

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL 

*Your South Pacific Travel Specialists*

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Luxury Small Group Journeys



2019 / 2020

Australia • New Zealand

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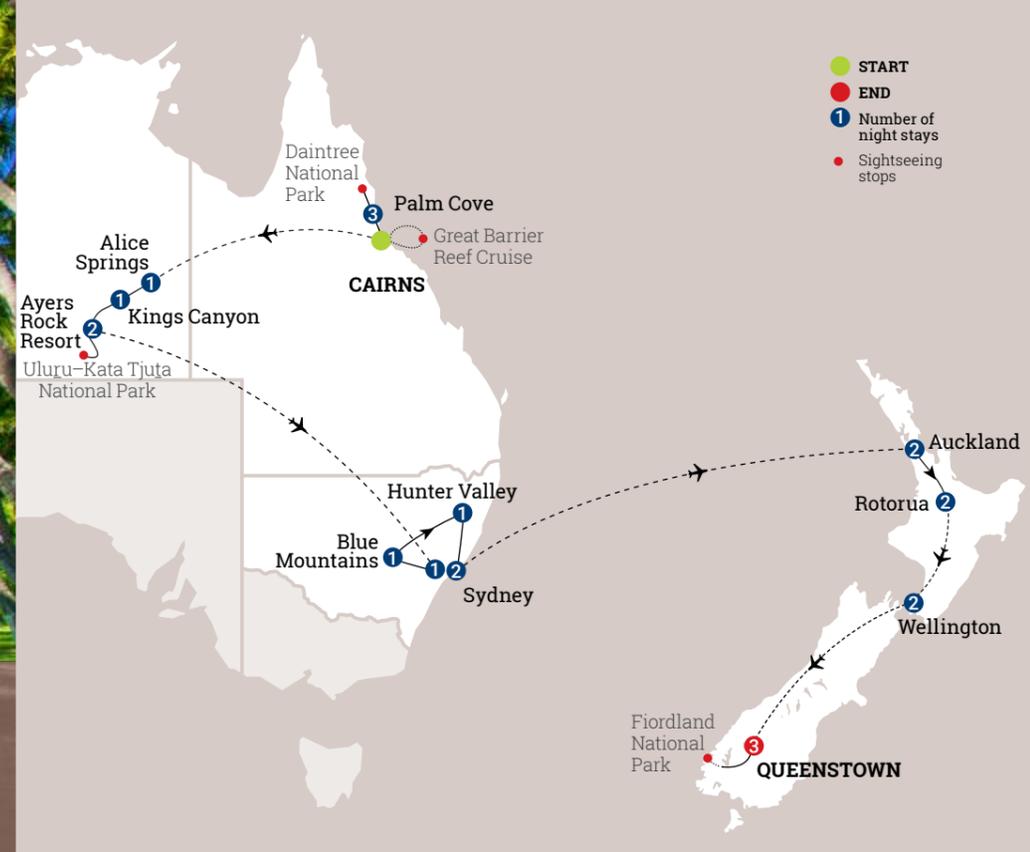
# FIRST LIGHT TRAVEL

Your South Pacific Travel Specialists

Palm Cove, Cairns

## Australia & New Zealand Expedition

22 DAYS CAIRNS → QUEENSTOWN ANFLY



Cairns • Daintree • Great Barrier Reef • Alice Springs • Kings Canyon • Uluru • Kata Tjuta • Sydney • Blue Mountains • Hunter Valley • Auckland • Rotorua • Wellington • Queenstown

A tale of two great countries, of epic natural beauty and ancient rituals and traditions – yours to explore on this tour from the oceans to the outback of Australia and across the length and breadth of New Zealand. Embrace the sophistication of the cities and soulful expanse of their stunning untamed landscapes.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Discover

- Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (the Olgas)
- Spectacular Sydney Harbour and beaches
- Great Barrier Reef
- Doubtful Sound in Fiordland National Park
- Beautiful Lake Rotorua
- New Zealand 'Adventure Capital' Queenstown

#### Explore

- Hike to the top of Kings Canyon
- The 36 mystical domes of Kata Tjuta
- Visit Rainbow Springs Nature Park
- Queenstown Journey Select experiences

#### Immerse

- Indigenous experience in Daintree Rainforest
- Sail a yacht on Sydney Harbour
- Māori culture at the Tamaki Māori Village

#### Relax

- Uluru sunset with sparkling wine
- Hunter Valley wine tastings



Great Barrier Reef



Sydney Sailing

#### Day 1 Welcome to Cairns

A warm welcome to the gateway city of Tropical North Queensland – the launch pad for your epic adventure from north to south, through the untamed wilderness of the outback. Upon arrival, you'll have time to relax before meeting your Journey Director this afternoon for a Welcome Reception with drinks and canapés and later dine overlooking the gleaming waters of the Coral Sea. Hotel: Alamanda Palm Cove, Cairns, 3 nights. DW

#### Day 2 Daintree and Indigenous Culture

Explore the symbiotic relationship between the local Kuku Yalanji people and ancient landscapes of the Daintree as you join your Aboriginal guide on an exclusive journey into the rainforest. Spend the morning learning about their fascinating traditions, bush diet and traditional medicines shared amidst the soundtrack of the untamed forest.

