



## THE ARKABA WALK

Wild Bush Luxury

# The Arkaba Walk

## 3 Nights/4 Days

*Flinders Ranges, South Australia*



### Summary Itinerary

<b>Day One</b>	<p>Meet your guide at Arkaba Homestead at 10 am. Introductory briefing and then road transfer to Wilpena Pound Resort. Set off on foot soon after 11:00am for the first leg across Wilpena Pound and the descent to Blacks Gap camp. 1 night at Black's Gap Camp, lunch, dinner and beverages (wine, beer and soft drinks) included</p> <p>Approx 12 km, 4-5 hours</p>
<b>Day Two</b>	<p>After breakfast and camp pack up, depart for the day's hike and a more challenging day, 11km to 15km through creeks and broken country approaching the foothills of the Elder Range to Elder Camp 1 night at Elder Camp - breakfast, morning &amp; afternoon tea, lunch, dinner and beverages (wine, beer &amp; soft drinks) included</p> <p><i>Approx. 10-14km, 6-7 hours (depending on the fitness of the group)</i></p>
<b>Day Three</b>	<p>After breakfast and camp pack up depart for the day's hike, crossing a variety of habitat, Mallee, native pine, river creek beds and hill country to Mern Merna Camp overlooking the confluence of Mern Merna and Slaty Creeks 1 night at Mern Merna Camp - breakfast, morning &amp; afternoon tea, lunch, dinner and beverages (wine, beer &amp; soft drinks) included</p> <p><i>Approx. 12-15km, 6-7 hours (depending on the fitness of the group)</i></p>
<b>Day Four</b>	<p>Depart after breakfast for the final leg of the safari, moving East alongside the course of the Mern Merna Creek and up over the Red range towards Arkaba homestead. Breakfast, morning tea, lunch and beverages included.</p> <p><i>Approx. 6km, 3 hours</i></p>

*\* The walk is graded 'moderate to challenging'*



### Day One – *Wilpena Pound Resort to Black’s Gap Camp*

Meet your guide at Arkaba Homestead at 10.00am and, over a cup of tea, listen to an informative briefing and overview of what to expect over the coming days and nights. Depart by road for the 35 minute drive to our starting point at Wilpena Pound Resort and set off on foot, on the first leg of the trail. The distance today is approximately 12 km, from Wilpena Resort into Wilpena Pound, crossing the interior of the Pound before the brief ascent to the rim of the Pound. From here, overlook Arkaba Station and the route for the next three days. From here, enter the Arkaba Wilderness and descend off the lip of the Pound to Black’s Gap Camp.

Expect to walk into camp at the foot of Wilpena Pound at around 5.30pm, in time to orient and settle in; take a hot shower and enjoy a cuppa or something a little stronger, while enjoying the evening light on the Pound behind camp. Our camp is located between Bunbinyana Range and Wilpena Pound, on a site previously occupied by a shepherd in the late 1850s. His stone chimney place still exists and we camp overlooking the creek where he used to take his water. Our guide and camp assistant will prepare a three-course camp dinner, taken al fresco under the evening sky and accompanied by fine wine and some interesting tales about Arkaba and the Flinders area. Turn in to our deluxe swags and enjoy a night under a canopy of stars.

*Day 1 is approximately 12km, 4-5 hours*



### Day Two – *Black’s Gap Camp to Elder Camp*

Today’s walk covers a magnificent 10-14km of distance - again, depending on fitness and interest we will vary the route accordingly. This day is arguably the most scenic, as we move out from Black’s Gap into the rolling hills more suited to the sheep farming activities of the station, with more open vistas. The first 2km of the hike will follow the famous Heysen Trail through Black’s Gap itself. Today’s section of the walk provides fascinating insight into the pastoral history of the region, passing through

areas that once were cultivated for wheat, pausing at old shepherds' camps and mustering yards, with Red and Grey Kangaroos and emus all regular sightings. The last leg of the day will take us slightly West into the hills and up to the very base of the Elder Range among beautiful stands of Native Cypress Pine trees.

Our luggage and swags will have been transported by vehicle to our new camp - Elder Camp - and we will again expect to arrive into camp around 5.30 pm in time for a hot shower, 3 course dinner and another beautiful night under the stars.

*Day 2 is approximately 10-14km, 6-7 hours  
(depending on fitness and interest of the group)*



### Day Three - ***Elder Camp to Mern Merna Camp***

Wake to the glorious morning light on the Elder Range directly ahead and above you – after a nourishing breakfast and pack up, set out on the next leg of the journey. This day is a little more challenging - depending on the group's fitness and ability, the day will cover a minimum of 11km - with some diversion to points of interest and lookouts, this is more likely to be around 15km in the day. The pace will be unhurried, with plenty of time to stop for photographs, bird watching, botanising and discussion. We will again traverse multiple habitats today, as we move southwards - the first few kilometres will be amongst the hill country at the foot of the Elder Range, traversing mature Mallee and Native Pine forests and we will finish the day following the bed of Slaty Creek - aptly named and with amazing rock structures along its course. This creek holds water well into the dry season and sometimes offers the opportunity to drink from crystal clear, ice cold mountain streams. The river bank is home to hundreds of magnificent River Redgums, and is quite spectacular. With strategic stops along the way for rests and a relaxing lunch in a shady spot, we will expect to arrive into our final camp, Mern Merna Camp, in mid-late afternoon.

