TRIP NOTES
ARKAROOLA AND LAKE EYRE

Here are the trip notes for your upcoming 8 day Arkaroola and Lake Eyre tour.
The trip departs from Adelaide.

Pick up location
We pick up from the Chifley on South Terrace, 226 South Terrace on the morning of departure at 7.30am and return you to the same location in the afternoon of the final day about 5.00pm or to Adelaide airport.

Our Park Trek mini-van and trailer along with Park Trek guides in uniform will be waiting out the front for you. We aim to depart at 7.30am so please arrive around 7:20am and we can introduce ourselves and pack your bags into our trailer.

We can drop you at Adelaide Airport on our return if requested. If you are booking a flight out on the final day, then you need to book a flight that departs from 6:30pm onwards.

DAY ONE - ADELAIDE TO FLINDERS RANGES
8kms return walk (moderate) 3.5 hours
Elevation:192 meters

We depart Adelaide and travel north, arriving at Jamestown for morning tea and a tour briefing at a local coffee shop.

We then continue to Wilpena Pound and our first walk starts at the visitor centre and follows the creek. The trail is quite a wide flat. Much of the walk is cool in the shade of beautiful big gum trees and pines. It’s a lovely atmosphere and there is a pretty waterhole.

Before long we cross the creek and head up to a flat plateau area where we come across the Hill Homestead. There are information boards here that detail its fascinating history which your guides will also discuss. There are toilets here.

The lookout track continues on up the hill behind the homestead. This is where the track gets harder and steeper. The track is uneven with lots of rocks and rock steps to climb over. After 300 meters or so we come to the first lookout platform. The views here are spectacular!

From here we continue up to the next lookout spot. It’s a little bit further than the first and slightly harder. The view here is also fantastic. After this lovely walk we hop back in the van and travel a little further to either Gum Creek Station or Rawnsley Park Station for an overnight stay.

Meals: lunch and dinner
Accommodation: Gum Creek Station Shearers rooms or Rawnsley Park Station holiday units.
DAY THREE
Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park
Weetootla Gorge, Grindells Hut and Monarch Mine circuit
Between 12km and 17kms (moderate-hard), 7-8hrs
Elevation: 340 meters

After breakfast and lunch making we head out of Arkaroola to the beginning of our days walk.

From the trailhead, the walk heads towards the creek. We follow the creek up the valley. It’s a mixture of sandy soil and the rocky creek bed. Although the path is uneven its relatively flat. The trail crosses some water but its low enough so you can easily find some rocks to get across and stay dry. There are some larger rocks and boulders to step over through this section and then we arrive at the track junction.

Depending on the fitness and willingness of the group we may turn left and head along Balcanoona creek or right onto the Monarch Mine trail. Regardless which route we take, both take us to Grindells Hut.

The Monarch mine trail feels very untrodden and the track is a bit rough as you clamber over rocks and what seems to be the path leading alongside a rocky outcrop. The Weetootla Spring is here along the creek bed. The terrain is still flat though uneven with some rocky slabs to step up and down. We continue along to a gentle ascent with switchbacks to ease the climb. After weaving our way up you can see exactly where the track is leading and start to see some pretty awesome views of the surrounding ranges and the valley.

It’s a narrow track and the sides of the mountain are steep but its surprisingly easy to walk these paths. You get a spectacular view of the trail in the distance on the side of the mountain opposite.

Hiking along the mountain sides is a very unique experience. The views are truly endless. There are a few sections where you will need to climb up and along larger rocks on the steep sides but in general this trail is pretty easy to walk on.

Eventually you spot Grindells Hut in the distance and the trail starts heading down from the mountains. Like the ascent, the descent is also quite gentle. At Grindells Hut there are toilets. We have a rest and look around before making out way back to the junction and through the Balcanoona Creek trail towards the Weetootla campground.

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner
Accommodation: Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary

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DAY TWO
Mount Chambers Gorge walk - 6km (moderate), 2.5hrs approx.

After breakfast, we depart Gum Creek Station and make our way further north to the start of the Mt Chambers Gorge Walk.

We arrive mid-morning and enjoy a short walk to an extensive Aboriginal petroglyph site here set amongst towering rock walls and a spring fed river bed.

The path is rocky slate and is quite skinny as it runs along the side of a rocky cliff. It levels out before long and remains quite flat from there on.

