

# Factsheet

## Outback Retreats

IN reality an escape to the Queensland Outback is a retreat in itself – a chance to escape the every day and take in the real Australia. The opportunity to experience the wilderness first hand. Our Outback retreats are a destination in themselves – here's a taste of retreats that showcase Queensland's dramatically beautiful Outback landscape and genuine country-style hospitality. Most are accessed from Cairns and lie within north-west Queensland or within the spectacular Carnarvon Gorge in Central Queensland.

### **Adels Grove**

Set amongst a plantation of exotic trees grown by a French Pioneer over 80 years ago, the resort is an oasis retreat for the Outback travellers. Adels Grove is an eco-sensitive tourist park on Lawn Hill Creek, adjacent to Lawn Hill National Park and 50km from the World Heritage-listed Riversleigh Fossil Fields in the far north-west of Queensland. The surrounding ranges include many ancient Aboriginal sites (not all accessible), internationally-significant fossils and a comet or asteroid crater. Accommodation is in tent-style, air-conditioned huts and camp sites are also available. Tours are available to the national park and Riversleigh. Other activities include year-round swimming and canoeing, bush walking and magnificent bird watching.

Ph +61 7 4748 5502 or visit [www.adelsgrove.com.au](http://www.adelsgrove.com.au).

### **Wrotham Park**

Wilderness wildlife and luxury has been Wrotham Park Station's forte since they opened their retreat in September 2004. The 600,000 hectare property, with its 10 guest quarters (catering for a maximum of 20 guests) is located 300km west of Cairns. The glorious vistas from its perch high above the banks of the mighty Mitchell River are breathtaking. A visit to Wrotham Park combines the rich heritage of Australia's rural history and classic outback station life with a premium resort experience. Guest activities include station tours, walks, canoeing, fishing, star gazing and horse riding. Access is via Cairns, and while self-drive is possible, charter flights and heli transfer are available. Wrotham Park closes annually between December and March.

Ph +61 2 9277 5050 or visit [www.wrothampark.com.au](http://www.wrothampark.com.au).

### **Tyrconnell Outback Experience and Historic Gold Mine**

This 110 acre bush retreat was once home to 10,000 people panning for gold when Tyrconnell was the most famous mine for the Hodgkinson Gold Field 120 years ago. Today, you can soak up the sunsets, stars and serenity from the balcony of a tin and timber cottages or camp at the ultimate bush experience. Tyrconnell owners/hosts Andrew Bell and Cate Harley are actively preserving the property's gold mining heritage. Guests can stay in the restored mine manager's cottage or watch (and listen) to a rare quartz crushing machine operating in all its noisy glory. Tyrconnell is located only 150km west of Cairns, access is by road, charter plane, heli transfer (direct to Tyrconnell) and train to Dimbulah where guests are met by Andrew and Cate. Choose from three heritage-style cottages, or luxury camping in tents complete with white linen covered beds and seagrass matting floors. Activities include panning for gold, horse riding, meeting one of the indigenous traditional owners of the area or just taking some time to gaze at the stars. Limited to 12 overnight guests.

Ph +61 7 4093 5177 or visit <http://www.tyrconnell.com.au>.

### **Undara Experience**

This multi-award winning experience is located on the eastern edge of the ruggedly beautiful Gulf Savannah region of northern Australia, 275km from Cairns. Highly-qualified Savannah Guides conduct tours of the nearby Lava Tubes, formed 190,000 years ago when molten lava flowed down a dry river bed leaving hollow tubes you can walk through. Undara is 'long way' in Aboriginal as one of the flows extends 160km. Undara Experience is an Australian Tourism Award-winner for unique accommodation and guests stay in authentic turn-of-the-century railway carriages. Dorm-style accommodation and camping is also available. In October, Undara hosts the spectacular Opera in the Outback. The Lava Tubes are only accessible by guided tour.

Ph +61 7 4097 1411 or visit [www.undara.com.au](http://www.undara.com.au)

### **Jowalbinna Bush Camp, Laura**

Some of Australia's finest accessible Aboriginal rock art can be easily reached from Jowalbinna Bush Camp at Laura. Located 317km north of Cairns, the surrounding country contains Aboriginal paintings going back 15,000 years and depicting Quinkans, local Aboriginal devil spirits. The bush camp has tented accommodation, camping facilities and regular guided walks to Aboriginal rock art sites, escarpments and flora and fauna interpretation.

Ph +61 7 4051 4777 or visit [www.cypda.com.au/tourism](http://www.cypda.com.au/tourism)

### **Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge**

This fully eco-accredited retreat is located at the entrance to spectacular Carnarvon Gorge, about 250km north of Roma in western Queensland. Carnarvon is home to some of the most vivid Aboriginal art sites anywhere in Australia. Here you'll see thousands of animals, humans, tools and weapons, all clearly depicted in rich ochre colours. The luxury timber and canvas safari style cabins are Advanced Eco-accredited by the Ecotourism Association of Australia. Lodge guests can take interpretive walks through the gorge with fully qualified guides. A beautiful stream flows the length of the gorge, forming a cool and refreshing oasis for unusual plants and a huge number of birds. This experience is about the landscape and the creatures that inhabit it. So, take in the sights and sounds of native plants, birds and animals from one of the wide verandahs, curl up in the recreation room or get out in the spectacular surroundings for some of the best bushwalking in the country. The gorge is accessible by conventional vehicle, and a shuttle bus service operates between the lodge and gorge entrance. The lodge closes each year in mid-December through to March owing to seasonal extremes.

