



VOYAGES
AYERS ROCK
RESORT

*"They say nothing prepares you for the sight of Uluru, and it's absolutely true."
Australian Traveller*

Voyages Ayers Rock Resort lies at the gateway to the dual World Heritage listed Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, in Australia's Red Centre. Given its remote location, a Resort of world-class standards is possibly something guests might not have expected to find 'in the middle of nowhere'. Here, guests can immerse themselves in the natural and cultural landscapes of one of the world's most beautiful natural wonders.

This desert oasis offers a variety of accommodation options catering for every possible taste and budget. From the five-star comfort of Sails in the Desert Hotel, and the award-winning Desert Gardens Hotel; to The Lost Camel and authentic Outback Pioneer Hotel and Lodge; or stylish Emu Walk Apartments.

Voyages also operate the Ayers Rock Campground, offering powered campsites and air-conditioned cabins. A Coach Campground services the unique needs of packaged group tour operators.

The Resort is situated on 104 square kilometres of private land: bordering the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and Katiti Aboriginal Land.

Within the township of *Yulara*, Voyages Ayers Rock Resort was conceived by the Northern Territory Government in the late 70s. Importantly, the resort town replaced

the haphazard facilities that had developed at the base of Uluru: hotels, motels and support industry had sprung up piecemeal, degrading the environment and damaging culturally significant sites.

Construction began in October 1982 with \$160 million invested in the resort and regional infrastructure, including residential housing, 3 international standard hotels, campground, airport, 2.6 megawatt power station, roads, sewage and water plant.

Architectural and design qualities followed well established desert building techniques such as compact developments, thick cavity masonry brick, double-roof construction, highly reflective colours, careful orientation of windows and the use of eaves, verandahs, blinds and shade screens (or sails).

Yulara was designed and built with utmost sensitivity to the natural and cultural environments. Cultural mapping studies were undertaken with Anangu (Aboriginal people) and environmental impact assessments were carried out to select the site where Voyages Ayers Rock Resort stands today.

Resort History

1950s Tourism officially 'arrives' with Len Tuit operating guided tours from Alice Springs and camping at a permanent base beside Uluru

1959 Leases granted for the operation of a hotel, 4 motels, store and service station at Uluru

1973 Commonwealth Senate Committee recommends the relocation of all tourism infrastructure

1976 Yulara township officially proclaimed

1977 Construction of Yulara tourist resort begins

1984 Yulara tourist resort completed

1992 Yulara Development Company Limited dissolved and hotel management contracts rescinded. Ayers Rock Resort Company Limited formed to manage all tourism infrastructure.

1997 Full privatisation of Yulara and accompanying 104 square kilometres of land: Ayers Rock Resort Company Limited dissolved following acquisition by The GPT Group. "Voyages Hotels and Resorts" formed.

2003 \$100 million Masterplan completed, including major upgrade of Desert Gardens Hotel, refurbishment of Emu Walk Apartments, expansion of Outback Pioneer Hotel & Lodge, launch of The Lost Camel, extension of residential facilities, and significant capital works to improve resort infrastructure.

Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṯa National Park

Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṯa National Park was inscribed on the World Heritage listing in two stages, initially in 1987 for its outstanding natural values and then in 1994 for its outstanding cultural values.

Covering 1,325 square kilometers, Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṯa National Park is managed by Parks Australia, a federal government agency, on behalf of Aboriginal people, to whom ownership was officially granted on October 26, 1985.

Tourists first visited the region in the 1950s and since tourist numbers were first recorded in 1962/63 (5,462), the number of visitors has soared to 400,000 in 2005.

There is no English translation for Uluṛu (Ayers Rock), however, in local Anangu Pitjantjatjara language Kata Tjuṯa (the Olgas) means 'many heads'.

AT A GLANCE

- Voyages Ayers Rock Resort comprises 825 rooms spread across 5 key accommodation options.
- The Resort has 13 dining experiences from relaxed dining under a desert sky, to grilling a barramundi steak on the BBQ.

