

OUTBACK QUEENSLAND



with Robert Kingsford-Smith or Chris Harding

1 - 14 May, 26 Jun - 10 Jul, 14 - 28 Aug, 11 - 25 Sep 2018

• LONGREACH • WINTON • MT ISA • THE GULF COUNTRY •
• QUEENSLAND SAVANNAH • CAIRNS AND THE TROPICS •



Scott McGregor's

RAILWAY ADVENTURES

OVERVIEW

Welcome aboard this character-filled tour, a rare opportunity to explore the many aspects of Far North Queensland and the Queensland Outback by coach, boat, plane and train.

Each of our tour dates has something special to offer. Our first tour, at the end of the wet season, sees the landscape lush and green, the rivers full and the air dry and warm. Then, while the southern states are still experiencing the chills of mid-winter, the clear, warm days in the Far North will have you reaching for those long-forgotten summer clothes. The springtime presents its own colour and character with longer days, subtle bush flowers and spring growth. All along the way you'll enjoy many culinary delights, meet all kinds of outback characters and be bowled over by the variety of entertaining experiences on this unique outback adventure.

Australia is indeed a lucky country to have such a unique collection of great train journeys in one sweeping and fascinating region. Travel from Brisbane to Longreach on the legendary Spirit of the Outback, followed by a trip to Mount Isa by coach with some interesting stops along the way. You will then fly to the Gulf of Carpentaria on board an island-hopping mail-plane. Your journey continues by train across the wide Savannah on the Gulflander. The Savannahlander takes you through the rugged Outback, over the high tablelands and on down through the rainforest to the coast. Enjoy time in Longreach, Winton, Mount Isa, Normanton and Karumba on the Gulf, the stunning Cobbold Gorge, the intriguing Undara Lava Tubes, and finally, to the holiday hub of Cairns. The tour is topped off by a day trip to the Port Douglas markets, the Bally Hooley Railway, Mossman Gorge and a drive to the Atherton Tableland.

WHY TRAVEL WITH US

- **Small group sizes** — a maximum of 20 passengers per trip guarantees an intimate experience with less time spent queuing, more time with your guide, and better access to sightseeing destinations.
- **Unique itineraries** — each itinerary has been meticulously developed by a team with great cultural awareness and many years' knowledge of each destination. You are guaranteed to experience the best that each destination has to offer.
- **Authentic local experiences** — whether it's a little-known yet impressive steam railway, a small boutique hotel or an authentic restaurant, know that you will experience something special on our tours.
- **Expert local guides and local operators** — we employ local guides to share their passion and knowledge of the places they call home, while our partners on the ground offer us support and backup all the way.
- **Customer satisfaction** — our testimonials speak for themselves. Thousands have travelled with us over the years and many come back year after year, often bringing friends along! On our customer satisfaction ratings, over 97% would recommend us to others and/or travel with us again.
- **Fully escorted** — our team of tour leaders is experienced and capable, entertaining and considerate, and together with our local guides, has your needs well covered. They will help with everything along the way, giving you the peace of mind to soak up your surroundings. And you'll find them jolly good company to boot!

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADERS

Robert Kingsford-Smith has built on his childhood passion for railways of the 1960s, by embarking on a quest to record on film the world's disappearing steam locomotives. His often adventurous travels have taken him to over forty countries and the resulting photographs and articles have appeared in numerous Australian and overseas publications.

Robert has led groups of like-minded enthusiasts on tours to places as diverse as South America, Pakistan and South Africa. More recently he has become the celebrated tour leader on many Railway Adventure tours through Outback Queensland, India and Sri Lanka. His passion for both history and wildlife has been well served on his travels and he combines his many interests with regular and extensive train travel. Cairns is of special significance for Robert because his great-great-grandfather, R. A. Kingsford, was its first mayor.

Chris Harding is Vice President of the Australian Railway Historical Society's NSW Division. Prior to that, he spent many years with the steam operating company, 3801 Limited, and conducted tours of Sydney's disused tunnels and behind the scenes at Sydney Central Station. He is often called upon by TV and radio stations to talk about railways and urban and industrial history. His early career with the Bank of New South Wales and Westpac gave him many opportunities for travel for work and pleasure. Chris' interest in narrow gauge railways began with his first trip to Switzerland in 1974, attracted by the extraordinary feats of engineering in unimaginable scenic locations, and has continued to grow ever since. His annual Swiss tour for Railway Adventures is one of our most popular journeys.



