

Outback Queensland



With Robert Kingsford-Smith
28th April – 12th May / 23rd June – 7th July / 4th – 18th August 2020
With Scott McGregor and Bernadette Eichner
18th August – 1st September 2020

• 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 Far North Queensland and the Queensland outback by coach, boat, plane and train.

Each of our tour dates have 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 culinary delights, meet wonderful outback characters and be bowled over by the variety of entertaining experiences on this one-of-a-kind outback adventure.

Australia is indeed a lucky country to have such a captivating collection of great train journeys in one sweeping region. Travel from Brisbane to Longreach on the legendary *Spirit of the Outback*, followed by a coach trip to Mount Isa with some fascinating 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 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. Our tour is topped off by a day trip to the Port Douglas markets, a journey on the Bally Hooley Railway, and visits to Mossman Gorge and the Atherton Tableland.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Overnight journey on the *Spirit of the Outback* in first-class sleepers with dinner provided
- Four heritage train journeys
- Four 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
- Two days' gentle travel on the *Savannahlander*
- Characters, scenery and iconic journeys from the desert to the tablelands and rainforest.

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADERS



ROBERT KINGSFORD-SMITH
April, June and August

Robert has built on his childhood passion for railways of the 1960s, by embarking on a quest to record the world's disappearing steam locomotives on film. His often adventurous travels have taken him to over forty countries and the resulting photographs and articles have appeared in numerous publications in Australia and overseas. Robert has led groups of likeminded travellers in destinations 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 history and wildlife has been well served on his travels and he combines his 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.



SCOTT MCGREGOR
August

A Mudgee native, has been involved in the media for over 30 years as an actor, presenter, writer and producer, but sharing his love of travel, and particularly railway travel, is where his passion now lies. Graduating from NIDA in 1979, he appeared in a wide range of stage, film and TV roles and presented and hosted numerous prime-time ratings winners like *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Room for Improvement*. He presented two series of his own *Railway Adventures* for Channels 7 and 10 and a number of programs for The History Channel. He established *Railway Adventures* in 2012 and also owns and operates *RUWENZORI*—an Orient Express-style tourist retreat on the Great Dividing Range near Mudgee.



BERNADETTE EICHNER
August

A skilled presenter, actor, psychologist and an emerging voice for the over-55's, Bernadette owns and operates her own businesses helping organisations be the best they can be when it comes to their people. Her travel experiences are many and varied, from the wilds of the Kimberley to the port caves of Portugal, the treasures of Angkor Wat to the bright lights of Broadway, the magnificence of Scandinavia to the big skies of South Africa. Over the last two years, she has co-hosted many tours with Scott McGregor, including Scandinavia, Vietnam, Borneo, Japan, and Sri Lanka and started leading in her own right with our highly successful Borneo 2019 tour. Our client testimonials refer to her being well organised, fun, inclusive and empathetic.

