

ENDEAVOUR

THE MAGAZINE FROM AUSTRAVEL, EXPERTS IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND & SOUTH PACIFIC



Call our Travel Designers on 0808 278 2299*
to tailor-make your Australasia experience.

ENDEAVOUR

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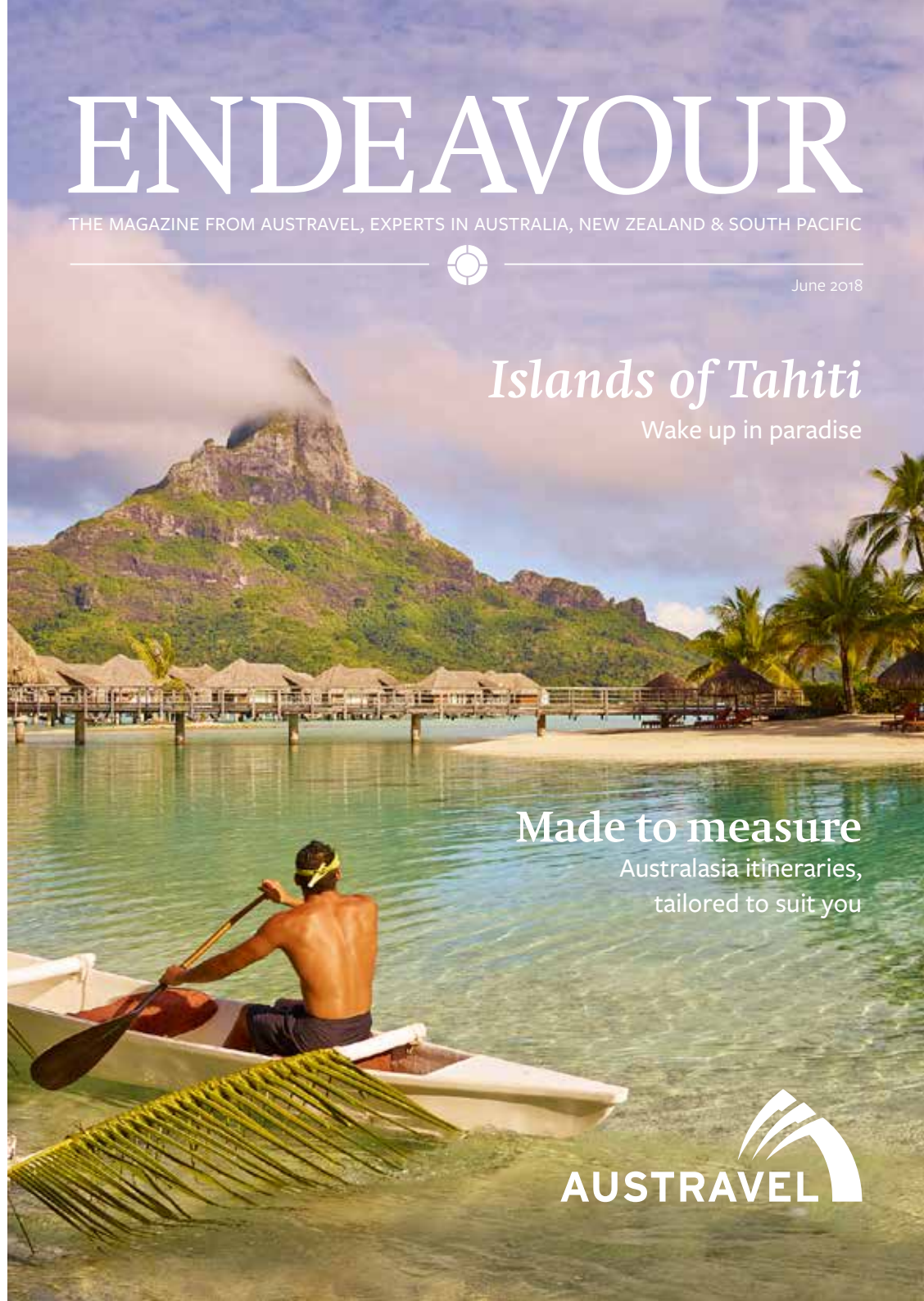
June 2018

Islands of Tahiti

Wake up in paradise

Made to measure

Australasia itineraries,
tailored to suit you



Welcome to ENDEAVOUR

the magazine by Austravel



Contents

- 4 What's hot**
A round up of what's trending Down Under.
- 6 Saving Phillip Island's penguins**
Austravel partners with the Penguin Foundation.
- 9 Made-to-measure**
Our experts can tailor-make an itinerary to suit you.
- 18 View with a room**
Wake up to paradise in Bora Bora.
- 20 Dear Austravel**
Stories and photos from our Austravellers.
- 22 72 hours in...the Gold Coast**
Enjoy three days of city living, wildlife encounters and rainforest adventures.
- 25 A day in the life...**
Meet the creator of Top Drop Margaret River Tours, Chris O'Hare.
- 28 Hayes & Jarvis**
Re-create your Australasia holiday memories elsewhere across the globe.
- 32 APT escorted touring**
Our most-loved escorted tours.
- 34 Travellers' tales**
Destination Manager, Katie, shares life on board The Ghan Expedition.
- 38 Ask the experts**
Our Travel Designers answer your questions.

Cover Image: Intercontinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa, as seen on page 18.



G'day and welcome to the latest edition of Endeavour

After reading this issue, you may be left pining for the soft white sands of the Islands of Tahiti. We've featured this paradise destination not once, not twice but four times in this edition... from the super glam resort of The Brando (p.4), as featured on *Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby* earlier this year, to an island hopping adventure (p.16).

We're delighted to announce the launch of our partnership with the Penguin Foundation (p.6), supporting a project which has, over 25 years, fully protected an area of the Summerland Peninsula for penguins and other wildlife to thrive. Maybe you'll experience the penguins of Phillip Island the next time you visit Melbourne?

With years of experience behind them, our expert Travel Designers are incredibly passionate about travel and have extensively explored Australasia and beyond. They'll listen to your travel ideas and use their own experience and unrivalled knowledge to create an itinerary tailored to you. Not sure where to start? (We get it, Australia is a BIG place..!) Take a look at our suggested itineraries (p.9) for some ideas, then give us a call and let's create your dream holiday.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition, I know the team have loved creating it.

Best wishes,

Lesley Rollo

Lesley Rollo
Managing Director - Austravel



Our magazine is named after HMS Endeavour, the first seagoing vessel to reach the east coast of Australia in 1770, when Captain Cook went ashore at what is now known as Botany Bay.

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What's hot

Our experts highlight new and exciting things in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific.

The Brando

The Brando – as seen on *Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby*

We haven't stopped dreaming of the pure white sands, sparkling azure waters and luxurious villas with private pools of The Brando since we spotted it on *Amazing Hotels* earlier this year. Formerly the private retreat of the late Hollywood star Marlon Brando, this unique, luxury resort on Tetiarora in the Islands of Tahiti has welcomed famous guests including Pippa Middleton, who honeymooned here with husband James Matthews back in 2017, and Barack Obama.

Stay 3 nights from £5,399 per person.
Based on selected travel March 2019.

New walking tour on Kangaroo Island

Head off the beaten track and explore Australia's 'zoo without fences'. Choose between a two or three day small group tour featuring a guided walk along sections of the Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail for access to some of the most rugged, remote and spectacular coastlines in South Australia. Enjoy delicious gourmet

picnics and local wines, discover the island's iconic natural sculptures of the Remarkable Rocks and meet the wildlife residents, including kangaroos and sea-lions.

Add this 2 day tour from £739 per person.
Based on selected travel November 2018.

