



From
\$7,402 USD

Single Room
 \$8,470 USD
 Twin Room
 \$7,402 USD

Prices valid until
 30th December 2023

16 days

Duration

New South Wales

Destination

**Level 1 - Introductory to
 Moderate**

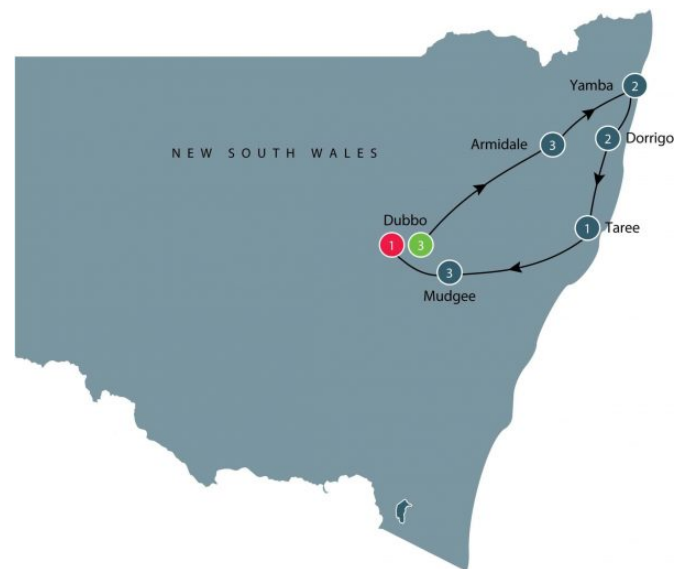
Activity

Escorted small group tour North East New South Wales

Mar 17 2023 to Apr 01 2023

Small group tour of North East New South Wales

An escorted small group tour of North East, New South Wales for mature and senior travellers is a journey of learning around the Northern part of New South Wales. This is part of Odyssey Travellers collection of discovery tours with a tour itinerary that explores the local culture in, New England, the North Coast and the Orana regions of New South Wales. It provides the traveller as part of a smaller group setting



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<https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au>

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than most independent tours to a travel experience with like minded people, a tour director and a knowledgeable local tour guide a small group tour of the North East part of New South Wales. This escorted tour is a hidden gem of places to visit in NSW is suitable for mature couples and the solo traveler visiting over the 16 days, historic towns of Armidale, Tenterfield, Yamba and Mudgee and includes sections of the mid North coast as well as inland areas. Travelers also time to explore with a local guide the National trust houses including the Saumarez Homestead and the Dundullimal Homestead and properties of Morpeth, Mudgee Rylstone and Gulgong which is home to around 130 National Trust-listed buildings. The Victorian era is well represented in this escorted regional New South Wales small group tour. As is the opportunity with your active tour director to explore the natural attractions with some great short walks in National park network to add to the programs range of cultural experiences.

The tour itinerary is over 16 days stopping at some of the memorable and iconic destinations and places to visit in New South Wales, completing the loop from our start and end destination, Dubbo.

This program links to this [New South Wales small group tour of the South](#). Ask about pricing for both programs back to back.

This small group tour for the active senior traveller stays entirely within NSW. It takes us north from Dubbo to Armidale and Tenterfield before turning east and crossing the mountains to Casino. From there we head south again, stopping at Dorrigo and visiting Morpeth on our way back to Dubbo via Mudgee. This small group tour allows us to experience a wide range of landscapes from the western plains to the New England ranges, fabulous rainforests, stunning east coast beaches and rolling, vine covered hills often as a day trip.

There are historic houses and towns to explore, and gourmet food to enjoy to make for a great holiday with fellow travelers. There will also be opportunities for bush walking in some of Australia's most spectacular National Parks. NSW has much to offer the mature and senior traveller, either as a couple or solo traveller and now is our

chance to experience its great diversity.

This, like all Odyssey Traveller small group tours is limited to 16 people. Odyssey does not offer any large group tour programs. All of Odyssey's guided tour programs are for smaller groups and have been since 2010.

This escorted small group tour has an interest in both Aboriginal and European settlement history. The program skirts around the edges of the "Aussie Outback", but is not an outback adventure for the traveller.

The Itinerary

This small group escorted tour with your tour guide and fellow traveller meet beyond Sydney and the Blue Mountain in Dubbo where the trip begins and ends 16 days later.

