

## RED CENTRE & KANGAROO ISLAND EXPLORER

### THE GHAN EXPEDITION

DARWIN TO ADELAIDE

DEPARTING WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY

(APRIL TO OCTOBER)

16 Days / 15 Nights

Travel on the Ghan and discover the wonders of Australia's outback with our exclusive package, combining the awe-inspiring Red Centre with the serene beauty of Kangaroo Island. Experience iconic landmarks, rich wildlife, and stunning landscapes on this unforgettable journey.

#### INCLUSIONS

- 1 night aboard The Ghan Expedition Darwin to Alice Springs, including all meals and beverages, and Off Train Experience in Katherine
- 7 nights of intimate small-group touring with Outback Spirit, travelling on board a state-of-the-art 4WD Mercedes-Benz vehicle, including accommodation, meals and guided touring
- 2 nights aboard The Ghan Expedition Alice Springs to Adelaide, including all meals and beverages and Off Train Experience in Coober Pedy
- Transfer from Adelaide Parklands Terminal to hotel
- 3 nights' accommodation in Adelaide, including breakfast daily
- Return flights from Adelaide to Kangaroo Island
- Return hotel to airport transfers in Adelaide to meet the return flight
- 2-night Kangaroo Island in Style tour, including flights to and from the Island, accommodation, most meals and personalised touring
- Northern Barossa Valley Voyager tour including lunch
- 15 breakfasts, 14 lunches, 12 dinners

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit ancient Nitmiluk Gorge
- Travel through the West MacDonnell Ranges, visiting Standley Chasm and Ormiston Gorge
- Visit Kings Canyon for a guided scenic walk
- See the spectacular Light Towers installation
- Visit World Heritage-listed Uluru and enjoy a guided base tour
- Early risers can experience the magic and beauty of the sun rising over Uluru
- Dine under the stars at the 'Sounds of Silence' dining
- Explore the rock formations of Kata Tjuta (The Olgas) and Walpa Gorge

- Admire the internationally acclaimed 'Field of Light' display at Uluru and watch as it illuminates the desert night
- Witness the breathtaking cultural experience of Wintjiri Wiru
- Explore underground sights in Coober Pedy
- Wildlife experience at Seal Bay Conservation Park
- Explore Flinders Chase National Park, Admirals Arch and Remarkable Rocks`
- Discover the history of the Barossa Valley
- Enjoy cellar door tastings, and a delicious lunch with a glass of wine to accompany

#### DAY 1 – BOARD THE GHAN EXPEDITION IN DARWIN

After boarding the train, settle into the comforts of The Ghan, relax in your cabin, or mingle with fellow travellers in the Outback Explorer Lounge. Enjoy lunch ahead of your Off Train Experience in Katherine.

In a region renowned for jaw-dropping natural assets, Katherine boasts one of the Top End's best – the incredible Nitmiluk Gorge and a cruise is on offer to showcase the beauty of this spot. Alternatively, the Katherine Outback Experience lets you into the lives of those who call the outback home, while the Cutta Cutta Cave system is home to a variety of native wildlife and is rich in Indigenous culture and modern European history. Alternatively, take it all in from the air, with an optional upgrade helicopter flight over Nitmiluk. (B,L,D)

Back on the train, you'll enjoy the cuisine and creature comforts of The Ghan, including a delectable on-board dinner, as you continue on towards Alice Springs. (L,D)

**OVERNIGHT:** 1 night The Ghan Expedition

#### DAY 2 – THE GHAN EXPEDITION, ARRIVE ALICE SPRINGS

Your eight-day Red Centre Explorer tour commences on arrival at the Alice Springs Rail Terminal. Here, you will be met by the passionate Outback Spirit crew, who will be guiding you as you take in all the Red Centre has to offer over the next eight days.

It all starts with a town tour of Alice Springs, including a light lunch at a local eatery.

