

TOP END EXPLORER

THE GHAN

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN | DEPARTURE MONDAY
(MARCH TO OCTOBER)
(Additional departures on Thursday April – October
2024)

Combine two national parks with a rail journey between Alice Springs and Darwin and connect with nature, wildlife and incredible landscapes as you dive deeper into the Top End. Travel from Alice Springs on The Ghan before continuing on to Kakadu and Litchfield National Parks for further exploration of the Top End's diverse natural habitats.

INCLUSIONS

- 1 nights' accommodation in Darwin, including breakfast
- 1 night aboard The Ghan, Alice Springs to Darwin, including all meals, beverages and an Off Train Experience in Katherine
- Transfer from Darwin Rail Terminal to hotel
- 2 nights' accommodation in Darwin, including breakfast daily
- 2 nights of intimate small-group Kakadu, East Alligator River and Litchfield touring with Outback Spirit Tours, travelling on board a state-of-the-art 4WD Mercedes-Benz vehicle, including accommodation, guided touring and meals
- Half-day Darwin City Sights tour
- Darwin Harbour Sunset Dinner Cruise
- 6 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners

HIGHLIGHTS

- Cruise through ancient Nitmiluk Gorge in Katherine
- Cruise on the Mary River spotting wildlife, including saltwater crocodiles and an abundance of birdlife
- Visit the Ubirr art site within Kakadu National Park, home to some of the world's most outstanding rock art
- Swim in a waterfall at Litchfield National Park
- View the aircraft on display at the Darwin Aviation Museum
- See the largest permanent display of Aboriginal artwork
- Stroll the George Brown Botanic Gardens
- Take in the sparkling waters of Darwin Harbour over a delicious dinner of local seafood and produce

DAY 1 – BOARD THE GHAN IN ALICE SPRINGS

Today, you follow in the footsteps of history as you board The Ghan on your way to Darwin. Before long you'll be mingling with fellow travellers in the Outback Explorer Lounge and preparing for a sumptuous three-course dinner, accompanied by fine wine. (D)

OVERNIGHT: 1 night The Ghan

DAY 2 – THE GHAN, KATHERINE AND DARWIN

As you head further north into the tropics, prepare to experience one of the Top End's most impressive natural wonders. The stunning Nitmiluk Gorge lies within the massive 292,000 hectares of Nitmiluk National Park near Katherine. You'll have the chance to explore it from the water with a guided cruise – an Off Train Experience you'll never forget. A few hours later, you'll arrive in Darwin and transfer to your accommodation. (B,L)

OVERNIGHT: 1 night Double Tree by Hilton Esplanade Darwin

DAY 3 – DARWIN TO KAKADU NATIONAL PARK

Today your touring with Outback Spirit Commences. Depart Darwin heading towards Kakadu National Park. Much of the route is along the Arnhem highway, passing the productive region of Humpty Do, where a vast array of tropical fruits is grown, and crossing the Adelaide River, with its vast wetlands, which attract migratory birds. At the Mary River, take to the water on a cruise that showcases the local wildlife, including saltwater crocodiles and the abundance of birdlife in the region.

Continuing east, we enter the World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park, stopping at the Mamukala Wetlands and the Bowali Visitor Centre before arriving at your accommodation, the Crocodile Hotel at Jabiru, so named for the crocodile shape it takes. (B,L,D)

**Due to the seasonal weather experienced in the Top End during March and April, we will visit the Bowali Visitor Centre on Day 2, and the cruise will occur on Adelaide River with crossings at Mary River, West Alligator and South Alligator Rivers*

OVERNIGHT: 2 nights at Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel
**Due to availability, some stays may be at Coinda Lodge*

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DAY 4 – KAKADU NATIONAL PARK

Begin the day with a drive to the East Alligator River region, known as the gateway to Arnhem Land. Take a spectacular local indigenous cruise on the East Alligator River and listen to the stories of the region as you spot the large saltwater crocodiles that dwell in these waters.

After a peaceful cruise, it's time to reboard the coach and head to the World Heritage Ubirr art site, home to some of the world's most outstanding rock art. Enjoy a 1 kilometre circular track walk and take in the amazing rock art. There will be time for those feeling fit to make the steep 250m climb to the top of the rocky escarpment for magnificent views across the Magela floodplain.

Enjoy a light lunch before visiting a local indigenous community arts centre, where there is the opportunity to watch local artists at work and possibly purchase some artwork.

Later, we head out to Nourlangie where you can take in ancient rock paintings and spectacular vistas as you take a 1.5 kilometre walk around this incredible indigenous site.

Then it's time to head back to the hotel to relax and enjoy dinner. (B,L,D)

*** Due to the seasonal weather experienced in the Top End during March and April you may visit the Bowali and Warradjan Visitor Centres in place of Ubirr, and the cruise will occur on Yellow Waters.*

DAY 5 – KAKADU NATIONAL PARK, LITCHFIELD NATIONAL PARK, DARWIN

This morning is a 6.45am departure to Jabiru Airport, where you'll gain another perspective on this incredible environment. Take to the skies on a 60-minute scenic flight over ancient escarpments, floodplains and winding rivers, exhibiting the results of 1.8 billion years of continuous erosion. Your flight includes live commentary from your pilot as you glide over these spectacular ancient lands.

Following our morning flight, we depart Kakadu National Park and head towards Batchelor, the gateway to Litchfield National Park. Containing several types of typical Top End

habitats, Litchfield National Park is abundant with lush monsoon forests, termite mounds, unusual rock formations, waterfalls, and cascades.

After stopping for morning tea, we head onto Wangi Falls; a large plunge pool surrounded by shady grassed areas. The falls flow all year round and after a light lunch, you can take a dip in the crystal-clear pool. Our next stop is Florence Falls. Here you can watch from the scenic viewing platform as the spectacular falls cascade into the plunge pool below. We then head for Darwin, arriving early evening, where your Outback Spirit Tour comes to an end. (B, L)

OVERNIGHT: 2 nights DoubleTree by Hilton Esplanade Darwin

DAY 6 – DARWIN, DARWIN HARBOUR DINNER CRUISE

Take in the top sights of this tropical city on a morning tour, including the Stokes Hill Wharf area, Botanic Gardens, the Chinese Temple, the Mooring Basin, and Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, plus Darwin Aviation Museum. In the evening, admire a spectacular sunset while feasting on a Territory-style dinner featuring local seafood and produce on a Darwin Harbour Sunset Cruise, (B, D).

DAY 7 – FAREWELL

Your Top End experience comes to an end as you check out of your accommodation after breakfast and farewell Darwin. (B)