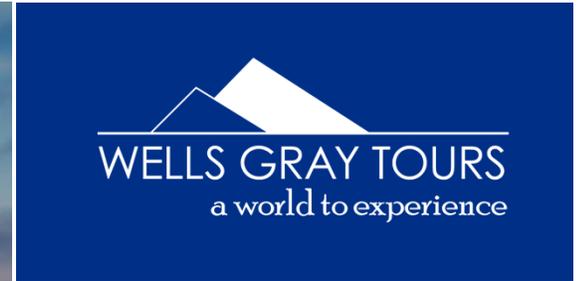




Uluru/Ayers Rock



Great Barrier Reef

AMAZING AUSTRALIA

March 26, 2023 – 22 Days

Breathtaking natural landscapes, vibrant cities, and friendly locals are only some of the reasons why you should travel to Australia. We start our tour with 5 nights in Melbourne, Australia's second largest city, with a day devoted to the Mornington Peninsula and another to the Great Ocean Road and 12 Apostles. We fly to Adelaide, South Australia's cosmopolitan coastal capital for 3 nights. Then, get ready for an awesome journey on the legendary Ghan Train to Alice Springs. Highlights in central Australia are the incredible monolith of Uluru (Ayers Rock) and the spectacle of the sunrise in the vast outback. In Cairns, we take a catamaran out to the remarkable Great Barrier Reef, and ride on the Rainforest Cableway and Kuranda Railway. Our last 4 nights are in Sydney, enjoying the historic Rocks district, Darling Harbour, Hyde Park, Bondi Beach, Sydney Opera House, and an excursion to the Blue Mountains. Come and see amazing Australia with Wells Gray Tours!

Activity Level: 2



TOUR
25

37 Meals Included:

18 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 9 lunches, 9 dinners

Fares per person:

\$14,930 double/twin; \$17,955 single
Please add 0.1% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$250 discount on first 8 seats; \$125 on next 4

Experience Points:

Earn 236 points from this tour.

Redeem 236 points if you book by December 13, 2022.

Departure from: Lower Mainland



ITINERARY

Day 1: Sunday, March 26

Get acquainted with your fellow travellers during dinner at **Globe @ YVR** in the Fairmont Hotel. Our flight to Melbourne leaves tonight.

Meals included: Dinner

Day 2: Monday, March 27

We cross the **International Date Line** and lose one day, gaining it back on April 16.

Day 3: Tuesday, March 28

We change planes in Sydney and arrive in mid-morning in **Melbourne**. We meet our guide and driver, and enjoy an orientation tour. Australia's second largest city has a wonderful blend of architectural heritage and modern skyscrapers. We see 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 five nights at the Sofitel Hotel on prestigious Collins Street and the rest of the afternoon is free time to relax. The hotel is one of Melbourne's finest and features a 35-storey atrium lobby with glass elevators. A "Welcome to Australia" dinner is planned, followed by a trip to the Melbourne Skydeck, 300 metres above ground, for an awesome view of the city.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodation: Sofitel Collins Hotel

Day 4: Wednesday, March 29

Our guide leads a walking tour of Melbourne, featuring its famous lanes. Robert Hoddle designed the city's streets in 1836, but refused to include lanes because he saw them as detrimental to respectable establishments. Melbourne's little laneways evolved to create access to buildings and are fascinating to explore today. We visit the **Botanical Garden**, then walk through Federation Square to the Birrarung Wilam art installations. Later, we drive to Phillip Island and visit the **Koala Conservatory**, 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 Centre has excellent exhibits about the life of the Little Penguin.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Sofitel Collins Hotel



Day 5: Thursday, March 30

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. An 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 on the **Arthurs Seat Eagle**, a cablecar that glides up the mountain to a panoramic view of the peninsula and ocean.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Sofitel Collins Hotel

Day 6: Friday, March 31

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 Collins Hotel



Day 7: Saturday, April 1

This is a free day in Melbourne. You may be interested in the Queen Victoria Market, Australian Centre for Moving Images, St. Kilda Beach, or a boat ride on the Yarra River.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Sofitel Collins Hotel

Day 8: Sunday, April 2

We fly to **Adelaide** for a three-night stay in South Australia's cosmopolitan coastal capital. Our tour around the city includes Victoria Square, the grand boulevard of King William Street, Trinity Church, and the parkland along the River Torrens. We visit the Art Gallery of South Australia which has inspiring displays of Indigenous art. This afternoon, we enjoy the bayside town of Glenelg.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 9: Monday, April 3

We ride the 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 10: Tuesday, April 4

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 of cool summers and rainy winters is perfectly suited for red wine production, particularly Shiraz and Cabernet. We take a tour at **Seppeltsfield Winery**, sometimes called the showplace of Australia, followed by lunch at St. Hugo Winery. This afternoon, we visit the quaint town of Hahndorf, settled by Lutheran immigrants in 1838.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 11: Wednesday, April 5

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 12: Thursday, April 6

Nothing quite prepares you for the spectacle of **sunrise in the vast Australian Outback**. Rising early, we get off the train for 1½ hours at a viewing area with benches, and a breakfast snack is served. You have never truly experienced a sunrise until you have seen this one, as you look out to the horizon and admire its dramatic, gorgeous colours. 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.

