



ACADEMY
TRAVEL

TAILORED
SMALL GROUP
JOURNEYS

FROM THE EDGE OF THE OUTBACK

BROKEN HILL, MUNGO & BEYOND

Lake Mungo

OVERVIEW

In the 1970s the discovery of 'Mungo Man' and 'Mungo Woman' in a dry lake in the far south-west of New South Wales drew international attention to the region.

Lake Mungo has one of the longest continual records of Aboriginal life in Australia, and the skeletons found in its sands are not only the oldest known fully modern humans outside Africa but show the earliest signs of ritual cremation. With its rich archaeological heritage and stark, eerie desert beauty, this area is like nowhere else in Australia.

A visit to World Heritage-listed Lake Mungo is one of the core experiences of this 10-day itinerary, which takes you from the storied mining town of Broken Hill in western NSW to the Victorian border town of Mildura. As well as ancient indigenous sites, we will explore the notoriously fickle river systems of the Murrumbidgee and Darling, which provided the ecological base for both ancient and colonial settlement and trade, and still support industry worth billions to the Australian economy.

We also experience the iconic art and culture of the outback, for decades a core part of Australian myth and identity.



TOUR LEADER

Dr Chris Carter is an Indigenous and historical archaeologist with over 20 years' experience leading tours in Australia, Central and South America. He has a BA(Hons), MA and PhD from the Australian National University.

TOUR DATES

October 15-24, 2024

TOUR PRICE

\$7,240 per person, twin share

\$1,970 single supplement

TOUR DEPOSIT

A **\$500** non-refundable deposit is required per person to confirm your booking on tour.

GROUP SIZE

Maximum number of **16** in group

ITINERARY

Broken Hill (4 nights), Bindara (1 night), Lake Mungo (2 nights), Mildura (2 nights)

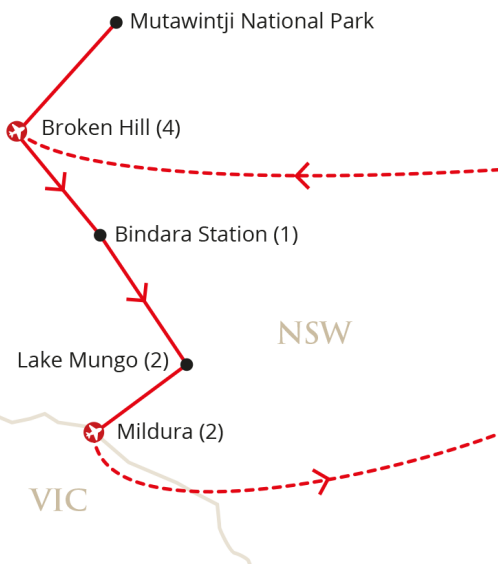
INCLUSIONS

9 nights' accommodation in motel, cabin and heritage style accommodation. All breakfasts, 5 lunches and 7 dinners. Services of an expert tour leader and an experienced tour manager throughout. All ground transport, entrance fees and tipping.

SA

NSW

VIC



DETAILED ITINERARY

Start & Finish

The tour starts at 6.00pm on Tuesday 15 October, at the Imperial Hotel, Broken Hill. The tour ends after breakfast on Thursday 24 October, at the Grand Hotel, Mildura.

Included meals are indicated with B, L, D.

Tuesday 15 October

Arrive

The tour commences at our Broken Hill accommodation at 6.00pm, with drinks on the verandah of our heritage hotel. After meeting your tour leader for introductions, we stroll through town to enjoy a welcome dinner at the fabulous Old Salt Bush restaurant. Overnight Broken Hill (D)

Wednesday 16 October

Explore Broken Hill

Today we explore Broken Hill's wide streets and heritage, discovering the town's mining past and thriving modern art scene. We take a walking tour with a local guide through the historic town centre past palatial Federation and Victorian buildings funded by mining wealth, as well as tin cottages and 1930s art deco properties. After the tour, we will call in at the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery housed in the refurbished Sully's Emporium building. The gallery collection comprises of colonial, modern and Aboriginal works by Australian artists such as Lloyd Rees, Pro Hart and Emily Kame Kngwarreye. This afternoon we visit the Line of Lode Miners Memorial, located atop a mullock heap. The impressive structure pays tribute to the 800 miners who lost their lives working at the mine. Tonight (weather permitting) we'll enjoy an evening at the Outback Astronomy centre and dinner under a superb night sky, with no light pollution. Overnight Broken Hill (B, D)

