

Itinerary: Coober Pedy

DAY 1/NIGHT 1

Start your discovery of this unique outback destination with a delicious coffee and fresh waffles at Waffles and Gems, Coober Pedy's opal miners' favorite place to start the day. Have a chat with a local miner to get a taste of a lifestyle where you can be penniless at dawn and a multimillionaire by dusk!

Once you are ready to start exploring, head to the Old Timer's Mine and Museum. This historic self-guided walk through the opal mine dating back to 1916 will allow you to unearth the history of this world-famous opal mining town. The museum will make you relive the 100 years of blood, tears and sweat it took to build this iconic town. The historic home dating back to the 1960's will make you feel at home the local way. You can even try your luck fossicking for opals, or "noodling", as the locals call it.

Is your belly rumbling? Head to Downunder and Gallery Café. Enjoy a fresh, handmade, gourmet sandwich. While you enjoy your rest, have a look through the underground art gallery, full of Coober Pedy's amazing and talented local, indigenous, and non-indigenous artists.

Catch opal fever at Tom's Working Mine. Guided tours are hosted by an experienced opal miner, touring you through the mine, showcasing historic and modern-day machinery used in opal mining or have a go at self-guided tours include a map and black light with information throughout the mine to keep you busy. See opal still in the walls and learn about the difference between precious and non-precious opal, also known as potch. The kids will have a blast experiencing life as an opal miner going up and down a 60-foot shaft on a winch!

You haven't experienced the real outback until you've been up close and personal with a kangaroo! At Josephine's Gallery and Kangaroo Orphanage you can hand feed a big red kangaroo, cuddle a joey and learn all about all about Australia's most iconic animal.

Dinner at Outback Bar and Grill is a perfect way to end your first night in Coober Pedy. From pizzas to their seafood and meals for the kids, you can't go wrong. If all your adventure of the day has made you hungry, you will love their signature dish, 400g char-grilled greek style lamb & chicken souvlaki!

Di's Dugout will allow you to relax after a long journey in the quiet serenity of underground accommodation. Originally dug in the 1970's, these lovely dugouts are unique and offer all the comforts of home, where no light and no noise will interrupt a long heavy sleep.

DAY 2/NIGHT 2

After experiencing the best sleep ever, head to the only underground café in Coober Pedy, Crystal Cave Café located in the Desert Cave Hotel. While you're there, walk through the free underground display which takes you a few meters under the hotel.

Right next door, enter Umoona Opal Mine and Museum and learn about the history of Aboriginal and European settlement in the area. See fossils first discovered from the area's extinct inland sea and learn about the history of the Kanku-Breakaways. Join a guided tour to see how life is lived in a modern Coober Pedy underground dugout and how the old timers started mining for opal in the area.

Have a walk around town with the Historic Trail, which will take you through Coober Pedy's first underground church, St Peter and Paul's Catholic Church and the array of historic sites around town.

If lunch is what you're after, look no further than John's Pizza Bar and Restaurant. The award-winning restaurant caters to all needs. You can't leave Coober Pedy without tasting their Coat of Arms pizza!

With everything you have learned about the area, take a drive out to the Kanku-Breakaways Conservation Park. Experience the rugged beauty of a 15,000-hectare protected area, which was once an inland sea, is just 25km outside of Coober Pedy. The striking sandstone mesas, that turns to spectacular reds and oranges at golden hour, are also home to a unique array of native flora and fauna.

On your way back into town, stop by the magnificent Serbian Orthodox Church. It is a must see while you're in Coober Pedy. Tunneled in the mid-1990's, its striking scalloped ceiling, rock carved sculptures and spectacular stained-glass windows will leave you in awe. A majestic underground experience.

Your belly growling? Head to the Big Winch 360. Coober Pedy's Big Winch 360 is the Outback's newest world-class attraction and home to Australia's first 360 degrees Circlevision cinematic experience. The movie will allow you to get a taste of Coober Pedy's surroundings communities, such as William Creek, Oodnadatta and the famous Oodnadatta Track without leaving the comfort of the luxurious sofas.

After the movie, head outside to watch the sun set over the desert with drinks and lay on grass for dinner.

After a full day, sleep underground at the Comfort Inn Coober Pedy Experience Motel. This old mine has been turned into a modern hotel. The old tunnels will take you to your comfortable bedroom.

If you are more of a camping-kind of person, then head to Riba's Underground and set up your swag or your tent... underground! Even if it is cold or hot outside, you will sleep like a baby in the comfortable warmth of this underground unique camping experience.

DAY 3

Excited about discovering more of Coober Pedy? Get woken up by the smell of freshly made coffee. Comfort Inn Coober Pedy Experience Motel will serve you breakfast in the comfort of your own hotel, where you can enjoy cakes, milkshakes and coffee, the combination to start the day perfectly.

Take a tour of Coober Pedy in the comfort of your own vehicle and tag-along with Follow Me Downunder. The award winning and experienced guide will invite you into his own underground home, take you into an opal mine, lead you on a search for your very own opal and show you some of Coober's best kept secrets. You will also discover how the opal can be turned into a perfect gemstone from the rough opal with an opal cutting demonstration.

Hunting for opal definitely works up an appetite! CK Confectionaire will satisfy your hunger with their fresh made pies, pasties and sausage rolls and daily specials with an Asian spin!

End your time in Coober Pedy with a walkthrough of Faye's Underground Historic Home & Mine Tour. Hand built by Faye in the early 1960's, the underground home will take you back in time and demonstrate the ingenuity of one of Australia's iconic outback pioneering women.

Tee-off at the only grassless golf club, Opal Fields Golf Club. It's the first and only golf course that has been granted reciprocal playing rights at the oldest and most prestigious Golf Course, St. Andrews in Scotland. Pop in to Opalios shop in the main street of town to organize access to the course and hire clubs and golfing equipment. You never know, you may even find your own opal on the grassless fairway!

If you are visiting during the weekend, head to the Italian Club for a feed, watch the footy and chat with the locals about the life in Coober Pedy.

When the sun is setting, drive down the main street where you will see a big movie screen... yes, it's the last Drive-In in South Australia and it's in Coober Pedy! Still active thanks to volunteers, sit in your car or lay down at the back of your van or ute and watch a movie under a billion stars. What a better way to finish your visit of this incredible destination?