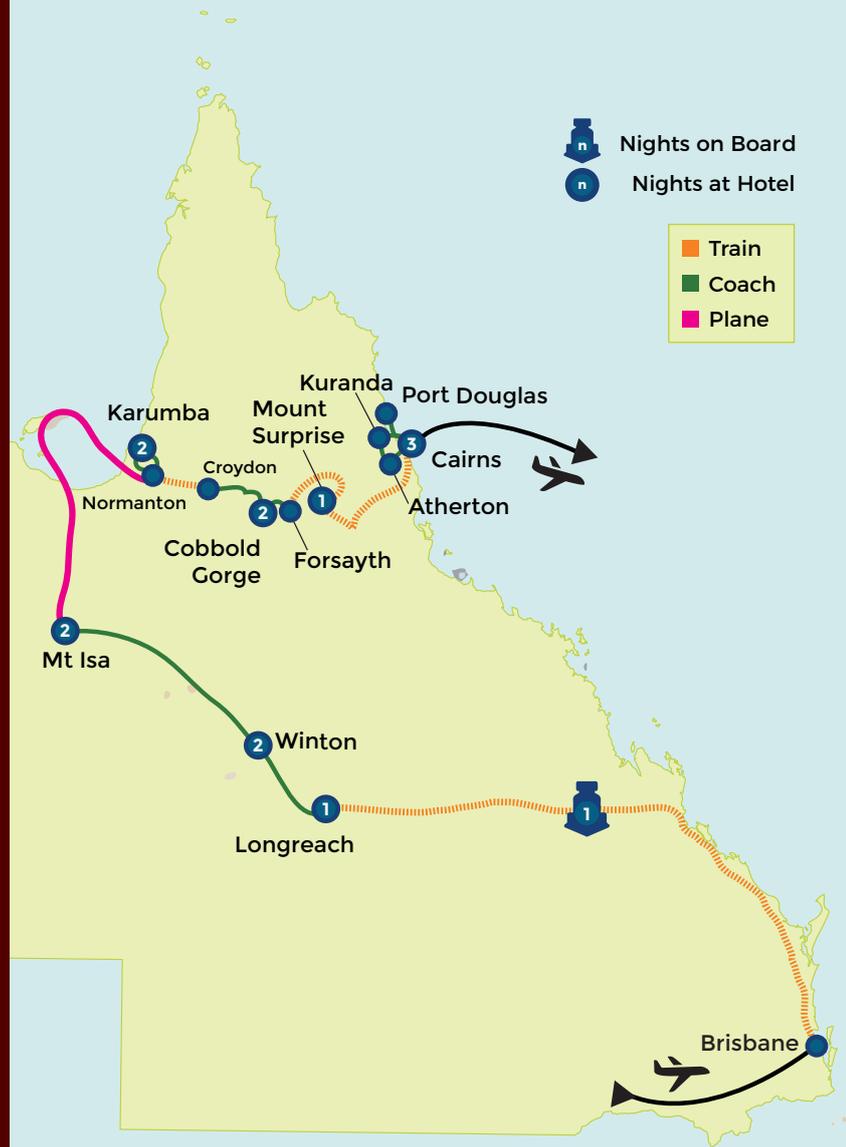
WHY TRAVEL WITH US

The joy of travel is not confined to the destination. How you travel is a large and rich part of the experience. Railway Adventures offers a truly unique perspective on some of the world's most spectacular destinations, with the confidence that the journey will be just as magical and memorable as what you discover at the end of the line.

WITH US, YOU CAN EXPECT:

- **Small group sizes** — a small number of 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** — every itinerary has been meticulously developed by a team of expert travellers with many years' experience, an intimate knowledge of the destination, and with great cultural awareness. 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 operators** — we employ local guides to share their passion for and knowledge of the place they call home, while our partners on the ground provide the best possible 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, providing peace of mind, and allowing you to relax and enjoy the journey. And you'll find them jolly good company to boot!

TOUR MAP



SOME WAYS YOU'LL TRAVEL

The best train trips possible, private luxury coach for off-train travel and many other appealing modes of transport.



The Gulflander



The Savannahlander



The Spirit of the Outback

Day 1 • Tue: Arrive Brisbane

To start our adventure, enjoy an afternoon welcome reception in the KG bar of the Mercure Hotel in Brisbane, right beside the iconic Roma Street Station. Meet your tour leader as well as your fellow travellers while enjoying a beverage and canapes before heading 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 in the train's "Tuckerbox" dining car and afterwards you can unwind in the "Shearers Rest" lounge car as evening descends on our northbound train.

Overnight: Spirit of the Outback (D)

Day 2 • Wed: Longreach

Wake up to a vista of the Central Ranges, while towns like Bluff, Blackwater and Emerald roll by as 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. Longreach 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 • Tue: Longreach—Winton

After breakfast, we take the short stroll to the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, Australia's premier outback heritage institution. Explore the museum, which showcases 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 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 dining room.

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

Day 4 • Fri: Winton

After breakfast we will visit the Australian Age of Dinosaurs museum. After exploring Australia's very own prehistoric past, we can enjoy morning tea. Take the next 24 hours to explore on your own with a Silver Winton Attraction Pass. Pick and choose from the list of activities, including the Quantilda Museum, Corfield & Fitzmaurice Building, the Royal Open Air Theatre, and the Opal Walk. You may also like to join an optional tour out to the Dinosaur Stampede National Monument at Lark Quarry Conservation Park. For the super energetic, you can try to walk to all the attractions!

Dinner is once again at the hotel dining room this evening.

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

Day 5 • Sat: Winton—Mount Isa

The morning is yours to continue exploring the town and its attractions or to just relax 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 in to 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 • Sun: Mount Isa

With a full day to explore, we 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 join the optional underground Hard Times Mine tour.

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

Day 7 • Mon: Mount Isa—Normanton—Karumba

This morning we 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 enjoy the 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 exploring 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 Ash's Holiday Units, Karumba (B, D)

Day 8 • Tue: Karumba

The morning is at leisure to enjoy this little town located on the Gulf of Carpentaria. It's a chance to take a break from the busy schedule to just relax. Walk out to the point or the estuary, 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 banana prawns, a specialty fish dish, tropical fruit platters and ice-cold drinks.