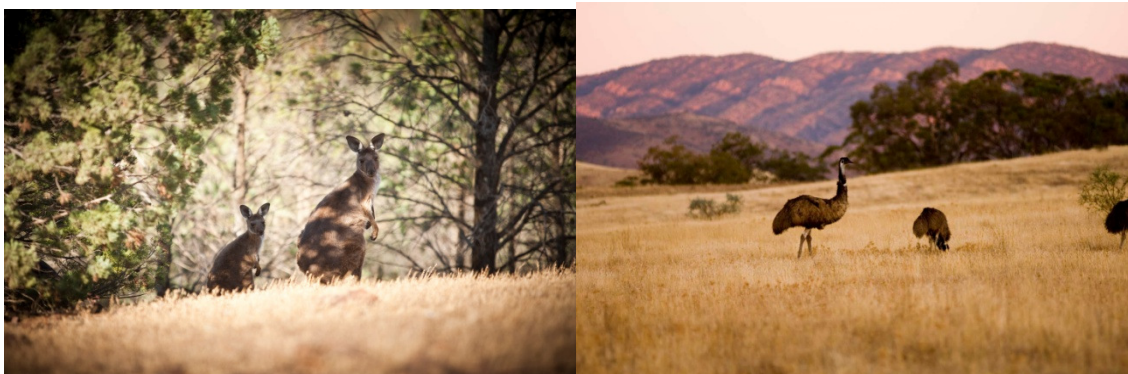
Once again our luggage and swags will precede us into camp and will enjoy showers overlooking the spectacular creek beds, surrounded by magnificent River Red gums, a quintessentially Australian outback scene. Enjoy another freshly prepared meal, some excellent South Australian wines and retire for our final night out.

*Day 3 is approximately 11-15km, 7 hours  
(depending on fitness and interest of the group)*

## Day Four – *Mern Merna Camp to Arkaba Station*

Our final leg of the hike is a relatively easy hike across the southern quarter of Arkaba Station to the historic Arkaba Woolshed. We estimate an arrival back to Arkaba Woolshed to be 12:00 midday. There will be an opportunity to freshen up at Arkaba homestead before your onward departure.

*Day 4 is approximately 6km, 3 hours*



## General Overview

**The Camps :** Each camp has five permanent swag decks. The low timber decks are slightly elevated, and each have a ½ metre corrugated iron screen around three sides, to give privacy – the fourth side is left open to the views over the countryside, while above you is the night sky and a canopy of stars. Your bed is a ‘swag’ – the bedding of choice for generations of Australian pioneers, a canvas envelope that is comfy and waterproof, protecting you from the elements. Our swags are the deluxe version with a luxury mattress and high quality linen.

Each camp site has two waterless composting toilets – each in their own little ‘dunny’ shed and strategically located to enjoy the best of the views. Each camp has two bush showers – essentially buckets that will require filling by hand with water warmed on the fire, and equipped with taps to regulate the flow. Some special touches ensure these showers will be a feature of this trip!

Walks are supported by a vehicle and staff member, who will transfer the camp items, swags, food, bedding, luggage etc each day after packing up – participants can be expected to help with packing up swags etc before departure in the morning. Luggage is kept to a minimum as space in the trailer is at a premium. Soft bags are essential.

Meals will sometimes be partially prepared in the homestead, and finished off over the campfire. 3 course dinners will be offered, with simple starters and desserts. Good South Australian wines will be on offer and a variety of cold beverages will always be available in camp. Tea and coffee stations will be set up for self-service at any time in camp. Continental or traditional camp breakfasts are offered and we will provide a packed lunch each day, for participants to carry with them – this includes fruit, trail bars, trail mix, sandwiches / rolls etc. Sufficient water will be available for walkers to fill their water canteens each day.

**Wildlife:** We can expect to encounter various wildlife on each day of the trip – healthy numbers of Euro, Western Grey Kangaroo and Red Kangaroo. There are also Emus, Wedgetail Eagles, Shingleback Lizards, Bearded Dragons and various skinks. We may come across some feral creatures such as goats and fox – these can form part of a discussion on the topic of feral animals and their control. Birdlife is prolific and varied, and will certainly form a feature of the trip.

A walking holiday can be a very personal experience – one man’s stroll can be another’s expedition. It is important that you choose the right holiday for your capabilities.

