Grand Australian Rail

Tour Length: 20 Days

Tour Departs: 29 April 2027

Australia is a vast country and one of the best ways to experience the magnitude of this great land in comfort is by rail. First up is the “Indian Pacific” from Perth through to Adelaide. Timeless travel between two great cities, experience the tremendous beauty of the Nullarbor on this epic three-day journey. After an overnight stay in Adelaide, we join “The Ghan” from Adelaide to Darwin. From the lush and prolific wine region of the Barossa Valley and South Australia through to the Red Centre and Alice Springs and on to the tropical region of the Northern Territory and Darwin. We spend time in Darwin before flying on to Cairns, our gateway to the winterless north of Queensland. Experience this wonderful state, which offers a diversity of scenery, lush and fertile regions, the world-renowned Great Barrier Reef, island resorts, exciting tropical towns and cities, before we join our final overnight rail journey - the “Spirit of Queensland” from Cairns through to Brisbane, where we end our adventure.

Highlights

- Indian Pacific and The Ghan – “Gold Service Cabins”
- Elegant twin (upper and lower berths converting to seating for day time use.
- Spirit of Queensland – Railbed sleeper seats
- Perth 2 nights
- Adelaide 1 night
- Darwin 3 nights
- Port Douglas 3 nights
- Cairns 1 nights
- Brisbane 3 nights

Tour Costs Per Person

Per Person Share Twin/Double Room

$21,600

Price Per Single Room

$24,500

Call us now to find out more about this tour

0800 500 518

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Tour Costs

Inclusions

- Economy Class air travel from Auckland
- Rail travel in “Gold Service” Class on board Indian Pacific and The Ghan + Railbed Sleeper Seat on Spirit of Queensland
- Superior Grade hotel accommodation for city stays
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary – B= Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary
- Tips and gratuities to local guides, drivers, train staff.
- Deluxe air-conditioned coach transportation
- Baggage handling of one suitcase per person – where possible
- Services of a Maher Tours Leader (subject to minimum numbers)

Exclusions

- Meals and sightseeing not specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel insurance (assistance and advice offered)
- Items of a personal nature such as room service, telephone calls, laundry etc.

Booking Conditions

- Initial Deposit due at time of booking:
  NZD$3,000 per person
- Second Deposit due Monday 2 November 2026
  NZD$3,000 per person
- Final Payment Balance
  Due Friday 12 March 2027

To register for this tour please contact us at 0800 500 518 or tours@mahertours.co.nz

Tour Itinerary

20 Days

Day 1 | Auckland - Perth

THURSDAY 29 APRIL (D)

We commence the tour with a direct flight to Perth, departing Auckland around midday. On arrival in Perth, we are transferred to our city hotel for a 2-night stay. We enjoy our first dinner together this evening.

Day 2 | Perth – Rottnest Island Tour

FRIDAY 30 APRIL (B,L)

An early morning today as we transfer to the Barrack Street Jetty to catch the 8.30am departure to Rottnest Island. The Grand Island Tour takes in all of Rottnest Island's natural attractions and historical landmarks. Pass by the Wadjemup Lighthouse, Henrietta Rocks, Oliver Hill Gun Fortification and Tunnels and the look-out point at Mabel Cove, before finishing with a unique historic train ride. From spectacular beaches to unspoiled salt lakes, we cover all the major habitats on this amazing tour. You'll learn about Rottnest Island's cultural and historical heritage, ranging from maritime and military history right up to its promising future. We return to our hotel later in the afternoon, and the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Day 3 | Perth – Adelaide on the Indian Pacific

SATURDAY 01 MAY (B,D)

The morning is free for you to explore this wonderful city, until early this afternoon when we are transferred to the Railway Station in time to join the “Indian Pacific” service to Adelaide. As our train departs Perth mid-afternoon and commences its journey towards Adelaide, sit back and relax in your own “Gold Service” class private compartment. This evening enjoy dinner on board in the Queen Adelaide Restaurant Car and maybe spend time in the Outback Explorer Lounge Car – a great opportunity to meet and mix with your fellow travellers.

Day 4 | Kalgoorlie & Cook

SUNDAY 02 MAY (B,L,D)

Early this morning, our train arrives in the mining city of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. If places could talk, Kalgoorlie would have some interesting stories to tell. Explore Australia’s largest outback town to uncover its fascinating past and present. There are a range of included off-train excursions, such as an up-close tour of one of Australia’s largest gold producing mines, The Super Pit. Or instead, visit Hannans North Tourist Mine. Here, you’ll delve into the history of gold mining while exploring over 30 exhibits. The train continues on, and our next stop is Cook. Hidden in the vast interior of South Australia lies a ghost town that once bustled with life. Today, the town of Cook is home to lonely buildings and a population you can count on one hand – but in its heyday the location was an important part of the development of Australia’s interior. Established in 1917, Cook was originally built as a support town for the railway, with more than 50 people helping to maintain the tracks. Step off the train for a nightcap and late-night bonfire, while you can bask under the vast Nullarbor sky and lose yourself counting shooting stars.

Day 5 | South Australia & Adelaide

MONDAY 03 MAY (B,L)

Spend your final day on the Indian Pacific travelling through the pastoral heart of South Australia, with sweeping views of the Flinders Ranges, Spencer Gulf, and the Adelaide Plains unfolding beyond your window. A leisurely breakfast and lunch are served on board, inviting you to savour the relaxed rhythm of train travel. Arrive in Adelaide in the afternoon to complete your epic Nullarbor train crossing

Day 6 | Adelaide to Darwin via Alice Springs & Katherine on The Ghan

TUESDAY 04 MAY (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?

