



Peter O'Leary in association with Specialty Travel presents the

15 Day Best of the Outback & Corner Country Tour

**Including Ray Station, travelling on the famous Birdsville,
Strzelecki & Oodnadatta Tracks, Lake Eyre, Arkaroola, Lightning
Ridge, Cubbie Station & more!**

Tuesday 17th August to Tuesday 31st August 2010

Day 1: Tuesday 17th Rockhampton - Roma (D)

Pick up: Yeppoon Rail 5.00am, Emu Park 5.20am, Northside Plaza 6.00am, South Mobil 6.15am, Gracemere 6.30am, Airport 6.45am.

We begin our tour to Corner Country today by joining our Virgin flight DJ1232 at 7.45am from Rockhampton to **Brisbane**. Upon arrival we will be met by our luxury coach to take us west via Toowoomba for lunch to Roma for our overnight accommodation.

Roma Explorers Inn, Roma 07 4620 1400

Day 2: Wednesday 18th Roma – Charleville (BLD)

Heading further west we arrive into **Charleville**, in time to enjoy the rich nostalgia of the historic **Corones Hotel** for lunch in this magnificent “old pub”, circa 1929. Charleville is the centre of a rich pastoral district and was a frontier town with its own brewery and registered bullock teams. Cobb & Co also had a coach building factory here. Ross and Keith Smith landed with engine trouble on their first flight from London to Sydney in 1919. This evening there is the opportunity to visit Charleville’s newest attraction, the **Cosmos Centre**. Experience seven interactive displays and two short films designed to catch your interest about the ancient star gazers from different cultures. Enjoy the Meteorite Talk and take the opportunity to hold ‘rocks from space’ in your hands. Tonight we can enjoy the open-air observatory and view the outback night sky.

Charleville Motel, Charleville 07 4654 1566

Day 3: Thursday 19th Charleville to Ray Station (BLD)

After a hearty breakfast we depart bound for **Myendetta Homestead**, 30 kilometres west of Charleville. Myendetta Homestead is something straight out of the pages of history. First built in 1908 it remains in the hands of the same family. We will enjoy morning tea as we discover the historically and architecturally significant homestead while learning how the occupants have changed over the years. Then its onward to **Quilpe** to visit the unique **Opal Alter** before arriving to a country welcome at Ray Station. **Ray Station** was settled in 1874 by Patsy and Sarah Tully (nee Durack). The legendary Tully and Durack families pioneered the pastoral industry in this region with the property having been passed down from generation to generation to this day. Tonight we will be treated to a 3 course dinner and entertainment with poetry and guitar music.

Ray Station, via Charleville 07 4656 4737

Day 4: Friday 20th Ray Station (BLD)

This morning we will enjoy a Tully – Durack Tour, take in the **water run**, visit the **Four Mile** and **Boundary Rider's hut**. The family cemetery is steeped in history and is an interesting walk through time, the **opal fields** and the **aboriginal rock holes** on the property. Our day finishes with an interesting film shown of the property's history.

Ray Station, via Charleville 07 4656 4737

Day 5: Saturday 21st Ray Station to Birdsville (BLD)

We have an early start this morning as we continue through the western region of Outback Queensland. Our comfort stop is in Windorah, then we enjoy our picnic lunch at Betoota. Our destination today is **Birdsville**. Initially developed as a customs depot for livestock movement between South Australia and Queensland, Birdsville was formerly known as **Diamantina Crossing**. Later the name Birdsville was adopted believing to be on account of the prolific bird life in the district. Many of Australia's pioneering European explorers travelled through the Birdsville district well before the town was gazetted. Monuments to acknowledge the feats of Captain Charles Sturt, Burke & Wills, Madigan and others are located throughout the town. We will stop a short distance out of town to view the "**Big Red**" – the biggest sand hill in the desert. On arrival, we take in the sights (the famous race track) and visit the **Working Museum** for a guided tour into yesteryear. Our accommodation this evening is in the famous **Birdsville Pub**.

Birdsville Hotel, Birdsville 07 4656 3244

Day 6: Sunday 22nd Birdsville to Marree (BLD)

Departing Birdsville we head south taking the famous **Birdsville Track** as it begins its long path into and across South Australia. It skirts some of the driest areas of Australia passing between the Simpson, Sturt's Stony, the Strzelecki and Tirari Deserts. It was developed as a stock route for drovers bringing cattle from the stock grazing country to Marree's railway. On our travels today we will pass many artesian bores, ruins at Lake Harry, Killalpaninna Lutheran Mission Memorial and after passing the Dog Fence we arrive into **Marree**. This tiny outback town marks the junction of the infamous Birdsville Track with *the Oodnadatta Track*. Marree (originally Heggot Springs in the camel train days) is an old rail head and until recently the Ghan used to travel through. It is now a small service town for the vast properties of the area. After our long day we will be ready for a freshen up before dinner at our accommodation.

