



RAILWAY ADVENTURES IN 2021

QUEENSLAND SAVANNAH



WITH SCOTT MCGREGOR AND FRIENDS

30 MAY - 08 JUNE 2021

15 - 21 AUGUST 2021

• THE GULF COUNTRY • QUEENSLAND SAVANNAH • CAIRNS AND THE TROPICS •
• THE GULFLANDER • THE SAVANNAHLANDER • THE BALLY HOOLEY STEAM RAILWAY •

INTRODUCTION

Welcome aboard this character-filled tour, a rare opportunity to explore Far North Queensland's Savannah country by coach, boat, plane and train featuring Australia's most eccentric and iconic outback railways. You will fly from Cairns to the Gulf of Carpentaria where your journey continues by train across the wide Savannah on the *Gulflander* and the *The Savannahlander* where your journey reveals the rugged outback, over the high tablelands and on down through the rainforest to the coast. Enjoy time in Normanton and Karumba on the Gulf, the stunning Cobbold Gorge, the intriguing Undara Lava Tubes, and finally the holiday hub of Cairns. Your tour is topped off by a day trip to the Port Douglas markets, a journey on the Bally Hooley Steam Railway, and visits to Mossman Gorge and the Atherton Tableland. All along the way you'll enjoy culinary delights, meet wonderful outback characters and be bowled over by the variety of entertaining experiences on this one-of-a-kind outback adventure.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Three vastly different, character-filled, heritage train journeys
- Private coach excursions to Port Douglas, Atherton and Croydon
- Scenic flight over Far North Queensland to the Gulf Country
- Boat trip to a private sand island in the Gulf for a sunset soiree
- Fascinating guided Cobbold Gorge and Undara Lava Tube experiences
- Two days' gentle travel on the iconic outback Savannahlander train
- 2 nights at the wonderful Cobbold Gorge resort with excursions
- Characters, scenery and iconic journeys from the desert to the tablelands and rainforest.

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADERS

ONE OF US WILL BE YOUR HOST

(check with the office for the leader of the tour on the date you choose)



SCOTT MCGREGOR

A Mudgee native, Scott has been involved in the media for over 30 years as an actor, presenter, writer and producer. His love of travel, particularly railway travel, is where his passion now lies. Graduating from NIDA in 1979, he appeared in a wide range of stage, film and TV roles and presented numerous prime-time ratings winners like *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Room for Improvement*. He presented two series of his own *Railway Adventures* for Channels 7 and 10 and programs for *The History Channel*. He established *Railway Adventures* in 2012 and owns and operates RUWENZORI—an Orient Express-style tourist retreat on the Great Dividing Range near Mudgee.



CHRIS HARDING

Vice President of the Australian Railway Historical Society, NSW Division, Chris fell under the spell of rail as a child, where he watched trains in action at the Enfield Railway Yards, then home to over 300 steam locomotives. Chris continued to have an active interest in railway history as a tour guide and office-bearer at the NSW Rail Transport Museum in Thirlmere. He is a popular media contact for commentary on historic and current railway events, frequently appearing on talkback radio and television programs. Although retired, Chris still enjoys working with Scott, hosting many railway adventures in Australia and around the world.



ROBERT KINGSFORD-SMITH

Robert has built on his childhood passion for railways of the 1960s, by embarking on a quest to record the world's disappearing steam locomotives on film. His often adventurous travels have taken him to over forty countries and the resulting photographs and articles have appeared in numerous publications in Australia and overseas. More recently he has become the celebrated tour leader on many *Railway Adventure* tours through Outback Queensland, India and Sri Lanka. His passion for history and wildlife has been well served on his travels and he combines his interests with regular and extensive train travel.



MIKE CONDON

Mike was born into a railway family with connections to Queensland Rail stretching back to the 1890s. Inspired by railway books and antiquities as a child, Mike soon found opportunities to travel with his father on locomotives. A career in media as a producer and director afforded Mike the professional skills to record his experiences by photographing and filming railways. For over 30 years, Mike has been trackside and on-board trains capturing unique scenes of railway journeys. His career has gifted him the opportunity to meet a very wide range of people from diverse backgrounds and he thoroughly enjoys engaging with new fellow travellers.