Ph +61 7 4984 4503 or visit [www.carnarvon-gorge.com](http://www.carnarvon-gorge.com).

### **Takarakka Bush Resort, Carnarvon Gorge**

An authentic bush camping experience is on offer at Takarakka Bush Resort in the heart of Carnarvon Gorge. Situated in a picturesque loop of Carnarvon Creek in the gorge, resort guests have the choice of canvas cabins, powered sites and camping. More than 20km of walking tracks are on the doorstep to ancient Aboriginal rock art sites, moss gardens, canyons and bluffs. Relax by the campfire at night and enjoy a sing-along, or spot one of Australia's most elusive wildlife, the platypus in the wild. The gorge runs 35km through the 302,000 hectare Carnarvon National Park and is also renowned for its bird-watching.

Ph +61 7 4984 4535 or visit [www.takarakka.com.au](http://www.takarakka.com.au)

### **Pepper's Spicer's Peak Lodge**

Not strictly in the Outback, but still a wilderness retreat, this mountain lodge is located only 90 minutes drive south west of Brisbane, Queensland's capital city. As well as offering luxurious accommodation and fabulous food, the lodge boasts majestic views of the

surrounding World Heritage-listed Main Ridge National Park. There are only 10 suites in this exclusive and remote setting so the guest experience is both intimate and relaxing. Guest activities make the most of the breath taking surrounds and include bush walking, mountain bikes and four wheel drive tours. At night guests enjoy fine food and wine, relaxing by the fire and the brilliance of the stars in the clear mountain skies.  
Ph +61 7 4666 1083 or visit [www.peppers.com.au](http://www.peppers.com.au).

## **Farmstays – not just a holiday**

Dotted throughout Queensland are another rural accommodation alternative... farmstays. These working properties give their guests the opportunity to experience what many city dwellers may never otherwise have. Tourists are able to step onto these properties and experience a different way of life. Milking, mustering on horse back and learning to ride motorbikes gives guests a taste for the rural life. Take the time to slow down in the evenings, contemplate the stars and get to know those around you. Farmstays are a truly special way to enjoy the Australian way of life.

### **Nardoo Station**

Lie back in the hot artesian spas and share the first rays of the sun with the galahs in the gidgee. This is the 'Real Australia' and you could be a part of it. Be welcomed by genuine Australian country hospitality and experience a small part of life on the land while joining in with some station activities.  
Ph: +61 2 4655 4833 or visit [www.nardoo.com.au](http://www.nardoo.com.au)

### **Myella Farmstay**

Only an hour and half from the regional centre of Rockhampton, Myella is a 2600 acre working cattle property. The beautiful landscape offers guests a chance to take it as easy as they like. They can alternatively get as involved as the like in the many activities on offer. Their specialty is horse riding.  
Ph: +61 7 4998 1290 or visit [www.users.bigpond.com/myella](http://www.users.bigpond.com/myella).

### **Aldville Station**

This 30,000 hectare cattle and sheep station lies 125km north west of Cunnamulla. The property spans the Paroo River and Buchal Creek. A range of accommodation and activity options is available.  
Ph: +61 7 4655 4814.

### **Wattle Downs Sheep Station**

Here visitors can join their hosts in the daily running of the station. Spanning 5000 acres of land 340km west of Brisbane, this merino sheep stud is set away from it all in the Australian bush. Guests can also get out at night and see the variety of native wildlife on show. There are also heaps of children friendly activities on offer.  
Ph: +61 7 4665 9129 or visit [www.wattledowns.com.au](http://www.wattledowns.com.au).

### **Carisbrooke Station**

Although not a farmstay, this day tour from Winton taking in beautiful Carisbrooke Station is something not to be missed. The tour takes visitors through Williams Valley, Covey Range and to spectacular views of the 'Three Sisters' mesa rock formation.  
Ph: +61 7 4657 1886 or visit [www.experiencewinton.com.au](http://www.experiencewinton.com.au).

### **Ray Station**

Ray Station is located north of Quilpie. Settled in 1874 by Patsy and Sarah Tully, Ray Station is still in the Tully family. Mark and Sandra offer group accommodation in the

shearer's quarters or the two bedroom cottage beside the homestead. Two museum buildings contain a wealth of historic family memorabilia and a large photographic display. Guests can expect to enjoy barbecues, smoko's, tours and stories plus evening sing-a-longs in a delightful setting.  
Ph: +61 7 4656 4737.