



From  
**\$3,313** CAD

Single Room

\$4,020 CAD

Twin Room

\$3,313 CAD

Prices valid until  
30th December 2023

7 days

Duration

Australian Capital Territory,  
New South Wales

Destination

Level 1 - Introductory to  
Moderate

Activity

## Small group tour to Southern Highlands and Canberra

Sep 10 2023 to Sep 16 2023

## Small group tour to the Southern Highlands and Canberra.

This is a small group tour of the Southern Highlands of NSW for the mature and senior traveller interested in contemporary Australian history of the Southern highlands, Canberra and the UNESCO World



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

08-Jun-2023

heritage listed Blue Mountain region with a focus on Katoomba .

An Odyssey small group tour of NSW seeks to go beyond the beautiful beaches, major tourist attraction often listed as places to visit in NSW, such as the Hunter Valley, Coffs harbour, Darling harbour , Byron bay or Bondi. This is a small group tour that will take you out of Sydney and away from the beach culture to see in the Blue Mountain and the hidden gem landscapes in between as a day trip collection to some important cultural and natural attractions in the beautiful Southern highlands of regional New South Wales including historic Berrima, Kangaroo Valley, Bowral and the Blue Mountains.

***This, like all Odyssey Traveller small group tours is limited to 16 people.***

During this 7 day period, with like minded travellers you travel to and learn about some of the beautiful hidden places in NSW.

## Departing Sydney

Leaving Sydney, we first break in the Southern Highlands region at Bowral for a walk around the town and a short guided tour of the National Trusts Retford house including the beautiful gardens. For those joining us in **September it is tulip season in Bowral and Canberra**. Travelling via the green rolling hills of the popular Kangaroo valley where we break for lunch and is often regarded as one of the places to visit in NSW, we continue on to stop for one night in town of Batemans bay on the NSW South coast .

## Travel to Canberra

From Batemans bay and its pristine beach and town environment we head inland, leaving the NSW south coast for a short journey of less than 3 hours to Canberra. In the nations capital we spend some 2 and 1/2 days (3 nights) exploring the museums and galleries and places of historic importance such as the Australian war memorial and the

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national gallery of Australia.

## Canberra to Orange

On the 6th day we depart Canberra to travel across the Central west region of to reach a key place to visit in NSW, Cowra and then travel onto the popular regional NSW town of Orange, breaking for morning tea and lunch along the way. This small group tour of the Southern Highlands and other places to visit in NSW spends its last night here in Orange. This regional town some 45 minutes from Bathurst is often regarded as one of the beautiful hidden places in NSW, with its acclaimed wine, winery and wine tasting , restaurants and locally sourced food. Orange is a popular weekend Getaway.

From Bowral to Cowra, through to Bathurst the Irish convicts attempted to settle and farm this region with success. However, the central West includes a flash gold boom in the mid 1800's and WWII POW camp for the Japanese. The group have the opportunity to visit NSW's only Japanese designed and managed garden. The garden a popular tourist attraction is certainly a beautiful hidden place in NSW and the garden is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. The design of the garden is a copy of the first Japanese landscape garden (Strolling garden) built by the first Japanese Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu. The Tokugawa Shogun ruled from Edo Castle from 1600 until 1868, when it was abolished during the Meiji Restoration. This garden is an often overlooked one of those places to visit near me garden The gardens cover some 4 hectares and is considered to be a leading contender for the beautiful places in NSW to visit.

## Return to Sydney

From Orange, this small group returns to Sydney, with scheduled stops in Bathurst for morning tea and the popular Blue Mountain town of Katoomba for lunch during the day.

Your program leader (tour guide) meets you and your travelling companions in central Sydney late on a Sunday afternoon for

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introductions and a welcome dinner. The following day we depart for Bowral in the Southern Highlands first as this small group tour heads to Batemans bay for the night.

An Odyssey Traveller tour is a small group tour of the Southern Highlands 2021, in NSW designed especially for seniors, for mature travellers who want an in-depth and authentic experience of their chosen destination. Since 1983, we have specialised in bringing Australian travellers to the world: now, our goal is to enable you to rediscover your own country on a day tour collection for mature and senior travellers for couples or solo travellers in a small group of up to 15 people of key places to visit in the Southern Highland region of NSW and Canberra.

This small group tour is also offered as a private tour for small groups with a tour guide.

## Highlights

1. Visit the National trust's Retford House and gardens in Bowral
2. Tour the National Gallery in Canberra
3. Visit the acclaimed Japanese garden in Cowra
4. Explore the regional town of Orange

## Itinerary

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## Day One

**Locations:** Sydney

**Overview:**

This small group tour meets in Sydney late in the afternoon for introductions and a welcome dinner

**Accommodation:**

Ibis World Sq, Sydney or similar

## Day Two

**Locations:** Kiama

**Overview:**

This morning after breakfast we leave Sydney and drive to Bowral in the Southern Highlands. Here we will visit the the Corbett Gardens and (if available) the grounds of Retford Park.

Corbett Gardens, established in 1911 is worth a visit any time though, unfortunately, the Spring Tulip Festival has been cancelled for 2020.

Retford Park, once the home of James Fairfax and now owned and managed by the National Trust. If the gardens are open to the public we will take time to visit. In 1964, James Fairfax bought the property and started to turn it from an agricultural property to a gentleman's residence. The house and grounds were left to the National Trust and according to them, "Having been in the caring hands of Mr Fairfax for over 50 years, the garden is a delight to wander through. As you venture up the driveway the grand Victorian Italianate homestead appears from a towering arboretum of magnificent trees."