Chris Harding

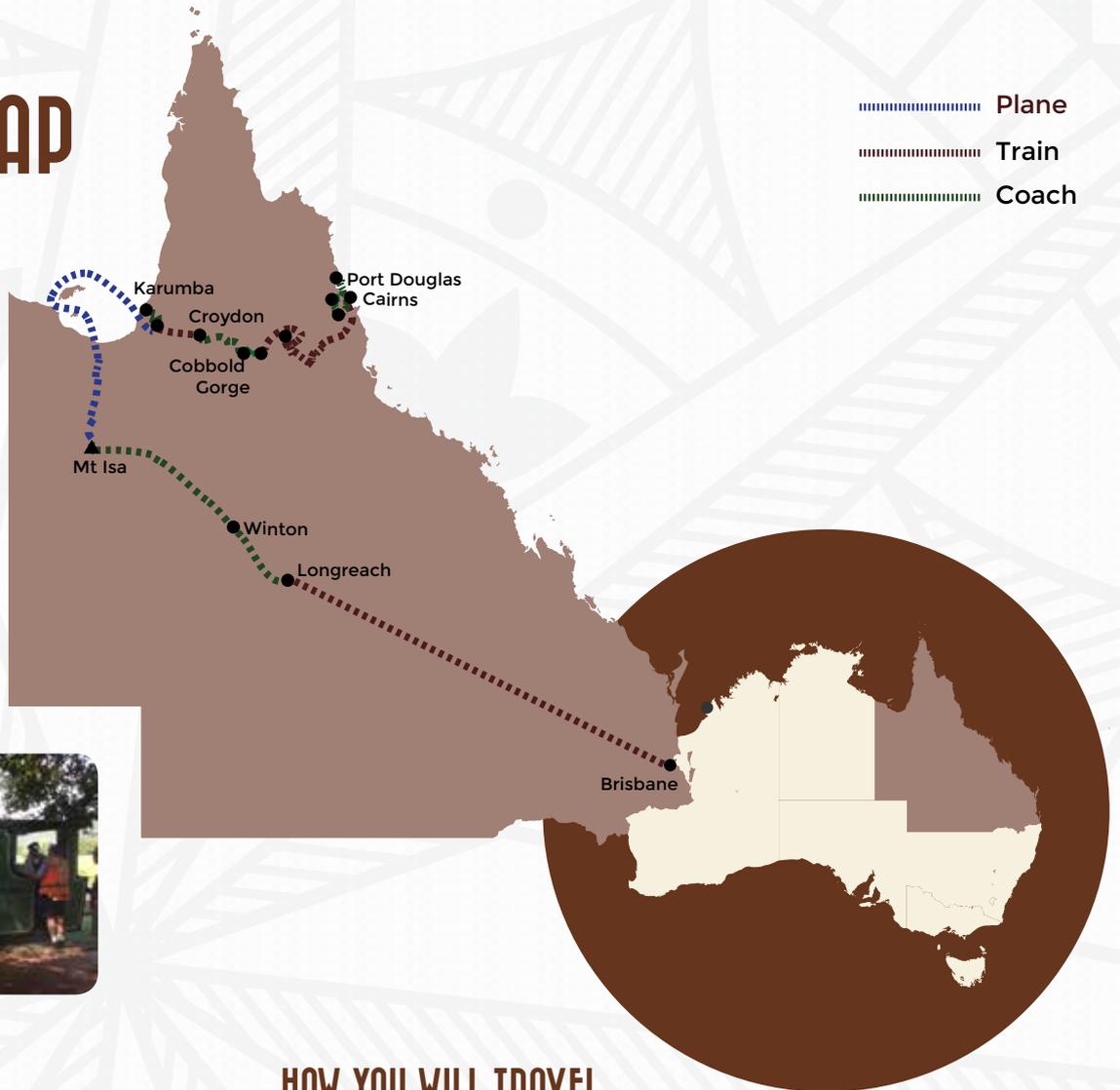


Robert Kingsford - Smith

HIGHLIGHTS

- Overnight journey on the Spirit of the Outback in first-class sleepers with dinner in the diner
- 4 heritage train journeys
- 4 comfortable coach excursions
- Mail-plane flight over the Gulf Country
- Boat trip to a private sand island in the Gulf for a sunset soiree
- Fascinating Cobbold Gorge and Undara Lava Tube experiences
- 2 days' gentle travel on the Savannahlander
- Characters, scenery and iconic journeys from the desert to the tablelands and rainforest.

