

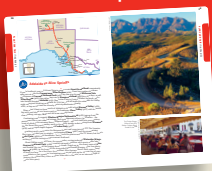
# 4 easy-to-use sections

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

Your planning tool kit

Photos & suggestions to help you create the perfect trip.

1



## ON THE ROAD

Your complete guide

Expert reviews, easy-to-use maps and insider tips.

2



## UNDERSTAND

Get more from your trip

Learn about the big picture, to make sense of what you see.

3

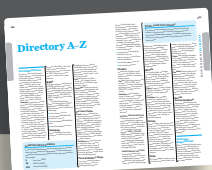


## SURVIVAL GUIDE

Your at-a-glance reference

Vital practical information for a smooth trip.

4



## How to Use This Book

Look for these symbols to quickly identify listings:

- Sights**
- Beaches**
- Activities**
- Courses**
- Tours**
- Festivals & Events**
- Sleeping**
- Eating**
- Drinking**
- Entertainment**
- Shopping**
- Information & Transport**

**All reviews** are ordered in our authors' preference, starting with their most preferred option. Additionally:

**Sights** are arranged in the geographic order that we suggest you visit them and, within this order, by author preference.

**Eating and Sleeping reviews** are ordered by price range (budget, midrange, top end) and, within these ranges, by author preference.

These symbols give vital information for each listing:

- Must-visit recommendation**
- Sustainable or green recommendation**
- FREE** **No payment required**
- Telephone number**
- Opening hours**
- Parking**
- Nonsmoking**
- Air-conditioning**
- Internet access**
- Wi-fi access**
- Swimming pool**
- Vegetarian selection**
- English-language menu**
- Family-friendly**
- Pet-friendly**
- Bus**
- Ferry**
- Tram**
- Train**

For symbols used on maps, see the Map Legend.

ISBN 978-1-74179-773-2



6TH EDITION  
Published Jun 2013  
First Published Sep 1996

5 2 4 9 9



USA \$24.99  
UK £15.99



# Central Australia

## Adelaide to Darwin



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

**Charles Rawlings-Way, Meg Worby,  
Lindsay Brown**

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

Welcome to Central Australia .....	4
Central Australia Map ....	6
Central Australia's Top 12 ..	8
Need to Know .....	16
First Time: The Red Centre.....	18
If You Like.....	20
Month by Month.....	24
Itineraries .....	27
Your Outback Trip.....	31
South Australian Wine & Food .....	39
Travel with Children....	43
Regions at a Glance....	45

## ON THE ROAD

### ADELAIDE & SOUTH AUSTRALIA..... 48

Adelaide .....	54
Adelaide Hills .....	78
Hahndorf .....	78
Stirling Area .....	80
Oakbank & Woodside ....	81
Gumeracha, Birdwood & Lobethal....	81
Fleurieu Peninsula .....	82
McLaren Vale .....	82
Willunga .....	84
Gulf St Vincent Beaches ..	85
Victor Harbor .....	86
Port Elliot .....	87
Goolwa .....	88
Kangaroo Island .....	90

Penneshaw & Dudley Peninsula .....	93
American River .....	94
Kingscote .....	95
North Coast Road .....	96
South Coast Road .....	97
Flinders Chase National Park .....	98
Limestone Coast .....	99
Coorong National Park ...	99
Robe .....	100
Beachport .....	102
Mount Gambier .....	102

### Penola & the Coonawarra Wine Region ..... 104 |

Naracoorte Caves National Park .....	105
Murray River .....	106
Murray Bridge .....	107
Mannum to Waikerie ....	107
Barmera & Around.....	108
Loxton .....	109
Berri .....	110
Renmark .....	111

### Barossa Valley.....112

Tanunda .....	112
Nuriootpa .....	115
Angaston .....	116

### Clare Valley ..... 117 |

Auburn .....	118
Mintaro.....	118
Clare.....	120

### Yorke Peninsula ..... 120 |

West Coast .....	120
East Coast.....	123
South Coast & Innes National Park.....	123

