

Things to Do in Alice Springs and Central Australia

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Central Australia is the most peculiar part of the whole continent. If you want to see the 'real' Australia, you must include a visit to its Red Centre on your Australian itinerary. Uluru, or also known as Ayers Rock, is the picture that comes into your mind when you think of Central Australia. Although Uluru is magic, it is not all. And certainly, does not represent Outback Australia and its lifestyle. Alice Springs is the capital of Central Australia, and it is (almost) the geographical centre of the country. In this post, I am sharing a list of things to do in Alice Springs and Central Australia.

WHY VISIT ALICE SPRINGS?

Many people believe, once they have seen Uluru, they know everything about Australia's Red Centre. They can't be further from the truth. Uluru is the main tourist attraction in Central Australia. And it deserves its important place not only because [it offers the most attractive landscape](#) but also because of its significance for the Aboriginal culture. However, like all the tourist attractions, it lost from its authenticity and offers a polished look into the culture.

If you are one of the curious and always thirsty for knowledge travellers, include a stay at the Red Centre's capital Alice Springs in your itinerary. It will not only allow you to understand the contemporary Australian Outback but also will give you a chance to visit some of the many secret places in Central Australia that the international tourists rarely visit because of lack of time and knowledge.

What you will learn from this post:

- [Why Alice Springs should be on your Australia itinerary](#)
- [What you can see and do in Alice Springs](#)
- [What are the places worth visiting from Alice Springs](#)

Alice Springs Australia Points of Interest

Where is Alice Springs Located and why is Significant for Australia

Alice Springs is the place that had (and still has) the most important role for the existing of Outback Australia. If you look at the map of Australia, you will see that the town is situated almost in the perfect middle... of nowhere. This location was very important in the late 1800s when the Overland Telegraph Station from Adelaide to Darwin was completed (see the Old Telegraph Station). Without the post in Alice Springs, the telegraph line connecting Australia with overseas couldn't exist.

It is very important for you to understand

Distances in Central Australia are huge. What is 'nearby' for you might be a 40-60 km away. In Central Australia's language, it is 130-160 km and more. I have listed where possible the distances to each of the places I've included in this post. However, I strongly recommend you make your own thorough research and create a plan, considering all – roadhouses available on the road, the places where camping is allowed, are the roads sealed or unsealed, and very importantly, the weather conditions.

Aboriginal Culture in Central Australia

If you want to learn more about the Aboriginal culture, you MUST visit Alice Springs and Central Australia! 25% of the population in the Northern Territory is of Aboriginal descent, which makes this part of the country the place with the biggest number of local indigenous representation. Hence, the need of you coming to the Territory in order to understand the oldest, still living culture in the world. Alice Springs and Central Australia is where the traditional lifestyle of the Aboriginal people is most preserved. They are also home of the largest Aboriginal groups (or also known as nations) in Australia - Pitjantjatjara, Arrernte, Luritja and Warlpiri.

For Aboriginal people, every place, every rock and every tree or bird is important and takes a very important part in the traditional beliefs. As you will see further, each of the natural formations and places mentioned in this article, have an Aboriginal name and is connected to the Dreamtime, the unwritten Aboriginal 'Bible'.

Several things make Alice Springs a very interesting place to visit. At first glance, it is a small town in the middle of the vast red desert that Central Australia is. It is known that its main industry is tourism but that's not the whole truth. Its main industry is the Aboriginal Industry.

>> Aboriginal Industry <<

To be clearer to the outsider, I will say that the Aboriginal industry consists of all supporting services that the Central Australian Aboriginal population receives from the government. Before I arrived, Australians from the East Coast were all telling me "When you go to Alice, you will see Aboriginals." They were right. There is no other place in Australia where you can see such a big presence of the 'traditional owners of the land', as they are officially recognized.

At first, you need time to adjust your curiosity. Their culture was one of the main reasons I always wanted to visit Australia but when I arrived, I was shocked at how 'unsocial' they are. After my expat experience in Africa, I believed it will be no problem to talk with them. What a naivety! In the Aboriginal traditions, it is not acceptable to talk with someone who was not introduced to you by someone you know and trust. It is a privilege you must earn, not something is given or expected.

