



# EMU SELECT 21 Day Sydney to Cairns Tour

Stray Journey - Australia East Coast

**TWIN SHARE PER PERSON:** AUD\$8195  
**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** AUD\$2500  
**STARTS:** Sydney **FINISHES:** Cairns  
**DURATION:** 21 Days / 20 Nights  
**START DAY:** Monday  
**FINISH DAY:** Sunday  
**2025 DEPARTURES:** 8 Sep, 6 & 20 Oct, 3 & 17 Nov, 1 Dec  
**2026 DEPARTURES:** 12 & 19 Jan, 2 & 16 Feb, 2 & 9 Mar, 6 & 20 Apr, 11 May, 15 June, 13 July, 10 Aug, 7 Sep, 5 & 19 Oct, 2, 16 & 30 Nov  
**MIN. / MAX. NUMBERS:** 6 / 22 passengers



## Overview

If you're after an epic East Coast trip without compromising on comfort, you'll love kicking back in twin or double rooms after action-packed days full of unforgettable activities.

Every day is different, explore golden beaches, vast mountains and lush rainforests while travelling in our own private mini coaches. Meet the cheeky wildlife and friendly locals and discover some off-the-beaten-track highlights that aren't on the usual New South Wales and Queensland 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!

We believe in MORE! More authentic experiences, more iconic sights, more stops on the way, more connection. Keep a look out for sections in our itinerary where you can **See More** and **Do More**, these are unique ways to experience the Real Australia!

## 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 Town Hall Station, your accommodation is located a short walk away and check-in is anytime after 2pm.

If you have time, take the opportunity to explore the city - we recommend jumping on the light rail and heading down to Circular Quay where you'll see the iconic Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge. At 6pm make your way to the hotel reception where you'll meet your Stray guide and new travel mates for a welcome meeting and optional group meal (additional cost).

**Accommodation included:** Vibe Darling Harbour 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:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

**Included activity:** Welcome Meeting

## Day 2 - Tuesday: Sydney to Blue Mountains

Head down to the hotel restaurant for breakfast before joining the rest of the group for our first day of adventure.

Today we'll say goodbye to Sydney as we depart the harbour city and head west to see some of the most spectacular scenery in Australia! Our first stop is the local town of Glenbrook where we'll have a short break to grab a coffee or a snack. From there, we continue on to Katoomba in the heart of the World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains, stopping at the iconic Echo Point and a walk to view the famous Three Sisters rock formation.

After a picnic lunch we'll head off for a 1.5-2 hour hike in the mountains. Along the walk we'll visit the stunning Wentworth Falls, view lush rainforest and dramatic clifftops, and enjoy breathtaking views over the Jamison Valley. Tonight, we'll enjoy dinner together and get to know each other better.

**Accommodation:** Blue Mountains YHA or similar. Note: there may be shared bathroom facilities at this location.

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

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

**Included activity:** Chasing waterfalls and walks.

## Day 3 - Wednesday: Blue Mountains to Port Macquarie

This morning we'll start our journey north by way of the famous Hunter Valley wine region where we'll stop for lunch and to taste some of the local wine and cheese (non-alcoholic options available). We'll

then continue to our destination for the night - the coastal town of Port Macquarie, known for its wildlife, beaches and penal colony past!

After the drive if you're feeling energetic, we recommend walking a section of the stunning Port Macquarie Coastal Walk.

**Accommodation:** Port Macquarie YHA or similar. Note: there may be shared bathroom facilities at this location.

**Meals included:** Breakfast

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

**Included activity:** Wine and cheese tasting

**Free activities:** Coastal walk

## 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. Before we depart, we'll visit the Guulabaa Wild Breeding Centre, where we'll get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and arguably cutest) marsupials - Koalas! Learn about the hospital's efforts to rehabilitate, protect and preserve the koalas and the new breeding centre's important efforts to save these iconic animals from extinction.

We'll then hit the road with a stop in Coffs Harbour for lunch, followed by a special experience learning about the First Nations people of Australia.

Your cultural experience takes place at an important site of the Gumbaynggirr people, the stunning location of "Niigi Niigi" (Sealy Lookout) within the Orara East State Forest. You'll go for a 1.5-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 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:** Guulabaa Wild Breeding Centre 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.

Take a walk up to Cape Byron Lighthouse, mainland Australia's most easterly point, with your Stray guide. Check out the many eclectic boutiques and cafes around town. You could join a sea kayaking tour 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, Cape Byron Lighthouse walk

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

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

**Free activities:** 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:** The Surf House or similar

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants.