- Facilities also include a medical centre, amphitheatre, tennis courts, conference centre, swimming pools, petrol station, interpretive visitors centre, banking, post office, hair and beauty salon, photo lab, laundry, newsagency, fast food takeaway, lookouts, tour and information centre, souvenirs, retail fashion, art gallery.
- A free shuttle service helps guests and residents move around the Resort and complimentary coach transfers ferry guests between their hotels and the airport daily.
- The Resort can accommodate up to 4,500 guests at capacity.
- Residential housing accommodates up to 1,100 staff, supported by an array of community services and facilities such as a recreation centre, resident's club/bar, swimming pools, oval, child care services, primary school, and an adult education centre.
- Over 65 individual tours operate from the Resort.
- Voyages Ayers Rock Resort is located 445 km southwest of Alice Springs; approximately 1 hour flight time and/or 4-5 hours drive. It is often referred to being at the geographical and spiritual 'heart' of Australia: 1265km from Adelaide; 2185km from Brisbane; 2139km from Sydney; 1953km from Melbourne; 1674km from Perth; and 1395km from Darwin.
- Peak travel season: July 1 to November 30 (recommended booking period in advance: 3 months).

GETTING THERE

For full information, **visit** www.ayersrockResort.com.au/getting/

Air

Nearest airport: Ayers Rock (Connellan) Airport

Flights operate daily from Perth, Sydney, Cairns and Alice Springs direct to Ayers Rock Airport, as well as four times a week from Melbourne. Flights from major capital cities range between 2½-3½ hours duration.

Ayers Rock Airport is located six kilometres from Voyages Ayers Rock Resort (10 minutes travel). A complimentary coach transfer from Ayers Rock Airport to Voyages Ayers Rock Resort meets every scheduled flight and visits each hotel.

Drive

There is no better way to explore Central Australia than at your own pace. Organise to collect a hire car from Ayers Rock Airport before you arrive or take your own vehicle and design an itinerary to suit your time and budget.

Coach

Coach transfers are available and services operate between Alice Springs, Kings Canyon, and Uluru. The luxury air-conditioned coaches travel through spectacular desert landscapes, with commentary provided by experienced driver-guides. Coach bookings can be made through Voyages.

AAT Kings, APT and Scenic Tours operate extended coach tour series throughout the Red Centre. For more information, visit the following websites:

www.aatkings.com.au

www.aptouring.com.au

www.scenictours.com.au

ACCOMMODATION

Sails in the Desert - 5 stars, 231 rooms

Named after the soaring white sails that crown its roof, this is Voyages Ayers Rock Resort's premium hotel. The interior decor focuses on Aboriginal heritage and culture, with a gallery in the lobby and significant artworks featured throughout the public areas and in the private rooms.

Slip into comfort right in the heart of the central Australian outback at Voyages Sails in the Desert Hotel. Relax in beautifully appointed rooms, enjoy a cocktail in the lovely grounds, or sit back and relax under the magnificent white sails.

The Hotel also features the acclaimed Mulgara Gallery, the lively, buffet-style Winkiku Restaurant, tapas-style cuisine by the pool at Rockpool (seasonal), and the award winning signature restaurant of Voyages Ayers Rock Resort, Kuniya Restaurant.

Desert Gardens Hotel – 4.5 stars, 218 rooms

Magnificent ghost gums and flowering native shrubs are the setting for this hotel. Voyages Desert Gardens Hotel is centrally located to all resort and touring facilities and offers a range of accommodation, from shaded poolside rooms to deluxe rooms overlooking the desert.

Relax in the comfort of your own private balcony or courtyard, or unwind in the hotel's pool, sipping cocktails from the Bunya bar.

It's only a short stroll to the Resorts' numerous lookouts, where you can view what is arguably Australia's best sunset, with the spectacular play of colours across the face of Uluru and the surrounding desert. Once the sun has set, dine at Arnguli Grill Restaurant and savour Australian native delicacies.

