



From
\$12,080 NZD

Single Room
 \$14,222 NZD

Twin Room
 \$12,080 NZD

Prices valid until
 30th December 2022

20 days
 Duration

Queensland
 Destination

Level 2 - Moderate
 Activity

Small group tour of Queensland

Jun 13 2022 to Jul 02 2022

Small group tour of Queensland

Get well and truly off the beaten track on Odyssey Traveller's 19-day small group Australian outback tours of Queensland. Away from the usual tourist centres – Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Great Barrier Reef, Cairns, Port Douglas, and the Daintree Rainforest – our Odyssey Travellers will discover the big skies, stunning pastoral and desert landscapes, and fascinating history of the outback communities of



western Queensland with your tour guide.

Our small group tours of the Australian outback in Queensland begin and end in Brisbane. We head west into Queensland and back, pausing along the way to explore and learn at each stop on day tour (s) with local guides, as we travel west then up into North Queensland then south back to Brisbane. This escorted tour is suitable for the mature and senior traveler whether as a couple or solo traveler.

This, like all Odyssey Traveller small group tours is limited to 15 people. As a tour company in the current environment, we are committed to small group travel that is safe for you and your fellow traveller rather than being a member of larger group tours.

Winton; Dinosaurs and home of Waltzing matilda

Winton epitomises the spirit of Australian outback tours. We spend 2 nights in Winton, here we visit the famous North Gregory Hotel, known as the ‘Queen of the Outback’, which has an impressive history. The first public performance of ‘Waltzing Matilda’ was here on April 6, 1895 (the story of which is told at the Waltzin’ Matilda centre, the world’s only museum dedicated to a song) and in the 1920s clandestine meetings helped launch a little airline known as QANTAS... During World War II, future American president Lyndon Johnson was forced to stay here, when forced to ditch his plane. The dining room – where you can enjoy a traditional outback dinner – features original etchings by acclaimed artist Daphne Mayo. Winton is also home to the red-browed pardalote, found across Queensland and the Northern Territory, and the elusive rusty grass wren, a small, long-tailed bird with reddish-brown upper parts (related to the Kalkadoon Grasswren, found in the Mt Isa region).

Winton is also the dinosaur capital of Australia. We visit the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum to learn about the Cretaceous sauropods that roamed the Winton area 95 million years ago. The dinosaurs were found on the property of a man named David Elliott – amazingly, in the form of an almost complete skeleton of a Sauropod! After our visit to the Dinosaurs Museum, we learn more about dinosaurs on a day trip to Lark Quarry, one of the most fascinating tourism centres in

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Queensland's outback. 95 million years ago, Lark Quarry was part of a great river plain, with sandy channels, swamps and lakes brimming with freshwater mussels, lungfish and crocodiles. Rainfall was over a metre per year, so the surrounding lowland forest was lush and green.

The fossil remains at Lark Quarry tell an incredible story. On the day, our drama unfolds, herds of small, two-legged dinosaurs came to drink at the lake. There were at least one hundred fifty dinosaurs of two different kinds, carnivorous coelurosaurs about the size of chickens, and larger plant-eating ornithopods, roughly the size of an emu. The harmony was broken when a huge meat-eating theropod, smaller than a Tyrannosaurus, approached the lake. It slowed, saw the other dinosaurs gathered at water's edge, and then turned and charged. The stampeding herd of smaller dinosaurs left a chaotic mass of footprints in the mud as they ran to escape. Today, these footprints are an extraordinary record of life in the times when the land here was part of Gondwanaland, the great southern supercontinent, rather than Queensland, Australia.

Longreach

We continue our journey from Winton to Longreach (just 2 hours away). Our Queensland outback small group tour spends two nights in Longreach, the home of the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, which showcases the history and culture of life in outback Australia, perhaps this is the home of the Australian adventure. As well our day tour of Longreach includes the Qantas founder's museum. Longreach was one of the founding centres for Qantas, the third oldest airline in the world (after KLM and Avianca), founded on 16 November 1920. One of the airline's original hangars remains in use at Longreach Airport and is listed on the Australian National Heritage List. The Qantas Founders Museum also includes among its displays a decommissioned Qantas Boeing 747-200 aircraft.

