








Clockwise from above: Kangaroo and joey in pouch; Great Barrier Reef, Queensland




## Your holiday includes

-  Return economy flights with Qantas & Emirates from London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow and all domestic flights within Australia, inclusive of all airport charges, security charges, any applicable fuel surcharges and UK Air Passenger Duty
-  Two-night outbound stopover – choose from Singapore or Dubai. Alternatively, spend two extra nights in Perth at the beginning of your tour
-  Carefully selected hotels in great locations, with all hotel portorage and applicable taxes
-  Meals worth £801 per person, with daily breakfast, lunch in a Barossa Valley winery, buffet lunch on the Great Barrier Reef and a lunch cruise around Sydney Harbour
-  Unforgettable experiences including:
  - ★ Sightseeing tours in Singapore (or Dubai), Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Alice Springs and Sydney
  - ★ Explore Caversham Wildlife Park
  - ★ Wine tasting in the Barossa Valley
  - ★ Experience Uluru at sunset and sunrise
  - ★ Full day excursion to the Great Barrier Reef
  - ★ Cruise Sydney's famous harbour
  - ★ A behind the scenes tour of the Opera House
  - ★ Aboriginal guided tour of Sydney's Botanic Garden

 Overnight journey on-board The Ghan train, on an all-inclusive basis, with all meals and selected alcoholic & soft drinks included

 Services of an experienced local Tour Manager

 All overseas transfers and modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout

 Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise and is fully ATOL protected

For more information on our Price Promise, please see our Booking Conditions on pages 140-143.

# The Very Best of Australia

 29 days  from £8,095pp  February – March 2025

Ultimate discovery and adventure awaits you on our Very Best of Australia tour. This in-depth tour covers so much of enchanting Australia, be it vibrant, world-class cities, the mesmerising outback or the ancient tropical rainforests of far North Queensland.

This tour also includes a journey aboard the legendary Ghan, one of the world's most famous rail journeys.

What makes this tour so special is the variety of included immersive activities which give you a true insight into the real Australia, its indigenous culture, its rich history and its warm, friendly people.

Amongst many other unforgettable experiences, this tour includes an overnight journey aboard the legendary Ghan, travelling north from Alice Springs in the heart of the Red Centre to Darwin at Australia's Top End, with a cruise through the enchanting Katherine Gorge included along the way. Travel in style on board in your own private cabin, with all meals and drinks included.



③ = Number of nights





Penguins, Phillip Island, Victoria



Twelve Apostles, Great Ocean Road, Victoria



Perth, Western Australia

# The Very Best of Australia

Days 1 to 11: UK - Singapore - Perth - Melbourne - Cairns

## Day 1: Depart UK

Depart from the UK airport most convenient for you with Qantas & Emirates, at no extra cost. Choose from London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

## Day 2: Singapore, 2 nights

Arrive at the wonderful city of Singapore and transfer to the four star M Hotel City Centre, situated in an enviable position close to the banks of the Singapore River. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

### Alternative stopovers

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

## Day 3: Singapore

Singapore is a city state rich in history and diversity. This morning, we enjoy a tour of this wonderful city, including the intriguing ethnic quarters where Chinese, Malay, and Indian influences fuse to produce Singapore's distinctive culture. We also visit the Merlion, Singapore's symbol, and the Botanical Gardens, home to a unique orchid collection. The rest of our day is at leisure. **Breakfast included**

## Day 4: Perth, 4 nights

Enjoy your time in Singapore as you please until we head to the airport, ready for our evening flight to our first stop in Australia, Perth. Once we arrive in Perth, we will clear customs and then head to our home for the next four nights, the Pan Pacific Hotel.

**Breakfast, in-flight meals and drinks included**

## Day 5: Perth

We take a look at Perth today with a sightseeing tour of the city and the surrounding area. First, we'll visit King's Park, an expansive landscape of bushland and wildflowers, which has stunning vistas across the city's skyline. We will then travel to the nearby port town of Fremantle to visit the fascinating Shipwreck Galleries. The tour ends with a relaxing cruise along the Swan River back to downtown Perth, passing the Millionaire Mansions on the way. This evening we'll get together for a convivial Welcome drink with our Tour Manager.

