



RAILWAY ADVENTURES IN 2022

Outback Queensland



With Scott McGregor, Robert Kingsford-Smith or Chris Harding
6 – 20 September 2022

• LONGREACH • WINTON • MT ISA • THE GULF COUNTRY • QUEENSLAND SAVANNAH • CAIRNS AND THE TROPICS •
• THE GULFLANDER • THE SAVANNAHLANDER • THE HERBERTON-ATHERTON HISTORIC RAILWAY •

INTRODUCTION

Welcome aboard this character-filled tour, a rare opportunity to explore Far North Queensland and the Queensland outback by coach, boat, plane and train.

Each of our tour dates have something special to offer. Our first tour, at the end of the wet season, sees the landscape lush and green, the rivers full and the air dry and warm. Then, while the southern states are still experiencing the chills of mid-winter, the clear, warm days in the Far North will have you reaching for those long-forgotten summer clothes. The springtime presents its own colour and character with longer days, subtle bush flowers and spring growth. 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.

Australia is indeed a lucky country to have such a captivating collection of great train journeys in one sweeping region. Fly to the Gulf of Carpentaria on board an island-hopping mail-plane. Your journey continues by train across the wide Savannah on the *Gulflander*. *The Savannahlander* takes you through the rugged outback, over the high tablelands and down through the rainforest to the coast. Enjoy time in Longreach, Winton, Mount Isa, Normanton and Karumba on the Gulf, the stunning Cobbold Gorge, the intriguing Undara Lava Tubes, and finally to the holiday hub of Cairns. Our tours are topped off by a day trip to the Port Douglas markets and a visit to Mossman Gorge and a day with the Herberton-Atherton Historic Railway in the Atherton Tableland.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Three heritage train journeys
- Four comfortable coach excursions
- Mail-plane flight over the Gulf Country
- Boat trip to a private sand island in the Gulf for a sunset soiree
- Fascinating Cobbold Gorge and Undara Lava Tube experiences
- Two days' gentle travel on the Savannahlander
- Characters, scenery and iconic journeys from the desert to the tablelands and rainforest.

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADERS



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.

TOUR MAP



SOME WAYS YOU'LL TRAVEL

The best train trips possible, private luxury coach for off-train travel and many other appealing modes of transport.



The Gulflander



The Savannahlander



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 • Tuesday 6 September: Arrive Brisbane

We begin our adventure with a briefing and celebratory welcome dinner and drinks at the historic Transcontinental Hotel with the group and your tour leaders setting the stage for the journey ahead.

Overnight: Pullman Hotel, Brisbane (D)

Day 2 • Wednesday 7 September: Longreach

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel and then assemble for our departure to the airport to catch our flight to Longreach.

Named after the “long reach” of the Thomson River, the town had only been gazetted for five years when the railway arrived in 1892. Longreach is situated right on the Tropic of Capricorn and has a population of just over 3,000, boosted by travellers who come to see the great museums, notably the Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame and the Qantas Founders Museum. After our early evening arrival, we take the short walk (or taxi) across the road to our accommodation which is also the location for tonight’s dinner.

Overnight: Longreach Motor Inn, Longreach (B, L, D)

Day 3 • Thursday 8 September: Longreach

After breakfast, we take the short stroll to the Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame, Australia’s premier outback heritage institution where you can explore the museum showcasing an eclectic mix of objects - touchscreens, open displays, photographs, artworks and audio-visual presentations. A fun filled live show follows before we head across the road to the Qantas Founders Museum for lunch. The Qantas Founders Museum tells the story of the four key figures who founded Qantas and highlights what life was like in Queensland in the 1920s. The history of our iconic airline unfolds as you experience a 1½-hour Jet Tour, a behind-the-scenes look at both a 747, 707 and more. Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant.

Overnight: Longreach Motor Inn, Longreach (B, L, D)

Day 4 • Friday 9 September: Longreach – Winton

This morning after breakfast, we board our private coach from Red Dirt Tours to take us the 180 kilometres to Winton and check into our heritage hotel in the heart of town. Lunch at leisure before our driver, Vicki will pick you up for the drive out to visit the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum. Here you’ll have plenty of time to wander the displays and our guide will show us around and host the walk-through Dino Canyon. To cap off the day we enjoy an early dinner at Age of Dinosaurs and visit the new Observatory which has only just opened and is a great addition to the Outback story.

Overnight: North Gregory Hotel, Winton (B, D)

Day 5 • Saturday 10 September: Winton – Mount Isa

The morning is yours to continue exploring the town and its attractions, you could explore the Waltzing Matilda Centre, the first museum in the world dedicated to a song, or just relax until it’s time to depart. You may also wish to join Viki from Red Dirt Tours who is on hand to take us on a guided tour of the wild country to the west of Winton, leading us across the outback to the exceptional Lark Quarry National Monument. It was here that the world’s best-preserved fossil and proof of a Dinosaur stampede was discovered by the local station manager in the 1960’s.