### Eyre Peninsula & the West Coast ..... 124 |

Port Augusta .....	124
Whyalla .....	126
Port Lincoln .....	126
Port Lincoln to Streaky Bay .....	127
Streaky Bay .....	129
Ceduna .....	129
Ceduna to the Western Australian Border.....	130

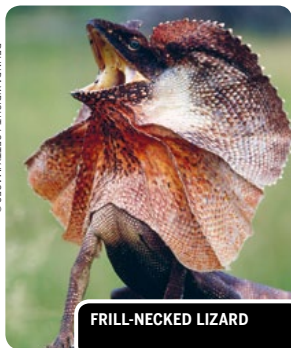
### Flinders Ranges ..... 131 |

Southern Ranges Towns .....	131
Mt Remarkable National Park .....	132
Quorn .....	132
Hawker.....	134

Flinders Ranges National Park .....	135
Blinman & Parachilna ...	137
Leigh Creek & Copley ...	137
Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park ...	138
Arkaroola .....	138

### Outback ..... 138 |

Woomera .....	139
Woomera to Coober Pedy .....	139
Coober Pedy .....	139



FRILL-NECKED LIZARD



STANDLEY CHASM P218

# Contents

## UNDERSTAND

Coober Pedy to Marla . . .	142
Oodnadatta Track . . . . .	143
Oodnadatta to William Creek . . . . .	143
Coward Springs to Marree . . . . .	143
Birdsville Track . . . . .	144
Strzelecki Track . . . . .	144
Innaminka . . . . .	144

## DARWIN TO ULURU . . . . . 145

<b>Darwin</b> . . . . .	151
<b>Around Darwin</b> . . . . .	171
Mandorah . . . . .	171
Tiwi Islands . . . . .	171
Arnhem Highway . . . . .	173
Mary River Region . . . . .	174
Stuart Highway to Litchfield National Park . . . . .	174
Litchfield National Park . . . . .	176
Adelaide River to Katherine . . . . .	177
<b>Kakadu &amp; Arnhem Land</b> . . . . .	179
Kakadu National Park . . . . .	179
Arnhem Land . . . . .	187
<b>Katherine to Alice Springs</b> . . . . .	188
Katherine . . . . .	189
Around Katherine . . . . .	193
Katherine to Western Australia . . . . .	195
Mataranka & Elsey National Park . . . . .	197
Barkly Tableland & Gulf Country . . . . .	198
Mataranka to Tennant Creek . . . . .	199
Tennant Creek . . . . .	199
Tennant Creek to Alice Springs . . . . .	201

The Tanami Road . . . . .	202
<b>Alice Springs</b> . . . . .	202
<b>MacDonnell Ranges</b> . . . . .	216
East MacDonnell Ranges . . . . .	216
West MacDonnell Ranges . . . . .	217
<b>Red Centre Way (Mereenie Loop)</b> . . . . .	219
Larapinta Drive . . . . .	219
Mereenie Loop Road . . . . .	220
Kings Canyon & Watarrka National Park . . . . .	220
<b>South of Alice Springs</b> . . . . .	221
Old South Road . . . . .	221
<b>Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park</b> . . . . .	223
Uluru (Ayers Rock) . . . . .	227
Kata Tjuta (The Olgas) . . . . .	228
Heading West . . . . .	228
Yulara (Ayers Rock Resort) . . . . .	228

<b>Central Australia Today</b> . . . . .	234
<b>History</b> . . . . .	236
<b>Aboriginal Australia</b> . . . . .	243
<b>Indigenous Visual Arts</b> . . . . .	248
<b>The Outback Environment</b> . . . . .	255

## SURVIVAL GUIDE

<b>Directory A–Z</b> . . . . .	262
<b>Transport</b> . . . . .	274
<b>Index</b> . . . . .	287
<b>Map Legend</b> . . . . .	294