Emu Walk Apartments – 4 stars, 60 rooms

Sheltered behind gardens of native trees and forming a walkway through the heart of the Resort is an avenue of terraced apartments. Spacious and well equipped, the Voyages Emu Walk Apartments can cater for up to six people - ideal if you are holidaying with family or friends. All apartments are self-contained, with separate kitchen, living and bedroom areas.

Located just minutes from the hub of the Resort, the Town Square, including mini supermarket and shops, these apartments provide everything you need to cook up a storm. Or, if you're not in the mood for cooking, you're nice and close to all of the fabulous resort restaurants, including Gecko's café.

The Lost Camel – 3.5 stars, 99 rooms

The lobby features contemporary furnishings, bright open spaces, and an intimate café and bar. At the heart of the hotel is a pool and deck, where guests soak up the sun and relax in between tours. At the end of the day, relax in the lobby's bar and lounge, where a plasma screen plays anything from CNN to music videos.

Furnished in a mix of Aboriginal and urban themes, the Lost Camel brings a modern and exciting feel to Voyages Ayers Rock Resort. The guest rooms are decorated in bright colours and crisp, clean whites. Stylishly framed photographs based on Aboriginal themes, such as hands weaving baskets or sifting through berries, adorn the walls to enhance this new hotel's distinctive, modern ethos.

Outback Pioneer Hotel & Lodge

Looking for traditional Aussie hospitality? You'll find it at the Voyages Outback Pioneer Hotel & Lodge - with your choice of 3 ½ star hotel or 2 star lodge accommodation, from comfortable, affordable hotel rooms and budget cabins to dormitories. This hotel is perfect for the demands of travellers looking for quality service in relaxed surrounds.

This is a place where friendships are made and good times are had by all. Taste Australia's pioneering past, as you enjoy a beer and some outback delights at the do-it-yourself Outback BBQ, and swap stories of your day's adventures. Alternatively, opt for the peace and quiet of the Bough House Restaurant with a buffet dinner.

The Voyages Outback Pioneer Hotel & Lodge is ideal for those who want to enjoy all that Ayers Rock (Uluru) has to offer.

Ayers Rock Campground

Pitch your tent on lush green grass under the shade of native desert oaks. With tent sites, powered sites, and air-conditioned cabins to choose from, Voyages Ayers Rock Campground offers a range of services and facilities to make the great outdoors truly enjoyable.

Located within the Voyages Ayers Rock Resort complex, the campground is an ideal base from which to experience the beauty of the living cultural landscape in Uluru-

Kata Tjuṯa National Park. A well-equipped campground with modern amenities - perfectly suited to families, independent travellers and groups.

ACTIVITIES

A stay at Voyages Ayers Rock Resort will leave you with more than a few photos. You'll come away with lasting memories, enriched with new understanding of the haunting desert interior of Australia's heartland.

No matter where guests choose to stay, they can join any of the 65 tours. Whether pondering the ancient intricacies of Anṅangu culture or swaying astride a camel, cruising the desert on a Harley or soaring in a helicopter, guests will have entered a realm of endless wonder.

The choice is surprising and remarkable, but perhaps the most sought after experiences are Uluṛu at sunrise and sunset - moments of inspiring beauty.

Top 10 'things to do'

1. Sounds of Silence

Experience the "Sounds of Silence" as you are taken to a remote desert location to enjoy the succulent tastes of a three-course buffet dinner under the stars.

2. Sunrise Camel Tour

Ride a camel across the red sand dunes as you watch the sun rising over Uluṛu.

3. Desert Awakenings

Travel by 4 x 4 into the outback and enjoy a barbecue breakfast as the sun rises over Uluṛu. Following breakfast explore the base of Uluṛu whilst your guide interprets Anṅangu creation stories.

4. Uluṛu Base Walk

Follow the 9.8 kilometre path around the base of Uluṛu. An easy walk will reward you with an up-close view of this ancient monolith.

