



EMU

21 Day Sydney to Cairns Tour

Stray Adventure Tour - Australia East Coast

RETAIL: AUD\$6,595

STARTS: Sydney **FINISHES:** Cairns

DURATION: 21 Days / 20 Nights

START DAY: Monday

FINISH DAY: Sunday

2024 DEPARTURES: 9 Sep, 14 Oct, 28 Oct, 11 Nov, 25 Nov

2025 DEPARTURES: 6 Jan, 20 Jan, 3 Feb, 17 Feb, 3 Mar, 17 Mar, 31 Mar, 28 Apr, 26 May, 16 Jun, 14 Jul, 11 Aug, 8 Sep, 6 Oct, 20 Oct, 3 Nov, 17 Nov, 1 Dec

MIN. / MAX. NUMBERS: 8 / 22 passengers



Overview

If you're looking for our biggest and 'bestest' tour, then our 21-Day Emu Tour is for you. As Australia's largest native bird, the Emu is the perfect Aussie mate to guide you from Sydney all the way up the east coast to tropical Cairns. You'll explore golden beaches, mountains and rainforests, meet the cheeky wildlife and friendly locals and discover some off-the-beaten-track highlights that aren't on the usual tourist trail. You'll travel with a local guide (and get their insider knowledge) and a bunch of like-minded travellers (your new lifelong friends) and explore all the amazing places Aussie has to offer!

Join us on this mega road-trip, where we believe in more! Featuring shared 4-8 bed mixed dorm-style accommodation and bucket loads of adventure, we've cranked up the excitement dial.

Day 1 - Monday: Arrive Sydney

G'day and welcome to your epic East Coast adventure. Your tour begins in Sydney with a day to yourself to explore the city sights and world-famous landmarks. If you've just flown in, we recommend taking the train from the airport to Central Station, your accommodation is conveniently located straight across the road. Check into the hostel anytime after 2pm and if you'd like to begin your trip with a delicious cocktail (because wine-not?), head down to Circular Quay and the Opera Bar. Located at the base of the Opera House, with views of the Harbour Bridge, you'll get all the iconic Sydney pics you can dream of. At 6pm head down to reception to meet your Stray guide and travel mates for the next few weeks.

Accommodation included: Wake Up Sydney or similar

Optional activities: Bondi to Coogee beach walk, visit Darling Harbour, explore King Street Wharf, Royal Botanic Gardens, Taronga Zoo, walk around the Opera House and the Rocks, the oldest area of Sydney. You can also take the ferry from Circular Quay to Manly.

Meal options: Head down to the hostel bar for Pizza Night

Day 2 - Tuesday: Sydney to Port Stephens

Today we'll say goodbye to Sydney as we depart the harbour city and make our way north to the Hunter Valley wine region where we'll taste some of the local wine and cheese before continuing through to Port Stephens, our destination for the night.

We'll be staying at the Surfside hostel, set on 6 acres of natural bushland, with kangaroos and wallabies on site. This boutique accommodation is about creating a relaxing experience in an environmentally conscious way so you can put your feet up and feel good about it! Once we've checked in, you can explore the area, relax, or head to the beach for a swim. If you're interested, go for a walk around and check out the architecture of the place - they've used wood and glass to maximise light and all development incorporates the nature of the area.

Tonight, we'll enjoy a classic Aussie BBQ dinner and get to know each other - anyone know a good icebreaker?

Accommodation: Surfside Hostel

Meals included: BBQ Dinner

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included activity: Wine and Cheese Tasting

Free activities: Wildlife spotting at our accommodation, beach swim

Day 3 - Wednesday: Port Stephens to Port Macquarie

This morning you have the choice to either sleep in, join your Stray guide for a hike, or jump in a 4WD bus to take part in some first-class sandboarding down the Stockton Sand Dunes (optional expense). The local sandboarding guide will teach you how to safely sandboard and tell you all about the amazing area and the rich Aboriginal history of the region.

If you don't want to sandboard, your guide will join you for a walk to the summit of Tomaree Head, which stands at 161 metres above the Port Stephens entrance. This short 2.2km return track offers breathtaking views of the coastline and panoramic views of Yacaaba Head, Cabbage Tree and Boondelbah islands, as well as Zenith, Wreck and Box Beaches, Fingal Island and Point Stephens Lighthouse - you might even be lucky enough to see some dolphins (and if it's May - September, you could see whales!).

Late morning, we'll pack up and move on to our next overnight stop, Port Macquarie. We'll have lunch on the way before visiting the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, where we'll get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and arguably cutest) marsupials. Check out the information centre to learn all about the hospital's efforts to rehabilitate, protect and preserve the koalas.

