

Journey to the Heart of Australia. Northern Territory

Uluru at Sunrise

JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF AUSTRALIA FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE TOUR

TAKE A JOURNEY to the Red Centre and immerse yourself in the extraordinary desert landscapes, mountain ranges, and some of Aboriginal Australia's most sacred sites, including Uluru and Kata Tjuta.

Australia's pioneering heart beats in Alice Springs – you will get a glimpse into the unique history of the Old Telegraph Station, marvel at the efforts of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and visit “Kangaroo Dundee” at the Kangaroo Sanctuary.

Travel through the spectacular West MacDonnell Ranges, explore and appreciate the scenic beauty, swim in waterholes, visit the Aboriginal settlement of Hermannsburg and take a walk into Palm Valley, an extraordinary oasis in the desert.

Feel on top of the world as you walk along the towering red rock cliffs of Kings Canyon and take in views of the forest of palms below.

Every visitor to Uluru & the Kata Tjutas will attest that pictures just don't do it justice. It's a region full of natural wonder and cultural landmarks.

This is Australia!



PICTURE: TOURISM AUSTRALIA



Day 1 **Arrival in Alice Springs**
(domestic airfare not included)

After arrival in Alice Springs make your way to your hotel.

○ **Accommodation: Crowne Plaza Alice Springs (March, May) OR Mercure Alice Springs (July-Oct)**

Day 2 **Alice Springs**

Breakfast at hotel.

This morning meet your experienced tour guide and commence the day with a town tour in Alice Springs. Visit the **Royal Flying Doctor Service** and discover how vital it was and remains in providing medical care to outback Australians. The service's Alice Springs base commenced operation in 1939 and is a key player in delivering 24/7 medical care to remote towns and farms.

Next we visit the **Old Telegraph Station**, the birthplace of the Alice Springs township. This historic museum precinct tells the story of how Australia, in 1871, became connected to the rest of the world.

After this we stop to enjoy the panoramic views over The Alice and the beautiful surrounding ranges from Anzac Hill.

Lunch at a local restaurant included. Sitting at the base of the spectacular West MacDonnell Ranges, **Alice Springs Desert Park** is closely connected to the local Arrernte people and embraces parts of their Akngwelye and Yeperenye Altyerre (Wild Dog and Caterpillar) dreaming stories. The history of the Arrernte people, together with the plants and animals they are responsible for, are told through the interpretation and creation of three distinct desert habitats within the park – Desert Rivers, Sand Country and Woodland. These habitats allow visitors to experience desert life as it really is.

In the late afternoon we'll visit **The Kangaroo Sanctuary**, a place to celebrate the beauty of Big Red – an Australian icon. On a guided sunset tour you'll take a leisurely walk through the Sanctuary's 188-acre wildlife reserve where you might meet the kangaroo characters from *Kangaroo Dundee* (a BBC/Nat Geo series) and many others.

Return to your hotel early evening.
△ **Accommodation: Accommodation: Crowne Plaza Alice Springs (March, May) OR Mercure Alice Springs (July-Oct)**

○ **Breakfast and lunch provided**



Kangaroo Dundee, aka Chris 'Brolga' Brown, holds a male joey.

PICTURES: TOURISM AUSTRALIA

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Day 3 Alice Springs – Glen Helen Gorge

Breakfast at hotel.

Meet your experienced tour guide and depart for the **West MacDonnell Ranges**.

First stop at **Simpsons Gap** where, with a bit of luck, we will spot one of the black-footed rock-wallabies that inhabit the area around the permanent waterhole. Later visit **Standley Chasm**. Known traditionally as Angkerle Atwatye, is an important cultural place of Indigenous Australia and sacred to women's dreaming of the Arrernte people.

After a self guided walk enjoy a BBQ lunch at the Café.

The journey continues to **Ellery Creek Big Hole**. Rugged cliffs surround this tranquil gorge, a popular site for swimming on hot days. Bring your swimmers and enjoy a refreshing dip. Before arriving at our destination for the day we will visit one more spectacular site. **Ormiston Gorge** is a great place to see the towering red walls of the gorge and pound, and an interesting variety of native animals and plants, including a number of relict plant species from Central Australia's tropical past. There is also a permanent waterhole for you to take a cool dip and several short walks inviting you to stretch your legs.

This afternoon we arrive at Glen Helen Lodge, your accommodation for the next two nights.

Dinner at the lodge this evening.

△ **Accommodation: Glen Helen Lodge (2 nights)**

○ **Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided**

Day 4 Glen Helen Gorge

Breakfast at the lodge.

The landscape around **Glen Helen** is spectacular – a towering sandstone wall is the first thing you see as you arrive. The area includes views of Mount Sonder, one of the highest points in Central Australia, which changes colours with the light.