In Alice Springs you will find many Aboriginal art galleries but also there are Aboriginal people sitting in Todd Mall every day, selling their paintings, although they are not the best examples of art. In the museum shops and in art galleries in nearby towns you will find more item designed with the stories of the Dreamtime.

>> Aboriginal Rock Art Sites You Can Visit from Alice Springs <<

The Aboriginal people that live in and around Alice Springs are from the Arrernte nation. They are one of the hundreds of Aboriginal nations that live nowadays in Australia.

Yeperenye (Emily and Jessie Gaps) – these are the two closest to the town sites where you can see an Aboriginal rock art. They are located just several kilometres on Ross Highway, in the direction of East McDonnell Ranges. Both are part of the Caterpillar Trail. "Dreaming Trails' are places associated with the same Dreamtime story in the Aboriginal culture. At Emily Gap, you can see a large caterpillar painting and the gap is a registered sacred site for the local Eastern Arrernte Aboriginal people.

Opinion

These are not as interesting as other of the sites listed below but if you are passing by anyway it is worth visiting them.

N'Dhala Gorge – one of the surprises of Central Australia. The place is not spectacular from a first sight but once you start walking the path, it reveals its treasures. It is situated approximately 90 km east of Alice Springs, and not far from Ross River Homestead.

Do an effort and go see this site. It represents one of the oldest Aboriginal art forms that are not impressive with sophistication but are covering a huge area. The site contains almost 6000 rock engravings, called petroglyphs. There are of two styles – finely pecked and pounded that are believed to represent two time periods. The oldest are believed to be 10 000 years old.



Just walk around and look for the small forms covering almost all the rocks around you. Follow the marked track, the walk takes approximately 1 h. Read the signs along the path. They explain some of the petroglyphs but also some of the rare vegetation of the region. The magnificent hues of the Central Australian nature will make this walk very special and memorable.

Advice

You need a 4WD to reach the gorge. The road from Alice Springs to Ross River Resort is sealed. The turn-off to the gorge is 500 m before the resort and from there you have 11 km of offroad track that crosses the Ross River at several times and when there are heavy rains it is impossible to pass. Check the weather and road conditions in advance (consider the later as a general advice for the whole Central Australia).

It is possible to camp at the entrance of the park, but there is no water there and you need to pay a camping fee (at the site).

Wallace Rockhole - located at 117 km west of Alice Springs, this is a small Aboriginal community that offers guided or self-guided rock art tours. This is one of the lesser-known places in Central Australia where you can not only see an Aboriginal art but also learn about it first-hand. The local Arrernte people are happy to share their knowledge with you and you can not only buy locally produced art but also take one of the dot painting classes.

Be aware

You need to pre-book your tours with the community. Campground and self-contained accommodation are also available in this remote place that, I believe, the curious traveller will enjoy the most.

Napwerte/Ewaninga Rock Carvings Conservation Reserve – This site is in a close vicinity from Alice Springs (35 km). Here you will find one of the largest concentrations and a great variety of ancient Aboriginal petroglyphs. This is a sacred man's site and Aboriginal women from the local Arrernte tribe are not allowed to be here. Don't worry, this doesn't apply for non-Aboriginal people. A marked walking track will bring you through the sandstones where you can see some of the most interesting rock engravings of this Aboriginal site.

Good to know

Best time to visit is early morning or late afternoon because the engravings look more spectacular under the light at these times of the day.

Plan your trip wisely, because camping is not allowed in this Reserve and you need to find another place or go back to Alice Springs for the night.

The Ochre Pits are located at 110 km from Alice Springs. This is a very important place for the Aboriginal Arrernte people and registered sacred site. From here, they take the ochre that plays an integral part in the Aboriginal ceremonies. To this day, the ochre is still used for a barter and traded across the country among the Aboriginal nations in Australia.