5. Kata Tjuṯa Valley of the Winds Walk

Explore the 36 weathered domes of Kata Tjuṯa (The Olgas) as you follow the Valley of the Winds walk through the rocky landscape.

6. Liru Walk

One of the most famous tours of Uluru: enjoy sunrise, a restaurant breakfast overlooking Uluru and the Liru Walk with Aboriginal guides.

7. Harley ride through Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa National Park

Enjoy an adrenalin fuelled view of Uluru from the back of a genuine Harley Davidson motorcycle.

Uluru Motorcycle Tours

8. Uluru-Kata Tjuṯa National Park Cultural Centre

Learn about the culture of the Traditional Owners of the Park, the Anangu.

Included with most tours to Uluru

9. Red Ochre Spa

Slip into comfort and relaxation right in the heart of the central Australian outback with a visit to the beautiful Red Ochre Spa. The perfect way to immerse yourself in the timeless landscape of one of the world's most beautiful natural wonders. The Red Ochre Spa is located within Sails in the Desert Hotel, at Ayers Rock Resort.

10. Scenic Flights

Sweep over the spectacular rock formations for amazing close up views.

For full list of activities, **visit** www.ayersrockresort.com.au/experiences/

Film & Photography

The sublime quality of light in the Red Centre stuns many professionals. Following sunrise the colour washes rapidly, however, sunset offers lingering qualities of light that can suit an array of still photography or filming requirements.

Allow for at least 90 minutes before sunset or sunrise to prepare your equipment and drive to your preferred location.

Recommended locations suitable for commercial media include:

Resort - Uluru Lookout: easily accessible for both sunrise and sunset shooting of Uluru and/or Kata Tjuta.

Resort - Firetrail: ideal for shooting a “classic” red dirt road with Kata Tjuta in the background.

National Park - Docker River Road: another location offering a long stretch of red dirt road with the soaring domes of Kata Tjuta in the background.

National Park – Firetrail: alternative sunrise “close-up” location on southern flank of Uluru - quality of shot depends on time of year and direction of sunrise.

National Park – Sunset Viewing Platform: widely accepted location for traditional Uluru “postcard” shot.

Ayers Rock Helicopters and Professional Helicopter Services can be chartered for aerial shots. Both operators have extensive experience working with media professionals, as well as intimate knowledge of the National Park’s Commercial Film & Photography Guidelines.

Resort Film & Photography Guidelines

Media capturing images within Voyages Ayers Rock Resort must be accompanied at ***all times*** by a member of the Resort Public Relations team.

Filming and/or still photography of the Sounds of Silence dining experience is only permitted before/during sunset: when guests are enjoying drinks and canapés on the dune top and when they make their way to the dining area to be seated.

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Film & Photography Guidelines

Under Australian law, any commercial film and/or photography conducted within Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park requires a permit.

Permits are obtained through the National Park and media should allow at least 14 days for permits to be processed.

For more information on Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Commercial Film & Photography Guidelines or Permit Applications, **visit** www.environment.gov.au/parks/permits/uluru-media.html

IMAGE LIBRARY

To access high resolution image files from the Voyages website, **visit** www.voyages.com.au/corporate/images

To order high resolution image files from the Tourism NT website, **visit** <http://imagegallery.tourismnt.com.au/>

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Desert climate with average temperatures ranging from approximately 22 degrees Celsius (72 degrees Fahrenheit) in winter to 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit) in summer.

Nights and mornings during winter can be very cold and reach freezing point, and guests should pack appropriate warm clothing. Daytime temperatures during summer can exceed 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit). Regardless of the time of year, guests should ensure they pack sunscreen and a hat. Remember that you're travelling in a harsh, semi arid desert region and that no matter what time of year, drinking plenty of water is a must!