## SPECIAL FEATURES

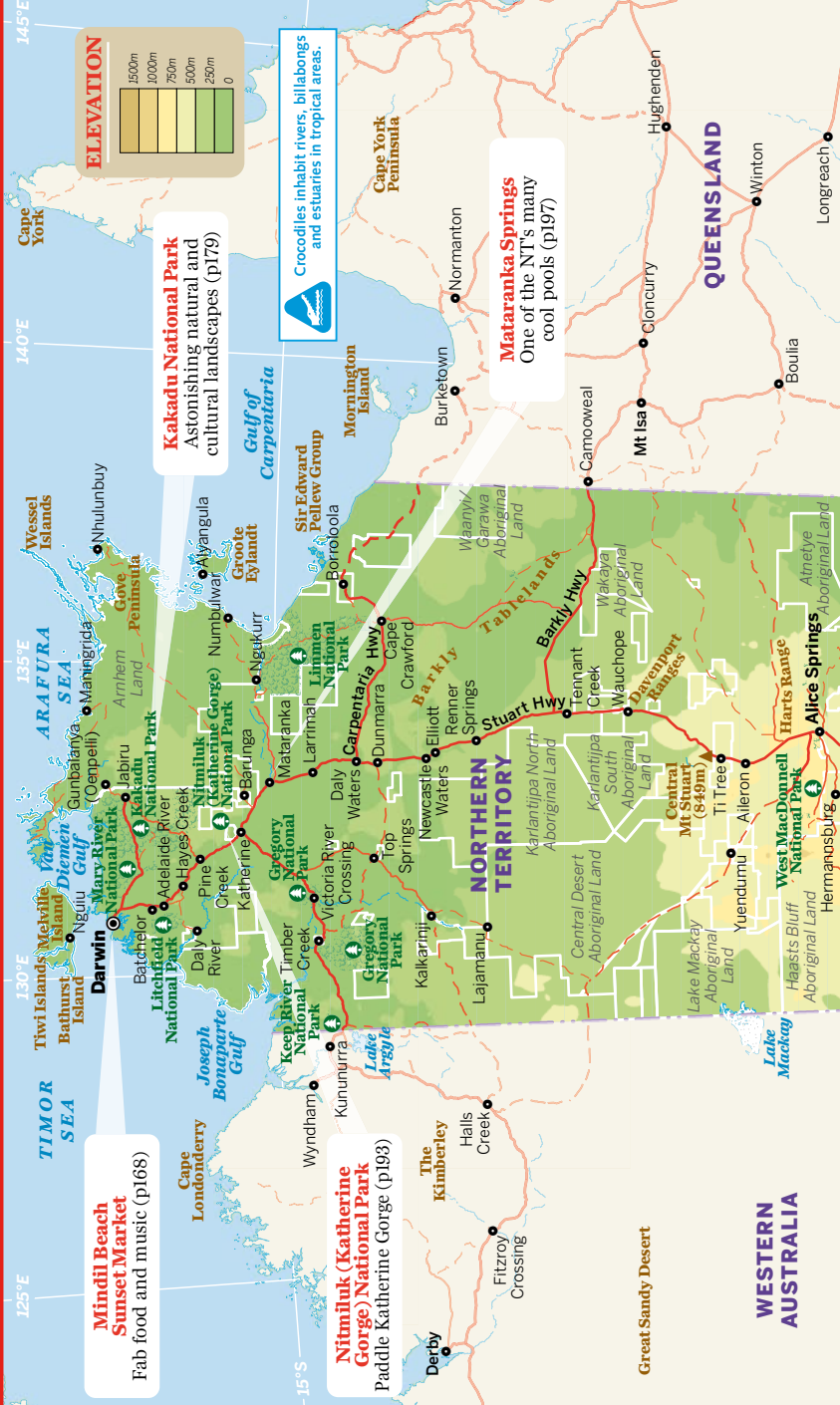
<b>First Time: the Red Centre</b> . . . . .	18
<b>Your Outback Trip</b> . . . . .	31
<b>South Australian Wine &amp; Food</b> . . . . .	39
<b>Indigenous Visual Art</b> . . . . .	248