New hotel! QT Hotel, Queenstown

In an enviable position with views over the beautiful Lake Wakatipu, the QT Queenstown offers luxurious, boutique guestrooms with the quirky design the QT brand is known for. After busy days exploring New Zealand's adventure playground, unwind with a pre-dinner cocktail at REDS bar; the perfect place to watch the sun set behind the majestic Remarkables, and enjoy a great night's sleep on the signature QT King Gel bed.

Stay 3 nights from £358 per person.
Based on selected travel October 2018.



Kangaroo Island walking tour

International Year of the Reef

2018 marks the third International Year of the Reef, to encourage awareness of the value of, and threats to, coral reefs and associated eco-systems. There are plenty of ways you can support sustainable efforts on your next holiday. Quicksilver tours of the Great Barrier Reef have achieved the highest eco certification attainable in Australia, while Lady Elliot Island has several initiatives in place to protect the reef. The eco resort has its very own Reef Education Centre for guests to learn more about the Great Barrier Reef and the island's surroundings, and recently hosted the Prince of Wales to demonstrate how they're working to conserve the Great Barrier Reef.

Add the Quicksilver Outer Barrier Reef tour from £145 per person.

Stay 3 nights in a Glamping Tent on Lady Elliot Island from £1,195 per person. Based on selected travel November 2018.



Great Barrier Reef



QT Queenstown

Saving Phillip Island's penguins

Austravel's partnership with the Penguin Foundation launched in 2017 with an aim to raise over £10,000 a year through donations, events and sponsorship. The partnership supports a variety of areas with an annual project focus, enabling the island's wildlife to flourish.

What is the Penguin Foundation?

The Penguin Foundation is a charity that raises funds to protect and advance Phillip Island's natural environment through research, conservation and education programmes. Phillip Island supports significant native vegetation communities and wildlife populations as well as international migratory bird species within its coastal, woodland and wetland environments.



penguinfoundation.
phillip island



Summerland Peninsula Project

Today, Phillip Island's little penguin colony flourishes, with over 32,000 of our feathered friends calling the island home. But the colony's plight was an altogether different story back in the 1980's when, without help, it was predicted there would be no penguins around to see in the millennium.


With careful intervention, a lot of hard work and the passion of many, the colony has been carefully restored to its natural habitat and a disastrous future was reversed. In partnership with the Penguin Foundation, we're determined to keep it that way.

The 2018 Austravel project focuses on an area which has, over 25 years, seen a former housing estate on the Summerland Peninsula returned to prime penguin habitat. Covering 360 hectares (900 acres), the Government of Victoria launched a crucial buy-back scheme in the 1980's which saw more than 200 houses and other infrastructure destroyed, with the last house removed in 2010. The area is now fully protected for both penguins and other wildlife, yet the hard work must continue.



To date, revegetation and restoration of the area has been successful, however invasive weeds still cover around three hectares (seven and a half acres) of this protected area. These weeds impact the sandy soil, stopping the little penguins from digging their burrows, as well as increasing the risk of the spread of fire, which could have devastating consequences. With your help, funds raised by the partnership will enable the Penguin Foundation to grow indigenous plants in Phillip Island Nature Park's nursery and rehabilitate this distressed area through an integrated weed control and revegetation programme, ensuring that the Summerland Peninsula remains a healthy penguin breeding habitat for many years to come.

Help us help the penguins!

Book with Austravel and we'll ask you to make an (optional) donation of £2 which will be donated to the Penguin Foundation's Summerland Peninsula Project. Further your support by visiting Phillip Island's conservation based attractions. 



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...



"Ask your Travel Designer about Phillip Island's '3 Parks Pass' covering Churchill Island, the Koala Conservation Centre and the world-renowned Penguin Parade."

LAURA, DESTINATION EXECUTIVE

ADD TO MY TRIP

See the little penguins on the Phillip Island Experience tour with 3 Parks Pass
from £63 per person.



FLY NON-STOP TO AUSTRALIA WITH QANTAS

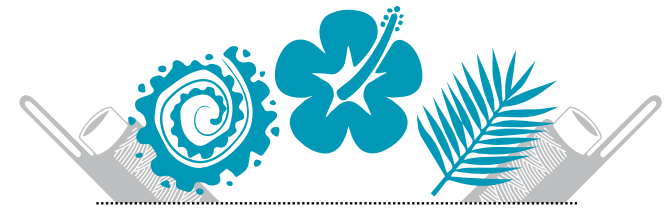
Qantas' new non-stop flight from London Heathrow to Perth means that you can now access Australia faster than before, with a flight time of just 16 hours 45 minutes. The Qantas Dreamliner offers state of the art technology where comfort and wellness are at the core of its design.

- Travelling in Business Class[†]? Arrive to the airport in style in your very own chauffeur driven car and head to the newly opened Qantas Premium Lounge for an Australian G&T.
- Relax in the newly designed Premium Economy seat that supports and cradles you for the duration of the flight or stretch out in the Business Class flatbed.
- Opt into the Qantas Wellness Programme; the onboard service designed to help combat jetlag when you arrive at your destination.
- With Qantas' easy same-day^{††} connections you can continue your journey onto 10 exciting Australia destinations.

Economy Class from £809 per person | Premium Class from £2,359 per person
Business Class from £4,329 per person



[†]Also in First Class on Qantas A380. ^{††}Subject to schedule change. Fares based on November 2018 departures. Terms & Conditions apply.



Made to measure



Creating tailor-made holidays to Australasia since 1977, our expert Travel Designers combine your travel wish-lists with their insider knowledge and experience to craft an itinerary, just for you. Start your tailored-made journey with one of our fully flexible itinerary suggestions; then together we'll trim, stitch or add on all you need to create your bespoke experience.





First time explorer

You've never been to Australia and want to see the very best it has to offer, with all must-experience tours and luxurious accommodation included.

Suggested itinerary: Australian Signature Highlights

Sydney, Blue Mountains, Hunter Valley, Uluru, Cairns, Lizard Island and Port Douglas

Highlights:

- Enjoy a stay in the heart of Sydney and a BridgeClimb experience
- Stay in a vineyard estate in the lush Hunter Valley
- Soak up the culture and experience a helicopter flight over Uluru
- Embark on an exclusive four night Great Barrier Reef cruise

Days 1-3: Sydney

Spend three nights in Australia's much-loved city, Sydney, staying at the boutique Harbour Rocks Hotel. Enjoy an included tour of the city's highlights and a BridgeClimb experience.

Days 4-5: Blue Mountains

(Driving time from Sydney: 1 hour 15 min - 77km)
Drive to Spicers Sangoma Retreat in the Blue Mountains where you'll spend the next few days taking in the spectacular panoramas and natural serenity of the region.

Days 6-7: Hunter Valley

(Driving time from Blue Mountains: 2 hours 30 min - 192km)
Drive through the picturesque Blue Mountains to the rolling vineyards of the Hunter Valley where you'll enjoy a two night luxury escape at Spicers Vineyard Estate.

Days 8-10: Uluru, Red Centre

Fly to Australia's Red Centre and stay in the luxurious Sails in the Desert Hotel. Experience a Sounds of Silence dinner, a helicopter flight over Uluru and the one-of-a-kind 'Field of Light' art installation.

Days 11-12: Cairns

Fly to tropical Cairns where you'll spend two nights in the Hilton Hotel overlooking the marina. Take an included cultural tour through the rainforest with an Aboriginal guide and embark on a hot-air balloon flight.

Days 13-16: Great Barrier Reef

A highlight of this itinerary, board your Coral Expeditions purpose-built small ship to explore untouched areas of the Great Barrier Reef - the ultimate experience.

