

Welcome to South Australia & Northern Territory

*Welcome to Australia's epic centre,
the country's heartland, a wild and
beautiful place tamed only by wineries
and remote desert trails.*

The Wild Interior

Call that Australia? *This* is Australia. Ever since *Crocodile Dundee* brought Kakadu to the world's attention, the outback and Top End have been on the radar for their impressive portfolio of quintessentially Aussie land forms: Uluru and Kata Tjuta rising improbably from the desert; the great sandstone escarpments and pristine coastline of Arnhem Land; the soulful Flinders Ranges; the vast stretches of outback with sand dunes and flood plains and monsoonal mangroves. All providing a stirring backdrop to some of Australia's best wildlife watching, from crocs to kangaroos. It's hard to escape the feeling that in this land lies eternity...

Indigenous Culture

It is the Indigenous population of the Northern Territory (NT) that gives the outback soul. These are a people whose lives remain inextricably tied to a land that their people have inhabited for millennia. And, unlike elsewhere in Australia, in the NT it's relatively easy to cross the cultural frontier and meet Indigenous Australians on their terms: it could happen on an intimate exploration of country led by an Indigenous guide, in quiet conversation with artists at work in one of the NT's many art centres, or in the timeless rituals and ceremonies of a festival.

The Sophisticated South

When you imagine Australia, South Australia (SA) is hardly the first thing that springs to mind. But here on the outback's fringe in SA are some big-ticket attractions. Take, for example, some of the country's premier wine-producing regions (perfect for slaking that outback thirst), among them the Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale, Clare Valley and the Coonawarra. There's also wonderful Kangaroo Island and, at the heart of the south, is Adelaide, where you can experience a torrent of creative energy through its amazing festivals, arts scene, pubs and foodie culture.

Outback Dreaming

While it's easy to identify the more obvious elements of the outback's appeal, there's one thing that's less easy to quantify: its strange, almost mystical allure. There's something about this place, an intangible call that defies easy explanation, something spiritual that echoes through so many moments out here. Perhaps it will touch you when you first lay eyes on Uluru. Or as the sun dips below the horizon beyond the escarpments of Kakadu. Or when you pull off the road in the middle of nowhere and find yourself enveloped by silence. In such moments lies the mysterious call of the outback.



Why I Love South Australia & Northern Territory

By Anthony Ham, Writer

God I love this place. There is something in the outback wilds that calls to me in ways I barely understand. It happens out on the lonely Carpentaria Hwy or down by the Victoria River near Timber Creek. It grips me every time I pass a turn-off out into the desert and find myself longing to take it. It's the possibility that a fabulous sighting of wildlife could happen at any moment. Boiled down to its essence, it is this: this is a wild land whose natural and human history are writ large on an impossibly beautiful canvas.

For more about our writers, see p288

Above: Driving the Old Andado Track (p46)