

# AUSTRALIAN BOTANICAL DISCOVERY

A 17 NIGHT ESCORTED TOUR OF AUSTRALIA'S GARDENS, PLANTS & HOMESTEADS

10<sup>TH</sup> TO 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018



We are delighted to be working with our Australian associates, Botanica World Discoveries on this comprehensive tour of Australia from the wildflowers of Perth to the East Coast including Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne and along the Great Ocean Road. September is the perfect time of year to witness the Australian botanical plants at their springtime best and, accompanied by our botanical guide, we will visit private gardens and homesteads and learn all about Australian plants. We also traverse diverse landscapes including the Blue Mountains, rainforest and the underwater garden of the Great Barrier Reef. The combination of incredible scenery and garden exploration, together with visits to the main highlights and cities, makes this journey unique and, by travelling in small group you will see and learn so much.



## Botanical Guide – Anthea Guthrie

Anthea Guthrie turned her hobby into a career. She entered her first show garden for the Royal Horticultural Society in 2003, and has since achieved numerous accolades, including two medals at the Chelsea Flower Show and Gold for Botanica at Hampton Court Flower Show in 2015. Anthea will travel from the UK and relate the Australian gardens and plants from an English perspective. She will be joined

by local Australian Botanical experts in selected locations.



## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

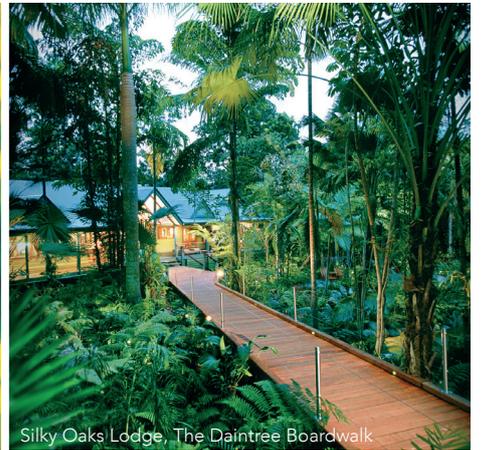
- See the indigenous wildflowers of WA at Kings Park in full spring flowering
- Enjoy a cruise on the pretty Swan River to historic Fremantle
- Tour Sydney Botanic Gardens & the famous Opera House
- Visit cool climate private gardens of the Blue Mountains
- Visit tropical Cairns and the Kuranda Highlands
- Cruise to the spectacular World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef
- Spend time in the Daintree Rainforest
- Visit the Botanical Ark and meet the owners
- See the Grampians National Park with indigenous flora
- Visit private country gardens and meet the owners including a garden designed by Chelsea Flower Show 'Best in Show' Winner
- Travel the picturesque Great Ocean Road



Judy's Garden



Wildflowers



Silky Oaks Lodge, The Daintree Boardwalk

## THE ITINERARY

**Day 1 London to Perth, Australia.** Flight by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 2 Perth.** Arrive and transfer to the Novotel Langley hotel for a two night stay. This evening we will meet for a welcome dinner in the hotel. (D)

**Day 3 Perth, Wildflowers & Private Garden.** Today take a city tour of Perth, including Kings Park with 400 hectares of delightful gardens with more than 1,700 native species many of which will be in spring bloom. Take a cruise on the beautiful Swan River to Fremantle and enjoy time to explore this historic part of Western Australia before visiting a private garden this afternoon. (B)

**Day 4 Perth to Sydney.** Fly to the spectacular city of Sydney today. Enjoy some free time to relax and explore this cosmopolitan city. Check in to the Amora Hotel Jamison, for a three night stay. (B)

**Day 5 Sydney Gardens & Sightseeing.** Enjoy a guided tour of the scenic Sydney Botanic Gardens, set on the famous Sydney Harbour. Afterwards, visit the Sydney Opera House before boarding a private cruise on Sydney Harbour for dinner this evening. (B, D)

**Day 6 Gardens & the Blue Mountains.** Travel out of Sydney to the Blue Mountains and see the famous Three Sisters. We will then visit a private garden before exploring Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens, before arriving back into Sydney this evening. (B)