Days 17-20: Port Douglas

Spend your last few days in Australia staying at the Shantara Resort in the tropical laid-back area of Port Douglas where you can relax and rejuvenate or select from a range of optional day tours.



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...



"When you're in Sydney, hop on a ferry from Circular Quay to the coastal suburb of Manly to experience Australia's renowned beach culture like a local."

LAURIE, TRAVEL DESIGNER

TAKE ME THERE

20 days **from £6,519 per person**

Includes: Return flights.

Based on selected travel September 2018

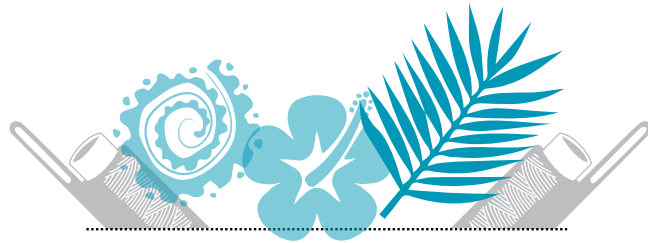
TAILOR ME

Why not add on a stopover in either direction?
Or visit Melbourne and the Great Ocean Road?



Image source: Destination NSW





Cultural wanderer

You're looking for a luxurious New Zealand experience with a mix of culture and locally guided tours so you can fully immerse yourself in the destination.

Suggested itinerary: Cultural New Zealand

Auckland, Bay of Islands, Coromandel Peninsula, Rotorua, Wellington, Marlborough Sounds, Kaikoura and Christchurch

Highlights:

- Experience a floatplane over Rotorua, White Island and Mount Tarawera
- Stay in an indulgent lodge at the base of the picturesque Kaikoura Ranges
- Enjoy a wine-tasting tour and luxury retreat in Marlborough Sounds
- Soak up some culture on a Maori tour and devour a tasty Hangi feast



Days 1-2: Auckland

Auckland is a thriving cultural hub with nature's playground on its doorstep. Stroll the harbour, hop on a boat to Waiheke Island's vineyards or admire panoramic views from Rangitoto Island's peak.

Days 3-4: Bay of Islands

(Driving time from Auckland: 3 hours – 227km). Head along the rugged west coast to Paihia. Enjoy an included tour of the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, visit Cape Reinga and take an optional cruise.

Days 5-6: Coromandel Peninsula

(Driving time from Bay of Islands: 5 hours – 417km). Drive south to Pauanui where you'll stay in a unique ocean side hideaway. Enjoy an included glass bottom boat tour to Whitianga, a Cathedral Cove kayaking tour and a guided nature walk of the Kauri forest and glowworm caves.

Days 7-8: Rotorua

(Driving time from Coromandel Peninsula: 3 hours 15 min – 230km). Visit Te Puia to see Pohutu Geyser and the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute. Explore the Tamaki Maori Village, where you'll watch a traditional Haka and enjoy a Hangi feast, and experience a scenic floatplane flight over the dramatic scenery below, including an active volcano.

Days 9-10: Wellington

(Driving time from Rotorua: 5 hours – 452 km) Head to the cool capital, Wellington, a compact city with a unique blend of history, culture, nature and cuisine. Take the cable car to Mount Victoria lookout, explore the Parliament Buildings and stroll around the National Museum of Te Papa Tongerewa.

Days 11-13: Marlborough Sounds

(Travel time from Wellington: 3 hours 50 min). Cross the Cook Strait by ferry to Queen Charlotte Sound, before reaching coastal Picton to relax at the Bay of Many Coves retreat, nestled into the hillside. Enjoy an included Queen Charlotte Track tour, wine cruise and Greenshell Mussel Farm cruise.

Days 14-15: Kaikoura

(Driving time from Marlborough Sounds: 2 hours 30 min – 156km). Return to Picton, popping into one of the area's many vineyards and Blenheim's Omaka Aviation Centre. Enjoy an included whale and dolphin cruise in Kaikoura, before a night in Hapuku Lodge.

Days 16-17: Christchurch

(Driving time from Kaikoura: 3 hours – 205km) Explore the English inspired town of Christchurch by foot, bike or on the famous city tram. Take a scenic punt along the river and wander through Hagley Park and the Botanical Gardens.



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...



"In the Coromandel Peninsula, visit Hot Water Beach - at either side of low tide, you can grab a spade and dig yourself your very own hot pool!"

MATT, TRAVEL DESIGNER

TAKE ME THERE

17 days from £4,619 per person

Includes: Return flights

Based on selected travel September 2018

TAILOR ME

Why not add on a stopover in either direction?
Or upgrade your room type?





Family adventurer

You're an active family looking for an exciting mix of beach, nature and city life, with minimal travel time and maximum adventure!

Suggested itinerary: Gold Coast & Nature Discovery

Gold Coast, Lady Elliot Island, Glass House Mountains, Noosa, Fraser Island and Brisbane

Highlights:

- Take in Queensland's lively Gold Coast and capital city, Brisbane
- Discover the Great Barrier Reef from the family-friendly coral cay of Lady Elliot Island
- Explore nature amongst the volcanic peaks of the Glass House Mountains
- Enjoy an active adventure on the world's largest sand island, Fraser Island

Days 1-3: Gold Coast

A thrill-seekers playground, explore Surfers Paradise, soak up the sunshine on the coast and hit the rides in one of the Gold Coast's world-famous theme parks!

Days 4-5: Lady Elliot Island

Transfer to the airport and take a short flight to eco-friendly Lady Elliot Island where you'll stay for two nights. Spend your days enjoying a traditional family holiday, swapping TVs and social media for lagoon snorkelling, guided nature walks and glass bottom boat touring.

Days 6-7: Glass House Mountains

(Driving time from Brisbane: 1 hour 15 min - 143km). Fly back to Brisbane then pick up your car and drive to the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast for two nights in your own self-contained cottage at Glass on Glasshouse. Optional mountain-based activities include horse-riding, walking trails, abseiling and cultural Aboriginal tours.

Days 8-10: Noosa

(Driving time from Glass House Mountains: 1 hour - 90km). Enjoy three nights at Peppers Noosa Resort & Villas surrounded by stunning beaches, lakes and national parks. For the ultimate experience, take an optional paddle-boarding or kayaking lesson in the everglades or, swim with a humpback whale!

Days 11-12: Fraser Island

(Driving time from Noosa: 2 hours - 159km) Drive to Hervey Bay and transfer by ferry for three adventure-filled days on Fraser Island, staying in a two bedroomed villa. Enjoy a guided 4WD tour on your full day; swim in crystal-clear Lake McKenzie, float down Eli Creek and drive down Seventy-Five Mile Beach.

Days 13-14: Brisbane

(Driving time from Hervey Bay: 3 hours 20 min - 283km). Drop off your car in Brisbane before taking in two nights at the Pullman Brisbane, in the heart of the city. Take an included day trip to Steve Erwin's famous Australia Zoo and say a final goodbye to Australia's wildlife!



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...



"Visit Lady Elliot Island between February and April to watch the baby turtles surface from the sand to make a dash for the ocean. The kids will love it!"

JULIE, TRAVEL DESIGNER

TAKE ME THERE

14 days **from £2,729 per adult and £1,949 per child**
Includes: Return flights

Based on selected travel November 2018

TAILOR ME

Why not add a stay in iconic Sydney or head to Uluru in the Red Centre? Or break your journey to Australia with a stopover in Asia or the USA?





Paradise seeker

You're travelling as a couple and want time to relax and reconnect. You're looking for something away from the crowds but with plenty to do.