TOUR MAP



SOME WAYS YOU'LL TRAVEL

We have selected a variety of highly acclaimed and unusual train trips, private luxury coaches for off-train travel, and other appealing ways of exploring this fascinating and ancient land. Here are just a few:



The Gulflander



The Savannahlander



The Bally Hooley Steam Railway

WHY TRAVEL WITH US

The joy of travel is not confined to the destination. How you travel is a large and rich part of the experience. Railway Adventures offers a truly unique perspective on some of the world's most spectacular destinations, with the confidence that the journey will be just as magical and memorable as what you discover at the end of the line.

WITH US, YOU CAN CONFIDENTLY EXPECT:

- **Small group sizes** — a small number of passengers per trip guarantees an intimate experience with less time spent queuing, more time with your guide, and better access to sightseeing destinations.
- **Unique itineraries** — every itinerary has been meticulously developed by a team of expert travellers with many years' experience, an intimate knowledge of the destination, and with great cultural awareness. You are guaranteed to experience the best that each destination has to offer.
- **Authentic local experiences** — whether it's a little-known yet impressive steam railway, a small boutique hotel or an authentic restaurant, know that you will experience something special on our tours.
- **Expert local guides and operators** — we employ local guides to share their passion for and knowledge of the place they call home, while our partners on the ground provide the best possible support and backup all the way.
- **Customer satisfaction** — our testimonials speak for themselves. Thousands have travelled with us over the years and many come back year after year, often bringing friends along. On our customer satisfaction ratings, over 97% would recommend us to others and/or travel with us again.
- **Fully escorted** — our team of tour leaders is experienced and capable, entertaining and considerate, and together with our local guides, has your needs well covered. They will help with everything along the way, providing peace of mind, and allowing you to relax and enjoy the journey. And you'll find them jolly good company to boot!

Day 1 • Sunday: Cairns

Arrive in Cairns and check in to our centrally-located hotel. In the evening we'll meet for a celebratory welcome dinner and drinks.

Overnight: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (D)

Day 2 • Monday: Cairns - Normanton - Karumba

This morning we board our flight from Cairns to Normanton. On arrival in Normanton, we will transfer to the train station for a 40-minute trip on the RM60, the Normanton Station's 78-year-old vintage rail motor. One of the highlights is watching the driver start the motor with a crank handle! After exploring Normanton and some free time for lunch at the local pub, we will transfer to Karumba and settle into our accommodation for the next two nights.

Overnight: Ash's Holiday Units or End of the Road Motel, Karumba (B, L, D)

Day 3 • Tuesday: Karumba

The morning is yours to enjoy this little town located on the Gulf of Carpentaria. It's a chance to take a break from the busy schedule to just relax. Walk out to the point or along the estuary or perhaps take an optional morning tour by boat or visit the Barramundi Discovery Centre (both subject to availability).

We gather in the late afternoon to join the Luxury Sand Island Sunset Dinner Cruise. Our little boat takes off from Karumba out into the Gulf waters. Watch the sky and sea turn to fire while relaxing on Sun Island with a dinner of Gulf mud crab, banana prawns, a specialty fish dish, tropical fruit platters and ice-cold drinks.

Overnight: Ash's Holiday Units or End of the Road Motel, Karumba (B, D)

Day 4 • Wednesday: Karumba - Normanton - Croydon - Cobbold Gorge

After breakfast we roll back across the flood plains and grasslands to Normanton and board the legendary Gulflander. Also known as the Tin Hare, the old rail motor has traversed the line between Normanton and Croydon every Wednesday for over a century on a unique line known as, "the line from nowhere to nowhere". Our driver and guard keep the commentary rolling and the whole experience is a slice of authentic Australian bush travel complete with the odd stop to drop off mail or allow wandering livestock and native animals to cross our path.

We arrive in time for lunch at the Croydon local café and then our coach takes us to the remote out-station of Cobbold Gorge Resort, arriving just after sunset where dinner is hosted on the deck of the restaurant. You are then free to have a nightcap at the bar or wander back to your cabin, marvel at the stars and enjoy the peace and quiet of this wild location.