**Breakfast included**

## Day 6: Perth

The morning is yours to explore. Then we head to Caversham Wildlife Park to meet some of Australia's iconic native wildlife, from kangaroos and koalas to wombats and wallabies. **Breakfast included**

## Day 7: Perth Freedom Day

Our first of several Freedom Days in Australia, where you can spend the day however you please. If you need a little guidance, our Distant Journeys Tour Manager will be there for you to offer expert advice and recommendations on things to do and places to eat, and they can also help to make any arrangements you may need or book additional excursions for you. On this first Freedom Day we also offer two optional excursions to some spectacular natural landscapes close to the city. The first is the Nambung National Park, home to hundreds of striking limestone towers known as the Pinnacles. Alternatively, you can take a trip to Rottnest Island, a protected nature reserve with a coastline of hidden coves and white sandy beaches. Rich in wildlife, here you can spot the quokka, a wallaby-like marsupial. However you choose to spend your first Freedom Day, enjoy! **Breakfast included**

## Day 8: Melbourne, 3 nights

Today we transfer to Perth Airport in time for our flight to Melbourne, the second-largest city in Australia. It's also one of the most historic, as seen in the stunning and extremely well-preserved Victorian architecture of its public buildings and grand houses. We'll discover more tomorrow, but for tonight we will settle into our riverfront accommodation, the Crowne Plaza Melbourne Hotel. **Breakfast included**

## Day 9: Melbourne

Among the places we will visit on this morning's sightseeing tour are the Victoria Markets, the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Treasury Gardens, the Rod Laver Arena and Federation Square. After soaking up these sights, we also head out of the city centre to see two lovely waterside suburbs: Port Melbourne and St Kilda. This afternoon, for those who wish, there is an opportunity to take a trip to Phillip Island, home to the world's largest colony of little penguins, to view the 'Penguin Parade'. **Breakfast included**

## Day 10: Melbourne Freedom Day

A Freedom Day in Melbourne to enjoy as you wish. Spend the day exploring its parks and laneways, or perhaps take an optional excursion aboard the Puffing Billy steam train through the Blue Dandenong Ranges. Alternatively, head out of the city along one of the most spectacular coastal drives in the world, the Great Ocean Road. **Breakfast included**

## Day 11: Cairns, 4 nights

This morning, we make our way to the airport for our flight to Cairns, in Tropical Far North Queensland. Upon arrival we transfer to the superbly located Pullman Cairns International , which will be our home for the next four nights. **Breakfast included**





Alice Springs, Northern Territory

# The Very Best of Australia

Days 12 to 15: Great Barrier Reef - Cairns - Brisbane

## Day 12: Great Barrier Reef

### Tour Highlight

A full day visit to the Great Barrier Reef will be an undoubted tour highlight. Our high-speed catamaran will zip across the ocean to the Outer Reef, where we disembark onto a platform which will be our base for the day. The Great Barrier Reef is one of the seven wonders of the natural world, and the world's largest coral reef system. Whether you want to snorkel surrounded by marine life, swim in the warm waters or explore in a semi-submersible vessel, there is plenty of time to enjoy these activities and more. There are other activities available at an additional cost for those looking for more adventure, such as scuba diving, a snorkel safari guided by a marine biologist, a Seawalker Helmet dive, or even taking a scenic helicopter flight over the reef for spectacular views. **Breakfast and lunch included**

## Day 13: Cairns Freedom Day

Today is a Freedom Day to spend how you wish in Cairns, although we are offering a popular optional excursion to the rainforest village of Kuranda. Our day begins as we travel on the Kuranda Scenic Railway up to the village of Kuranda in the rainforest. Passing over 40 bridges and through 15 tunnels, this is a railway journey to remember. Once in Kuranda, there are several pleasant ways to spend the next few hours, including perusing the markets, visiting the butterfly sanctuary, or exploring the Koala Gardens. We continue to Rainforest Station where we meet our Aboriginal guides. Chat in the Yarning Circle, test your boomerang and spear throwing skills and watch a traditional Aboriginal dance performance. We make our way back to the coast on the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, descending above the treetops with far-reaching views over the rainforest. **Breakfast included**



