



# Sunsets, Saddles & Shiraz

*“Eighty-six per cent of Australians live near the coast, yet the Outback is enshrined in the national psyche.”*

## Australia’s most accessible Outback experience

Ever dreamed of the droving life – just you and your trusty steed, the red desert below and endless blue skies overhead?

‘Sunsets, Saddles & Shiraz’ is a new, authentic Australian Outback experience, combining the rustic romance of cattle droving, gourmet food and wine, native wildlife and the breath-taking Flinders Ranges (one of the most ancient, remarkable landscapes on earth). And it’s all just a few hours’ drive north of Adelaide, the cultural capital of South Australia.

## The droving

Two days you’ll never forget... Expert drovers will match you to your mount, and before long you’ll be ambling along on horseback – hearing about life as a drover, feeling the sun on your back, seeing magnificent desert landscapes (from gibber plains to sandy creek beds lined with majestic river red gums), and smelling the desert at dusk.

You’ll learn to identify various animal tracks and native plants. You’ll enjoy a fresh packed lunch and billy tea in a shady creek bed. And you’ll tail the cattle until late in the afternoon, with the sinking sun guiding you into the station yards for the night.

## The Prairie

The award-winning Prairie Hotel is your Outback oasis. Licensed in 1876, it’s one of few buildings in Parachilna: population seven and lying between the Flinders Ranges and Lake Torrens. Today it’s owned by Jane and Ross Fargher, who have built a national reputation for exceptional hospitality and cuisine. The restaurant speciality is ‘feral food’, everything from kangaroo, emu and camel to native limes and bush tomatoes.

You’ll arrive at the Prairie on the first afternoon. And later, (desert skies willing) you’ll dine under a canopy of stars, with a menu inspired by renowned Australian chef Andrew Fielke. Outback singer/songwriter John O’Dea, the hotel’s resident musician, will also be on hand each night to entertain you with his unique brand of Australian heritage music.

## The wildlife

We’ll do our utmost to introduce you to the ‘locals’. During your Outback adventure, we’ll take you in search of the rare (and incredibly cute) Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby. This elusive little fella can be found in Brachina Gorge, one of the most spectacular attractions in the Flinders Ranges National Park and a haven for many native species. Rock fragments in Brachina date back 500 to 600 million years, so there’s a fair bit of history to share.

## 2009 Departures

**Fri 20 to Mon 23 March**  
**Sun 22 to Wed 25 March**

**Fri 8 to Mon 11 May**  
**Sun 10 to Wed 13 May**

## The station

Nilpena is a working cattle station, north-west of Parachilna on the edge of Lake Torrens. It’s here that you’ll meet the drovers and be matched with your horse. You’ll love the place: it’s right on the edge of red sand dunes which sweep far away to the north; and to the east you’ll get panoramic views of the Flinders Ranges. After your day in the saddle, you’ll freshen up in the Nilpena Shearer’s Quarters before enjoying sunset drinks around the campfire (complete with kangaroo tail cooked on the coals.)

For one amazing evening, you’ll dine with the drovers in the historic Nilpena Woolshed (on a ‘slate floor’ that’s 550 million years old!) In fact, Nilpena was recently recognised as a National Heritage Fossil Area – some of the planet’s oldest known fossils were found in the nearby Ediacara hills.

## The tucker

Rest assured, you won’t go hungry. As we’ve said, the Prairie is renowned for its food and the experienced team will be in charge of all meals – from hearty, fully-cooked breakfasts to fresh, scrumptious lunches and gourmet dinners. The beer will be cold, the Aussie wine will be divine and the coffee will be strong.

## The timeframe

Sunsets, Saddles & Shiraz is primarily a three-night experience, allowing plenty of time for you to become an old hand on the horse. And, weather permitting, you’ll also get to sleep under the stars in a swag – just like a ‘true-blue’ drover. You’ll be immersed in your Outback adventure, tailing the cattle deep into the bush and over a multitude of desert landscapes. You’ll also get maximum time with the droving team, learning about their lives and the history of the Australian bush.

For those on a tight schedule, we can also offer a two-night experience.

So, get cracking. We look forward to saying G’day!

## The package

Your Sunsets, Saddles & Shiraz adventure includes:

- 3 nights accommodation (1 night Prairie Hotel, 2 nights swag);
- 2 full days in the saddle;
- all meals and drinks including beer & premium wines with dinner;
- live entertainment each evening; and
- Wallaby Watch tour.

AUD \$3,795 per person. Places are strictly limited. Minimum 4.

**Fri 24 to Mon 27 July**  
**Sun 26 to Wed 29 July**

**Fri 16 to Mon 19 October**  
**Sun 18 to Wed 21 October**

# Sunsets, Saddles & Shiraz

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Q. Do I need riding experience?

