



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

56 days from £10,295 per person

If you're going to travel all the way to the other side of the world, you will really want to make the most of your holiday. Combining these two itineraries will make the ultimate holiday to Australasia. You will start your adventure by joining our The Very Best of New Zealand tour; before flying to Australia and joining our The Very Best of Australia tour.

New Zealand is known for so much - its stunning and otherworldly landscapes, its Maori culture and laid-back lifestyle, its unique flora and fauna; the list is endless. For that reason, if you're going to travel to the other side of the world, you need to allow plenty of time to appreciate everything that New Zealand has to offer.

So, to make sure you don't miss out on Australia's many highlights and hidden gems, we've put together the ultimate Australian adventure. From the glitter of Sydney and Melbourne, to the haunting splendour of the outback – we visit all the must-see sights including four nights in tropical Cairns, the ideal base to visit the Great Barrier Reef and an overnight journey on-board 'the legendary Ghan'



Your holiday includes

Your holiday includes

- Flights with leading scheduled airlines
- Return economy class flights
- Fly with Qantas/Emirates from London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow
- Flights between New Zealand and Australia
- All domestic flights in Australia
- All airport charges, security charges and any applicable fuel surcharges
- UK Air Passenger Duty

Choice of outbound stopover

- Two-night outbound stopover; choose from Singapore, Bangkok or Dubai

Carefully selected hotels

- Superior hotels in great locations
- All hotel portorage
- Applicable hotel taxes

Many meals

- Daily breakfast
- Dinner in Rotorua
- Lunch on Kangaroo Island
- Buffet lunch on the Great Barrier Reef
- Lunch cruise around Sydney Harbour

All-inclusive on The Ghan

- All meals
- Selected alcoholic and soft drinks

Unforgettable experiences

- Sightseeing tours in Singapore (or Bangkok or Dubai), Christchurch, Dunedin, Queenstown, Wellington, Rotorua, Auckland, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Alice Springs, and Sydney
- Overnight cruise on Milford Sound
- Maori concert
- Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve
- 'Hole in the Rock' cruise in the Bay of Islands
- Full day touring Kangaroo Island
- Experience Uluru at sunset and sunrise
- Cruise down the scenic Katherine Gorge
- Full day on the Great Barrier Reef
- Lunch cruise around Sydney Harbour

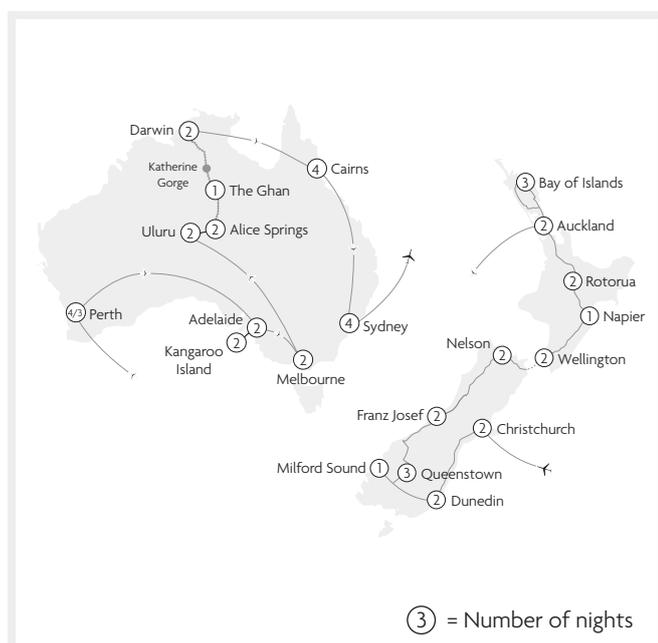
On the ground

- Services of an experienced Coach Captain in New Zealand and Tour Manager in Australia
- All overseas transfers
- Modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout

100% confidence

- Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise*
- Your holiday is covered by our Covid Guarantee*
- Your holiday is fully ATOL protected

* For more information on our Price Promise and Covid Guarantee, please refer to our website www.distantjourneys.co.uk





The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 1 to 2: UK - Singapore - Christchurch - Dunedin

