

## Dubbo - Lightning Ridge

*with Port Bus*

7 Days / 6 Nights

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021



### Day 1. Monday 7<sup>th</sup> : Home - Hollydene Estate - Dubbo

**Lunch & Dinner**

This morning we pick you up from home and begin our drive across to Dubbo via The Hunter Valley. After a comfort stop en-route we arrive in the **Upper Hunter** at the **magnificent Vines Restaurant at Hollydene Estate for lunch and 6 course to enjoy their delicious wine.** Following lunch our journey continues across through Dunedoo and into Dubbo for check in to our accommodation. Dinner tonight is in the motel restaurant.

**Overnight: Dubbo**

### Day 2. Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> : Dubbo - Coonabarabran

**Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

Our day starts at the **Taronga Western Plains Zoo**, home to over **4,000 animals**, and widely recognised as Australia's greatest open range Zoo. With our own guide on board we begin our **Zoo Safari Tour** for a brief insight to over 350 species of animals. After our tour we have morning tea before boarding our coach and head to Coonabarabran travelling out to the **Siding Spring Observatory**. The observatory is Australia's premier Optical Astronomical Research Facility and is home to Australia's largest optical telescope, the 3.9 metre Anglo Australian Telescope, and the Australian National University's 2.3 metre Advanced Technology Telescope. Following our lunch & tour it's back to the **Coonabarabran Visitors Centre** to check out the **Australian Museum Diprotodon Exhibition**. On display is the skeleton and skull of a Diprotodon, the largest marsupial ever to have lived. It is often likened to a giant sized wombat. After our visit we check into our motel before enjoying dinner in the motel restaurant before heading out to **Milroy Observatory**, under the open sky with a guided walk through our Milky way galaxy, our astronomer will take you on a unique journey not only through space but through time itself as you witness the wonders of star birth, globular clusters of stars, even planets.

**Overnight: Coonabarabran**

### Day 3. Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> : Coonabarabran - Lightning Ridge

**Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

After breakfast we visit the **Crystal Kingdom Museum** which contain some of the world's rarest and most colourful zeolite crystals & rare fossils that are found nowhere else in the world. Then continue to the small country township of **Coonamble**, famous for its **Nickname Hall of Fame**. The 'Nickname Hall of Fame' can be seen in and around Castlereagh street where prominent local characters have been immortalised in caricature and adorn the walls. Find out how 'Fluffy', 'Singo', 'Vanderbilt' and others got their nicknames! We have an early lunch at the **Global Village Cafe**, then continue up to **Lightning Ridge**, home of Australia's National Gemstone the Black Opal and a town known for its rich history and colourful characters. Upon arrival we check in to our motel before dinner.

**Overnight: Lightning Ridge**

**For more information contact Port Bus**

**Phone: 02 6583 8774**

**Postal: PO Box 200, Telegraph Point, NSW, 2441**

#### Day 4. Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> : Lightning Ridge

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Our **Lightning Ridge guide joins us this morning** before we head for the fields! Our first visit is to **Fred Bodel's Hut**, the oldest miners' camp still standing in Lightning Ridge and along the way we pass the historic **Three Mile Flat**, the site of an early miners' settlement. We continue onto **Lunatic Hill Open Cut Mine**, which is the largest open cut opal mine in NSW and here learn of historic opal mining techniques and try our luck at opal fossicking ourselves! Travelling back into town we enjoy morning tea, witness an opal cutting demonstration and listen to an informative talk on the famous Black Opal. Filled with new knowledge we head out to **Simms Hill Opal fields and Miners' Camp** to get some practical experience. Our next stop is at the weird and wonderful **Astronomers' Monument**, a concrete structure of three levels built entirely by hand! The amazing sights around Lightning Ridge continue when we pull up at **Amigo's Castle**, built by Vittorio Stefanato, known locally as "Amigo". Another interesting stop is at **Bevan's Opal Cactus Garden** which has the largest variety of cactus in Australia. Lunch is included with our stop at the garden before moving on to the **Chambers of the Black Hand**, a 100 year old mine. Here we can take our time to explore the hand carved sandstone sculptures, walls and pillars of the underground Gallery. After an amazing day, we make our way to our accommodation for a rest and dinner in our motel restaurant.