Marree Hotel, Marree 08 8675 8344

Day 7: Monday 23rd Marree – William Creek – Marree (BLD)

Today is the opportunity to experience the totally unique views of **Lake Eyre** and **The Painted Desert** by air. We will travel west to **William Creek** along the infamous **Oodnadatta Track**. William Creek is one of the smallest towns in South Australia and is often busier with parked aircraft than vehicles. Here, we have flights available for an optional excursion. This is a spectacular chance to see Australia's most hidden iconic landmarks. The Painted Desert is an area of 30 by 10 kilometres of sandstone hills in pristine condition and incredible colours. No roads exist in this area and can only be viewed by air. Enjoy the visual extremities of Lake Eyre, Australia's largest inland lake, with its amazing colours and patterns that become accentuated from the air whether full of water or totally dry. A captivating flight will return you both visually impacted and educationally enriched. For those who prefer their feet on the ground the **William Creek Hotel** has an almost legendary status and is the only 'watering hole' on the Oodnadatta Track between Marree and Oodnadatta. With the closure of the hotel at Tarcoola, the William Creek pub is the only iron hotel left trading in South Australia.

Marree Hotel, Marree 08 8675 8344

Day 8: Tuesday 24th Marree – Arkaroola (BLD)

Departing Marree we head south to Leigh Creek. From Copley we travel east to the **Gammon Ranges National Park** and into Arkaroola. This afternoon we enjoy one of the tour highlights! We join the spectacular **Arkaroola Ridge Top 4WD Tour**. Prepare yourself for breathtaking views over mountains as we travel aboard these open 4WD vehicles. Your informative guide will pause en route to point out various flora, fauna, geological formations and points of interest. See towering granite peaks, razor-backed quartzite ridges slashed by precipitous gorges, creeks with cool, deep waters framed by stately gums, rare wallabies and other marsupials. After dinner, for those that wish to, there is an option to visit the **Astrological Observatory** (own expense). View the brilliant night sky through a powerful telescope and discover the magic of the universe. (Subject to weather conditions)

Arkaroola Tourist Resort, Arkaroola 08 8648 4848

Day 9: Wednesday 25th Arkaroola – Innamincka (BLD)

After breakfast, we farewell Arkaroola and take the **Strzelecki Track** north to **Innamincka**. This track was possibly even more hazardous than the Birdsville track because it relied on waterholes, dams and wells. During periods of drought this track was closed for years at a time but now it has been realigned to serve Moomba and Innamincka. The Innamincka region is best known historically because of its association with the tragedy of Burke and Wills expedition but more recently it has become identified as a gas and oil area. Set in a desert region, it relies heavily on water from North Queensland to refill Cooper Creek.

Innamincka Hotel, Innamincka 08 8675 9901

Day 10: Thursday 26th Innamincka – Tibooburra (BLD)

The Innamincka region is best known historically because of its association with the tragedy of Burke and Wills expedition but more recently it has become identified as a gas and oil area. Set in a desert region, it relies heavily on water from North Queensland to refill Cooper Creek. We will visit **the Dig Tree site** (the base from which Burke and Wills set off for the Gulf of Carpentaria and the scene of their tragic return to find the camp deserted and a carving on a large coolibah tree telling them where to dig for supplies) We then head south to **Tibooburra** the hottest and most isolated outback town in New South Wales. Of interest in town is the **Botanic Gardens**. A few decades ago artists, fascinated by the desert, came to the town to paint. They seem to have felt that any flat surface was worthy of their daubings because there are still original works by Clifton Pugh, Russell Drysdale and Rick Amor on the walls of the Family Hotel.

Family Hotel Motel, Tibooburra 08 8091 3314

Day 11: Friday 27th Tibooburra – Bourke (BLD)

This morning we continue to **Bourke** heading east via **Wanaaring** some 200 kilometres north-west of Bourke in outback New South Wales. The tiny town of Wanaaring sits on the banks of the Paroo River. Out here the colours of the outback are striking – a vast blue sky and glaring red dirt. There's not much to the town – a store, police station and primary school and of course the local pub called the Outback Inn where we will make a lunch stop today. Arriving into Bourke we'll take in the sights of the town and see some of the wonderful historic buildings such as The Old London Bank (1888) Courthouse (1900) Post office (1880) and Post Office Hotel (1888). At the corner of Mitchell and Wilson Streets is the Carriers Arms Inn, frequented by Henry Lawson in the early 1890s and mentioned in some of his stories. Also on our itinerary is the **"Back of Bourke Exhibition"** which was opened in 2002 as well as the Bourke Cemetery to see the grave of Fred Hollows.