Suggested itinerary: Tahitian Island Explorer

Tahiti, Moorea, Tahaa and Bora Bora

Highlights:

- Explore Tahiti with black sand beaches and luscious rainforests
- Spot the dolphins that inhabit the turquoise waters of Moorea
- Snorkel at Le Taha'a and relax in your overwater bungalow at sunset
- Watch the sun rise over Mount Otemanu in Bora Bora

Days 1-2: Tahiti

Land into the lush green island of Tahiti, with a few days to acclimatise at the Intercontinental Tahiti. Explore the markets in Papeete, or head inland past waterfalls to the volcanic crater for unspoilt views of the island's surrounding reef.

Days 3-6: Moorea

Hop on a short ferry ride to beautiful Moorea and arrive in your paradise home for the next four nights, the Hilton Moorea. Relax on the white sand beaches, enjoy sunset cocktails or head inland on a 4WD tour of this dramatic volcanic island, fringed by coral reef.



Days 7-10: Taha'a

Fly from Moorea to Raiatea and transfer to Taha'a Lagoon. Home to lush mountains and turquoise waters, you'll relax in style in one of Le Taha'a Island Resort & Spa's traditional thatched overwater suites. Wade the shallow waters to reach the fringing coral reef, bursting with marine life.

Days 11-15: Bora Bora

World-renowned as one of the most exclusive and romantic beach resorts anywhere on Earth, you'll transfer to the Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa and discover real paradise. Enjoy a host of activities, with a sunset catamaran cruise included in your experience.

Day 16: Auckland

Travel back to Auckland ready for your flight home with a night at the Skycity Hotel to break up the journey.



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...



"In Taha'a, take a short boat trip to the village of Tapuamu to see the colourful colonial era church and local village."

VICKI, TRAVEL DESIGNER

TAKE ME THERE

16 days **from £6,995 per person**
Includes: Return flights
Based on selected travel October 2018

TAILOR ME

Why not add on a stopover in either direction or extend your time in New Zealand?



A VIEW WITH A ROOM

Intercontinental Bora Bora
Resort & Thalasso Spa

Wake up to views of Mount Otemanu and step off the deck of your new, luxury Brando Suite Bora Bora into the warm, azure waters of the tranquil lagoon. Enjoy scuba diving and sunset cruises, spend lazy days on the pristine white sand beach, cool off in your private pool and relax in the Thalasso Spa. Indulge in a gourmet dining experience at the romantic Le Corail restaurant and stop for a night cap at the trendy Bubbles Bar.

ADD TO MY TRIP

Stay 4 nights from £2,999 per person
Based on selected travel January – March 2019



Queenstown

Dear Austravel...

Austravellers, Lorraine and Stephen, share their memories from their New Zealand adventure.

Whenever we saw New Zealand on TV programmes or films, it always looked so beautiful. It had long been on our bucket list and we knew we had to visit one day. Having previously booked a holiday to Australia with Austravel, which we were so impressed by, we were confident that booking our New Zealand trip with them would be fantastic.

Our Travel Designer Dave organised our holiday. We had done our own research and after listening to our requests and using his own knowledge, Dave completely tailor-made our own itinerary which included everything we wanted to do.

We flew with Singapore Airlines on the way out and stopped off in Singapore for two nights to break up the journey. We had previously visited Singapore and loved it so much that we wanted to return. From Singapore to Auckland we flew with Air New Zealand – one of the best airlines we've flown with, we were so impressed with their service.

After arriving into Auckland we flew to Kerikeri Airport in the Bay of Islands on a small domestic plane, which allowed us to have incredible views of the scenery below. Our first impressions of New Zealand certainly didn't disappoint – it was just as beautiful, if not more, than we imagined. We explored by foot and were lucky enough to see seals, dolphins and an abundance of wildlife. From Pahiha we took a ferry over to Russell to learn about the history of the island and the sea was the ideal temperature to swim in.

Next on our itinerary was Rotorua – and first on our list was Hobbiton. We had both read the books so to visit the film set and see how they brought the films to life was very interesting. We finished off the tour with a cold drink in the sun sitting outside the Green Dragon. We also visited Te Puia and learnt about the stunning geysers and enjoyed a delicious steam box lunch cooked the traditional Maori way. One of our favourite tours in Rotorua was the Tamaki Maori Village, an



interactive tour where we learnt all about Maori culture. The song and dance performances were very powerful.

From Rotorua we flew to Christchurch. After visiting Quake City, an interactive museum, we were shocked to learn how much devastation the city had suffered after the 2011 earthquake and how much it has been restored and developed since. We headed to Kaikoura for a whale watching tour, then took the TranzAlpine train from Christchurch to Arthurs Pass, travelling through the spectacular scenery of the Canterbury plains was awe-inspiring.

Our next stop was Queenstown, recommended by Dave for its activities and scenery. The flight was incredible and the most amazing flight landing I've ever had – having a bird's eye view of the mountains and lakes was simply breathtaking. We stayed at the QT Queenstown, a new contemporary hotel, and our first tour was the Dart River Jet Boat; an exhilarating experience along the rivers with Mount Aspiring National Park as a backdrop. There are so many restaurants and bars on offer, we enjoyed evenings in the harbour where we could dine with great views. We also visited Gibbston Valley Winery on a small group tour and sampled 24 delicious wines between us. New Zealand wine is now my favourite!

On the way home we stopped in Hong Kong. On first impressions after leaving New Zealand, the contrast was very vast and I wasn't sure if it was



Hobbiton Village

going to be for me. However we absolutely loved it, visiting Victoria Peak for great views over the city and walking trails.

New Zealand lived up to our expectations, the people are all so friendly and the scenery is utterly out of this world. I did not want to come home!

We've now enjoyed two fantastic holidays with Austravel and are looking to book a third. We would like to visit Adelaide, Perth and Sydney again and visit Vietnam as a stopover to tick off another destination en route. We would certainly recommend Austravel to anyone looking to travel to Australasia.

If you'd like to share your Austravel stories and photos with us, please email us at share@austravel.com.

We'd love to hear from you! 📧

72 HOURS IN... the Gold Coast



Enjoy three days of city living, wildlife encounters and rainforest adventures

DAY ①

Morning: If you love long sandy beaches and a laid back attitude then Australia's Gold Coast is for you. Head down to Surfers Paradise to admire the impressive skyline from the Skypoint Observation deck. Located on level 77 of the Q1 building it offers unsurpassed 360 degree views of the Gold Coast beaches to the hinterland and beyond. If you want to explore further why not hire a bike and head north to Main Beach which is only a 20 minute ride away and popular with the surf crowd. Watch the locals in action, or if you fancy having a go you can even book in for a surf lesson yourself. Afterwards stop for lunch at one of the many cafés or restaurants on offer before casually making your way back to Surfers Paradise.

Afternoon: This afternoon join Whales in Paradise for an unforgettable whale watching experience. Sit back with a coffee as you cruise the stunning Nerang waterways past the homes of the rich and famous before heading out to sea. The catamaran offers unobstructed viewing decks as well as a water level viewing deck making sure you can get as close to the whales as possible. Your experienced crew will offer expert tips on how to spot the local wildlife which, as well as whales, includes bottlenose dolphins, giant loggerhead turtles and various sea birds. As your tour draws to a close cruise back to Surfers Paradise before heading out to one of the many restaurants.



DAY ②

Morning: Collect your hire car and travel away from the hustle and bustle of the Gold Coast and begin your journey deep into the Hinterland. Make a stop at Mount Tamborine to explore the area, with numerous walks and lookouts in the rainforest, Cedar Creek is one of our favourites. For a change of pace, indulge in home grown produce, from macadamia nuts and freshly grown avocados to award-winning cheeses and fudge before visiting wineries boasting panoramic coastal views.

