



— 2026 —

# AUSTRALIAN ESCAPE TOUR

INCLUDING KANGAROO ISLAND,  
MURRAY RIVER CRUISE & THE GHAN

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# AUSTRALIAN ESCAPE TOUR

inc. Kangaroo Island, Murray River Cruise & The Ghan

**Tour Length:** 20 Days

**Tour Departs:** 31 May 2026

**Tour Ends:** 19 June 2026

## OVERVIEW:

We are delighted to again offer this tour, incorporating an iconic 4-night cruise on the mighty Murray River, and one of Australia's great rail journeys. On board our cruise, we travel north on the great Murray River from the historic river port of Mannum to Blanchetown. Follow in the wake of great Australian pioneers on a 4-night cruise along the outback river highway. Experience the magic and majesty of the spectacular scenery from towering cliffs to expansive farmlands, aboard the paddlewheeler Murray Princess. Australia is a vast country and one of the best ways to experience the magnitude of this great land in comfort is by rail. Travelling through golden wheat fields, vast sheep stations, rugged mountain ranges, scattered outback towns, the magnificent red sand hills of the Simpson Desert before entering the beautiful and mysterious tropical north.

### Murray River 4-night - Outback Heritage Cruise

With all the character and charm of yesteryear, the Murray Princess is an authentic paddlewheeler built to cruise the mighty Murray River. The southern hemisphere's largest inland paddlewheeler is propelled by a stern wheel that you can view through the double storey lounge window. It's a real taste of bygone days, with the elegance and convenience you'd expect today. We are holding an allocation of Outside Cabins.

### The Ghan Rail Journey - Adelaide to Darwin

Travel by rail on The Ghan between Adelaide, Alice Springs and Darwin and you will embark on one of the world's great train journeys. This transcontinental adventure on The Ghan offers an unsurpassed view of Australia over three unforgettable days.

## TOUR COST PER PERSON

Share Twin or Double Room  
NZD \$17,750.00

Supplement for Single Room  
NZD \$4,200.00

Total Cost for Single Room  
NZD \$21,950.00



Named after the Afghan cameleers who once traversed this route, The Ghan will take us from one edge of this country to the other, through the Red Centre of Australia and the Tropical Top End. During your time aboard the The Ghan, all superb restaurant-quality dining and onboard beverages and off train touring are included.

### Train "Gold Service" includes:

- Elegant twin (upper and lower berths) or single sleeper compartments converting to seating for daytime use. Twin compartments have private ensuite facilities while single compartments have their own wash basins with shower and toilet facilities located at the end of the carriage.
- All compartments fully serviced by dedicated cabin stewards
- Luxurious "Outback Explorer" lounge and bar car for relaxation and socialising, non-alcoholic drinks included.

### Additional Tour Highlights:

- Adelaide 3 nights - City tour and full day Barossa Valley tour
- Kangaroo Island 1 night – including Seal Bay Conservation Park and Flinders National Park
- Darwin 3 nights - Darwin City Tour, harbour dinner cruise
- Kakadu National Park 1 night, including Yellow Water Billabong Cruise, Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Nourlangie Rock Art Site
- Brisbane 3 nights – including visit to Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary



## TOUR COSTS

### Included:

- Economy Class Air Travel from Auckland
- First Class hotel accommodation
- Air-conditioned coach transportation
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Prepaid airport/government taxes, security and fuel surcharges (as at 01/09/25)
- Sightseeing & entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary
- English speaking local hosts/guides in each country
- Tips/gratuities to guides, drivers & staff
- Baggage handling of one (1) piece per person, where possible
- Fully escorted by a Maher Tours Leader

### Excluded:

- Any meals and sightseeing tours not specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel insurance – advice and assistance offered
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, room service, laundry, telephone charges etc.

*NB: Tour members may extend their stay in Australia and return at a later date. We are happy to assist with any additional bookings.*

### Booking Conditions:

**Initial Deposit** - Due at time of booking

- NZD \$3,000.00 per person

**Second Deposit** - Due Monday 01 December 2025

- NZD \$3,000.00 per person

**Final Payment** - Due Tuesday 21 April 2026

- Balance

To register for this tour please contact us at 0800 500 518 or [tours@mahertours.co.nz](mailto:tours@mahertours.co.nz)



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

### Sunday 31 May

Auckland – Adelaide (D)

An early start this morning, as we check in for our 8.20am flight to Adelaide. On arrival we enjoy a sightseeing tour of the city. Adelaide is an elegant, clean and gracious city that has preserved its heritage and links with the past. Our tour will show us many of the lovely parks and gardens that surround the city, the grand sandstone homes and cottages and the many churches that are spread throughout the city. We then transfer to our hotel where we overnight. There is time to relax before we meet up for dinner this evening.