At **Glen Helen Gorge**, the ranges part to make way for the Finke River. This permanent waterhole is an important refuge in the hot summer months, for all nine species of fish recorded for the Finke, as well as migrating waterbirds. From here the Finke River makes its way on to the Simpson Desert. The area's traditional owners believe that this inviting swimming spot is the home of an ancient and powerful Rainbow Serpent, and regard it as off limits.

Lunch and dinner included at the lodge.

Glen Helen Gorge



△ **Accommodation: Glen Helen Lodge**
○ **Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided**

Day 5 Glen Helen – Hermannsburg – Palm Valley – Kings Canyon

Breakfast at the lodge.

This morning we depart for **Hermannsburg** along the unpaved Mereenie Loop Road.

The Aboriginal settlement of Hermannsburg is famous as the home of Aboriginal landscape watercolour artist Albert Namatjira. Explore the buildings of the restored historic town and see work by local artists. Wander around the National Trust-listed Hermannsburg Historic Precinct – a series of historic German-style whitewashed buildings that were constructed when the mission was established. The historic precinct is shaded by river red gums and old date palms. Among the low, stone buildings are a church, a school and various houses and outbuildings. The buildings have been restored to their original 19th-century condition and now house the Kata Anga Tea Rooms, a museum and the Namatjira Gallery, which displays original paintings by the artist and works by the acclaimed Hermannsburg Potters.

Your next stop is **Palm Valley**, located within **Finke Gorge National Park**, it's one of the most impressive places in central Australia (subject to road conditions).

Palm Valley is a maze of sandstone amphitheatres, pinnacles and gorges and is home to the red cabbage palm after which the valley is named.

This particular species of palm is only

found in this area and there are only about 3000 adult plants. The entire park contains a diverse range of other plant species, many of which are rare and unique to the area.

Enjoy a walk within the park to some spectacular lookouts.

After lunch we continue on to Kings Canyon (Watarrka), and later in the afternoon, **Kings Creek Station**. The station, set amongst majestic desert oaks, is a working cattle/camel station. Some 36 documentaries have been filmed at Kings Creek and the station hosted Australian Geographic's fourth ever expedition!

Enjoy a self-cook BBQ for dinner tonight.

△ **Accommodation: Kings Creek Station (bush tents* with shared facilities for one night)**

○ **Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided**

**Located against the spectacular backdrop of the George Gill Ranges, our unique bush tents offer comfortable and affordable accommodation. Kings Creek Station's bush tents are permanent canvas cabins constructed of steel frames, tiled floors and lockable doors. Featuring light and power, the tents are twin share with all linen provided. There are shared toilet and shower facilities, a kitchen, grassed picnic area and swimming pool.*

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Day 6 Kings Canyon – Uluru

An early morning start for those that are keen to **climb to the rim of Kings Canyon**.

The climb, is suitable for relatively fit travellers, the first 500 steps of the Rim Walk are the most challenging, but the spectacular views over the surrounding desert are the reward as soon as the sun has risen. A truly magnificent experience. The 6km circuit will take you down into the Garden of Eden, a beautiful rockhole surrounded by rare plants, before ascending to 360-degree panoramic views over the red dunes.

Alternatively, enjoy a more gentle walk in the dry riverbed below.

Return to the station for a hearty Bushman's breakfast (bacon, eggs, hash brown, sausages, toast, tea and coffee).

We set off for our final destination – Uluru/Kata Tjuta National Park. Enroute we stop at **Curtin Springs Station** for lunch and views of Mt Connor, a massive table mountain rising from the desert. By mid afternoon we'll arrive at the Ayers Rock Resort where you'll check into your accommodation and freshen up.

An hour before sunset we make our way to a lookout where we can marvel at the ever-changing colours on the rock and enjoy a **glass of sparkling wine** as the sun slowly sets.

Return to the hotel.

△ **Accommodation: Desert Gardens Hotel (2 nights)**

○ **Breakfast and lunch provided**

Day 7 Ayers Rock

Another early morning departure for another spectacular experience – **sunrise over Uluru**.

Return to the hotel for breakfast. Afterwards visit the Anangu Cultural Centre followed by a tour around the base of Uluru with several short walks to cultural sites.

Return to the hotel for some leisure time. If you feel like it, hire a bicycle to ride around Uluru (at own expense).

In the mid afternoon depart the hotel with your guide to visit Kata Tjuta.



Kings Creek Station bush tents

Kings Creek Station hosted Australian Geographic's fourth expedition.

Enjoy a short hike to the **Karu lookout**, which has breathtaking views into the Valley of the Winds and join the **Walpa Gorge walk**, which is one of the few places in Kata Tjuta where you can see wallabies hopping around the domes.

Return to the resort by late afternoon.

An hour before sunset we will depart for an **unforgettable dining experience**.