Leaving Dubbo, our outback Australia tours itinerary follows the path of the rail line built in the 1860's to Tamworth. From Tamworth after a break this small group tour continues on to Armidale. The small group head to Tenterfield and on eventually to Yamba. British and European history through architecture and settlement is seen and experienced and learnt about on this program underpinned by local guides sharing with travellers.

The group heads south from Yamba to Dorrigo, via Grafton and also extends now in to the national park network including ancient Gondawana rain forests. Continuing south towards Mudgee we learn about the heritage towns along the route before 3 nights in Mudgee. In and around Mudgee we learn about the wines of the region and the history including Rylstone and Gulgong which seem to be time capsules of the bygone era. Eventually we return to Dubbo on day 15.

This program is good mix of history and walking for the active traveller.

Articles about Australia published by Odyssey Traveller:

- [Mallee and Mulga: Two Iconic and Typically Inland Australian Plant Communities](#) (By Dr. Sandy Scott).
- [The Australian Outback: A Definitive Guide](#)

For all the articles Odyssey Traveller has published for mature aged and senior travellers, click through [on this link](#).

External articles to assist you on your visit to Australia:

- [Finding Mungo Man: the moment Australia's story suddenly changed](#)
- [A 42,000-Year-Old Man Finally Goes Home](#)
- [Fish traps and stone houses: New archaeological insights into Gunditjmara use of the Budj Bim lava flow of southwest Victoria over the past 7000 years](#)
- ['A big jump': People might have lived in Australia twice as long as we thought](#)
- [Mildura, Victoria](#)

Highlights

1. Enjoy exploring and learning about some of the great National Trust house of New England and Armidale
2. Learn about the Gondwana rain forest and its importance
3. Reach Tenterfield to explore and learn about Henry Parkes and the call for a Federation

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4. Spend time in Mudgee exploring the history and also the wine growing regions in the surrounding districts
5. Enjoy the time capsule experience in the small towns of Rylstone and Gulgong

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Dubbo

Overview:

We meet in the late afternoon as a group for an introduction to the tour program hosted by the tour director. Followed by a group evening meal.

Accommodation:

Sebel Dubbo or similar

Day 2

Locations: Dubbo

Overview:

In the morning your small group adventure commences with cultural experiences, we visit the National Trust's Dundullimal Homestead for the chance to learn about life on a colonial station. Believed to be the oldest sophisticated slab house in Australia, Dundullimal and its sandstone stables, timber church, and shed are a living illustration of rural life on an isolated property. The homestead and grounds are perfect for an extended visit for the traveller with an interest in colonial history.

Its story is one of amazing endeavour and vision, evidenced in the creation of a finely-crafted vintage home. The homestead has survived, in near original condition, from a time when the land was beyond the limits of settlement in the Wellington valley.

Built in the early 1840s as the head station of a 6,500 hectare (26,000 acres) squatting run, the homestead is Dubbo's oldest building open to the public. Its interior is remarkably sophisticated for its genre, with

louvres and multiple-pane glazed openings onto the verandah. The imposing sitting room is noted for its 'tent' shaped plaster ceiling and wallpaper, reproduced from an 1850 patent. The master bedroom is complete with an iron bed and a campaign chest.

The house is an interesting contrast to the traditional sandstone stables complex. The 'working' areas include the blacksmith's forge, coach room, sunken cool room, stores and stables. This building reflects the practical yet essential elements of rural life on a large, isolated property during the nineteenth century.

This afternoon we visit the historic Dubbo gaol. The Old Dubbo Gaol, a courthouse lockup in 1847, was proclaimed an official Gaol in 1859 and closed operations as a penal institution in 1966. The Old Dubbo Gaol officially re-opened as a tourist attraction in 1974, and is now completely restored and home to a large display of animatronics and holographic displays which provide a realistic and fascinating insight into a bygone era of barbaric prison life.

Later this afternoon we return to our hotel. You will be free to explore one of the city's many eating establishments. You might also like to take the opportunity for a short excursion to the Dubbo Observatory.

Accommodation:

Sebel Dubbo or similar

Day 3**Locations:** Dubbo**Overview:**

This morning we drive south to the town of Wellington and visit the caves where megafauna fossils were discovered in 1830. The discoveries (including the fossil of a giant kangaroo) attracted Charles Darwin's attention and influenced his ideas on evolution.