Overnight: Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge (B, L, D)

Day 5 • Thursday: Cobbold Gorge

After a hearty bush breakfast we will join a morning tour and cruise of Cobbold Gorge. Custom-made electric boats glide through the water below the spectacularly sculptured gorge walls in an almost eerie silence, ensuring minimal disturbance to wildlife. There's every chance of seeing one of the resident freshwater crocodiles!

After lunch we will board our all-terrain vehicle for a tour of Robin Hood Station (supposedly named because it adjoined the Sherwood mining lease), a 1284-square-kilometre cattle grazing property run by third-generation cattleman, Simon Terry and his wife Gaye. On your station tour you will visit the cattle yards, dams and outbuildings, hearing rare insights into the cattle grazing industry and relaxing over a traditional outback 'smoko'.

You can also take a helicopter joy flight to see this spectacular country from the air.

Overnight: Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge (B, L, D)

Day 6 • Friday: Forsyth - Mount Surprise

Staff from Cobbold Gorge Tours will transfer us to Forsyth where we board the Savannahlander for the first stage of its 500-kilometre journey to Cairns. Departing Forsyth Station, the terminus of the Chillagoe Railway and Mining Company line built in 1910, the train traverses the Newcastle Range and later, pauses for lunch at the iconic Einasleigh Pub right beside the vast Copperfield Gorge. In the mid-afternoon, the train pulls into Mount Surprise where we will transfer to Undara for an Archway Explorer Tour. The Lava Tubes are giant volcanic caverns—the oldest in Australia and the longest on Earth. At sunset, head back to Mount Surprise, and after a hearty roast dinner wander over to the character-filled pub or settle in for some entertainment around the campfire at the village.

Overnight: Bedrock Village, Mount Surprise or Undara Experience, Undara (B, L, D)

Day 7 • Saturday: Mount Surprise - Cairns

The second leg of the Savannahlander journey to Cairns has us boarding early at Mount Surprise. The journey is full of rugged scenery and we'll make a few stops: lunch at the Railway Hotel, Almaden; Dimbulah for afternoon tea; Barron Falls and the grand Barron Gorge; and finally, into Cairns in the evening. We will stay at the centrally located Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort and enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, L, D)

Day 8 • Sunday: Cairns - Port Douglas - Cairns

We travel by air-conditioned coach to Port Douglas to shop at the famous Port Douglas Markets. The markets have been trading in locally made handmade goods for almost 20 years – they became a Cotters Market in 1998, guaranteeing that all products are made by the stallholders themselves. We will then ride on the Bally Hooley Steam Train, pulled by one of their two coal-fired steam locomotives, Speedy or Bundy. The locomotives are both over 55 years old, being the last ones used by the Mossman Sugar Mill before being replaced by diesel engines to haul the sugar cane from the fields to the region's mill.

We then travel to the Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre for a light lunch followed by a walk through the beautiful tropical rainforest in Mossman Gorge itself. Returning to Cairns in the mid-afternoon, enjoy the afternoon and evening at leisure.

Overnight: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, L)

Day 9 • Monday: Cairns - Atherton - Kuranda - Cairns

After a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, we depart for a tour of the lush volcanic region of the Atherton Tablelands. We travel up the ranges south of Cairns to Lake Barrine, an almost perfectly formed crater lake where we experience the rainforest from a cruise boat. We will pre-order lunch before the cruise so that it is ready after exploring this special environment.

