

LEICHHARDT'S SAVANNAH EXPEDITION

DARWIN - CAIRNS

SAMPLE ITINERARY

This is a sample itinerary and may be subject to change. We may need to alter or amend itineraries, excursions, accommodation, or sightseeing arrangements from those published, with little or no notice. This may be due to road conditions, weather, cultural considerations, safety factors and other operational considerations or government regulations. Final itineraries are sent to passengers approximately 2-3 weeks before travel.

DAY 1 – Darwin

Today you will be greeted by our friendly and professional Tour Directors. We then head into the city and check into the Hilton Garden Inn Darwin (Formerly The Doubletree by Hilton).

This evening we enjoy our first dinner together on the Charles Darwin with a delicious Territory-style sunset dinner cruise. **Meals: (D)**

DAY 2 – Darwin - Edith Falls - Katherine

This morning we depart Darwin and journey south along the Stuart Highway, through Adelaide River and Pine Creek en route to Katherine. Along the way we'll visit Edith Falls, where you can swim in the paperbark-fringed pool at the base of the waterfall.

Later this afternoon we arrive in Katherine for the first of two nights at Knotts Crossing Resort. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 3 – Katherine

This morning we enjoy Tom Curtain's national award winning Katherine Outback Experience, a new addition to our tour.

Later on today we take a 2-hour boat cruise on the Katherine River Gorge in Nitmiluk National Park. The NitNit Dreaming cruise is one of the most popular tours in the region and will take you to the end of the first gorge, where you will experience the beauty of the large boulders, rock pools and sands that make up the crossover to the second gorge.

We return to Knotts Crossing Resort for our second night. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 4 – Katherine - Lorella Springs

This morning we head through Mataranka before continuing east along the Roper Highway towards Roper Bar. Our travels take us along one of the most remote sections of the Savannah Way. Used extensively by drovers in the 1870's, thousands of cattle have walked this route on their way from Queensland to the Northern Territory and the Kimberley.

We pass through the dramatic scenery of the Limmen National Park before arriving into Lorella Springs late afternoon where we settle in for our three-night stay in this extraordinary location. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 5 – Exploring Lorella Springs Station

Over the next two days we explore all the wonders of Lorella Springs Wilderness Park including pristine thermal springs.

We'll take part in an exhilarating helicopter flight over the southern 'Lost City' and also take a drive out to the area to explore ancient sandstone structures where we will enjoy a ground tour with your guides who'll tell you about the local geology, vegetation and birdlife.

At the end of each day's adventures, join your station hosts at the bar for happy hour and mingle with other likeminded explorers journeying across the Gulf. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

Note: weight restrictions apply for legal and safety reasons on all helicopter flights. All passengers must be weighed prior to boarding the aircraft.

DAY 6 – Exploring Lorella Springs Station

As Day 5. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 7 – Lorella Springs - Borroloola - Pungalina

This morning we farewell the lovely team at Lorella Springs and make our way back out to the Savannah Way.

From here we head to Borroloola, and after a visit to the Borroloola Museum, we continue our journey south east towards Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Pungalina-Seven Emu Wildlife Sanctuary.

Together the two properties cover a combined area of around 305,000 hectares and include coastal monsoon

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rainforest, tall paper bark forests, palm-fringed wetlands, deep gorges and coastal flood plains. The sanctuary is home to over 40 species of mammals, 190 species of birds and 95 species of frogs and reptiles.

We arrive at the sanctuary late afternoon and check in to our new safari camp. Built by Outback Spirit in 2019, the camp features unique safari tents with ensuite bathrooms and covered decks, the perfect spot for a two-night stay to discover the area. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

Note: Seven Emu is owned by Mr Frank Shadforth with 110,000 hectares of the property leased to the Australian Wildlife Conservancy for conservation. Pungalina is wholly owned by AWC.

DAY 8 – Exploring Pungalina - Seven Emu Sanctuary

Today, we'll explore Pungalina-Seven Emu Sanctuary and learn about what makes these two properties such important ecological habitats in northern Australia.