Day 1: Depart UK

Depart from the UK airport most convenient for you with Qantas/Emirates. Choose from London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow. No matter which airport you choose, there will be no additional cost. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 2: Singapore, 2 nights

Flights from London Heathrow may travel direct to Singapore. All UK regional flights will travel via Dubai. Arrive into the wonderful city of Singapore and transfer to the four star Copthorne Kings Hotel, situated in an enviable position close to the banks of the Singapore River. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Alternative stopovers:

Dubai or Bangkok

We have based days 2-4 of this itinerary on a stopover in Singapore. Should you prefer, you may choose to stop in Bangkok or Dubai for the same price. Your stopover includes transfers, accommodation, daily breakfast and a city sightseeing tour. Flight timings will vary. Please speak with one of our personal travel experts for more detail

Day 3: Singapore

Known as 'the crossroads of Asia', Singapore is a city where east meets west; a cosmopolitan melting pot with an inspirational identity.

This morning, enjoy a tour of this wonderful city. Included is a stop at Merlion Park with impressive views of Marina Bay. See the historic Civic District, Thian Hock Keng Temple and the fabulous orchid gardens set within Singapore's botanical gardens. Return to the hotel where the rest of our day is free to spend as we please. **Breakfast included**

Day 4: Depart Singapore

A day at leisure in Singapore until it's time to leave for our evening flight to Auckland. Perhaps explore the impressive Gardens by the Bay or enjoy high tea at Raffles. **Breakfast, in-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 5: Christchurch, 2 nights

We change aircraft in Australia. On arrival into Christchurch we meet our local Coach Captain, who will be our driver and guide during our time in New Zealand. Transfer to the centrally located Distinction Hotel Christchurch, where we spend our first two nights in New Zealand. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

Day 6: Christchurch

Considered the most English of New Zealand's cities, today in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake, Christchurch is in the midst of an epic rebuild that has completely reconstructed the city centre. This morning we take a tour to see what this exciting developing city has to offer. We start our day with a visit to the Sign of the Takahe, an historical building on the edge of the city before continuing to view the key landmarks of the city centre, including the transitional

'Cardboard Cathedral'. From here we take a visit to the Botanic Gardens. Founded in 1863 with the planting of an English oak tree, the Christchurch Botanic Gardens contain an impressive array of flora and fauna. Our afternoon is at leisure to continue exploring this delightful city. **Breakfast included**

Day 7: Dunedin, 2 nights

This morning following breakfast we begin our journey south towards Dunedin. We stop at Hampden Beach to witness the geological curiosities known as the Moeraki Boulders, huge spherical boulders which are scattered along the beach, whilst others can be seen emerging from the sandstone cliffs. Each boulder weighs several tonnes and is up to two metres in diameter. According to Maori legend, the boulders are gourds washed ashore from the great voyaging canoe Araiteuru when it was wrecked upon landfall in New Zealand hundreds of years ago. Scientists explain the boulders as calcite concretions formed about 65 million years ago. The soft mudstone containing the boulders was raised from the seabed around 15 million years ago and waves, wind and rain are excavating them one by one. Known as the 'Edinburgh of the South', Dunedin is South Island's second largest city and is considered New Zealand's architectural heritage capital, with its lovingly restored Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Our next two nights are spent at the Distinction Hotel Dunedin, conveniently located close to the Octagon. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 8 to 11: Dunedin - Milford Sound - Queenstown

Day 8: Dunedin

Enjoy a city sightseeing tour this morning travelling past Otago University, New Zealand's first. Our sightseeing also takes in the city's neo-Gothic churches, town hall, opulent theatres, and other 19th century buildings. We have time to admire the beautifully landscaped trees and plants of Dunedin Botanical Gardens and the spectacular views of the Otago Peninsula and Harbour before we return to our hotel. Our afternoon is at leisure to spend as we please. **Breakfast included**

Day 9: Milford Sound, Overnight Tour Highlight

Today we visit the magnificence of Fiordland National Park and Milford Sound. We say goodbye to Dunedin passing through Balclutha, which has a distinctive arched concrete bridge and pass through fresh, green farm scenery as we continue to Lumsden and Mossman and the scenic lakeside shores of Te Anau. From here our scenic drive takes us through a variety of landscapes – farmland, native tussock grasslands, lush beech forests and impressive glacial valleys – before arriving at Milford Sound. In the height of summer Milford Sound attracts thousands of tourists each day; but when the day ends, visitors depart and a silence descends. Distant Journeys have included an overnight cruise along Milford Sound, undoubtedly a once in a lifetime experience.