The Major Mitchell Motel, Bourke 02 6872 2311

Day 12: Saturday 28th Bourke – Lightning Ridge (BLD)

We start our day travelling east through Brewarrina and Walgett where we will head north to **Lightning Ridge**. **Lightning Ridge** is a rich opal field, famous as the only source of black opal in the world. With its stark and scarred landscape this town has a peculiar fascination for visitors. Opals can be purchased direct from the miners while the novice fossicker can occasionally stumble across a choice stone among the heaps of mullock known locally as 'shincracker'. We had to the pub for a well earned lunch before we begin our touring. This afternoon, a local guide will join us on the coach for a sight seeing tour of the town. One of the more unusual sights will be **Amigos Castle** – a castle built from ironstone by a local resident. We will also see the **Astronomers Monument**, the Hot Artesian Pool, and an open cut opal mine. Mid afternoon we arrive at the **Walk-In-Mine** where we can experience the atmosphere of an underground mine. Our time here includes a video presentation and explanation about opal mining. We then visit the showroom to view the opals that came from the mines in this area. We check into our accommodation to freshen up. Tonight we have an unusual treat. At the **Black Queen** we will enjoy a tour of the historic buildings by Kerosene Light followed by an outdoor evening meal and a "million stars evening extravaganza"!

Wallangulla Motel, Lightning Ridge 02 6829 0542

Day 13: Sunday 29th Lightning Ridge – Dirranbandi (BLD)

We have another underground mine experience this morning and it's unique! At the **Chamber of the Black Hand** we go 11.2 metres underground to explore hand carved images sculptured out of the sandstone walls and pillars of an old opal mine. We then tour the old opal mine that was started over 100 years ago. Mid morning we board the coach, leave Lightning Ridge and head north to **Dirranbandi**. At the centre of a cotton-growing area, Dirranbandi's population almost doubles at harvest time when backpackers flock into town to pick the crop. Nearby Cubbie Station is believed to be the largest, privately-owned cotton farm in the Southern Hemisphere and we have arranged a visit to the station tomorrow. We enjoy lunch before our local guide joins the coach to show us around the area. The remainder of the afternoon is free to relax.

Dirranbandi Hotel Motel 07 4625 8299

Day 14: Monday 30th Cubbie Station – Goondiwindi (BLD)

Following a hearty breakfast, we're ready to begin our touring. Today we visit **Cubbie Station** which covers 200,000 acres and with 35,000 of these used to grow cotton, the scale of **Cubbie Station** is awe inspiring. Our guide will take us on an interesting tour before returning to Dirranbandi for lunch. This afternoon, we make our way to Goondiwindi for our final night's accommodation.

Country Comfort Goondiwindi 07 4671 4560

Day 15: Tuesday 31st Goondiwindi – Brisbane Airport – Home (B)

Our final day of our Corner Country tour – after breakfast we travel via Warwick to the Brisbane Airport to connect with our Virgin flight DJ1245 back to Rockhampton . We'll arrive home with some amazing memories after travelling to parts of the Outback that a lot of Australians have yet to experience!

Return Times: Airport 5.15pm, Mobil 5.30pm, Gracemere 5.45pm, Northside Plaza 6.00pm, Emu Park 6.40pm, Yeppoon Rail 7.00pm

TOUR COST: \$4145.00 Per Person

\$790.00 single supplement

****Flights to Brisbane & return are included provided the booking is made before 14th May 2010. Specialty Travel is unable to guarantee the above price if booking is made after the 14th May 2010**** (Includes airline luggage surcharge for 1 suitcase per person)

Tour Inclusions

- 14 nights motel accommodation 14 cooked breakfasts, 14 dinners, 13 lunches
- Lunch at the Coronas Historical Hotel, Charleville
- Entry to the Cosmos Centre, Charleville
- Visit to Myendetta Homestead for tour and morning tea
- Lunch at the Imperial Hotel, Quilpie
- Visit to the Opal Alter, Quilpe (St Finbarr's Catholic Church)
- Ray Station all inclusive
- Picnic lunch ex Ray Station
- Entry to the Birdsville Working Museum
- Lunch at the Mungerannie Roadhouse
- Lunch at the William Creek Hotel
- Lunch at Arkaroola Tourist Resort
- 4WD Ridgetop Tour, Arkaroola
- Picnic lunch ex Arkaroola
- Lunch at the Wanaaring Outback Inn
- Entry to the "Back of Bourke" exhibition
- Lunch at Lightning Ridge
- Guided tour of Lightning Ridge & entry to Walk In mine
- Entry to Black Queen, Lightning Ridge
- Entry to the Chamber of the Black Hand, Lightning Ridge
- Lunch at Dirranbandi Pub & Tour of Dirranbandi
- Guided Tour of Cubbie Station (pending)
- Lunch at Dirranbandi Pub
- Lunch at historical Nindigully Pub

NOT Included

- Painted Desert or Lake Eyre Scenic flights ex William Creek (optional).
- Astrological Observatory, Arkaroola (optional)

For bookings please fill out attached booking form and return to Peter with a \$500 Deposit.

