

Birdsville to Alice

New
Tour!

\$2799ppts
\$817s/s
incl flights

11 June
2011
10 Days

Day 1: Home—Narrabri (LD)

We will pick up at Strathfield and Hornsby, Tuggerah and the Hunter. Travelling via Scone and Gunnedah, we will arrive in Narrabri mid afternoon.

Southern Cross Motor Inn 02 6792 3838

Day 2: Narrabri—Roma (BLD)

We will travel through Moree then Mungindi and across the border into Queensland. Lunch will be at the pretty agricultural town of St George. At Roma we will have time to photograph the **stately bottle trees lining the streets**.

Explorers Inn 07 4620 1400

Day 3: Roma—Ray Station, Quilpie (BLD)

This morning we will visit **Roma's famous Clay Mural**. This striking mural containing 17 local elements is interpreted by means of an audio and moving light presentation. We then make our way to Mitchell, and then Charleville for Lunch. Our accommodation tonight is at **Quilpie**, in the heart of Boulder Opal country. Enjoy a **unique Australian experience** during our stay at Ray Station with dinner and entertainment around a campfire. The station is only open to groups, and provides rustic themed outback styled accommodation, themed to the original use, however clean, with all new beds, mattresses and linen, with reverse cycle air conditioning, however not all buildings are ensuited.

Ray Station 07 4656 4737 (2 nights)

Day 4: Ray Station (BLD)

Following a hearty breakfast experience the inspiring 'Tully-Durack story' as told by the family of the original owners. **Ray station's 600 square kilometres** remains one of a select few properties in Australia never to have changed hands since white settlement. It has been passed down by each generation directly from father to son. Ray Station was settled in 1874 by great grandparents Patsy and Sarah Tully nee Durack. Sarah's brother the famous Patsy Durack (Kings in Grass Castles) urged them to follow him to the Kimberley, but they declined, surviving the great drought of 1900. We spend the day **touring the property, and experiencing life on a remote and massive station**, where life has not changed too much since pioneering days, and our generous hosts are keen to share this unique experience with us.

Day 5: Quilpie—Birdsville (BD)

This morning it's off to the tracks where **Birdsville's** annual race meeting sees the population grow from 120 to 6,000 in two days. Birdsville is a small outback town situated on the banks of the Diamantina River between the sands of the Simpson Desert and the gibbers of Sturts Stony Desert. The area is steeped in history, from Aboriginal meeting places to European settlement in the late 1870s and beyond. The Hotel is Australia's most legendary Outback pub, an Australian icon. Built in 1884, the hotel offers airconditioned ensuited motel rooms with television, and clock radios.

Birdsville Hotel 07 4656 3244 (2 nights)



Day 6: Birdsville (BLD)

This morning travel out to see "**Big Red**", the first of 1140 sand hills (heading west) which run north-south for hundreds of kilometres. Big Red is believed to be the **highest sand hill in the desert**. A slow walk up will ensure you appreciate its mammoth height. At the Birdsville Bakery we enjoy a sample of one of the many varieties of pies including the **Award Winning Camel Pie** if you are game enough! We spend this afternoon looking around at the racetrack and town at leisure.

Day 7: Birdsville—Roxby Downs (BLD)

This morning we start to travel along the Birdsville Track into some of Australia's most remote country. Our lunch break today is at the **Mungerannie Hotel**, once a supply point for drovers travelling north to Queensland. This afternoon, we look around Maree, founded around a series of artesian springs by wheat, sheep and cattle farmers in the 1870's. Afghan camel drivers also made it their home, and many of their descendants still live here today. We make our way to **Roxby Downs**, a mining town located in northern South Australia. The town was purpose built to service the **Olympic Dam mine** which contains one of the largest known ore bodies in the world today. The Olympic Dam mine is owned by BHP Billiton, and produces copper, uranium, silver and gold.

Roxby Downs Motor Inn 08 8671 0311

Day 8: Roxby Downs—Coober Pedy (BLD)

We will stop at **Woomera**, for morning tea. This town was created in the 1950's for rocket testing. Lunch will be at the little town of **Glendambo**. We arrive in **Coober Pedy** in time for a **guided tour, visiting an underground home and church, and the chance to see and perhaps purchase some opal**.

Mud Hut Motel 08 8672 3003

Day 9: Coober Pedy—Alice Springs (BLD)

We stop at **Marla** for morning tea, before making our way to the border where we will stop for a photo. We then stop at **Erlunda** for lunch, before arriving at Stuarts Well for a Camel Ride. We then make our way into Alice Springs, going to the Anzac Hill Lookout for good views over the town.

Lasseters Hotel Casino 08 8950 7777

Day 10: Alice Springs—Home (B)

This morning we make our way to the Airport to fly back to Sydney. Alternatively, you may wish to extend your stay in Alice Springs by joining our Red Heart Tour (page 6). There is a multi-tour discount available for guests choosing to do two or more tours together.