Accommodation: Port Macquarie YHA or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included activity: Koala Hospital visit

Free activities: Sleep in, swim, relax on the beach, Headland Walk

Optional paid activities: Sandboarding

Day 4 - Thursday: Port Macquarie to Byron Bay

Today we're heading to the iconic surfing town of Byron Bay, known for its relaxed vibes and no worries attitude. On the way to Byron, we'll stop at the historic and hipster town of Bellingen to get some lunch, followed by a special Aboriginal experience learning about the First Nations people of Australia.

Your Cultural Experience takes place at an important cultural site of the Gumbaynggirr people, the stunning location of "Niigi Niigi" (Sealy Lookout) within the Orara East State Forest. You'll go for a 2-hour tour and see 360-degree views, as well as getting the opportunity to immerse yourself in culture through stories, songs, language and the uses of native plants. This will be an unforgettable cultural experience with an emphasis on authentic connection and contributing to helping a community regain their culture and identity.

Do More: By taking part in the experience, you're making a direct contribution to the revitalisation of Gumbaynggirr language and culture with a percentage of the tour price going towards the local bilingual school to help foster cultural identity and education success.

When we arrive in Byron Bay, we'll take you on an orientation drive around town to help you get your bearings, showing you points of interest and the top spots for food, shopping and nightlife. For the next few nights, we're staying at boutique hostel The Surf House, located right in the heart of Byron and just a couple of hundred metres from the main beach - heaven!

Accommodation: The Surf House or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants, BBQ at the rooftop of the hostel

Included activities: Historic town and Aboriginal Cultural Experience

Day 5 - Friday: Byron Bay Free Day

Today you have a full day in Byron Bay to really embrace the Byron Bay motto: "cheer up, slow down, and chill out". Start your day off with a morning yoga class on the rooftop of your hostel and then spend your day exploring the laidback hippy town.

You can walk to Cape Byron Lighthouse, mainland Australia's most easterly point, or check out the many eclectic boutiques and cafes around town. You could join a sea kayaking or snorkel trip and search for dolphins and other marine life, or even go for an iconic Australian activity - learning to surf.

Accommodation: The Surf House or similar

Included activity: Morning yoga class

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Optional paid activities: Surf lesson, dolphin kayak, skydive, cycle the rail trail

Free activities: Walk to the lighthouse, swim, relax on the beach, check out the shops and cafes, free surfboard hire

Day 6 - Saturday: Byron Bay Free Day

You lucky thing - you have ANOTHER free day to explore Byron Bay today. Tick off any activities you didn't get the chance to do yesterday or pass the day wandering the township or relaxing on the beach. Hone your surf skills with more lessons or borrow one of the free surfboards at your hostel to try it out by yourself.

If you're a foodie then you're in luck, as eating your way around Byron is an experience in itself. There are heaps of vegetarian and vegan options available, a couple of our favourites are the Cardamom Pod for lunch and No Bones for dinner, both of which are super close to your hostel. This evening, head to

the Saturday twilight markets for some live music and lots of boutique stalls showcasing local arts, crafts and some incredible food.

Accommodation: Surfhouse or similar

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants. We recommend trying one of the many great vegan options!

Optional paid activities: Surf lesson, dolphin kayak, snorkel or dive, skydive

Free activities: Walk to the lighthouse, swim, relax on the beach, check out the shops and cafes

Day 7 - Sunday: Byron Bay to Brisbane via Surfers Paradise

This morning, meet your guide and group outside the Surf House hostel at 8:50am and we'll depart north across the NSW border to Queensland, stopping for some lunch and a walk around the famous Surfers Paradise. Next, we'll head to a nearby nature reserve to spot some wild kangaroos, before continuing to Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland for the night. This evening, we recommend going for a stroll down to Southbank for a walk along the Brisbane River and then check out some of the many bars and restaurants.

Accommodation: Roamer Brisbane or similar

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Free activities: Visit Surfers Paradise, kangaroo spotting, catch the Brisbane city ferry

Day 8 - Monday: Brisbane to Noosa

Have a sleep in this morning before leaving Brisbane and heading north to Noosa. We'll stop along the way to stretch our legs and see the amazing panoramic views of the Glasshouse Mountains and the Sunshine Coast before enjoying some lunch in the quirky town of Eumundi, known for its artisanal crafts. We'll go for another walk to see some final views of Noosa and the gorgeous Noosa headlands before arriving at our accommodation in the afternoon.