Barcaldine

Heading west from Longreach we have a short drive and spend the night in Barcaldine. The name Barcaldine originates from the Oban region in Scotland and is pronounced bar-call-din. Barcaldine is home



to the Tree of Knowledge, which marks the birth of the labour movement in Australia. The tree grew outside the Railway Station for around 180 years until 2006, when sadly, it was poisoned by an unknown culprit. Today, the famous tree has been preserved and placed under an award-winning structure that gives the illusion of a canopy over the Tree. Head to the Tree at night for the best views, as the memorial is lit beautifully by special lighting.

In Barcaldine, we spend the afternoon learning about the origins of the Australian Labour Party, and view architectural curiosities, such as the masonic lodge – seemingly out of place in this small central west Queensland town.

Carnarvon National Park

Travelling back into the Australian outback, we head to Carnarvon National Park, where we spend two nights. Carnarvon Gorge is a rain forest oasis in the semi-arid heart of Central Queensland, and a major camping ground and centre of outback tourism. Towering white sandstone cliffs form a spectacular steep-sided gorge with narrow, vibrantly coloured and lush side-gorges. Boulder-strewn Carnarvon Creek winds through the gorge. The gorge is home to a range of significant plant and animal species, many of them relics of cooler, wetter times. Remnant rainforest flourishes in the sheltered side-gorges while endemic Carnarvon fan palms *Livistona nitida*, ancient cycads, ferns, flowering shrubs and gum trees line the main gorge. Grassy open forest grows on the cliff tops. The creeks attract a wide variety of animals, including more than 173 species of bird.

Rock art on sandstone overhangs is a fragile reminder of local Aboriginal peoples' long and continuing connection with the ancient landscape of the gorge. Ochre stencils, rock engraving and freehand paintings make up some of the finest Aboriginal rock art imagery in Australia. We will have the opportunity with a tour guide to view and learn about these paintings at Cathedral Cave, which lies at the end of the main path through the Gorge, and is indicated by archaeological evidence to be the main campsite for indigenous people who used the Gorge.

Charleville

This small group tour spends 2 nights in Charleville. Whilst here the group have the opportunity to go star and planet gazing, take time to tour the historic town and understand the value of wool to a town like Charleville in the early 20th century period. Take a private tour of the heritage listed Hotel Coronas with a rags to riches story linked to Qantas, Greek islands, Brisbane and Sydney.

Articles about Australia published by Odyssey Traveller:

- [The Kimberley: A Definitive Guide](#)
- [Uncovering the Ancient History of Aboriginal Australia](#)
- [Aboriginal Land Use in the Mallee](#)
- [Understanding Aboriginal Aquaculture](#)
- [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 Brisbane & Outback Queensland:

- [Outback Towns | Outback Queensland](#)
- [The 10 Best Things to do in Outback Queensland](#)
- [Three Western Queensland Towns Worth Visiting](#)

Highlights

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1. Winton, goes beyond the dinosaur fossil with analysis and interpretation of a stampede on mudflats now in the geologic record.
2. Explore Barcaldine, the tree of knowledge and the place where the labour party was founded in Australia.
3. Carnarvon Gorge National Park shows the group first class well preserved Aboriginal rock art.
4. In Charleville learn about the WWII era when it temporarily became part of the USA and was home to nearly 3500 american servicemen.servicemen lived
5. Visit Longreach, one of the founding centres for Qantas, the third oldest airline in the world (after KLM and Avianca)

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Brisbane to Roma

Overview:

Having made your own way to Brisbane we meet in the morning and begin the journey inland to Roma, home to the southern hemisphere's largest cattle sale yards. Roma is located approximately 500 km from the capital city.

That evening we have a welcome dinner at a local restaurant for you and your fellow traveller as a small group.

Accommodation:

Roma TBC

Day 2

Locations: Charleville

Overview:

Today we travel west to Charleville, the drive should take approximately 3h. We will spend 2 nights in Charleville.

The city has an interesting history linked to the WWII when in 1942 it was home to nearly 3500 American servicemen and we will view what remains of their stay during the war.

Accommodation:

Hotel Corona or similar

Day 3

Locations: Charleville

Overview:

Today we explore the city and its history, we will visit the Charleville Historic House Museum and its building that dates back to 1887.