The terrain is sandy and rocky with lots of rock obstacles. You will start to see the engravings become more common as you move along the trail. Before long we come out into a small natural amphitheater and see a wall full of engravings. It’s quite a spectacular site and must have been a very important place for the local indigenous people.

Eventually the creek bed flattens out and we retrace our steps back. There is the option of walking along the creek of the main gorge depending on time and group willingness. We find a nice spot in the shade to have lunch and then continue on. We finish the day in the remote village of Arkaroola.

Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary is run by the Sprigg family as private wilderness retreat and an important conservation reserve. This is a truly beautiful place with so much to offer avid bushwalkers.

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner
Accommodation: Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary

There is no mobile phone coverage here however you can purchase wifi for around $10 for your whole stay. There is a licensed bar onsite.
**DAY FOUR**

**Baraanna Gorge Trail**

7.5kms approx. 4 hours walking (moderate-hard)

**Elevation:** 190 meters

Today’s walk is quite varied and allows us to discover the geological story of Arkaroola as we explore the different rock surfaces and gorges with a magnificent hike through Bararanna Gorge.

The terrain starts off uphill on a rocky path, although it’s not too strenuous. Once we reach the highest point you can see where the trail contours around the mountain side. There is a lot of slate which looks like perfectly made tiles, it’s quite fascinating.

The trail starts heading down hill and there are some incredible views of distant mountain ranges. We start to walk through some vegetation and soon head down a small creek and into the actual gorge.

We take care climbing down here as the path goes over some very awkward and large boulders. We continue following this creek bed. The path is rocky, sand and sometimes on slabs. Once you get down into the gorge the path weaves in and out through large boulders. The steep sides of the gorge come into view and its spectacular.

We follow the gorge for a little while and come across Stubbs waterhole. This is a scenic area with huge walls of the gorge directly behind it make it a photographers dream. The track continues around through the creek bed and there are some large boulders to maneuver over and around. Near the end of the trail we walk up a steep hill and over the other side and can then see where we started.

There is such a variation in this walk, you get to see a lot and walk on all different types of terrain which is fascinating.

Optional extra: Tonight there is an opportunity to join on an astronomy tour. (Guest expense $40 approx.)

Meals: breakfast and lunch (dinner at guest expense)

Accommodation: Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary

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**DAY FIVE**

**Farina & Marree** (travel day with short walk)

**Farina Ruins walk**

2kms approx. 1-2 hrs (easy)

We have breakfast, pack up and depart Arkaroola to venture into the heart of Australia’s outback.

We stop in Farina and enjoy a bun if the bakery is open, otherwise we will provide morning tea. We then have a short walk to visit the ruins. We wander through the streets looking at the old post office, police station, pub and then head over to the railway lines and on toward the cemetery.

After a little bit of driving the road turns to dirt. Just before you come into Marree you will see a stone statue of a man. It’s a good opportunity to stop here and get a photo.

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner. Dinner tonight is at Marree Oasis with a 2 course meal and live entertainment.

Accommodation: Marree Oasis Holiday Park cabins
DAY SIX
Lake Eyre Walk

Today we head north and visit the iconic Lake Eyre. There is a small uphill walk of about 200 metres. Once we reach the top you will see a large expanse of white salt flat that continues into the distance - Lake Eyre.

We spend lots of time taking photos and after your visit here you can say that you’ve walked at Lake Eyre! A unique and rare experience.

We then return to Muloorina for a toilet stop and have lunch by a waterhole. The afternoon is open for flights or a town walk to take in the some historical sites.

Scenic flight – optional extra (guest expense) – 45min flight cost approx. $280pp. It is best to advise guides so this can be booked in advance.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodation: Maree Oasis Holiday Park cabins

DAY SEVEN
Maree to Almerta Station
The Bluff
3kms approx. 2 hrs (moderate)
Elevation: 125 metres elevation

We pack up and begin our journey south to Almerta Station stopping at Prairie Hotel to explore this unique and interesting outback hotel. Once we reach Almerta Station we stretch our legs on one of the station walks.

The Bluff walk is a great one. We follow the ridgeline up the hill alongside the cliff edge until we reach the summit. We do a loop and walk back down enjoying more views on the other side. Keep you eyes out for wedge-tailed eagles on this walk.