On board the wonderful Milford Mariner we cruise the full length of New Zealand's most spectacular fiord to the Tasman Sea, and anchor for the night in a sheltered cove. Our night aboard Milford Mariner will be a truly memorable experience, with nature guides on hand to assist, and the option to explore in the tender craft or kayaks, or simply relax on deck. After the day's activities, enjoy a sumptuous evening buffet in the spacious dining saloon before retiring to your private cabin with en-suite facilities. **Breakfast and dinner included**

Day 10: Queenstown, 3 nights

a truly wonderful experience as well as a hot breakfast, it's time to make our way back to the jetty ready for the next part of our journey. We re-trace our tracks to Te Anau and continue through high country landscapes as we travel to the historic mining town of Arrowtown. The heart of its history is Buckingham Street, a procession of small-town heritage buildings that stretch into a tree-lined avenue of tiny miners' cottages. Be sure to try a cream tea in one of the quaint tea rooms. We journey on to nearby Queenstown, and our home for the next three nights, the four-star Millennium Hotel, situated only a short walk from the centre of town. **Breakfast included**

Day 11: Queenstown Freedom Day

Queenstown smiles south across Lake Wakatipu into an incomparable alpine scene. Poplars and willows surround the lakefront and the lake seems to glisten every shade of blue. Today has been left free to take advantage of the incredible variety of activities available in and around New Zealand's most glamorous alpine resort. For a fabulous view across the lake to the Remarkables, why not take a gondola ride to the top of Bob's Peak? There is also an opportunity to take an optional leisurely cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the vintage steamboat TSS Earnslaw. The cruise includes a visit to Walter Peak Homestead and a sheep shearing show, before returning to Queenstown aboard Earnslaw. **Breakfast included**

We recommend

Queenstown TSS Earnslaw

Enjoy a cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw, including a sheep shearing show at Walter Peak homestead.





The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 12 to 17: Queenstown - Franz Josef - Nelson

Day 12: Queenstown Freedom Day

A further Freedom Day to enjoy in this wonderful alpine setting. The thrill seekers amongst us may wish to try the Shotover Jet – an exhilarating boat ride amongst the crags and boulders of the Shotover River canyon. For a more serene experience maybe stroll by the lakeside or take a gondola ride to the top of Bob's Peak for a magnificent panoramic view of Queenstown. **Breakfast included**

Day 13: Franz Josef, 2 nights

Incredible scenery today as we travel via Lake Dunstan, created by the mighty Clyde hydro dam in 1994. We make our way through New Zealand's Central Otago region, along the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea. We will also travel along one of the most exciting scenic roads ever built – crossing the Haast River Bridge and via Clark Bluff. Later in the afternoon we reach Franz Josef in the Westland National Park. Our next two nights are at the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel. **Breakfast included**

Day 14: Franz Josef Freedom Day

Today is left completely free to absorb the beauty of Franz Josef. For those that so wish, we shall drive to the Franz Josef Glacier terminal where we will have the opportunity to walk to view the glacier. Weather permitting, we may also take an optional scenic flight, which is at an additional cost, over the glacier and the awe-inspiring Alpine region. **Breakfast included**

We recommend

Scenic flight over Franz Josef Glacier

Enjoy an optional helicopter flight over awe-inspiring Franz Josef Glacier.