Palaeontologists consider the caves one of the world's most significant sites of megafauna fossils from the Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs. Other fossils found include a marsupial lion and a seven-metre-long goanna – Australia's longest goanna today is the perentie, which grows

up to 2.5 metres.

We'll join a tour of the caves and explore this fascinating underworld dating back hundreds of millions of years.

This afternoon is free to explore Dubbo.

Accommodation:

Sebel Dubbo or equivalent

Day 4

Locations: Armidale

Overview:

This morning, after breakfast, with your fellow traveller we head towards Armidale. We'll stop for lunch in Tamworth, with a heritage listed railway station and a town famous for its Country & Western Festival. Our tour itinerary has this small group continuing on to Armidale and our hotel where we'll spend the next three nights.

The picturesque town of Armidale is at the centre of the New England High Country region. It is home to a large university and the leafy streets are lined with heritage buildings.

British pastoralists first entered the region in the early 1830s, following the earlier exploration of the area by John Oxley. Oxley recommended the region for grazing, and soon squatters established large leaseholds in the locality. Armidale was initially founded in 1839 by George James MacDonald who was the Commissioner of Crown Lands and head of the local Border Police detachment in the New England district.

MacDonald established his barracks on the site and named it after Armadale on the Isle of Skye, the ancestral home of the MacDonald clan. As travelers we will find much to explore in this historic town.

Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

Armidale Mercure or equivalent

Day 5

Locations: Armidale

Overview:

This morning, after breakfast, we will begin with a guided heritage tour with a local guide of the city culminating in a break for lunch at Booloominbah, a heritage listed building located on the campus of the University of New England.

Booloominbah was designed by John Horbury Hunt in the Federation Arts and Crafts style and built from 1884 to 1888 by William Seabrook and John Thomas Brown. Originally the mansion was a private house for the pastoralist White family. In its following years, it became the initial building of the New England University College, the predecessor of the University of New England. On 8 November 2006, the building was proudly added to the New South Wales State Heritage Register. The beautiful building is still owned by the University and is used daily for a range of university administration and activities.

The afternoon will be yours to explore Armidale and perhaps pay a longer visit to some of the places glimpsed on this morning's tour. Depending on your interests you could visit the New England Regional Art Museum, the Aboriginal Cultural Centre or the Armidale Railway Museum.

Tonight you are free to select a restaurant of your own choice.

Accommodation:

Armidale Mercure or equivalent

Day 6

Locations: Armidale

Overview:

This morning your tour leader takes this group of travelers to visit the National Trust's Saumarez Homestead and its surrounding outbuildings. This grazing property was first inhabited by British settlers in the 1830s. Today it includes a fully furnished, 30 room Edwardian mansion built between 1888 and 1906 as well as extensive farm

buildings dating to around 1910.

The White family purchased the Saumarez in 1874 and worked the property until 1984 when they gave 10 hectares containing the historic precinct to the National trust. We take a guided tour through the White family mansion complete with original furnishings. We can wander through the gardens and visit the outbuildings, complete with 19th century tools and equipment.

In the afternoon we drive to Wollomombi Falls for spectacular views and the chance to do a bush walk lasting about one and a half hours. The walk is said to be a relatively easy one.

We return to our Armidale Hotel for the night.

Dinner will be in a restaurant of your own choice.

Accommodation:

Armidale Mercure or equivalent

Day 7

Locations: Yamba

Overview:

This morning we leave Armidale and head north to Tenterfield and then across the ranges to Casino and on to the coast where we stay for two nights.

An historic town in the rolling New England region, Tenterfield is sometimes called the 'birthplace of Australia' as this is the town where Sir Henry Parkes made his famous 1889 speech calling for Australia's federation. We'll take a stroll along the streets of Tenterfield where we'll find many heritage-listed buildings. We can stop by the 1860-built Tenterfield Saddler, made famous by Peter Allen's song of the same name

The saddlery, however, is much more than just a song. For 50 years (from 1908 – 1960), this quaint blue-granite saddlery on High Street was a key meeting place in town. Saddler George Woolnough (Allen's grandfather) plied his trade, undisturbed by the chatter and opinions of those who wandered in. One famous customer was Banjo Patterson.

