

Sacred Earth Safaris

10 Day / 11 night Flinders Ranges and Outback SA Photo tour

Arrival day into Adelaide- Sunday 25th Sept 2022 (D)

Please make your way into Adelaide city for your pick up at either the Ibis Adelaide on Grenfell Street or Hilton Hotel in Victoria Square (your choice of pick up location) at 1pm.

This first leg of our South Australian Outback adventure, takes us to Port Augusta, situated at the head of the Spencer Gulf and known as the "*Crossroads of Australia*" and Gateway to the Flinders Ranges, the outback and Spencer Gulf.

After spending the afternoon getting to know each other, we'll enjoy our first dinner together as a group, in the hotel restaurant.

Overnight accommodation- Standpipe Motor Inn- motel room with en-suite, Port Augusta

Day 1- Monday 26th Sept (B,L,D)

We'll depart the hotel after breakfast, for the nearby Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, where you have some free time to take a wander around or one of the walks..

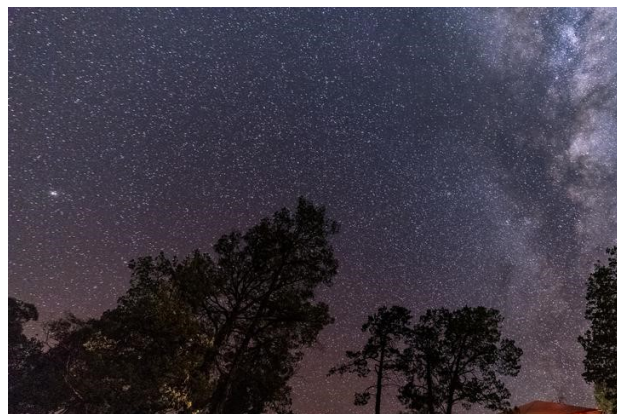
To the uninitiated, Australia's arid heart might seem barren and lifeless. In fact the opposite is true. The arid lands are home to thousands of highly evolved plant communities that are specially adapted to thrive in an environment where temperatures are extreme and drought can last for decades. Australia's arid zone ecosystems are fragile and complex and they are found nowhere else on earth. The gardens are home to many species of birds, with 150 different species recorded. Birds can be spotted all over the garden but there are also 2 bird hides available.

We'll now make our way into the Ikara- Flinders Ranges, known for their unique beauty, indigenous history, ancient geological formations, rich colours and textures and abundant wildlife. The Flinders Ranges are home to a huge array of plant species, birds, reptiles and mammals and the vibrant colours of the 800 million-year-old quartzite and limestone outcrop that is the Flinders, are truly spectacular.

En- route we take a look around the Kanyaka Ruins, just south of Hawker. The ruined farmhouse is all that remains of a farmers dream to provide for his family in this unforgiving landscape. It's a harsh reminder of the hardships the first European settlers endured.

Our accommodation for the next 3 nights is at the Ikara Safari Camp. We're surrounded by nature, with views of the ranges and clear skies, which are perfect for night photography. You might even be able to shoot the stars from right outside your tent- Andrew is always there for those special tips !

Overnight accommodation—Luxury Safari tent with en-suite, reverse cycle air conditioning, power points, tea/coffee, view of the ranges and it's own private deck and fire pit, (*no TV though*), at the Ikara Safari Camp at Wilpena Pound Resort (3 night stay)



Day 2 - Tuesday 27th Sept (B,L,D)

This morning you have the option of taking a walk to the Wilpena Pound lookout or take a scenic flight. Walk along the beautiful Wilpena Creek, framed by huge river red gums, into Wilpena Pound. Walking on to the Old Hills Homestead, you can learn about the hardships the Hills family had to face at the turn of the century with the option of walking up to the Wangara lookout to see the mystical heart of the Flinders Ranges with stunning views over Wilpena Pound. There is a shuttle available to shorten the walk, that can take you up and back again (extra cost- approx. \$5 each way).

Flights are extra cost (\$196pp for 20 mins, \$231pp for 30 mins and \$347pp for 1 hour) but we can book them for you, so everyone flies together

After lunch we depart for an afternoon of exploring. We take the Moralana Scenic Drive, which connects the Wilpena and Leigh Creek Roads and is known as one of the best drives through the Flinders Ranges. We'll see stunning scenery featuring the southern wall of Wilpena Pound, Black Gap Lookout, red Range, Elder Range and more.