Day 15: Nelson, 2 nights

Journey north this morning along the Heritage Highway, passing Lakes Lanthe and Mapourika as we leave Westland National Park. Our travels continue northbound taking us via Hokitika and Hari Hari travelling alongside striking wild scree-scarred terrain with forests of Crimson Rata and Kahikatea. We also visit Punakaki (Pancake Rocks), an incredible maze of limestone rocks with booming blowholes stacked high above the sea; before arriving in Nelson where our next two nights are at the Nelson Rutherford Hotel. **Breakfast included**

Day 16: Nelson Freedom Day

Nelson is a delight for explorers on foot. Scattered throughout the city are art galleries and workshops, historic buildings and street-side cafés. Today has been left as a Freedom Day so you can spend it any way you choose. Perhaps consider a trip to Abel Tasman National Park, New Zealand's smallest national park, blessed with golden beaches, sculptured granite cliffs, and its world-famous coast track. A cruise along the coast will take you to the very best scenery this region has to offer. Alternatively, you may wish to take a tour of some of the region's wonderful wineries. **Breakfast included**

Day 17: Wellington, 2 nights

This morning we leave South Island in our wake as we board the ferry for our interisland cruise to New Zealand's North Island. During the cruise, enjoy spectacular views as we depart Queen Charlotte Sound. With the possibility of birds and dolphins following, we make our way across the Cook Strait to Wellington. Upon arrival we re-join our coach and make our way to Wellington, where the remainder of our day is at leisure. Our next two nights are spent at the Copthorne Hotel Oriental Bay. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 18 to 23: Wellington - Napier - Rotorua - Bay of Islands

Day 18: Wellington

Wellington is compact, cultured and full of character. Its interesting and varied architecture provides the ideal starting point for our orientation tour this morning. We visit Wellington's administrative area, taking in Parliament House, 'the Beehive' – you'll understand the name when you see it – and the government buildings. We then continue to the top of Mount Victoria for the finest view of the city and its picturesque harbour. Your afternoon is at leisure – a visit to Te Papa museum is highly recommended, as it offers a fascinating insight into New Zealand's rich history and cultural heritage. Alternatively, ride a cable car to Wellington's beautiful botanical gardens. **Breakfast included**

Day 19: Napier, Overnight

This morning our journey continues north via Hastings and the Kapiti coast as we make our way to our final destination, the Art Deco city of Napier, located in an area dominated by orchards and vineyards. Napier's city centre has the feeling of a time capsule - the seamless line of 1930s architecture is quite extraordinary. One of the ways to enjoy the streetscape is on a self-guided tour. Our evening is spent at the delightful Scenic Hotel Te Pania, superbly situated on Napier's sea front. **Breakfast included**

Day 20: Rotorua, 2 nights

Today we make our way along the Thermal Explorer Highway to Lake Taupo, New Zealand's largest lake. Visit the impressive Huka Falls where the Waikato River suddenly narrows to a chasm less than 15 metres across and heaves its vast bulk over an 11-metre ledge to boil furiously in a deep semi-circular basin below. We continue to Rotorua, the heart of New Zealand's rich Maori culture, and enjoy lunch inspired by traditional Maori cooking. This afternoon, we explore, Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve, with its spurting geysers and boiling mud pools, and attend a concert featuring traditional song and dance, including the world famous war dance – The Haka. After a wonderful day, we head to the Millennium Hotel for two nights. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 21: Rotorua Freedom Day

A day at leisure in Rotorua. For those that so wish, optional activities include a float plane flight over Mount Tarawera, or perhaps a visit to the Hobbiton Movie Set from The Lord of the Rings may be more appealing? **Breakfast included**

Day 22: Bay of Islands, 3 nights

We travel north this morning via Auckland as we make our way to the pale sands and turquoise waters of the Bay of Islands, and the pretty seaside town of Paihia where the Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands will be our home for the next three nights. **Breakfast included**

Day 23: Bay of Islands cruise

Tour Highlight

Undoubtedly one of the highlights of this tour is a cruise around the Bay of Islands, as in our opinion, there's no better way to see this picturesque part of New Zealand. You'll cruise via Red Head Passage to Cape Brett and Piery Island and on to the famous 'Hole in the Rock'. In these world-famous deep-fishing spots it's not uncommon to see schools of fish and dolphins. The return trip includes a visit to historic Russell. It's hard to believe that this quaint township was once known as the 'Hell Hole of the Pacific'. As the afternoon has been left free, you have an excellent opportunity to take an optional visit to the grounds of the Waitangi National Reserve. It was here in 1840 that the British and Maori chiefs signed the Waitangi Treaty. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 24 to 32: Bay of Islands - Auckland - Perth

