Australia Rail Extravaganza: The Ghan and Indian Pacific

https://www.irtsociety.com/journey/australia-rail-extravaganza/



Overview

The Highlights

- **New for 2026:** Two extra-luxurious new suites, Australis and Aurora, are now available on every departure of *The Ghan* and *Indian Pacific.* Contact us if you wish to book these cabins.

- World-famous *Indian Pacific* train from Sydney to Perth, with meals and drinks included on board.

- Experience Platinum service on *The Ghan* from Darwin to Adelaide — or opt for one of two new suites, Aurora or Australis.

- Two full days exploring Kakadu National Park.

- Kata Tjuta and Uluru.

- Stay at Longitude 131, a luxurious, eco-sensitive and romantic accommodation with views of Uluru.

- All accommodations, taxes, breakfast daily and all transfers included.

This is a completely custom journey. This is a sample itinerary that can be built upon and changed (within certain parameters).

Read our blog post here about what our 2022 Australia travelers especially loved.

The Tour

Our exclusive 'Australia Rail Extravaganza: Luxury Down Under' itinerary allows you to experience the joys of two cross-continent World's Top 25 Trains – *The Ghan*, and the *Indian Pacific*.

The great Platinum service on board the trains allows you plenty of time to be pampered -- but also lots of time exploring off the train on included sightseeing excursions. The trains have added fantastic off-train experiences.

Experience Sydney, Perth, Darwin and fantastic sites in between including rain forests, deserts and outback mining towns. This program abounds in UNESCO World Heritage sites, from Kakadu National Park to Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (the Olgas). All of our Society of International Railway Travelers guests who have taken this independent journey loved it. We can still remember what it felt like to wake up in the middle of the desert on *The Ghan*, with the fine orange glow of the sand, coffee in hand, as the world passed us by.

Itinerary

Day 1: Sydney

Arrive Sydney. You will be met on arrival by our representative, fast-tracked through immigration, assisted with baggage collection, fast-tracked through Customs and Quarantine and escorted to meet your limousine driver for a private transfer to your hotel. Explore the city at your leisure today as you get your bearings. Soak up Sydney’s gorgeous harbor and natural beauty. Shangri-La Hotel Sydney (or similar).

Day 2: Sydney

After your included breakfast, explore the famous bridge, the Opera house, its great transit, or a

harbor cruise.

Day 3: Indian Pacific

Included private transfer from your hotel to the train terminal. Board the *Indian Pacific* and at Sydney Central Station this afternoon and settle in to your Platinum Cabin. Relax, or mingle in the Outback Explorer Lounge as you leave Sydney behind. Enjoy dinner on board as you head toward the far West toward Perth. Dinner served on board in the classic Queen Adelaide Restaurant.

Day 4: Indian Pacific

The train travels north, pausing in Broken Hill for an early off-train experience. Visit the Pro Hart Gallery and learn about one of Australia's most iconic artists. Step back on board for breakfast, and watch the scenery change from the outback to the green and gold of South Australia. Upon arrival in Adelaide, enjoy a leisurely walking tour and a gourmet dinner in the National Wine Center. After dinner, return to the train.

Day 5: Indian Pacific

Travel through salt lake country and vast Nullarbor Plain — the longest straight stretch of railway in the world. Stop at one of world's most isolated outposts, Cook. Arrive in Rawlinna this evening for a short stop to enjoy the brilliant desert stars. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are served in the dining car. Overnight on the Indian Pacific.

Day 6: Arrive Perth

Today, take in the scenery of the Avon Valley over breakfast before arriving in Perth. Private transfer to COMO The Treasury (or similar) for a one-night stay.

Day 7: Perth to Darwin

Private included to the airport today in a deluxe chauffeured car. Fly Perth-Darwin and check into Darwin Hilton (or similar). Private transfer included to your Darwin hotel. Darwin is known for its relaxed outdoor lifestyle and enjoyed warm weather all year round. The sea surrounds the city. More than 50 nationalities call Darwin home.

Day 8: Kakadu National Park

Depart Darwin early this morning for Kakadu National Park. Your first stop is Fogg Dam, a vast, open wetland area that is home to large numbers of colorful birds during the Top End dry season. After a stop for tea, join a small group scenic cruise around the picturesque Corroboree billabong, viewing a large variety of wetland birds and the Top End's famous saltwater crocodiles in their natural environment.

This is part of the Mary River wetlands system, which has the largest concentration of saltwater crocodiles in the world. The birdlife out on the wetland is fantastic, with many different species of

birds including Jabiru, Ibis, Brolga, Jacana, Egrets, Herons, Kites, Sea Eagles, Whistling ducks, Magpie, Geese and many others.