Our Noosa accommodation is less of a hostel and more of a resort, with a pool and a licensed bar/cafe (did someone say poolside margaritas?) as well as designer dorms with privacy screens and USB charging points. This evening, we'll grab a drink and dinner at the bar and make plans to explore Noosa.

Accommodation: Bounce

Meals included: Breakfast, drink on arrival

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, dinner at hostel

Free activities: Swim, walks, lookouts

Day 9 - Tuesday: Noosa Free Day

Today you have a completely free day to spend doing whatever you like. Explore the Everglades by kayak or book a skydive and see Noosa and surroundings from above. Grab a sun lounger and get some much-needed R&R, go for a walk around the incredible headland, visit the beach or have a long, lazy lunch in the sun. The Noosa Surf Club is one of our faves so if you'd like to go out for dinner, you can't go wrong with this local hotspot!

Accommodation: Bounce

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Free activities: Chilling by the resort pool, going for a walk in the National Park, visiting the famous beach or checking out the local boutiques and cafes

Optional paid activities: Everglades Cruise and/or Canoe, Skydive

Day 10 - Wednesday: Noosa to K'gari (formerly Fraser Island)

It's an early start this morning as you head out for your 3-day, 2-night K'gari (formerly Fraser Island) adventure. During this amazing experience you'll explore the largest sand island in the world on a 4WD expedition, see the magical Lake Boorangoora (McKenzie), discover towering rainforests, spot a wild dingo, cruise along endless sandy beaches and lose yourself in the magic of stargazing. If you fancy learning how to drive a 4WD, you can do that! This is going to be one of the best experiences of your whole trip and is definitely the coolest way to explore this world-heritage listed National Park.

After a bus, ferry and 4WD transfer, you'll arrive at The Eco Retreat on K'gari (your accommodation for the next 2 nights). You'll have some tasty lunch and then you can check out the retreat's ocean views before heading out for your first adventure to see some of the Island highlights. This evening, you'll arrive back at The Eco Retreat to enjoy dinner, practice throwing a boomerang, share stories and learn to play the didgeridoo around the campfire. Tonight, you'll be lulled to sleep by the sound of the waves as you settle into your beach cabin accommodation.

Accommodation: The Eco Retreat on K'gari

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Snacks

Included activities: K'gari adventure tour

***Do More:** Take part in a beach clean up on the island of K'gari and contribute to keeping this piece of paradise as nature intended.*

Day 11 - Thursday: K'gari (formerly Fraser Island)

This morning, wake up to the gorgeous golden sunrise over the ocean, enjoy breakfast and get ready for a fun-filled morning exploring K'gari and her hidden treasures. Enjoy lunch on the beach and then spend

the afternoon discovering more lakes (there are over 100!) and epic views before arriving back at The Eco Retreat in time for another dinner under the stars and some fun evening activities.

Accommodation: The Eco Retreat on K'gari

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Snacks

Included activities: K'gari adventure tour

Day 12 - Friday: K'gari (formerly Fraser Island) to Bundaberg

After breakfast today you'll hit the inland tracks to discover towering trees and take one last refreshing dip, enjoy lunch in the forest and then begin your journey back to the mainland, arriving into Rainbow Beach around mid-afternoon ready for your next journey north up to Bundaberg.

Bundaberg is well-known for sugarcane, rum, ginger beer and more recently has been called the 'Bundaberg Bowl' for its reputation of growing and producing fresh food that's served across the country. Your accommodation in Bundaberg is a relaxed eco-resort, this time you'll be located by a nature reserve in the coastal suburb of Bargara and have access to a spa, sauna, tennis courts and more (we know, we treat you good!).

Accommodation: Kelly's Eco Resort in villas or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Snacks, BBQ Dinner

Included activities: K'gari adventure tour

Day 13 - Saturday: Bundaberg Free Day

Today you get to have a relaxing morning in Bundaberg. Enjoy a sleep in, go for a swim at the resort pool or why not play a game of tennis? We'll have breakfast at the resort and then head to Bundaberg for lunch and to explore the area.

After lunch, we'll head to the Bundaberg Rum Centre for a tour of their distillery and a tasting of their iconic rum. Or, if you'd prefer a full day out on the water and the chance to visit the Southern part of the Great Barrier Reef, your guide can book you onto the incredible Lady Musgrave Full Day Tour for a day of snorkelling, a boat cruise, island walk and delicious food. Tonight, we'll have a group BBQ dinner at the resort.

