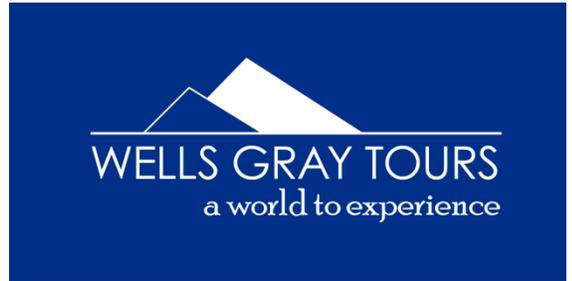




Uluru/Ayers Rock



Great Barrier Reef

AMAZING AUSTRALIA

February 12, 2021 – 21 Days

Breathtaking natural landscape, vibrant cities, and friendly locals are only some of the reasons why you should travel to Australia. We start our tour in Melbourne, Australia's second largest city, where we spend four days touring the highlights in Melbourne and a full day is devoted to the Yarra Valley. Next, we head west for a day exploring the incredible scenery along the Great Ocean Road. From here, we fly to Adelaide, South Australia's cosmopolitan coastal capital for two nights. Then, get ready for an awesome journey on the legendary Ghan Train. Highlights in this area are the incredible monolith of Ayers Rock and the spectacle of the sunrise in the vast Australian Outback. We fly to Cairns for a three night stay and board a catamaran for an hour-long trip out to the amazing Great Barrier Reef. Our last four nights are in Sydney. Highlights include the historic Rocks district, Darling Harbour, the Parliament House, Hyde Park, Mrs. Macquarie's Chair, Bondi Beach, and the renowned Sydney Opera House.

Activity Level: 2



TOUR
25

37 Meals Included:

17 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 9 dinners

Fares:

\$13,290 pp double/twin, \$16,885 pp single
Please add 0.2% GST.

This tour is limited to 25 people.

Early booking recommended!

Early Bookers:

\$200 discount on first 8 seats; \$100 on next 4

Experience Points:

Earn 221 points from this tour

Redeem 221 points if you book by November 5



ITINERARY

Day 1: Friday, February 12

We drive from Kamloops and the Okanagan to Vancouver Airport. Get acquainted with your fellow travellers during dinner at Globe @ YVR in the Fairmont Hotel. Our flight to Melbourne, Australia, leaves tonight.

Meals included: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Overnight Flight

Day 2: Saturday, February 13

We cross the **International Date Line** and lose one day.

Day 3: Sunday, February 14

Our flight arrives in **Melbourne** this morning. We meet our guide and driver and enjoy an orientation tour. Australia's second largest city has a wonderful blend of architectural heritage, modern skyscrapers, and contemporary designs. We see the Bourke Street Mall, the tree-lined beauty of Collins Street, the splendour of St. Paul's Cathedral, the ornate Princess Theatre, and Federation Square. We stay four nights at the Sofitel Hotel on prestigious Collins Street and the rest of the afternoon is free time. Our Welcome to Australia Dinner is at the Berth Waterfront Restaurant on the docklands promenade, followed by a ride on the Melbourne Star, a giant 120-metre tall Ferris wheel.

Meals included: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Sofitel Hotel

Day 4: Monday, February 15

Our guide leads a walking tour of Melbourne, featuring its famous lanes. Robert Hoddle designed the city's street map in 1836 but refused to include lanes because he saw them as detrimental to the respectable establishment. Melbourne's little laneways evolved to create access to buildings and are fascinating to explore today. This afternoon, we drive to Phillip Island and visit the **Koala Conservatory and Nature Park**, home to koalas, seals, and

shearwaters. When dusk arrives, we have admission to the premium viewing area to witness the **Penguin Parade** on floodlit Summerland Beach. The Visitor's Centre has excellent exhibits about the life of the Little Penguin.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Sofitel Hotel