**Day 7 Sydney to Cairns.** This morning fly north to Cairns in Far North Queensland. Visit a private garden and the Cairns Botanical Gardens with its rainforest boardwalk. Transfer to the Pullman International hotel for a two night stay. (B)

**Day 8 Great Barrier Reef – Underwater Gardens.** Enjoy a full day cruise to the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef. Spend time exploring the reef by glass bottomed boat or by snorkel and enjoy a buffet lunch on board the floating pontoon. (B, L)

**Day 9 Kuranda Highlands & Tropical Landscapes.**

Catch the Skyrail up to the rainforest town of Kuranda. Enjoy free time to explore the markets, Barron Gorge National Park and the Australian Butterfly Sanctuary before taking the iconic Scenic Railway back to Freshway. Travel north to spend two nights at the beautiful and unique Silky Oaks Lodge, set in the tree tops of the rainforest. (B, D)

**Day 10 Botanical Ark & Indigenous Culture.**

Exclusive visit to the highly renowned and privately owned Botanical Ark, famous for its amazing collection of rare plants from around the world. Also visit the Daintree Rainforest at Mossman Gorge and enjoy a tour with local Kuku Yalangi guides on the indigenous history of the area. (B, D)

**Day 11 Cairns to Melbourne.** This morning we make our way back down to Cairns where we board our flight to Melbourne. Settle into the Marriott Hotel for your three night stay in the heart of the city before enjoying dinner this evening. (B, D)

**Day 12 The Australian Garden.** Travel out of Melbourne to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens with its exciting Australian Garden showcasing Australian plants and horticulture. Enjoy some free time this afternoon to explore Melbourne's laneways and street art. (B)

**Day 13 The Dandenong Ranges, Bush Art & Private Garden.** Visit The Dandenongs with its quaint mountain top villages and tree clad ranges and enjoy a stop at Sky High look out with sweeping views of Melbourne, before visiting the fascinating William Ricketts Sanctuary with its bush art sculptures. Visit a private garden designed by Chelsea Flower Show 'Best in Show' winner, Phillip Johnson. This evening dinner is on the famous Melbourne tramcar restaurant. (B, D)

**Day 14 Goldfields & Grampians Flora.** Depart Melbourne and travel through the historic gold mining town of Ballarat. Visit a private garden and continue to the Grampians driving from Halls Gap

to Dunkeld enjoying the Australian native flora and spectacular vistas. Check in for your two night stay at the Royal Mail Hotel, Dunkeld, renowned as a gourmet food destination. (B, L, D)

**Day 15 Australian Homesteads & Private Gardens.** Enjoy the scenic rural views of the fertile Western District and visit three private country gardens including the family home of Botanica Founder, Judy Vanrenen where you can hear about sheep farming and the perils of country gardening in the harsh Australian climate. (B, L, D)

**Day 16 The Great Ocean Road Coastal Landscapes.** Travel along the world famous Great Ocean Road with its picturesque coastal views, stopping at the Twelve Apostles and travelling through the lush Otway National Park to the seaside town of Lorne. Overnight stay at Mantra Hotel, Lorne. (B, D)

**Day 17 Geelong Gardens & Melbourne to London.** This morning explore Geelong Botanic Gardens with a dry climate garden before making our way to Melbourne Airport for your onward flight to London. (B)

**Day 18 London.** Arrive this morning.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin Room: **£7995** Single Room: **£9995**

**Price includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, internal flights, 15 nights accommodation as described (or similar) on bed and breakfast basis, meals as indicated (B, L, D), all excursions as detailed, transfers, Botanical Guide and local tour guide.

**Not included:** Travel insurance, visa.

**Tour Only Option:** For guests that wish to arrange their own flights, we are offering a discount of £750 per person for the non-use of the flights from London to Perth and from Melbourne to London. The start of your holiday will be the 11th September and you will join the group at the Perth hotel on day 2 of the above itinerary.

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