For the current weather, **visit** www.bom.gov.au/

Average monthly maximum temperatures for Voyages Ayers Rock Resort:
(degree Celsius and Fahrenheit)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
36	35	33	28	24	20	19	23	27	31	34	35

97	95	91	82	75	69	66	73	81	88	93	95
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CULTURE

Archaeological work in the Cleland Hills to the north of Uluru in 1987 suggests that Aboriginal people were living in this region at least 22,000 years ago.

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park is located in what has traditionally been the territory of Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people.

The traditional owners of the Park call themselves Anangu or Pitjantjatjara people. Anangu life revolves around the Tjukurpa. Tjukurpa, sometimes inaccurately translated as 'Dreamtime' or 'Dreaming', is the word that Anangu use to refer the ancestral time when the world was being formed by heroic beings.

In the Tjukurpa, these ancestors erupted from the featureless surface of the earth and travelled across it, having adventures and leaving their mark on the landscape in many forms. At Uluru, the most significant of these ancestors are the Mala, Kuniya and Liru (poisonous snakes). All three groups of ancestors travelled thousands of kilometres before and after they came to Uluru.

Like Uluru, the landscape of Kata Tjuta was greatly affected by the activity of powerful ancestor beings. Because of the connections to important and secret ritual ceremonies that all Anangu men must undertake at various stages in their lives, not even the names of these ancestors can be revealed casually for the tourist.

Tjukurpa is not simply a story that explains how physical things like rocks and trees came to be, it details how important social behaviours and the proper ways of doing things originated. It contains the way that the social and physical world came into being, and the form of the land and human relationships in the beginning. This provides Anangu with their explanation of how these things are.

It is the basis for the 'world view' of Anangu. It acts as an ethical guide for truth and morality: of what is right and wrong. It is a religious system to help Anangu look at, anticipate and judge things in a similar way to each other.

Source: Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Tour Operator Workbook, Environment Australia & Mutitjulu Community Inc, 2002.

For more information, **visit** <http://www.deh.gov.au/parks/uluru/index.html>

GEOLOGY

Uluru and Kata Tjuta are the visible tips of huge slabs of rock which extend up to 6 kilometres beneath the surface. However, a close-up look reveals that they are made of different types of rock.

Uluru is arkose, a coarse-grained sandstone which was eroded from huge mountains made from granite. Kata Tjuta is conglomerate, consisting of gravel, pebbles, cobbles and boulders cemented by sand and mud.

For more information on the geology, **visit** www.deh.gov.au/parks/uluru/natural/geology.html

FLORA

As its World Heritage listing indicates, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park 'contains unique, rare or superlative natural phenomena, formations and features'.

Anangu have, for centuries, divided the flora in the Park into a number of categories: *Punu* (trees), *Puti* (shrubs), *Tjulpun-tjulpunpa* (flowers), and *Ukiri* (grasses).

Perhaps the most prevalent tree is the Desert Oak, or *Kurkara*. Desert Oaks are slow to mature and grow in deep sand in large numbers. Juveniles look like Christmas trees and mature to an adult form spreading massive limbs when the roots meet the water table. It is the only member of its family in Central Australia and its cones are the biggest of its kind. Fire burns its foliage but usually does not kill the tree.

Shrubs such as grevilleas and hakeas (corkwood trees) flower in the spring and winter and are known for their big bottlebrush heads. *Kaliny-kaliny* (honey grevillea - *Grevillea eriostachya*) flowers are bright yellow and green. Colourful ground flowers are called *tjulpun-tjulpunpa*. Daisies and other ground flowers bloom after rain and during the winter. Others such as the wattles bloom as spring approaches.

The prickly *tjanpi* (hard spinifex - *Triodia basedowii*) hummocks are prevalent throughout the Park. Their enormous root systems prevent desert sands shifting, spreading underground beyond the prickly clump and deep into the soil and forming an immense cone.

Bush tucker, in the form of wild tomatoes and other fruits, can also be found at different times of year and include *Kampurarpa* (desert raisin or wild tomato - *Solanum centrale*), *tjuntawara* (shy nightshade - *Solanum cleistogamum*), *itunypa* (western nightshade), and *tjilka-tjilka* (prickly nightshade - *Solanum petrophilum*) which have distinctive yellow stamens that stand erect from the fused pentagon of purple petals.