Accommodation: Kelly's Eco Resort or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Included Activities: Distillery Tour

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Optional paid activities: Lady Musgrave Full Day Snorkel Tour

Free activities: Swimming, tennis or checking out Bargara Beach

Day 14 - Sunday: Bundaberg to Airlie Beach

Today is a big travelling day to Airlie Beach, the gateway to the amazing Whitsunday Islands, so load up on snacks and we'll get the tunes going to get us through the day. We'll make some stops to stretch our legs and arrive in Airlie in the evening.

Accommodation: Base Airlie Beach or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, bakery, restaurants

Day 15 - Monday: Airlie Beach to Whitsunday Islands

This morning, enjoy a sleep in or take a stroll down to the Airlie lagoon for a dip. If you'd like to see the Whitsundays Islands from above, there's time for a sneaky scenic flight (optional extra) over the Islands and outer Great Barrier Reef (including Heart Reef) before our 2-night sailing tour departs.

After lunch, head down to Coral Sea Marina to meet your crew and jump onboard a 76-foot, maxi sailing yacht which will be your home for the next two days. As you leave the marina and Airlie Beach behind you, watch your crew hoist the sails for an exhilarating trip out to the Whitsunday Islands - part of the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Once you arrive out around the Islands, jump in for a swim or snorkel amongst the fringing reef and then enjoy the sunset with a drink in hand on one of the crew's favourite little beaches. In the evening relax on deck, have a few drinks, get to know the crew, stargaze and let the calm waters gently rock you to sleep - for the adventurous, mats are provided to sleep on deck under the stars or if you prefer a bit more comfort, a bed awaits you below deck.

Accommodation: Open shared dorm style accommodation on a maxi sailing yacht

Meals included: Breakfast, Afternoon Snacks, Dinner and Dessert (BYO drinks)

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes

Included activities: Sailing, snorkelling and exploring the Whitsunday Islands

Day 16 - Tuesday: Whitsunday Islands

This morning you'll be forgiven for thinking you're in paradise, as you wake up on a yacht surrounded by beautiful islands and enjoy a delicious breakfast on deck as you sail towards Whitsunday Island, home to the best beach in the world - Whitehaven Beach. You'll disembark and enjoy a bush-walk to Hill Inlet Lookout and then spend the rest of the day exploring and relaxing on Whitehaven Beach. You can also go snorkelling today, enjoy a sunset beach session and another fun evening onboard with your group and the crew.

Accommodation: Open shared dorm style accommodation on a maxi sailing yacht

Meals included: Breakfast, Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Snacks, Dinner and Dessert

Included activities: Whitehaven Beach, Hill Inlet Lookout, bush-walk, sailing, snorkelling

Day 17 - Wednesday: Whitsunday Islands to Magnetic Island via Airlie Beach

Enjoy your final morning on-board the yacht, have one last magical swim or snorkel and then sail on back to Airlie Beach. This afternoon we'll jump back on the bus and head to Townsville. We'll then catch the ferry over to our next destination of Magnetic Island in the late afternoon. Nearly 50% of 'Maggie Island' is national parkland, and it's surrounded by amazing beaches and abundant wildlife. Your guide will fill you in on the activities you can do around the island over the next couple of days.

Accommodation: Roamer Magnetic Island or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Morning Tea

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included Activities: Sailing, snorkelling, Magnetic Island Ferry

***See More:** This island paradise is your best chance on the East Coast to see koalas in the wild. Keep your eyes out for these sleepy marsupials, rock wallabies, and colourful birds as you explore the forested island.*

Day 18 - Thursday: Magnetic Island Free Day

Today you will wake up in paradise and have a full free day to explore. This beautiful island is home to the historic Forts Complex, which you see in a scenic walk with your Guide. At the end, you'll be rewarded with some incredible views over the island and ocean beyond. Spend the rest of your day relaxing on the secluded beaches, hiking through native bush or searching for wildlife! Top tip: stay alert and keep your eyes on the trees, Maggie Island is one of the best places in Australia to see koalas in the wild!

Accommodation: Roamer Magnetic Island or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, bakery or cafes

Free activities: Walk

Optional activities: Snorkel

Day 19 - Friday: Magnetic Island to Cairns via Atherton Tablelands

We catch the ferry back to the mainland in the morning and then we'll get on the road again and head up to the stunning Atherton Tablelands. We'll stop at the famous Millaa Millaa Falls along the way for a swim and some amazing photo ops.