Day 24: Bay of Islands Freedom Day

Today you'll have a full day at leisure, allowing you to do the things that really interest you. For example, there is the opportunity to join a fantastic optional trip to Cape Reinga. It's a full-day excursion which visits the northern tip of New Zealand. Not only is this area the place where the Tasman Sea meets the Pacific Ocean, but it holds a special significance in Maori tradition as the place where Maori spirits return to their traditional homeland, Hawaiiki-A-Nui, via the roots of a lone – and still standing – 800 year old pohutukawa tree. Other standout locations during the tour include the Te Pahi sand dunes and a drive along Ninety Mile Beach, passing some magnificent scenery along the coast. **Breakfast included**

Day 25: Auckland, 2 nights

After breakfast this morning, we leave The Bay of Islands. On the drive to the Waipoua Kauri Forest Reserve, we pass rolling hills dotted with dairy farms which give way to lush forest the closer we get to the reserve. There's chance to marvel at the gigantic kauri tree Tane Mahuta, or 'Lord of the Forest.' From here, we cross the impressive Waitemata Harbour Bridge and head in to Auckland, and the Grand Millennium Hotel, where our last two nights of this guided tour of New Zealand will be spent. **Breakfast included**

Day 26: Auckland

Start the morning with an orientation tour of the city. Auckland has a beautiful waterside setting, with a modern skyline standing out against a backdrop of volcanic hills. As part of the tour, we'll drive along the famous Waitemata Harbour. You'll be able to see Rangitoto Island, an extinct volcano, which although it's in the distance, dominates the horizon. The stylish Viaduct Harbour is another stop on the tour, which has played host to many America's Cup celebrations. As the afternoon has been left free for you to enjoy however you'd like, why not take in the panoramic views from the top of the Sky Tower? As you'd expect from the tallest building in the southern hemisphere, the views truly are breathtaking. **Breakfast included**

Day 27: Perth, 7 nights

Today we say farewell to our friends in New Zealand as they depart for home, whilst you will transfer to the airport for your flight via Melbourne or Sydney to Perth, Australia. On arrival you will be met by our local representative and transferred to the Crown Metropolis Hotel, where we have 4 nights to relax and recharge before our Australian adventure begins. **Breakfast, in-flight meals and drinks included**

Days 28-30: Perth

Relax and explore at your leisure before the Very Best of Australia tour commences. **Breakfast included**

Day 31: Perth

Check out of the Crowne Metropolis and make your own way to the Pan Pacific Perth Hotel at your leisure for the start of the Very Best of Australia tour. Your new travelling companions in Australia will not arrive into Perth until later in the day, so the rest of the day is free for you to explore independently. **Breakfast included**

Day 32: Perth

Named 'the friendly city' by tourists from all over the world, Perth is the world's most isolated city and is the capital of Western Australia. Today, we have arranged a tour to explore the city and its surrounds. Visit King's Park, with its enchanting wild flowers and bushland, and amazing views over the city's skyline. We will also travel to the nearby port town of Fremantle and enjoy a visit to the fascinating Shipwreck Gallery. Later, we see the Millionaire Mansions as we return to the hotel with a cruise along the Swan River. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 33 to 37: Perth - Kangaroo - Adelaide

Day 33: Perth Freedom Day

Our first Australian Freedom Day allows us to spend the day as we please. Our Distant Journeys Tour Manager will be on hand with advice on things to do, where to eat, make any arrangements and book excursions for you to further explore the area. Perhaps take an optional trip to the Nambung National Park to visit the fascinating limestone formations known as the Pinnacles. Alternatively, make the short journey to Rottneest Island, a protected nature reserve with white-sand beaches and secluded coves, and home to the small wallaby-like marsupial, the quokka. However you choose to spend your day – enjoy! **Breakfast included**

We recommend

Nambung National Park

Take an optional tour to the Nambung National Park to visit the fascinating limestone formations known as the Pinnacles