**Overnight: Lightning Ridge**

#### Day 5. Friday 11<sup>th</sup> : Grawin - Glengarry

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Our guide joins us again today as we head out to **Grawin, Glengarry and the Sheeppark Opal Fields**. Our first stop is the **Grawin Club in the Scrub** for morning tea before travelling through the mining fields viewing working mines and opal mining machinery. While here we try our luck at fossicking for opal on the Mullock heaps. Lunch today is from the tucker van at the **Glengarry Hilton**, a great opportunity to meet some of the eccentric and opal loving locals. After lunch our guide takes us on a **tour around town** which includes stops at the **Sheeppark community War Memorial and Sweeney's community shop**. With everyone back on-board our coach it's back to Lightning Ridge to our accommodation to rest up before dinner.

**Overnight: Lightning Ridge**

#### Day 6 Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>: Lightning Ridge - Narrabri - Tamworth

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

After breakfast and checkout, it's goodbye to Lightning Ridge as we begin our journey across to Narrabri, with a comfort stop along the way. We visit the **Narrabri Tourist Centre** which provides an insight into the areas cotton industry, then have lunch at a local RSL. We continue on to Gunnedah with a stop at **The Heritage Sculptures - Pensioner's Hill Lookout**. We now make our way to **Tamworth**, check in to our motel before enjoying dinner in the motel restaurant.

**Overnight: Tamworth**

#### Day 7 Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>: Tamworth - Walcha - Port Macquarie

Breakfast & Lunch

Today our first port of call is the **Tamworth's Golden Guitar Visitor Information Centre** to see the refurbished **Australian Country Music Hall of Fame and The Walk a Country Mile display**. Then continue on to **Walcha** we have time to take a stroll along Fitzroy and Derby Street's. Those interested should call into **Antipodean Tynker** or the Tourist Centre for a self guided map of the renowned **Open Air Gallery of sculptures and artworks** which is a must see before lunch at the **Walcha Royal Cafe** which was built in 1889 as the Royal Hotel. This magnificent building was gutted by fire on the 28th August 1938. Later on that year the building was rebuilt and named the New Royal Hotel. The current owners, Brad Keable and Toni Heaney purchased the property in December 2006 and converted the hotel to a hip 60's style café and accommodation country establishment. Leaving Walcha in the early afternoon we continue down the Oxley Highway through the National Park, with a comfort stop along the way, arriving back home to Port Macquarie after a wonderful few days in Lightning Ridge with Portbus.



# Exploring Dubbo & Lightning Ridge



## Tour Highlights:

Hollydene Estate Vines Restaurant; Taronga Western Plains Zoo; Siding Spring Observatory; Australian Museum Diprotodon Exhibition; Milroy Observatory; Crystal Kingdom Museum; Coonamble Nickname Hall of Fame; Global Village Cafe; Full Day Opal tour - Fred Bodel's Hut, Three Mile Flat, Lunatic Hill Open Cut Mine, Simm's Hill Opal Fields & Miners' Camp, Astronomers' Monument, Amigo's Castle, Bevan's Opal Cactus Garden & Chambers of the Black Hand; Grawin, Glengarry & the Sheeppark Opal Fields Full Day Tour; Narrabri Tourist Centre; Gunnedah; Walcha Open Air Gallery; Walcha Royal Cafe & much more!

## Tour Price Includes:

- Luxury coach travel - (below price excludes coach)
- 6 Nights quality accommodation
- Breakfast, lunch & dinner as per itinerary (19 Meals)
- All entry fees, cruise & guides as per itinerary

**Nett Tour Cost: \$ 1995.00 per person Twin Share (Single Supplement \$ 399.00)**

**Tour cost based on minimum 15 pax**

*The tour prices valid for travel in 2021. Please note that the itinerary is subject to change without notice.*

**\$200.00 Deposit per person is due now with completed booking form**

**Final Payment Due by 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**For Information & Bookings Contact**

**Ph: 02 6583 3330**

**[Email: tours@portbus.com.au](mailto:tours@portbus.com.au)**