SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

BY RAIL, ROAD AND SPECIAL STEAM TRAINS

WITH MIKE CONDON
17 - 25 MARCH 2021

• BRISBANE • TOOWOOMBA • DALBY • GYMPIE • HERVEY BAY •
INTRODUCTION

This short and sweet adventure centres on an autumn excursion along the historic and dramatic railway which formed the Queensland section of the Great northern Railway linking Sydney and Brisbane by rail in 1888. This tour of discovery on some very special railways takes you across Southern Queensland’s ranges from Brisbane to Toowoomba, then continues onto Warwick by special steam train for the historic run across the Downs and the wild Granite Belt up the range to Wallangarra. From there we turn North West and venture across the rich Darling Downs to Dalby soaking up the rural landscapes, historic homes and colonial histories. The Bunya Mountains National Park offer a rare insight into a very special botanical site, rich with Aboriginal cultural significance and from there it's a scenic drive down the ranges to Gympie and another great steam train journey along the Mary Valley. The colonial delights of Maryborough, home to the creator of Mary Poppins and just up the road the seaside town of Hervey Bay is the bookend to this varied adventure. All in all, you’ll experience a grand round trip tailor made to showcase the rich characters stories and great train journeys of Queensland’s great South East.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Steam train journeys at Swanbank from Warwick to Wallangarra and on the Mary Valley
- Museum visits to Workshops Rail, Cobb+Co, Olds Engineering and military museums
- Explore heritage railway preservation collections at Ipswich, Warwick and Gympie
- Special guided tour of the grand Jimbour historic homestead in Dalby
- Private vintage carriage on the heritage train trip from Warwick to Wallangarra
- Tilt train journey through the Sunshine Coast from Hervey Bay to Brisbane
- Explore the national parks at Girraween and the Bunya Mountains
- From the mountains, to the coast via rugged ranges, vast plains and lush hinterlands
- Comfortable coach travel and luggage transport throughout

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADER

Mike Condon

Mike Condon was born into a railway family with connections to Queensland Rail stretching back to the 1890’s, and so was destined to share this passion of his. Inspired by railway books and antiques as well as being immersed in a household operational life of Queensland Rail, 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. Mike has also worked in the production of educational content, corporate marketing and information programs, training materials for the Australian Army’s Aviation Corps, news gathering and training and operational reporting for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service. Mike has a wide range of interests including history, arts and travel. 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.
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 holiday destinations, with the confidence that the journey will be just as magical and memorable as what you find 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** — each 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 local operators** — we employ local guides to share their passion 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. Our customer satisfaction ratings show that over 97% would recommend us to others and/or travel with us again.

• **Fully-escorted** — our tour leaders are experienced and capable, entertaining and considerate, and together with our local guides have your needs well covered. They help with everything along the way, providing peace of mind, and enabling you to relax and enjoy the journey. And you’ll find them jolly good company, to boot!

SOME WAYS YOU’LL TRAVEL

The best train trips possible, private luxury coach for off-train travel and many other exciting ways to explore. Here’s a selection:

- **Southern Downs Steam Railway**
- **Mary Valley Rattler**
- **Queensland Rail’s Tilt Train**
Day 1 • Wednesday 17 March: ARRIVE BRISBANE
Arrive in Brisbane. In the evening, gather for a welcome dinner with Mike and your fellow travelers at the historic Transcontinental hotel.
Overnight: Pullman Hotel or similar, Brisbane (D)

Day 2 • Thursday 18 March: BRISBANE - TOOVOOMBA
After breakfast at the hotel, we depart for a coach visit to the award-winning Workshops Rail Museum in Ipswich. This is Australia's oldest railway workshop still in operation and home to Queensland Rail's extensive heritage collection. Here you can explore the exhibits to discover the enormous impact rail has had on the state and view the beautifully restored rolling stock as well as Queensland's largest model railway, treasured icons such as the Vice-Regal carriage and Australia's oldest working steam locomotive.
A short run down the road brings us to the Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway. Here, we enjoy a short tour by steam train down the former Swanbank coal railway that winds its way through a delightful semi-rural setting, showcasing the history and character of the location. Continuing the railway theme, we view the Bluff Railway Station, with its beautiful setting, lush hanging gardens and delightful café in the old Station Master's residence.