Hotel: End of the Road Motel OR Ash's Holiday Units, Karumba (B, D)



Copperfield Gorge

Day 9 • Wed: 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 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 Club Hotel in Croydon 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 • Thu: Cobbold Gorge

After a hearty bush breakfast, we will join a morning tour and cruise of Cobbold Gorge. Custom-made electric 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 can also take a helicopter joy flight to see this spectacular country from the air.

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

Day 11 • Fri: Forsayth—Mount Surprise

Staff from Cobbold Gorge Tours will transfer us to Forsayth where we board the Savannahlander for the first stage of its 500-kilometre journey to Cairns. Departing Forsayth Station, the 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 transfer 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 • Sat: 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 we'll make a few stops: lunch at the Railway Hotel, Almaden; Dimbulah for afternoon tea; Barron Falls and the grand Barron Gorge; and finally, Cairns in the evening. 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 • Sun: Cairns—Port Douglas—Cairns

We travel by air-conditioned coach to Port Douglas to shop at the famous Port Douglas Markets. The markets have been trading in locally made handmade goods for almost 20 years – they became a Cotters Market in 1998, 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 three coal-fired steam locomotives, Speedy or Bundy. The locomotives are both over 55 years old, being the last ones used by the Mossman Sugar Mill before being 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)

Day 14 • Mon: 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. We will pre-order lunch before the cruise so that it is ready after exploring this special environment.

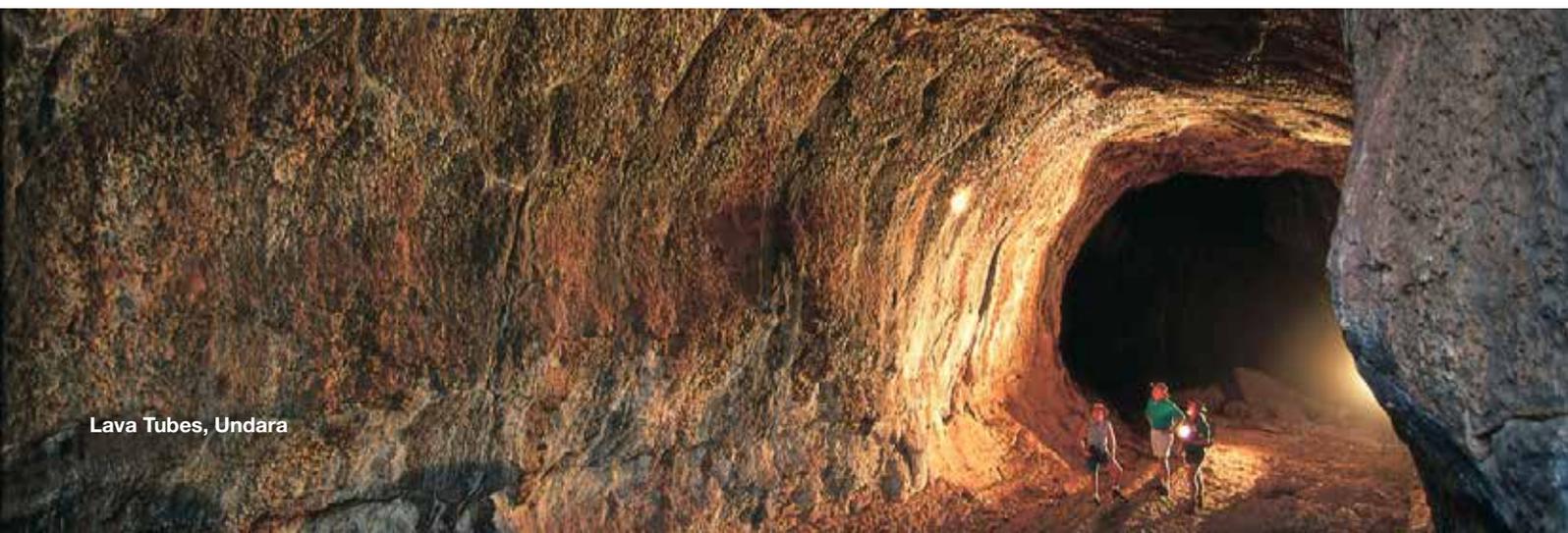
We will return to Cairns via Mareeba and travel on to Kuranda, “The Village in the Rainforest”. The Skyrail gondola is a special experience that takes us down to the coastal plain, flying over the canopy of the rainforest and marvelling at the wonderful views across the ranges and out over the Coral Sea.

