

STUARTS COACHES - 8 DAY LIGHTNING RIDGE & MOREE



Day 1 (LD): Nowra to Dubbo – Saturday 4 September 2021 – 7.00am departure

Welcome to our 8-day tour to the Lightning Ridge Opal fields, Dubbo and Mudgee. We depart our depot – 339 Greenwell Point Road Worrigee at 7.00am. Our main destination is **Lightning Ridge** – where we spend 3 days exploring this unique outback opal mining town. Today we travel to **Dubbo**, so sit back and enjoy the service and facilities aboard our touring coach as we depart Nowra and travel through Cowra, Parkes to Dubbo

2 nights - Comfort Inn Blue Lagoon Dubbo – PH: 02 6882 4444
Dinner in the motel, Lunch at Cowra

Day 2 (BLD): Dubbo – Sunday 5 September 2021

After breakfast we make our way to the **Taronga Western Plains Zoo** where we spend the morning. The Zoo is home to more than 1100 animals from around the world, many of them endangered species. The Zoo is in the unique position to allow many of the animals to roam freely and to be viewed without the visual barriers of fences, bars or glass, instead using a system of dry and water-filled moats. A zoo keeper will step onboard our coach and explain the open range layout and some of the behind the scenes operations of the Zoo. We have time at leisure to explore the zoo before making our way to **Dundullimal Homestead**. Wealthy Squatter John Maughan built Dundullimal in the 1840's as the head station of his 1600 acre sheep run. Maughan sold the property in 1858, and it was subsequently occupied by three prominent Dubbo families. The slab house and stone stables that remain bear testimony to the hardships and conditions of colonial life on the land. We enjoy lunch here before returning to the township where we visit the **Old Dubbo Gaol**. Originally a courthouse lockup in 1847, it was proclaimed an official Gaol in 1859 and closed operations as a penal institution in 1966. It was officially re-opened as a tourist attraction in 1974. It is now fully restored and home to a large display of animatronic models and holographic displays which provide a realistic and fascinating insight into a bygone era of barbaric prison life. After our full day of touring we return to our motel with time to freshen up before dinner.

Breakfast & Dinner in the motel, Lunch at Dundullimal

Day 3 (BLD): Dubbo to Lightning Ridge – Monday 6 September 2021

After breakfast we continue north to *Gilgandra*, home of the Coo-ees and the Town of Windmills. In Bridge Street a plaque commemorates that starting point of the famous "Coo-ee" recruiting march of World War I. The beautiful St Ambrose Anglican Church is also in part a tribute to the march as well. From here we travel through *Gulargambone*, *Coonable* and *Walgett* where we stop for lunch, then arrive into *Lightning Ridge*, where we collect our *local guide* for a *tour* of town. With its stark and scarred landscape this town has a peculiar fascination for visitors. During our tour we'll view an *open cut mine*, see the *Bore Baths* and *Coopers Cottage*. This authentic miner's camp was built in 1916 and is a genuine historical display of early pioneer living. After our wonderful day we check into our accommodation – home base for the next three nights.

3 nights - Lightning Ridge Outback Resort (Motel rooms) – PH: 02 6829 0304
Breakfast & Dinner in the motel, Lunch in Walgett

Day 4 (BD): Lightning Ridge – Tuesday 7 September 2021

Today, we experience the atmosphere of an underground mine at *Opal Mine Adventure*. Here we'll learn about opal mining through a video presentation and visit the showroom to view the opals that came from the mine in this area. Next is a visit to the *John Murray Art Gallery*, well worth a visit. John has been kept busy adding to his mural on the outside wall of the Gallery, affectionately named "Billygoat Lane" (in reference to its original name). We now have some free time for lunch (own expense) before an afternoon visit to the *Chambers of the Black Hand*. Opened in April, 2007, this is a unique tourist mine. At 11.2m underground, local artist Ron Canlin has created the most amazing paintings and sculptures. There is The Last Supper, Archangel Gabriel and the Chinese Terracotta Warriors. Ron is constantly carving new work, such as a samurai warrior so there are changes every day. The second level is a mine that has been worked for over 100 years, and all the old shafts and drives that were dug by the old timers are still there. On this level a geology tour will give us the different strata's opal formation - an experience not to be missed. Overall, it is a very unique visit. Our last stop for the day is to *Amigos Castle*, a huge Italian Style Castle built by one man from ironstone. We'll take a look around then return to our motel.