To take us back to Wilpena Pound, we travel through the Brachina Gorge Geological Trail, a trail that passes through 130 million years of earth history, including meteorite debris, stromatolites and fossilized plant and animal life. It offers an insight into past climates, the formation of the ranges and the evolution of early forms of life. It's also an important refuge for the rare and endangered Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby.

This leads us through the Heysen Ranges into Bunyerroo Valley and Gorge, where we stop for late afternoon and sunset photos at the spectacular Razorback Lookout.

Overnight accommodation- Ikara Safari Camp at Wilpena Pound Resort.

Day 3 - Wednesday 28th Sept (B,L,D)

This morning we'll take a walk to the Old Wilpena Station, one of the most scenically spectacular pastoral settlements in South Australia. A working station for 135 years, Old Wilpena Station slipped into retirement in 1985 and is now a tranquil archive of pastoral history. Once we reach Old Wilpena Station, there are plenty of photography opportunities, including a variety of old station buildings, the cemetery and relics of station life. The walk is an easy to moderate 2km walk with some uneven ground.

*Alternatively, you may like to join the 2 hour Yura Udnyu tour with an experienced Yura guide, for an extra \$47 per person. Yura" is the name for Adnyamathanha people and "Udnyu" means white, so this tour includes the intertwining histories of both cultures. Along the way, guests learn about the diversity of the land, native animals, native bush-tucker which changes with the season, and Yura culture and history. **please note this tour is a public tour, so there will be other people on the tour who are not from our group***

There is some free time this afternoon for you to pursue your own photography interests, by taking a walk, staying on longer at Old Wilpena Station or simply relaxing and enjoying the views and environment at the safari camp.

Late this afternoon, we'll travel to the nearby Cazneau Tree, an old majestic river red gum that was made famous by the artist Harold Cazneau. His internationally recognized photo, taken in 1937, was named the "The spirit of endurance". Cazneau regarded it as his most Australian picture.

Overnight accommodation- Ikara Safari Camp at Wilpena Pound Resort.

Day 4 - Thursday 29th Sept (B,L,D)

This morning we depart Wilpena and drive to the historic mining town of Blinman. After a short break, we drive the back road into the Gammon Ranges, heading towards Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary. The privately owned sanctuary was founded in 1969 by Reg Sprigg, Biologist, Oceanographer, Conservationist, scientist and pioneer of eco-tourism.

Many minerals are found on Arkaroola, including gold, sapphires, rubies, amethyst, several forms of quartz, uraninite and malachite (among others) and evidence of early mining is scattered about Arkaroola and the Gammon Ranges.

Arkaroola is also famous for its clear night skies and offers some of the best viewing conditions in Australia.

This afternoon you'll take Arkaroola's famous Ridgetop tour- an unforgettable encounter with the timeless terrain and unique natural beauty of Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary. Learn from your Arkaroola guides about Arkaroolas 1600 million year old geological history as they navigate the steep slopes and hair raising ascents of the Ridgetop Track. Inspiring images of red granite mountains and golden spinifex covered hillsides give way to a breath-taking view

across the Freeling Heights, Lake From and the desert beyond. Take in the 360 degree panorama as you enjoy afternoon tea at Sillers Lookout- a lofty pinnacle at the end of the track.

After dinner, you have the option of taking the Explore the Cosmos observatory experience (extra \$60 pp). You'll be seated indoors, in a relaxing space to view the wonders of our solar system and beyond into deep space. See the stars and planets from a whole new perspective, up-close and personal and on the big screen !

www.arkaroola.com.au/ningana-imaging-observatory

Overnight accommodation- basic rooms with en-suites, Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary.

The rooms each have a double and single bed, small en-suite and heating / air-con. They do not have a TV, fridge or tea / coffee, though a fridge and tea/ coffee are available in the communal kitchen. There is a large communal lounge / seating area for guests to socialise.

Day 5 - Friday 30th Sept (B,L,D)

Today we travel west to Leigh Creek and then north Towards Marree. En-route we visit the Lynhurst Ochre Pits and Farina, one of the towns settled early in the period of the 'opening of the outback' by European settlers. Explore the ruins, many of which have been stabilised and researched and imagine in your mind's eye the life they may have lived and the hardships they endured.

