



**RAILWAY  
ADVENTURES**

**2023**

# **BORNEO**

**SABAH, SARAWAK AND ANZAC DAY IN SANDAKAN**

With Bob Daniel

22 APRIL – 4 MAY 2023

• SANDAKAN • KINABATANGAN • KINABALU PARK •  
• KOTA KINABALU • LABUAN FEDERAL TERRITORY • KUCHING •



## INTRODUCTION

On this very special Asian adventure, we discover the extraordinary beauty and tragic history of North Borneo. Not only will we ride the rails in one of the world's most exotic locations, experience its abundant natural wonders, and explore fascinating cities and towns, but we'll also have the opportunity to attend the special Anzac Day dawn ceremony in Sandakan. Here we'll remember the Australian and British soldiers who tragically perished in the Death Marches of 1945.

We begin our journey in Sandakan in Borneo for the Anzac Day dawn service. Next comes a visit to the region's important wildlife rehabilitation and conservation centres. We'll visit the historic island of Labuan and discover unique wildlife at the Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort before continuing to the stunning UNESCO World Heritage-listed Kinabalu National Park. We'll then enjoy an extended stay in Sabah's capital, Kota Kinabalu and join the North Borneo Railway, a reinvigorated remote colonial line. We cap off our adventure with a trip to Sarawak and the fascinating, historic city of Kuching. Join us on this special journey through vast unspoiled natural beauty, vibrant modern cities, friendly people, and a wealth of rich stories, including a poignant legacy for remembrance and reflection.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Attend the official Anzac Day dawn service in Sandakan
- Visit the Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre and Sun Bear Conservation Centre in Sepilok
- Stay in the tranquil Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort and discover its unique flora and fauna
- Explore the beautiful Kinabalu National Park, including the spectacular Mount Kinabalu and
- Kundasung war memorial gardens
- Ride the historic North Borneo Railway steam train from Kota Kinabalu to Papar and return
- (subject to operation)
- Experience the North Borneo Railway in a private chartered railcar, along the Pandas River to Tenom
- Explore the historic main island of the Federal Territory of Labuan and visit the Commonwealth War Graves site
- Explore the historic city of Kuching, the capital of the state of Sarawak
- Visit history and culture museums in Kota Kinabalu and Kuching
- Enjoy the knowledge and insights of expert English-speaking guides throughout