We'll go for a walk and a swim in Lake Eacham - a beautiful crater lake, and visit the heritage-listed Curtain Fig Tree, before making our way to Cairns. Tonight, we're staying at an amazing resort with its

own person-made beach! We'll have a group dinner at the resort and then check out the legendary Cairns nightlife.

Accommodation: Gilligans Cairns or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included activities: Magnetic Island ferry, swim, walk, waterfalls

Day 20 - Saturday: Cairns Free Day

Today is a completely free day so if you had a few too many cocktails last night, enjoy a lazy sleep-in and perhaps some hair-of-the-dog by the pool in the afternoon. If you're ready for another day of adventure, why not book a tour of Cape Tribulation or go to see the iconic Great Barrier Reef?

Accommodation: Gilligans Cairns or similar

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Free activities: Hang out at the amazing resort pool, walk the Esplanade, visit the Botanical Gardens

Optional Activities: Cape Tribulation Day Trip, bungy jump, Great Barrier Reef trip, skydive, rafting

Day 21 - Sunday: Cairns

Today is the final day of your Stray adventure. Give a hug or a wave to your new mates and head off for the next leg of your adventure, taking with you the most incredible memories, everything you've learned about Australia's special culture and wildlife, and of course some classic Aussie lingo - G'DAY MATES!

This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over Australia's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.

What's Included:

- Experienced tour guide
- Private coach transport
- 20 nights' accommodation in 4-6 shared dorms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, eco-lodges, apart from 2 nights K'gari/formerly Fraser Island (cabins), 2 nights Whitsunday Sailing (open shared dorm style accommodation on a maxi sailing yacht).
- 25 meals (14 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 7 Dinners)
- Wine and Cheese Tasting, Hunter Valley
- Aboriginal Cultural Experience & Bush Walk
- 3 Day / 2 Night K'gari 4WD Safari Tour

- Aussie BBQ and Distillery Tour, Bundaberg
- 2 Day / 2 Night Whitsunday Sailing Adventure
- Return Magnetic Island Ferry
- Loads of walks and wildlife
- Waterfalls, lakes, lookouts, and so much more!

What to Bring:

Camera, Sturdy walking shoes/boots, Warm clothing, Waterproof jacket, Hat & Sunscreen, Swimsuit/towel, Reusable water bottle, Toiletries, Motion sickness tablets, Insect repellent

Please Note:

- Luggage is limited to one piece per person with a maximum weight of 20kg plus a day pack
- A basic level of fitness is required for medium length walks
- Accommodation is in 4-8 shared dorms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, eco-lodges, apart from 2 nights K'gari/formerly Fraser Island (cabins) and 2 nights Whitsunday Sailing (shared dorm style on a maxi sailing yacht).
- 25 meals are included. We make regular supermarket stops so you can self-cater for other meals, or there are usually quite a few cafe/restaurant options in each location.

Highlights:

Waterfalls, mountains, sailing, wildlife spotting! There are so many awesome inclusions with the Stray Emu Sydney to Cairns Tour and we can't wait for you to experience them:

- Discover your inner wine connoisseur at **Hunter Valley** and taste award-winning samples fresh from the vineyard
- Catch a glimpse of local wildlife and snap the amazing views at **Port Stephens**
- Get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and cutest) marsupials at the **Port Macquarie Koala Hospital**
- Visit the quirky towns of **Bellingen** and **Eumundi** for a taste of alternative lifestyles
- Connect and gain an understanding of the incredible **Aboriginal Culture** through a bush walk and cultural experience

- Centre yourself with a yoga class in laid-back **Byron Bay**
- Drop into the iconic **Surfers Paradise** and enjoy views of kilometres of golden sand beaches
- Spend a night in the buzzing riverside city of **Brisbane**
- Visit the Sunshine Coast and live it up in the resort town of **Noosa**
- Embark on a 3-day 4WD Safari to **K'gari** (formerly Fraser Island). Drive along the beach and through the rainforest, visit a shipwreck, swim in crystal clear waters, before relaxing around a campfire under the stars
- Stay in the relaxed seaside town of Bargara and taste some of **Bundaberg's** famous rum
- Explore the breath-taking **Whitsunday Islands** during a 2-days/2-night sailing trip. Snorkel over vibrant fringing reefs, experience sailing on an ex-race yacht and visit some of the world's most pristine beaches
- Embrace your inner nature-lover on **Magnetic Island**, a wildlife paradise filled with koalas and wallabies
- Discover the magic of the **Atherton Tablelands** - from amazing waterfalls and lush rainforest to a pristine crater lake!
- Enjoy the relaxed **Cairns** lifestyle and the fun nightlife that it's famous for!