# On the Road



# Central Australia



**Mindil Beach**  
Sunset Market

Fab food and music (p168)

**Kakadu National Park**  
Astonishing natural and cultural landscapes (p179)

**Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park**  
Paddle Katherine Gorge (p193)

 Crocodiles inhabit rivers, billabongs and estuaries in tropical areas.

**Mataranka Springs**  
One of the NT's many cool pools (p197)

Great Sandy Desert

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Gibson  
Desert

## Kings Canyon & Wataarrka National Park

## A unique outback oasis (p220)

## Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

## Two natural wonders (p223)

## The Ghana

Adelaide to Darwin  
by rail (p283)

### ROAD DISTANCES (km)

Note: Distances are approximate

Location	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Adelaide	2032	508	988	670	2470	1732					
Tennant Ck											
Port Augusta	300	1224	2720	2402	750						
Mt Gambler	430	1960	3460	3150							
Katherine	2702	1178	318								
Darwin	3020	1496									
Alice Springs	1524										

Note: Distances are approximate

## Great Australian Bight

## Kangaroo Island

Wildlife, wilderness and fine edibles (p90)

**madatta Track**

Adventurous 615km  
outback detour (p143)

## Ikara (Wilpena Pound)

## Remarkable Flinders Ranges rock formations (p135)

## Adelaide Central Market

Multicultural downtown  
foodie delights (p55)

## McLaren Vale Wine Region

One of SA's brilliant wine regions (p82)



## CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

**Cathy Craigie** is a Gamilaori/Anaiwon woman from northern New South Wales. She is a freelance writer and cultural consultant and has extensive experience in Aboriginal Affairs. Cathy contributed the Aboriginal Australia chapter.

**Brenda L Croft** was born in Perth, now lives in on the south coast of New South Wales, and she is a senior research fellow at the University of NSW. Brenda is from the Gurindji/Malngin/Mudpurra peoples in the Northern Territory on her paternal side, and of Anglo-Australian/German/Irish heritage on her maternal side. She has been involved in the arts and cultural sectors for three decades as an artist, arts administrator, curator, writer, academic and consultant. Brenda contributed the Indigenous Visual Arts chapter.

**David Fuller & Kylie Strelan** wrote the Outback Environment chapter. David has worked for the last 22 years as a parks and wildlife ranger, and Kylie is an editor with an environmental consultancy. They lived for more than 15 years in national parks throughout the Northern Territory, including Garig Gunak Barlu, the West MacDonnells and Nitmiluk. With a passion for road trips (and family to visit in Adelaide), David and Kylie have driven the length of the Stuart Hwy more times than they care to recall.

**Dr Irene Watson** wrote the section headed The Land & Indigenous Peoples in the Outback Environment chapter, first published in Lonely Planet's *Aboriginal Australia & the Torres Strait Islands: Guide to Indigenous Australia*. Dr Watson is now working with the University of South Australia. Dr Watson writes: 'I am a Tanganekald and Meintangk woman; my ancestors are the sovereign peoples of the Coorong and the southeast region of South Australia.'





## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Charles Rawlings-Way

**Co-coordinating author; Adelaide & South Australia** As a likely lad, Charles suffered in shorts through Tasmanian winters, and in summer counted the days til he visited his grandparents in Adelaide. With desert-hot days, cool swimming pools, pasties with tomato sauce squirted into the middle and four TV stations, this flat city held paradisiacal status. In teenage years he realised that girls from Adelaide – with their Teutonic cheekbones and fluoridated teeth – were better

looking than anywhere else in Australia. These days he lives with a girl from Adelaide (see fluoridated teeth, aforementioned) in the Adelaide Hills and has developed an unnatural appreciation for Coopers Pale Ale. An underrated rock guitarist and proud father of daughters, Charles has penned 20-something guidebooks for Lonely Planet.