We should arrive with plenty of time to freshen up and rest before enjoying a delicious three-course farewell dinner at the scrumptious Raw Prawn on the colourful Cairns esplanade.

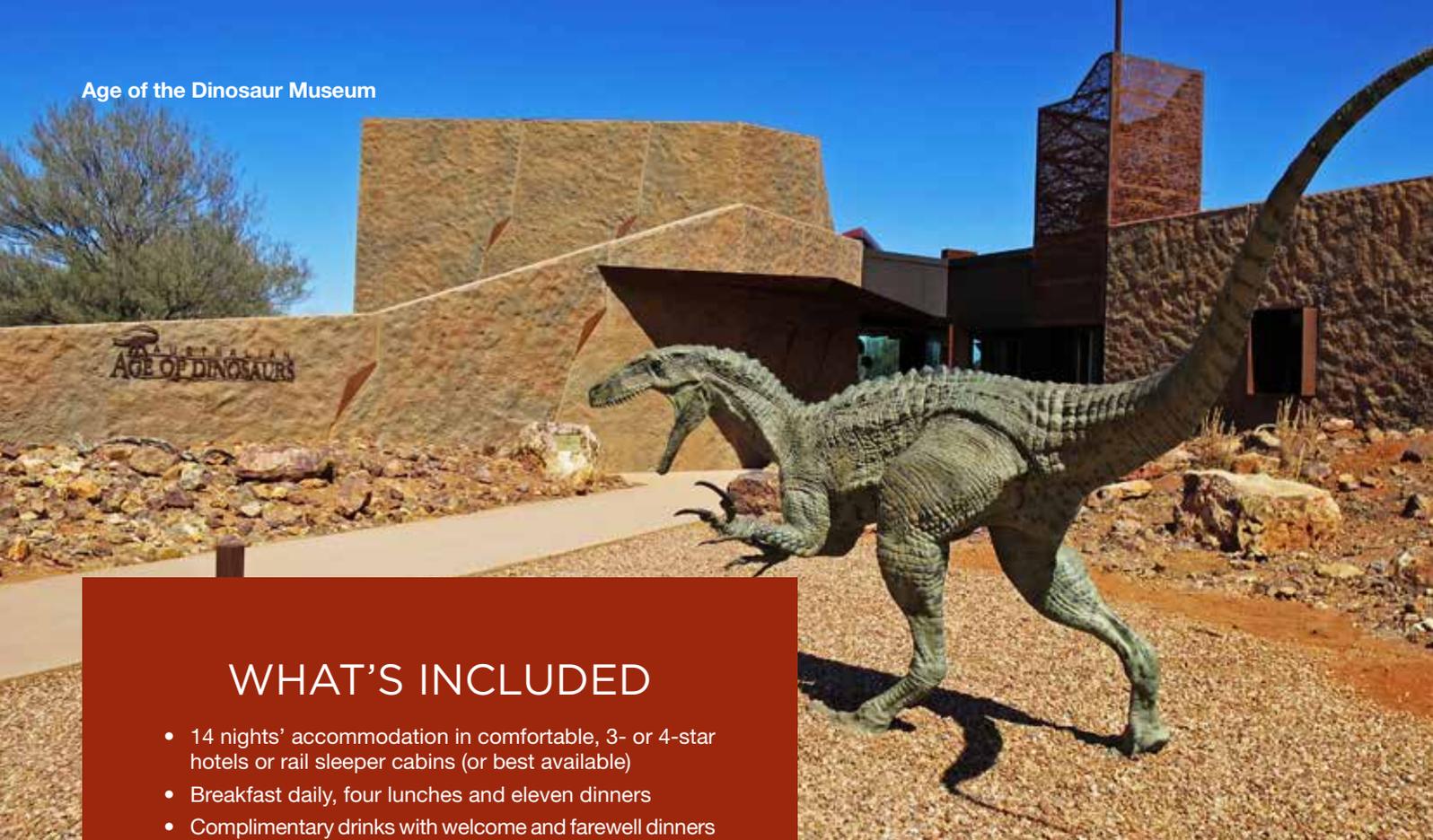
Hotel: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, D)

Day 15 • Tue: Tour End (B)

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!