TOUR MAP



Bally Hooley Railway

HOW YOU WILL TRAVEL

First class rail journeys, private luxury coach for off-train travel and many other appealing ways to travel. Here's a selection:



The Gulflander



The Savannahlander



The Spirit Of The Outback

Day 1 • Tuesday: Arrive Brisbane

The Jen Hotel in Brisbane, right beside Roma Street Station, is an appropriate venue for an afternoon welcome reception to start our adventure. Meet Robert and Chris and fellow travellers while enjoying a beverage and canapes before heading down to the platform for our date with the Spirit of the Outback. After checking in and locating your sleeping berth, relax and settle in for our 6.10 pm departure.

From the comfort of your air-conditioned first-class sleeping berth you will enjoy a fascinating journey from Brisbane to Longreach. A chef-prepared dinner is served on board in the train's "Tuckerbox" dining car and you are invited to continue to unwind in the "Shearers Rest" lounge car as evening descends on our northbound train.

Overnight: Spirit of the Outback (D)

Day 2 • Wednesday: Longreach

The morning greets us with a vista of the Central Ranges and towns like Bluff, Blackwater and Emerald roll by while we enjoy our cooked breakfast. Soak up the ever-changing landscape as we head further into the heart of the Queensland Outback, passing sleepy Central Queensland towns like Alpha, Jericho and Barcaldine in the afternoon, leading to our destination of Longreach at 7.15 pm.

Named after the "long reach" of the Thomson River, the town had only been gazetted for five years when the railway arrived in 1892. The town is situated right on the Tropic of Capricorn and has a population of just over 3,000, boosted by travellers who come to see the great museums, notably the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and the Qantas Founders Museum.

Hotel: Albert Park Motor Inn, Longreach (B, L)

Day 3 • Thursday 5 May: Longreach - Winton

After breakfast, we take the short stroll to the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, considered by many to be Australia's premier outback heritage institution. We will have an opportunity to explore the museum, which is comprised of an eclectic mix of objects touchscreens, open displays, photographs, artworks and audio-visual presentations. After a live show we have time for lunch at the Hall of Fame's café.

After lunch we will head on foot to the Qantas Founders Museum. The museum tells the story of the four key figures who founded Qantas and highlights what life was like in Queensland in the 1920s. We will also attend a 1½-hour Jet Tour for a behind-the-scenes look at both a 747 and 707.

In the afternoon, we board our private coach from Red Dirt Tours to take us the 180 kilometres to Winton and check in to our hotel. This evening you will enjoy dinner in the hotel's authentic retro era dining room.

Hotel: North Gregory Hotel, Winton (B, D)

Day 4 • Friday 6 May: Winton

After breakfast we first visit the Australian Age of Dinosaurs museum where we can enjoy morning tea. You will have the next 24 hours to explore on your own with a Silver Winton Attraction Pass. Pick and choose whatever attractions you are most interested in from the list including the Quantilda Museum, Corfield & Fitzmaurice Building, the Royal Open Air Theatre, and the Opal Walk. You may also join an optional tour out to the Dinosaur Stampede National Monument at Lark Quarry Conservation Park. For those super energetic brisk walkers, you may try to get to all the attractions!

Dinner is at our hotel.

Hotel: North Gregory Hotel, Winton (B, D)

Day 5 • Saturday 7 May: Winton - Mount Isa

The morning is yours to continue explorations of the town and its attractions or to just relax at the hotel until it's time to depart. Our regular scheduled coach leaves at 12.50 pm for the journey across the wide, rugged outback, passing through Cloncurry to Mount Isa.

After checking into our hotel we don't have far to travel to enjoy dinner - the private dining room in the hotel's restaurant is the best place to go!