Your **Sounds of Silence** experience begins with canapes and chilled sparkling wine upon a dune top overlooking Uluru/Kata Tjuta National Park. As the sun sets and darkness falls, listen to the sound of a didgeridoo and join your table of fellow travellers for an unforgettable dining experience.

Attentive staff will offer a selection of Australian wine and beer while the first course is served at your table. As the night sky twinkles to life, you'll be welcomed to an interactive chef's station where you will be served your choice from a freshly prepared, bush tucker-inspired menu incorporating native ingredients.

Settle back and listen to a resident star talker decode the southern night sky. Locate the Southern Cross, the signs of the zodiac,

the Milky Way, as well as planets and galaxies that are visible due to the exceptional clarity of the atmosphere out here.

△ **Accommodation: Desert Gardens Hotel**

○ **Breakfast and dinner provided**

Day 8 Depart Ayers Rock

Breakfast at the hotel.

For thousands of years, the Anangu have passed down their knowledge from generation to generation, to keep the land, their culture and their people strong.

Join a fun and organic **dot painting workshop**. You will be taught by a local Anangu artist (and an assisting interpreter). You'll learn about traditional art, symbols, tools and more. Get inspired by the ancient ways of the desert and create your very own work of art to treasure. Through the workshops the artists would like to share a part of their culture with you, so you can learn something, create something and show your family.

Individual departure by AAT Kings Shuttle bus to Ayers Rock airport.

○ **Breakfast provided**

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COST

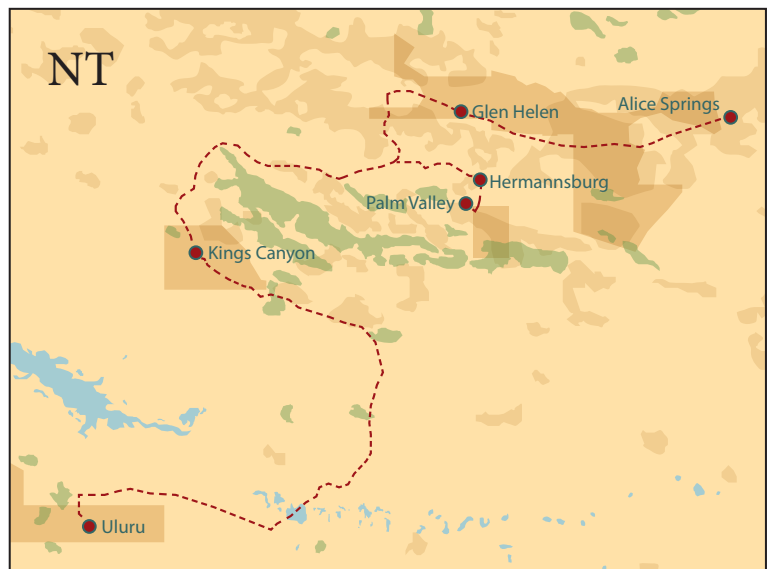
FROM \$3775/PERSON TWIN SHARE. FROM \$720 SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Costs include the following services as per itinerary

- 7 nights accommodation in specified rooms/safari tents
- Local experienced Driver/Guide throughout day 2 – day 7
- Sightseeing as per itinerary by private air-conditioned charter vehicle (4WD coach)
- Meals as per itinerary – daily breakfast, 5 x lunch, 3 x dinner & 1 x Sounds of Silence Dinner
- Admission fees where applicable including Royal Flying Doctors, Old Telegraph Station, The Alice Springs Desert Park, Kangaroo Sanctuary, Standley Chasm, Hermannsburg, Uluru/ Kata Tjuta National Park Entrance Fee, Maruku Arts Experience
- Detailed travel information and documentation
- Goods & Service Tax (GST)

Costs do not include

- Domestic 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, alcohol
- Tips and gratuities
- Optional tours/services



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Kata Tjutas (The Olgas) from the air

EXTRA INFO

Travel dates

- 15–22 Mar 2022
- 19–26 May 2022
- 3–10 July 2022
- 11–18 October 2022

Accommodation

- Mercure Alice Springs www.all.accor.com
OR Crowne Plaza Alice Springs
www.ihg.com
- Glen Helen: Glen Helen Lodge
www.glenhelenlodge.com.au
- Kings Canyon: Kingscreek Station
(tents) www.kingscreekstation.com.au
- Ayers Rock: Desert Gardens Hotel
www.voyages.com.au

Meals

- The following meals as per itinerary: daily breakfast, 5 x lunch & 4 x dinner.
- Beverages are not included during meals unless otherwise specified.

Transport

- 4WD vehicle for overland touring from Alice Springs via Kings Canyon to Uluru.

Costs as per itinerary

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

COVID-19

The NT government approved COVID-19 Safety Plan is in place and all suppliers are Covid Clean accredited.

COVID-19

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



Joeys and Kangaroo sign

PICTURES: TOURISM AUSTRALIA

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