

The Outback

A vast and wild territory.

Vast, pure wilderness, with red semi-arid terrain stretching as far as the eye can see, and a green, tropical northern area summarises the immense Australian Outback, which stretches from eastern Queensland to the heart of Western Australia. For a long time this area was feared and considered largely an Aboriginal area, but nowadays many tourists are eager to visit and have an authentic, Outback adventure. This remote area can be seen as the essence of Australia as it is ultimately more representative of the country than the urbanised, coastal cities.

By exploring the **wilderness of the Outback** by **motorhome**, you will discover a different world of completely unpopulated, **rugged mountain ranges**, spectacular gorges and dusty tracks. Tourism, farming and mining are the main activities in the region. The soil is rich in minerals and largely unexploited, allowing for flowers and plants to flourish in towns such as **Moomba, Roxby Bowns** and **Cooper Pedy**, set in the heart of an otherwise bare, lunar landscape. The Outback is also home to some amazing meteor craters and geological formations. Don't miss the UNESCO World Heritage Site of **Uluru** (or Ayers Rock), a huge, red monolith sacred to the Aboriginal people, in the heart of the magnificent **Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**. Also not to be missed is **Kings Canyon**, an impressive opening in the heart of the desert sheltering an oasis at the bottom. Other sites worth a visit include: **Devils Marbles, Kimberley, Pinnacles, Flinders Range, Lake Eyre, Purnululu, Longreach, Broken Hill, Glentelen Gorge, Lake Argyle** and **Murray River**.

Animals have adapted to live in this arid and harsh environment. You may see brumbies (wild horses), camels, dingos, parakeets, kangaroos, lizards and snakes (some venomous and dangerous). The Outback lifestyle is very particular. School is conducted via radio and supplies generally arrive in the area on a monthly basis. There are many **Aboriginal communities** in the area and if you would like to visit or pass through one you have to obtain special permission which can take from a few minutes to a few days. Don't miss the most beautiful Aboriginal site, the **Kakadu National Park**.

The Outback can be crossed from north to south or visa versa by a paved road. All vehicles can generally take this route if followed cautiously. There are many other routes that can be taken in a 4x4 vehicle which is probably the best vehicle to use in this region of Australia. These routes generally follow old cattle routes and railway tracks. Some examples are: **Oodnatta Track, Birdsville Track, Strzelecki Track** and **Tanami Track**.

A **trip into the Outback should always be well planned**. The best season for travel in this region is from June to August. These months will allow you to avoid soaring temperatures of 45-50°C, as well as fly swarms. Isolation in this region can be problematic. Make sure you leave with sunscreen, a hat, plenty of water, some music and essential vehicle spare parts, as you will often be very far from towns and service stations. Inform relatives and a local police station of your itinerary and make sure you are well informed and planned before your departure.