

YORK COLLEGE GOES TO AUSTRALIA

17 days

Itinerary downloaded on: February 22, 2024

Day 1: ***Washington Dulles - Sydney, Australia***

Today we fly from Washington IAD to Sydney, Australia.

Day 2: ***Crossing the International Date Line***

Day 3: ***Arrival in Sydney - City Touring***

Welcome to Australia!

Sydney is regarded as one of the world's most beautiful cities. Its mild climate and sparkling harbour provide an outdoor playground for young and old, while the extensive parklands around the CBD make Sydney a rewarding city to explore.

On arrival into Sydney International Airport you will be met by your local English speaking guide and private coach for a city sights tour of some of Sydney's famous locations.

Travel through Sydney's trendy new district Oxford Street and the elegant Paddington with its terrace houses before arriving at the Pacific Ocean. Stroll the superb coast cliff walk. Travel on to famous Bondi Beach. Visit the beachfront promenade, enjoy a coffee or cool drink (own expense). Return to Sydney via Double Bay, Kings Cross and city centre before checking into your hotel for the next 3 nights.

Enjoy the remainder of your day and evening in Sydney. Perhaps take the optional Harbour Dinner Cruise.

Overnight in Sydney. Base Backpackers Sydney.

Day 4: ***Blue Mountains Tour***

This morning collection by local tour guide and private coach. Today we travel over the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge for a full-day tour of the Blue Mountains.

Follow the Great Western Highway to Katoomba, the tourist capital of the Blue Mountains. At Echo Point witness the spectacular Three Sisters rock formation and views over the Jamison Valley, distant Mt Solitary, the Ruined Castle and Katoomba Falls. Hear fascinating Aboriginal legends including the Banksia man and the Bunyip.

Overnight in Sydney. Base Backpackers Sydney.

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 5: *Sydney: At Leisure*

Free time to explore Sydney!

Perhaps take in the sights of Bondi Beach and Darling Harbour. Or visit Taronga Zoo or the Aquarium. For the more adventurous why not try the Sydney Harbour Bridge Climb! Overnight in Sydney. Base Backpackers Sydney.

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 6: *Sydney - Ayers Rock*

After breakfast, collection by private coach and local guide, transfer to Sydney domestic airport for flight to Ayers Rock.

Upon arrival at Ayers Rock domestic airport, collection by private coach and local guide and proceed to Uluru via the Cultural Centre for your Base Walk guided tour around the base of Uluru. This will show you some of the many caves in which local Aborigines have left their mark from a bygone era. View ancient cave paintings and learn about Aboriginal legends of Kuniya Tjukurpa (Python Dreaming). Visit the Maruku Arts and Crafts Centre and the Park Headquarters.

In the late afternoon, we arrive at the sunset viewing area to witness and photograph the striking colour changes that can take place in this majestic part of Australia and on such a huge monolith in the desert plain. Return to camp after sunset. Evening at leisure.

Overnight in Ayers Rock. Wayoutback Remote Campsite.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 7: *Ayers Rock - Kings Canyon*

An early collection this morning by private coach for the Kata Tjuta Sunrise and Valley of the Winds Walk. The Valley of the Winds walk showcases the undulating and diverse landscapes found among Kata Tjuta's many domes. Be escorted to stunning views over the valley and along the base of giant domes that reach up to 540 metres into the sky. Along the way you'll learn about the unique characteristics that allow native flora and fauna to survive in this harsh environment.

Then proceed to drive to Kings Canyon, stopping at Curtain Springs for lunch.

Upon arrival in Kings Canyon, proceed to Kings Creek Cattle Station for your overnight accommodation in their Tented Campsite.

Overnight at Kings Canyon. Kings Creek Cattle Station.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 8: *Kings Canyon - Alice Springs*

You will be collected by private coach for transfer to the Canyon to embark on the magnificent Rim Walk. Kings Canyon is best viewed from the top. To reach the plateau and the head of the canyon you take the marked path that starts at the car park. Arriving there, you enter a different world.

The plateau itself consists of a maze of small valleys topped by domed ridges of rock with a texture so ancient looking that the overall effect is one of a ruined city. Take a walk around the rim of the Canyon and on to the peaceful Garden of Eden passing through hundreds of domes of the Lost City and into a lush oasis of trees, palms, rock pools and shady crevices. Upon completion, we then continue onto Alice Springs.

Overnight at Alice Springs. Haven Resort.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 9: Alice Springs

This morning embark on a full-day hike through the West MacDonnell Ranges. You will be collected by private coach and driven to Simpsons Gap where you will hike back to Alice Springs via Wallaby Gap and Euro Ridge.

Tonight enjoy a BBQ dinner at the very historic Old Telegraph Station. The Telegraph Station was midway along the Overland line from Darwin to Adelaide which played a key role in Australia's development.

Overnight at Alice Springs. Haven Resort.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 10: Alice Springs - Ghan Train to Katherine

This morning after a full breakfast at the hotel, check-out to your room before collection by private coach for your halfday Alice Springs city tour.

This tour covers many interesting highlights. Commence touring at Desert Park in the morning then visit the Royal Flying Doctors Service, and learn how this marvellous facility operates to provide a "Mantle of Safety" to the people of the outback. See how routine medical clinics are provided to isolate outback areas.

Then we call in at the "School of the Air", and sometimes are able to listen to the children take lessons on air.