The ochre found here is known to be one of the best on the continent as it has glimmering, silken texture. The several layers of different colours of rock provide a rainbow-like experience to the one walking around.

Important

This is a sacred site and every interference with it is punishable. And yes, you are not allowed even to touch it!

Standley Chasm – This is a women-only Aboriginal cultural site, which means Aboriginal men cannot visit it. However, nothing stops you from taking the short walk among Cycads, White Cypress Pines, River Red Gums, Mistletoes, Tee Trees and [my favourite Ghost Gums](#). The beautiful path ends up at the chasm, created by floods for million years.

The site is located only 50 km from Alice Springs and the best time to see the chasm in its best is one hour before or after the noon. I visited it at sunset and although the red-orange glory of the rocks was not as sheer as at noon, it was still impressive.

Entrance fees and more

Check the [Central Australia's tourist website](#) for practical information about visiting Standley Chasm and the fees that apply.

>> Aboriginal Art Galleries in Alice Springs <<

Yubu Napa at 65 Hartley Street is an art gallery and gift shop.

Mbantua Gallery at 64 Todd Mall is an art gallery representing mostly women artists from the lands northeast of Alice Springs. One of the most renowned art galleries in town.

Tangentyere Artists is an Aboriginal-owned and non-for-profit art centre. There will find the artwork of Aboriginal people living in Alice Springs. Address is 16 Fogarty Street.

Talapi Art Gallery is showcases art works from remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia. You will find it at 45 Todd Mall.

Useful

More about Indigenous art in Central Australia, you can learn if you download the free app [Red Centre Art Trails](#), part of which is the Alice Springs Art Trail.

THINGS TO DO IN ALICE SPRINGS

>> Museums to Visit in Alice Springs <<

Contrary to you might expect from one of the remotest towns in Australia, there is a lot to be seen and done in Alice. There is an abundance of museums but as I consider that some of them might not be so interesting to the international visitor, I have listed the ones I believe are significant and unique in their own merits.

National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame (and Stuart Town Gaol)

National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame (and Stuart Town Gaol) – As the readers of this blog are primarily women, I believe this museum will be of utmost interest to them. The [Pioneer's Women Hall of Fame](#) has an impressive collection of profiles of women who were first in their fields in Australia. Some of these women achieved unbelievable things in times when the woman was totally dependent on the marriage and her husband.

However, the unique exhibition of the museum showcases the life of the first (white) women who came to live in the vast remoteness of Central Australia. Despite the harsh living conditions, these women created a history and inspire even today.

One of the things that may shock and confuse you about this museum, is that it is in an old gaol. But this is what makes it even more interesting. In addition to the women-focused exhibitions, you can visit the premises of the old jail cells. They are divided into men's and women's block. If this side of the museum is not what you would be interested in, you can have just a quick look in the women's block which is just behind the corner after you have exited the shop/reception area.

Tip

In the museum's shop will find some beautiful pieces of handmade Aboriginal crafts and paintings on very good prices. These are items made by inmates of the new correctional centre (read, the new goal) located near Alice Springs. It is said that money from these sales are going back to the inmates to support them after they have served their sentence.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service – There is no better story than the one of the RFDS in Australia's Outback. To understand the challenges that people face still today living in [remote places around Australia](#), you need to visit this museum in Alice Springs.

[The Royal Flying Doctor Service](#) was started in 1939 by a visionary John Flynn. In the museum, you will learn the story of one of the biggest 'air ambulances' in the world. It is a non-profit organization that operates in remote and regional areas and without its help people in these areas wouldn't be able to receive medical help or even, in many cases, survive. To visit this museum is to understand the Australian Outback in its most profound meaning – how difficult life is and how much survival is the word that describes it.

Don't miss!

The best coffee and brunch in Alice Springs are in the RDFS' café adjacent to the museum. I discovered this fact by accident after I've been frequenting the more centrally located places. After this discovery, I was often enjoying the quiet and sunny garden and the strong and fragrant coffee. Take the chance to sample some of the breakfasts or delicious cakes they offer.