Koala

## Day 14: Cairns Freedom Day

Another Freedom Day in tropical northern Queensland. If you prefer to stay in Cairns today, there's much to see and do, including numerous museums and art galleries, as well as over 200 walking tracks. Today you can also come with us to the nearby Daintree Rainforest, the world's oldest rainforest. It's also home to the World Heritage Site Cape Tribulation, an isolated headland where the rainforest meets the reef. During our rainforest tour, you'll see the rainforest's dazzling variety of flora and fauna on a guided walk as well as embarking on a cruise to spot saltwater crocodiles. **Breakfast included**

## Day 15: Brisbane, 2 nights

We leave Cairns this morning for a short flight to Brisbane, capital of Queensland, where on arrival we will take a sightseeing tour including Brisbane's South Bank, which offers museums, riverside views and even a man-made beach. After checking into our hotel, the Stamford Plaza, the rest of the day is at leisure to relax and settle in. **Breakfast included**



The Ghan





Katherine Gorge, Northern Territory



Crocodile, Daintree River, Queensland



Bondi Beach, Sydney, New South Wales

# The Very Best of Australia

Days 16 to 27: Brisbane - Uluru - Alice Springs - The Ghan - Adelaide - Sydney

## Day 16: Brisbane Freedom Day

A Freedom Day in Brisbane, to enjoy as you wish. Have a lazy day strolling around Brisbane's gardens and river boardwalk and enjoy a bite to eat at the recently restored Howard Smith Wharves, under the city's iconic Story Bridge. Alternatively, leave the city behind and enjoy an optional full day tour exploring the spectacular and picturesque scenery of the Scenic Rim. This region is home to six national parks and a World Heritage Rainforest, just an hour's drive from Brisbane. **Breakfast included**

## Day 17: Uluru (Ayers Rock), 2 nights

### Tour Highlight

A complete change of scenery begins today as we fly to Australia's Red Centre. On arrival in Uluru (Ayers Rock) we'll head straight for our hotel, the Desert Gardens, where we have time to relax before this evening's highlight, sunset at Uluru. Enjoy a glass of wine with your travelling companions whilst witnessing the changing colours of Uluru as the sun begins to set. After the velvety darkness has descended, we return to the hotel where the rest of the evening is at leisure. **Breakfast included**

## Day 18: Uluru

This morning, before breakfast we have the option of seeing a different perspective of Uluru at sunrise – it's worth the early start! Later, we depart for a rock base tour enabling us to discover more about Uluru's historical and cultural importance. We also take a tour of the impressive series of rounded sandstone domes known as Kata Tjuta (The Olgas). Tonight, there is the option of visiting the stunning installation the Field of Light, or dining under the stars at the Sounds of Silence. **Breakfast included**

## Day 19: Alice Springs, Overnight

Leaving Uluru behind early today, we drive east through the Outback towards our next destination, Alice Springs. Our overnight accommodation is at the Crowne Plaza Lasseters Hotel, and tonight there is a choice of optional activities: a memorable sunset camel ride, or a proper Aussie experience at the Outback Bush BBQ. **Breakfast included**

## Day 20: The Ghan, Overnight

### Tour Highlight

Nestled within the MacDonnell Ranges, Alice Springs is an iconic town with rich pioneering history and ancient indigenous culture. This morning we enjoy a sightseeing tour including 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.

We continue to Alice Springs Rail Terminal, ready for our magnificent rail journey to Adelaide. 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 onboard, 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. Upgrade options to the Gold Premium service are also available. **Breakfast, lunch and dinner PLUS selected onboard drinks included**

## Day 21: Adelaide

Awake this morning to watch The Ghan entering the rolling pastoral landscapes of South Australia. In just 25 hours aboard The Ghan we will have covered 1,555 kilometres and passed the fierce Simpson Desert, rugged mountain ranges, salt lakes, vast sheep stations and golden wheatfields. After a lavish breakfast and a leisurely morning aboard The Ghan, we arrive into Adelaide where we disembark. We'll take a tour of this city of churches and parks before we check into our home for the next two nights, the Hilton Adelaide. **Breakfast, PLUS selected onboard drinks included**