## RED CENTRE & KANGAROO ISLAND EXPLORER

Then, you'll check-in at DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs, where we'll stay for the first two nights. In the evening, the group will meet for welcome drinks and a short briefing on what you can expect during your tour. Tonight's dinner is at the hotel. (B,L,D)

**OVERNIGHT:** 2 nights DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs

### DAY 3 – ALICE SPRINGS

Today, explore Alice Springs and its surrounds, taking in natural rock formations that are truly spectacular. After breakfast, venture to the West MacDonnell Ranges and enjoy a walk to Simpsons Gap. Known as 'Rungutjirpa' by the Arrernte people, Simpsons Gap is an important spiritual site and home to dozens of rare plants and a host of native wildlife.

We'll then visit Standley Chasm – Angkerle Atwatye – a cultural icon of Central Australia, which is 100% owned and operated by the Arrernte community. We'll break for morning tea before departing the West MacDonnell Ranges to visit the Alice Springs Desert Park. Here, enjoy a guided tour that will challenge your perception of the desert, leaving you with an understanding that the desert is full of life.

This evening, enjoy a classic-style outdoor BBQ and show under the incredible night sky. (B,L,D)

### DAY 4 – ALICE SPRINGS TO KINGS CANYON

Today, we say goodbye to Alice Springs as we go deeper into the outback. First up is a visit to Ellery Creek for a short walk and morning tea, then we travel to Ormiston Gorge to see its towering red cliffs. We'll stop for lunch, before journeying to the mighty Kings Canyon and Watarrka National Park.

As we drive through the outback, we'll take the scenic Mereenie Loop 4WD track through the West MacDonnell Ranges and arrive at Kings Canyon Resort, where we'll spend the next two nights.

Tonight, dinner is at Carmichael's, a relaxed restaurant situated in Kings Canyon Resort, surrounded by native trees and bushlands. If you're lucky, you may spot an inquisitive dingo wandering through the grounds. (B,L,D)

**OVERNIGHT:** 2 nights Kings Canyon Resort

### DAY 5 – KINGS CANYON – WATARRKA NATIONAL PARK

This morning, we depart early to experience the beauty of Kings Canyon. Two walks are available, including the spectacular 6km rim walk, which features breathtaking views of the Watarrka National Park before descending into the 'Garden of Eden'. For those who wish to save energy, a more relaxed walk is available along the creek on the canyon floor (2.6km).

There is also the opportunity to take a 15-minute helicopter flight over Kings Canyon and Watarrka National Park (at own expense).

After the morning's activities, return to Kings Canyon Resort for lunch and to rest and refresh. The afternoon is spent learning about Aboriginal culture with Karrke

Aboriginal Cultural Experience and Tours. In the Aranda language, Karrke is the name for the western Bowerbird, which is native to Central Australia. Our guide will teach us about bush tucker and bush medicines used for spiritual and physical healing.

For those wishing to take the optional helicopter flight over Kings Canyon, you will take to the air in the afternoon to enjoy the aerial perspective.

As afternoon turns to evening, enjoy sunset drinks and canapes at Light-Towers, an immersive sound and light installation by acclaimed artist Bruce Munro, who also created the Field of Light. Tonight, we'll enjoy dinner at the newly renovated Kings Canyon Bar & Grill. (B,L,D)

### DAY 6 – KINGS CANYON TO ULURU-KATA TJUTA NATIONAL PARK

We depart Kings Canyon for Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, passing through Kings Creek Station and lunching at Curtin Springs, a million-acre cattle station. In the early afternoon, we arrive at the award-winning Sails in the Desert Hotel, part of the Ayers Rock Resort.

This evening, we attend the Wintjiri Wiru Sunset Dinner. This is a breathtaking cultural storytelling experience, told through choreographed drones, lasers and projections illuminating the night sky.