Day 5: Tuesday, February 16

The day is devoted to the **Mornington Peninsula**, an hour south of Melbourne. First, we visit the intriguing **Sculpture Park** at Point Leo Estate, a visual feast of pieces built from wood, metal and ceramics. The extensive vineyard overlooks Western Port Bay and Phillip Island, and a tour of the winery with tasting is included. Lunch is at St. Andrews Beach Brewery with a glass of local craft beer. This afternoon, we ride the **Arthurs Seat Eagle**, a cablecar that glides up the mountain to a panoramic view of the Mornington Peninsula and ocean.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Sofitel Hotel

Day 6: Wednesday, February 17

We head west from Melbourne for a day exploring the incredible scenery along the **Great Ocean Road**. Along the 200 km of awesome coastal vistas, we enjoy the sandy beaches of the Surf Coast, the rainforests of **Otway National Park**, quaint villages such as Lorne and Apollo Bay, and the renowned **Twelve Apostles** in Port Campbell National Park.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Sofitel Hotel

Day 7: Thursday, February 18

We fly to **Adelaide**, South Australia's cosmopolitan coastal capital. Its ring of parkland on the River Torrens is home to well-known museums such as the Art Gallery of South Australia with amazing displays of Indigenous art, and South Australian Museum, devoted to

natural history. Our driver-guide provides an orientation to the city with Victoria Square, the grand boulevard of King William Street, and Trinity Church. We stay three nights at the Intercontinental Hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 8: Friday, February 19

We ride the 9 am ferry to **Kangaroo Island**, South Australia's premier nature-based tourism destination. Take a guided walk on the beach among a colony of rare and wild Australian sea lions with a National Park Ranger. Stroll the Admirals Arch boardwalk watching the long-nosed fur seals. Head to the Hanson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary to see koalas relaxing in the trees. We spend the afternoon at **Flinders Chase National Park**, renowned as a sanctuary for native Australian animals including kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, and echidnas. We take the evening ferry back to the mainland and return to Adelaide.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 9: Saturday, February 20

The **Barossa Valley** is a renowned wine-producing region near Adelaide. The stone cottages and Lutheran churches throughout the region are testament to a 19th-century wave of German settlers. From tasting the official best wine in the world, to sipping a local drop that's as old as you, the Barossa is Australia's wine capital, featuring more than 80 cellars. The Mediterranean climate (cool summers and rainy winters) is perfectly suited for red wine production, particularly Shiraz and a richly flavoured Cabernet. We go first to Jacob's Creek, founded in 1847, for lunch with wine pairings, followed by a private tour and tastings at **Seppeltsfield Winery**, sometimes called the showplace of Australia. This afternoon, we visit the quaint town of Hahndorf which was settled by Lutheran immigrants in 1838.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 10: Sunday, February 21

Get ready for an awesome journey on the legendary **Ghan Train**. It pulls out of Adelaide at noon for the 25-hour journey to Alice Springs. A gourmet lunch is served soon after. You are travelling in **Gold Class** which offers a private lounge and restaurant. Beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) are complimentary throughout the trip. Your private compartment has seating for the daytime which converts to upper and lower bunks for the night, and a private bathroom. During the afternoon, we pass the **Flinders Ranges** which contain some of the oldest rock formations on the planet. Perhaps indulge in a pre-dinner drink, followed by a superb meal and conversations with fellow diners. **Note:** Bring a carry-on bag with your overnight needs, as your suitcase is checked through to Alice Springs.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Ghan Train