### Meg Worby

**Co-coordinating author; Adelaide & South Australia** After six years at Lonely Planet in the languages, editorial and publishing teams, Meg swapped the desktop for a laptop in order to write about her home state, South Australia. After 10 years away, she was stoked to find that King George whiting is still every bit as fresh on Kangaroo Island, there are the same endless roads to cruise down in the Flinders Ranges, and the Adelaide Hills now has more wineries. In fact, obvious

wine analogies aside, she found that most places in South Australia just keep getting better. This is Meg's fourth Australian guidebook for Lonely Planet.



### Lindsay Brown

**Darwin to Uluru; First Time: the Red Centre; Your Outback Trip; The Outback Environment** A former conservation biologist and publishing manager of outdoor activity guides at Lonely Planet, Lindsay enjoys nothing more than heading into the outback in his trusty old 4WD to explore and photograph Australia's heartland. As a Lonely Planet author, Lindsay has contributed to several titles including *Australia, Central Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland & the Great Barrier Reef, East Coast Australia, Sydney & New South Wales* and *Walking in Australia*.

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

Published by Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd

ABN 36 005 607 983

6th edition – Jun 2013

ISBN 978 1 74179 773 2

© Lonely Planet 2013 Photographs © as indicated 2013

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in China

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose of review, and no part of this publication may be sold or hired, without the written permission of the publisher. Lonely Planet and the Lonely Planet logo are trademarks of Lonely Planet and are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Lonely Planet does not allow its name or logo to be appropriated by commercial establishments, such as retailers, restaurants or hotels. Please let us know of any misuses: [lonelyplanet.com/ip](http://lonelyplanet.com/ip).

Although the authors and Lonely Planet have taken all reasonable care in preparing this book, we make no warranty about the accuracy or completeness of its content and, to the maximum extent permitted, disclaim all liability arising from its use.

# Itineraries



## 3 WEEKS The Red Centre

Getting to Australia's red desert heart is half the fun: hop on an internal flight from the east coast, jump on the legendary train the *Ghan* from either Darwin or Adelaide, or tackle the Stuart Hwy from the north or south. But whichever conveyance you choose, you'll be confronted by one of Australia's great truths: this place is gargantuan! Travel in winter to beat the heat.

**Alice Springs** (p202; just 'Alice' to her friends) will come as sweet relief if you've been clocking up the desert highway miles. Enjoy the trappings of civilisation for a while, but don't dally: there are national parks out there waiting to be explored!

**Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park** (p223) is a must-see, but **Finke Gorge National Park** (p219) is for serious 4WD-ers. More accessible is the **Watarrka (Kings Canyon) National Park** (p220) and **West MacDonnell Ranges National Park** (p217).

For a real taste of outback driving, head for **Tylers Pass** (p217) in the 'West Macs', from where you can view the crater of **Tnorala Conservation Park** (p219). From here, if you've got a 4WD, take the 'inner loop' road down to **Hermannsburg** (p219) and back to Alice on Larapinta Dr – but be prepared for some devilish road corrugations!



## Adelaide to Alice Springs

If you're hoofing it over to SA from Victoria, super-scenic **Great Ocean Road** conveniently spits you out near the **Coonawarra Wine Region** (p104). From here explore the dunes and lagoons of **Coorong National Park** (p99), sip your way through **McLaren Vale Wine Region** (p82), then either hop over to **Kangaroo Island** (p90) for a few days, or roll into festival-frenzied **Adelaide** (p54). Don't miss a trip to Central Market for lunch, and a night eating and drinking on Rundle St. If it's hot, cool off inside the estimable Art Gallery of SA, or hop on the tram for a beachy swim at palindromic Glenelg.