Since 1860, the building has been used as a bank, private residence, and saddlery. Classified by the National Trust and in original condition –

the old ceilings wear 130 years of tobacco stains, wooden floors are patched in places with scraps of leather, and visitors can see the working conditions of 100 years ago first hand.

From Tenterfield we'll continue across the ranges through spectacular scenery, stopping for photo opportunities along the way. Our next major stop will be at Casino in the Richmond valley.

We'll have time to take a walk through the picturesque town and explore its history, including a large number of art deco buildings and the heritage-listed colonial post office, first completed in 1879.

Our final destination today will be somewhere on the coast, close to Yamba.

Accommodation:

Yamba TBA

Day 8

Locations: Yamba

Overview:

Today you have a rest day a break from small group travel, or not, the choice is yours!

There are parks beside the river for pleasant strolling, a good golf course and, for the more energetic, walks to local landmarks, such as the Yamba Lighthouse. The town is built around a national park, too, and humpback whales put on breaching shows just off-shore during their annual migration between May and November

Tonight you can select any of the local restaurants for your evening meal.

Accommodation:

Yamba TBA

Day 9

Locations: Dorrigo

Overview:

This morning we begin our journey south. We'll take the scenic route through the hills to Grafton and then continue to Dorrigo, where we'll spend two nights.

Grafton was built on the banks of the Clarence River, part of the east coast's largest river system, and is home to grand historic buildings, classic country pubs and a grand floral festival showcasing Grafton's famous Jacarandas.

There are over 2,000 Jacaranda trees in Grafton and when they blossom each spring the whole city turns purple. Jacaranda trees in Grafton date back to 1879 when seed merchant Henry Volkers introduced the species. Over the years many more of the trees have been planted. We'll take time to tour Grafton's rich Victorian and Edwardian architecture and to visit Schaeffer House.

Schaeffer House is home to a Museum and Research Room and is the headquarters of the Clarence River Historical Society. The homestead was built by the son of a pioneer German family, Grafton's first architect, Mr F.W.C. Schaeffer, between 1901 and 1903. The historical society was formed in 1931 and is the oldest country historical society in New South Wales. The house displays beautiful china, glassware and furniture presented to the society over the years.

From Grafton we'll continue to Dorrigo.

Dorrigo is situated on the Dorrigo Plateau near the edge of the New England escarpment above the Bellinger Valley. It is a quiet rural service town surrounded by rich agricultural lands which are predominantly used for sheep and cattle. The area is noted for its large number of waterfalls and bush walks. Its location on the edge of the escarpment results in a number of impressively panoramic views across the Bellinger Valley. In keeping with the district's long tradition of timber cutting most of the streets in the town are named after timbers – thus Cypress, Mahogany, Ash, Tallowood, Rosewood, Hickory, Myrtle, Kurrajong and so on.

On our arrival in Dorrigo, time and weather permitting, we'll drive two kilometres north of the town centre to Dangar Falls, a beautiful 30-

metre waterfall. (There will be time the next morning to include the falls if we can't manage on arrival.) There's a viewing platform, and a walking trail that leads you to the river at the bottom of the waterfall. The viewing platform offers a great vantage point and excellent photo opportunity of the falls.

Accommodation:

Dorrigo TBA

Day 10**Locations:** Dorrigo**Overview:**

Today we spend a day exploring the Dorrigo National Park. The park is part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area and offers stunning scenery that has been millions of years in the making. It contains a range of forest types that protect an enormous variety of animals and birds, like red-necked pademelons, the vibrantly coloured wompoo fruit-dove and the spectacular regent bowerbird. We'll begin at the park centre for an introduction to the diversity of flora and fauna to be found in the region and possibly have a guided private tour.

Directly connected to Dorrigo Rainforest Centre, the Skywalk Lookout offers a bird's-eye view of the surrounding landscape. Perched right on the edge of the escarpment, the views take in Bellinger Valley to the coast with deep valleys and gorges, blanketed in a rich rainforest. Birdwatchers should keep an eye out for regent bowerbirds, topknot pigeons and grey goshawks.

The 70 metre boardwalk soars over the edge of the escarpment some 21 metres above the rainforest. Easily accessible, anyone can enjoy the panoramic views of the Rosewood rainforest basin.