Afternoon: Continue your journey towards subtropical Lamington National Park along the winding roads before arriving at your home for the next two nights. Surrounded by dense forest, O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat was once a humble log cabin guest house but has expanded to become a contemporary resort offering a large choice of accommodation. We recommend a Mountain View Room, with unobstructed views to the McPherson mountain ranges. After settling in, head for dinner at The Dining Room to enjoy the delicious locally sourced produce on offer and be sure to stop for a drink at the Rainforest Bar to view the spectacular sunset over the westerly ranges.





DAY 3

Morning: After a hearty breakfast, you have the day at leisure to explore the many activities on offer at O'Reillys. Consisting of nine suspension bridges 16 meters above ground, the Tree Top Walk is perfect for spotting the many species of bird that inhabit the area. One of the best times for bird spotting is early morning so grab a pair of binoculars and head out. If you are looking for something a little more challenging there is a range of full day walks available; just grab yourself a map and head out to explore. If relaxing is more your thing then make sure you pay a visit to the Lost World Spa to enjoy an indulgent treatment.

Afternoon: Spend this afternoon visiting Canungra Valley Vineyard just a short drive from O'Reilly's. The extensive grounds stretch along the banks of Canungra Creek making it a perfect spot to enjoy a picnic. Enjoy a selection of wine tastings from the cellar door before ordering a homestead picnic basket. Everything you need is provided, including freshly made food, cutlery, crockery and even a picnic blanket so you can sit back, relax and enjoy your surroundings. After your time in the hinterland choose to extend your stay at O'Reilly's or travel further north and explore the beauty of the Sunshine Coast. 📍



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...

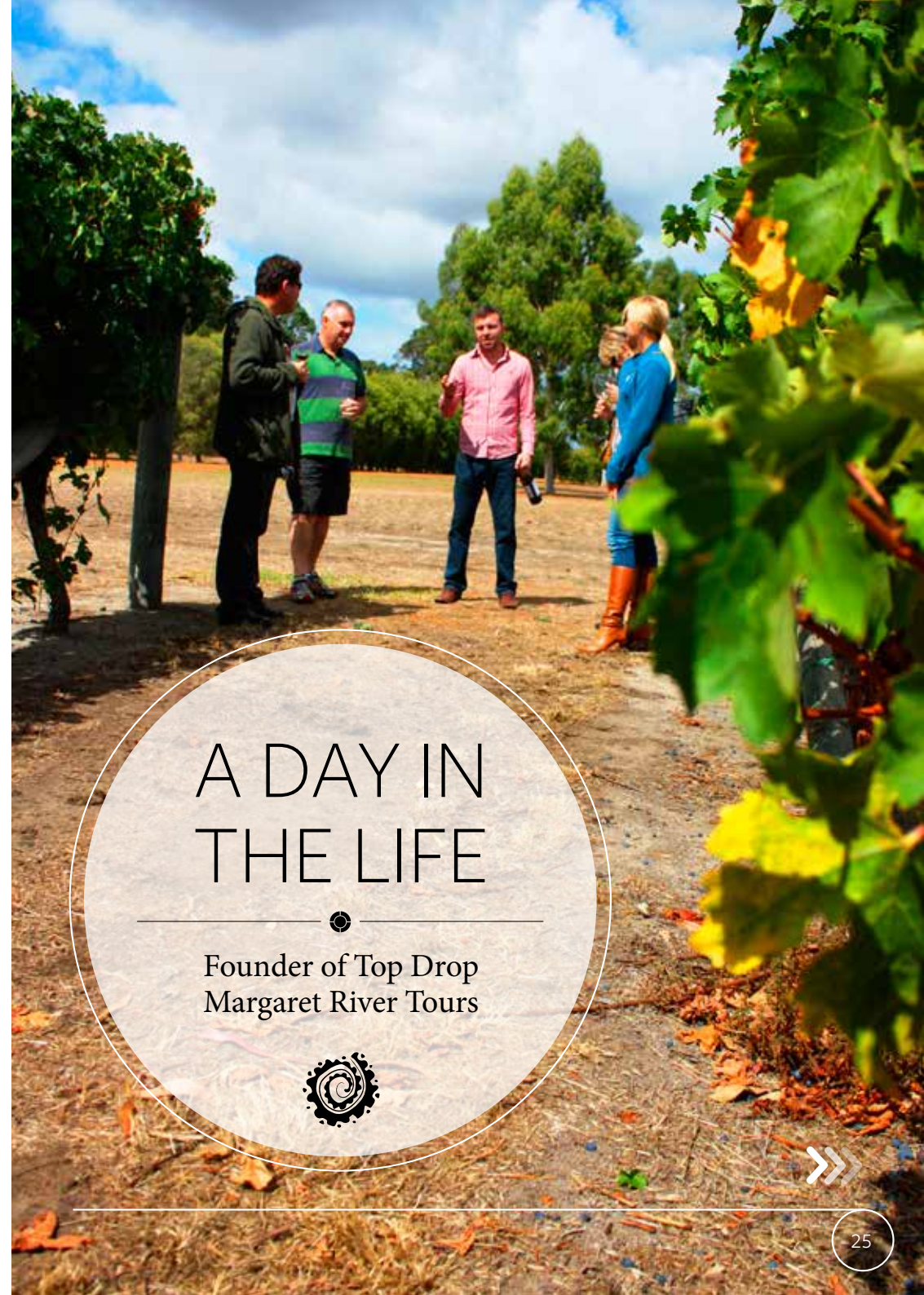


"Check out the fabulous markets in Surfers Paradise each Wednesday, Friday and Sunday evening. They're great for meeting locals and buying some souvenirs."

SUE, TRAVEL DESIGNER

ADD TO MY TRIP

3 days Gold Coast self-drive **from £419 per person.**
Includes: 1 night at QT Gold Coast with Whales in Paradise tour, 2 nights at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat in Lamington National Park with 2 days car hire.
Based on selected travel October 2018.



A DAY IN THE LIFE



**Founder of Top Drop
Margaret River Tours**



WHO: Chris O'Hare

OCCUPATION: Founder of Top Drop Tours

LOCATION: The Margaret River

Luscious vineyards, delicious produce and stunning beaches are just some of the reasons so many are drawn to the Margaret River region every year. We asked Chris, the man behind award-winning Top Drop Tours, all about what got him where he is today, what you can enjoy on his tours and much more – by the time you finish reading, we're sure Top Drop Tours and the Margaret River will be next on your list!

Q. How did Top Drop Tours begin?

I found my version of paradise in Margaret River and created Top Drop Tours to showcase the region and the feeling that I fell in love with. Now that sounds great, but a lot of hard work followed to build a business offering top quality tourism experiences in Western Australia's most popular regional destination.

Q. What does a typical day leading a tour involve?

While every day leading a tour is different, we start each day with the same objective; making our guests' day with Top Drop Tours the highlight of their time travelling through Australia. We are fortunate that we have incredible experiences to showcase, but it is often the little extras that make the difference and the exciting part of our job is finding that special something that elevates a tour from fun to unforgettable.

Q. What's your favourite part of leading a tour?

The best part of leading tours is quite simple; when we change people's lives. Ultimately the biggest thrill we get is the moment that our guests 'get it', that very special moment when they realise that they have just spent a day exploring a place that they will never forget, a place that they will be talking about for years to come and a place that they have just become ambassadors for. This happened to me a long time ago, Margaret River has a way of getting under your skin and every day I see that spread across the globe, it's a special feeling to contribute to that.

