

Two Days in Birdsville: Australia's Ultimate Outback Experience

Birdsville rewards those who make the journey. Set at the edge of the Simpson Desert, this outback town blends heritage, culture, and striking landscapes. In two days, visitors can feel the Diamantina spirit, learn local stories, and see Australia's unforgettable desert views.

Day One — Walk Birdsville: Heritage and Culture

Begin your Birdsville adventure at the Wirrarri Visitor Information Centre, the essential hub for outback travellers. Gather local tips, check road conditions, pick up a town map and watch the *Spirit of the Diamantina* film in the Wirrarri cinema. Step into the Wirrarri Gallery to experience the *Birdsville – The Black Book* exhibition, offering a deeper look at Birdsville's cultural landscape and unique history. Visitors can also book a tour of the Birdsville Courthouse Precinct at the Wirrarri Centre.

Just behind the Wirrarri Centre, visit The Meeting Place, one of three installations created by members of the Wangkangurru Yarluyandi People, celebrating connection to Country and community.

Begin by following the Birdsville walking route. Pause for coffee and a snack at Karrawa Wirinya Café on Graham Street, then continue to the nearby Artesian Bore, which demonstrates Birdsville's use of superheated water pumped from the Great Artesian Basin.

Continue down Frew Street, turning into Adelaide Street to visit Anzac Park, where the memorial wall honours local service personnel. Across the road, the Old Royal Hotel ruins stand as a reminder of Birdsville's early days, with sandstone walls dating back to the 1880s.

Further along Adelaide Street, visit the Birdsville Old Hospital Museum, established in 1923 by Rev. John Flynn. The Inland Mission hospital served outback communities for over 80 years alongside the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Today, the restored building shares stories of frontier nursing and remote life.



Above: Wirrarri Visitor Information Centre. Below: Birdsville's Artesian Bore



Stop for lunch at the Birdsville Bakery on MacDonald Street, home of the famous Curried Camel Pie and a favourite with travellers.

In the afternoon, visit the Birdsville Courthouse Precinct beside the Police Station on MacDonald Street. Begin by exploring the digital archive and experiencing past court hearings to gain insight into Birdsville's pioneering history. If time permits, take a short drive to view the Birdsville Racetrack, home to Australia's most famous outback race event.

Finish the day with dinner at the iconic Birdsville Hotel, where travellers gather to share stories and enjoy classic outback hospitality.

Day Two — Desert Landscapes and Big Red

Start the morning with a coffee and a light bite from the Birdsville Bakery or Karrawa Wirinya Café before heading out to explore the surrounding landscape. Visitors may also wish to stop at the Birdsville Dunes Golf Club, one of the world's most remote 18-hole golf courses, set against a spectacular desert backdrop.

For a different perspective, scenic flights from Birdsville provide a breathtaking aerial view of the Simpson Desert, Diamantina River, Goyder Lagoon and the Channel Country — an unforgettable way to experience the scale of the outback.

Before exploring further, visit the Birdsville Cemetery. The pioneers' stories here reflect the community's resilience and history.

Along Birdsville–Bedourie Road, visit the rare Waddi Waddi Trees, which feature needle-like leaves and thick bark. Early explorers like William John Wills documented these remarkable trees. Their extremely hard timber was used by Aboriginal people and settlers; today, the trees are protected.

On your return toward town, take time to relax at Pelican Point, a peaceful billabong setting perfect for birdwatching and soaking in the quiet beauty of the Diamantina River system.



Above: Birdsville Courthouse. Below: Pelicans feeding the the Diamantina River



In the late afternoon, head to Big Red, 35 kilometres from town. Take the brief dirt track from Little Red to the towering dune. As the Simpson Desert's first and tallest dune, Big Red offers sweeping desert views and a striking sense of scale.

Visitors can enhance the experience by booking with local tour providers Big Red Tours or the Birdsville Hotel to explore the dunes and the surrounding country. Stay for sunset as the desert glows in deep reds and golds before the night sky reveals one of Australia's most spectacular dark-sky experiences, with the Milky Way stretching across the horizon.

Two days in Birdsville offer an outback experience shaped by heritage, culture, and vast desert landscapes—a small town with a legendary spirit attracting visitors from across Australia and beyond.



Above: Big Red Tours, Birdsville. Left: Birdsville flora and fauna.
Below: Arru - Welcome to Wangkangurru Yarluynandi Country