Learn how to hunt for elusive mud crabs before enjoying lunch under the leafy canopies of mahogany and oak. B L

#### Day 3 Great Barrier Reef

Go beyond the 'great' and into an underwater wonderland – your cruise to discover the magic of the Great Barrier Reef will venture to Agincourt Reef on the Quicksilver wave-piercing catamaran, where you have a unique opportunity to soak up the pristine natural setting before you. Snorkel past iridescent coral formations and colourful marine-life – an undersea treasure-trove as far as the eye can see. Relax up on deck surrounded by the vivid blue of the Coral Sea, bask in the golden Australian sunshine and enjoy a tropical lunch on board before returning to Palm Cove. B L

#### Day 4 Cairns – Alice Springs

Depart the holiday hotspot of Cairns, flying to Alice Springs where you'll gain

unique insights into what life is like in an isolated Australian town. Spending some time at the School of the Air and Royal Flying Doctor Service, learn how these services provide a much-needed medical lifeline to remote Australian communities. ✂ Join your Alice Springs family hosts this evening for a Local Dining Experience barbecue dinner around a campfire, as the Milky Way lights up the sky. Hotel: Crowne Plaza Alice Springs Lasseters. B DE

#### Day 5 Alice Springs – Kings Canyon

This morning's journey takes you through the West MacDonnell Ranges and along the 4WD Mereenie Loop Road, past Tylers Lookout and Gosses Bluff. Take a walk through Angkerle (Standley Chasm), created over millions of years, and continue to your destination, Kings Canyon, where you can stroll along the shady creek bed at the foot of the towering sandstone cliffs of the canyon. Hotel: Kings Canyon Resort, Deluxe Spa Rooms. B L DW

#### Day 6 Kings Canyon – Uluru

Rise with the birds and embark on the exhilarating 6km Rim Walk at Kings Canyon past the domes of the Lost City, to where you'll peer over the towering sandstone cliffs into the gorge below. Next stop is Curtin Springs Station. Learn about the legacy of the Severin family and their wrangling heritage and then kick back in true Aussie style at a delicious barbecue lunch. This afternoon, venture to the spiritual midst of Uluru in time to enjoy sparkling wine at a spectacular sunset. Hotel: Sails in the Desert Hotel, Ayers Rock Resort, 2 nights. B L

#### Day 7 Uluru and Kata Tjuta

Venture to the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre where you'll learn about the strong connection shared over millennia between the Anangu people and this ancient land. The mystical domes of Kata Tjuta are your next stop. Join your Journey Director for a guided walk deep through the whistling

Walpa Gorge, tracing the cultural significance of Kata Tjuta's ancient rocky domes. Spend the rest of the afternoon at the base of Uluru's red slopes, embracing the timeless stories of the Anangu whose rock art you'll have an opportunity to see before visiting the Mutitjulu Waterhole, home to the Anangu's wanampi, an ancestral water snake. ✂ Afterwards, meet the magical stars of the Southern Hemisphere this evening at the sensational Sounds of Silence Dinner. B DE

#### Day 8 Uluru – Sydney

Witness a mesmerising sunrise over Uluru – perfectly viewed from the dune viewing area. Afterwards, kick back and enjoy laidback Aussie vibes before your flight to Sydney. Consider an optional experience scenic helicopter flight over Uluru and Kata Tjuta, learn the art of Aboriginal dot painting or simply relax with a good book. This afternoon, soulful Uluru gives way to cosmopolitan Sydney. Hotel: The Langham, Sydney. B

#### Day 9 Sydney – Blue Mountains

The shimmering hue of the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains National Park beckons from afar as you embark on a day of discovery to explore its extraordinary beauty. Soak up eucalyptus scents and discover such icons as the Three Sisters at Echo Point and spectacular Bridal Veil Falls. Go off the beaten path in the company of your Journey Director to secluded lookouts and peaceful short bushwalks. Hotel: Fairmont Resort Blue Mountains. B DW

#### Day 10 Blue Mountains – Hunter Valley

Explore Australia's original wine country. A day of guilt-free indulgence awaits as you sample the delectable flavours and award-winning vintages of the Hunter Valley. Enjoy private wine tastings at boutique vineyards and a sumptuous lunch in exquisite surrounds before arriving at your hotel and spending the rest of the afternoon at leisure. Hotel: Kirkton Park, Hunter Valley. B L DW