Q. What varieties of wine can be enjoyed?

Margaret River wine is famous globally for its extraordinary quality. The two varieties that we are renowned for are Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon and as a region, we have won multiple international awards for each of these wines. Margaret River's secret weapon is actually our grape growing conditions which allow our wineries to produce a wide range of wine. Whether you are looking for a light easy drinking white or a full bodied red, Margaret River has it covered, always at the highest level.

Q. What about the food?

Wine and food, for us there is no separation between them, so gourmet produce is always an important element of our tours. All of our tours feature a restaurant lunch and we work with chefs who are committed to using locally sourced seasonal produce. In addition, our gourmet produce tour visits cheese and chocolate producers as well as a local provider that focusses on growing organic produce to make the most unbelievable range of taste bud tantalizing treats.

Q. What's your most memorable customer experience?

Definitely the first time that we helped arrange a surprise wedding proposal. Weeks of planning, between myself and the groom-to-be were finalised and on the day, everything worked like a charm.

We finally arrived at a very remote location where the proposal was planned, at that very moment it dawned on me, what if she says no. Can you imagine how awkward the drive back to the hotel would be? The good news is she said "YES" and I'm pleased to say that every proposal we have had on tour since has had a 100% success rate!



Q. When you aren't working, what do you do in your spare time?

On the rare occasion that we have a day off we often spend the morning exploring one of the region's spectacular walk trails, whether by the river, ocean or through the forest. We do this with our young children who love searching for fairies, just as much as we enjoy searching for dolphins and whales. In our opinion this type of physical activity must be rewarded, so it is off to lunch at one of the fabulous Margaret River winery restaurants. Just one day like this reminds us of why we moved here, it also reminds us of the feeling that our guests have when we show them our region.

Q. Top tip for travelling on one of your tours?

Never skip breakfast when you are doing a wine tour!

Want to hear more from Chris? Head to our blog at austravel.com to read the full feature. ⓘ



ADD TO MY TRIP

Enjoy a Margaret River Top Drop tour from £114 per person.

HAYES & JARVIS

Let's talk holidays

Trading places

Re-live those holiday memories from Down Under elsewhere across the globe.

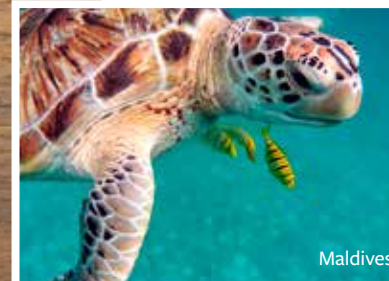
Los Angeles, California

If you've returned from your holiday Down Under and are looking to recreate some of your experiences elsewhere in the world, look no further than our sister company Hayes & Jarvis. Creating tailor-made holidays to the Far East, Indian Ocean, Africa and beyond for over 65 years, their Destination Specialists are on hand to help plan your next adventure outside of Australasia.

So whether you've travelled on board The Ghan, dived the Great Barrier Reef or spotted whales in New Zealand, Hayes & Jarvis has something to rival those once in a lifetime moments.



Pacific Coast Highway



Maldives



Whale watching

Road tripped along the Great Ocean Road?

Cruise down California's Pacific Coast Highway

Dazzling city experiences in Los Angeles and San Francisco one moment, amazing beaches including San Simeon and Monterey the next; a Golden California self-drive will provide adventure, glamour and wonderful landscapes. Stop off in the quaint seaside village of Carmel, cruise along the 17-Mile Drive toll road boasting magnificent seaside scenery, and down towards Los Angeles to stroll along the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Take a quick jaunt to glitzy Las Vegas for exciting nightlife, then finish with a stay in San Diego to ensure you have a truly memorable trip.

12 day Golden California self-drive itinerary, travelling in March 2019, starts from £2,099 per person.

Explored the Great Barrier Reef?

Dive underwater in the Maldives

While the Great Barrier Reef is the icon of the oceans, the waters around the atolls of the Maldives are a haven for shoals of butterfly fish, turtles, dolphins and manta rays. And with overwater villas suspended above a crystal clear lagoon, a PADI course in paradise awaits.

Combine a 7 day Classic Ceylon superior tour in Sri Lanka with a 7 night stay at OBLU by Atmosphere Helengeli in the Maldives. Travelling in January 2019, prices start from £3,449 per person.

Seen whales and dolphins in New Zealand?

Spot whales and bears in Canada

Vibrant cities, incredible wildlife and breath-taking scenery, Canada rivals New Zealand as a country with it all. Explore the rugged coastlines of Vancouver Island, spotting whales in the Strait of Georgia, and head into the untamed wilderness of Tofino in search of grizzly bears, as well as eagles and other quintessentially Canadian wildlife. Combine epic animal encounters with urban life in the city of Vancouver, taking a leisurely stroll through Stanley Park and tasting fresh produce at Granville Island Public Market.

9 day Whales, Bears and Vancouver Island self-drive itinerary, travelling in October 2018, starts from £2,949 per person.



Travelled through the outback on board The Ghan?

Step aboard South Africa's Blue Train

Glimpse the soul of beautiful South Africa from the comfort of your carriage window. Attended by your own private butler, surrounded by wood panelling and gold-plumbed bathrooms - impeccable high standards are always well-observed. Cigars are well-stocked in the club car and dress codes change from casual to elegant evening wear in the dining car. You will feel as though you have entered a time capsule and are being transported into your very own Agatha Christie novel. The only suspense here is what culinary wonders the chefs will produce next.

Combine 4 nights in Cape Town, 1 night aboard The Blue Train, 1 night in Johannesburg and 3 nights in Kruger National Park. Travelling in November 2018, prices start from £4,749 per person.



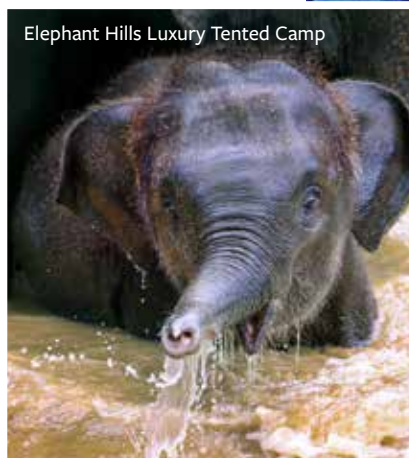
The Blue Train, South Africa

Cuddled koalas in Queensland?

Feed elephants in Thailand

There's nothing better than coming face to face with a country's wonderful wildlife. Once you're escorted into Elephant Hills Luxury Tented Camp it's as though you have stepped through a portal into a magical hidden valley. Mists clear to reveal the tree-covered limestone cliffs that encircle your resort. Get up close and personal with Asian elephants on your Elephant Experience, where you can get involved during their bath and mealtimes. Then take a relaxing canoe ride along lakes and rivers that teem with tropical flora and fauna.

Combine 3 nights in Bangkok, 2 day Elephant Hills Jungle Safari and 7 nights in Khao Lak. Travelling in February 2019, prices start from £2,749 per person.



Elephant Hills Luxury Tented Camp

Elephant Hills Luxury Tented Camp




The Blue Train, South Africa

Witnessed magnificent Uluru?

Explore the mighty Grand Canyon

Since man first encountered the vast plunging depths, temple-like buttes and dramatic white-water rivers of the Grand Canyon, they have held the landscape spread before them in awe. The canyon has been carved by the twisting Colorado River into a labyrinth series of segmented limestone cliffs and buttresses that change colour as the sun rises and falls. No photo can do the Grand Canyon justice, you just have to see it for yourself. Take a road trip from Las Vegas to Grand Canyon National Park, with stops at Bryce Canyon and Arches National Park; two of Utah's Mighty 5, as well as Monument Valley for a true Wild West experience.