Our regular scheduled coach leaves at 12.50 pm for the journey across the wide, rugged outback, passing through Kynuna and Cloncurry to Mount Isa. After checking in to our hotel we don’t have far to travel to enjoy dinner—the private dining room in the hotel’s restaurant is the best place to go!

Overnight: Redearth Boutique Hotel, Mount Isa (B, D)

Day 6 • Sunday 11 September: Mount Isa

With a full day to explore, we start with a compact town tour travelling past the vast mine complex to the lookout and the historic Underground Hospital. In the afternoon, visit the Isa Experience and Riversleigh Fossil Centre. This is a multi-media gallery presenting the prehistoric, indigenous, cultural and mining heritage of the Mount Isa region. The gallery displays a mixture of artefacts, photographs, specimens and models as well as audio and video accounts of Mount Isa’s fascinating history. You then have some free time before we gather again in the afternoon and head out of town to visit Lake Moondarra for sunset drinks and canapes.

Overnight: Redearth Boutique Hotel, Mount Isa (B)

Day 7 • Monday 12 September: Mount Isa – Normanton – Karumba

This morning we board our flight from Mount Isa to Normanton via Doomadgee and Mornington island, hopping from one settlement to the other and flying low enough to enjoy the spectacular views of the Gulf. On arrival in Normanton, we will transfer to the train station for a 40-minute trip on the RM60 (subject to service running), 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 lunch at the local pub, we will transfer to Karumba and settle into our accommodation for the next two nights.

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

Day 8 • Tuesday 13 September: Karumba

This morning after a hearty breakfast, our friends at Karumba host a bird watching boat tour along the river and estuaries including a history of the town from the aspect of the river as the gateway to the Gulf. The rest of the morning is at leisure for you to enjoy the town and take a break from the busy schedule to just relax. You also have the option to visit the Barramundi discovery centre which your tour leader can facilitate.

We then 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 (tide and weather permitting), an intriguing and completely flat sand cay. We enjoy a light dinner of banana prawns, a specialty fish dish, tropical fruit platters and ice-cold drinks. The rest of the evening is yours to enjoy and the popular Sunset Tavern always on hand for a welcome night cap.

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

Day 9 • Wednesday 14 September: Karumba – Normanton – Croydon – Cobbold Gorge

After breakfast we roll back across the flood plains and grasslands to Normanton and board the legendary Guilflander. 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 Club Hotel in Croydon 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 Savannah location.

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

Day 10 • Thursday 15 September: 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! The gentle bush walk takes you up to the edge of the gorge and then a smart glass bottomed bridge takes you across it revealing even more aspects of this ethereal place.

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 11 • Friday 16 September: Forsayth – Mount Surprise

Staff from Cobbold Gorge Tours will transfer us to Forsayth where we board the Savannahlander for the first stage of its 500-kilometre journey to Cairns. Departing Forsayth 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, D)

Day 12 • Saturday 17 September: 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 Outback 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, 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, D)

Day 13 • Sunday 18 September: Cairns - Port Douglas – Mossman Gorge – Kuranda – Cairns

This morning we travel by air-conditioned coach to Port Douglas to shop at the famous Port Douglas Markets. The markets have been trading in local handmade goods for almost 20 years – they became a Cotters Market in 1998, guaranteeing that all products are made by the stallholders themselves.

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. We will return to Cairns and travel on to 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.

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

Day 14 • Monday 19 September: Cairns – Atherton – Kuranda – Cairns

After breakfast at the hotel, we depart for a tour of the region of the rich Atherton Tablelands. We start by travelling south across the Sugar Cane fields then up the steep Gillies Highway to the lush forests and farming country of the tablelands. First stop is the excellent Mining Museum and then we take the short run to meet the team at the Herberton Historic Railway Museum. Here we learn about the restoration work and history of the railways of the tablelands before sampling it ourselves with a run along the old line to the astounding Historic Village. You have time to explore the vast collection and witness a variety of big machines in action. We return via Mareeba and the mountain road back to Cairns.

We should arrive with plenty of time to freshen up and rest before enjoying 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 15 • Tuesday 20 September: Tour End (B)

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!



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 14 nights' accommodation in comfortable, 3- or 4-star hotels or rail sleeper cabins (or best available)
- Breakfast daily, seven lunches and eleven dinners
- 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 Brisbane for tour start and from Cairns at tour 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

FITNESS RATING



Two 'Locos' - fitness rating

The most common grading for our tours. Two loco itineraries offer many activities that require a little extra fitness – walking on uneven ground, climbing hills to enter towns or historic sites, walks of 1-3 kilometres as well as getting on and off transport. You need to have good mobility and aerobic fitness and be able to manage your own luggage.