Day 7 | Flinders Ranges

WEDNESDAY 05 MAY (B,L,D)

Wake to the changing landscapes of South Australia as The Ghan arrives into Port Augusta, South Australia’s gateway to the outback. After breakfast, step off the train and prepare for a full day discovering one of the nation’s most remarkable regions: the Flinders Ranges.
Your Off Train Experience takes you deep into this ancient landscape, where rugged ranges, dramatic gorges and red rock outcrops tell stories millions of years in the making. From sweeping lookouts to encounters with native wildlife, the Flinders Ranges offers a striking introduction to the outback.
After a day of exploration, rejoin the train for a relaxed evening on board recalling the days adventures.

Day 8 | Marla – Alice Springs

THURSDAY 06 MAY (B,L,D)

After a night of fine dining and relaxed comfort aboard The Ghan, wake to a spectacular outback sunrise at Marla, a remote outpost 160 kilometres from the Northern Territory border and gateway to the legendary Oodnadatta Track. With red dirt beneath your feet and a bonfire casting warmth into the cool morning air, pause to take in the stillness of this extraordinary place.
Back on board, enjoy a leisurely brunch as the desert landscape unfolds on the journey north to Alice Springs. 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 helicopter flights and camel rides. We re-join the train early this evening to depart for Katherine.

Day 9 | Katherine - Darwin

FRIDAY 07 MAY (B,L)

Your final day begins in Katherine, in the tropical north where the landscape gives way to rocky escarpments and fast-flowing canyon streams. 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 capital of Darwin, arriving late afternoon. On arrival, we are met and transferred to our city hotel for a 3-night stay.

Day 10 | Darwin

SATURDAY 08 MAY (B)

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.

Day 11 | Darwin

SUNDAY 09 MAY (B,D)

Today 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. This evening, we conclude our stay with a dinner cruise on Darwin Harbour which will hopefully present us with fantastic views of a fiery sunset.

Day 12 | Darwin – Cairns – Port Douglas

MONDAY 10 MAY (B)

Today, we join our early afternoon flight to Cairns. On arrival, we will be met and transferred by coach to our central accommodation in Port Douglas (approx. 1.5hrs). We arrive mid-evening and the rest of the evening is at leisure. We stay in Port Douglas for 3 nights.

Day 13 | Cape Tribulation & Daintree Eco Experience Tour

TUESDAY 11 MAY (B,L)

A full day tour today. We take a guided tour through the Wildlife Habitat. We then cross the Daintree River to visit Cape Tribulation National Park, a World Heritage Listed site, where we have a BBQ lunch. We return to Port Douglas late afternoon.

Day 14 | Great Barrier Reef Cruise

WEDNESDAY 12 MAY (B,L,D)

A highlight of our time in Port Douglas is a cruise out to Low Isles, an idyllic unspoilt coral cay encircled by a spectacular fringing reef of beautiful coral gardens, teeming with colourful marine life. We board the 30-metre luxury sailing catamaran, Wavedancer, for a day to remember with a wide range of activities to fully experience Low Isles unique environment. There is a chance to snorkel, or if you don't want to get wet, enjoy a glass-bottom boat tour, a guided beach walk or just relax on the beach under a thatched umbrella before we return to our hotel late this afternoon. Tonight, we enjoy dinner together.

Day 15 | Port Douglas - Cairns

THURSDAY 13 MAY (B,D)

This morning, we transfer back to Cairns. On arrival, we board the Skyrail Cableway which takes us above the tropical rainforest of the Barron Gorge National Park and onto Kuranda. Visit the Butterfly Sanctuary before heading to Kuranda village, with time to browse through the various stalls of the colourful Kuranda Markets. We then take the historic journey through the picturesque countryside on the Kuranda Scenic Train back to Cairns, arriving late afternoon. We check into our hotel and enjoy dinner together later this evening.

Day 16 | Cairns – Brisbane on the Spirit of Queensland

FRIDAY 14 MAY (B)

After breakfast, we transfer to the railway station and board the Spirit of Queensland for the overnight trip to Brisbane. Our accommodation aboard is in the "Railbed" accommodation, an exclusive section of the train featuring spacious and comfortable seats by day with state-of-the-art personal entertainment systems, which convert to a lie flat bed in the evening.

Day 17 | Brisbane

SATURDAY 15 MAY (B,D)

We arrive at Brisbane Roma Street Station at 9.00am this morning. We are collected from the station by our coach and will enjoy a short orientation tour of the city before we transfer to our hotel to check in (or store luggage until such time as our rooms are ready). The remainder of the day is at leisure – a good opportunity to enjoy some retail therapy!

Day 18 | Brisbane

SUNDAY 16 MAY (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.

Day 19 | Brisbane

MONDAY 17 MAY (B,D)

Our final day in Australia! The day is yours, to do as you wish – perhaps some last minute shopping, a scenic cruise, or for those wanting to venture further afield, a trip to Australia Zoo (we can assist with bookings). Tonight, we meet for our farewell dinner.

Day 20 | Brisbane – New Zealand

TUESDAY 18 MAY (B)

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

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

Grand Australian Rail

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