More wine! About an hour north of Adelaide is the old-school **Barossa Valley** (p112; big reds); and about two hours north is the boutiquey **Clare Valley** (p117) with its world-class riesling, cottagey B&Bs and old stone mining towns.

Continuing north, raggedy **Flinders Ranges National Park** (p131) jags up from the semi-desert like a rust-coloured mirage. Rich in indigenous culture, the Flinders – the heart of which is the amazing Ikara (Wilpena Pound) – will etch itself into your memory. Hit the Stuart Hwy and journey north to the mildly spooky rocket-testing town **Woomera** (p139) and the opal-tinged dugouts of **Coorob Pedy** (p139).

Trucking north, you'll enter the Simpson Desert and cross into the NT. The Lasseter Hwy turn-off takes you to weighty, eye-popping **Uluru** (p227) and the mesmerising **Kata Tjuta** (p228) rock formations. You've seen the photos and the TV shows, but there's nothing quite like seeing an Uluru sunset firsthand.

About 300km north of Uluru, the spectacular, vertigo-inducing **Watarrka (Kings Canyon) National Park** (p220) rewards intrepid travellers with scenic walks into and around the rim of this gaping desert chasm. Finish up in the desert oasis of **Alice Springs** (p202), in the heart of the steep-sided MacDonnell Ranges. Alice has plenty to keep you busy for a few days: the excellent Alice Springs Desert Park, some classy restaurants or just a soak in a swimming pool as you gear-up for the next leg of your journey (the Stuart Hwy drive or *Ghan* train ride to Darwin, or an internal flight if you're time-poor).

STEVE PARNISH / CORBIS ©



Top: Flinders Ranges  
National Park (p131)  
Bottom: Outdoor dining,  
Rundle St, Adelaide

KYLE MCGAUGHAN / GETTY IMAGES ©





## Darwin, Kakadu & Katherine

Gone are the days when **Darwin** (p151) was a brawling frontier town full of fishermen, miners and truck drivers blowing off steam. These days there seem to be more backpackers here than anyone else, and Darwin is very multicultural, as a visit to the fabulous Mindil Beach Sunset Market will confirm. Grab some Thai stir-fry, Indonesian beef rendang, a Malaysian laksa or a Greek souvlaki and head for the beach.

While you're in Darwin, don't miss the outdoor Deckchair Cinema in the dry season, and the outstanding Aboriginal and Cyclone Tracy exhibits at the Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory. Also worth a look is the atmospheric Saturday-morning Parap Village Market, crammed with tropical produce and food stalls, followed by a night on Mitchell St, where a free-wheelin', anything-goes vibe confirms Darwin's rep as a hedonistic haven (...depending on your mood, you might want to head for bed before or around 1am, after which things can get messy). Shopping-wise, the commercial galleries in Darwin are great for making an informed, ethical purchase of some Aboriginal art.

A few hours south on the Stuart Hwy you'll run into some superb national parks. **Litchfield National Park** (p176) is famous for its plummeting waterfalls, bushwalks and cooling swimming holes – so welcoming on a hot day. From here, backtrack 50km north then head east into World Heritage-listed **Kakadu National Park** (p179), a wetland of international significance with amazing rock outcrops dappled with equally amazing, millennia-old Aboriginal rock art. Check out the Kakadu wildlife too: crocs, lizards, snakes, brolgas, jabirus, barramundi and flocks of raucous wildlife.

Further south is **Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park** (p193), where the Katherine River cuts its way through 13 jagged ravines. Take a walk, a swim, a scenic flight, or paddle a canoe to find an isolated spot for lunch. **Katherine** (p189) is the regional 'big-smoke': there's not a lot going on here, but it's a good place to stock-up for your road trip or take a dip in some thermal springs. Continuing south, there are also thermal springs at **Mataranka** (p197) – soak off the road dust in a (free!) naturally-heated swimming hole and wonder what the folks back home are doing this afternoon.

© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'