Meals included: Brunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Crowne Plaza Hotel

Day 13: Friday, April 7

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: Sails in the Desert Hotel

Day 14: Saturday, April 8

The extraordinary 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. Uluru is about 3.6 km long and 1.9 km wide, with a circumference of 9.4 km. We get up early to witness the **Uluru sunrise** as the first light 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 water-snake, 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: Sails in the Desert Hotel



Day 15: Sunday, April 9

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**.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Shangri-La Marina Hotel Cairns

Day 16: Monday, April 10

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. The trip lasts about six hours, so there is plenty of time to explore the wonders of the reef.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Shangri-La Marina Hotel Cairns

Day 17: Tuesday, April 11

We board the **Skyrail Rainforest Cableway** 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. At the top in



Kuranda, there is time to browse the shops of the Heritage Market. Then we go to Rainforestation Nature Park which has preserved Australia's Indigenous culture. The Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience presents the fascinating customs and ancient traditions with a dance performance and Dreamtime Walk. Later, 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: Shangri-La Marina Hotel Cairns



Day 18: Wednesday, April 12

We fly to Sydney and stay four nights at the Harbour Marriott Hotel which has an excellent location downtown near the harbour. This is a 5-star hotel, among the finest in the city.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Harbour Marriott Hotel

Day 19: Thursday, April 13

We start with a driving tour of **Sydney** highlights such as the historic Rocks district, bustling Darling Harbour, 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: Harbour Marriott Hotel

Day 20: Friday, April 14

An all-day tour features the scenic **Blue Mountains**. 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. On the return to Sydney, we stop at Featherdale Wildlife Park to meet Australian animals such as koala, kangaroo, wallaby, and Tasmanian devil.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Harbour Marriott Hotel

Day 21: Saturday, April 15

Today is leisure time to explore other sights around Sydney. You may wish to walk around Darling Harbour, crammed with shops and restaurants. The huge National Maritime Museum and the Royal Botanic Garden are worth visiting.

Tonight is our Farewell to Australia dinner featuring a cruise on **Sydney Harbour**. Admire 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: Harbour Marriott Hotel

Day 22: Sunday, April 16

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

Meals included: Breakfast

TOUR NOTES

Currency & Expenses: The currency in Australia is the dollar and, as of April 2022, a Canadian dollar is worth about A\$1.08. 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.

Changes: As this tour has been planned and priced a year before departure, it is possible that exchange fluctuations could affect the fare or the airline could add a fuel surcharge, in which case you will be notified of the fare difference. Itinerary and flight changes can also happen as Australia emerges from Covid restrictions, but we try to substitute as closely as possible.

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.

Ghan Train accommodations: Gold twin or double is a sleeper cabin featuring private bathroom and upper and lower berths that convert to a three-seater lounge by day. Gold single is a sleeper cabin featuring a bed that converts to a seat by day and shared shower/toilet facilities along the hall.

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. Instructions 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.

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

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flight from Vancouver to Melbourne
- Current air taxes, fees and fuel surcharges
- Airline luggage fee for 1 suitcase per person
- 18 nights of accommodation and hotel taxes
- 19 days of coach transportation
- Guided driving and walking tours of Melbourne
- Melbourne Skydeck
- Phillip Island with Koala Conservatory
- Penguin Parade
- Mornington Peninsula with winery and brewery
- Sculpture Park
- Arthurs Seat Eagle gondola
- Great Ocean Road
- Otway National Park rainforests
- Port Campbell National Park & Twelve Apostles
- Flight from Melbourne to Adelaide
- Guided driving tour of Adelaide
- Art Gallery of South Australia
- Ferry to/from Kangaroo Island
- Hanson Bay Sanctuary and sea lion colony
- Flinders Chase National Park
- Barossa Valley tour
- Seppeltsfield and St. Hugo winery tours
- Hahndorf Village Heritage Area
- Ghan Train from Adelaide to Alice Springs in Gold Class service with overnight roomette
- Locally-guided tour of Alice Springs
- Alice Springs Telegraph Station
- School of the Air
- Royal Flying Doctors Service tour
- Flight from Alice Springs to Uluru (Ayers Rock)
- Uluru sunset and sunrise events
- Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Center
- Dot Painting Workshop
- 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
- Skyrail Rainforest Cableway
- Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience
- 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
- Transfer from Sydney hotel to airport
- Flight from Sydney to Vancouver
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director
- Gratuities for Australian guides and drivers
- Luggage handling at hotels, train and flights
- **37 meals:** 18 breakfasts, 1 brunch, 9 lunches, 9 dinners





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 or motorized wheelchair. 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 Activity Level 2 could be challenging, you are urged to 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 POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$1,000 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due December 13, 2022. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$250 discount on first 8 seats and \$125 on next 4 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after December 13, 2022.

Cancellation Policy: Up to September 26, 2022, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$100 per person. From September 27 to December 13, the cancellation charge is \$700 per person. From December 14 to January 13, 2023, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From January 14 to February 13, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After February 13, 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.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy.

Home pickups are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$50 per person round trip. Transfer is to and from YVR. Please request no later than at final payment.

Photo Credits: Pixabay (Uluru, koala bear), AdobeStock (Great Barrier Reef, Sydney Opera House), Wikimedia (12 Apostles, Kangaroo Island, Ghan Train, Field of Lights, Rainforest Cableway, Blue Mountains funicular), Sofitel Melbourne Hotel, Wikimedia by Bob Lindsell (Kuranda train)

Experience Points: This tour earns 236 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 December 13, 2022.

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

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