There are more walks at Almerta that we can explore depending on time.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Accommodation: Almerta Station

DAY EIGHT
Almerta Station to Adelaide via Alligator Gorge
Alligator gorge
10kms approx. 4-4.5hrs (moderate-hard)
Elevation: 370 metres elevation

We pack up and head south stopping for a circuit hike along the full length of Alligator Gorge, including the Narrows and the Terraces.

The trail starts as a steep downhill descent with rock slabs as stairs. There are handrails which will come in handy. After descending the stairs we follow the track to the terraces.

The trail follows the creek bed on a mixture of sand and dirt soil on uneven terrain. After reaching the terraces, care needs to be taken on the slippery rock surface. There are many obstacles to climb over and the track is undulating.

After approximately 2 kms the track starts ascending and contours around the mountain. The track is much more even here with no rocks or boulders to navigate. After reaching the top it winds around to a 4wd track and we follow this road back towards the carpark and Blue Gum track. At Blue Gum carpark there are toilets.

From here we head back down the gorge and into the narrows. The tall sides of the gorge are incredibly dramatic and it’s a lovely place to walk through. Finally we reach the terraces and the staircase we came down at the start. Luckily there are some seats along the way for a breather heading back up!

We aim to have you back in Adelaide around 5pm. We drop off at the Chifley and the Adelaide Airport. If you are planning to fly out after the tour please book flights after 6.30pm.

Meals: breakfast (Lunch guest expense)
Things to note:
Temperature variations are between 4 to 30 degrees so it essential that you bring warm clothing including a beanie, thermals, gloves, fleece jacket etc. and clothing for warmer weather.

During the day items such as long-sleeve shirts, thick walking socks, shorts and long pants and a broad brimmed hat will serve you well. Your best preparation is to have layered clothing that can go from warm to cool in the course of a day’s walk.

Footwear
Arkaroola and Lake Eyre can be pretty exacting on footwear, and the terrain is rocky and uneven underfoot. Hiking boots are required for this trip. If your intention is to buy new boots for the trip make sure that you do so as soon as you can in order to break them in. If you’ll be wearing an existing pair of walking boots then give them some time to break them back in and soften up. At day’s end, when we are relaxing, having a softer pair of shoes to change into will bring your feet gentle relief.

Gaiters or sock protectors are also useful. Walking poles that have telescopic extensions are also useful with balance. If you are trying to board your flight with telescopic poles packing them in a postal cylinder is a great way to ensure they will arrive at the other end.

ABOUT THE MEALS
The food we serve is healthy, hearty and home style. Our menus are designed to showcase the fabulous regional produce where possible. Fresh local cheese, yoghurt, fruit, vegetables, fish and meats are used, supporting local farmers and minimising our food miles. We don’t offer five-star dining, but our guides take pride in ensuring that all meals are delicious and plentiful, prepared with top-quality fresh seasonal ingredients.

Breakfast
is a continental spread of cereals, stewed fruit, yoghurt, toast and spreads. Coffee and tea are always available at your base accommodation.

Lunch
can vary from day to day, but includes meat, salad, bread and wraps. Some days might include something different like roasted chicken.

Dinner
is a casual two-course meal of main and dessert prepared by your guides. The menu changes to suit available fresh produce but could include a classic roast lamb, salmon fillet or Thai chicken. Dessert may include things like maple baked apples, pears in red wine or seasonal fruit salad.

Snacks
Guests can prepare their own trail mix each morning from our self-serve trail mix selection. There will be fresh fruit for the trail and biscuits or fruit cake for tea breaks.

Pre-dinner antipasto
Each evening we prepare a selection of antipasto delights, dips, cheese and crackers before dinner.

Dietary requirements
We are able to accommodate guests’ specific dietary requirements and can prepare meals to meet individual needs.

Alcohol
Our tours do not include alcoholic beverages, however guests are most welcome to bring wine/beer along with them. If you are bringing bottled wine, please pack this carefully to avoid breakages.
ACCOMMODATION:

Gum Creek Station - Shearers rooms

Recently upgraded quality Shearer’s Quarters style accommodation. Fully self-contained, with large kitchen plus dining/living area; wood fire and gas heating; large outdoor deck and BBQ area, nestled alongside river red gum-lined homestead creek.