We also visit the Reptile Centre, home to the largest reptile display in Central Australia. We display an extensive range of reptiles including Terry the Saltwater Crocodile, HUGE Perentie Goannas, Thorny Devils, Frill-neck Lizards and many other fascinating lizards including a varied selection of NT Geckos from the Alice Springs region, Barkly and the Top End on display in the amazing Gecko Cave.

Finally if time permits, we take in a panoramic view of Alice Springs from ANZAC Hill lookout. From the top one can see over the modern Alice Springs Township and beyond to the McDonnell Ranges that form a southern boundary to the town.

On completion of the tour, transfer back to your hotel before proceeding to Alice Springs Railway Station for your overnight train journey onboard the Ghan to Katherine.

Meals on train: available for purchase.

Overnight Ghan Train.

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 11: Katherine - Kakadu

Collection by private coach this morning from the Railway Station and travel to Katherine Gorge for your cruise along the gorge. Following this, we drive onto Kakadu National Park. Time permitting, we can stop at termite mounds along the highway for a photo opportunity.

Overnight in Kakadu. Coinda Campsite.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 12: Kakadu

Collection this morning by private coach and travel through Kakadu for a full day of sightseeing.

Visit Nourlangie Rock where you can explore the huge natural shelter, the walls adorned with layer over layer of superb Aboriginal rock art depicting thousands of years of Ancient history – dream tales. We then proceed to Nadab Lookout which provides a spectacular view of the floodplains that stretch across Kakadu's lowlands before proceeding to the Bowali Centre where there's a walk-through display including a giant crocodile skeleton and even an air conditioned library. Next we're onto view the superbly preserved Aboriginal rock paintings at Ubirr -- a museum in the desert.

Finally it's onto Mary River for your Crocodile Cruise before making your way to camp for your overnight accommodation.

Overnight in Kakadu. Point Stuart Campsite.

Meal Plan: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 13: Kakadu - Darwin

This morning you are collected early by private coach for your drive to Darwin. We depart Kakadu travelling along the Arnhem Highway stopping at Fogg Dam.

Upon arrival in Darwin we begin a sightseeing tour of the city's main attractions, such as the Museum, State Square which includes Parliament House and the Supreme Court. And if time permits, we'll visit Darwin's busy harbour area, the Esplanade overlooking the Harbour, including a lookout which commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing of Darwin in 1942. View the elegant colonial architecture of Government House which is near the southern end of the Esplanade and the Old Admiralty House.

Check into your accommodation before making your way down to Mindil Beach for the famous Mindil Beach Markets. While the sun sets over the sea, food stalls prepare cuisine from more than 20 countries. You can sample spicy Asian dishes, traditional Greek, Italian, English or South American food, crocodile, buffalo and barramundi from 'The Territory' or a mouth-watering spread of tropical fruits or juices and desserts.

More than 200 local artisans and craft people produce a colourful array of goods which complement the collection of arts and crafts imported from around the globe. Add to all this the buskers, tarot card readers, masseurs/masseuses and a variety of local and travelling musicians offering free entertainment and you find the ingredients for an exciting, unique evening of fine food and entertainment.

Overnight in Darwin. Chilli's Backpacker Hostel.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 14: Darwin - Cairns

This morning collection by private coach for your transfer to Darwin Domestic Airport for your flight to Cairns.

Cairns City is the heart of Tropical North Queensland and is the primary gateway to Northern Australia. Cairns is a modern, sophisticated city, it is an ideal base to explore the wider Tropical North Queensland region with front door access to World Heritage listed Reef, Rainforest and Outback.

A focal point for the city is the Cairns Esplanade. Almost two kilometres of landscaped parkland fringes a busy thoroughfare and restaurant strip on one side, and a natural harbour inlet on the other. The Cairns City Council recently completed a major redevelopment of the Esplanade with a large recreation area on the foreshore that can be used by local residents and tourists alike. The parkland features an outdoor amphitheatre, a large sandy swimming lagoon, picnic areas, shops and restaurants, a Great Barrier Reef Cruise departure terminal, walking tracks and children's playgrounds.

Upon arrival at Cairns domestic airport, collection by private coach. After checking in at your hotel, enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure.

Overnight in Cairns. Gilligans Backpackers.

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 15: Cairns: Barrier Reef Cruise

Reef Magic Cruises depart direct from Cairns to the Outer Great Barrier Reef spending 5 full hours at the spacious, all weather, Marine World Pontoon. Guests have both the time and space to enjoy the largest range of reef activities available in a relaxed, fun and personalised atmosphere. Suitable for all age groups and swimming abilities, activities include snorkelling, marine biologist presentation, fish feeding demonstration, semi-submersible and glass bottom boat tours, underwater observatory or simply relaxing on a sun-lounge. Optional activities, available at additional expense, include biologist guided snorkel tours, advance marine snorkel safari and scenic helicopter flights. The day includes morning and afternoon tea plus a hot and cold buffet lunch.

Overnight in Cairns.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 16: Cairns: At Leisure

A much deserved day at leisure to enjoy the delights of Cairns.

Overnight in Cairns. Gilligans Backpackers.

Canada/USA
1-800-665-3998

United Kingdom
0114-247-3400

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 17: *Departure from Cairns*

Pick up this morning by private coach and transfer to Cairns International Airport for your departure flight.

BON VOYAGE!

Meal Plan: Breakfast