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

**Free activities:** 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

**Included activities:** Visit Surfers Paradise, kangaroo spotting.

**Free activities:** Explore Brisbane and catch the Brisbane city ferry

## Day 8 - Monday: Brisbane to Noosa

This morning we say farewell to the city and head back to the Coast and the boutique beach town of 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 views of Noosa and the gorgeous Noosa headlands before arriving at our accommodation in the afternoon.

**Accommodation:** Villa Noosa or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, dinner at onsite restaurant or hostel across the road

**Free activities:** Swim, walks, lookouts

## Day 9 - Tuesday: Noosa Free Day

Today you have a completely free day to spend doing whatever you like. Noosa is home to Australia's Everglades (one of only two on the planet). Consider taking an adventure canoe or a relaxing afternoon cruise to explore this special place.

Other options include: relaxing by the pool, going for a walk around the incredible headland, visiting the beach or having 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:** Villa Noosa or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast

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

**Free activities:** Chilling by the 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

## 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 beautiful glamping accommodation.

**Accommodation:** Glamping Tents with Ensuites at The Eco Retreat

**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:** Glamping Tents with Ensuites at The Eco Retreat

**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 Beach Resort in villas or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch & Snacks

**Included activities:** K'gari adventure tour

## Day 13 - Saturday: Bundaberg / Bargara

This morning we'll have breakfast at the resort and then head to a nearby Coral Farm for a special land-based reef experience. Have a behind-the-scenes look at the incredible beauty and science of coral

cultivation and the future of reef restoration. There are over 70,000 individual corals and 200 marine species for you to view!

We'll then head to Bundaberg township for lunch, after which we'll visit the Bundaberg Rum Distillery and if you're keen, a tasting of their iconic rum (extra cost). In the afternoon, relax, take a walk on the beach or why not play a game of tennis at the resort?

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 Experience for a full day of snorkelling, a boat cruise, guided island walk and delicious food.

Tonight, we'll have a traditional Aussie BBQ dinner at the resort.

**Accommodation:** Kelly's Beach Resort in villas or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Included Activities:** Coral Farm Tour and Distillery Visit

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

**Optional paid activities:** Lady Musgrave Full Day Tour, Rum tasting

**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:** Colonial Palms or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Local restaurants, cafes, bakery, pubs, on-site restaurant

## Day 15 - Monday: Airlie Beach to Whitsunday Islands

Today you'll head out on the water to see the spectacular Whitsundays Islands up close. Sit back and enjoy the sea air on-board the largest sailing catamaran in The Whitsundays. Sail through the Islands, visit Whitehaven Beach, snorkel the fringing reef and enjoy a delicious BBQ lunch with all-inclusive drinks.

**Accommodation:** Colonial Palms or similar

**Included Activity:** Whitsunday Islands catamaran sailing tour including Whitehaven Beach, snorkelling and all-inclusive drinks

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Meal options:** Local restaurants, pubs or on-site restaurant

## Day 16 - Tuesday: Airlie Beach Free Day

Today is yours to explore. Enjoy a sleep in, relax by the pool, take a stroll around Airlie's boutique shops or along the 4km waterfront Bicentennial Boardwalk. If you'd like to see the Whitsundays Islands from above, book in for a skydive or scenic flight (optional extra) over the Islands and outer Great Barrier Reef (including Heart Reef).

**Accommodation:** Colonial Palms or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Local restaurants, cafes, pubs or on-site restaurant

**Optional paid activities:** Scenic Flight, Skydive

**Free activities:** Relax by the pool or the Airlie lagoon, Bicentennial Boardwalk

## Day 17 - Wednesday: Airlie Beach to Magnetic Island

Enjoy your final morning in Airlie Beach. Your Adventure buddies will join you again around lunch time and we'll jump back on the bus and head north 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:** Bounce Magnetic Island in cabins (shared facilities) or similar.

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants or on-site restaurant

**Included Activities:** 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:** Bounce Magnetic Island in cabins (shared facilities) or similar.

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants or on-site restaurant

**Included Activities:** Forts Complex walk

**Free activities:** Explore the island, relax on the beach, spot koalas

**Optional activities:** Snorkel



## Day 19 - Friday: Magnetic Island to Cairns via Josephine Falls

This morning we'll catch the ferry back to the mainland and then we'll get on the road again and head to our final destination of our tour, Cairns - the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef.

On the way, we'll stop in Tully (home of the giant Gumboot), for a lunch break, then head to the beautiful Josephine Falls for a walk through lush rainforest and, if conditions allow, a refreshing swim.

