state capital. Enjoy a meander around the city, indulge in a spot of shopping or just relax over a coffee. Then it's the bright lights, big city feel of the Gold Coast – we'll head to the Surf Club for dinner, before exploring some of those bright lights. (B, D)

DAY 22 Gold Coast

We've got a free day here – enjoy beaches that go on for miles, thrill your inner adrenalin junkie with a visit to the many 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 23 Gold Coast to Byron Bay

We make tracks from Surfers today, heading for the state of New South Wales and the eclectic resort town of Byron Bay. On the way we stop at the "Natural Arch", a spectacular natural site that's bursting with beauty. Once we reach our destination, we'll check in at the accommodation and head out to explore the town. (B)

DAY 24 Byron Bay

A full day in Byron leaves you with a veritable cavalcade of options: try out skydiving, sea kayaking or diving, 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 25 Byron Bay to Central Coast

Start the day the right way, with Topdeck's famous Gourmet Picnic Brunch. Then we'll head further south, passing through the coastal towns of Coffs Harbour and Kempsey, home of the "Akubra" hat. Once we hit the Central Coast, get ready for a surf lesson and carve up the waves! (Brunch, D)

DAY 26 Central Coast to Sydney

We've got time for one more dip in the ocean, with another surf lesson. Then in the afternoon we'll head down the Pacific Highway, through Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to our final destination. We're sure you'll have enjoyed yourself! (B)