Our accommodation tonight is in Marree, which is situated at the crossroads of the Oodnadatta and Birdsville Tracks. The town also has a rich Aboriginal, Afghan and European heritage.

After checking into our accommodation, you have some free time to visit the Tom Kruse Museum (in our hotel) and take a look around the town, including Tom's old truck and the Afghan mosque.

Overnight accommodation – motel room with en-suite, Marree Pub Hotel

Day 6 - Saturday 1st October (B,L,D)

This morning we join we join the 615km unsealed Oodnadatta Track as head towards William Creek. The Oodnadatta Track follows the Old Ghan Railway line and the Overland Telegraph, after it was originally mapped by the explorer, John McDouall Stuart. The track follows an old Aboriginal trading route through semi-desert country with artesian springs and waterholes along the way. The Oodnadatta Track is littered with ruins of old town sites, station ruins, homes, cairns and remnants of the old railway line, the short-lived gold rush and the Overland Telegraph Line

We stop several times en-route, including the natural artesian springs within Wabma Kadarbu Mound Springs Conservation Park. The Blanche Cup and The Bubbler mound springs are created from water deep within the Great Artesian Basin which filters to the surface forming mounds and bubbling ponds.

We also stop at the Lake Eyre South lookout and pass the famous dingo fence.

Our accommodation for the next 2 nights is at William Creek, the smallest settlement in South Australia with a population of 3 humans and a dog ! It's located 165km's from the nearest town and sits in the largest cattle station in the world (Anna Creek-approximately the size of England).

Overnight accommodation – basic motel style donga room with en-suite, TV, tea/ coffee and fridge at William Creek Pub Hotel, middle of nowhere, Outback South Australia (2 night stay)

Day 7 - Sunday 2nd October (B,L,D) daylight savings starts this morning, where you need to put clocks forward by 1 hour, at 2am to 3am

This morning you have the opportunity for scenic flights over Kati Thanda- Lake Eyre, Australia's lowest point, the largest inland lake in Australia and the largest salt lake in the world ! The Lake contains 400 million tonnes of salt and is 15 metres below sea level. Donald Campbell set a land speed world record of 649 kmh in his turbine car "Bluebird" on its dry bed back in 1964.

Flights are extra cost (approx. \$300 pp for 1 hour) but we can book them for you, so everyone flies together

On the flight enjoy the visual extremities of Lake Eyre that will return you both visually impacted and educationally enriched. The only way to get the full impact of the lake is from the air. See prehistoric river systems graphic patterns

where they enter the lake and form a magnificent art form. Flights include flying to Belt Bay, the lowest point in Australia.

Then you'll get to see Lake Eyre from the ground, as we depart for Halligan Bay at Lake Eyre North. We have plenty of time here for a good look at the magnificent lake with its incredible colours and patterns.

Back to William Creek and after dinner, conditions permitting, you may like to try your hand at star photography.

Overnight accommodation - William Creek Pub Hotel

Day 8 - Monday 3rd October (B,L,D)

We continue to Oodnadatta today, along the Oodnadatta Track, calling in to explore the Algebuckina Bridge historic site en-route.

Oodnadatta is famous for its iconic pink roadhouse, where we'll have lunch. The town was originally created when the Overland Telegraph Line was laid and then became the northern terminus for the Central Australia Railway.

Our next stop is the Painted Desert (Arckaringa Hills), an ancient Inland Sea bed where the hills are the result of rain, weather and erosion. The slopes and shapes include many different colours and shades of orange, yellow and white-hence the name "Painted Desert".

Our destination today is the opal capital of the world, Coober Pedy, where we'll spend the next 2 nights. Coober Pedy is as famous for its underground homes as it is for its opals and 50% of the population live underground (in homes called "dugouts"), as well as using underground shops and churches.

To reach Coober Pedy, we travel through the Moon Plain, rich in fossil deposits, evidence of the inland sea that covered this region 120 million years ago and offering a vast expanse of rocky plains unlike anywhere else. The strange lunar landscape has been used for many Hollywood movies including Mad Max Beyond the Thunderdome, Pitch Black, Red Planet and Priscilla Queen of the Desert.