Day 11: Monday, February 22

Nothing quite prepares you for the spectacle of **sunrise in the vast Australian Outback**. Rising early, we alight the train for 1½ hours to a viewing area with benches, and a breakfast snack is served. You have never truly experienced a sunrise until you have seen this one, and as you look out to the horizon and admire its dramatic, gorgeous colours, you realize that the earth at your feet is equally vivid and deep red. Brunch is served on the train and soon we cross the state border into the Northern Territory. Then we glide through the MacDonnell Ranges and arrive at **Alice Springs** in early afternoon. The town began its modern history as a telegraph station on the Adelaide to Darwin line, and the end of the Ghan railway. Alice Springs was initially the name given to the waterhole that was discovered by a surveyor in 1871 during construction of the Overland Telegraph Line, referring to Alice Todd, wife of the Superintendent of Telegraphs. Our

driver/guide meets us at the train station. Our first stop is the Telegraph Station which presents the story of the connection of Australia to the rest of the world in 1871. The actual spring or waterhole is nearby. Then we enjoy the panoramic view from **Anzac Hill** which is also the site of the War Memorial. Next, we visit the **School of the Air**. Since 1951, it has provided an educational resource for isolated school children, servicing an area of over 1.3 million sq km. We stay overnight at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Meals included: Brunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Crowne Plaza Hotel

Day 12: Tuesday, February 23

First, we tour the **Royal Flying Doctors Service**, an aeromedical organization that provides primary health care and 24-hour emergency service to anyone who lives, works or travels in rural and remote Australia. Afterwards, we fly from Alice Springs to Uluru, previously known as **Ayers Rock**, and stay two nights at the luxurious five-star Sails in the Desert Hotel. At 5:30 pm, we drive to a viewing area for the Uluru sunset. Watching the orange and red colours change over this incredible landscape is a splendid experience.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Desert Hotel

Day 13: Wednesday, February 24

The incredible monolith of **Uluru** was named in 1873 for Sir Henry Ayers, Colonial Secretary, but was given the dual name "Uluru / Ayers Rock" in 2002, recognizing the aboriginal name. Uluru originally sat at the bottom of a sea, but today stands 348 metres above ground. Surprisingly, 2.5 km of its bulk is underground. Uluru is about 3.6 km long and 1.9 km wide, with a circumference of 9.4 km. We get up early to go to Talinguru Nyakunytyjaku – the **Uluru sunrise** viewing area. Here we witness first light as it gently embraces the desert landscape. As the sun rises, so too does the remarkable birdlife that calls Uluru home. Listen as the birdsong

welcomes the new day and experience the tranquility of nature. We visit the **base of Uluru**, the Mutitjulu waterhole, home of a wanampi which is an ancestral watersnake, and the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Center. The afternoon is leisure time at the hotel, but a dot painting workshop is offered by a local Anangu artist. Learn about traditional art, symbols and tools, and create your own art treasure. As darkness falls and Uluru becomes a silhouette, the acclaimed **Field of Lights** illuminates. As far as the eye can see gentle rhythms of colour light up the desert. Created by artist Bruce Munro, the exhibition covers seven football fields and contains 50,000 spindles of light in a spectrum of ochre, deep violet, blue, and gentle white.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Desert Hotel

Day 14: Thursday, February 25

This morning, admire another sunrise spectacle that features the rocks of **Kata Tjuta** where 36 domes comprise this spiritual place. Walk between sheer rock walls into Walpa Gorge as the guide explains the significance of this sacred ceremonial site. Alternatively, sleep in and have leisure time. In the afternoon, we fly to **Cairns** and stay three nights at the Pacific Hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Pacific Hotel

Day 15: Friday, February 26

We board a catamaran for the hour-long trip out to the amazing **Great Barrier Reef**. Its protected shallow waters make it the perfect location from which to explore the reef, for both snorkelers and scuba divers. Equipment is supplied along with expert commentary by a naturalist, a glass-bottom boat tour, and a buffet lunch. About six hours is spent at the reef, so there is plenty of time to explore its wonders.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Pacific Hotel