Alice Springs Reptile Centre

If you plan to explore more outback places, you need to learn more about the beautiful but deadly creatures inhabiting these lands. In the Reptile Centre in Alice Springs, you will pay a small fee for such a knowledge.

Behind a thick glass, the notorious Taipan and Brown Snake are displayed in a light environment. You know how most of the reptile centres are dark and you can't see the details of the animals? Here you can see and study the patterns on the snakes' backs. Such a knowledge can be crucial in case you or someone around you has been bitten because of the different antivenoms. However, recently an antivenom was created that can be used to treat all Australia's snakes' bites.

Here you will also see crocodiles, including the saltwater type that lives in the north, in Darwin's tropics. There are also lizards, dragons and goannas. There are more than 100 reptiles from 60 different species, representing the most significant of the fauna in the Northern Territory.

Don't miss

Every day, three times a day, there are shows when you can learn more about the animals and even touch some of them. If you are interested to join, make sure you visit the centre around 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. or 3:30 p.m.

The Residency & the Cultural Precinct

The Residency is a historical building that has a significant meaning for the people of Alice Springs. However, for the international visitor may be more interesting to see a typical Northern Territory architecture from before the air-conditioned life. I loved my visit there because it gave me an understanding of the early years of Alice Springs as a town. The wide closed verandas are exemplary for the Central Australia style and anybody who has a keen interest in architecture must visit the Residency.

Must know

There is no entrance fee to visit this museum, but donations are appreciated and help maintain the building. It is located, very conveniently for every visitor, next to the post office in the heart of Alice Springs.

The Old Telegraph Station

To understand how the life in Central Australia has begun in the form we know it today, your visit to the Old Telegraph Station in Alice Springs is essential. You will learn why and how Alice Springs was created in the middle of the land known also as [the Never Never](#).

What visitors will find here is not only the story of the telegraph line that allowed Australia to connect with the rest of the world but also a tale of strength and courage. You will see how the life of the families living here at the end of 19th and beginning of 20th centuries was organized. It is a visual presentation of the first Northern Territory pioneers' life, full of hard work, challenges and much of sense of adventure.

The telegraph line was opened in 1872 and allowed messages to be send and received only in several hours' time instead of months, as it was before. Imagine the importance in the people's lives, many of whom had families overseas, in the European countries.

You will need to buy an entrance ticket from the Trail Station Café. Enjoy a moment sitting on the veranda facing the yard of the Old Telegraph Station, sipping from your cup of coffee and savouring some of the classics of the Australian Outback. Scones served with butter and jam, vanilla slices and Anzac cookies are those you must try at some point of your Central Australia journey!

At the telegraph station, you will also see an exposition about the Stolen Generation, as at one point housed children from this infamous governmental program. It is emotional but also informative exposition.

Tip

Guided tours of the Alice Springs Old Telegraph Station run at 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. every day from March to November.

Transport Hall of Fame, Alice Springs

The Ghan is an Outback icon. It is a railway line that connects Australia's South with the Northern part of the country. The trip from Adelaide to Darwin takes 54 hours and has a stopover in Alice Springs. The construction of the almost 3000 km long railway started in 1878 and finished in 2001 when the last section to Darwin was completed.

It is a magnificent sight to see the Ghan arriving in Alice Springs. Its silvery body snaking slowly as it passes through the Gap. The camel logo on its sides vibrates under the sun with an allure of adventure.

In Alice Springs, you can visit the Old Ghan Museum and Transport Hall of Fame to learn more about the pioneering times when the inner part of the continent was not accessible so easily. Engineers and workers who helped build this line suffered from sickness and hardship of everyday life. Some of them even came into the vast Emptiness with their wives who, however, went back to the cities when they had children.

Visiting the museum is a trip through the history with a lot of information and artefacts provided to help you understand not only the history and the importance of the Old Ghan for the country but the character and the past of the Australian Outback itself.

See also

Except for the Ghan history, you can have a look at the old cars and tractors collection. However, this is at an additional price.