Tonight, we're staying at an amazing resort that has its own person-made beach! We'll have a group dinner at the resort before heading out to experience the legendary Cairns nightlife.

**Accommodation:** Gilligans Cairns or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Meal options:** Local cafes, bakery

**Included activities:** Magnetic Island ferry, swim, walk, waterfall

## Day 20 - Saturday: Cairns Free Day

Today is a completely free day so if you were dancing into the early hours, enjoy a lazy sleep-in and perhaps a dip in 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 resort pool, walk the Esplanade, visit the Botanical Gardens

**Optional Activities:** Cape Tribulation Day Trip, Great Barrier Reef trip, Kuranda Scenic Railway, 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 twin or double rooms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, hotels, eco-lodges, apart from 2 nights K'gari/formerly Fraser Island (glamping tents with ensuites).
- 24 meals (15 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 5 Dinners)
- Blue Mountains, Wentworth Falls Hike and the Three Sisters Lookout
- Wine and Cheese Tasting, Hunter Valley
- Guulabaa Wild Breeding Centre (Koala Hospital) visit
- Aboriginal Cultural Experience & Bush Walk
- Yoga class
- Byron Bay Lighthouse walk
- 3 Day / 2 Night K'gari 4WD Safari Tour
- Coral Farm Tour & Distillery Visit, Bundaberg
- Whitsunday Islands catamaran day tour including Whitehaven Beach, snorkelling, lunch and all-inclusive drinks
- Return Magnetic Island Ferry
- Historic Forts Complex walk Magnetic Island
- Josephine Falls visit and swim
- Loads more walks and wildlife
- Beautiful beaches, lakes, lookouts, and so much more!

## What to Bring:

Camera, Sneakers/trainers, Clothing (mainly light layers but some warm items), Waterproof jacket, Hat & Sunscreen, Swimsuit/towel, Reusable water bottle, Toiletries, Motion sickness tablets, Insect repellent

## Please Note:

- This tour starts on a Monday and ends on a Sunday (21 days later).
- Pick up: As Day 1 is an arrival day, please make your own way to Vibe Darling Harbour, 319/325 Sussex St, Sydney, where you can check in from 3pm. Meet at reception at 6pm for a welcome meeting.
- Drop off: Gilligans Backpacker Resort & Hotel, 89 Grafton St, Cairns. Check out is 10am.
- Luggage is limited to one piece per person with a maximum weight of 20kg plus a day pack
- A basic to medium level of fitness is required for walks and activities
- The Select and Adventure Tour customers travel together on the same bus and have the same travel days except for the Airlie Beach / Whitsunday section (Days 15 and 16). There is an

option for Select Tour travellers to take part in the 2 day / 2 night sailing adventure but they would need to notify Stray at the time of booking. Please note that the 2 day / 2 night sailing boat includes shared dorm style accommodation only.

- All accommodation rooms are twin/double share (unless you purchase a solo upgrade) and include a private ensuite bathroom with the exception of the following:
  - your accommodation at Blue Mountains, Port Macquarie and Byron Bay where ensuite rooms are limited
  - your accommodation at Bounce Magnetic Island where bathrooms are separate and shared between up to 4 people.
- Single travellers who purchase the twinshare option will be put in a twin room with another single traveller of the same gender. For single travellers wanting a private room, they will need to purchase a solo upgrade.
- 24 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.
- This tour is suited to active 18-60's singles, friends or couples who still want to see it all but with a side of comfort.

## Highlights:

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

- Enjoy a walk through the National Park and take in the dramatic scenery and stunning waterfalls at the **Blue Mountains**
- Discover your inner wine connoisseur at **Hunter Valley** and taste award-winning samples fresh from the vineyard
- Get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and cutest) marsupials at the Guulabaa Wild Breeding Centre (**Koala Hospital**)
- Visit the quirky towns of **Katoomba 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** followed by a walk to the famous Cape Byron Lighthouse and the easternmost point of mainland Australia.
- 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, partake in a **Coral Farm tour** and visit the famous Bundaberg Rum distillery
- Explore the breath-taking **Whitsunday Islands** on a catamaran sailing day tour visiting the famous Whitehaven Beach, snorkel over amazing fringing reef and enjoy a BBQ lunch onboard with all-inclusive drinks.
- Embrace your inner nature-lover on **Magnetic Island**, a wildlife paradise filled with koalas and wallabies
- Take a break at Josephine Falls for a walk through the lush rainforest and optional swim
- Enjoy the relaxed **Cairns** tropical lifestyle and the fun nightlife that it's famous for!