Bornean Rainforest

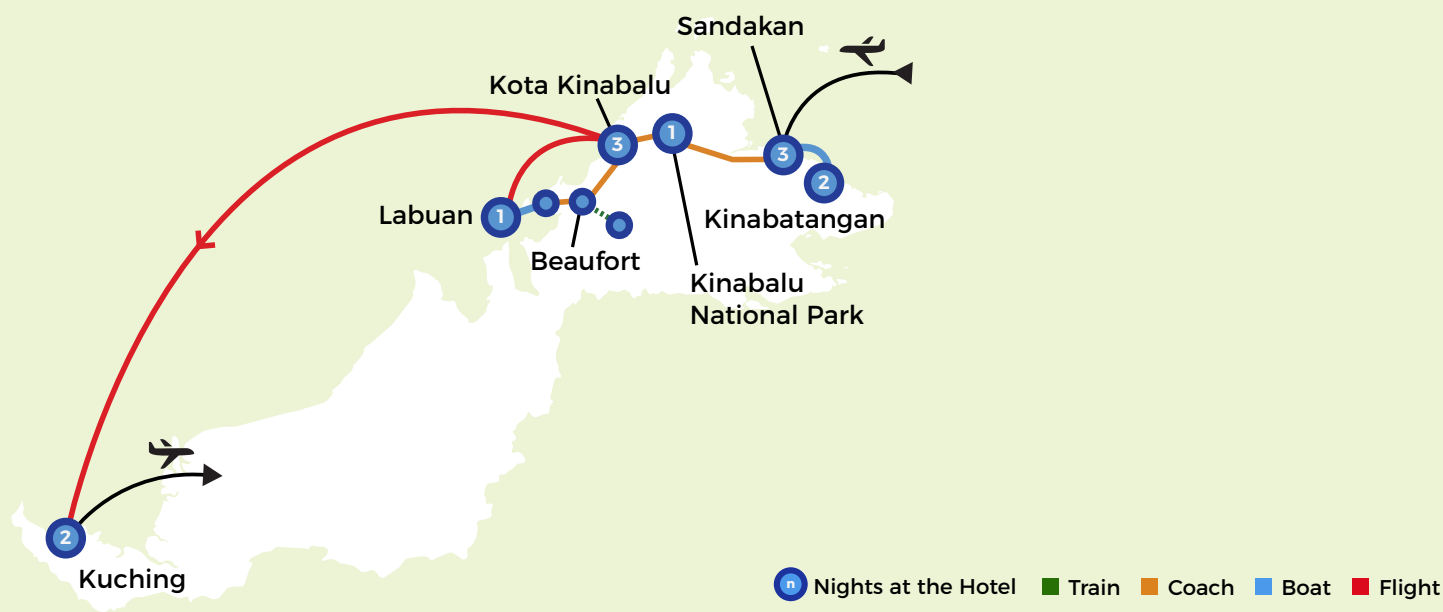
## MEET YOUR **TOUR LEADER**



### Bob Daniel

Bob Daniel has been fascinated with trains all his life, his father having engineered the construction of many of the famous Australian trains during the 1950's and 60's, including the Southern Aurora and The Sunlander. Bob is the founder and original owner of Guidepost Tours, established nearly 40 years ago, which now operates niche market tours to many destinations around the world. He regularly travels by rail on local trains throughout South East Asia and many other countries, discovering how the spread of rail routes has led to the development and enhancement of culture and life in rural communities and cities. Whilst still involved with the development of itineraries for Guidepost Tours and Railway Adventures, Bob is heavily involved with Heritage Rail Groups in New South Wales, is qualified in Rail Safety and Track Awareness, and travels regularly on steam and diesel tours as train manager or in other capacities.

# TOUR MAP



## 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 is discovered at the end of the line.



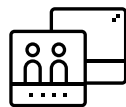
Unique  
**itineraries**



Authentic local  
**experiences**



Expert local  
**guides and  
operators**



Fully  
**escorted**



Small  
**group sizes**



Customer  
**satisfaction**

## SOME WAYS YOU'LL TRAVEL

The best train trips possible, private luxury coach for off-train travel, guided walking where suitable, and other appropriate and appealing options to make exploration easy.



The North Borneo Steam Railway



The North Borneo Railway Chartered  
Railcar



Ferry to The Federal Territory of Labuan

### Day 1 • Saturday 22 April: ARRIVE SANDAKAN

On arrival in Sandakan, we'll be taken to our hotel to check in for the next three nights. Enjoy some free time to freshen up before regrouping for Welcome Dinner.

*Overnight: Sabah Hotel, Sandakan (D)*

### Day 2 • Sunday 23 April: SANDAKAN – SEPILOK – SANDAKAN

Today is all about conservation, rehabilitation and creating awareness. After breakfast, we take a short drive to the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre for a close encounter with the 'wild man of Borneo.' Here we'll walk in this primary forest reserve to the observation deck to witness the orangutan feeding by the rangers and learn about the centre's conservation and rehabilitation efforts. We'll then head to the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre next door. The Malayan sun bears, found only in Southeast Asia, are the world's smallest bear species. While Borneo is a remaining stronghold for this species, it is seriously threatened if not extinct in many areas of mainland Asia. Enjoy lunch at the nearby Forest Edge Restaurant.

After lunch, walk to the Rainforest Discovery Centre and view its amazing biodiversity while walking along a network of self-guided trails in the forest. Not to miss the 150 m-long canopy walkway which provides a spectacular view of the lush rainforest of Sepilok from 25 m above the ground. Back to the hotel, this evening is at leisure.