Day 16: Saturday, February 27

The morning is devoted to **Tjapukai Cultural Park** which tells the ancient story of the Tjapukai people's belief in the creation of the world, using live performances and high-tech visual effects. Stroll the History and Heroes walk, listen to a talk about art styles used by different Aboriginal clans, watch the Tjapukai dancers in a fire-making ceremony, learn how to cook bush foods, hear from a warrior about traditional hunting methods, throw a returning boomerang, and play a didgeridoo. Afterwards, we board the **Skyrail Cablecar** which skims along the tops of the rainforest canopy for 7 km and provides awesome views of the Barron Falls. We get off twice at the mid-stations and take short walks through the jungle. In Kuranda, there is time to browse the shops of the Heritage Market, then we board the awesome **Kuranda Scenic Railway** to travel back down to the coast. Opened in 1891, the train crosses 37 bridges and goes through 15 tunnels during the 37-km journey.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Pacific Hotel

Day 17: Sunday, February 28

We fly to Sydney and stay four nights at the Park Royal Hotel which has an excellent location next to the bustle of Darling Harbour.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Park Royal Hotel

Day 18: Monday, March 1

We start with a driving tour of **Sydney** highlights such as the historic Rocks district, Darling Harbour, the Parliament House, Hyde Park, Mrs. Macquarie's Chair, and popular Bondi Beach. Next is a guided tour of the renowned **Sydney Opera House**. This is Sydney's most recognizable building and officially one of the seven wonders of the 20th century, completed in 1973. Joern Utzon, the Danish architect, said the inspiration for his masterpiece was the sails of yachts on the harbour. There may be an opportunity to see a show in one of the four

theatres and discounted tickets can be purchased after taking a tour.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Park Royal Hotel

Day 19: Tuesday, March 2

An all-day coach tour features the scenic **Blue Mountains**. At Featherdale Wildlife Park, we meet Australian animals such as koala, kangaroo, wallaby, and Tasmanian devil. Along Cliff Drive, there are panoramic views of the Three Sisters, Katoomba Falls and Jamison Valley. We descend 600 metres by cablecar into the rainforest, then stroll along a boardwalk through the jungle, and ride the steep funicular railway back up to the rim, all with terrific views. Lunch is included at Lookout Echo Point.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Park Royal Hotel

Day 20: Wednesday, March 3

Today is leisure time to explore other sights around Sydney. A walk around Darling Harbour is recommended, crammed with shops and restaurants, and the huge National Maritime Museum. Tonight is our Farewell to Australia dinner featuring a cruise on **Sydney Harbour**. Enjoy views of the Harbour Bridge, Opera House, Fort Denison, Point Piper, and Watson's Bay. A smorgasbord of fine Australian cuisine is provided while listening to live commentary about the passing sites.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Park Royal Hotel

Day 21: Thursday, March 4

Our Air Canada flight leaves at noon. It is 14 hours to Vancouver, but we cross the International Date Line and arrive at 7:30 am on the same date. Our coach is waiting and we drive home to the Okanagan and Kamloops.

Note: If you prefer to fly to Kelowna or Kamloops, this can be arranged at current rates.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Coach transportation to/from Vancouver Airport
- Flight from Vancouver to Melbourne
- Current air taxes, fees and fuel surcharges
- 17 nights accommodation and hotel taxes
- 18 days of coach transportation
- Locally-guided tour of Melbourne
- Melbourne Star Observation Wheel
- Phillip Island with Koala Conservatory
- Penguin Parade
- Mornington Peninsula drive with 2 wineries
- Sculpture Park & Arthurs Seat Eagle gondola
- Day-long drive along Great Ocean Road
- Otway National Park rainforests
- Port Campbell National Park & Twelve Apostles
- Flight from Melbourne to Adelaide
- Locally-guided tour of Adelaide
- Art Gallery of South Australia & Museum
- Ferry to/from Kangaroo Island
- Hanson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary & sea lion colony
- Flinders Chase National Park
- Barossa Valley tour & Jacob's Creek wine pairing
- Seppeltsfield winery private tour & tastings
- Hahndorf Village Heritage Area
- Ghan Train from Adelaide to Alice Springs in Gold Class service
- Locally-guided tour of Alice Springs
- School of the Air & Royal Flying Doctors Service
- Alice Springs Telegraph Station
- Flight from Alice Springs to Ayers Rock
- Uluru sunset and sunrise events
- Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Center
- Uluru Field of Lights Dinner Experience
- Kata Tjuta sunrise spectacle
- Flight from Alice Springs to Cairns
- Catamaran excursion to Great Barrier Reef with glass-bottom boat ride and snorkel equipment
- Tjapukai Cultural Park
- Skyrail Rainforest Cablecar
- Kuranda Scenic Railway
- Flight from Cairns to Sydney
- Locally-guided tour of Sydney
- Sydney Opera House tour
- Blue Mountains tour with cablecar and funicular
- Featherdale Wildlife Park
- Dinner cruise on Sydney Harbour
- Flight from Sydney to Vancouver
- Gratuities for Australian guides and drivers
- Luggage handling at hotels, train and flights
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director
- **37 meals:** 17 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 9 dinners



