AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

A JOURNEY TO THE LANDS DOWN UNDER

FEB 15 - MAR 10, 2027 • 24 DAYS • 41 MEALS

JOURNEY LEADER: DANIEL BENSON

The iconic Kangaroo of Australia, a symbol of the country's unique wildlife

Experience the rugged landscapes, vibrant cultures, and relaxed spirit of Australia and New Zealand. From the ancient stories of the Outback to the dramatic peaks of the Southern Alps, these lands offer a seamless blend of wild natural beauty and a legendary, laid-back way of life. Marvel at towering fjords and sparkling waterfalls in Milford Sound, spend a day cruising the vibrant Great Barrier Reef, and encounter iconic wildlife like koalas, kangaroos, and the elusive kiwi bird. Wander through bustling cities framed by glittering harbours and modern skylines, then escape to charming villages and rugged Outback landscapes steeped in Indigenous history. With a pace that balances thrilling discoveries and moments to relax, this trip also delights the palate with a rich variety of local culinary experiences, from bush BBQs to fine dining by the water's edge. Embark on a journey through two captivating countries, each with a bold and unique character.

Highlights

- Discover New Zealand and Australia through guided city tours in Auckland, Christchurch, Melbourne and Sydney
- Enjoy panoramic views from Auckland's Sky Tower
- Swim in the Great Barrier Reef on a full-day cruise
- Witness the Penguin Parade on Phillip Island and meet koalas and kangaroos at Healesville Sanctuary
- Cruise Milford Sound, New Zealand's striking fjord
- Marvel at glowworms in the Waitomo Caves and geothermal wonders at Te Puia
- Support conservation efforts at the National Kiwi Hatchery
- Explore history and culture at the Māori Gallery, Lakes District Museum, and Sydney Opera House
- Connect with the spirit of the Outback at Uluru through walks, and stories
- Ride the Puffing Billy steam train in the Dandenong Ranges
- Take in the Blue Mountains by railway, skyway, or cableway
- Experience vibrant Indigenous traditions with Māori and Pamagirri cultural performances
- Taste local flavours through special culinary experiences:
  - Lakeside BBQ at Walter Peak Station
  - Gondola ride to a scenic lunch in Rotorua
  - Wine tastings in the Yarra Valley and Gibbston Valley
  - Bush BBQ lunch in Kuranda
  - Sounds of Silence dinner show at Uluru National Park
  - Sydney Harbour luncheon cruise
  - Traditional Māori hāngī dinner

Journey Leader

Daniel Benson, a seasoned traveller and United Church minister, loves sharing his enthusiasm for exploring new places. He has travelled across Canada, Europe, the U.K., Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, and has studied in Switzerland, Israel, Scotland, France, and Italy. Dan's love of people and places make him an intrepid tourist, seeking out the unusual, conversing with locals, and exploring the history and meaning of a place. His interests include art, architecture, history, literature, and scenic landscapes. Join him on this exciting journey.

Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare to Australia and New Zealand plus domestic flights within the destination
- First-class accommodation, as indicated or similar
- All sightseeing and entrance fees as described
- 41 meals as noted in the itinerary (B - 21 breakfasts, L - 7 lunches, D - 13 dinners)
- Services of your Canadian journey leader and expert local drivers and guides
- All gratuities, surcharges, taxes and fees for inclusions
- Airport transfers in Canada (or equivalent value) with booking of air-inclusive package

FEB 15-16, Monday-Tuesday **DEPART CANADA**
Tour members from across Canada gather in Vancouver and fly to Auckland, losing a day en route.

FEB 17, Wednesday **AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND**
Arrive in Auckland early this morning and transfer to our hotel for immediate check-in. Join your fellow travellers for dinner this evening. **Grand Millennium** (2 nights) D

FEB 18, Thursday **AUCKLAND**
We explore New Zealand's most populous city on a sightseeing tour featuring the Auckland War Memorial Museum with its Māori gallery, followed by panoramic views from the Sky Tower. This evening, gather for a welcome reception and dinner. BD

FEB 19, Friday **WAITOMO / ROTORUA**
Drift through the magical Waitomo Caves as thousands of glowworms light up the darkness like a starry sky. After some free time, we continue to Rotorua and our lakefront hotel. Visit the Te Puia Thermal Reserve to see bubbling mud pools and geysers, and learn about Māori life and crafts. This evening, enjoy a traditional hāngī dinner in a Māori village, complete with a concert of songs and dances. **Novotel Rotorua Lakeside** (2 nights) BD

FEB 20, Saturday **ROTORUA**
This morning, head to the Agrodome to learn about sheep breeds, watch live shearing and skilled farm dogs in action. Then, stop by the National Kiwi Hatchery to learn about New Zealand's national bird and the efforts to protect it.