We'll also learn more about the time the local airport became temporarily part of the USA in 1942 on a secret WWII tour.

In the evening we will star gaze at the magnificent outback sky at the Charleville Cosmos Centre & Observatory.

Accommodation:

Hotel Corona or similar

Day 4

Locations: Windorah

Overview:

We continue our journey west to Windorah, located in the Far West region of Queensland, about 500km from Charleville. This small town has a population of just 80 people.

Windorah's main attraction is Cooper's Creek, located just outside the township. Here's the only place where two rivers, the Thomson & Barcoo, join to form a creek. Another attraction in the area are the

amazing Sand Hills, located at Ourdel Station, west of the town, where we can experience views and some of the reddest sand ever seen.

Accommodation:

Windorah TBC

Day 5

Locations: Birdsville

Overview:

We depart after breakfast and drive west 400km to Birdsville, one of the most well known outback towns. Home to the Birdsville Races and the end of the Birdsville Track.

Birdsville is close to the border between Queensland, South Australia, and the Northern Territory, on the edge of the [Simpson Desert](#).

Because of the harsh climate, the area was only sparsely populated by Aboriginal people, with the Yarluyandi group living in the Birdsville area and the Wangkangurru people on the Simpson Desert.

Accommodation:

Birdsville TBC

Day 6

Locations: Birdsville

Overview:

With plenty to see in this iconic outback town we'll spend 3 days here. The main attractions include the heritage architecture, including two quintessential outback pubs, the **Royal Hotel** and the **Birdsville Hotel**; the late 19th century **Birdsville Courthouse**; and the **Australian Inland Mission Hospital**, used as an outpost for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Every September, Birdsville plays host to the Birdsville Races, known as 'the Melbourne cup of the outback'. The races were first held in 1882, but became hugely popular in the 1990s, often attracting up to

8000 visitors to the tiny town.

Birdsville is also in close proximity to 'The Burke and Wills Tree', a Coolabah tree said to be among the explorers' final campsites before their demise in the [Strzelecki Desert](#).

Accommodation:

Birdsville TBC

Day 7

Locations: Birdsville

Overview:

We continue exploring this isolated corner of the world and will also enjoy some free time to wander about the town at your own pace or take some time to relax.

Accommodation:

Birdsville TBC

Day 8

Locations: Mount Isa

Overview:

Our day today will be taken up by a long drive north to Mount Isa, we'll stop along the way to break up the 685 km journey. Mount Isa is also affectionately known as "*oasis of the outback*" as a welcome mirage for travellers arriving from all directions.

Accommodation:

Mt Isa TBC

Day 9

Locations: Mount Isa

Overview:

We take the day to explore this unique town and surrounding area. We'll make a visit to the Mount Isa Underground Hospital and Museum,

a 40 bed community hospital by Mount Isa Mines created in 1940 before the first state run hospital opened in the town.

We'll learn more about the mining history of the town; Mt Isa is the world's biggest single producer of copper, zinc, silver and lead. Our visits continue with visits to Casa Grande, the heritage-listed villa where Queen Elizabeth once stayed and Lake Moondarra to enjoy the outback sunset and perhaps spot some of the local wild peacocks that reside in the area.

Accommodation:

Mt Isa TBC

Day 10

Locations: Cloncurry

Overview:

We depart Mount Isa for Clonclurry this morning, a short drive of 120 km east. The town, known as just "The Curry" by the locals is the birthplace of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and destination of the first Qantas flight.

We visit two of the main attractions of "Curry" , first we stop at the Unearthed Visitor Information Centre and Museum to learn about the local history and explore the what remains of the now deserted nearby town of Mary Kathleen. We'll also stop at the John Flynn Place Museum & Art Gallery dedicated to celebrate the work of John Flynn and the beginning of the Royal Flying Doctors Service, an essential service for all remote outback towns.

Accommodation:

Cloncurry TBC

Day 11

Locations: Winton

Overview:

We depart early today for our 350 km drive towards Winton, arriving late morning and begin exploring [Winton](#).

We visit the North Gregory Hotel, known as the 'Queen of the Outback', which has an impressive history. The first public performance of 'Waltzing Matilda' was here on April 6, 1895 (the story of which is told at the Waltzin' Matilda centre, the world's only museum dedicated to a song) and in the 1920s clandestine meetings helped launch a little airline known as QANTAS ...