Hotel: Ibis Styles Mt Isa Verona Hotel, Mount Isa (B, D)

Day 6 • Sunday 8 May: Mount Isa

We have a full day to enjoy all that Mount Isa has to offer. Start with a compact town tour travelling past the vast mine complex to the lookout and the historic Underground Hospital. In the afternoon, visit the Isa Experience and Riversleigh Fossil Centre. This is a multi-media gallery presenting the prehistoric, indigenous, cultural and mining heritage of the Mount Isa region. The gallery displays a mixture of artefacts, photographs, specimens and models as well as audio and video accounts of Mount Isa's fascinating history. You can also partake of an optional 'underground' Hard Times Mine tour.

Hotel: Ibis Styles Mt Isa Verona Hotel, Mount Isa (B)

Day 7 • Monday 9 May: Mount Isa - Normanton - Karumba

This morning we transfer to the airport to board our flight from Mount Isa to Normanton via Doomadgee and Mornington Island, hopping from one settlement to the other and flying low enough to provide spectacular views of the Gulf. On arrival in Normanton, we will transfer to the train station for a 40-minute trip on the RM60, the Normanton Station's 78-year-old vintage rail motor. One of the highlights is watching the driver start the motor with a crank handle! After an exploration of Normanton and some free time for lunch at the local pub, we will transfer to Karumba and settle into our accommodation for the next two nights.

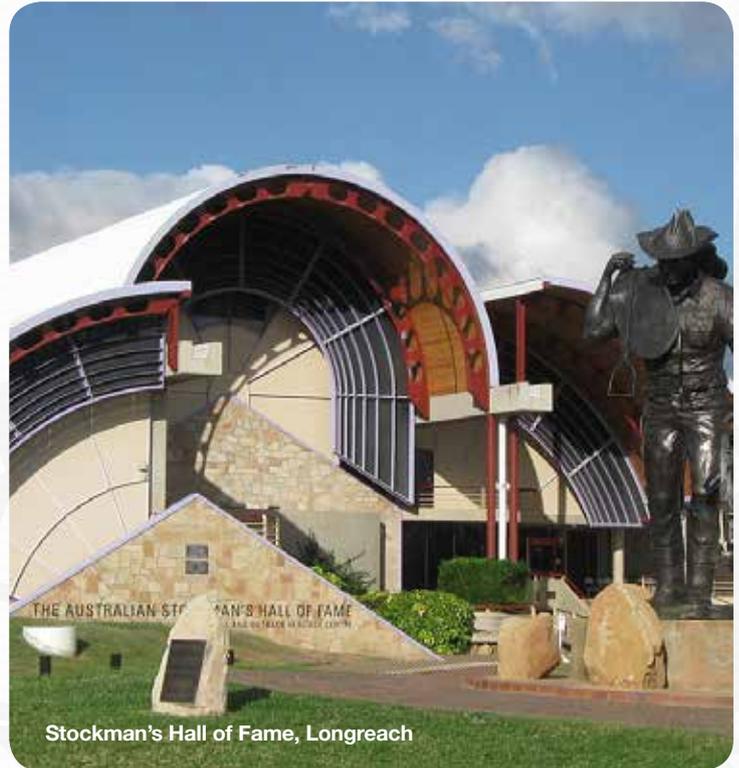
Hotel: End of the Road Motel or Similar, Karumba (B, D)

Day 8 • Tuesday 10 May: Karumba

The morning is yours to enjoy this little town located on the Gulf of Carpentaria. It's a chance to take a break from the busy schedule and just relax. Take a walk out to the point or along the estuary or perhaps take an optional morning tour by boat or visit the Barramundi Discovery Centre - both subject to availability.

We gather in the late afternoon to join the Luxury Sand Island Sunset Dinner Cruise. Our little boat takes off from Karumba out into the Gulf waters. Watch the sky and sea turn to fire while relaxing on Sun Island with a dinner of Gulf Mudcrab, Banana Prawns, a specialty fish dish, tropical fruit platters and ice-cold refreshments.

Hotel: End of the Road Motel or Similar, Karumba (B, D)



Day 9 • Wednesday 11 May:

Karumba - Normanton - Croydon - Cobbold Gorge

After breakfast we roll back across the flood plains and grasslands to Normanton and board the legendary Gulflander. Also known as the Tin Hare, the old rail motor has traversed the line between Normanton and Croydon every Wednesday for over a century on a unique line that is known as “the line from nowhere to nowhere”. Our driver and guard keep the commentary rolling and the whole experience is a slice of authentic Australian bush travel complete with the odd stop to drop off mail or allow wandering livestock and native animals to cross our path.