Thursday 17 October

Mutawintji National Park

This morning we make a 300-kilometre round trip northeast of Broken Hill to Mutawintji National Park, dominated by the Bynguano Ranges whose vibrant colour beautifully captures the changing light and provides a backdrop for the famous hand stencil artworks of the local people. The ruggedly beautiful park shows evidence of continuous use by Aboriginal people for thousands of years. We are guided around Mutawintji by one of the traditional owners and introduced to its history, culture, before embarking on a walk to view the rock-art. On our return to the hotel, the evening is at leisure. Overnight Broken Hill (B, L)

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

The myth of the Outback

Witness Broken Hill's flourishing arts scene, born of the uncompromising landscapes. The town provided the backdrop for such classic films as *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Mad Max 2* and Pro Hart was born and painted here.

A great mining history

Get to know the history of mining towns like Broken Hill and Silverton, which prospered from rich deposits of lead, zinc and silver. Visit the Line of Lode Miners Memorial and relive the harsh conditions of the mines in Silverton.

Ancient art and culture

Experience indigenous culture dating back over thousands of years in the stunning landscape of Mutawintji National Park: from dreamtime stories to rock art and hand stencils.

Lake Mungo National Park

Explore the archaeological heritage of the ancient lakebed of Mungo National Park, recognised for both its important geological past and its 50 000-year record of Aboriginal settlement.

The River Murray

Discover the economic and cultural significance of the remarkable inland river systems of southwestern New South Wales.



Living Desert Sculpture Park

Friday 18 October

Daydream Mine

We travel 20 kilometres outside of Broken Hill for a private guided tour of the Daydream Mine site, founded in 1881. Starting on the surface, we visit the old township where the miners lived in extremely harsh conditions in the 1880s and see the historic smelter used by BHP. Then we descend underground to see how the mine once operated, donning a hat and light just as the Cornish miners would have done. We continue to Silverton and wander through the historic buildings, many of which have appeared onscreen in films and television series. At the iconic Silverton Hotel, you can have lunch washed down with a cold beer before we return to Broken Hill in the afternoon. Later, we take a short drive out of town to see the sun setting over the Living Desert Sculpture Park, followed by dinner at the iconic Palace Hotel. Overnight Broken Hill (B, D)

Saturday 19 October

To Bindara

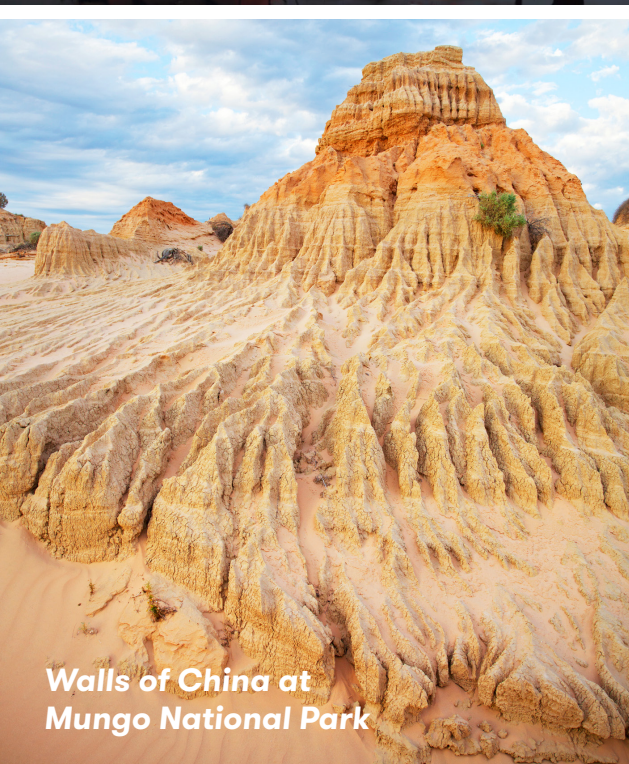


Before leaving Broken Hill, we enjoy a tour of the Royal Flying Doctor Service base, which celebrates the ingenuity and resourcefulness of this institution. We then drive to historic Bindara Station via the small town of Menindee (road conditions permitting) the ill-fated last stop for explorers Burke and Wills on their journey across the interior. If there is water in the Lakes we will stop to explore before a lunch time arrival at Bindara Station. The majestic red brick homestead and outbuildings on Bindara were built by Joseph Dunne around 1870 from bricks fired on the property using local clay, while other materials used in the construction were transported up the river by paddle steamer. We explore the outbuildings and old cemetery and take a stroll along the banks of the Darling River, where the bushland provides a natural habitat for a wide range of birds including many rare species. This area also contains evidence of Aboriginal occupation including stone tools, fireplaces and trees scarred by the removal of bark to build canoes. In the evening we enjoy a campfire dinner with station owner Barb. Overnight Bindara (B, L, D)