During World War II, future American president Lyndon Johnson was forced to stay here in Winton, when forced to ditch his plane. The dining room – where you can enjoy a traditional outback dinner – features original etchings by acclaimed artist Daphne Mayo. Winton is also home to the red-browed pardalote, found across Queensland and the Northern Territory, and the elusive rusty grasswren, a small, long-tailed bird with reddish-brown upper parts (related to the Kalkadoon Grasswren, found in the Mt Isa region). We have a walking tour in the late afternoon to identify heritage buildings and more stories of the history of Winton before a group meal.

Winton is also the [dinosaur](#) capital of Australia.

Accommodation:

Winton TBC

Day 12

Locations: Winton

Overview:

Today is about Dinosaurs.

We visit the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum to learn about the Cretaceous sauropods that roamed the Winton area 95 million years ago. The dinosaurs were found on the property of a man named David Elliott – amazingly, in the form of an almost complete skeleton of a Sauropod! After our visit to the Dinosaurs Museum, we learn more

about dinosaurs on a day trip to Lark Quarry, one of the most fascinating tourism centres in Queensland's outback . 95 million years ago, Lark Quarry was part of a great river plain, with sandy channels, swamps and lakes brimming with freshwater mussels, lungfish and crocodiles. Rainfall was over a metre per year, so the surrounding lowland forest was lush and green.

This is an amazing day as a step back in geological time and should also include the opportunity to see some of the volunteers who travel to Winton to assist on the dig, cleaning fossils in the lab and cataloguing.

Accommodation:

Winton TBC

Day 13

Locations: Longreach

Overview:

We depart Winton and travel south for 180 km until we arrive in Longreach. We visit the Stockman's hall of fame, a escorted tour with a local guide of Longreach and a visit to the Qantas founder's museum.

Longreach was one of the founding centres for Qantas, technically QANTAS was founded in Winton.

Accommodation:

Longreach Motor Inn or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Longreach

Overview:

Today we continue exploring Longreach with our local guide. With a mid afternoon finish, there is time to pause and relax or wander around Longreach, stretching the legs before continuing our journey south tomorrow.

Accommodation:

Longreach Motor Inn or similar.

Day 15

Locations: Barcaldine

Overview:

Today we travel east for about 1h to Barcaldine.

[Barcaldine](#) is home to the Tree of Knowledge, which marks the birth of the labour movement in Australia . The tree grew outside the Railway Station for around 180 years until 2006, when sadly, it was poisoned by an unknown culprit. Today, the famous tree has been preserved and placed under an award-winning structure that gives the illusion of a canopy over the Tree. Head to the Tree at night for the best views, as the memorial is lit beautifully by special lighting.

In Barcaldine, we spend the afternoon on a excursion learning about the origins of the Australian Labour Party, and view the local culture and architectural curiosities, such as the masonic lodge – seemingly out of place in this small central west Queensland town. There are plenty of stories and cultural experiences to be shared here to hear as we explore the town.

Accommodation:

Landsborough Lodge Motel or similar

Day 16

Locations: Carnarvon National park

Overview:

Travelling south-east for about 5h we head to Carnarvon National Park, where we spend two nights. Today is a travel day, we arrive in late afternoon, stopping as and when required by the group on the road.

Carnarvon Gorge is a rainforest oasis in the semi-arid heart of Central Queensland, and a major camping ground and centre of outback tourism. Towering white sandstone cliffs form a spectacular steep-sided gorge with narrow, vibrantly coloured and lush side-gorges. Boulder-strewn Carnarvon Creek winds through the gorge. The gorge is home to a range of significant plant and animal species, many of them relics

of cooler, wetter times.

Accommodation:

Takarakka Bush Resort or similar

Day 17

Locations: Carnarvon National Park

Overview:

Today, we have a full day exploring the park. Not only fauna and flora but the Aboriginal rock art. A Local guide will share their knowledge and stories with the group.

Carnarvon Gorge lies within the spectacular and rugged ranges of Queensland's central highlands. Lined with vegetation and fed by the waters of numerous side gorges, Carnarvon Creek winds between towering sandstone cliffs. The gorge is a cool and moist oasis within the dry environment of central Queensland.