We arrive in time for lunch at the Croydon local café and then our coach takes us to the remote out-station of Cobbold Gorge Resort, arriving just after sunset where dinner is hosted on the deck of the restaurant. You are then free to have a nightcap at the bar or wander back to your cabin, marvel at the stars and enjoy the peace and quiet of this wild location.

Hotel: Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge (B, L, D)

Day 10 • Thursday: Cobbold Gorge

After a hearty bush breakfast we will join a morning tour and cruise of Cobbold Gorge. Custom-made electric-powered boats glide through the water below the spectacularly sculptured gorge walls in an almost eerie silence, ensuring minimal disturbance to wildlife. There's every chance of seeing one of the resident freshwater crocodiles!

After lunch we will board our all-terrain vehicle for a tour of Robin Hood Station (supposedly named because it adjoined the Sherwood mining lease), a 1284-square-kilometre cattle grazing property run by third-generation cattleman, Simon Terry and his wife Gaye. On your station tour you will visit the cattle yards, dams and outbuildings, hearing rare insights into the cattle grazing industry and relaxing over a traditional outback 'smoko'. You may wish to take a helicopter joy flight to see this spectacular country from the air.

Hotel: Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge (B, L, D)

Day 11 • Friday: Forsayth - Mount Surprise

Staff from Cobbold Gorge Tours will transfer us to Forsayth where we board the Savannahlander for the first stage in its 500-kilometre journey to Cairns. Departing Forsayth Station, terminus of the Chillagoe Railway and Mining Company line built in 1910, the train traverses the Newcastle Range and later, pauses for lunch at the iconic Einasleigh Pub right beside the vast Copperfield Gorge. In the mid-afternoon, the train pulls into Mount Surprise where we will be transferred to Undara for an Archway Explorer Tour. The Lava Tubes are giant volcanic caverns - the oldest in Australia and the longest on Earth. At sunset, head back to Mount Surprise, and after a hearty roast dinner wander over to the character-filled pub or settle in for some entertainment around the campfire at the village.

Hotel: Bedrock Village, Mount Surprise (B, D)

Day 12 • Saturday: Mount Surprise - Cairns

The second leg of the Savannahlander journey to Cairns has us boarding early at Mount Surprise. The journey is full of rugged scenery and a couple of stops - lunch at the Railway Hotel, Almaden Dimbulah for afternoon tea Barron Falls and the grand Barron Gorge and finally, into Cairns at approximately 6.30 pm.

We will stay at the centrally located Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort and enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Hotel: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, D)

