

GREAT OCEAN ROAD, GRAMPIANS & THE GOLDFIELDS

11 Days



6 > 16 APRIL 2024



Set off to experience one of the world's most scenic coastal drives. Uncover inspiring landmarks such as the famous Twelve Apostles, native wildlife and behold the pristine rainforests along the spectacular Great Ocean Road. Winding our way inland, explore the Grampians and historic Goldrush towns of Bendigo and Ballarat and stunning scenery whilst returning home.



CT TRAVEL
Coolum Tours & Travel

11 days – Twin / Double \$ 4727.00 pp
Single \$5730.00
Deposit \$500.00

Inc Airfare – Brisbane > Melbourne

DAY 1: (LD) MELBOURNE TO APOLLO BAY**SATURDAY 06 APRIL 2024**

Welcome to our 11-day tour to the *The Great Ocean Road, The Grampians and the Gold Fields*. Upon arrival at Melbourne Airport make our way to *Geelong* for lunch at the *Geelong Boathouse restaurant*. Following lunch, we visit the *National Wool Museum*. For most of its history Geelong has been one of the great wool cities of Australia and the nearly 200 buildings in the area, classified by National Trust, keeping residents and visitors mindful of the city's heritage. This is definitely a museum worth visiting as it showcases the Australian wool story – from the sheep's back to the clothes rack, and from the birth of the industry in the 1840s to its place in the world today. This afternoon we have a relaxing drive along the start of the Great Ocean Road and arrive and settle into our accommodation for the night.

Best Western Apollo Bay Motel | Apollo Bay | subject to availability
Dinner in hotel | Lunch at Geelong Boathouse

DAY 2: (BLD) THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD TO WARRNAMBOOL**SUNDAY 07 APRIL 2024**

From Apollo Bay our scenery changes as we wind our way up the slopes of the Otway Ranges. The Great Otway National Park leads us to the spectacular *Otway Fly* – a tree top walk, the longest and highest canopy walk of its kind in the world. There is a 300m flat walk from the car park to the Visitors Centre so wear some comfortable shoes. From the centre we undertake the *Tree Top Walk* (*some buggy style transportation is available should we need it*) with the resulting views of the Otways an experience well worth our effort! After a bite to eat here we follow the *Great Ocean Road* to rejoin the coast and travel the full length of the *Port Campbell National Park*. Amongst the spectacular sites along this section of the coast will be the *Twelve Apostles*. These huge pillars loom out of the surf, carved out over time by the fury of the ocean. Continuing on through Port Campbell and Peterborough we arrive into *Warrnambool*, a beautiful seaside city on the shores of Lady Bay. More than 100 ships and boats were wrecked within 80 kilometres from Warrnambool, hence the current name for the area - *The Shipwreck Coast*. This will be our base for the next three nights.

Deep Blue Hotel & Hot Springs, Warrnambool 3 Nights | Subject to availability
Breakfast and dinner at hotel | Lunch at Otway Fly Café

DAY 3: (BD) WARRNAMBOOL & THE SHIPWRECK COAST**MONDAY 08 APRIL 2024**

We start our day's sightseeing with a *guided tour* of *Warrnambool* - to see and hear about her rich maritime history and the final resting place of over 180 wrecks. Afterwards we travel to nearby Allansford to *Cheeseworld*, the home of award-winning cheeses. Following delicious tastings of their products, we head to the *Botanic Gardens*. The gardens were planned by William Guilfoyle who later became a director of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne. In 1877 he designed an appropriate layout of sweeping lawns, long curving paths where the viewer can gaze into the distance. Following lunch (*at own cost*) and some free time, we spend the remainder of the afternoon at *Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village* where we are in for a real treat! *Oddball*, the movie starring Shane Jacobson, was released nationally in September 2015 and follows the true story of the Middle Island Maremma Project. They use Maremma dogs to guard the local Little Penguin colony. Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village is home to the real Maremma dogs and today we will have the chance to meet them and to learn why Middle Island Maremma's are needed, their success and of course why they are suited to the role of penguin guardians. It will be a fascinating tour. Our focus is then on the maritime history of the region as we enjoy a wander through the State Heritage listed Lady Bay Lighthouse precinct, overlooking Lady Bay. Flagstaff Hill holds the richest collection of Shipwreck artefacts in Australia. Scattered throughout the Village are a range of trades that supported the rich maritime heritage of the late 1800s. We head back to our hotel for dinner, then return to the Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village to enjoy the wonderful sound and light show called *"Shipwrecked"*. This is a spectacular sound and laser show that takes us on a journey through a raging ocean, flanked by an unforgiving coastline. It is the true story of a Melbourne bound clipper with a priceless statue on board.