### Monday 01 June

Adelaide – Mannum (Join Murray River Cruise) – Curnamont (B,D)

This morning we check out of our hotel and make our way to Mannum, where we board the Murray Princess mid-afternoon, for our 4-night Outback Heritage Cruise. We depart historic Mannum, the birthplace of the Murray River trade and communication, and head downriver while enjoying a Welcome Dinner. As we cruise under floodlight to our overnight mooring at Curnamont, we may see nocturnal wildlife on the riverbank. Watch for kangaroos, hairy-nosed wombats, tortoises, egrets and many other species. Our on-board entertainers provide music for the night owls.

### Tuesday 02 June

Curnamont – Blanchetown (B,L,D)

For those who are keen photographers, we suggest rising early to capture the special light and the morning movement

of wildlife. Prolific birdlife includes pelicans, wrens and swans. We enjoy a leisurely morning and lunch cruising upriver to Blanchetown through one of 13 locks which maintain the flow and levels of the river's water. This afternoon we moor opposite to the township of Blanchetown for our overnight anchorage. As the last rays of the sun fade, we visit Burk Salter Boutique Winery and enjoy wine tasting at the cellar door which is fitted out with beautiful red gum bars. After dinner, join in the fun and excitement, and participate in the onboard "Murray River Cup".

### Wednesday 03 June

Blanchetown – Sunnysdale (B,L,D)

After breakfast we cruise downriver to picturesque Swan Reach. The town, first settled in the 1850s, was originally the largest of five sheep and cattle stations in the area and is now home to native flower and fruit growers. The original Swan Reach homestead is now the Swan Reach Hotel where you can enjoy an ale or cappuccino overlooking the Murray River (additional cost). Join the walking tour and visit the Swan Reach Museum (gold coin donation at entry). Cruise downriver after lunch and take in the tranquility as the landscape slides by. When we arrive at Sunnysdale, it's all ashore for the Woolshed Show as we recreate typical Australian woolshed history. Later we visit the Native Wildlife Shelter where some of South Australia's most interesting native animals are cared for. And then of course, there is the great Aussie Barbecue – cooked and served in a bush setting on the banks of the mighty Murray River.

### Thursday 04 June

Sunnysdale – Youngusband (B,L,D)

After an optional early morning Bush Tucker Breakfast, or bush walk with the Captain, the vessel cruises slowly downriver past magnificent cliffs scoured by the river over millions of years. We reach Ngaut Ngaut Aboriginal Reserve, one of Australia's most significant archaeological sites, for a step back in time – tens of thousands of years – for a guided boardwalk tour to view ancient rock carvings and to learn about Aboriginal history in the area. We return to the vessel to cruise downriver to Youngusband. Along the way, adventure seekers can also take a scenic tender boat ride. Tonight, we join our fellow guests for a delicious final night dinner and enjoy the evening entertainment.

### Friday 05 June

Youngusband – Mannum – Glenelg – Adelaide (B)

We head back to Mannum and after breakfast, we reluctantly say farewell as we arrive at the Mannum Wharf. We make our way back to Adelaide, stopping in Glenelg for lunch, before we continue through to Adelaide to check into our hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

### Saturday 06 June

Adelaide (B,D)

Today, we enjoy a morning tour of the city's main attractions which will allow us to get our bearings. Our Coach Captain will share his local knowledge on things to see and do including the charm and

character of the buildings and famous landmarks. A perfect introduction for first-time visitors, we visit the Botanic Park, Adelaide Oval, St Peters Cathedral and the National Wine Centre of Australia. The afternoon is at leisure before we enjoy dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

### Sunday 07 June

Barossa Valley Day Tour (B,L)

Another great day today as we set off for the Adelaide Hills, through a patchwork of orchards and vineyards to the town of Hahndorf, one of the most popular towns in the area originally settled by German immigrants in 1839. The town retains much of its Germanic heritage and is home to some of the regions finest cellar doors. Then, we travel across to the world-famous Barossa Valley, the heartland of the Australian wine industry which retains much of its diverse European cultural heritage. Time for lunch and some wine tasting before returning to Adelaide later this afternoon.

### Monday 08 June

Adelaide – Kangaroo Island (B,L,D)

Today we enjoy a scenic journey to Cape Jervis taking in the picturesque Fleurieu Peninsula with its vineyards, coastal views and rolling hills. On arrival, board the SeaLink Kangaroo Island ferry for the 45-minute crossing to Penneshaw on Kangaroo Island. We visit Seal Bay Conservation Park and enjoy a delicious lunch at a local Bistro, followed by a visit to the Flinders Chase National Park, where we will see the Remarkable Rocks



## DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

and Admirals Arch. We overnight on Kangaroo Island, with dinner included.