Araluen Cultural Precinct

Araluen Cultural District is the artistic heart of Alice Springs. Here you will find exhibitions showcasing Central Australia arts and crafts, theatre and ballet shows, much-loved festivals like the Beanie Festival and much more.

The Museum of Central Australia is also located at the precinct. If you are a nature buff, you absolutely need to visit this museum where you will learn about the Central Australia's fauna and flora from the beginning to nowadays. Central Australia is one of the most interesting and still mysterious places on the continent. It is also a fascinating region. It seems that not much life can survive here. However, this is not the case and many unique and intriguing species can be found here.

Keep an eye on events

As soon as you arrive (or even better prior to arrival) in Alice Spring, check what is on the [event's page](#) of the Cultural Precinct. Often, the most interesting events in town take place here and you don't want to miss something that it is of great interest to you.

Natural Landmarks around Alice Springs

Central Australia may seem like a boring place but is far from that. In addition to all events, museums, nightlife and Aboriginal culture exploration, there are many natural landmarks you can... no, you must visit. Here are some of the best and the nearest to Alice Springs.

Chambers Pillar

Chambers Pillar is made of a sandstone which towers 50 m. It is an impressive rock formation but also has a sacred significance for the Aboriginal people. Its Dreamtime story involves a Gecko ancestor and the Aboriginal marriage traditions (you can't marry the wrong skin group guy, girl!). You will discover the story on your own, but this is what you need to know before your visit:

The Chambers Pillar is situated 160 km south of Alice Springs. During the time before the railway line was built, the rock formation was the landmark for the pioneer travellers of Central Australia on the way from Adelaide to Alice Springs. Documented for the first time in 1860, today the site features 2 campgrounds with firepits. Walking tracks let you explore the surroundings. You might wish to camp for a night as the Chambers Pillar is most stunning at sunrise and sunsets, blazing under the rays.

You must know

You need to be extremely cautious when driving to Chambers Pillar. Only 4WD can reach the destination. You will drive on sand dunes and must be vigilant for upcoming traffic.

Gosse Bluff

Gosse Bluff is one of this nature formations with a wow effect over everyone who sees it. But the point of view is important too.

More than 140 million years ago, a comet hit the surface here, creating a crater 20 km across. While travelling the unsealed Mareenie Loop to shorten the distance to Kings Canyon, we saw the crater from afar. I couldn't stop thinking that this must have been a jolt of unimaginable scale. Today, the bluff is about 5 km in diameter. The erosion reduced its size not only horizontally but vertically too – the surface is 2 km lower than its original level.

To visit this place of extreme cultural and scientific importance, you need to travel 175 km from Alice Springs. A 4WD is recommended for the last 5 km drive as the road is sandy. Once inside the crater, you can take two walks. The shorter one will take to a lookout, but you should take the longer one as at its end you will find a better view from a higher vantage point. At the Gosse Bluff, there is no campground area but there are picnic table and shelter. Fire is not permitted.

The best view

The best view of the Gosse Bluff is from Tylers Pass on Namatjira Drive, 2 hours and 15 minutes' drive from Alice Springs. At the pass, there is also an information board that introduces you to the Aboriginals' beliefs about the creation of the crater.

Ormiston Gorge

One of the most beautiful places in Central Australia is located 'only' 135 km from Alice Springs. A short walk will bring you to the Ghost Gum lookout platform where you may get dizzy from the stunning views of the red hills, dotted with the white trunks of ghost gums. Underneath your feet, the deep green colour of the pond is contrasting with the white sand surrounding it. There is a longer, three-hour circuit walk, but be aware of the weather and don't do it at midday in the hottest summer months.

Take time to enjoy it

Go for a dip into its refreshing waters. Take time to enjoy this special and quiet place. The place is accessible via sealed roads, no need of 4WD.

Palm Valley

This valley is the only place where the Red Cabbage Palm is found. The species is a relic from the times when Central Australia was a tropical, not desert heaven. Only here, you will also find what it is known as the oldest plant species - the McDonnell Ranges Cycad. Because of the shadows of the ranges and the water from the Finke River, the soil here keeps enough humidity to keep these unique species thrive.