Breakfast and dinner at hotel | Lunch at own expense

DAY 4: (BLD) PORT FAIRY & PORTLAND**TUESDAY 09 APRIL 2024**

This morning we travel to *Port Fairy*, filled with colonial character, it's a lovely place to take a stroll and browse the many boutique shops. We'll also meet a *local guide* who will enlighten us to the inside stories of town before we continue through to *Portland*. As the only deep-sea port between Adelaide and Port Phillip, it is a major exporting centre for the produce of south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia. The main exports are wool, grains and secondary manufactures made in Portland itself. At the *Portland Cable Tram Depot* we travel back to yesteryear looking at the fabulous vintage cars and memorabilia held within the depot's museum. A lovely light lunch is enjoyed before boarding the lovingly restored and modified saloon cars. Tracking along Portland's spectacular foreshore, we uncover the unique characteristics of the town including wonderful views of the working, natural deepwater harbour. Returning to Warrnambool we have time to stop by the *Tower Hill State Game Reserve*. Here you'll unearth a crater of an extinct volcano teeming with wildlife, including some very bold Emus! Observe the beauty of this reserve along a one-way scenic drive over the land bridge to the main body of land.

Breakfast and dinner at hotel | Lunch at Portland Tram Depot

DAY 5: (BLD) THE GRAMPPIANS**WEDNESDAY 10 APRIL 2024**

Farewelling Warrnambool, we leave the sea-breezes behind and head via the beautiful village of Dunkeld, at the southern entrance to the Grampians, to *Halls Gap*. We visit *Brambuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre* to view the very best interpretation of the Grampians National Park, discovering its exceptional environment and Aboriginal culture. Next door is the *Brambuk Bush Foods Café* where we enjoy lunch. We spend the afternoon visiting several of the best lookouts in the northern part of the National Park –*Reeds Lookout, McKenzie Falls and Boroka Lookout* – all easily accessible and all with sensational views. The area is likened to a giant botanical garden, filled with one third of Victoria's fauna. A short drive takes us into *Stawell* and our accommodation for the night.

Magdala Motor Lodge, Stawell | 1 Night | Subject to availability
Breakfast and Dinner in Motel | Lunch at Brambuk Cafe**DAY 6: (BLD) THE GRAMPPIANS TO BENDIGO****THURSDAY 11 APRIL 2024**

From the Grampians, we make our way inland to the Goldfields region of Central Victoria. At Ballarat, we collect our **guide** and embark on a tour of this historic gold mining city, with its outstanding heritage architecture. Next, we make our way to the *Eureka Centre*, dedicated to the central theme of democracy. Located on the site where young miners bravely stood up for their rights in 1854, we explore the events surrounding the *Eureka Stockade* and see the original Eureka Flag. We spend the rest of the day at *Sovereign Hill*, where Australia's history comes to life! It's just like stepping back in time - from the hustle and bustle of Main Street where costumed ladies and gents parade their new-found wealth, to the excitement of the Red Hill Gully Diggings where you can pan for real gold. Visit the **Gold Museum** and uncover a diverse range of collections from mining and military history through to costume and photography. We continue our journey to Bendigo for our 2-night stay.

Quality Inn Colonial Bendigo | 2 Nights | Subject to availability
Breakfast & dinner in motel | Lunch at Sovereign Hill

DAY 7: (BLD) BENDIGO**FRIDAY 12 APRIL 2024**

After breakfast we are in for something a little different. We board the *'Talking Tram'* for an interesting ride through the main areas of Bendigo to learn a little about the history of the Goldfields as well as see some of the stunning historical buildings such as the Shamrock Hotel and the magnificent *Sacred Heart Cathedral*. We also step back into the Golden Era and experience one of the most remarkable boom time buildings in Victoria. *Bendigo Town Hall's* stunning interior features elaborate plasterwork, extensive hand painted decoration and delicate gold leafing. Our next stop is the *Golden Dragon Museum*. Here we enjoy *lunch* followed by a *tour*. On our tour we will hear and see the story of the impact and contribution made by the Chinese people of Bendigo - from the Gold Rush of the 1850s to the present day. We also stop by the *Chinese Joss House* - the oldest Joss House still in use in the area. Built in 1860 it fell into disrepair but was restored by the National Trust and reopened in 1972. It is made up of three buildings - a caretakers residence, temple to Guan Kung and an ancestral hall with alters to several other gods and brilliant banners. After our interesting day, we return to our motel.

Breakfast & dinner in motel | Lunch at museum

DAY 8: (BLD) BENDIGO TO ALBURY**SATURDAY 13 APRIL 2024**

We visit **Overwrought Garden and Gallery** where we are welcomed by a staff member who will walk us through the process of artist David Dawson and his team as they take raw Australian steel and turn it into stunning rustic art pieces. See inside the workshops and packing shed, watch the welders transform designs, learn about the history of the site and walk around the lovely gardens. We head to the **Garden of St Erth**, sitting in a fold of Lerderberg Valley. Featuring an extraordinary range of plants from around the world, it has something to offer each season. We'll enjoy lunch at **The Cosmopolitan Hotel** before continuing to **Albury** for our final night on tour together.