Any queries please phone Peter on 49112644

SpecialtyTravel Lic. – TAG1430 Member of Travel Compensation Fund

Terms & Conditions

The tour operator reserves the right -

To vary the itinerary in anyway at anytime it deems necessary.

To amend the price subject to any changes imposed by other tour operators and carriers included in the itinerary. The operation and provision of services from other tour operators and carriers included in the itinerary is the responsibility of these operations and no responsibility is taken by the travel company for the failure of such operators to provide the nominated service.

To cancel or postpone the tour due to insufficient numbers or as the result of circumstances outside the company's control that in the opinion of the company would adversely effect the operation of the tour

The company accepts no responsibility for damage or loss of personal belongings and suggests that suitable insurance be effected for protection of the same.

The company does not accept responsibility or liability for delays, accidents, injury, irregularity or damage caused by other transport companies used for connection tours operated by this company.

Cancellations

Cancellation fees may be levied in accordance with notice given. Unless specifically advised at the time of booking there will be no fee for cancellations made more than 2 months prior to travel. For cancellations between 1 and 2 months of the date of travel, cancellation fees may apply as per conditions imposed by other suppliers of services included in the tour. For cancellations between 30 and 14 days, a cancellation fee of up to 30% of the fare may apply. For cancellations less than 14 days, a cancellation fee of up to 50% of the fare may apply. For no shows a 100% cancellation fees may apply.

Fares & Payments

Fares quoted are subject to alteration. However no change will be made after the final balance has been paid. A deposit of \$500 is required to confirm the booking with the balance due at least 45 days prior to departure.

Inclusions

Inclusions for each tour are shown on the itinerary. As a general rule, tours include dinner, bed, breakfast and entry fees to various attractions and cruises etc. Meals included are identified by the symbols, B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner.

Exclusions

Meals not specified, optional tours, room service, telephone calls, drinks and other items of a personal nature.

Accommodation

Wherever possible, rooms are self-contained with private bathroom, colour television, tea and coffee making facilities and heating/air conditioning. Persons wanting a single room must pay a single supplement.

Departure Details

Passengers are requested to ready for departure at least 15 minutes prior to departure time. Departure details and times will be advised either at the time of booking or final payment.

Travel Insurance

Is not included but is strongly recommended and available if required for an additional cost. (Approx \$111.00)



BOOKING FORM – DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Post: - 2 Cypress Court
Brightview, Q. 4311
Phone (07) 49112644 Fax (07) 5427 9205

TOUR NAME: _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____
(Please supply names as per Passport/Licence)

Surname (1) _____ Given Name/s _____ Title _____

Surname (2) _____ Given Name/s _____ Title _____

Preferred Name (if different from above) 1. _____ 2. _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Mobile _____

Email: _____ Have CHA Name Badge: Yes / No (Please circle one)

Concession Card Numbers: (if any) 1. _____ 2. _____

Preferred Accom: Twin/Double Bed _____ Twin Share or Single Supp: _____

Dietary Requirements: (If Any) _____

TRAVEL INSURANCE (strongly recommended) Yes No Date of Birth _____
Date of Birth: _____

\$500 Deposit per person required with booking. Final Balance due 45 days prior to departure.

PAYMENT METHOD – Cheque, Credit Card or Direct Deposit

Cheque: (Please make payable to SPECIALTY TRAVEL)

Direct Deposit: (If using this method please phone me on 49112644 and advise when done)

Specialty Travel Trust Account: Westpac BSB 034210 ACC. 137027

Credit Card Type: (Please Circle one) Mastercard Visa Amex (Merchant fees apply)

This is to confirm that I, the Cardholder : _____
(Full name as it appears on your credit card)

Have read and accept the Terms & Conditions of Specialty Travel as stated online and/or in their brochures and authorize Specialty Travel to charge the following credit card for deposit and/or final payment:

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____ CCV: _____

Amount: \$ _____ Signature: _____

**Please return completed forms by one of following
Make sure you phone your booking through first!!**

**Post: Peter O'Leary, 2 Cypress Court, Brightview 4311
Direct Fax: 5427 9205
Email: peter@specialty.travel Direct Phone: 4911 2644**