8 day Canyon Adventures self-drive itinerary, travelling in November 2018, starts from £1,299 per person. 



Grand Canyon National Park

Our most-loved escorted tours

Save up to £500[†] per person



With so much to experience in Australasia, it can be difficult to know where to start. Our escorted touring partner for over 30 years, APT Touring is a family-owned company, renowned for its comprehensive range of experiences in Australasia. With two tour levels to choose from, all tours include an expert guide, fully inclusive touring and no hidden extras.

Discover our top five most-loved (and booked) APT Premium Tours, offering comfort at a price that represents outstanding value, with the perfect balance of inclusions and leisure time, hand-picked accommodation in central or unique locations, quality meals and sightseeing, all delivered with wonderful service.

THE APT DIFFERENCE:

APT's friendly, knowledgeable local guides and tour directors will share their passion for the country they call home.

"Insider Experiences": unique sightseeing activities, memorable interactions with local people and gastro experiences included at no extra cost.

Handpicked accommodation: each hotel and resort included has been tried and tested by APT's experts.



Fraser Island

East Coast Adventure

Combine iconic cities with extraordinary islands and tropical rainforest on this 13 day tour. Explore the coast from Sydney to Cairns; visit Noosa before hopping over to Fraser Island. Continue to Hamilton Island and onto the luscious Atherton Tablelands, before a final stop at the famous Great Barrier Reef.

From £4,719 per person. Includes return flights.
Based on selected travel September 2018 – March 2019.



Rotorua

New Zealand Getaway

If you're looking to experience New Zealand's highlights, this 15 day itinerary is the perfect tour for you. Start your adventure in Auckland and explore the Bay of Islands, before heading to Rotorua. Travel south through Taupo and Wellington, and step over to the South Island where you'll explore Christchurch, Fox Glacier, Queenstown and Fiordland National Park. Admire stunning Mount Cook and Lake Tekapo.

From £4,269 per person. Includes return flights.
Based on selected travel September 2018 - September 2019.

Discover Australia

Encompass Australia's renowned sites and visit five remarkable states on this 18 day tour. See the sights of Perth before leaping over to Alice Springs and witnessing the famous monolith; Uluru. Journey to Cairns where you'll dive into the Great Barrier Reef or explore the World Heritage-Listed Daintree Rainforest. Complete your tour with stays in vibrant Melbourne and iconic Sydney.

From £6,719 per person. Includes return flights. Based on selected travel September 2018 – March 2019.

Grand Tasman

Tasmania; a state bursting with beautiful wilderness, rich culture and spectacular landscapes waiting to be explored. This 10 day tour takes in all the must-see sites of Tasmania; visit the capital city of Hobart, witness Freycinet National Park and admire Cradle Mountain and its neighbouring lakes. Discover Port Arthur, Bicheno, Strahan and one of Australia's oldest cities, Launceston.

From £3,249 per person. Includes return flights. Based on selected travel September 2018 – April 2019.



Freycinet National Park

17 day Kimberley, Kakadu & Arnhem Land Explorer

Embark on a unique 4WD adventure on this 17 day small group tour. Travel along the immense Gibb River Road with stops in Bell Gorge, El Questro Wilderness Park and Purnululu National Park, offering incredible cultural experiences and unforgettable wildlife sightings. Visit Kakadu National Park and Arnhem Land, rich in Aboriginal culture and unspoiled wilderness, before arriving into Darwin.

From £8,439 per person. Includes return flights.
Based on selected travel August – September 2018.



The Kimberley

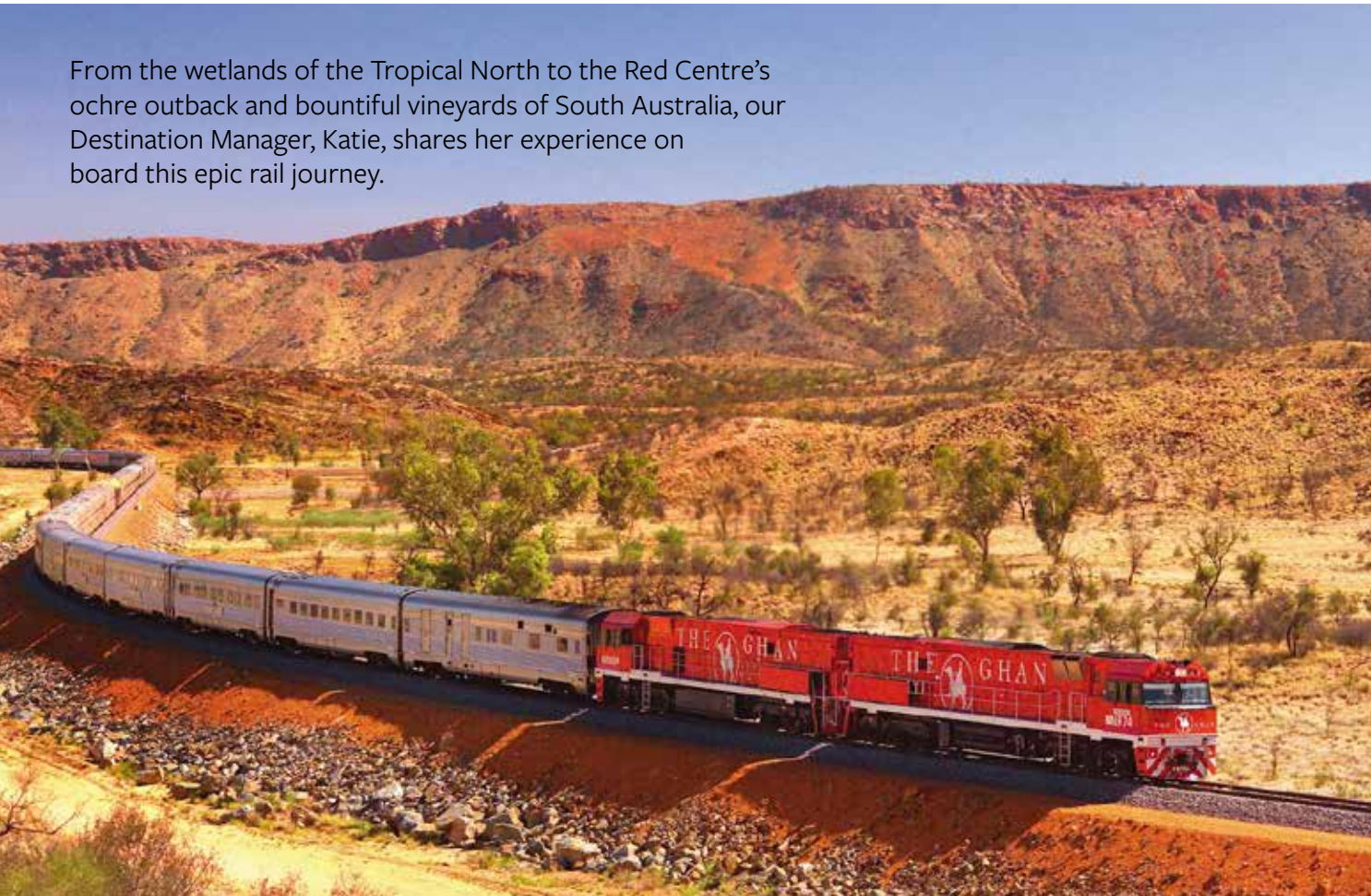
Be inspired at austravel.com or call our Travel Designers on 0808 278 2299* to tailor-make your Australasian experience.
[†]£500 per person saving based on twin share on all 2018 Kimberley, Kakadu & Arnhem Land Explorer departures.