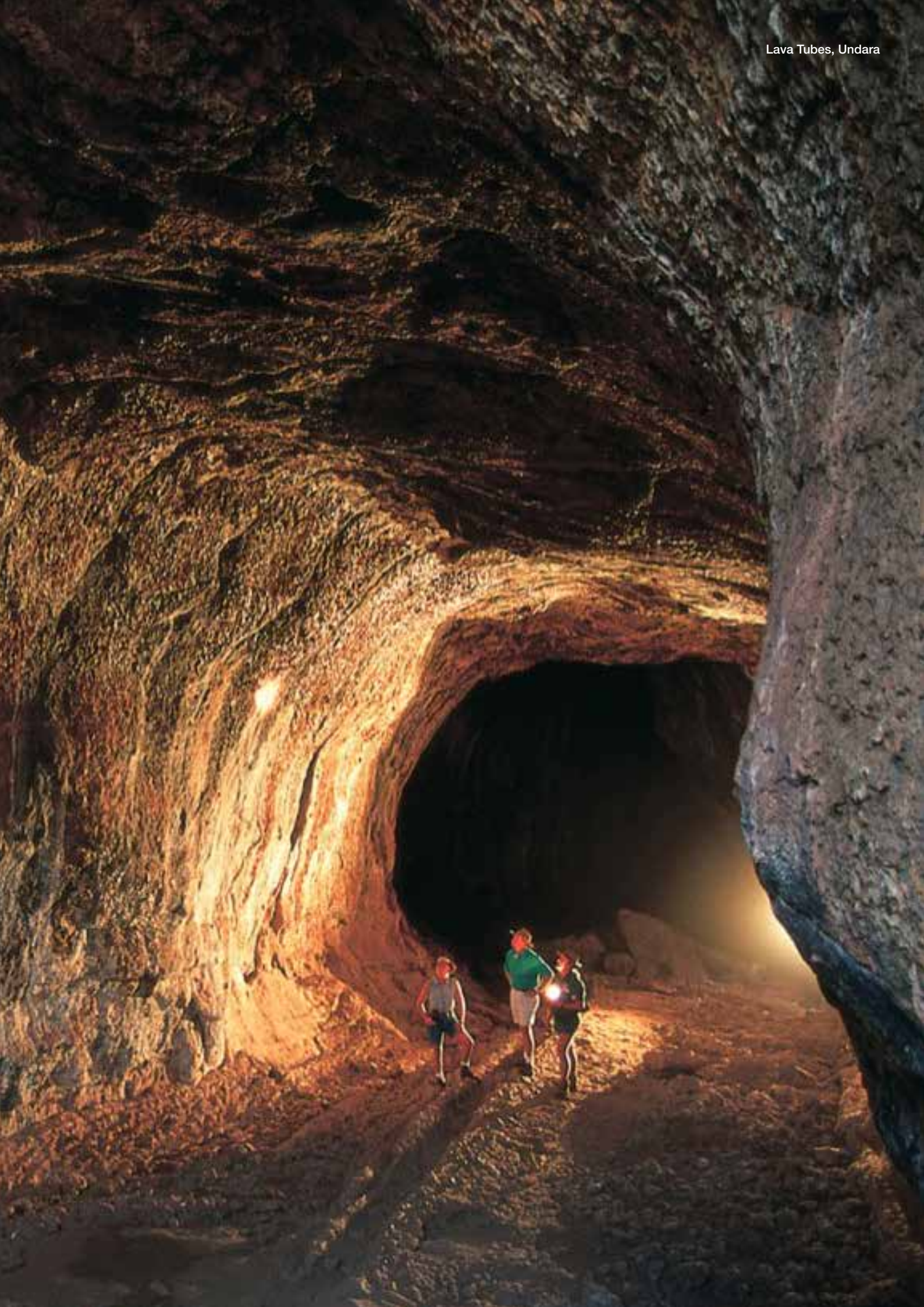
We will return to Cairns via Mareeba and onto Kuranda, "The Village in the Rainforest". The Skyrail gondola is a special experience that takes us down to the coastal plain, flying over the canopy of the rainforest and marvelling at the wonderful views across the ranges and out over the Coral Sea.

We should arrive with plenty of time to freshen up and rest before joining Robert and our fellow travellers for a delicious three-course farewell dinner at the scrumptious Raw Prawn on the colourful Cairns esplanade.