*Overnight: Sabah Hotel, Sandakan (B, L)*

### Day 3 • Monday 24 April: SANDAKAN

Today we'll explore Sandakan. Beginning at St Michael's church – the oldest stone church in Sabah and the place where many POWs spent the night before marching to the 8-mile camp. Enjoy lunch at the English Tea House, a former colonial residence perched high overlooking the city. After lunch, walk over to the restored colonial home, now a museum, of famous American writer Agnes Keith. During the years between 1934 and 1952, Agnes Keith penned a trilogy – "Land below the Wind", "Three Came Home" and "White Man Returns" of her moving experience during her stay in Sandakan. On the way back to our hotel we visit the Puh Jih Syh Buddhist Chinese temple, offering beautiful views of the city and Sandakan Bay, and experience how the locals live in the floating village of Sim Sim where houses are built on stilts. This rest of the afternoon is at leisure ready for our early morning pre-dawn start the next day. Dinner at the hotel.

*Overnight: Sabah Hotel, Sandakan (B, L, D)*

### Day 4 • Tuesday 25 April: SANDAKAN - ANZAC DAY SERVICE - KINABATANGAN

It's an early start this morning to attend the Anzac Day dawn service at the Sandakan Memorial Park, once the site of the prisoner of war camp. Here we will remember our fallen heroes – 2,345 allied prisoners of war who suffered and perished during the infamous death marches from Sandakan to Ranau in 1945. The mostly Australian and British soldiers were taken to Sandakan to build airstrips. After enduring horrific treatment and malnourishment, they were forced on a tortuously long walk to Ranau, a distance of over 260km. Only six Australians survived.

The story of Sandakan is one of the most tragic of World War II. Every year, family members and friends of the POWs who perished during the death marches travel to Sandakan to reflect and remember. This event also remembers local residents who risked their lives to help the POWs during this tragic period. The service begins at dawn and is approximately one hour long, after which we'll have a gunfire breakfast at the memorial.

From here we'll travel to the Sandakan Yacht Club Jetty and board our boat to the Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort in Abai, Kinabatangan. The one-and-a-half-hour boat ride will take us across Sandakan Bay, passing historical Berhala Island and fishing villages. On arrival at our resort, we'll check in and enjoy a cup of coffee and local banana fritters while we're briefed about the lodging and activities, after which we'll have some time to relax, freshen up and explore.

Later in the afternoon, we'll board another smaller boat for a cruise along the Kinabatangan River in search of wildlife. You'll just love the stunning serene river setting from our boat as the sun sets over the landscape. If weather permits, we'll watch the fireflies shimmering as the evening falls before journeying back to our resort for dinner. After dinner, geared up with our headlamps and torchlights, you can take a guided stroll along the boardwalk to look for interesting insects and other unique wildlife that might turn up after dark.

*Overnight: Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort, Abai (B, L, D)*

### Day 5 • Wednesday 26 April: KINABATANGAN

Early morning cruise to observe more wildlife and birdlife. We cruise to the nearby ox-bow lake, Danau Pitas, to explore the area. Enjoy your packed breakfast while admiring the natural surroundings. Return to the lodge for rest and lunch. Explore the resort grounds for interesting plants and insects and birds within the resort area.

In the late afternoon set off for another river adventure, cruising in search of more wildlife along small tributaries. Return to the resort to refresh. Enjoy dinner and then set off again for a night cruise along small tributary rivers in search of nocturnal wildlife.

*Overnight: Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort, Abai (B, L, D)*

### Day 6 • Thursday 27 April: KINABATANGAN - KINABALU PARK

We'll farewell our resort after breakfast this morning, travelling back to Sandakan and arriving just in time for lunch at the local English tea-house and restaurant. We'll then embark on a scenic journey by coach to Kinabalu National Park, arriving at dusk (depending on the road conditions). We'll check in to our cosy lodge, freshen up and re-group for dinner at the Balsam Restaurant.

*Overnight: Nepenthes Lodge, Kinabalu Park (B, L, D)*

### Day 7 • Friday 28 April: KINABALU PARK - KOTA KINABALU

This morning enjoy some free time to explore the stunning natural environment of the Kinabalu National Park. You can admire the rare flora of the area with a morning walk around the Botanical Gardens or simply relax in the lodge. You'll also have the option of taking a side trip to the nearby Kundasang War Memorial. We'll depart this tranquil scene at midday and drive to the bustling centre of Kota Kinabalu.

