

Queensland Spirit: Heart of the Outback

AATKings

BRISBANE RETURN

🕒 FIRST CHOICE

7 DAYS | OQLD

5 INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

Piercing red soils, dusty greens, endless blue horizons... this is the spirit of the outback, and your chance to experience Queensland's biggest attractions: a behind the scenes tour of Australia's largest collection of dinosaur fossils and the birthplace of Qantas among them. This outback tour offers rare glimpses into life on the land. Sleep in restored shearers' quarters on an historic working station – does it get any more Australiana? – and eco-friendly glamping tents, because we're committed to leaving a light footprint. Top off this tour with an epic rail journey that reminds you just how hypnotic the Australian countryside can be.

Highlights

📍 Local Connection

'Outback Dan' is a fifth-generation farmer at Camden Park Station. His family will woo you with outback yarns, dinner and country hospitality.

👤 Insider Knowledge

Go behind the scenes at the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum to meet working palaeontologists in Winton's fossil lab.

🌿 Cultural Immersion

Life on the land in remote Queensland can be thrilling – but also harsh. Learn what it's like on two working stations.

🌱 Sustainable Footprints

Nature releases all the good endorphins. You'll feel even better when you check into eco-friendly glamping tents under the stars.

Dining

6 Full breakfasts **B** 1 Dinner **D**
2 Lunches **L** 4 Dinners with wine **DW**

Flight Information

Day 1 – Flight to arrive the previous day into Brisbane Airport

Day 7 – Flight to depart after 15:00 from Brisbane Airport



Winton Sign

Itinerary

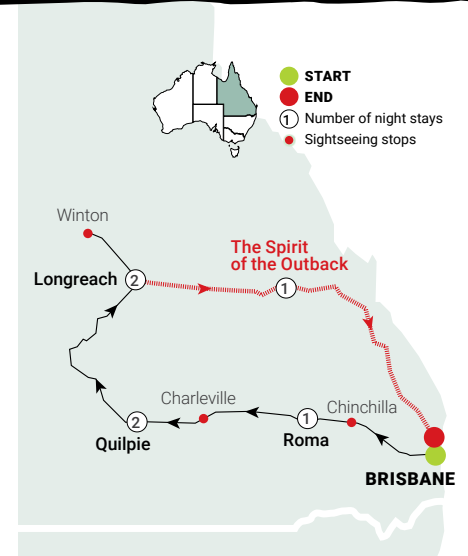
When you picture the colours of Australia, it's the ochres, dusty greens and piercing blues that come to mind. Welcome to outback Queensland. Outback exploration is undoubtedly one of the best things to do in Queensland and AAT Kings' tours will let you see all the highlights while giving you enough breathing room to truly appreciate every intriguing destination.

1 Brisbane – Roma

It doesn't take long for the towers of Brisbane to give way to bucolic countryside, fading from rainforest to the vivid hues of the outback. Small in population but big in personality, Chinchilla is the first chance to stretch your legs. The 'Big Watermelon' hints to the fact this is the melon capital of Australia. Grab a slice, or a more hearty bite to eat, at the historic Club Hotel (fun fact: it's the only hotel in town that hasn't burnt down) before you journey on to ravishing Roma. The horizons here extend for days, only matched in expanse by the smiles of locals – expect plenty of country hospitality, not at the least from Charles and Amanda who own your accommodation for the night. Toast the end of the day with them over a glass of wine and regional fare at your welcome dinner. **Hotel: Overlander Homestead. DW**

2 Roma – Quilpie

The further west you travel in Queensland, the slower the outback lifestyle. As evidenced in Charleville, which is a slice of natural paradise for the endangered bilbies and wetland birds. The locals will happily reveal the best places to spot wildlife, ideally over a cold beer and a pub meal at heritage-listed Hotel Coronas. The stories that get told here... The countryside from here to Quilpie is mesmerising – long stretches of road and vast expanses of



