

Title:

Central Australia: the Heart and Soul of Australia

Word Count:

440

Summary:

Central Australia is located in the heart of the Australian continent, and is home of the most significant icons of Australian culture.

Keywords:

central, australia, uluru, alice, springs, tour, travel

Article Body:

Central Australia is located in the heart of the Australian continent, and is home of the most significant icons of Australian and Aboriginal culture including Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (The Olgas), the outback town of Alice Springs, the Ghan railway, and Aboriginal art centres such as Papunya and Hermannsburg. Central Australia is also home to the true Outback spirit of Australia. Whether you're visiting from elsewhere in Australia or from overseas, Central Australia epitomises the vast and unspoiled wonder of Australia's desert interior.

Nature is overwhelming in Central Australia. Red sand and rock dominates the landscape, and crystal clear skies are alive with a million-star display almost every night of the year. The enormous range of unique flora and fauna found in the Red Centre is proof that, while the climate is arid, the land is rich and bountiful. Kangaroos, wallabies, dingoes, emus, echidnas, perenties, goannas, geckos and huge eagles are just some of the animals found in Central Australia, as well as imported species such as camels.

The unofficial capital of Central Australia is the town of Alice Springs, established by 19th century European and Afghan pioneers who opened up Australia's interior. Today, Alice Springs is a modern outback town with all comforts and none of the hassles of a major capital city, and is the perfect base from which to tour the region, from Uluru and Kata Tjuta in the south to Tennant Creek in the north.

The Aboriginal presence in Central Australia is strong, with living cultural and spiritual traditions connecting indigenous people to the region's landscapes and landmarks. A visit to Central Australia will provide ample opportunities to

learn about and understand both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture. For anyone interested in authentic Aboriginal dot painting, Alice Springs is home to a large number of Aboriginal art galleries.

To get the best out of a Central Australian tour, visitors should allow at least seven to ten days. While Uluru, Kata Tjuta and Kings Canyon are undoubtedly major Central Australian tour destinations, visitors can appreciate an enormous variety of stunning natural locations all within an hour or two's drive from Alice Springs. Popular destinations in the Eastern and Western MacDonnell Ranges include Trephina Gorge, Arltunga, Simpson's Gap, Standley Chasm, Ormiston Gorge, Glen Helen and Palm Valley.

Attractions right in Alice Springs itself include the Olive Pink Botanical Gardens, the Desert Park, and the Old Telegraph Station where Alice Springs was first established. For visitors who wish to experience the true heart and soul of the Australian continent and its history and cultural diversity, a week in Central Australia is an experience not to be missed!