On the next leg we take the coach up the range to the charming garden city of Tooowoomba, where we'll check in and have some downtime before a late afternoon excursion to smell the roses at the beautifully laid-out Japanese Gardens. Just a short drive down the road is the wonderful collection at Downs Steam railway museum and depot where dinner is laid on in style in the dining car.
Overnight: Burke and Wills Hotel, Toowoomba (B)

Day 3 • Friday 19 March: TOOVOOMBA - WARWICK
This morning we take a gentle exploration of the city, its attractions and surrounds before a visit to the extensive Cobb+Co Museum with its excellent collection and stories. We continue up to Picnic Point where the large park is ablaze with spring colour, after which we’ll return to the heart of the city for some free time for lunch.

This afternoon we have our coach on hand to take us south to Warwick, pausing along the way to call into the village of Nobby, home to the atmospheric Rudd's pub, named after the celebrated Australian author Steele Rudd, and the adjacent museum to the important pioneering work of Sister Mary Kenny.

Once in Warwick you have the option to join in on a short tour of the town and the railway workshop and depot of the Southern Downs Steam Railway, the operators of the train we’ll be riding with tomorrow. Dinner this evening will be hosted at the hotel's award-winning restaurant.
Overnight: Coachman’s Inn, Warwick (B, D)

Day 4 • Saturday 20 March: WARWICK - WALLANGARRA - WARWICK
After breakfast, we head down to the station to meet our special steam-hauled train to the border town of Wallangarra. Settle into your private carriage for the leisurely run up the Great Dividing Range on the original Sydney to Brisbane railway, which dates from the 1880’s. The line is rich with ever changing scenery and sweeping views as it climbs to the top of the pass in the heart of the Granite Belt. The train pauses for morning tea at Stanthorpe before our arrival at Wallangarra on the Queensland - New South Wales border around midday. We settle in for a lavish lunch hosted on the long platform of the vast historic station, which also houses an interesting historical museum. The afternoon offering includes a short coach excursion to the Girraween National Park and the famous Chocolate Tourist Centre before a gentle meander along the back roads to Stanthorpe to re-join our heritage train for the scenic run back down the range. The return journey offers a whole new aspect of the line as the sun reclines and the valleys to the north are spread out on our approach to our base at Warwick. Your evening is free at leisure.
Overnight: Coachman’s Inn, Warwick (B, L)

Day 5 • Sunday 21 March: WARWICK - DALBY
This morning we travel by coach north to Dalby and take some time along the way to explore Jondaryan Woolshed, one of Australia’s best preserved and largest early colonial woolsheds. Further on past Dalby is the sprawling estate of Jimbour. The grand homestead was built by the Bell family in the mid 1870's and is one of the most opulent rural homesteads in the English style in Queensland. We enjoy a guided tour of the house and grounds which feature an extensive stand of Bunya Pines before returning to Dalby for the evening and dinner at the hotel.
Overnight: Kobbers Motor Inn, Dalby (B, D)

Day 6 • Monday 22 March: DALBY - BUNYA MOUNTAINS - GYMPIE
After breakfast in the hotel dining room we head out past the little village of Kaimkillenbun and Mowbullan and into the tree clad escarpment of the Bunya Mountains National Park. The Bunya Pine, Arucaria Bidwilli, is the largest of the ancient native pine family and was a culturally significant tree for the local Aboriginal tribes. The park rises more than 1,100 meters above sea level and offers sweeping views of the surrounding area. We have a chance to find out more of the unique botany and heritage at the information Centre before we take a gentle drive through this impressive forest and down the ranges to Kingaroy. You have some free time for lunch in town in the shadow of the gigantic peanut silos. Continuing toward the coast and our destination at Gympie affords the chance to settle back on the coach and enjoy the ever-changing scenery and small stops we’ll make along the way. Settle into your accommodation in Gympie and enjoy dinner at the hotel.
Overnight: Mary River Motor Inn, Gympie (or similar) (B, L, D)

