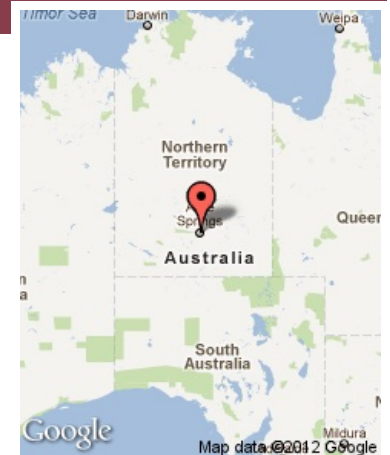


4WD Uluru Safari



Highlights

The Red Centre of Australia was considered by early white settlers to be an inhospitable desert, yet it is a place of huge cultural and spiritual significance. Spend three or five days on a 4WD Uluru safari discovering the magical and awe-inspiring Uluru, Kata Tjuta, Watarrka, Palm Valley and the West MacDonnell Ranges.

Australia's Red Centre is mythical, in the true sense of the word. This is a landscape that swallows you whole, leaving no doubt in the mind about the importance of humans in context of the Earth's life. The sheer scale of the place is awe-inspiring, the contours of the naked rock are geological poetry, and the space offers you an open invitation to pause to drink in the kind of silence that fills the whole being. Of all the places that deserve to be called ancient, this is surely the great grandmother.

Of obvious note is the fact that this safari will take you to Uluru, surely among the most famous -not to mention oldest- landmarks in the world. The nearby Oak valley Aboriginal Community, with its rock art and olive plantation, offers a chance to learn firsthand what it means to live in this remote desert region, and if you're lucky you may even get to try kangaroo cooked over an open fire.

You'll visit Kata Tjuta (the Olgas), resembling a group of pebbles cast onto the ground but for the fact that the largest is 546 metres high, and King's Canyon, with its sheer 300 metre walls. You'll experience the welcoming oasis of Palm valley, with the only palm trees for over 800 kilometres, a last surviving remnant of the prehistoric, tropical Australia, and before the trip ends you'll be introduced to West MacDonnell National Park, where you'll find some of the most imposing and spectacular scenery you'll see anywhere on earth.

Is it for me?

This is one of those trip itineraries that polarises readers: it'll probably immediately seem like either a dream adventure, or your worst nightmare. If the very prospect of a four-wheel drive desert safari in Australia's Red Centre makes you cringe, then, no: this is definitely not for you. If, on the other hand, you feel that deep, nameless tingling, a yearning to be gripped and spellbound by something as vast and old and wise as the bare Earth itself, well... You already know this is the good medicine. Please note also that children under eight years old are not accepted on this tour.

You will be travelling in a remote and sometimes challenging area. From time to time your itinerary may need to be adjusted due to a number of factors including road closures, weather conditions and requests from the Traditional Aboriginal owners of the lands. As you are travelling in a culturally sensitive area, it is possible that on occasions the Aboriginal people request we do not travel to certain parts of their lands due to ceremonies and other cultural considerations.

Accommodation

We'll just say it straight: accommodation is basic, a swag around the campfire, under the stars, and food is cooked over a campfire: hearty, nutritious and filling, with a smoky tang and as honest as the ground beneath your camping mat. This is real outback adventure, bush camping. Let's face it: if you wanted a four-poster bed you wouldn't even be reading this. However, please don't be alarmed, there are a few of life's 'must haves' such as freshly brewed coffee (or herbal teas) food of one of the highest qualities you can get in the red centre and on the first three nights there are toilets and showers available. You'll be comfortable because your body will be

Prices from

880 GBP (5 days) per person

Why book with Tourdust?

- ✓ The Best Local Operators
We handpick the best local operators
- ✓ Local Price Guarantee
Pay what you would locally with our Best Price Guarantee
- ✓ Secure Online Payments
Safe and easy online booking



- ✓ ABTA Bonding for your protection
We even throw in complimentary Supplier Failure Cover

ABTA
ABTA No. L7477

outdoor-tired, and the food will taste fantastic because it's cooked together with a small group of folks sitting around a fire in the wild country.

Itinerary

This Uluru Safari can be enjoyed as a 3 or 5 day safari.

Day 1: After you are collected from Alice Springs at 5.45am, you'll be driven to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, where you'll break for lunch at bush camp. If joining in Uluru you will be collected from the airport or accommodation from 1pm. The afternoon is devoted to enjoying Uluru, including a full base walk or climb, or you can join the Aboriginal guided Kuniya Walk at extra charge. You'll also visit the Cultural Centre where you can learn about the Tjukurpa (Aboriginal law / religion). It's then time to view the sunset on Uluru accompanied with a glass or two of sparkling wine before returning to the campsite for a delicious meal.