Recognised nationally for its outstanding natural and cultural values, Carnarvon Gorge protects unique and significant plants and animals—many of them relics of cooler, wetter times. Permanent springwater, cooler temperatures and low levels of direct sunlight provide the conditions that allow remnant rainforest to survive here in the dry central Queensland climate.

Carnarvon Creek always flows, even when it hasn't rained for months. Water falling as rain in the high country slowly percolates down through the porous sandstone, eventually meeting an impermeable (waterproof) band of rock known as shale. Unable to continue its journey downwards, the water moves sideways along the sandstone and escapes through breaks, seeping out at places such as the Moss Garden and at other springs within the gorge.

The springs and creeks of the gorge support a mosaic of habitats, home to an enormous diversity of life. Whether you choose to walk the main track or simply relax at the park visitor area, you will have many opportunities to encounter and discover the gorge's plants and animals.

Mornings at the gorge are colourful as the sunlight meets the cliffs and a symphony of birdsong fills the air. Kangaroos and wallabies can be found around the picnic area and at night echidnas can be seen

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strolling about. The call of yellow-bellied gliders, owls and the bush stone curlew are often heard after dark.

Steadily flowing water has carved this gorge out of ancient sandstone. The same water, still flowing from the rock, has drawn travelers to Carnarvon Gorge for many thousands of years. Aboriginal people have a long and continuing relationship with this dramatic landscape. While visitors to the park usually associate Aboriginal history with the park's rock art sites, the connection for Aboriginal people is with the entire landscape. The dreaming says that the rainbow serpent Mundagurra created Carnarvon Gorge as he travelled through the creek system, coming in and out of the water, and carving the sandstone as he travelled.

The fragile art on the gorge's sandstone walls reflects a rich culture. Ochre stencils of tools, weapons, ornaments and ceremonial objects provide an insight into the lives of the gorge's first people. The gorge is often described by today's Traditional Custodians as a place of learning – an area of great spirituality. This land still teaches, with many visitors to the park gaining a new understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and history.

European arrival

Rugged ranges and rough terrain made this area difficult for early European explorers. Ludwig Leichhardt led the first European group into the region in 1844, passing to the east of the gorge. Two years later Thomas Mitchell and his party passed to the west. It is thought that Mitchell named the ranges after the Caernarfon Ranges of Wales.

European settlers followed soon after, with grazing runs established in the area in the 1860s. A mix of resourceful and colourful characters sought a life in this hard, remote area. High country to the south was named 'The Ranch', possibly by cattle duffers, while side-gorges were perfect for 'lying low'.

In 1932, a 26,300ha section of the gorge was declared as national park, after lobbying by the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland, which had organised expeditions into the area. The many sections of Carnarvon National Park now cover 298,000ha of the central highlands. Cathedral cave lies at the end of the Main Track and the turn-off is only metres from the boardwalked site. Ample seating is provided along the multi-level boardwalk with interpretive signs pointing out key motifs.

There are some motifs shared with the Art Gallery, such as the net patterns, but plenty unique to Cathedral Cave. See if you can find the stencilled rifle.

Based on archaeological evidence, Cathedral Cave was the main campsite for indigenous people using the Gorge whereas the Art Gallery appears to have been primarily ceremonial in nature. Cathedral Cave's massive overhang certainly provides more shelter in adverse weather than the comparatively shallow overhang at the Art Gallery.

When the Gorge was still being used as a cattle lease, Cathedral Cave was where cattle were coralled while the Gorge was being mustered. Unfortunately, the cattle damaged some of the rock art whilst penned in.

Accommodation:

Takarokka Bush Resort or similar

Day 18

Locations: Roma

Overview:

We travel further south today making our way to Roma, a journey of about 300km where we spend the night.

Here we will enjoy our farewell dinner and reminisce about the wonderful experiences we shared in the Australian Outback of Queensland.

Accommodation:

Roma TBC

Day 19

Locations: Brisbane

Overview:

After breakfast we complete our drive back to Brisbane where our tour concludes.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 18 nights accommodation.
- 18 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 8 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 Domestic airfares
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature, such as telephone calls and laundry

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