

Gondwana Rainforest. Wine and Waves. New South Wales

Barrington Tops
National Park

GONDWANA RAINFOREST WINE AND WAVES

OUR SEVEN-DAY DISCOVERY tour has us exploring the lush farming district of Gloucester, the pristine wilderness that is the magnificent and ancient World Heritage-listed Gondwana Rainforest region of Barrington Tops and picturesque Nelson Bay. Quaint country towns, meandering rivers, fresh mountain air and beautiful coast wait for you on this journey to discover hidden delights of New South Wales. A highlight of the tour is a visit to the Aussie Ark whose vision is to create a long-term future for Australia's threatened wildlife.



PICTURE: TOURISM AUSTRALIA

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Sooty Oystercatcher birds in flight

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival in Sydney
(domestic airfare not included)

After arrival in Sydney make your way to your hotel.

○ **Accommodation: Vibe Hotel Sydney**
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Day 2 Sydney – Dungog – Barrington Tops – Gloucester

Breakfast at the hotel.

Departing Sydney we head north towards Gloucester. Our first stop is at the Hunter Region Botanic Gardens where we have time to explore the gardens and enjoy morning tea refreshments before making our way to Dungog. Here we will meet up with a NSW National Parks Discovery Ranger who will escort us on our walk. A medium-length walk, Blue Gum loop trail passes outstanding rainforest and blue gums and is a soothing riverside walk through patches of untouched forest in Barrington Tops National Park. The trail crosses the magnificent Williams River, winding past cascades, eucalypts and rainforest before joining the southern end of Rocky Crossing walk. While crossing a high steel span bridge, stop to take in the

beautiful views of the river. Passing through stands of young Sydney blue gums, you'll see signs of past logging along the track. Further on, a short detour leads to scenic Fern Creek cascades, where we'll enjoy our picnic lunch. Back across the river, the track enters an enchanting patch of ancient rainforest. Be sure to look high in the moss-covered branches for birds nest ferns and orchids. Nearing the end of the path, huge Sydney blue gums stretch skyward, with several short detours leading to secluded river spots, such as Crystal Pools. From here, it's a scenic drive into the town of Gloucester, our base for the next two nights.

Dinner tonight is included.

△ **Accommodation: The Gloucester Country Lodge**

○ **Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided**
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Day 3 Exploring Gloucester Tops

Breakfast at the lodge.

Today is spent exploring the astonishing diversity that is the Gloucester Tops accompanied by a NSW National Parks Discovery Ranger. Combining a series of walks, you'll wander through open snow

gum and sub-alpine woodland as well as cool temperate rainforest. This landscape is part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia and is millions of years old. Keep your eye out for swamp wallabies and grey kangaroos and in the summer season, the flora is spectacular. Lunch will be picnic-style before returning to our accommodation late afternoon. (Walks will be selected based on activity level of our guests.)

Returning in the afternoon to the lodge, we have time to relax and freshen up before we head out for a late afternoon tour of Hill View Herb Farm – a farm-gate property offering a wide range of fresh culinary and medicinal herbs to smell, taste and touch. Your host will take you for a walk through the gardens before we enjoy a delightful dinner in this picturesque setting. Dishes will feature homegrown herbs and produce.

△ **Accommodation: The Gloucester Country Lodge**

○ **Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided**
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ITINERARY CONT. →

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Day 4 Barrington Tops National Park & Aussie Ark – Hunter Valley

Breakfast at the lodge.

An early start today as we head out of Gloucester and ascend the stunning Barrington Tops to our destination – the Aussie Ark. Established in 2011 this unique property is located high above the beautiful Barrington Tops and is dedicated to saving the iconic Tasmanian devil from extinction as well as creating a long-term future for a range of threatened Australian species. Our experience starts off with an introduction of the project and the Tasmanian devil over morning tea at the Interpretation Centre. The tour will then take you on a journey to see the devils in free-range enclosures. You will enter a huge enclosure and experience a rare opportunity to get up close and personal to witness a communal feeding that encourages wild behaviour. Finally, depending on the time of year you visit, you will even get the chance to hold and interact with our newest devil joeys.

After leaving the Ark we'll enjoy a picnic lunch beside the Manning River and then a series of short walks and lookout stops designed to immerse you in the ancient Antarctic beech forest. We then move west, off the Tops and through the scenic Upper Hunter Valley to arrive in the Hunter Valley early evening. Dinner this evening is at the resort.

△ Accommodation: Hunter Resort

○ Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided

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Broughton Island

Day 5 Discover the Hunter Valley

Breakfast at the resort.