Travellers' tales

4 days on board The Ghan Expedition



From the wetlands of the Tropical North to the Red Centre's ochre outback and bountiful vineyards of South Australia, our Destination Manager, Katie, shares her experience on board this epic rail journey.



Day 1: Darwin to Katherine

We were met in our Darwin hotel by the friendly team from the Ghan and after a speedy transfer we arrived at the railway station, where we got our first glimpse of our home for the next three nights. At 39 carriages and almost 1km long, it's quite a sight, and the perfect chance to get a photo with the iconic loco at the front.

Once shown on board we met our carriage host who showed us to our cabin, booked our off train experiences and walked us through to the Outback Explorer lounge for a cold glass of bubbles.

After lunch on board, our first port of call was Nitmiluk Gorge, a short transfer from Katherine, where we cruised through the gentle waters watching out for resident crocs. The steep formation of these cliffs have created waterfalls which tumble down over bright orange rocks. We jumped off and crossed a rocky area to get into the second gorge; to the Jawoyn people this area is of great cultural importance, with Nitmiluk meaning 'place of cicada dreaming'.

Back on the train we picked up speed and headed south as the sun set. Dinner was served in the Queen Adelaide Restaurant, where we met some of our fellow travellers before calling it a night and returning to our cabin.

Day 2: Katherine to Alice Springs

Overnight we had travelled around 1,200km and woke to the familiar red earth of the Outback, and after a breakfast of smoked Barramundi with hollandaise, we arrived into Alice Springs at around 10am for a day in the heart of the Red Centre.

Off train experiences here range from discovering the town to a scenic flight over to the monolith of Uluru, but we chose to head out with the team at Outback Cycling on a bike ride. Leaving Alice we headed along the path of the Todd River, which is without water for around 95% of the year and home to the patch of water confused for a 'spring' which gave the town its name. The cycle path continues up to the Telegraph Station; a crucial location in getting messages between Adelaide and Darwin from its origins in the 1870s.

After a tasty lunch at Epilogue Lounge on the main street of Todd Mall, we had some free time and headed to Yubu Napa Aboriginal art gallery to see some of the local artists at work, popping in to the Flying Doctors to see their interactive museum too. That evening we enjoyed an Outback BBQ in the grounds of the Telegraph Station with a fantastic star gazing talk after the sun had set, before returning back to the train for the next leg of our journey into South Australia.






Day 3: Alice Springs to Coober Pedy

The train stopped mid-morning close to Manguri and we jumped off to join our respective tours, heading out to the majestic Breakaways; an area of national park with spectacular viewpoints and unique landscapes often used as filming locations for space movies due to its rocky earth. We were met by a couple of local guides who talked us through the native plants that thrive out here and how they are traditionally used.

We then visited the underground town of Coober Pedy, anglicised from the Aboriginal 'kupa-piti' - translated to 'white man in a hole'. A large section of residents live in 'dugouts' which are bored into rocks and maintain a cool temperature year-round, unlike above ground homes which require constant air-conditioning. Coober Pedy is best known for its affiliation with opal mining, and after a tour with local miner George, a delicious lunch was served 15m underground in a former mine. Heading back to the train we were treated to a campfire with drinks and canapés as the sun set before boarding for our last night on the Ghan.

Day 4: Coober Pedy to Adelaide

We were woken by Bruce, the train manager, who announced that we were about to travel round the longest bend on the entire track - a great photo opportunity where you can see both ends of the train in one go. This marked the end of our journey as we passed the Flinders Ranges and into green rolling hills. After breakfast it was time to pack our cabins and say goodbye to new friends as our epic journey from north to south was complete.

If you're looking to explore the Australian Outback in style, I would certainly recommend The Ghan Expedition. This itinerary is an extra night longer than the Ghan, allowing you more time for those unique off train experiences. But with limited departures operating between March and October and the train being on many people's bucket lists, make sure you book in advance to avoid missing out. 

ADD TO MY TRIP

4 days The Ghan Expedition (Darwin to Adelaide) from £2,119 per person. Based on selected travel October 2018.



WHAT OUR EXPERTS SAY...



"Concerned about travelling alone? No need to worry. There's an Outback Explorer lounge and Queen Adelaide restaurant car for every four passenger carriages – the perfect place to chat about meet new people and discuss the day's activities."

KATIE, DESTINATION MANAGER



Alice Springs



ASK THE AUSTRAVEL EXPERTS...



We understand that planning a holiday to Australasia can feel a little daunting. That's where our expert Travel Designers come in. No question is too small for them and they love planning your dream trips Down Under. Here, we put Dave and Paul to the test with some of your questions...



Q. We want to visit Australasia with teenagers for one last family holiday. Any suggestions for activities and destinations that they'll love?

Paul: Queenstown is a great destination for families as there is something there for everyone. You could enjoy a cruise on Lake Wakatipu or for something a bit faster go for a jetboat ride. Bungee jumping and sky-diving are great activities too, or take the skyline gondola to the top of Bob's Peak for mountain biking or lugging. Take a day cruise on Milford Sound, just a transfer from Queenstown, and if you're there in winter, how about trying some skiing or snowboarding?

Dave: I would suggest Rotorua on the North Island of New Zealand. It has easy access to Hobbiton movie set and has plenty to do within a 20 minute drive of the city, including mountain biking trails and zorbing for the more adventurous or wandering amongst the Redwood forest or Te Puia volcanic park for something more serene.

Q. We're planning a wedding anniversary in the summer (UK) but want to go somewhere the weather will be good. Any ideas?

Dave: I would recommend the 11 day Polynesian Dream Cruise in French Polynesia. This is a great way to cover a lot of ground in the South Pacific and gives you the opportunity to visit some lesser known islands as well as Tahiti and Bora Bora. You can also snorkel in the turquoise lagoons straight from the boat.

Paul: Funnily enough, I would also recommend the South Pacific – it's a great time to visit – but how about Fiji? You could spend some time on the Coral Coast on the main island of Viti Levu and also spend a bit of time on one of the smaller islands in the Mamanucas or Yasawa Islands to experience a real tropical paradise.



Milford Sound



Freycinet Island



Bora Bora



Singapore

Q. We've already seen the obvious places in Australia and visited New Zealand. This time we want to do something really different. Any suggestions?

Paul: Tasmania. If you love the outdoors this is an ideal place for you. It is also a lesser known destination ideal for food and drink lovers too. If you can travel between January and April there is an 8 day cruise with a focus on food and drink which also takes in the beauty of Freycinet National Park.

Dave: Wow! Great minds... I am also thinking Tasmania. I would suggest a self-drive tour and 10 days should be sufficient to cover all of Australia's only island state. Make sure to take in a guided walk through some of Australia's most dramatic scenery, kayak around Freycinet National Park and stop for a photograph at Wineglass Bay.

Q. I usually fly to Australia without stopping over but am looking to break up the journey next time. Where would you suggest?

Dave: I would recommend Singapore as a stopover as it has something for everyone. English is widely spoken, it has a great MRT transport system and lots to keep you entertained. Head to the Gardens by the Bay, explore Singapore Zoo and take a River Safari. Families (or big kids) should visit Resort World Sentosa and you can grab some reasonably priced Asian street food in Chinatown.

Paul: I recommend Kuala Lumpur as a great city to visit for a few days and if you have a bit more time, why not see more of Malaysia? You could take a flight over to Borneo to see orangutans in the wild. There are some fantastic hotels in and around Kota Kinabalu too where there is a huge range of ocean related activities, including snorkelling off the beach, scuba diving, jet boating and para sailing. 