Ride the gondola up Mt. Ngongotahā to the Skyline Restaurant for a buffet lunch with panoramic views. The rest of the day is free to explore at your leisure. BL

FEB 21, Sunday ROTORUA / QUEENSTOWN
Fly to the South Island for a three-night stay in New Zealand's resort capital, Queenstown, surrounded by majestic mountains and lake views. This evening, cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the vintage TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak sheep station, for a lakeside gourmet BBQ featuring homegrown produce.
Copthorne Hotel or similar (3 nights) BD

FEB 22, Monday QUEENSTOWN
Spend the day at your own pace, whether you opt for a jet boat ride on the Shotover River, a gondola trip to Bob's Peak, or a stroll by the lake in the Botanic Gardens. B

FEB 23, Tuesday MILFORD SOUND
Travel through the rugged Hollyford Valley to Milford Sound for a full day surrounded by the pristine beauty of Fiordland National Park. Cruise its deep, still waters past towering fjords, powerful waterfalls, and the iconic Mitre Peak. BLD

FEB 24, Wednesday QUEENSTOWN / MT. COOK / TWIZEL
Wander through the historic gold rush town of Arrowtown, with a visit to the Lakes District Museum. Enjoy a short wine tour and tasting in the cave cellar at Gibbston Valley Winery, then continue to Aoraki / Mount Cook Village. Take in the alpine views during free time at the Hermitage before arriving in Twizel.
Distinction Mackenzie Country Hotel (1 night) BD

FEB 25, Thursday LAKE TEKAPO / CHRISTCHURCH
Stop at Lake Tekapo to see the picturesque Church of the Good Shepherd, built in 1935 as a tribute to the region's early settlers. Arriving in Christchurch, known as the Garden City for its parks and green spaces, take part in a city sightseeing tour followed by free time to walk the Botanic Gardens. **Hotel Elms** (1 night) BD

FEB 26, Friday CHRISTCHURCH / MELBOURNE
We board our flight to Melbourne, known as the cultural capital of Australia. Upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel to settle in. We leave the remainder of the day open for you to begin your own independent exploration of this vibrant metropolis. **Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne** (3 nights) B

FEB 27, Saturday MELBOURNE / PHILLIP ISLAND
Begin the day with a Melbourne city tour, including stops at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cooks' Cottage in the Fitzroy Gardens, Flinders Street Station, and St. Paul's Cathedral. Pass the Shrine of Remembrance and the Olympic Park sports precinct before journeying to Phillip Island. Enjoy coastal views via Churchill Island and the Nobbies, then witness the famous Penguin Parade as the little penguins return ashore at sunset. BD

FEB 28, Sunday YARRA VALLEY
Ride the historic Puffing Billy steam train through the forested slopes of the Dandenong Ranges. At Healesville Sanctuary, encounter iconic Australian wildlife including kangaroos and koalas. Afterward, savour a special Yarra Valley lunch and wine tasting before returning to Melbourne. BL

MAR 1, Monday MELBOURNE / AYERS ROCK
Fly to Ayers Rock (Uluru), in the heart of the Outback, a site of spiritual significance to the Anangu people. Drive through Kata Tjuta National Park for views of Uluru with a stop at the Olgas, a striking formation of domed red rocks.

Discover the Maori culture of New Zealand

The Sydney Opera House—an architectural masterpiece on the harbour

Koala, Australia's adorable tree-dwelling marsupial

The stunning dramatic cliffs of Milford Sound

Take a walk into its deep gorges to experience the scale and stillness of the landscape. Then, we visit a cultural centre to learn about Aboriginal history and culture.
Sails in the Desert Hotel (2 nights) B