The Arkaba Walking Safari is a ‘moderate to challenging’ walk. You will cover between 6 to 15km per day over steep, hilly terrain with some mountain scrambling. The route follows some thick vegetation,

up hillsides and rocky surfaces. You can be walking up to 7 hours per day with plenty of ascents and descents and across uneven ground. Whilst you do not need previous trekking experience, a good level of fitness is required.

## Access to the property

**By Air:** Flights to Adelaide from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Cairns, Alice Springs, Darwin and Perth. There are international flights from Singapore, Fiji, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong and Bali.

A schedule flight between Adelaide and Port Augusta operates every day except for Saturdays with Sharp Airlines. Bookings can be made online at [www.sharppairlines.com](http://www.sharppairlines.com). Private charter flights to Arkaba can depart from Adelaide or Kangaroo Island. In Adelaide they leave from the General Aviation area of Adelaide Airport which is directly across from the Main Terminal. On Kangaroo Island flights can depart from Kingscote Airport or Vivionne Bay depending on where guests are staying.

From Adelaide the flight is approximately 60 minutes.

From Kangaroo Island the flight is approximately 90 minutes.

The charter flight takes you over the wine country of the Clare Valley and the Mid-North district before landing at Hawker Airstrip, it is then a 25 minute transfer by road to Arkaba (this road transfer is included in our rates).

Hawker Airstrip is a tarmac runway so most aircraft can access this site. The aircraft that we use is a Cirrus (single engine) which can carry up to 2 passengers, a Piper Navajo (twin engine) which has the capacity to carry 5 or a PC12 which is a single engine turbine aircraft and has the capacity to carry 10.

**By Road:** Arkaba Station is a 4.5 hour drive direct from Adelaide on a sealed tarmac road or about 5-6 hours via the Clare Valley with stops. The drive from Port August is about 75 minutes.

## When to go

Arkaba Walking Safaris operate from mid March until 30<sup>th</sup> November each year.

The climate in the Southern Outback is generally dry and sunny year round. Over the summer months from December to February/March it can get very hot during the days and quite warm in the evenings. In winter months from June to August the days are warm and nights are cold, often dropping below 0°C.

### June to August

Nights are cold and the days are warm, dry and generally cloudless with some spectacular sunrises and sunsets. It can sometimes be wet and windy if we get good winter rains.

Minimum 4°C  
Maximum 16°C

\* Note in July/August temperatures at night will usually drop to below 0°C

### March to May

This is the time of year where the evening temperatures begin cool but the days remain relatively warm.

Average temperatures  
Minimum: 16°C  
Maximum: 32°C

### September to November

Both the days and nights start to warm up and again the days are generally cloudless. Wildflowers start to bloom and continue doing so until the end of October.

Average temperatures:  
Minimum 10°C  
Maximum 25°C

### December to February

This is the hottest time to be in the Southern Outback with temperatures reaching up to 40°C during the day.

Average temperatures:  
Minimum 16°C  
Maximum 32°C

## Itinerary Includes

### **We provide**

- Towels
- All bedding - fitted sheets and duvet, pillows
- Basic toiletries - soap and shampoo
- All cutlery, crockery
- Water
- All meals, beverages (wine and beer) and a selection of snacks, trail foods and fruit daily
- Head lights, one per person, and batteries

### **Guide will carry**

- Sat Phone for emergency use
- Hand held UHF radio for communication with camp
- First Aid kit
- Extra water
- Selected flora and fauna identification guides
- Navigation aid - GPS for emergency or locating points of interest

## Exclusions

- Scheduled domestic & international flights
- Transport to/from Adelaide to Arkaba Station
- Meals, beverages and equipment unless specified
- Comprehensive travel insurance
- Gratuities & items of a personal nature

## Guests Essential Packing List

- Day Pack to carry daily needs of water, food etc. 25-30 litre with hip support recommended
- Hiking boots offering good ankle support – well worn in
- Fleece for evenings (light/heavy depending on season)
- Tracksuit for evenings
- Warm clothing for the winter months including a hat, scarf, gloves and thick coat (May – August). Note: in mid winter, the nights and early mornings can be very cold.
- Set of thermals for cooler months May-August.
- Waterproof jacket in rainy months
- Wind cheater
- 4 pairs good socks and gaters for sock protection (if walking in shorts)
- Pair of slip on shoes (or thongs) for wearing in camp
- Adequate underwear (no laundry available)
- Sleepwear
- Light long pants - eg. zip-off leg types or shorts
- Light wicking shirts (with SPF recommended) or light cotton shirts, preferably long-sleeved
- Beanie / bobble hat in cool months
- Binoculars for wildlife and bird viewing
- Camera and spare batteries (no charging facility available)
- Water canteen - carry minimum of 3 litres per person each day. Camelback is recommended.
- Small personal first aid kit including blister protection and insect repellent
- Wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen
- Any preferred snack food / trail food
- Sewing repair kit
- Optional Items: Walking poles.