## Day 22 (SAT): Adelaide Freedom Day KI

As today is a Freedom Day, it's the perfect chance to explore Adelaide or venture further afield with a full-day tour of Kangaroo Island, known for its native wildlife and pristine beaches. **Breakfast included**

## Day 23: Adelaide

The Barossa Valley is synonymous with world-class wines, and today's excursion takes us to this famous wine growing region. Our day begins with a visit to Mount Lofty, a great viewing point in the Adelaide Hills, and home to extensive botanical gardens. After a fascinating visit to a working blacksmith museum, we enjoy wine tasting and lunch in one of the Barossa's picturesque wineries. **Breakfast and lunch included**

## Day 24: Sydney, 4 nights

This morning, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Sydney, New South Wales. From its world-famous Harbour Bridge and Opera House to its sandy beaches and native bushland, vibrant culture and lively entertainment scene, Sydney is one of the world's favourite cities. We'll transfer to the Hyatt Regency Hotel in the heart of Darling Harbour and settle in for the first of our four nights here. **Breakfast included**

## Day 25: Sydney

### Tour Highlight

This morning's sightseeing tour begins with a drive through some of Sydney's most fashionable inner-city suburbs en route to Bondi Beach. Travel by Double Bay and Rushcutters Bay as we make our way back to the city centre. We journey via Hyde Park and Parliament House to Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Royal Botanical Gardens, where we stop for the classic photo opportunity of the Opera House and Harbour Bridge. We complete our tour in the best possible way – enjoying a lunch 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 26: Sydney Freedom Day

Today has been left free, but 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 27: Sydney

This morning presents an array of diverse experiences: an expertly guided exploration of Sydney's iconic Opera House, a leisurely stroll through Sydney's renowned Botanic Garden led by an Aboriginal guide, and a captivating journey into the historic convict roots of Sydney at the interactive Hyde Park Barracks Museum, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The afternoon is left entirely free for you to do as you wish. Whether you fancy some retail therapy or climb the awe-inspiring Harbour Bridge, our Tour Manager will be delighted to offer their assistance in making your choice a reality. **Breakfast included**





Sydney Harbour, New South Wales



Camel, Dubai

# The Very Best of Australia

Days 28 to 29: Sydney - UK

## Day 28: Depart Sydney

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

## Day 29: Arrive UK

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

### Why not combine with a tour of New Zealand?



If you wish to make the ultimate journey to Australasia, combine The Very Best of Australia with one of our fantastic tours of New Zealand.

Please see pages 120-121 for more details.

## Homebound Stopovers from only £195 per person

Why not extend your holiday with a stopover on your homeward journey? Choose from Singapore, Sentosa Island or Bangkok, a beach stay in Bali or a stop in fashionable Dubai. Your stopover includes return airport transfers, accommodation and daily breakfast.

### Dubai

Two nights from £345 per person The magic, mystery and traditions of Arabia, combined with an ambitious futuristic vision.

### Bangkok

Two nights from £195 per person Glittering temples, diverse and wonderful cuisine and graceful service with a smile.

### Singapore

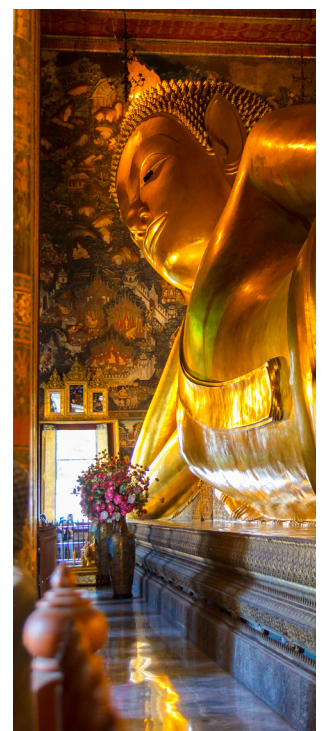
Two nights from £295 per person A perfect blend of ancient eastern and modern western cultures.

### Sentosa Island

Two nights from £495 per person A relaxing sanctuary or fun-filled adventure, only 20 minutes from Singapore.

### Bali

Three nights from £495 per person A truly relaxing stopover at this beachfront hotel, where turquoise waters lap at white-sand shores and swaying palm trees.



Please see pages 134-135 for more details on homebound stopovers.