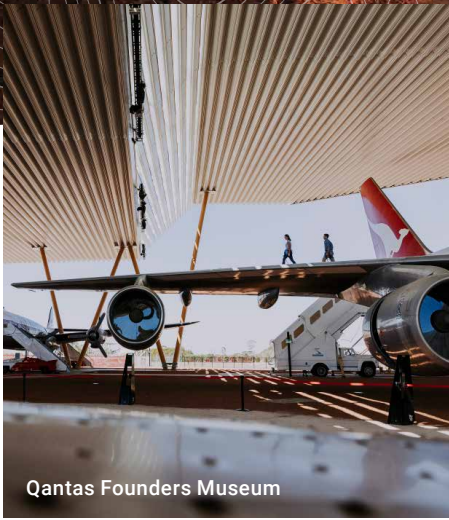
nothing can be humbling. And welcoming, as you'll discover when Mark and Sandra throw open the doors of Ray Station. The family has owned this estate since 1874, and designed the rooms you'll bed down in – set in restored shearers' quarters. But before then, there's a campfire dinner and tunes on the tin piano to be enjoyed. **Hotel: Ray Station, 2 nights. B DW**

3 Ray Station, Quilpie

There's something about being in the country that whets your appetite. Wake, and look forward to a delicious breakfast prepared by your hosts. You won't go hungry here – they're also thinking about what to cook you for lunch and dinner. It's this kind of generosity that flows naturally into eye-opening, and entertaining, stories about the property, including previous caretakers, and how they tended the land. You can even discover more about their fascinating history: at the family cemetery. Head out on a tour, fossick for



Outback Quilpie



Qantas Founders Museum



Mitchell Grass Retreat



Arno's Wall



Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum

boulder opal, and revel in the vastness of Quilpie – certainly one of the best places to visit in Queensland's vast outback. **B L DW**

4 Quilpie – Longreach

If you're looking for the centre of Queensland, Longreach is pretty much it. After waving goodbye to station life, you're bound for this patch of outback perfection, all red dirt and spinifex and blazing sunsets. There's plenty of things to do in Longreach, like visiting the Qantas Founders Museum, which pays homage to the fact this is the spiritual heart of Australia's national airline. If the idea of glimpsing 100+ years of aviation history gets your heart racing, then the vast swathes of nature that surround your glamping tent for the night will slow it down. Switch off, relax and enjoy your eco-friendly cocoon, replete with creature comforts including air-conditioning, ensuites and dreamy beds. There's also a kitchenette, so you can enjoy a BBQ on your private deck. Or venture out for more country flavour at an optional outback dinner and show. **Hotel: Mitchell Grass Retreat. 2 nights. B**

5 Longreach – Winton – Longreach

For a petite town, there's an impressive number of things to do in Winton. The biggest attraction of all are the dinosaurs that once roamed here, leaving behind the country's largest collection of dinosaur fossils. Follow in their (large) footsteps at the Australian Age of Dinosaurs, part museum, part working laboratory, where you'll go behind the scenes. Winton's other claim to fame is the fact Banjo Patterson wrote 'Waltzing Matilda' here in 1903. He's not the only creative drawn here. Graeme Leak created a fence that can be played as an instrument (aka the Musical Fence), and Arno Grotjahn erected a quirky art wall studded with every household object imaginable. The unexpected stories continue at Camden Park Station, a 7,300-hectare sheep and cattle station where fifth-generation farmer 'Outback Dan' will tell you about life on the land... including the visit of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. They didn't have a three-course dinner awaiting them in historic shearing shed; you do. **B DW**

6 Longreach – Brisbane

Australia has its fair share of epic outback train tours that let you witness the wild beauty of a region while travelling the historic routes taken

by past generations. Among them is Spirit of the Outback, your chariot back to Brisbane on the last leg of your adventure. Exclusive access to the train's Shearers Rest Lounge means you can enjoy a glass of bubbles while remote towns and vast stretches of bush zip by outside, the click-clack of the rails a meditative soundtrack. Dinnertime in Tuckerbox Restaurant celebrates Queensland's culinary bounty. And then your plush cabin awaits. Sweet dreams. **Private Cabin: Spirit of the Outback. B L D**

7 Brisbane

Wake up to vistas of the Queensland outback and savour the scene over coffee and your final breakfast in the train's dining carriage. As the Brisbane River and the city's gleaming towers come into view, you know your adventure is about to end. But what joy it has sparked for future outback tours. **B**



Outback Dinner Add-On

Smithy's Outback Dinner and Show

That free evening on day four? How better spent than enjoying a camp-oven dinner beside the river in Longreach. Enjoy drinks at sundown before sitting down to a two-course meal. As tasty as the food is, this experience is all about the entertainment, with Smithy's crew entertaining with songs and stories that speak to the soul of the Queensland outback. If the billy tea and damper don't win you over, then the bedazzlement of stars overhead surely will.