## RED CENTRE & KANGAROO ISLAND EXPLORER

After a short journey from the resort, we venture to an open-air theatre set atop a dune. Enjoy cocktails infused with native ingredients while taking in the incredible views of Uluru. As darkness descends, dine on a gourmet dinner hamper, where native ingredients are combined with modern techniques to create a balanced and flavourful meal as the night sky lights up before our eyes. Witness the ancient Mala story re-told and feel a powerful connection to country listening to a traditional Inma soundtrack and narration in the local Pitjantjatjara language. (B,L,D)

**OVERNIGHT:** 3 nights Sails in the Desert Hotel

### DAY 7 – ULURU KATA-TJUTA NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast, we depart to discover Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) and admire the stunning rock formations on a guided walk into Walpa Gorge, an ancient temple crafted by nature.

Take in the cultural centre and take a guided tour around the base of Uluru, which stands 348 metres above the desert plains. Learn about traditional Anangu culture and why Uluru, one of the largest monoliths in the world, is such a sacred site.

In the afternoon, tour the Gallery of Central Australia followed by free time to relax by the pool or alternatively, take the complimentary shuttle to explore the Resort and activities on offer.

Departing the resort before sunset, we head to an exclusive dune-top location, again with majestic views of Uluru. Enjoy drinks and canapes as artist Bruce Munro's global phenomenon Field of Light gently illuminates. Aptly named Tili Wiru Tjuta Nyakutjaku (looking at lots of beautiful lights), Field of Light features 50,000 slender stems, crowned with radiant, frosted-glass spheres, spread across an area the size of seven football fields. After your host provides insight into this remarkable installation, you can explore the stunning display via dedicated pathways.

This evening, return to the hotel for dinner. (Please note dinner will be at approximately 9.00pm). (B,L,D)

### DAY 8 – ULURU-KATA TJUTA NATIONAL PARK

Early risers can experience the sun rising over Uluru this morning and the colours of dawn spreading across the landscape. Breakfast is at the hotel, before we depart for the Mala Walk. Admire the fine examples of rock art along this walk before arriving at Kantju Gorge, a place of profound peacefulness surrounded by sheer vertical walls.

This afternoon is at your leisure. You may choose to explore the Town Square, arrange a scenic flight (own cost) or relax in the comfort of your hotel.

This evening, enjoy the unique Sounds of Silence dining experience under the stars. Offering the best of the Red Centre distilled into four magical hours, the evening begins with canapes and chilled sparkling wine served on a viewing platform overlooking the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. As the sun sets and darkness falls, listen to the sound of the didgeridoo and enjoy a premium bush tucker-inspired buffet incorporating native bush ingredients. Afterwards, settle back and listen to the resident star talker decode the southern night sky.

After this incredible experience, we return to Sails in the Desert for our final night. (B,L,D)

### DAY 9 – ULURU-KATA TJUTA NATIONAL PARK TO ALICE SPRINGS, THE GHAN EXPEDITION

Enjoy a hearty breakfast at the hotel before making the journey by road from Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park to the Alice Springs Rail Terminal, where your Red Centre Explorer tour comes to an end.

Re-join The Ghan Expedition and enjoy a unique dining experience this evening. Tuck into a mouthy-watering meal as you sip on a cold beer or a glass of fine wine under a chandelier of stars at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station. (B,L,D)

**OVERNIGHT:** 2 nights The Ghan Expedition

## RED CENTRE & KANGAROO ISLAND EXPLORER

### DAY 10 – THE GHAN EXPEDITION, COOBER PEDY

From your morning stop at Manguri, you'll venture into the weird and wonderful opal mining township of Coober Pedy, where more than half of the residents live underground. Here, you'll enjoy a day of discovery, and a gourmet lunch in the most unique of locations: underground. Off Train Experiences on offer include exploring the majestic Breakaways, touring the town, learning more about mining history on the Opal Experience, or an optional upgrade with the Painted Hills and Lake Eyre scenic flight.

