

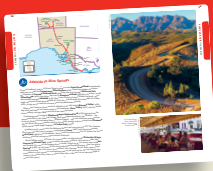
4 easy-to-use sections

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

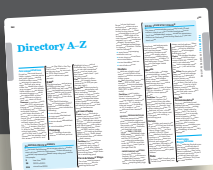


SURVIVAL GUIDE

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.

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Central Australia

Adelaide to Darwin

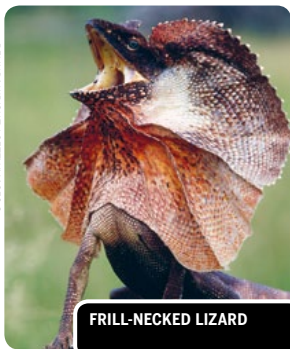


THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

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

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On the Road



Central Australia

0 100 miles
0 200 km

125°E 130°E 135°E 140°E 145°E

**Mindil Beach
Sunset Market**

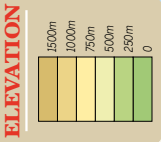
Fab food and music (p168)

Kakadu National Park
Astonishing natural and
cultural landscapes (p179)

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

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

 Crocodiles inhabit rivers, billabongs
and estuaries in tropical areas.



**WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**

QUEENSLAND

**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**

Gibson Desert

Kings Canyon & Watarrka National Park

A unique outback oasis (p220)

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

Two natural wonders (p223)

The Ghan

Adelaide to Darwin by rail (p288)

ROAD DISTANCES (km)

Note: Distances are approximate

Alice Springs	1524
Darwin	3020 1496
Katherine	2702 1178 318
Mt Gambier	430 1960 3460 3150
Port Augusta	300 1224 2720 2402 750
Tennant Ck	2032 508 988 670 2470 1732
Adelaide	
Alice Springs	
Darwin	
Katherine	
Mt Gambier	
Port Augusta	

Oodnadatta 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)

Kangaroo Island

Wildlife, wilderness and fine edibles (p90)



125°E

130°E

135°E

35°S

SOUTHERN OCEAN

Great Australian Bight

NEW SOUTH WALES

VICTORIA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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 desk-top 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

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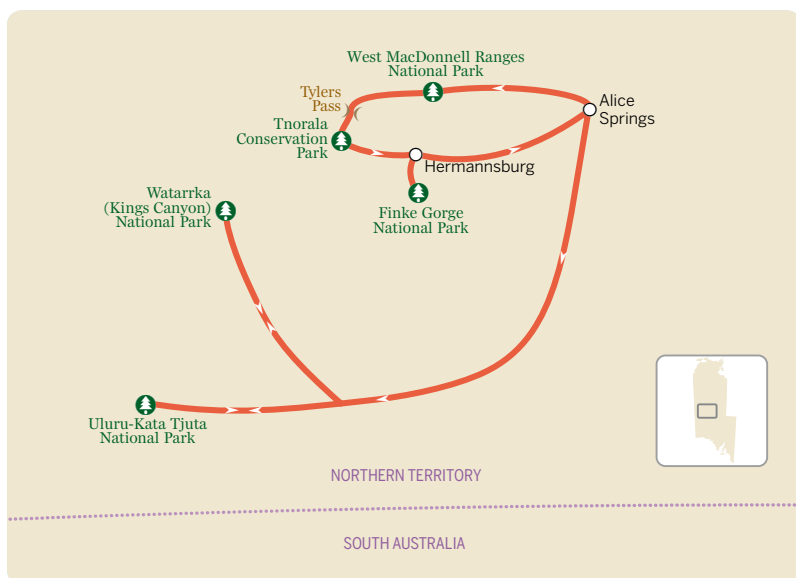
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Itineraries



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 **Watarrika (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 Galley 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 **Coober 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 MCGILGIBLIN / GETTY IMAGES ©



2
WEEKS

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 birdlife.

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.

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