### Tuesday 09 June

Kangaroo Island – Adelaide (B)

We return to Adelaide today, arriving mid-afternoon. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

### Wednesday 10 June

Adelaide to Darwin via Alice Springs & Katherine on The Ghan (B,D)

Late in the morning, we transfer to the railway station where we join “The Ghan”. We depart Adelaide just after midday for the 2979km journey through to Darwin, truly one of the great train journeys of the world. Sit back and marvel at the great Australian landscapes from the rusty reds of the outback to the lush tropical splendour of Darwin. Why not enjoy a pre-dinner drink in the Outback Explorer Lounge while taking in the scenery as we wind our way north?

### Thursday 11 June

Alice Springs – Katherine (B,L,D)

Our train arrives into the gateway to the heart of Australia, Alice Springs, early afternoon for a 4-hour stopover. An included sightseeing tour offers the opportunity to explore the iconic sites of the Alice including The Flying Doctor Base and the Telegraph Station which played a pivotal role in bridging the communications between remote towns and settlements. Other tours are available at additional cost for the more adventurous including one helicopter flight. We re-join the train

early this evening to depart for Katherine.

### Friday 12 June

Katherine – Darwin (B,L)

Our train arrives into Katherine in the morning for a stopover of 4 hours. This sub-tropical town is the gateway to Nitmiluk National Park and the spectacular Katherine Gorge with its 25-million-year-old canyons. We have the morning in Katherine with plenty of time for an included sightseeing – maybe a cruise on the Katherine River to Nitmiluk Gorge or the Katherine Outback Experience to learn about the inner workings of life on a remote cattle station. Other tours are available at additional cost for the more adventurous including scenic flights through the gorge. This afternoon, we travel the final 300km of our epic journey as we continue on to the northern sub-tropical capital of Darwin arriving late afternoon. On arrival, we are met and transferred to our city hotel for a 2-night stay.

### Saturday 13 June

Darwin (B,D)

Our morning sightseeing tour is a perfect introduction to Darwin. We see the Chinese Temple and the lush Botanic Gardens and tour the historic sights of the city including the East Point Military precinct, an area rich in World War II memorabilia. We see the Stokes Hill Wharf area and the Mooring Basin. There is also time available to explore the Museum and Art Gallery. The afternoon is at leisure. This evening, we enjoy a dinner cruise on Darwin Harbour which will hopefully present us with fantastic views of a fiery sunset

### Sunday 14 June

Kakadu National Park Tour (B,L)

Today, we are up early to get started on a day you will long remember. Covering an area of almost 20,000 square kilometres, World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park offers one of the most diverse landscapes you will ever experience with mangrove fringed coastal areas, expansive flood plains, lowland hills, open woodland and forest habitats. Be amazed at the population of wildlife in the water, on the land and in the air. Highlights of the day include: The Yellow Water Billabong Cruise, home to thousands of saltwater crocodiles and up to 60 species of colourful birdlife; after lunch at Cooida, Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre where artefacts and videos illustrate stories of the traditional owners ranging from personal stories to “bush tucker”; Nourlangie which provided shelter to indigenous people for many thousands of years and where the rock art illustrates their deep spiritual culture. There is even an opportunity for a spectacular scenic flight (additional cost) over the Arnhem Land Escarpment. We overnight in Kakadu.

### Monday 15 June

Kakadu – Darwin (B)

We depart Kakadu this morning and travel back to Darwin. On arrival, the rest of the day is left free to relax and enjoy the wonderful winter tropical climate of the city. Maybe explore the waterfront and take part in the fish feeding ritual at Doctors Gully, visit the Defence of Darwin Experience, or just relax and watch the world go by at an outdoor café.

### Tuesday 16 June

Darwin – Brisbane (B)

Late this morning, we are transferred to the airport in time to join our early afternoon flight to Brisbane. On arrival, we are met and transferred to our hotel for a three-night stay.

### Wednesday 17 June

Brisbane (B)

Today, we join a cruise – enjoying informative commentary as we glide along Brisbane’s waterfront, before arriving at Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary - the oldest and largest Koala Sanctuary in the world. There is plenty of time to explore the sanctuary, where we can see over 130 koalas, hand feed kangaroos and emus, experience an authentic Australian sheep dog show, spy on a shy platypus swimming, and see the amazing birds of prey. Returning mid-afternoon, the rest of the day is yours at leisure.

### Thursday 18 June

Brisbane (B,D)

Our final day in Australia – a free day for optional activities in Brisbane. Maybe shopping, a sightseeing tour, a river cruise or simply relaxing. This evening, we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

### Friday 19 June

Brisbane – Auckland (B)

Back to the airport today in time to join flights back to Auckland.



FULLY ACCREDITED



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WANAKA, NEW ZEALAND

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