Day 34: Kangaroo Island, 2 nights

Following breakfast this morning, we board our flight to Adelaide, capital of South Australia. Upon arrival, meet our waiting coach and continue to the Fleurieu Peninsula, where we board a ferry to Penneshaw on Kangaroo Island. We make our way to the Mercure Kangaroo Island Lodge, situated in a bayside location on Kangaroo Island, for the next two nights. **Breakfast included**

Day 35: Kangaroo Island Tour Highlight

Our Kangaroo Island adventure commences with a scenic drive to Seal Bay Conservation Park. Here we will walk on the beach amongst a colony of rare Australian sea lions with a National Parks Ranger. Following lunch, we spend the afternoon at Flinders Chase National Park, renowned as a sanctuary for native Australian animals including kangaroos, wallabies, koalas and echidnas, to view how the park is quickly regenerating. The tour of the park will also take us to the rugged southern coastline for a walk on the Remarkable Rocks, providing us with great photographic opportunities and stunning sea views. We continue to Admirals Arch, which takes us down a rugged cliff face to reveal a spectacular rock archway, a natural nursery and safe haven for playful Long-Nosed Fur Seals. After a wonderful day spent amongst Australia's very best wildlife, we return to our hotel for a second night. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 36: Adelaide, 2 nights

After meeting a variety of Australia's wildlife up close and personal, it's time to make our way back to the mainland by ferry. En route to Adelaide, we visit Australia's oldest surviving German settlement in the quaint village of Hahndorf, with its tree-lined streets and original 'Fachwerk' buildings. Surrounded by grassy parkland, picturesque hills and the Mount Lofty Range, Adelaide could scarcely present a more captivating aspect. During this afternoon's sightseeing tour we will be introduced to Adelaide's streets, fine Victorian buildings and the attractive parks and gardens that surround the city. Later, we arrive at the Crowne Plaza Hotel for our next two nights. **Breakfast included**

Day 37: Adelaide Freedom Day

A Freedom Day to spend as you please. Take a look around Adelaide on foot or perhaps take an optional tour to the famous wine growing region of the Barossa Valley. Alternatively, a lunch cruise along the Murray River is a lovely way to spend a few hours. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 38 to 44: Melbourne - Uluru - Alice Springs - The Ghan

Day 38: Melbourne, 2 nights

This morning we make our way to the airport in plenty of time for our flight to Melbourne, capital of Victoria state and Australia's second largest city. Melbourne's allure lies in the fabulously preserved Victorian architecture of its many public buildings and gracious homes. Enjoy a sightseeing tour including Captain Cook's Cottage (optional entry at own expense), Victoria Markets, Federation Square, the MCG and Rod Laver Arena. We also head out of the city to see the waterside suburbs of St. Kilda and Port Melbourne. Home for the next two nights is the four star Pullman on the Park. **Breakfast included**

Day 39: Melbourne Freedom Day

Today we can choose to relax or explore as we please. We have the opportunity to take a trip to Phillip Island, home to the world's largest colony of fairy penguins, to view the 'Penguin Parade'. Alternatively, take the Puffing Billy steam train through the Blue Dandenong Ranges, explore the city's most famous sporting landmarks or tour along one of the world's most spectacular coastal drives - the internationally renowned Great Ocean Road. **Breakfast included**

Day 40: Uluru, 2 nights

Following breakfast this morning, we board our flight to Uluru in Australia's Red Centre. Before landing we may have the opportunity to view the world's largest monolith from our aircraft. Rising from the flat surrounding scrubland, Uluru is a site of deep cultural significance to the Aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory. Upon arrival we make our way to the four star Desert Gardens Hotel.

Tour Highlight

Later, we depart for a rock base tour enabling us to discover more about its historical and cultural importance. Enjoy a glass of sparkling wine with your travelling companions whilst witnessing the changing colours of Uluru as the sun begins to set. It's truly a photographer's delight. **Breakfast included**

Day 41: Uluru

This morning, we have the option of viewing Uluru at sunrise. Following breakfast we leave for a tour of the impressive series of rounded sandstone domes known as the Olgas. Your afternoon is at leisure to enjoy one of the many activities on offer. On your second evening in Ayers Rock Resort, watching the sun set at the Sounds of Silence dinner is highly recommended. **Breakfast included**