MAR 2, Tuesday **AYERS ROCK**
As dawn breaks over Uluru, we enjoy a stunning piece of artwork, created by three local Anangu women artists which comes to life through laser projection, music and the natural environment of the desert floor. Later we walk the base trail at Uluru to Mutitjulu Waterhole, with views of Kantju Gorge. Our evening begins on a dune-top with sparkling wine and canapés while we watch the sunset transform the landscape of Uluru. As darkness falls, we enjoy a didgeridoo performance and a bush tucker dinner, then settle back as a resident star talker decodes the brilliant southern sky. BD

MAR 3, Wednesday **AYERS ROCK / SYDNEY**
Fly to Sydney and transfer directly to our hotel. This evening, dine at The Meat & Wine Co, one of Australia's top steakhouses. **The Grace Hotel** (3 nights) BD

MAR 4, Thursday **BLUE MOUNTAINS**
Set out on a full-day tour of the Blue Mountains, passing charming villages, dramatic lookouts, and waterfalls. Stop in Leura before continuing along Cliff Drive to Katoomba for panoramic views of the Jamison Valley and the iconic Three Sisters. After lunch, visit Scenic World for a ride on the Railway, Skyway, or Cableway, each offering a unique perspective of the rainforest and sandstone cliffs. BL

MAR 5, Friday **SYDNEY**
Discover Sydney, a dazzling harbour city known for its iconic skyline and relaxed coastal lifestyle. Tour the historic centre, elegant suburbs, and famous southern beaches. Enjoy a luncheon cruise on the harbour followed by a guided tour of the Sydney Opera House. The rest of the day is free before we gather for dinner tonight. BLD

MAR 6, Saturday **SYDNEY / CAIRNS**
Today we fly to the tropical city of Cairns, gateway to the Great Barrier Reef. This evening, sit down to a delightful dinner at Dundees. **The Flynn Hotel** (3 nights) BD

MAR 7, Sunday **GREAT BARRIER REEF**
Board the Quicksilver catamaran for a full-day adventure to the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef, Earth's largest living structure and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Soak up this marine wonder by glass-bottom boat or snorkel among vibrant coral gardens and tropical sea life. BL

MAR 8, Monday **KURANDA**
Travel by Scenic Railway to the village of Kuranda. Take part in the Dreamtime Walk to learn about Aboriginal customs, tools, and hunting techniques, including spear throwing and boomerang. Then, watch the Pamagirri Dance Show, where traditional dances, didgeridoo music, and storytelling bring local culture to life. After a BBQ lunch, we return to Cairns by Skyrail cableway, gliding over the rainforest canopy of the Barron Gorge. BL

MAR 9, Tuesday **CAIRNS / SYDNEY**
Our journey comes to a close as we fly back to Sydney. Upon arrival, we are transferred to our hotel for the night. This evening, we gather for a delicious farewell dinner to celebrate the many memories of our time in Australia and New Zealand. **The Brighton Hotel** (1 night) BD

MAR 10, Wednesday **SYDNEY / CANADA**
Our journey concludes as we board our flights home, gaining a day as we arrive in Canada. B

REV05OCT26

CT Rating 3/5 - Moderately Challenging: This journey involves extensive travel with long flights and travel days. Temperatures will range from comfortable to very hot and humid. Travel in the Outback can be strenuous, involving rough roads and hot conditions. Hotels are comfortable and the locals are very friendly.

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

Land Only (Join / Leave Hotel)	$16,225
Vancouver	$19,895
Victoria	$19,895
Calgary / Edmonton	$19,995
Toronto / Ottawa / Montreal	$20,245
Regina / Saskatoon / Winnipeg	$20,135
Halifax*	$20,335
Saint John* / St. John's	$20,395
Single Supplement	$4,045

**Members joining from these cities may receive an overnight hotel stay in lieu of home city transfers*

Land only members join at the hotel in Auckland and leave at the hotel in Sydney. The land only price includes flights to and from the Outback but excludes all other domestic flights in destination.

Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features for more details.

Tour price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room. Prices are based on a minimum of 20 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective February 2026 and are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted with a minimum of 20 members.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to our terms and conditions.

Visa Requirements: Travellers will need to apply online for e-visas. Inquire for details.

Deposit is $1,200 per person
Final payment is due November 10, 2026

To reserve your place on this tour, please book online or submit an enrollment form along with your deposit to:

1092 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, ON M4P 2M6
416-484-0926 • 1-800-387-8890
tours@craigtravel.com • craigtravel.com

Craig travel

A Proud Canadian Family Business
Since 1969

tico.ca
Reg # 1498987