Breakfast & Dinner in the motel, Lunch at own expense

Day 5 (BLD): Grawin, Glengarry & Sheeppark Opal Fields – Wednesday 8 September 2021

No trip to Lightning Ridge would be complete without a trip to *The Grawin ***. We'll see interesting places like *The Pub in the Scrub*, *The Glengarry Hilton* and *Sheeppark Flats*. Located about 70km west of Lightning Ridge, The Grawin was established in 1908 with the discovery of the opal at "Hammond Hill". Further discoveries in 1920 at "Richards Hill" put the unofficial village on the map. It was at Grawin that the largest opal 'Light of the World' was found in 1928. Since the first discovery of opal in the region, people have come and gone in tides with each new strike, seeking their fortune in search of the rainbow in the rock. It is believed that a field at Grawin was discovered in 1905 but it wasn't until the 1970s that it became a major field in its own right. The Mulga Rush, which began in 2000, is the biggest opal rush since the Coocoran was discovered in the early 1900s. The Sheeppark area was named after a find of opal near the fence of the old Sheepparks. A *local guide* will join us on our day's tour and *lunch* is enjoyed at the *Glengarry Hilton*. After a great day we head back to Lightning Ridge. We have one last stop to make at *Bevans Cactus Farm*. Started in 1966 and now encompassing two passionate generations, Bevan's host the largest cactus nursery in the Southern Hemisphere with approximately

2,500 young and aged varieties. Grown from seeds collected from around the world, many plants are now over 100 years old, with the oldest being nearly 150 years of age.

*** Please Note: Today's Touring depends on local weather and road conditions***
Breakfast & Dinner in the motel, Lunch at Glengarry Hilton

Day 6 (BLD): LIGHTNING RIDGE TO MOREE - Thursday 9 September 2021

After breakfast we pack up and board the coach for an interesting day of touring. We cross the Queensland Border after the small township of Hebel and arrive at **Cubbie Station**. This farm was a grazing business before being acquired in 1983 by Des Stevenson who converted the property to cotton production. We will be shown around by a local to spend the morning touring the giant farming operation that produces a wide variety of irrigated agriculture including cotton, wheat, sorghum, sunflowers, barley, chickpeas and corn. For lunch we travel to **Dirranbandi** and this afternoon we pass through the cotton growing areas of New South Wales and arrive in **Moree** where we can relax and take a soak in the Hotel Pool.

1 night - Burke & Wills Motor Inn, Moree – PH: 02 6752 3377
Breakfast & dinner in the motel, Lunch at Dirranbandi Hotel

Day 7 (BLD): MOREE TO MUSWELLBROOK – Friday 10 September 2021

We farewell our hosts and depart Moree following breakfast We pass through Narrabri and Gunnedah and arrive late morning at **Bobs Shed** in Quirindi. Take a stroll down memory lane and look through an extensive collection of authentic 40s and 50's items, admire the collection of historic pub items in the Railway Hotel and visit Peter Brocks World - an amazing tribute to an Australian icon. Bob will tell us stories relating to the collection and this will also be our lunch venue today. This afternoon we pass through Scone and arrive in Muswellbrook for our final night's accommodation for the tour.

1 night - Noahs Mid City Motor Inn, Muswellbrook
Breakfast & dinner in the motel, Lunch at Bobs Shed

Day 8 (BL): MUSWELLBROOK TO NOWRA – Saturday 11 September 2021

This morning we head for home via the Hunter Valley, Central Coast and arrive back following another great time away.

Breakfast in the motel, Lunch at Berowra

Cost: \$2580 Twin Share \$3180 Single Supplement

Deposit: \$300.00 per person upon booking

Balance due: 4th August 2021

Minimum no's required for the tour to proceed

Not included is items of Personal Nature

Booking Terms & Conditions

Accommodation is on share room basis in Motels, Hotels etc. The accommodation named may be altered without notice.

The right is reserved to amend or modify the Itinerary at any time without notice for unpredictable weather or road conditions or for any other reason beyond our control.

Cancellation Fees: In the event of cancellation of a tour the following fees apply:

- 60 days or more prior to departure, loss of deposit.
- Between 7 and 59 days prior to departure, 75% of tour price.
- Less than 7 days prior to departure, 100% of tour price.

Refunds: No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour after departure.

Responsibilities: Stuarts Travel advises that the service it provides is for the booking and packaging of goods and services provided by other operators such as hotels, motels and transportation companies. Passengers are advised to familiarize themselves with the terms and conditions on which these services are supplied.

Accordingly, Stuarts Travel will not be responsible and will be excluded from any liability for any loss, damage, omission or acts being negligent or otherwise, committed by the operators of airlines, coach lines, rail travel, hotels/motels or attractions used in connection with the tour.

The operator of this tour is **Stuarts Travel Pty Ltd**

Payment to Stuarts Travel acknowledges that you have read, understand and accept these booking conditions.