Or Rawnsley Park

The property is situated just outside Wilpena Pound and is the perfect base for exploring the area. Here we stay in comfortable two-bedroom cabins for four nights of the tour. These cabins have two bedrooms with the one shared bathroom between the two rooms, and a shared living area.

You can choose a single supplement if you would prefer not to share a bedroom, this means you would have one bedroom in the two bedroom cabin and are likely to be sharing the cabin.

Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary

Here we stay at either the Mawson or Callitris Lodge which both have mountain views. This is motel styled accommodation with ensuite rooms. There is a coin operated laundry in the Mawson building to do some washing.

Oasis Holiday Park Marree

Oasis Caravan Park is located in the centre of Marree, at the base of lake Eyre. Home to the Marree Man, seventh man made wonder of the world.

We stay in cabins with an ensuite in every room. There is a firepit and rustic communal area. Laundry facilities are available here.

Almerta Station

Almerta Station is a unique destination in the Flinders Ranges. Here we will stay in the very comfortable Shearer’s Quarters. There is a recreational room with a pool table. Laundry facilities are available here.
PACKING LIST - WHAT TO PACK
You need your own personal clothing, a pair of comfortable walking boots, toiletries and any personal medication.

The most important item for you to have with you is a reliable pair of walking boots. Runners and flat-soled shoes will not suffice except as something you can wear after the day’s activity. Weather can be quite variable, so a waterproof jacket is very important to pack on all trips, regardless of the weather forecast.

GEAR LIST
Please bring you gear in a soft bag rather than hard suitcase to help guides pack the trailer.

DAY PACK—recommend approx. 20 litres, with a load bearing harness
As a walker you will need to have your own day pack and water bladder and suitable hiking shoes/boots. Here is a suggested list of what walkers will need to be wearing or have in their day pack:
• rain jacket
• a fleece jacket
• wide-brimmed hat for sunny days
• beanie or woollen hat for cold days
• water bottle or drinking bladder, min 2 litre
• high factor sunscreen
• lip balm
• blister pads and / or tape for rubbing and/or blisters
• antiseptic hand gel
• sun glasses
• walking poles (optional)
• gaiters (optional)
• camera
• binoculars
• spare batteries for all devices/charger

MAIN BAG
Your main bag stays at the accommodation for the duration of the trip. You only carry your light day pack while walking.
• 4 pairs long and/or short pants. Preferably loose fitting, lightweight and quick drying
• 2 x Long sleeved shirts
• 4 x T-shirts
• fleece jacket/woollen sweater – something warm
• rain jacket/ spray jacket
• swimmers/bathers and towel (optional)
• walking socks
• if rain is expected, then having a set of thermal under garments can keep you warm in the face of blustery conditions
• a woollen or fleece hat for cooler weather
• lightweight, quick drying towel
• waterproof, reusable bag for worn clothing
• comfortable shoes and clothing for evenings and activities
• underwear
• toiletries— shampoo/conditioner, body wash, deodorant, sanitary products, insect repellent, toothpaste etc.

LIST OF WHAT WE PROVIDE:
• Two Park Trek guides, who will drive, cook and care for you.
• Transport which includes pickup and drop off from Adelaide. We use a comfortable 12 seater mini coach with a trailer attached for luggage.
• 6 dinners (1 dinner at guest own expense), 7 lunches (1 lunch at guest own expense), 7 breakfasts, trail mix, nibbles, fresh fruit
• Tea, coffee, hot chocolate and biscuits.
• 7 nights accommodation on a twin share basis (single supplement available at additional expense).

POST TOUR INFORMATION:
We drop back into Adelaide and Adelaide airport around 5.00pm. If you are flying out that night, you’ll need to book a flight out after 7.00 pm.

Pre and Post tour accommodation
We pick up from the Chifley on South Terrace
Tel: 08 8223 4355 at 7.30am on day 1 of the trip.

Please quote ‘Park Trek’ if booking at either the Chifley Hotel or Sage Hotel to receive a discounted rate.

If you are looking for accommodation other than the Chifley, here are some options:
• Sage Hotel Adelaide—Ph: (08) 8223 2800
• Hilton Adelaide—Ph: (08) 8217 2000
• Adabco Boutique Hotel—Ph: (08) 8100 7500
• South Terrace Motel - Ph: (08) 8223 2800