Day 13 • Sunday: Cairns - Port Douglas - Cairns

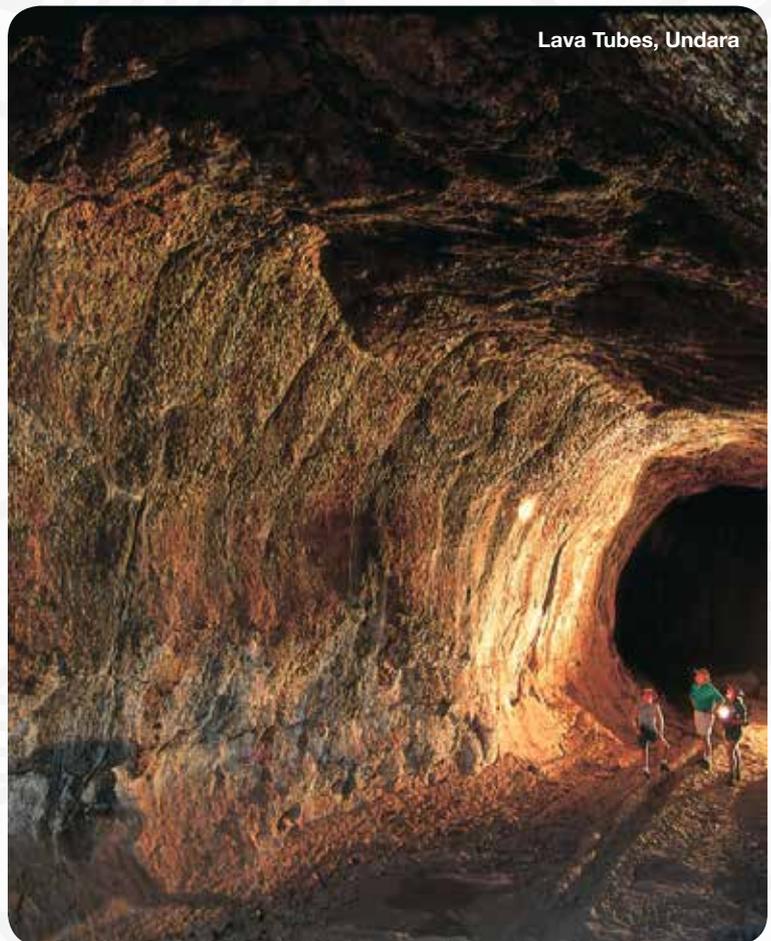
We travel by air-conditioned coach to Port Douglas to shop at the famous Port Douglas Markets that have been trading in locally-made handmade goods for almost 20 years. It became a Cotters Market in 1998, thereby guaranteeing that all products are made by the stallholders themselves. We will then ride on the Bally Hooley Steam Train, pulled by one of their two coal-fired steam locomotives, Speedy or Bundy. The locomotives are both over 55 years old, being the very last ones used by the Mossman Sugar Mill before they were replaced by diesel engines to haul the sugar cane from the fields to the region's mill.

We then travel to the Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre for a light lunch followed by a walk through the beautiful tropical rainforest in Mossman Gorge itself. Returning to Cairns in the mid-afternoon, enjoy the afternoon and evening at leisure.

Hotel: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, L)



Copperfield Gorge



Lava Tubes, Undara



Sand Island Sunste Cruise - Gulf of Carpentaria

Day 14 • Monday: Cairns - Atherton - Kuranda - Cairns

After a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, we depart for a tour of the lush volcanic region of the Atherton Tablelands. We travel up the ranges south of Cairns to Lake Barrine, an almost perfectly formed crater lake where we experience the rainforest from a cruise boat. Lunch should be pre-ordered at the Tea House prior to our cruise so that it is ready after exploring this special environment.

The return trip to Cairns takes us a different way back, via Mareeba and onto Kuranda, "The Village in the Rainforest". The Skyrail gondola is a special experience that takes us down to the coastal plain, flying over the canopy of the rainforest and marvelling at the wonderful views across the ranges and out over the Coral Sea.

We return to Cairns, arriving in plenty of time to freshen up and rest before joining Robert and our fellow travellers for a delicious three-course farewell dinner at the scrumptious Raw Prawn on the busy and colourful Esplanade.

Hotel: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, D)

Day 15 • Tuesday: Tour End

Breakfast is at your leisure in the hotel and then you are free to continue on your way to other awaiting adventures. Tour terminates. All out, all change. Please mind the gap! (B)

PRICE	Per person twin share.....	\$6,950	Deposit (per person)	\$1,000 at time of booking
	Single supplement.....	\$985	Final payment due by	60 days before departure

INCLUSIONS

- 14 nights' accommodation in comfortable 3- or 4-star hotels or rail sleeper cabins with daily breakfast
- Meals as per itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)
- Complimentary drinks with welcome and farewell dinners
- Comprehensive sightseeing with expert local guides
- Excursions/entrances fees except those listed as optional in the itinerary

EXCLUSIONS

- Transport to Brisbane for tour start and from Cairns at tour end
- Excursions/entrances listed as optional in the itinerary
- Drinks with meals (except for welcome and farewell dinners)
- Items of a personal nature e.g. telephone, laundry, minibar
- Travel insurance

The Gulflander



Mail Plane over the Gulf Country



Age of the Dinosaur Mueseum



SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

We have suggested flights for this itinerary depending on your departure point from Australia, any preferred stopovers en-route and/or your planned pre- and post-tour activities. We can also investigate your preferred airline and offer you a solution based on connection times and prices. Contact 1300 733 323 to discuss your options.