Because Nilpena is a working cattle station, we do require that you have some riding experience. We do not ride nose to tail, but spread out when the terrain allows and you need to be able to handle your horse. Riders need to evaluate their own capabilities and their ability to ride safely. Our horses are gentle working station horses, but they are not trail riding horses. We recommend that you are reasonably physically fit and getting some riding in before coming would make you more comfortable in the saddle.

### Q. Can we bring our own horses?

No. All horses, saddles and safety equipment are included in your package.

### Q. What sort of saddle is provided?

All riders will be using Australian Stock Saddles.

### Q. Do I need to wear a helmet?

Yes, all riders are provided with a helmet and are required to wear it while riding.

### Q. How many cattle will we be moving?

You will be tailing a mob of around 200 head of cattle. They are predominantly Hereford shorthorns.

### Q. If I don't feel like riding, can I follow in a 4WD?

Yes, you'll have the opportunity to explore points of interest on Nilpena Station. Nilpena offers an amazing diversity of desert landscapes extending to the edge of Lake Torrens National Park, with panoramas of the Flinders Ranges to the east. Lake Torrens is the second largest salt lake in Australia.

A section of Nilpena Station has recently been declared a National Heritage Fossil Area, following the discovery of the fossilised remains of an entire community of soft-bodied creatures. Their discovery has led to the declaration of a new geological period – The Ediacaran Period – the first to be declared in 120 years and the first to be named after a location in the Southern Hemisphere.

The substantial station buildings are valuable relics of European settlement and the station has relics of earlier Aboriginal occupation.

Scenes from the Philip Noyce movie *Rabbit Proof Fence* were filmed here. Nilpena Station boasts locations of significance to production companies from throughout the world and has been widely used in feature films, 4WD commercials and fashion shoots.

### Q. Can I extend my stay?

Yes, you are more than welcome to book on two consecutive tours. We have two tours running back to back with each departure. You may book on both tours giving you 5 night package.

Alternatively, you may choose to extend your accommodation only. Staying in luxurious accommodation at the Prairie Hotel you'll have the opportunity to explore the many attractions of the region.

### How do I get to Parachilna?

There are a variety of options for travelling to Parachilna. We can arrange air charter from Melbourne and Adelaide -you'll land at our nearby airstrip. We can also arrange vehicle transfers from Adelaide or a hire car if you wish to explore the region. Sharp Airlines operate daily services from Adelaide to Port Augusta (196km south of Parachilna) and we can arrange air or vehicle transfers from Port Augusta.

### Q. Do I have to sleep out in the open?

No. While many will relish the opportunity to roll out their swag under our magnificent night skies, tents are available. All guest will have a "shearer's bed", a fold out wire bed to roll your swag on, keeping you off the ground regardless of whether you are in the open or in a tent.

### Q. What sort of medical assistance is there?

The medical welfare and the personal safety of individuals are of primary importance. Any pre-existing illness must be notified to your booking agent before your departure. You are advised to bring adequate supplies of any medication that you may require. It may not be possible to obtain medication while in the Outback or remote areas.

Staff members hold current Senior First Aid Certification.

### Q. Do you cater for people with disabilities?

Unfortunately because of the hard terrain of the Outback, special facilities for the disabled are not available.

Riding does require a greater than normal level of physical exertion and you need to be aware of your physical limitations and ensure your fitness is at a suitable level.

### Q. What clothes do I need to pack?

Comfortable clothes should be worn, with long sleeve shirts and a hat recommended for sun protection. Enclosed shoes must be worn while riding, and it is recommended a boot with a heel be worn to ensure stability within the stirrup. It can become very cold at night so it's a good idea to wear layers of clothing and add or subtract to your own comfort. Bring a raincoat in case of wet weather.

### Q. Are there any age restrictions?

We recommend that all participants are over 18 years of age. There are no concession or child prices available. Please be aware of the following if you decide to bring a child. There are no child minding facilities. Weather can range from very hot to very cold. If the child chooses not to ride, a parent or guardian will be required to stay with them. There are no set activities for children.

### Q. Is there power available?

You'll be staying in a variety of accommodation, from luxury rooms at the Prairie Hotel to 'million star' swag accommodation in our camp. The campsite will be powered by electricity (generator facilities). Australia's electricity voltage is 240 volts AC.

### Q. Will I get mobile phone coverage?

There is no digital mobile coverage. Guests on the Telstra Next G network may get intermittent coverage but should not rely on accessing this service.

### Q. What communications are there in case of emergency?

Staff will have satellite telephones available for emergencies only. For your safety, our camps are also equipped with HF (Flying Doctor) radio, UHF radio and satellite phone. These services are not available for personal use.

### Q. How can I be reached in case of an emergency back home?

In an emergency, you may be contacted via the Prairie Hotel on +61 8 8648 4844. A message will be passed on to you at the camp.

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