Take a cruise on the Calvert River and experience some rarely seen but truly spectacular scenery. We'll also enjoy an engaging presentation and discussion exploring the Australian Wildlife Conservancy's conservation work, wildlife research, and land management initiatives at Pungalina-Seven Emu Wildlife Sanctuary. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 9 – Savannah Way – Hell's Gate

This morning we bid farewell to Pungalina-Seven Emu Wildlife Sanctuary and continue east along the Savannah Way, crossing over the NT/QLD border and onto Hell's Gate.

Here, we stay in new and modern accommodation with ensuite bathrooms for the next two nights. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 10 – Hell's Gate

Today we visit the station at Hell's Gate. Located on Cliffdale Station, Hell's Gate takes its name from a gap in the escarpment one kilometre south.

The activities will include a tour of the station and a scenic helicopter flight to the coastline of the Gulf of Carpentaria via Eight Mile Creek where you may see native birds, wild pigs, wild brumbies, wild bulls and cattle, crocodiles and native fish life all accessible from the air.

Enjoy some free time this afternoon on your second night with friends on this unique outback station. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 11 – Hell's Gate – Leichhardt Falls - Camp 119 - Karumba

This morning we depart Hell's Gate and continue travelling along the Great Top Road to Doomadgee and onto Burketown. We visit Leichhardt's Falls (no swimming) before re-joining the Savannah Way across the gulf to Camp 119.

This was the most northerly camp of the Burke and Wills Expedition of 1860/61. The exhausted party of Robert O'Hara Burke and William John Wills set up camp close to the seasonal Little Blynoe River, in the hinterland of the Gulf of Carpentaria, in their attempt to cross Australia from south to north. It was the northernmost point of their ill-fated expedition.

After lunch we make our way north towards Normanton and onto Karumba. Located on the banks of the Norman River, Karumba came to importance in the 1930's when it became a stop-over point for flying boats on the run from London to Australia.

Later this afternoon we check in to the End of the Road Motel for our 2 night stay. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 12 – Karumba - Gulflander - Barramundi Centre

This morning we join one of the last great characters of rail travel - The Gulflander. This historic little train takes us on a journey from Normanton to Critters Camp.

From here we head back to Karumba and discover the amazing secrets of the mighty barramundi at The Les Wilson Barramundi Discovery Centre, the only hatchery in the world to breed the Southern Gulf strain of this iconic fish! The brand new interactive and state-of-the-art Interpretive Centre provides the history, stories, lifecycle, and habits of these sought-after fish.

For our dinner this evening we enjoy a special Sand Island sunset dinner cruise in the Gulf. Dine on local seafood while watching a sensational gulf sunset. (Includes wine and beer. Alternative meals are available).

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We head back to the End of the Road Motel for our final night in Karumba. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

Note: Gulflander journey may change subject to operating hours.

DAY 13 – Karumba - Undara

From Karumba we head east to Mt. Surprise and then on to Undara Volcanic National Park, which protects the longest lava tube cave system in the world.

This afternoon we check in to Undara Lava Lodge for our overnight stay in unique accommodation, consisting of restored railway carriages. The lodge has recently been fully renovated and upgraded, with all rooms now featuring private ensuite bathrooms. Tonight, enjoy dinner in the outdoor style restaurant as the outback sun fades into a clear starlit night. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 14 – Undara Lava Tubes - Atherton Tablelands - Cairns

This morning a local Savannah Guide will take us on a tour through the lava tube cave system. Created when the Undara Volcano erupted over 190,000 years ago, the lava that poured out was enough to fill Sydney Harbour three times over. The lava flows lasted a long time, which allowed the outer edge to cool while the interior kept flowing, creating the tubes seen today.

Departing Undara, we join the Kennedy Highway and travel east to the beautiful Millaa Millaa Falls. Continuing through the scenic Atherton Tablelands, we check in to the Shangri-La located on the Marina, just minutes from the Esplanade.

Tonight, enjoy our final dinner together and celebrate our adventure through some of the most remote country in Australia. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 15 – Cairns

After breakfast enjoy a leisurely morning before being transferred. **Meals: (B)**

Every effort will be made by your crew to ensure that the above itinerary is followed. However, Outback Spirit reserves the right to alter the itinerary once on tour as required due to weather and track conditions or other operational considerations.