Overnight: Novotel Cairns Oasis Resort, Cairns (B, L, D)

Day 10 • Tuesday: Tour End

Breakfast is at your leisure in the hotel and then you are free to continue on your way to other awaiting adventures. Tour terminates. All out, all change. Please mind the gap! (B)





Copperfield Gorge

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 9 nights' accommodation in comfortable, 3- or 4-star hotels
- Breakfast Daily, seven lunches and eight dinners
- Economy Class flight Cairns to Normanton, 20 Kilo luggage allowance
- Complimentary drinks with welcome and farewell dinners
- Comprehensive sightseeing with expert local guides
- Excursion/entrance fees, except those listed as optional in the itinerary

WHAT WE DON'T INCLUDE

- Transport to/from Cairns for tour start and end
- Excursions/entrances listed as optional in the itinerary
- Drinks with meals (except for welcome and farewell dinners)
- Items of a personal nature e.g. telephone, laundry, minibar
- Travel insurance

FITNESS RATING



Two 'Locos' - fitness rating



Barron Falls

HOW TO BOOK

Download a booking form from our website and follow the easy steps to getting on board. Alternatively, contact us on 1300 800 977 or info@railwayadventures.com if you'd prefer a form be sent to you. Complete the form and submit it, along with your \$1000 pp deposit to secure your place on the tour.

SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

We have suggested flights for this itinerary depending on your departure point from Australia, any preferred stopovers en-route and/or your planned pre- and post-tour activities. We can also investigate your preferred airline and offer you a solution based on connection times and prices. Contact 1300 800 977 to discuss your options.

DETAILS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

We endeavour to have all the details of our tours correct at the time of printing. However, sometimes factors beyond our control may affect the final inclusions and prices. These factors may include, but not be limited to; significant fluctuations in currency exchange rates, individual hotel/restaurant decisions that may affect bookings; weather events forcing a change of itinerary; unexpected trackwork on rail lines, unexpected closure of site attractions and so forth. Therefore, items mentioned in the brochure such as quoted prices, hotels and inclusions are subject to change. If a change is imposed on us, we will endeavour to ensure the substitute is of the same quality that you've paid for.

TOUR PACE / LEVEL OF FITNESS

Our itineraries are designed to make the most of each destination, so a reasonable amount of activity is built into most days, which is why we call them adventures. Our philosophy is to offer you the best experience possible, while leaving you, our guest, the flexibility to pace yourself and choose how much or how little you want to do. Each Railway Adventures tour incorporates periods of free time for your own exploration and relaxation.

While you don't need to be a 'gym junky', a reasonable level of fitness is required for most of our tours. The ability to manage your own luggage, get on and off all manner of trains and coaches, walk for extended periods, stand comfortably, and climb steps and stairs will ensure you get the maximum enjoyment from your adventure.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

In addition to assisting with flight suggestions and bookings, we can also give you some ideas of what you could do before and after your Railway Adventure.

We can also organise your all-important Travel Insurance for you. Call our office on 1300 800 977 if you would like to discuss options.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For more information on factors such as travel insurance requirements, fitness levels, fees and charges, tour cancellations, payment schedules and so on, please refer to our Terms and Conditions, which accompany the booking form. They can also be found on our website .

SOME PLACES YOU'LL STAY

We hand pick hotels and resorts based on their location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere. Here's a selection:



Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge



Novotel Oasis Hotel, Cairns



Ash's Holiday Units

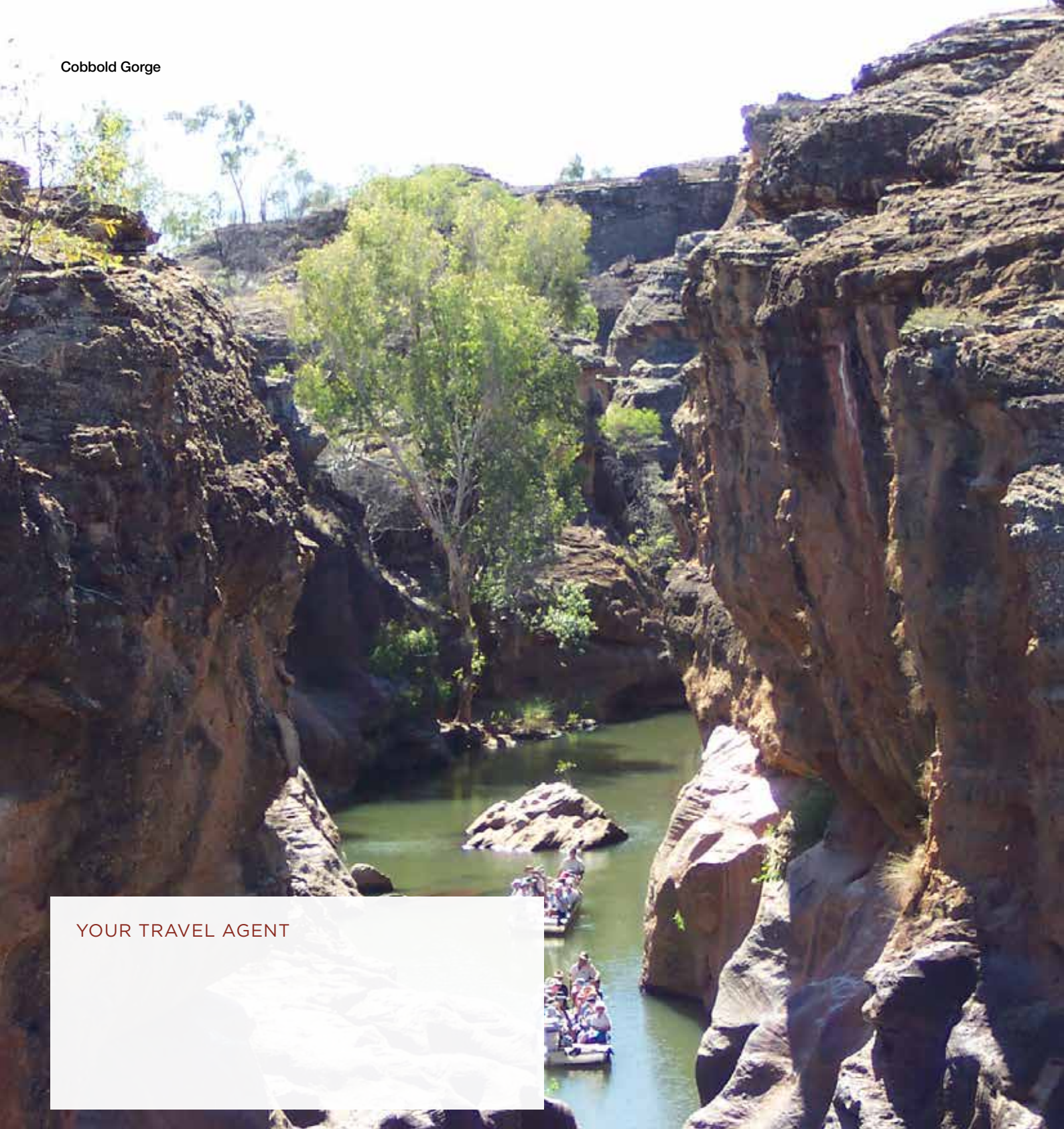


Bedrock Village, Mt Surprise

PRICE GUIDE

Per person twin share.....	\$5,185
Single supplement.....	\$685
Deposit (per person).....	\$1000 at time of booking
Final payment due by	60 days from tour departure

*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.



YOUR TRAVEL AGENT

THE RAILWAY ADVENTURES STORY

Railway Adventures was launched in 2012 by well-known Australian TV personality and self-confessed rail fan, Scott McGregor. A lifelong passion for travel has taken Scott to scores of countries and his preference for rail has seen him exploring many of the world's great train journeys, confirming his belief that the most relaxing, romantic and engaging way to see a country is by rail. He even has his own life-sized, fully-restored opulent train accommodation atop the Great Dividing Range near Mudgee, offering guests a rare and special bush retreat experience.

Since 2012 Railway Adventures has thrilled and delighted more than 1200 travellers on over 100 tours from Sweden to Sri Lanka, Tasmania to Transylvania, Britain to Burma, Venice to Vietnam and all manner of shorter adventures in our own wonderful country. Scott's numerous rail-themed TV documentaries, his ongoing involvement in rail heritage and his extensive connections with private train owners around the world, guarantee that every Railway Adventures tour is exclusive, entertaining and authentic. 15 July 2020.

TRAVEL ACCREDITED LIC #A14416



1300 800 977 railwayadventures.com