HOW TO BOOK

Download a booking form from our website and follow the easy steps to getting on board. Alternatively, contact Guidepost Tours on 1300 733 323 or enquiries@guidepost-travel.com if you'd prefer a form be sent to you. Complete the form and submit it, along with your \$1000 pp deposit to secure your place on the tour.

DETAILS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

We endeavour to have all the details of our tours correct at the time of printing. However, sometimes factors beyond our control may affect the final inclusions and prices. These factors may include, but not be limited to; significant fluctuations in currency exchange rates, individual hotel/ restaurant decisions that may affect bookings; weather events forcing a change of itinerary; unexpected trackwork on rail lines, unexpected closure of site attractions and so forth. Therefore, items mentioned in the brochure such as quoted prices, hotels and inclusions are subject to change. If a change is imposed on us, we will endeavour to ensure the substitute is of the same quality that you've paid for.

Although it is rare (and we will only do it as a last resort), tours can sometimes be cancelled if minimum numbers aren't reached before our booking deadlines. For more information, please see our Terms and Conditions available on our web site or by calling 1300 733 323

TOUR PACE / LEVEL OF FITNESS:

Our itineraries are designed to make the most of each destination, so a reasonable amount of activity is built into most days, which is why we call them adventures. Our philosophy is to offer you the best experience possible, while leaving you, our guest, the flexibility to pace yourself and choose how much or how little you want to do. Each Railway Adventures tour incorporates periods of free time for your own exploration and relaxation. While you don't need to be a 'gym junky', a reasonable level of fitness is required for most of our tours. The ability to manage your own luggage, get on and off all manner of trains and coaches, walk for extended periods, stand comfortably, and climb steps and stairs will ensure you get the maximum enjoyment from your adventure.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

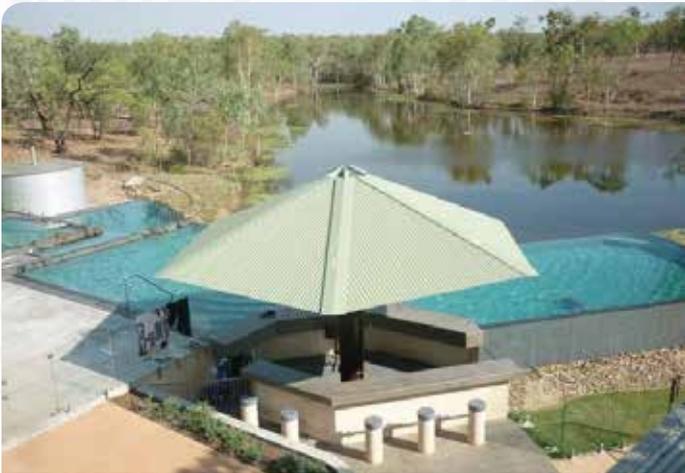
In addition to assisting with flight suggestions and bookings, we can also give you some ideas of what you could do before and after your Railway Adventure. We can also organise your all-important Travel Insurance for you. Call our office on 1300 733 323 if you would like to discuss options.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For more information on factors such as travel insurance requirements, fitness levels, fees and charges, tour cancellations, payment schedules and so on, please refer to our Terms and Conditions, which accompany the booking form. They can also be found on our website or call 1300 733 323

WHERE YOU WILL STAY

Handpicked hotels and resorts based on location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere. Here's a selection;



Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge



Novotel Oasis Hotel, Cairns



End of The Road Motel



Bedrock Village, Mt Surprise



Cobbold Gorge

THE RAILWAY ADVENTURES STORY

Railway Adventures was launched in 2012 by well-known Australian TV personality and self-declared rail aficionado Scott McGregor. A lifelong passion for travel has taken Scott to scores of countries and his preference for rail has seen him exploring many of the world's great train journeys, confirming his belief that the most relaxing and engaging way to see a country is by rail. Since 2012 more than 50 tours from Sweden to Sri Lanka, Tasmania to Transylvania, Britain to Burma and Venice to Vietnam have thrilled and delighted over 700 travellers. Scott's numerous rail-themed TV documentaries, his ongoing involvement in rail heritage and his extensive connections with private train owners around the world guarantee that a Railway Adventures tour is exclusive, entertaining and authentic. New tours are launched regularly, inspired by new trains, new routes and the growing interest in taking a train to some of the world's most fascinating places.

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