Dinner is served back on the train, where you can enjoy a nightcap as your journey continues. (B,L,D)

### DAY 11 – THE GHAN EXPEDITION, ADELAIDE

This morning, you'll see a dramatic change in landscape as the rich ochre tones of the outback make way for the green fields of South Australia. Enjoy a leisurely brunch as you pass through the Flinders Ranges before arriving in Adelaide. Transfer to your accommodation, home for the next two nights. (B)

**OVERNIGHT:** 2 nights Sofitel Adelaide

### DAY 12 – BAROSSA VALLEY

Today, delight your senses with boutique wine and food touring to the historic Barossa Valley, with its 80 cellar doors. You'll even visit one of the oldest vineyards in the world, where Shiraz vines were planted in 1843. Enjoy running commentary from your driver as you make your way towards the world-renowned wine region and be guided through some of the best wines South Australia has to offer. Tours are small groups up to 8 people only to ensure a relaxed and unhurried day. Whether you prefer red or white, there will be something to tantalise and delight with tastings at three wineries throughout the day, and a delicious lunch with an accompanying glass of wine included in your tour. (B,L)

### DAY 13 – ADELAIDE TO KANGAROO ISLAND

*Please note: Day 13 and 14 may be interchanged.*

Depart from Adelaide Airport for your flight to magical Kangaroo Island, where you will be met by your guide and begin your 'Island Life' tour. Island Life provides a taste of the way of life in this bucolic spot, where things take time, drivers wave as they go by, and passers-by stop for a chat.

Have a cuppa with some home-made treats before taking a walk down a country track through towering Eucalyptus trees, where koalas snooze overhead or chew languidly on leaves. Listen for the sounds of the bush – brightly coloured honeyeaters and brilliant parrots, cicadas or perhaps just the sound of silence. You'll travel through the island's most productive countryside to the north coast and walk through the bush with your guide, learning what makes that noise and whose tracks those are. Watch for small wallabies, a kangaroo found only on Kangaroo Island, and a variety of other birds, plants and animals.

Lunch is at a private bush camp, where you'll enjoy a delicious meal featuring King George whiting – a local sea fish, fresh salads and fine South Australian wines. At Seal Bay Conservation Park, take a private tour with your guide among Australian sea lions on a beautiful sandy beach. Watch pups nursing or playing in the surf and old bulls bearing the scars of territorial disputes and learn about their unique breeding biology.

After a day of touring, you will return to your accommodation, with dinner included at your hotel. (B,L,D)

**OVERNIGHT:** 2 nights Mercure Kangaroo Island Lodge

### DAY 14 – KANGAROO ISLAND

Begin the day travelling through some of the regenerating landscapes of Kangaroo Island. Learn about fire ecology and how nature deals with this natural hazard. Some of the native flora species only flower following fire.

Travel into Flinders Chase National Park and explore the massive shapes of Remarkable Rocks, a natural sculpture perched impossibly on top a granite dome plunging into the ocean. Then you'll break for an elegant picnic lunch in the bush, or if weather permits, on a spectacular clifftop. Evidence of the power of the Southern Ocean swell continues at Admirals Arch – a coastal grotto that provides a haul out for a large colony of Long-nosed Fur Seals, which swim effortlessly through the crashing waves.

After your last day of touring, you will return to your accommodation, with dinner included at your hotel. (B,L,D)

## RED CENTRE & KANGAROO ISLAND EXPLORER

### DAY 15 – KANGAROO ISLAND TO ADELAIDE

This morning, you'll be transferred to the airport for your return flight to Adelaide. Arriving in Adelaide, you will be transferred to your city accommodation to leave your bags and spend the remainder of the day at your leisure.

The evening is free to explore some of Adelaide's many dining and entertainment precincts. (B)

**OVERNIGHT:** 1 night Sofitel Adelaide

### DAY 16 – FAREWELL

After breakfast, check out of your accommodation, bringing your epicurean adventure to an end. (B)