Learn about the wildlife on the billabong from your knowledgeable guide. After the cruise, we then head off the highway down the old Jim Jim 4WD dirt track into Kakadu, where you will have ample opportunity to view bird and wildlife at numerous waterholes along the way. This tour is a must for keen wildlife and bird photographers, so make sure your camera is charged! This private journey includes a stay in Cooinda Lodge (or similar), a 3.5-star property that is clean, comfortable and has great access for touring.

Day 9: Kakadu to Darwin

After a delicious breakfast, visit Nanguluwur rock art and Aboriginal occupation sites. The Nanguluwur site is less well-known, so we are well away from tourist crowds, yet it has some excellent examples of rock art, including the rare and ancient ‘dynamic figures’. There are also examples of the famous ‘x-ray’ style art and so-called ‘contact period’ art, when Aboriginal people had first contact with Europeans.

Your guide will explain the unique art and rich culture of the area. Next, head south to Maguk (Barramundi Gorge) to spend the afternoon in this picturesque area. At the end of a monsoonal forest walk, enjoy a swim in a refreshing, natural plunge pool with a beautiful, perennial waterfall cascading above you. Return to Darwin for your overnight at the Hilton (or similar).

Day 10: Boarding The Ghan

Enjoy your included private transfer from the hotel to the train station. Board the legendary *Ghan* and settle in to your Platinum Cabin. Enjoy lunch on board and relax in your cabin. Arrive Katherine early afternoon and take a leisurely cruise on the Katherine River or meet the traditional owners of Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge, the Jawoyn people. You can choose to take a scenic helicopter flight (additional cost). Dinner served on board tonight.

Day 11: The Ghan to Alice Springs

This morning on board, wake up to a magical experience: the wonders of the Red Center. Breakfast is served, then take an off-train excursion to explore Alice. (You can choose to take a helicopter excursion, additional expense.) Dine in Alice this evening beneath a canopy of stars at an authentic Outback Bush Barbecue. Arrive Alice Springs.

Day 12: On board the Ghan

After breakfast, arrive in Manguri and disembark for a tour to Coober Pedy. This is the sun-scorched opal mining capital of the world. More than half of the residents live underground. Venture into the town’s underground tunnels and caves and have a gourmet lunch underground (or relax on board the train). Return to the Ghan and relax before dining in the Queen Adelaide Restaurant this evening.

Day 13: Arrive Adelaide

This morning, you will love the dramatic change in the landscape. It changes from the rich ocher tones of the outback to the beautiful green of South Australia. Breakfast is served in the restaurant before arriving in Adelaide. Private transfer is included to your hotel. Spend one night at the Mayfair Hotel (or similar). Includes full breakfast. This boutique hotel in the heart of Adelaide is a great location. Explore this South Australian city at your leisure.

Day 14: Uluru

This morning, meet your limousine driver for your private transfer to the Adelaide Airport. Upon arrival, your driver will meet you at the Ayers Rock Airport with a sign with your name on it — and take you to the magical land of Uluru, the true Aboriginal name for what many people call Ayers Rock. It rises 348 meters high and is one of the country's most recognized natural landmarks. It dates back 500 million years.

Check in tonight at Longitude 131 (we recommend a minimum of three nights). Longitude 131 is a luxurious, eco-sensitive and romantic accommodation at the gateway of this dual World Heritage site. Complete with 5-star luxury and private views of the sun rising and setting over Uluru, Longitude 131 is an intimate oasis in the desert. Included in your stay at Longitude 131 are the following signature experiences (private touring can also be arranged at additional cost):

Uluru Sunset: A drive into the dual World Heritage-listed National Park leads to the twilight viewing area where you can take in the sunset over Uluru with a glass in hand. This is the perfect location to capture the changing lights reflected over the Rock's many faces as the sun slips below the vast desert horizon.

Field of Light: Longitude guests will have an exclusive section to view the lights between Uluru Sunset and Table 131. Guests will walk uninterrupted along the pathways in the Field of Light, just as the tiny buds are lighting up – when it's time to depart, the field will be fully lit!

Table 131: Dine outdoors on fine fare celebrating a fusion of modern and indigenous flavours and discover the wonders of the southern night sky. As darkness falls, a four-course dinner with matched Australian wines is delivered with Longitude service. In the cool season, a warm fire sparks under the spectacular night sky. Indigenous performers mesmerize with the movement and songs of their ancient culture and after dinner, Longitude's resident astronomer regales guests with tales of the Southerly constellations. (Subject to weather conditions).

Note: If you prefer to stay at Sails of the Desert, this is available upon request. If staying at Sails of the Desert, we will arrange for you the Tali Wiru Dinner under the stars — a world-class gastronomic adventure in the outback. Behind are the domes of Kata Tjuta and a most spectacular sunset. Stargazing the southern night sky is a memorable experience.