On the way into the city, we'll take note of various important sites such as the spectacular State Mosque with its gold motif domes and the waterfront area bursting with markets, restaurants, and fleets of fishing boats. After checking in to our centrally located hotel and having some time to explore and freshen up, we'll enjoy a buffet dinner together at the hotel's restaurant.

*Overnight: Le Meridien, Kota Kinabalu (B, L, D)*





#### Day 8 • Saturday 29 April: KOTA KINABALU

You have the morning at leisure before we embark on an excursion by coach to the Mari Mari Cultural Village to learn about the different tribal groups, the types of housing, foods and warcraft, topping the visit off with a cultural performance. On our way back to our hotel in Kota Kinabalu we'll call in for a short visit to the interesting museum of Sabah, which showcases much of the history and culture of the area, including a collection of rail-related rolling stock and artefacts. We'll enjoy dinner at our hotel later this evening.

*Overnight: Le Meridien, Kota Kinabalu (B, L, D)*

#### Day 9 • Sunday 30 April: KOTA KINABALU - LABUAN

Enjoy a morning at leisure before checking out with our overnight packs and boarding our plane for the short hop to the Federal Territory of Labuan. On arrival, we'll enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before embarking on a tour of the island with our expert local guide. We'll begin with a visit to the interesting History and Culture Museum, giving us an overview of this unique island territory.

Next is a stop at the Commonwealth War Cemetery; home to 3,908 graves of soldiers who either died at the POW camp sites, on the death marches, or in battle. The remains of the Allied troops were gathered from all over Borneo to be interred at the cemetery, all bearing a plaque, some identified, but so many still listed as, 'Known only to God.' The peace and tranquillity of the place takes hold as you seek to understand the senselessness of the deaths of so many brave young men. We'll then make our way up to Surrender Point where plaques mark the spot where the 37th Japanese Southern Army surrendered to the 9th Division Australian Imperial Forces on the 9th September 1945, which led to the end of World War II in Borneo. Later, we'll settle into our accommodation for the night and enjoy dinner together.

*Overnight: Grand Dorsett Hotel, Labuan (B, L, D)*

#### Day 10 • Monday 01 May: LABUAN - BEAUFORT - TENOM - KOTA KINABALU

Today is devoted to a unique journey on a variety of transport, including the North Borneo Railway, on a route not usually explored. This railway was built in the late 1890s and was originally constructed for the tobacco trade. We'll begin our morning with a ferry ride from Labuan to Menumbuk, before continuing by coach to the town of Beaufort. From here we'll board our private chartered railcar and embark on our journey on the North Borneo Railway. We travel through lush forest, following the scenic Padas River, before arriving in the frontier town of Tenom in time for lunch at a local restaurant.

Following lunch, we'll depart Tenom, travelling back to Beaufort where we'll call into a memorial to the bravery of the Australian 9th division. This memorial includes details of the battles that defeated the Japanese and also the heroics of Tom Starcevich VC. We'll travel by coach back to Kota Kinabalu, re-unite with our luggage and enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure.

*Overnight: Le Meridien, Kota Kinabalu (B, L)*

#### Day 11 • Tuesday 2 May: KOTA KINABALU - KUCHING

This morning we say goodbye to the state of Sabah and transfer to the airport for the mid-morning flight to Kuching, the capital of the state of Sarawak. On arrival, we'll check in to our centrally located hotel and have lunch at the café in the Old Courthouse building. Enjoy some downtime before regrouping for an early evening walking tour through old Kuching before boarding our boat for a sunset cruise on the Sarawak River. The rest of the evening is at leisure to explore and take advantage of the abundance of restaurants and shops in the vicinity of our hotel.