There will be time for lunch in Bowral before we head down Macquarie Pass to Minnamurra. Here we will visit the Rainforest Centre and take the easy one hour loop walk through rare remnant rainforest. Those preferring not to take the walk will be able to enjoy afternoon tea in the

café.

From Minnamurra we will drive to Kiama to visit the famous “ Blow Hole” before checking into our accommodation for the evening.

Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.

**Accommodation:**

Sebel Hotel Kiama or similar

**Day Three**

**Locations:** Canberra

**Overview:**

After breakfast this morning we make our way to Canberra via Nowra, Braidwood and Bungendore.

Braidwood is a National Trust classified town and the first to be listed on the NSW State Heritage register. Braidwood developed during the gold rush period and many of its buildings date back to that era.

Bungendore was established in 1837 and many of the original buildings still stand. Here we'll have time to stroll around the streets and visit the Bungendore Woodwork Gallery. It is an institution, showcasing some of the best wood art and contemporary furniture in Australia. After exploring its collection, you can have a coffee or poke around the town's galleries, antique stores and gift shops.

From Bungendore it is a relatively short drive to Canberra via Queanbeyan.

Once in Canberra we check into our hotel for the next three nights.

Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.

**Accommodation:**

Novotel Canberra or similar

## Day Four

**Locations:** Canberra

### Overview:

This morning its time for a little art! Canberra has what (in my opinion) is one of the world's best portrait galleries. Even if you've been there several times there is always something new to draw your interest. The portraits are great but the stories attached to each one are often just as interesting. We'll also take time for a quick visit to the National Library (who wouldn't like a second look at those magnificent stained glass windows) and visit the National Galery.

Those interested in lunch will be able to find it at either the Portrait Gallery or the National Gallery. Both have excellent cafes.

After lunch we'll meet to walk around the lake, across Kings Avenue Bridge and past the carillon to Blundell's Cottage. This cottage gives us a taste of what life might have been like in the Canberra area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, well before there was any thought of it becoming the new nation's capital. The stone cottage was built in 1860 to house the Duntroon estate's head ploughman, William Ginn, and his family (1860-1874). It was later occupied by George Blundell, a Duntroon bullock driver and his family (1874-1933) and finally by shepherd Harry Oldfield and his wife Alice (1933-1958). The cottage has only limited opening hours but we'll be able to continue our walk and visit nearby St John's Anglican Church, consecrated in 1845. (Those preferring not to do the 30 minute walk will be able to take the coach.)

After exploring the church we'll rejoin the coach and drive to the National Botanic Gardens for a guided tour. The 50-hectare National Botanic Gardens are spread across the slopes of Black Mountain. In the carefully tended collections, you can admire representatives of all the important species of Australian flora. The rain forest area is particularly impressive. Look for water dragons among the lush foliage. Other highlights include The Red Centre garden, with its red earth and spinifex grassland. The gardens are also a haven for birds and

butterflies.

After time in the Botanic Gardens we'll return to the hotel. The rest of the afternoon and evening will be at yours to relax.

**Accommodation:**

Novotel Canberra or similar

**Day Five**

**Locations:** Canberra

**Overview:**

Our second day in the national capital will begin with a visit to the Australian War Memorial where we will take a guided tour. More than just a war memorial, the site combines an excellent museum, archives, art gallery, and library.

In the afternoon we will drive to historic Lanyon Homestead. The station is set at the foothills of the Brindabella Ranges on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River. The 1859 station homestead has been restored and furnished. The convict built outbuildings provide an insight into station life in the 1850s and should be open for visitors.

We return to our hotel in the late afternoon. The rest of the day is yours to enjoy.

**Accommodation:**

Novotel Canberra or similar

**Day Six**

**Locations:** Orange

**Overview:**

This morning we leave Canberra after breakfast and drive to Bathurst via Cowra.

If it is open we'll visit Cooma Cottage near Yass. This National Trust property was once the home of explorer Hamilton Hume. The original colonial bungalow, built by pioneering pastoralist Henry O'Brien, forms part of the earliest complex of dwellings and stables on the site. Hume bought the cottage and the 100 acres for £601 in 1840 and lived there

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for the rest of his life. Hume spent 20 years enthusiastically building extensions; adding his own version of Palladian-style wings and a Greek Revival portico. Cooma Cottage now stands as a fine example of the way our pioneers constructed their dwellings and how they lived.

From Yass we continue north through Boorowa to Cowra, where we will have lunch and explore the superb Japanese gardens.

Cowra was home to the largest prisoner of war breakout in modern military history. At 1.50am on 5 August 1944, over 1000 Japanese prisoners launched a mass escape from the Prisoner of War campsite. In the attempt the lives of two hundred and thirty four Japanese prisoners and five Australian soldiers were lost. In 1978-79 the Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre (the true highlight of any visit to Cowra) was established with the aid of the Japanese government to honour both Australian and Japanese dead.

From Cowra we will continue to Orange where we will spend the night. Time permitting we will visit the outstanding “Age of Fishes Fossil Museum” in Canowindra. This museum is one of only two of its kind in the world, the other is in Lebanon.

Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.

**Accommodation:**

Mercure Orange or similar.

**Day Seven**

**Locations:** Sydney

**Overview:**

This morning we head back towards Sydney with stops at Bathurst and in the Blue Mountains.

Our tour ends this afternoon in Sydney.

## Inclusions / Exclusions

**What’s included in the tour.**

- 6 nights accommodation.

- 6 breakfasts & 4 dinners.
- Transport by modern and comfortable coach.
- 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.
- Airport/Hotel transfers.
- 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.