Palm Valley is part of the Finke Gorge National Park. You need 4WD as the last 16 km the road is sandy and rocky, and in heavy rain days not accessible at all. The park is at 138 km from Alice Springs. There are several possibilities for walks, from 45 minutes to 2 hours return. You need sturdy shoes, sunscreen and a hat and a lot of water.

Camping and picnicking are possible here, there are showers, toilets and barbeques provided. You need to collect firewood before entering the park and must pay a camping fee.

Camping fees

The camping fee, like in many camping places in Central Australia, are paid cash in boxes installed at the campgrounds. See here the [camping fees](#) as well as the list of all campgrounds available in the Northern Territory.

Rainbow Valley

Rainbow Valley is, in my opinion, the most beautiful valley of Central Australia. There are two reasons for that. First, because it is less visited site, and I definitely love visiting [lesser-known places](#) around the world. And when a place is less visited, it keeps its original atmosphere and look. The other reason is that the valley's main landmark – the sandstone cliffs have a unique colour mixture of red, yellow and white rock.

The variety of the surrounding claypan and sandy pathways add to the character of the place. The rainbow rock cliffs are most beautiful at sunset. There are two campgrounds here, however without showers. I advise you to stay for a night, to see the Rainbow Valley in its glory at sunset but also to explore it in the fresher air of the awakening day. It is a magnificent experience, mostly because of the peacefulness of this place that allows you to reconnect with Nature and yourselves.

Access

A 4WD is recommended to access the Rainbow Valley, which is at 97 km south of Alice Springs.

Corroboree Rock

Same as Simpsons Gap, the Corroboree Rock is not one of the most exotic places to see but it is in such proximity to Alice Springs (34 km), that it deserves to be mentioned. If you have time, go and have a walk.

Simpsons Gap

The main reason why you should visit Simpsons Gap is that here you have a very good chance to spot a black-footed rock wallaby. Usually, they come out at dawn or dusk and you can meet them at the walking path or around the waterhole. Red rocks and rare vegetation species also make of this place a special walking experience.

Simpsons Gap is also one of the closest to Alice Springs sites. It is at 18 km from the town on a sealed road. There is also a family-friendly mount bike path and a walking trail.

Must know

There is a campground but can be only used by the Larapinta Trail walkers.

>> Places to Eat, Drink and Socialize in Alice Springs <<

Page 27 and *Epilogue* cater to vegetarians and vegans in a hipster atmosphere. *Epilogue* is also good for dinner and has regular weekend events at their rooftop bar. Another great place for breakfast, or just a coffee break, is *Olive Pink Garden* located at the Botanic Gardens. It is a nice outdoor environment with a lot of birds and animals. There is also a sand pit playground for the little ones.

The Flying Doctor's Café is my favourite. It makes the best coffee in town and serves the most flavorful breakfasts and delicious cakes. *The Water Tank* is the craziest café and the hidden gem of Alice Springs. It has a quirky and alternative menu but with an emphasis on fresh, healthy food. It has an authentic shabby chic feel in a rustic old workshop shed.

Monte's is a carnival-inspired outdoor restaurant-bar with hearty food and plenty of live music. There is a trivia Thursday night at 7 p.m. that is extremely popular with the locals. If you want to get a table, best to arrive an hour early.

Bojangles has a wild-west atmosphere. All the boys and girls working in the cattle stations around love going to Bojangles. Apart from its Australian western vibe, people like it for its big farmer-size servings of juicy beefsteaks and flavoury fish and chips (the Kid's size fish and chips serving is enough for a woman). Its menu, however, includes also many other Australia classics.

>> Alice Springs Street Markets <<

There is a regular Sunday market at Todd Mall street in Alice Springs. At the market, you will find local Indigenous crafts, food stalls and local produce. Sometimes there are live performers too. Each month, there is also a night market organized, that is usually supplementing a major event happening in town.