Sunset on Menindee Lakes

Sunday 20 October

Mungo National Park



After an early morning walk along the river at Bindara looking for ancient indigenous sites, we depart for Pooncarie on the Darling River. Burke and Wills passed through here on their ill-fated journey to the Gulf of Carpentaria. We stop for a cold beer and barbecue lunch at the Telegraph Hotel before arriving at Mungo Lodge. We check into our accommodation mid-afternoon and have time for a short rest before a walk in the park and visit to the Information Centre and the shearing shed that once belonged to the original Mungo Station. Overnight Lake Mungo (B, L, D)

Walls of China at Mungo National Park

Monday 21 October

Walls of China

This morning view the Walls of China and walk across the lunette that formed along the eastern margin of the lake to search for evidence of the earliest human inhabitants

HOTELS

Accommodation on this tour is limited by the remote locations and the number of rooms available at certain destinations.

In Broken Hill we are the sole occupants of a charming eight room heritage hotel where we get to mingle with the owners who still work in the mining industry. At Bindara, located on the banks of the Darling River, we have sole use of the historic station. The rooms here reflect its heritage nature and some have shared facilities. Our stays vary on the second part of the tour, from motel style in Mildura, to cabins at Mungo Lodge.

Broken Hill, Imperial Hotel

(4 nights)

Bindara, Bindara Station

(1 night)

Lake Mungo, Mungo Lodge

(2 nights)

Mildura, The Grand Hotel

(2 nights)

WEATHER

October is a pleasant time to travel to inland NSW, with temperatures historically ranging between 12-25°C. Mornings in Western NSW and Broken Hill are cool. Rainfall should be minimal (Please note, excess rainfall can now happen at any time, which can affect access to Mungo National Park. We do usually get ample notice of this.)

FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

Grade Three

This tour is among our most physically demanding. You should be able to comfortably participate in up to five to seven hours of physical activity per day, including walking at an easy to regular pace, sometimes on uneven terrain, with only short breaks. A reasonable level of physical and respiratory fitness is a must.



and extinct animals dating back 50,000 years. The World Heritage-listed Willandra Lakes system has remained dry for approximately 18,000 years, creating a significant archaeological region known for the discovery of Mungo Man, the oldest human remains found in Australia. We drive around the lunette, stopping at Vigars Well to climb the dunes for a spectacular view, and enjoy a picnic lunch. This evening we head back into the National Park to witness the sun setting over the Walls of China. Overnight Lake Mungo (B, L, D)

Tuesday 22 October

To Mildura

After a leisurely breakfast there is time for a walk along the dry western shoreline of the lake before we depart for Mildura making a stop at Wentworth for lunch and to see the confluence of the Murray and Darling Rivers. Overnight Mildura (B, L)

Wednesday 23 October

The Murray

This morning we enjoy a leisurely cruise and morning tea on the Murray River. An informative onboard commentary provides an insight into the Murray Darling River system and its environs as we meander along the river. During the afternoon we will visit Rio Vista, the home built in 1892 by William Chaffey, who, along with his brother George, was responsible for establishing Mildura and the development of the irrigation programs that eventually brought prosperity to the region. The Mildura Art Gallery occupies space adjoining the original house. On our last evening we enjoy a fabulous farewell meal in multi award-winning Italian restaurant Stefanos. Overnight Mildura (B, D)

Thursday 24 October

Depart

The tour concludes after breakfast. (B)

A NOTE ON THE TOUR STYLE AND ACCESS

This tour is quite different from a regular Academy Travel tour. Accommodation and food in the outback can be relatively basic and we have to use a sturdy rather than luxury coach. Please also note that if heavy persistent rain occurs, the National Parks Authority can close access to Mungo and we may have to alter the itinerary.



ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS

For further information or to secure a place, please contact **Lucy Yeates** on 9235 0023 (Sydney) or 1800 639 699 (outside Sydney) or email:

lucy@academytravel.com.au