

great value HOLIDAYS

Murray River Explorer Tour

Day 1 (D): Home to Albury: Sunday 20 October 2024

Welcome to our **Murray River Explorer Tour**, from Albury to the Murray Mouth in South Australia. This morning we fly to Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport where our Touring Coach will be waiting for us. After loading the coach, we are on our way – north along the Hume Highway to Albury on the New South Wales Border. **Albury** (NSW) is separated from its sister city **Wodonga** (Victoria) by the Murray River. This is not the starting point of the Murray – that is many hundreds of kilometres further east in the high country of the Australian Alps. However, **Albury/Wodonga** is where the river widens and meanders through relatively flat country to **Mildura** and then flows into South Australia. *(Lunch own cost, Welcome dinner in hotel)*

Quality Siesta Resort Albury

Day 2 (BLD): Albury to Echuca: Monday 21 October 2024

Today we follow the Murray Valley Highway west towards **Echuca**. First stop is **Yarrawonga** situated on **Lake Mulwala** – the next downstream reservoir from Lake Hume. **Lake Mulwala** was formed by the completion of the Yarrawonga Weir. It was part of the massive Lake Hume project to harness the waters of the Murray for irrigation. We have arranged a short cruise aboard the **PS Cumbeeroona**. The lake is dominated by a vast number of trees standing in the water and the lovely homes along the foreshore. We will cruise past these towering River Red Gums and dozens of sandy beaches whilst enjoying morning tea. From Yarrawonga we continue through **Cobram** to **Strathmerton** for a visit to Cactus Country. Following lunch in the café, our hosts will give us a talk on the garden followed by the chance for a wander. We'll be amazed at the amount of cacti we'll see from all over the world! From here we make our way to **Echuca Moama**. *(Breakfast & dinner in the motel/Lunch Cactus Country)*

Philadelphia Motor Inn, Echuca

Day 3 (BD): Historic Echuca: Tuesday 22 October 2024

After breakfast we meet a local character who will help us understand the history and stories of the area of the **Echuca Port**. Our guide will point out areas of interest and fill us with tales of the colourful personalities who "crewed" the old river boats. All the events we learn about happened when trade was booming here at the turn of the century. After our guided tour we join the **PS Pevensey** for a one-hour cruise along the Murray River. This afternoon we spend some time at the **Port of Echuca Discovery Centre** and then

and have a chance to look through **Sharps Magic Movie House & Penny Arcade**. (*Breakfast & dinner in the motel/Lunch at own expense*)

Philadelphia Motor Inn, Echuca

Day 4 (BLD): Lake Boga & Swan Hill: Wednesday 23 October 2024

Leaving Echuca, we follow the river to **Koondrook** for a visit to the only working sawmill in the region. Since 1889 the Arbutnot Sawmill has played a major role in the social and economic viability of Koondrook and surrounding area. The sawmill today is a modern timber processing plant with automatic equipment which is a far cry from the days of steam power and heavy manual work. The viewing walkway allows for safe access and the opportunity of viewing the Redgum logs through the milling process and on to become a magnificent piece of Redgum furniture. Whilst in Koondrook we look at the **Red Gum Statue River Walk** that has been created by a local chainsaw carver. Our lunch stop is in **Lake Boga** which is home to the famous **Lake Boga Flying Boat Museum**. The Catalina Flying Boat played an integral part in the allied defence of the South Pacific during World War 2. Lake Boga was an ideal stretch of water on which the mighty flying boats could alight. We make a brief stop at the **Flying Boat Museum**. All types of Flying Boats that were serviced at Lake Boga are represented in the Museum - with special sections dedicated to the United States of America and the Netherlands air craft and crew who visited Lake Boga during World War 2. From here we continue to **Swan Hill**. Following dinner, we head to **Pioneer Settlement** for the **Heartbeat of the Murray** sound and laser show. This wonderful show is the first of its kind and utilizes water, light, laser, sound and special effects to tell the fascinating story of the Murray River– from 30 million years ago to today. The set features 20 water fountains, each of which can spray water up to 40 metres high and is fitted with individually coloured LED light. The show will face the Little Murray River making it the first show of its kind to use a natural river environment and setting as the background. (*Breakfast and dinner at motel/Lunch at Flying Boat Museum Café*)

Swan Hill Resort, Swan Hill:

Day 5 (BLD) Pioneer Museum Swan Hill – Thursday 24 October 2024

Our morning is spent at the nearby **Pioneer Settlement Museum**, Australia's first outdoor museum. We'll wander through living history, as well as enjoy a cruise on the mighty Murray River aboard the **Paddleboat Pyap**. After a lunch we have a little free time before we are on our way again, following the Murray Valley Highway to **Mildura** for our overnight stop. We will arrive into Mildura just on dinner time and have dinner in the motel restaurant just after arrival. (*Breakfast & dinner in the motel/Lunch at Pioneer Settlement*)