The view is dominated by the double peak of McGraths Hump, also known as Old Man Dreaming. In Aboriginal Gumbaynggirr legend, it shows the profile of a warrior's face, Ngali. It was Ngali's job to protect women who came to give birth in Bellinger Valley. But Ngali fell asleep,

and for his punishment he was turned to stone for all eternity.

The afternoon offers us the chance to take one walking tour in the bush.

Those looking for an easy introduction to Dorrigo's rainforest systems might like to start with the Satinbird stroll. The rainforest's abundance of plant species, vines, epiphytes and buttressed roots are easily visible from the 600 metre sealed trail. The stroll is named after the satin bowerbird renowned for its remarkable courtship ritual. Birdwatching is superb, so don't forget to bring a pair of binoculars. You might be lucky enough to spot the stroll's namesake or perhaps a migrating black-faced monarch between September and March.

For those looking for a longer walk there are a number of other walking tracks including the Rosewood Creek track. Best taken in an anti-clockwise direction, the peaceful Rosewood Creek walking track loops through astonishing World Heritage-listed rainforest, waterfalls, and creeks. It offers a moderate walk for a leisurely afternoon. You'll pass some of the largest blackbutt and tallowwood trees you're likely to ever see. The occasional giant stump acts as a reminder of earlier logging history in the area. You'll also pass through coachwood, crabapple and sassafras trees on your way to Coachwood Falls.

We return to Dorrigo in the afternoon and for travelers, the rest of the day is yours to relax or explore the town.

Accommodation:

Dorrigo TBA

Day 11**Locations:** Taree**Overview:**

After breakfast this morning we head south again and spend the night in the Taree/Wingham area. Our first stop will be at Port Macquarie, approximately two hours south of Dorrigo. We'll visit the Taking Point Lighthouse built in 1879. The lighthouse sits on top of a rocky headland which offers stunning panoramic views along the coast.

While in Port Macquarie we'll make a lunch stop at the Sea Acres Rainforest Centre, one of the largest remaining coastal rainforest reserves in NSW. Here we can enjoy the a walk along the elevated one

point three kilometre rainforest boardwalk through pristine subtropical rainforest before taking lunch in the centre's café.

After lunch we'll continue our drive south to Wingham. Wingham, an historic village on the banks of the Manning River, is the oldest town in the beautiful Manning Valley. The village green is surrounded by National Trust-listed Federation buildings and a nature reserve of subtropical lowland rainforest, including giant Moreton Bay figs. You can walk from town to the Brush Nature Reserve, home to a colony of grey-headed flying foxes and fig trees. An easily accessible boardwalk links to several walking tracks through the nature reserve. This reserve is home to a rich and rare rainforest, as well as hundreds of flying foxes.

This small group adventure continues on to Taree, a major service centre and also on the Manning River, at a point where the river is wide and deep. The town has many historic 19th century buildings including the Court House (1882) and St Paul's Presbyterian Church (1869).

We'll spend the night in either Wingham or Taree, depending on accommodation availability.

Accommodation:

Taree TBA

Day 12**Locations:** Mudgee**Overview:**

This morning we leave the coast and head inland. Our final destination is Mudgee via historic Morpeth. The tour itinerary shows a two night break in Mudgee.

Morpeth, on the banks of the Hunter River, was a bustling port in colonial times. The town, with its rich heritage of beautifully preserved buildings, uneven cobble stone paths and walkways has been called a living museum. The town's role, as one of the most important river ports in NSW, began in the 1820s under the instruction of the Colonial Secretary.

The Historic Arnott Bakehouse is on Swan Street and is now home to Morpeth Sourdough. The family business began in 1847, when baker and confectioner William Arnott arrived from Scotland. From small

beginnings, Arnott's biscuits became a household name.

After time to explore Morpeth and the local culture of the town as well as lunch, we'll continue to Mudgee.

Accommodation:

Mudgee TBA

Day 13

Locations: Mudgee

Overview:

This morning take some time to explore historic Mudgee before heading out with your fellow traveller to a local winery for a wine tasting and lunch. The elegant town of Mudgee is on the banks of the Cudgegong River. Its beginnings, in a rich pastoral history and the colonial gold rush era, are reflected in the tree-lined heritage streetscapes.

Mudgee is renowned as a key Australian wine producing region. With a viticultural history stretching back to 1858, Mudgee has played an important role in Australian wine production. Today we will visit a winery (or two) and sample some of the regions best known wines. With over 35 wineries in the region we'll be spoilt for choice. We'll have lunch in one of the wineries with views over the surrounding vineyards.