TOUR NOTES

Currency & Expenses: The currency in Australia is the dollar and, as of May 2020, a Canadian dollar is worth about A\$1.10. You should order Australian dollars from your bank 1-2 weeks before departure, or plan to use ATMs. Credit cards are accepted almost everywhere. Gratuities have been included for all group meals and for local guides, naturalists and driver-guides. Tipping is not expected for meals you buy on your own and tax is included on menu prices. Costs for meals and attractions you choose yourself are generally higher than in Canada. As this tour has been planned and priced 10 months before departure, it is possible that exchange fluctuations could affect the fare, in which case you will be notified of the increase or decrease.

Accommodation is booked in superior hotels in the range of 3 to 5 stars. Hotel costs are similar to those in large Canadian cities, so many travellers would consider them expensive. However, on an extensive holiday like this, you want to be staying in well-located and memorable accommodations.

Documentation: A passport is required and must be valid on the date of entry. An Australian Electronic Travel Authorization is required and is applied for on-line before you leave. Directions will be provided at final payment.

Beverages: In many countries outside Canada and USA, it is not standard practice to include beverages with tour meals. On this tour, tea, coffee, or bottled water is usually included with each meal and other beverages can be purchased. A few dinners have a glass of beer or wine included. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages are complimentary on the Ghan Train.

Flight upgrades: Please enquire about current prices for upgrades on the flights between Vancouver and Australia. Premium economy and business class may be available.

Triples are not available on this tour.

 **Activity Level 2:** Due to the historic nature of some attractions and the nature walks looking for birds and animals, it will be necessary to climb stairs, walk on uneven surfaces, and walk at least a kilometre, plus stand for an extended time on walking tours. This tour is not appropriate for people who require the use of a walker. Some days are long such as the Great Ocean Road and Kangaroo Island, or have early departures such as the sunrise events at Uluru and Kata Tjuta. There can be long walks in the airports and you are urged to request a cart or wheelchair in advance or at check-in if this could be a concern. The coaches, trains and vessels cannot carry a scooter. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coach by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. This tour is rated as Activity Level 2, but some days are Level 3 (more rigorous). If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, drivers and local guides have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be asked to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.



Tour 25: This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning the tour is limited to 25 participants, a more intimate travel experience.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$1,000 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due November 5, 2020. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$200 discount on first 8 seats and \$100 on next 4 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after November 5.

Cancellation Policy: Up to September 11, 2020, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$100 per person. From September 12 to November 5, the cancellation charge is \$1,000 per person (your deposit). From November 6 to December 4, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From December 5, 2020, to January 5, 2021, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After January 5, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to currency exchange rates or taxes and surcharges from airlines and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore, Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Photo Credits: Uluru/Ayers Rock (Pixabay); Great Barrier Reef, Sydney Opera House (AdobeStock)

Experience Points: This tour earns 221 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until November 5.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

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