Cattlemens' Hall of Fame, Longreach

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 \$500 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 junkie', 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.

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.

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 GUIDE

Per person twin share.....	\$7,485
Single supplement.....	\$1,089
Deposit (per person).....	\$500 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.*

SOME PLACES YOU'LL STAY

Hand-picked hotels and resorts based on location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere.



Cobbold Gorge Resort, Cobbold Gorge



Novotel Oasis Hotel, Cairns

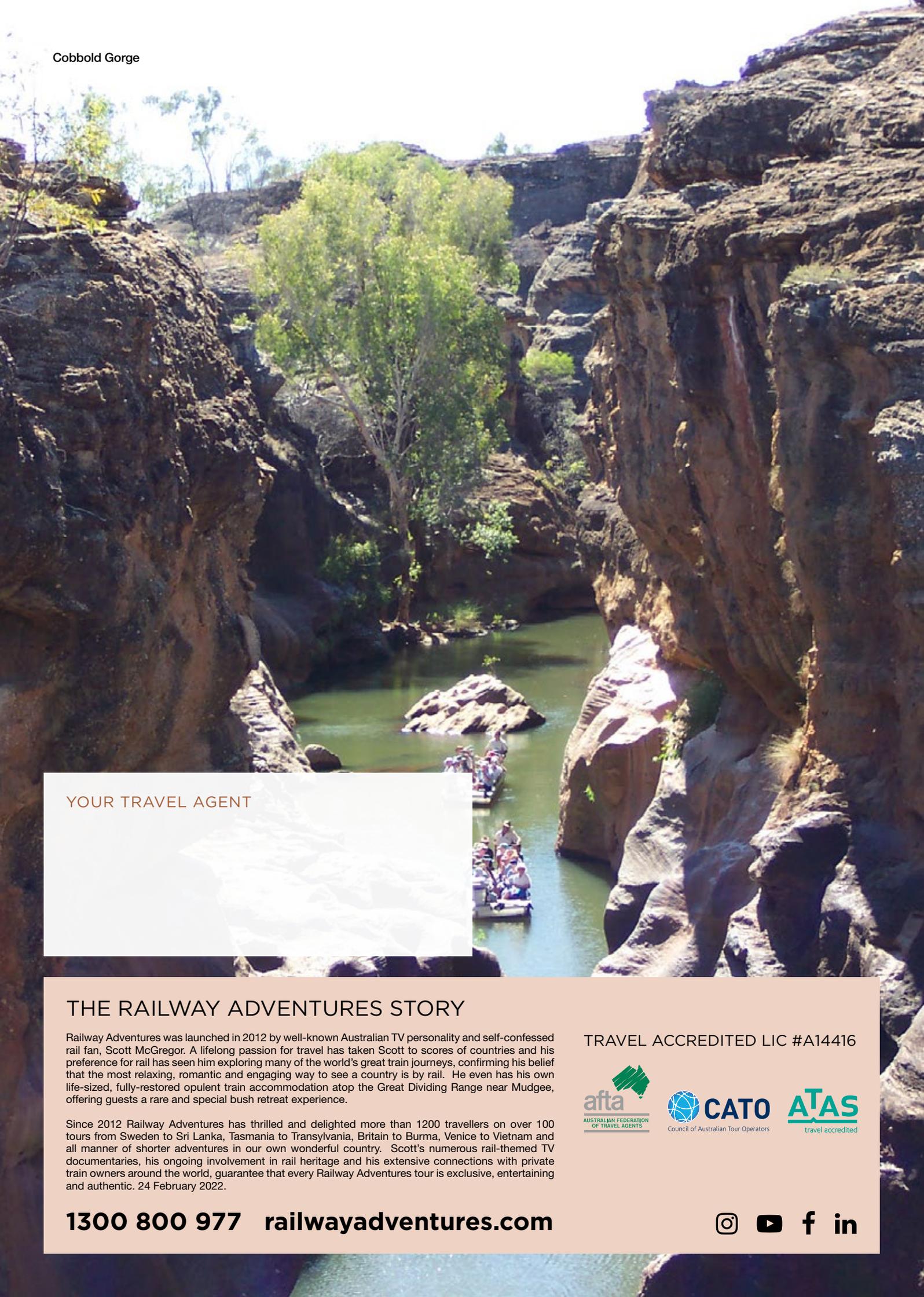


North Gregory Hotel, Winton



Bedrock Village, Mt Surprise

Please Note: Hotels of similar standard may be substituted



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. 24 February 2022.

TRAVEL ACCREDITED LIC #A14416



1300 800 977 railwayadventures.com