This evening, after dinner, we will head out to the Mudgee Observatory for a conducted viewing session.

Accommodation:

Mudgee TBA

Day 14

Locations: Mudgee

Overview:

This morning we drive to Rylstone via the south side of Lake Windermere, and then continue to the Wollemi National Park.

Framed between the slow-moving Cudgegong River and the UNESCO World-Heritage-listed Wollemi National Park, the heritage village of

Rylstone looks like it belongs in the movies.

We'll have time to stroll along Rylstone's main street admiring its sandstone buildings and allowing lots of time to call in at its assortment of pubs, restaurants and cafes. A great way to discover the colonial treasures of one of the oldest villages west of the Great Dividing Range is on the self-guided Rylstone heritage walk.

The nearby heritage-listed Wollemi National Park offers a dramatic setting for scenic walks. Here we can explore the spectacular landscapes of a park which is part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. From scenic canyons, towering cliffs, wild rivers and serene forests, there are ample opportunities to be immersed in the beauty of the largest wilderness area in NSW.

Weather and park restrictions permitting, we'll also walk the Glow Worm track.

The walking track is a short, easy walking track. The track is popular with people keen to see glow worms in their natural environment. We can take the easy 1km walk to the tunnel entrance, past an impressive landscape of tall forests, lush tree ferns, narrow gorges and stunning pagoda rock formations. (Bring a torch for use in the tunnel!)

The 400m-long tunnel was built in the early 1900s as part of the railway for the thriving mining industry at Newnes. It's now home to thousands of glow worms that cling to the dark, damp walls. Switch off your torch, keep quiet, and wait for the worms to light up the tunnel with pinpricks of blue light.

On your way back, look for goannas and lyrebirds. If you're lucky, you may spot a swamp wallaby or koala. During spring and summer, the walking track is dotted with yellow pagoda daisies, while banksias bloom in the cooler months.

We return to Mudgee this afternoon via the north road through the village of Lue.

Tonight you'll be able to select a restaurant of your own choice.

Accommodation:

Mudgee TBA

Day 15

Locations: Dubbo

Overview:

Today we return to Dubbo. Our adventures, however, are not quite over. This morning we take the less direct route via Gulgong and The Drip Gorge.

We'll begin with the opportunity to take a walk along the Drip Gorge walking track in the Goulburn River State Conservation area. The track meanders beside the Goulburn River to The Drip, or 'The Great Dripping Wall'. 'The Drip' itself is a 35 metre high overhanging cliff and water trickles through the porous rock wall making it a cool oasis even in summer. This is a fairly easy and mostly flat 2.8km return walk, and although there are a few steps to tackle, there is nothing too strenuous.

After the walk we'll return to Gulgong and spend some time exploring this historic village with a local guide. Visiting Gulgong is a bit like taking a trip right through regional Australia in the 19th century. The former gold mining town still feels like it might have in the 1870s when people came here seeking quick fortunes. Gold fever struck the region in 1870, when payable gold was found at Red Hill and 20,000 people flocked to the area. Prior to that, Gulgong was just a sheep-run, a large property for raising sheep.

Gulgong is home to around 130 National Trust-listed buildings, many complete with their original verandahs and iron-lace balconies. You can also see Australia's oldest operating opera house, the Prince of Wales Opera House, which opened in 1871, and where the great Dame Nellie Melba once performed. Poet and short story writer Henry Lawson spent much of his childhood in the area, and his cultural legacy is celebrated in the Henry Lawson Centre.

We continue to Dubbo this afternoon.

Tonight we have our farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

Sebel Dubbo or similar

Day 16

Locations: Dubbo

Overview:

This small group Tour concludes after breakfast.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 15 nights accommodation.
- 15 breakfasts, 2 picnic lunches, 6 dinners.
- Transport by modern and comfortable 4wd or other vehicle suitable for the highway conditions.
- Entrances and sightseeing as specified.
- Services of Tour Leader for the duration of tour
- Detailed Preparatory Information

What's not included in our Tour

- Return airfares to Dubbo
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature, such as telephone calls and laundry

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, moderate walking on uneven surfaces for 3 - 5 kilometres per day. Suitable for most fitness levels.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.