Day 7 • Tuesday 23 March: GYMPIE – MARYBOROUGH – HERVEY BAY
This morning we find ourselves gravitating to the old Gympie railway station where we board the popular Mary Valley Rattler, a special vintage train that traverses the valley west along the scenic Mary River. Usually hauled by a C17 steam loco the volunteers may substitute a retro diesel loco if steam is not available for the half day excursion.
In the afternoon we’ll visit the Gympie Gold Mining and Historical Museum with its vast collection of artefacts and photographs and enjoy lunch at the café followed by a visit to Woodworks Museum with a tour of the workshop and mills. The rest of the afternoon and evening are free for you to explore and enjoy on your own.
Overnight: Mary River Motor Inn, Gympie (or similar) (B)

Day 8 • Wednesday 24 March: GYMPIE - MARYBOROUGH – HERVEY BAY
After breakfast we hit the road heading north to Maryborough where we meet Peter and Robert Olds who run a most illuminating engineering enterprise that amongst other things has constructed wheels for the Queen's royal coach and a full-size replica of Queensland's first locomotive of 1873, The 'Mary Ann'. We even get to ride on a special run of this historic relic for a short distance down the track.
After some free time for lunch you have time to look over the military museum and excellent heritage precinct including the statue to Mary Poppins and adjacent museum dedicated to its creator PL Travers. There is free time for lunch and in the afternoon we take a short drive to Hervey Bay where we take a boat trip on the bay and enjoy the late afternoon on the water before heading to our waterfront venue for a farewell dinner with Mike and the group. The rest of the evening is at leisure.
Overnight: Mantra Hervey Bay (B, D)

Day 9 • Thursday 25 March: HERVEY BAY - BRISBANE
After a morning at leisure and late check out we transfer to the station at Howard for our mid-morning departure of the Tilt train to Brisbane. We travel across the fertile coastal plain past the Glasshouse mountains and onto into the suburbs arriving at Roma St, in Brisbane at 2:50. Here our tour comes to a close and we say farewell to our group until the next adventure beckons and we take to the rails once again.
WHAT’S INCLUDED

- 8 nights in comfortable, centrally located accommodation
- 4 great train journeys
- Most meals as specified in the program
- Drinks included with welcome and farewell dinners
- Luxury chartered coach transport throughout the tour
- Comprehensive sightseeing with expert local guides
- All excursions and entrance fees to attractions, as listed in the itinerary

WHAT WE DON’T INCLUDE

- Meals and services not mentioned in itinerary
- All other personal expenses such as drinks, phone calls, laundry services, camera fees where applicable
- Excursions listed as optional and extra in the brochure

FITNESS RATING

Two ‘Locos’ - fitness rating
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.

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.

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 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.

PRICE
Per person twin share.................................$3,985
Single supplement.....................................$645
Deposit per person)...............................$500 at time of booking
Final payment due by ......................31 January 2021

SOME PLACES YOU’LL STAY
Hand-picked hotels and resorts based on location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere. Here’s a selection:

Burke & Wills Hotel, Toowoomba
Mantra Hervey Bay
Kobbers Motor Inn, Dalby
Coachmans Inn Warrick
Railway Adventures was launched in 2012 by well-known Australian TV personality and self-declared rail aficionado 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 and engaging way to see a country is by rail.

Since 2012 more than 60 tours from Sweden to Sri Lanka, Tasmania to Transylvania, Britain to Burma and Venice to Vietnam have thrilled and delighted over 800 travellers. 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 a Railway Adventures tour is exclusive, entertaining and authentic. New tours are launched regularly, inspired by new trains, new routes and the growing interest in taking a train to some of the world's most fascinating places. 11 August 2020.