Lava Tubes, Undara

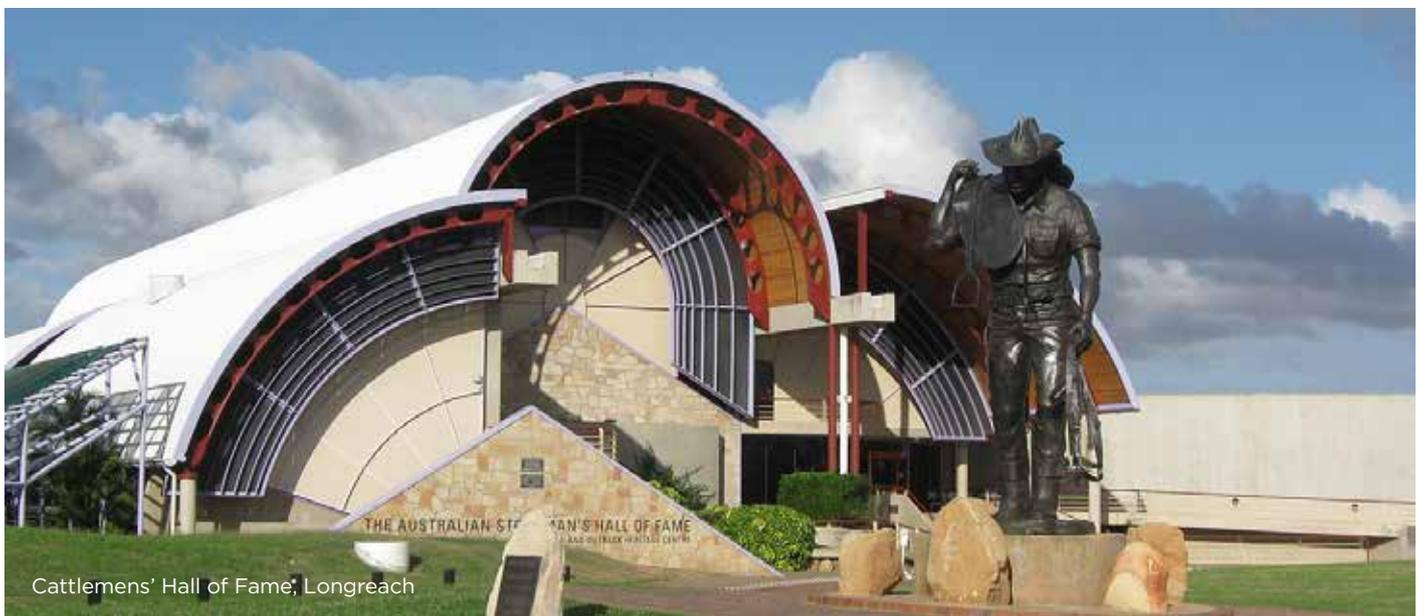


WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 14 nights' accommodation in comfortable, 3- or 4-star hotels or rail sleeper cabins (or best available)
- Breakfast daily, four lunches and eleven dinners
- Complimentary drinks with welcome and farewell dinners
- Comprehensive sightseeing with expert local guides
- Excursion/entrance fees, except those listed as optional in the itinerary

WHAT WE DON'T INCLUDE

- 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



Cattlemens' Hall of Fame, Longreach

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.

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 junkie', 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 800 977 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.

PRICE

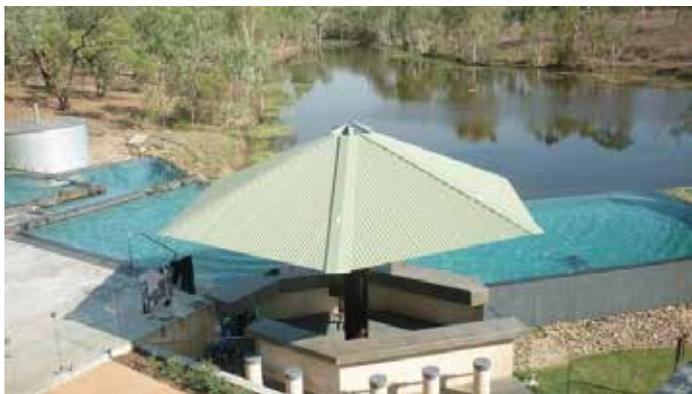
Per person twin share..... **\$6,950**
Single supplement..... **\$985**

Deposit (per person) **\$1,000 at time of booking**
Final payment due by **60 days from tour departure**

**Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.*

SOME PLACES YOU'LL STAY

Hand-picked hotels and resorts based on location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere.



Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge



Novotel Oasis Hotel, Cairns



End of The Road Motel



Bedrock Village, Mt Surprise

Cobbold Gorge