Mildura Inlander Resort: PH: 03 5023 3823

Day 6 (BLD): Mildura and Wentworth: Friday 25 October 2024

The first stop on our tour today is at the Mildura wharf where we board our morning cruise on the **PS Rothbury**, Built in 1891, the **PS Rothbury** is one of the last "working" Paddle steamers on the Murray. At that time she was well known as the fastest tow boat on the river. On arrival back on dry land we make our way to **Orange World** - a working 50-acre citrus property situated just 8 minutes from Mildura over the Chaffey Bridge. We will enjoy a **citrus tour** around the picturesque property of avocado trees, numerous citrus varieties and tree

grafting areas. There is also an opportunity to travel on the 70-seat tractor train with undercover seating for an informative commentary on a wealth of citrus information with a juicy sense of humour. Lunch today is at the **Varapodio Olive Oil Farm**. We'll be met by the owners who will give us a talk on their farm as well as tastings of their award-winning oils. We'll also see their range of salad dressings, olive oil mayonnaise and olive oil cosmetics and soaps. In Wentworth we see the junction of the Darling and Murray rivers before a visit to the **Old Wentworth Gaol**. A visit to the gaol shows the hard lives and extreme conditions prisoners endured amongst the beauty of the old pepper trees dating back to the establishment of the gaol in 1879. *(Breakfast & dinner in the motel/Lunch at Varapodio Olive farm)*

Mildura Inlander Resort: PH: 03 5023 3823

Day 7 (BLD) Renmark and Berri: Saturday 26 October 2024

Today we continue west along the Sturt Highway towards the South Australian Border. Its 140ks from **Mildura** to **Renmark** - and just a little closer is the tiny village of Paringa (Paringa is from an Aboriginal word meaning "big bend in the river"). It's here we have our morning stop and take a look at the Silo Art mural. Next, we take a look at **Lock 5**. Navigating the Murray River wouldn't be possible without the series of locks and weirs that were built back in the 1920s and 1930s. Fourteen locks are still in use today. We have lunch at the **Renmark Club**, then have a visit to **Olivewood Homestead**, a homestead and museum containing relics from 1887 and traces the story of the Chaffey Brothers who were instrumental in introducing irrigation to the area. Our final visit for the day is to **Angoves Wines** for a wine tasting and history talk. Angoves Wines is the largest privately owned winery in Australia. Established in 1886 and commencing operation in 1910, it is noted for a large variety of premium wines and brandy. From Renmark we now head to Berri for our accommodation overlooking the Murray River. *(Breakfast & dinner in the motel/Lunch at Renmark Club)*

Berri Hotel/Motel:

Day 8 (BLD): Heading Downstream to Murray Bridge: Sunday 27 October 2024

Loxton was first settled by people of (predominantly) German origin, who were escaping religious persecution. This proud German heritage is still evident today at the **Loxton Historical Village**. Later this morning, we make our way to **Kingston-on-Murray** where we visit **Banrock Station**. Of the property's 1650 hectares only 250 hectares are devoted to grapes – varieties such as Semillon, Merlot, Chardonnay, Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon. The remaining land, including 12.5 kilometres of river frontage adjacent to the Banrock Lagoon and wetlands, is being returned to its native state. We take in a presentation at the cellar door which of course means some wine tastings. From Banrock Station it's not far into **Waikerie**, where we look at the Silo Art mural, then head via the **Big Bend Lookout** to **Murray Bridge**. *(Breakfast & dinner in motel, lunch at Banrock Station)*

Bridgeport Hotel, Murray Bridge:

Day 9 (BD): The Murray Mouth: Monday 28 October 2024

Leaving our hotel, we follow the Murray River via the small towns of **Wellington** and **Milang** to **Goolwa** where the Murray River finally enters the Southern Ocean. Goolwa is an aboriginal word meaning elbow and is situated on the bend in the Murray River,

opposite Hindmarsh Island. At 10.30 am we board the **“Spirit of the Coorong”** for a cruise to the **Mouth of the Murray River**. The cruise takes us through the Goolwa Barrage, one of 5 constructed in the 1930s to separate the sea water from the fresh water of the river. From here the river mouth and the entrance to the Coorong are 4kms further on and, depending on the tide, can be freely accessed. After our cruise we have some free time to purchase lunch in Goolwa and this afternoon we return to Murray Bridge via Strathalbyn. Tonight, as our farewell dinner we join the **Captain Proud Paddle Boat** and relax and enjoy the scenery. *(Breakfast in motel, lunch at own expense, Dinner onboard Captain Proud Paddleboat)*

Day 10 (B): Heading Home: Tuesday 29 October 2024

We travelled nearly the entire length of the Murray River and unfortunately our tour has come to an end. After breakfast we travel into Adelaide for our flights home. *(Breakfast in the motel/Lunch own arrangements & cost)*

All itineraries are subject to change due to occasional restrictions in opening times/days of some attractions, e.g. churches, wineries etc. We cannot be held responsible for any changes due to closures, inclement weather etc.

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