Day 2: After watching the sunrise over Uluru and Kata Tjuta, it's breakfast and off to Kata Tjuta for a 7km hike through the magnificent "Valley of the Winds". After lunch, you'll then head to Curtin Springs Cattle Station, arriving in mid afternoon before travelling on to Kings Creek Station for your second night's bush camp. After a campfire dinner it's time to kick back and be mesmerised by the millions of stars on display.

Day 3: It's a leisurely start to the day before you head off to Watarrka for a 6km walk through the towering walls, crevices and plateaus of King's Canyon, the Amphitheatre and the Lost City as well as taking time for a swim in the "Garden of Eden". If you're on a three day trip, you will be taken back to Alice Springs. If you've opted for the 5 day option you're then off to four-wheel drive to Oak Valley Aboriginal Community where you'll be joined by your Aboriginal Host who will share a few tales over the campfire in beautiful surroundings.

Day 4: You'll rise with the sun to a hearty breakfast before checking out the sights of Oak Valley including Rock Paintings and carvings with your Aboriginal Host. You'll then head back across Owen Springs Reserve cutting into the West MacDonnell Ranges. At Ormiston Gorge you'll hike the "Ghost Gum Walk" and take a swim in beautiful rock pools. After a visit to Glen Helen later in the day you then stop at the next bush camp for another night.

Day 5: After breaking camp you'll head off around Namatjira Drive stopping at Tyler's Pass to view Gosse Bluff (a comet crater) along the way, and then head to Hermannsburg Mission, est. 1877. Later you'll 4-wheel drive into Palm Valley for lunch and another hike, after which you'll drive back to reach Alice Springs in early evening.

Details

Getting there

You need to get to Alice Springs or Uluru to commence this tour, you can fly there from most cities in Australia. Please note your tour will conclude in Alice Springs and departure flights must be booked from here. It is not possible to depart from Uluru if joining this tour.

Price includes

Price quoted is the price per adult during low season. Prices vary for low season and high season.

The latest model air-conditioned 4WD vehicles, all meals except for breakfast on day 1 and dinner on the last day, camping equipment, swags (bush sleeping bag covers with zip-up sides and mattress) and pillows, sleeping bags (\$15 hire fee), laundered bed sheet (\$5 hire fee), reference books, chilled face cloths (summer), and supplies of drinking water (must have your own bottle). Bush showers and toilets available at most of our private bush camps.

Comfort level

Down to earth (hostels, camping, huts)

Experience required

A reasonable level of fitness and interest is all that is needed

Travellers should bring

You'll need to bring a flashlight (torch), hat (wide brimmed best), sunscreen, insect repellent, a fly head net (summer), any required medication, water bottle (at least 1.5 litres), walking shoes/boots (you do a lot of walking/climbing), warm clothing (winter), sleeping bag, toiletries, swim wear, towel, camera, extra batteries and a great sense of humour; wine or beer. Space is limited, please bring only one small bag per person. Ask at reception of your accommodation for excess baggage storage.

Reviews (1)

Reviews of this experience

“ The next morning, Brad, arrived to take us on our two-day adventure. Brad was ...a typical Australian, nothing was a bother and his motto was "it's all good, no worries". He took us to the Oak Valley Aboriginal community where we met Craig, an Aboriginal rocker, just back from the AC/DC concert in Sydney, having driven for 28 hours... He proudly showed us around his land, explaining his heritage and by the time we were leaving I dared to address him as "cous".

And then it was off to camp, where we gathered wood and built a campfire (well, Brad was the one who actually built it), and the girls prepared the potato bake while the men stood around the barbie sipping beer. Nothing changes. Sparkling wine, steaks and potato bake under a star-filled sky. What more could you want? Brad maybe. We slept under the stars in swags which are, to the uninitiated, a sleeping bag and mattress all in one.

After a hearty hot breakfast cooked by Brad, we motored on towards Ayers Rock ...We stopped off at Kings Canyon, a spectacular sandstone gorge in Watarrka National Park, where we undertook a three and a half hour walk, the first half of which was vertical. Given that I'm no longer young and a smoker, I must admit I did lose the plot a small bit on the vertical stretch. In fact my legs started to turn to jelly, but with the constant exhortations of our hero Brad, I got to the top. We travelled around the rim of the gorge amid amazing scenery and those, unlike me, who were not afraid of being out of their depth enjoyed a swim in the water hole.

We arrived at Uluru, the Aboriginal name for Ayers Rock in time for the much talked-about sunset and it wasn't a let down. It was spellbinding and what better way to enjoy its ever changing copper, ochre and orange hues than sipping a glass of champagne.

(Irish Independent, April 25, 2010, Eleanor Goggin) ”

The-Irish-Independent reviewing 4WD Uluru Safari