Quality Resort Siesta, Albury | 1 Night | Subject to availability
Breakfast and dinner at the hotel | Lunch at The Cosmopolitan Hotel**DAY 9: (BD) ALBURY TO DUBBO****SUNDAY 14 APRIL 2024**

Setting out on our travelling day, we head to *West Wyalong* to see the 'Crooked Mile' which is the unique main street, originally a bullock track woven around gold diggings and old tree stumps to enjoy lunch. (Own expense). Feeling content after our meal, we then journey onwards to *Parkes*, a town named after one of NSW's most famous Statesman, Henry Parkes. We visit *the CSIRO Radio Telescope*, known as "The Dish" to explore the astronomy and space science exhibitions. One of the most prominent landmarks, the 64-metre telescope, Murriyang, has been in operation since 1961 and continues to be at the forefront of astronomical discovery thanks to its regular upgrades. We continue on to *Dubbo* for our overnight accommodation.

The Oxley Motel, Dubbo | 1 night | Subject to availability
Breakfast and dinner at the hotel | Lunch at own cost**DAY 10: (BD) DUBBO TO GOONDIWINDI****MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024**

Following breakfast, we hit the road again travelling via Gilgandra and Coonabarabran on our way to **Narrabri** where we stop for lunch (own expense). We travel through the rich agricultural areas surrounding Moree and arrive late afternoon in *Goondiwindi* for our overnight stay.

Jolly Swagman Motor Inn, Goondiwindi | 1 Night | Subject to availability
Breakfast and dinner at the hotel | Lunch at own cost

This morning we depart “Gundy” and head east along the Gore Highway through the rich farming communities of Millmerran and Pittsworth arriving in *Toowoomba*, where we stop for lunch. We continue on and arrive home after a fantastic tour with many fond memories and new found friends.

Breakfast in hotel | Lunch

Tour Inclusions –

- 10 night’s motel accommodation
- 10 motel Cooked Breakfasts
- 10 motel 2 course Dinners
- 7 included lunches – see below
- Lunch at The Geelong Boat House
- Entry and guided tour of the National Wool Museum
- Entry and Lunch at Otway Fly Tree Top Walk
- See Twelve Apostles
- Step on guided tour of Warrnambool
- Cheese tastings at Cheese World
- Lunch at Cheese World
- Group entry and tour of Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum (& Pippies)
- Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum Group entry and tour,
- Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum meet the Maremma Session
- Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum Shipwreck show
- Step on guided tour of Port Fairy
- Entry to Port Fairy Museum
- Light lunch at Portland Cable Tram Depot Museum
- 1 hour ride on Portland Cable Tram
- Visit to Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve
- Visit Brambuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre (Can visit but mostly being renovated)
- Lunch at Brambuk Bushfoods Cafe
- Visit Reeds Lookout, McKenzie Falls & Boroka Lookout
- Step on Guide of Ballarat
- Entry to The Eureka Centre
- Entry to Sovereign Hill
- Tour of Vintage Talking Tram & Central Deborah Gold Mine at Bendigo
- Tour of Golden Dragon Museum
- Lunch at Golden Dragon Museum
- Entry to Chinese Joss House
- Group tasting, demonstration, morning tea at Chocolate Mill
- Group entry to The Garden of St Erth
- Lunch at The Cosmopolitan Hotel
- Ned Kelly's Last Stand Show
- See 'Crooked Mile'(Main Street) of West Wylong
- Group visit to CSIRO Australia Telescope National Facility
- *Home p/ups & t/fers (* conditions apply)

Confirmed Accommodation

- Ocean Road Motel- 1 Night
- Mid City Motel Warrnambool – 3 Nights
- Magdala Motor Lodge & Lakeside Restaurant – 1 Nights
- All Seasons Resort Hotel – 2 Nights
- Quality Resort Siesta – 1 Night
- The Oxley Motel Dubbo – 1 Night
- Jolly Swagman Motor Inn – 1 Night

Air – Virgin Airlines

06 April 2024 Brisbane - Melbourne

VA314

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The itinerary may be subject to change without notice. Whilst every effort is made to adhere to the itinerary as provided, CT Travel reserves the right to alter the touring and attractions as dictated by circumstances and conditions outside the company's control. Alterations may be made to ensure the smooth running of the tour. Every attempt will be made to ensure alterations do not adversely affect the operation of the tour. CT Travel will not be held responsible for weather-based cancellations, or those closures made at a venue's discretion.



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