Day 15: Uluru Sunrise, Kata Tjuta

Set out early this morning on a small group tour. Watch the first light of the new day at Uluru as

you enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and have an Outback picnic breakfast. You will learn the creation stories of Liru (poisonous snake) and Kuniya (python) and hear about the Mala people. After breakfast you will visit Mutitjulu Waterhole and then drive around the base of the Uluru before returning to the resort.

This afternoon, travel to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park to a place where unique flora and fauna thrive – Kata Tjuta (The Olgas). Here your guide (small group tour) will reveal the many attributes of this diverse environment and describe the cultural significance of Kata Tjuta as a sacred Aboriginal men's ceremonial site. Arriving at Walpa Gorge, walk between the mighty conglomerate domes and hear how these 36 domes that make up Kata Tjuta have evolved over millions of years. Take time to listen to the wind (Walpa) far above and view the scale of the rock walls that surround you. The spirituality of this amazing location embraces everyone who ventures here.

Day 16: Uluru

This afternoon, continue exploring this stunning region with a sundowner like no other. Drive into the dual World Heritage-listed National Park to the twilight viewing area where you can take in the sunset over Uluru with a glass in hand. This is the perfect location to capture the changing lights reflected over the Rock's many faces as the sun slips below the vast desert horizon.

Longitude guests will have an exclusive section to view the lights between Uluru Sunset and Table 131. Guests will walk uninterrupted along the pathways in the Field of Light, just as the tiny buds are lighting up - when it's time to depart, the field will be fully lit!

Dine outdoors on fine fare celebrating a fusion of modern and indigenous flavors and discover the wonders of the southern night sky. As darkness falls, a four-course dinner with matched Australian wines is delivered with Longitude service. The lodge's resident guide offers a tour of the sky, with legend from the Greek Gods told alongside Aboriginal creation tales from the Red Centre. (Subject to weather conditions).

Day 17: Uluru

Today, you'll transfer to the Ayers Rock Airport for your flight to Sydney. Rest up with a one-night stay at Rydges Sydney Airport (a one-minute walk from Sydney International Airport) before your connecting flight home tomorrow.

Day 18: Sydney and your onward travels

You will be met on arrival at the airport by our representative, assisted with airline check-in, and escorted through customs to your airline lounge — or directly to your departure gate.

Dates & Prices

2026 Dates

November 9 - November 26
November 16 - December 3
November 23 - December 10

Accommodation	Price	Deposit
Platinum Double	From 34,500 AUD	40%

Price is estimated based on above itinerary; price can fluctuate depending on availability and season of travel
Estimated price includes Platinum Service on The Ghan & Indian Pacific
Contact us if you wish to book the Australis or Aurora Suites; these are extremely limited
Please note for all departures: prices are in Australian Dollars (AUD). Please visit XE.com for conversion to US Dollars or other currency.
Prices are per person
Single pricing available upon request

2027 Dates

March 8 - March 25
March 15 - April 1
March 22 - April 8
March 29 - April 15
April 5 - April 22
April 12 - April 29
April 19 - May 6
April 26 - May 13
May 3 - May 20
May 10 - May 27
May 17 - June 3
May 24 - June 10
May 31 - June 17
June 7 - June 24
June 14 - July 1
June 21 - July 8
June 28 - July 15
July 5 - July 22
July 12 - July 29
July 19 - August 5
July 26 - August 12
August 2 - August 19
August 9 - August 26
August 16 - September 2
August 23 - September 9

August 30 - September 16
September 6 - September 23
September 13 - September 30
September 20 - October 7
September 27 - October 14
October 4 - October 21
October 11 - October 28
October 18 - November 4
October 25 - November 11
November 1 - November 18
November 8 - November 25
November 15 - December 2
November 22 - December 9

Accommodation	Price	Deposit
Platinum Double	AUD 39,600	40%
Aurora Suite	AUD 45,000	40%
Australis Suite	AUD 57,600	40%

Price is estimated based on above suggested itinerary; price will fluctuate depending on exact itinerary, availability, and season of travel;
Estimated price includes the indicated cabin type (Platinum, Aurora, or Australis Suite) on both The Ghan & Indian Pacific;
Please note for all departures: prices are in Australian Dollars (AUD). Please visit XE.com for conversion to US Dollars or other currency;
Prices are per person;
Single pricing available upon request.

Our Process

This is a suggested itinerary for a wonderful private journey. It will be fully customized for you. Please contact us at (800) 478-4881, or (502) 897-1725, or email us at tourdesk@irtsociety.com, to schedule a brief conversation with one of our specialists to discuss our process.

More

Off-train tours included with Gold and Platinum service only; flights not included in the pricing.

Itinerary may be adjusted depending on rail availability. It is best if you have some flexibility with your travel dates - especially if you would like Platinum Service on both trains.

Prices here include Platinum service. Gold service is available - but our guests who have traveled in Gold missed all the many little extras not offered in this class. Highly recommend Platinum. Book well in advance.

You must have an electronic ETA (visa) to enter Australia. This can be processed online.