WILDLIFE

Historically 46 species of native mammal are known to have been living in the Uluru region, but currently there are 21 according to recent surveys. Of particular importance is the Mala, or rufous-hare wallaby, which has been extinct in the region since the mid 1900s.

Anangu and Parks Australia have completed the construction of a 170 hectare feral proof enclosure, which is the new home for 25 Mala, reared in nearby Watarrka National Park (Kings Canyon). It is hoped that the Mala will adapt to their new home, breed and eventually be released into the wild and contribute to the long-term survival of the species.

The mulgara, another vulnerable species, is mostly restricted to the transitional sandplain area, a narrow band of country that stretches from the vicinity of Uluru, to the Northern boundary of the Park, and into Ayers Rock Resort. This very important area also contains *itjaritjari* (marsupial mole), *kuniya* (woma python) and *tjakura* (great desert skink).

The Park has a very rich reptile fauna of high conservation significance with 73 species having been reliably recorded. Four species of frog are abundant at the base of Uluru and Kata Tjuta following summer rains.

Also calling the Park home are the *malu* (red kangaroo), *kanyala* (euro), *kipara* (Australian bustard), *kalaya* (emu) and lizards such as the *tinka* (sand goanna) and *ngintaka* (perentie).

Of all the mammal species found in the Park, six are introduced: the house mouse; camel; fox; cat; dog; and rabbit.

78 species of bird have been recorded in Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, including several rare species such as the scarlet-chested parrot, the striated grasswren and the grey honeyeater.

Hawks, Australian kestrels and falcons soar above the rocky habitats or *puli* of Uluru and Kata Tjuta and live amongst the plants growing at their bases. They prey on other birds, small mammals, reptiles and insects, killing by severing the neck of their prey with one powerful bite.

Also located in the rocky habitats are *Patupiri* (fairy martins) and their bottle-shaped mud-nests in caves. You are more likely to see them in flight displaying their white rumps. Little woodswallows glide for insects high on the cliff faces.

Amongst the hard spinifex are two uncommon species: the painted fire tail and *mirilyirilyi* (dusky grasswren). Dusky grasswrens are one of the larger wrens that bounce over boulders with their tails cocked. When disturbed the dusky grasswren will dash away, running with their tails lowered, and hide.

Grevilleas, hakeas and desert oaks offer food and shelter for these species. *Patilpa* (Port Lincoln ringnecks) are often seen in desert oaks where they feed on seeds from cones.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Uluru is 348 metres at its tallest point: 43 metres higher than Sydney's Centrepont Tower, 24 metres higher than the Eiffel Tower, and just 33 metres lower than the Empire State Building.

- The Cultural Centre is a free form structure built from locally made mud bricks and the design was based upon two ancestral snakes of Anangu – Kuniya (woma python) and Liru (poisonous snake man).
- The colour changes of Uluru result from the filtering affect of the earth's atmosphere on the sun's rays.
- 5,462 tourists visited Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in 1962/63. In 2005 this number reached 400,000.
- Geologists have dated the underground water table and found that some parts/sources are as old as 7,000 years.
- The sand dunes seen throughout the Park have been in their present position for up to 30,000 years.

Source: Department of Environment & Heritage www.deh.gov.au/parks/uluru

RATES & PACKAGES

For full list of current rates and packages, **visit**
www.ayersrockresort.com.au/pricing/

CONSUMER BOOKINGS

Voyages Travel Centre (Sydney Corporate Office):

Phone: 1300 134 044 (within Australia only)

+61 2 8296 8010

Fax: +61 2 9299 2103

Email: travel@voyages.com.au

Web/online: www.voyages.com.au

PLEASE NOTE: no bookings are managed/taken at the Resort.

PRESS CONTACTS & MEDIA BOOKINGS

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