Overnight accommodation- Desert Cave Hotel -motel room with en-suite, Coober Pedy (2 night stay)

Please note that the hotel cannot guarantee everyone will have an underground room, but they will try their best. Guests can also request an above- ground room if preferred.

Day 9 - Tuesday 4th October (B,D)

This morning you'll take a 2 hour tour of Coober Pedy with a guide from the Umoona Opal Mine. The tour will include the underground churches and other points of interest. After the tour, it's back to Umoona, where you'll watch the award winning documentary "The Story of Opal" and present a hands-on demonstration, explaining the different types of opal. Then we'll get taken into the underground homes and deep into the original opal mine.

Then you have some free time to take a look around the town yourself or pursue your own interests.

Late this afternoon, we make our way out of town to the nearby Breakaways Reserve, offering a striking & unique example of arid scenery. From the flat - topped mesas to the stony gibber desert, remnants of millions of years provide a wealth of geological interests and breathtaking views. There are two lookout points which highlight the open spaces and colourful environment, leaving an impression of the long gone inland sea that our early explorers dreamt of. As the day goes by, the passing of the sun changes the desert colours, creating photogenic scenes that appear surreal. This is a fantastic place for sunset photography.

Overnight accommodation- Desert Cave Hotel- motel room with en-suite, Coober Pedy

Day 10 - Wednesday 5th October (B,L,D)

Today we make our way back to Port Augusta and it will take us all day to get there. En-route we'll stop for lunch and have a look at the salt lakes in the region including Lake Hart.

We also take a look around the Heritage Museum and Missile Park at Woomera, which holds a special place in Australian National heritage as it was the 4th country in the world to launch its own satellite- after the US, Russia and France. The Woomera Rocket Range was established in 1947 as a joint British / Australian project for developing and

testing experimental rockets, weapons and missiles. Nowadays the Woomera Prohibited Area (WPA) is the largest land testing range in the world.

Overnight accommodation- Standpipe Motor Inn- motel room with en-suite, Port Augusta

Departure day- Thursday 6th October (B)

This morning we travel back to Adelaide. We'll arrive at approximately 12 noon and we can drop you off in the city (at the Hilton or Ibis only due to limited coach parking in Adelaide!).

END OF TOUR B= Breakfast L= Lunch D= Dinner

[AUD \\$7295 per person, twin share and AUD \\$8495 single room](#)

Includes GST and valid for travel in Sept / Oct 2022. Based on a minimum of 10 guests travelling. Itinerary is exclusive to Sacred Earth Safaris, subject to availability road, weather and cultural conditions.

Inclusions:

- Sole use of 6WD coach, with professional driver guide and photography tour escort Andrew Goodall of Natures Image Photography
- Meals as stated- 11 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 11 dinners
- 11 nights accommodation, as listed
- Entry fees and permits
- Private opal mine tour at Coober Pedy

Exclusions:

- Travel Insurance
- Alcohol or soft drinks
- Any optional activities such as Wilpena Pound and Lake Eyre scenic flights and Aboriginal guided tour to Old Wilpena Station in the Ikara Flinders Ranges (I can book all of these for you though- no worries),

Our vehicle is a 6WD with air- conditioning, coach seating and tinted windows. Upon opening the entry door, a step unfolds to assist entry and there is also a large hand rail. There is no toilet on the bus but we stop regularly. If you need additional stops, please advise your guide. This is the Outback, it's sandy and dusty and there might be flies in some places. Toilet facilities will vary through the tour and may include "long drops" and facilities without soap, towels and dryers, especially in the more remote areas. We carry alcohol based hand sanitiser and wet wipes, on the vehicle, for your use.

Rooms are clean and tidy, with en-suites, most have tea/ coffee but not all have TV. Dinner and breakfast are taken in the accommodation restaurants, lunches are individual picnic packs or taken in local cafes- simple but tasty food. This is not a 5 star tour, this is not the city, there are no fancy restaurants or luxury hotels. But what you will get is Outback hospitality, spectacular Outback scenery and the opportunity to visit these iconic Aussie locations in comfort, with like minded travellers and in a safe and comfortable vehicle with experienced crew.