Kings Canyon



Uluru sunset



The Rocks, Sydney



Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown

# Australia & New Zealand Expedition

CONTINUED



The Red Barn



Hobbiton, Matamata



Tamaki Maori Village

### Day 11 Hunter Valley – Sydney

🚩 The wind in your sails, it's time to kick-start your afternoon on famous Sydney Harbour. Prime your sea legs and join your sailing crew on board a luxury yacht. Take the helm, work the grinders or simply kick back as you sail past the billowing sails of the Sydney Opera House, Harbour Bridge and small secluded coves surrounded by multi-million dollar waterfront homes. An evening at leisure follows your exhilarating day on the water. Hotel: The Langham, Sydney, 2 nights. B

### Day 12 Sydney Sightseeing

The Eastern Suburbs of Sydney welcome you this morning as you stroll along the coastal walk. No trip to Sydney would be complete without a visit to the iconic Sydney Opera House for a VIP guided tour to learn about this architectural marvel. Afterwards, toast your Inspiring Journey at a Celebration Dinner at chef Peter Gilmore's iconic Bennelong Restaurant under the sails of the Sydney Opera House. B CD

### Day 13 Sydney – Auckland

Bid farewell to the Harbour City as your epic discovery of Australia's natural splendour and spiritual soul comes to an end and welcome to New Zealand, when you fly to Auckland, your gateway to the North Island. Spend time at leisure before meeting your New Zealand Journey Director and fellow travellers for a Welcome Reception and dinner. Hotel: Sofitel Auckland, 2 nights. B DW

### Day 14 Auckland

Soak up Auckland's intoxicating charm this morning as you embark on a city sightseeing tour. Then travel by ferry to Waiheke Island for a culinary extravaganza of bold reds. Continue your love affair with Waiheke at Casita Miro, savouring delicious Mediterranean flavours. Today's final stop is at Mudbrick Vineyard where you'll enjoy spectacular views of the Hauraki Gulf. B L

### Day 15 Auckland – Rotorua

✂ Your leisurely discovery of New Zealand's North Island continues as you follow the Waikato River to the home of Lance and Bridgette O'Sullivan, for a traditional country-style lunch. 🚩 ✂ Visit the Tamaki Maori Village for insights into the local rituals and traditions and then indulge in the mouthwatering flavours of a Hangi Local Dining Experience. Hotel: Pullman Rotorua, 2 nights. B DE

### Day 16 Rotorua Journey Select

✔ Embark on one of the Journey Select sightseeing experiences today to explore the sacred lands and Maori traditions of Rotorua. Indulge in the Polynesian Spa's healing waters, tread in the footsteps of Bilbo Baggins in the fantasy-land of Hobbiton or take the native forest zipline adventure tour with Canopy Tours. B DW

### Day 17 Rotorua – Wellington

Come face-to-face with New Zealand's indigenous creatures within the lush surrounds of Rainbow Springs Nature Park. 🚩 Encounter the local Maori community at Whakawerawera Living Village and see New Zealand's largest geyser before you board your flight to Wellington. Hotel: Sofitel Wellington, 2 nights. B

### Day 18 Wellington

A foodie extravaganza awaits this morning as you join a local guide to sample the delicious gourmet delights shared over fascinating stories of Wellington. Embrace your inner hipster, as you discover the charming Victorian architecture and savour the city's coffee culture. Explore New Zealand's fascinating culture, nature, heritage and art at Te Papa Museum of New Zealand, joining a guide who will reveal the stories behind the exhibitions. B DW

### Day 19 Wellington – Queenstown

Discover the urban eco-sanctuary of Zealandia, admiring the extraordinary efforts of conservationists. Then it's

time to fly to Queenstown, New Zealand's adrenalin capital. On arrival, journey to the gold-rush village of Arrowtown. Enjoy an orientation tour of Queenstown. Hotel: Heritage Queenstown, 3 nights. B

### Day 20 Doubtful Sound

🚩 Journey deep into the heart of Fiordland National Park. From the silence of the 'Sounds' to the ancient rainforests, the beauty and vastness will leave you speechless. Your day begins in Manapouri, where you'll embark on a cruise across Lake Manapouri. In Doubtful Sound, take to the waters of this glistening fiord. B L DW

### Day 21 Queenstown Journey Select

✔ Today indulge your adventurous side on one of the Journey Select sightseeing experiences. Enjoy a guided walk through a native beech forest or embark on a minibus tour through the scenic gorge of Skippers

Canyon. For a more sedate encounter with the adrenalin capital, visit one of the nearby wineries to sample award-winning vintages. As your final day ends, spend the evening enjoying a Celebration Dinner with wine with your Journey Director and new found friends. B CD

### Day 22 Farewell from Queenstown

For now, all that's left to say is a fond farewell as your journey comes to an end after breakfast. B



Hunter Valley



Sydney



Doubtful Sound



Wellington

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