*Overnight: The Waterfront Hotel, Kuching (B, L)*

#### Day 12 • Wednesday 3 May: KUCHING

Following breakfast, we'll embark on a guided tour of Kuching, beginning with a visit to Batu Lintang, once a Japanese internment camp during WWII. The camp housed both Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees, up to 3,000 souls at its peak. Following this, we'll explore Fort Margherita, an unmistakable landmark along the Sarawak River, built by Raja Charles Brooke in 1879 to guard Kuching's river approaches from pirates and rebels. Fort Margherita is also home to The Brooke Gallery, a museum that depicts the story of the work and influence of the White Rajas. We'll then visit the State Museum which includes the extensive collection of the renowned botanist Alfred Russel Wallace.

After lunch at a vibrant local restaurant, Café Café, we'll continue our tour with a visit to the Chinese History Museum to learn about the enormous influence of the Chinese on the region. We'll then return to our hotel and regroup for our celebratory farewell dinner on the waterfront, including a box seat for the amazing musical fountain light show that plays out on the river, against the backdrop of the extraordinary parliament building.

*Overnight: The Waterfront Hotel, Kuching (B, L, D)*

#### Day 13 • Thursday 4 May: KUCHING - DEPART (B)

Our Borneo adventure comes to an end after breakfast this morning. You'll be taken to the airport for your flight home or onward to more adventures.





## WHAT'S **INCLUDED**

- 12 nights' accommodation in the highest quality hotels available, mostly 4-5 star
- Breakfast daily, eleven lunches, and nine dinners
- Drinks included with welcome and farewell dinners
- Luxury chartered coach, with luggage transport throughout the tour
- Comprehensive sightseeing with an English-speaking guide and colleagues
- Airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All excursions and entrance fees to attractions, as listed in the itinerary
- Internal flight from Kota Kinabalu to Labuan, and Kota Kinabalu to Kuching – Economy class, 20 Kilo luggage included
- Tipping and gratuities

## WHAT WE **DON'T INCLUDE**

- International flights
- Meals and services not mentioned in the itinerary
- All other personal expenses, such as drinks, phone calls, laundry services, and camera fees where applicable
- Excursions listed as optional and extra in the itinerary
- Travel Insurance (a condition of travel)

## FITNESS **RATING**



### Two 'Locos'

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.



Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre



Sunset in Kota Kinabalu



## SOME PLACES **YOU'LL STAY**

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

*Please Note: Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted.*

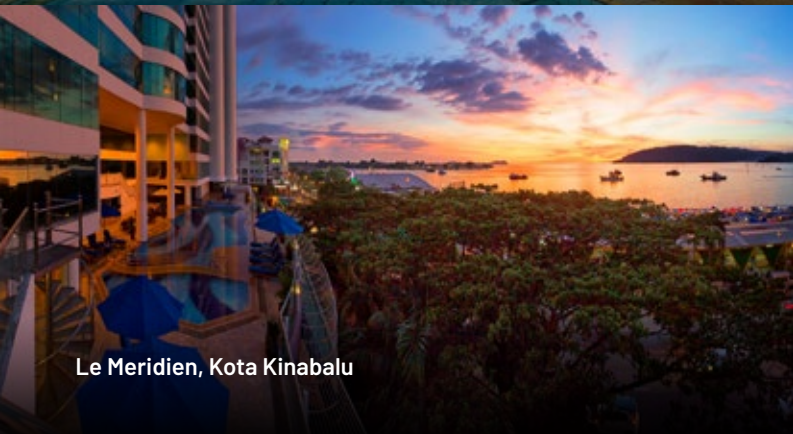
## PRICE

Per person twin share ..... **\$7,385**  
Single supplement ..... **\$1,575**  
Deposit (per person) ..... **\$1000 at time of booking**  
Final payment due by ..... **20 February 2023**

**Tour Code: 2304BOR**



Sabah Hotel, Sandakan



Le Meridien, Kota Kinabalu



Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort



The Waterfront Hotel, Kuching

### 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](mailto: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 steps and stairs will ensure you get the maximum enjoyment from your adventure.

### ADDITIONAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

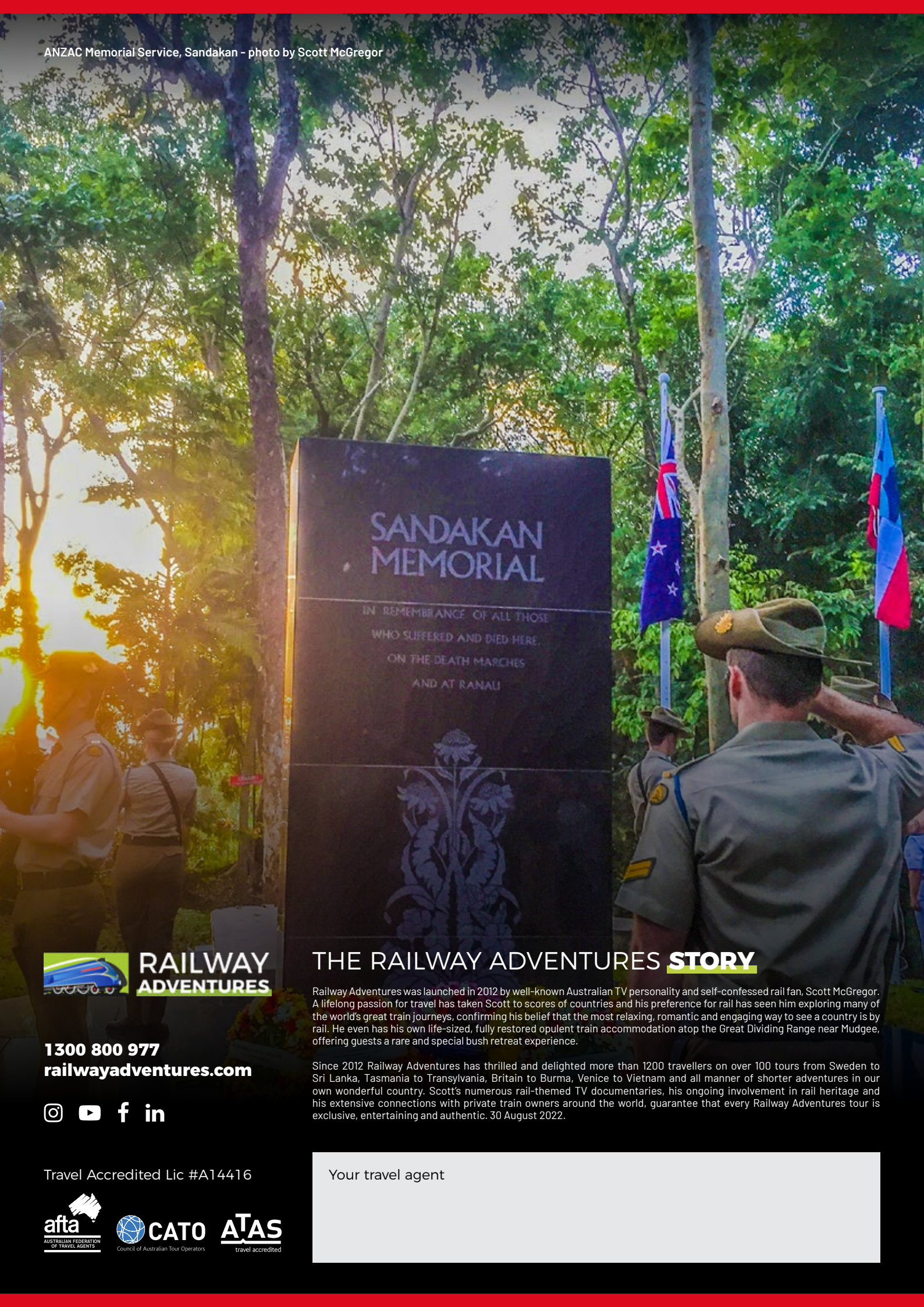
In addition to assisting with flight suggestions and bookings, we can also give you some ideas of what you could do before and after your Railway Adventure.

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.





## SANDAKAN MEMORIAL

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL THOSE  
WHO SUFFERED AND DIED HERE  
ON THE DEATH MARCHES  
AND AT RANAU



**RAILWAY  
ADVENTURES**

**1300 800 977**

**railwayadventures.com**



## 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. 30 August 2022.

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Council of Australian Tour Operators

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Your travel agent