Day 42: Alice Springs, 2 nights

We have a leisurely start to our day. Later, we make our way to Alice Springs, travelling along the Lasseter and Stuart Highways. Upon arrival we check-in to the four star DoubleTree by Hilton. In the evening, we highly recommend experiencing the outback bush barbecue. **Breakfast included**

Day 43: Alice Springs Freedom Day

Our day is free to relax or explore the outback. You may wish to take a trip to the Western MacDonnell Ranges; an excellent opportunity to get a real picture of life in the outback. The full day excursion takes us through the wondrous and picturesque scenery of Simpson's Gap and the towering granite walls of Standley Chasm. **Breakfast included**

Day 44: The Ghan, Overnight

Nestled within the MacDonnell Ranges, Alice Springs is an iconic town made famous by its rich pioneering history and ancient indigenous culture. This morning you may wish to take an adventure in slow motion on an optional hot air balloon trip over the outback landscapes. Later, we board our coach and enjoy a sightseeing tour. Visits include the Royal Flying Doctor Service, the School of the Air, and the Old Telegraph Station, now a museum and the site of the old springs from which Alice gets its name.



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 45 to 47: The Ghan - Darwin - Cairns

Tour Highlight

Later in the afternoon it's time to make our way to Alice Springs Rail Terminal ready for our magnificent overland rail journey to Darwin, on Australia's northern coastline. Known for being one of the world's iconic rail journeys, The Ghan was named after the Afghan cameleers who once traversed this route. Our twin accommodation is in Gold Service cabins, air-conditioned, private sleepers, all with upper and lower bunk beds, en-suite shower, wash basin and toilet. Single travellers will be accommodated in Gold Service single cabins, which are configured as a lounge chair by day, converting into a bed at night, with shared bathroom facilities at the end of each carriage. Whilst on board, all our meals are included, as are a wide selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. Following dinner in the Queen Adelaide Restaurant, enjoy drinks with your travelling companions in the Outback Explorer Lounge. **Breakfast and dinner PLUS selected onboard drinks included**

Day 45: Darwin, 2 nights

Following breakfast, The Ghan arrives into Katherine. Here we have the opportunity to visit nearby Nitmiluk National Park, home to the spectacular Katherine Gorge. The gorge is a series of 13 sandstone gorges carved over many millions of years by the Katherine River. As we cruise up the river, calls of the cicada resonate across the water between the towering sandstone cliffs. Listen to stories of how the gorge was named, whilst marvelling at the sheer walls, etched by time and the elements, and home to a myriad of plant and animal life. Afterwards, return to The Ghan in time for lunch as we continue our journey to Darwin. Upon arrival we transfer to the DoubleTree by Hilton Esplanade, situated on Darwin's striking esplanade. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 46: Darwin Freedom Day

Darwin is the capital of Australia's Northern Territory and is known for its laid-back fusion of frontier outpost and modern city. Your day has been left totally free to spend in your own particular way. Perhaps visit the Defence of Darwin Experience, an immersive, interactive multimedia experience telling the story of Darwin's role in World War II – a very important time in Northern Territory history. Alternatively visit the thundering waterfalls, rainforest pockets and sacred sites of Litchfield National Park. For those wishing to venture further afield, a full day overland or flightseeing excursion to Kakadu National Park can be arranged. **Breakfast included**

We recommend

Litchfield National Park Explore the spectacular beauty of the national park, with its impressive waterfalls and expanses of rainforest.



Day 47: Cairns, 4 nights

An early start, as we leave for the airport in time for our one-stop flight to Cairns. Upon arrival we shall transfer to the ideally located Hilton Hotel, which will be our home for the next four nights. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 48 to 51: Cairns - Great Barrier Reef - Sydney

Day 48: Cairns Freedom Day

Although today has been left free, you may wish to take an optional trip to Kuranda. We ascend to Kuranda by the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, a beautiful experience gliding over the rainforest canopy. 'The village in the rainforest' Kuranda awaits. It's a lovely place to while away a few hours visiting the markets, butterfly sanctuary or the Koala Gardens. Travel back to Cairns along one of the most unique rail journeys in Australia, the Kuranda Scenic Railway. See how the track clings to the rockface along a narrow coastal strip. During our journey we encounter no fewer than 40 bridges and 15 tunnels as we make our way back to Cairns. **Breakfast included**