This morning we have a relaxed start. The Hunter Valley, 180 years young, is Australia's oldest and best-known wine region and is soaked in history. It's a dynamic and fascinating area that brims with more than 150 top-class wineries, 65 indulgent restaurants as well as gourmet produce and boutique breweries. Today we'll take a sensory excursion and gain insights into wine making, meet passionate winemakers and enjoy a delightful casual lunch featuring local produce. This evening, we'll enjoy dinner at one of the premier local restaurants.

△ Accommodation: Hunter Resort

○ Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided

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Day 6 Hunter Valley – Port Stephens – Broughton Island – Sydney

Breakfast at the hotel.

An early breakfast this morning as we depart from the Hunter Valley and make our way to the pristine blue waters of the Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park. Arriving at the Marina, we board our exclusive private charter vessel for our 3.5-hour tour to Broughton Island, keeping an eye out for dolphins!

Beautiful, rugged and wind-swept, Broughton Island sits 8 nautical miles north-east of Port Stephens, part of Myall Lakes National Park. With a history that dates back more than 300 million years, Broughton features a fascinating mix of everything from incredible volcanic peaks to stunning white, sandy beaches. The wildlife is just as diverse as the landscape.

Broughton is home to the endangered green and golden bell frog, an active breeding site for shearwaters (or muttonbirds) and is a nesting ground for adorable little penguins. You might even spot a sea eagle overhead!

As we follow the well-worn walking tracks, take in the spectacular views, spot some of the natural inhabitants and hear stories of the early settlers, you'll discover for yourself why this island is so special.

During the warmer months, treat yourself to a quick dip in the crystal clear waters of a sheltered cove and during the winter months keep a look out for the magnificent Humpback whales as they migrate past our coast!

Note: Broughton Island is weather dependent. Should weather determine we are unable to access the island, the tour will be replaced by a cruise to Fingal Island, which is full of rich history and incredible views.

Returning to the marina, we'll embark on an invigorating short walk to the summit of Tomaree Head, 161m above the Port Stephens entrance. As you hike the track, you'll enjoy unparalleled views of idyllic Port Stephens and its coastline. From the top, you can see as far as Cabbage Tree and Boondelbah islands – these nature reserves are the world's only nesting sites for the endangered Gould's petrel. At the summit we'll enjoy a picnic lunch before making our way back to Sydney where we expect to arrive at approximately 6.30pm.

△ Accommodation: Vibe Hotel Sydney

○ Breakfast and lunch provided

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Day 7 Sydney / End of tour

Breakfast at the hotel.

End of the tour. Make your own way to the airport or book additional nights through us.

○ Breakfast provided

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View from Tomaree Head Lookout



COST

\$3,349/PERSON TWIN SHARE. \$650 SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Costs include the following services as per itinerary

- 6 nights accommodation as per itinerary
- Local experienced driver/guide throughout days 2-6
- Sightseeing as per itinerary by private air-conditioned charter vehicle
- Private boat cruise to Broughton Island
- Sustainable water bottles on board
- Meals as per itinerary
- Detailed travel information and documentation
- GST is included

Costs do not include

- Domestic or international airfares
- Pre-registration, late check-out or day use at hotels other than specified above
- Guide services other than specified
- Meals/beverages other than specified
- Tips and gratuities
- Optional tours/services
- Travel insurance



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Meet a Tassie devil at Aussie Ark



EXTRA INFO

COVID-19

ALL RESPONSES WILL BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH BEST PRACTICE MEDICAL AND OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT ADVICE.

Travel dates

- 14–20 February 2021
- 14–20 March 2021
- 17–23 October 2021
- 21–27 November 2021

Accommodation

- Sydney: Vibe Sydney (Goulburn St) tfhotels.com.au
- Gloucester: Gloucester Country Lodge gloucestercountrylodge.com.au
- Hunter Valley: Hunter Resort/Pokolbin hunterresort.com.au

Guide

- Experienced driver/guide from days 2–6

Transport

- Fully air-conditioned 14-seater touring vehicle with reclining leather seats

Costs for the travel arrangements as per itinerary

- All costs are based on nett per person twin share costs in Australian dollars (AUD).

Min. 8 Pax / Max. 12 Pax	AUD \$3,349
Single supplement	AUD \$650

COVID-19

Commitment to Safety (COVID-19): The safety and health of our staff and clients remain the highest priority. Our COVID-19 safety plan has procedures in place to ensure the well being of the people in its workplace.



PICTURES: TOURISM AUSTRALIA

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