Day 49: Great Barrier Reef

Tour Highlight

A holiday to Australia would not be complete without a visit to the Great Barrier Reef. Its vibrantly coloured marine life and breathtakingly beautiful coral make this World Heritage site a must see for all visitors. During our full day Great Barrier Reef excursion, we board our high-speed catamaran and journey out to the Marine World platform located on the Outer Reef. Snorkel in the sheltered coral lagoon, or if you prefer to stay dry, view the reef from the semi-submersible reef viewer, glass-bottomed boat, or underwater observatory. With five hours at the reef there is plenty of time to do it all. For the more adventurous, there are a number of activities available at an additional cost, including scuba diving (no experience necessary), joining the marine biologist on a guided snorkel safari, or soaring above the reef on a spectacular scenic helicopter flight. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 50: Cairns Freedom Day

Another Freedom Day to enjoy in tropical northern Queensland. Surrounded by rainforest and mountains, Cairns boasts over 200 walking tracks; there are also numerous interesting museums and art galleries to explore. If you prefer to venture further afield, we suggest a day trip to the nearby Daintree Rainforest, where the oldest rainforest in the world meets the reef at the World Heritage listed Cape Tribulation. The tour gives a wonderful insight into the rainforest's unique flora and fauna, including a walk with an aboriginal guide and a cruise spotting saltwater crocodiles. Enjoy your day! **Breakfast included**

Day 51: Sydney, 4 nights

This morning we make our way to Cairns Airport in time for our flight to Sydney. Sydney is a city that takes full advantage of its natural setting – its sparkling harbour is host to the world famous Sydney Harbour Bridge, and the spectacular Sydney Opera House. Sydney's suburbs are blessed with lush native bushland and pristine sandy beaches. Add to this the excellent restaurants and cafés, endless shopping opportunities and a vibrant culture and it's very easy to understand why Sydney is one of the world's favourite cities. Upon arrival we head to the landmark Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, in the heart of central Sydney. **Breakfast included**



The Very Best of New Zealand & The Very Best of Australia

Days 52 to 56: Sydney - UK

Day 52: Sydney

Tour Highlight

This morning, our sightseeing tour begins with a drive through some of Sydney's most fashionable inner city suburbs enroute to Bondi Beach. Travel by Rushcutters Bay and Double Bay as we make our way back to the city centre. Travel via Hyde Park and Parliament House to Mrs Macquarie's Chair, an exposed sandstone rock cut into the shape of a bench by convicts in 1810, as a gift to Governor Macquarie's wife, Elizabeth. Here we stop for the classic photo opportunity of the world famous Opera House and Harbour Bridge. We complete our tour in the best possible way – enjoying a luncheon cruise around Sydney's beautiful harbour. The views of the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge and the many dream homes nestled along the edge of the water are truly amazing. The afternoon has been left free to spend as we please. **Breakfast and lunch included**

Day 53: Sydney Freedom Day

A Sydney Freedom Day to spend as you please. Although today has been left free, for those that so desire, we shall be taking an optional trip to the World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountains are a perfect example of native Australian bushland, with gum trees, majestic peaks and deep gorges stretching as far as the eye can see. Experience the panoramas from a series of lookouts, including Echo Point – the prime position to view the Three Sisters rock formation.

The excursion also visits Wentworth Falls and the pretty village of Leura, famous for their annual garden festivals and playing host to many of the region's local artists. **Breakfast included**

Day 54: Sydney Freedom Day

A further Freedom Day to experience Sydney in a way that suits you. Take an optional behind the scenes tour of Sydney Opera House, catch up on some shopping or possibly climb the impressive Harbour Bridge. Whatever you wish to do, our Tour Manager will be very happy to help. **Breakfast included**

Day 55: Depart Sydney

The day is yours until it's time to depart for the airport. Our flight to our chosen UK airport operates via Dubai or Singapore, where there will be a change of aircraft. **Breakfast, inflight meals and drinks included**

Day 56: Arrive UK

This morning we arrive into our chosen airport (London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow) bringing an end to our incredible adventure. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

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