Check the market dates

The Sunday Todd Mall markets' dates are available [here](#) and the date of the night markets [here](#).

>> Sunrise and Sunset in Alice Springs <<

Central Australia is famous for its vast horizons. Which makes sunrises and sunsets spectacular. The best spot to see the sunrise in Alice Springs is at the 'Alice Springs' sign, not far from the airport. This is because the flat land south of the Ranges allows you to see all the colours of the sun without interruption as it rises.

For a sunset, go to Flynn's Grave. This is the resting place of John Flynn – the founder of the Royal Flying Doctors. From there, you can take the track to Mount Gillen, it takes 2 hours return. However, be back at the starting point before dark as the track is difficult at times and not very well marked.

For a really stunning sunset, drive to Neil Hargrave Lookout, 1 h 20 min from Alice along Namatjra Drive.

>> Alice Springs Festivals and Events All Year Round <<

There are many events happening in Alice Springs all year round. Some of them are unique and peculiar.

The [Beanie Festival](#) is a favourite of all – locals and visitors. The idea of this event was to help the local Indigenous communities in Central Australia but now it became a funny, treasure-hunting-like game. People from all over Australia contribute with the creations they make during the year. See [more Beanie Festival photos](#) on my Facebook page.

Other events worth mentioning are:

The [Desert Mob](#), one of the biggest events in the country, promoting the Aboriginal culture and art. There are hundreds of new Aboriginal artworks exhibited each year and possibility to meet the artists in person.

The *Territory Day Celebrations* on first of July. This is the only day in the year when the Territorians can have private fireworks. You can imagine that they get crazy on this day! The shops selling fireworks get busy on this day with long queues of (mostly) men at all ages.

[Finke Desert Race](#) is one of the remotest races in the world. Both cars and bikes take part and in 2018, we witnessed some very passionate and ambitious women drivers among the hundreds of men.

[Parrtjima Festival of Light](#) is an event that lasts for 10 night during which light installations are created by some of the Aboriginal artists if Central Australia. There are also other events. Talks and live music enhancing the spectacular festival. Parrtjima is free of charge to attend.

Find what's on

There are dozens of events happening in Alice Springs and Central Australia. Check [what's on in the Red Centre](#) when you are planning your visit.

>> Towns near Alice Springs to Explore in Central Australia <<

[Hermannsburg](#) is an old Lutheran Mission that today houses a café and art shop with some of the most amazing Aboriginal artworks you will find in Central Australia. Its surroundings and buildings haven't changed much since 1877 when the mission was established. You can combine your visit to Palm Valley with visiting Hermannsburg as the turn to the valley is just a few kilometres away.

Tip

Try the scones with butter and jam in the Hermannsburg Café. If you are lucky, you might be able to buy freshly picked lemons from the tree at the front. It's a real wonder that lemons and roses thrive in this dry and hot climate!

[Alice Springs to Uluru](#) or vice versa is one of the most travelled routes in the Northern Territory. You can fly to Uluru directly and visit only the Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park (park entrance fee is \$25 and valid for three consecutive days). However, if you have time, my advice is to spend more time exploring Central Australia.

Accommodation in Ayers Rock Resort is very expensive. Alternatively, you can [join a camping tour from Alice Springs to Uluru – Kata Tjuta and Kings Canyon](#). They usually last three or four days and are the best budget option, especially for a solo female traveller. It is also the safest way to do this trip if you are alone on the road.

For the adventure-seekers

The best part of these tours is the opportunity to sleep under the stars in another Australian Outback icon – the swag.

Ross River Homestead – it is an old homestead now turned into a resort. There are cabins and campgrounds available, [check the accommodation rates here](#). The best part of the place is the café-bar that is in the old homestead building and offers an authentic historical feel. You can learn a lot and imagine how life looked like in the past from just walking from room to a room. Don't shy to ask the staff any questions you might have. They love sharing stories about the Outback.

For the party lovers

Ross River Homestead Resort is also the place where the [Wide Open Spaces Festival](#) happens.

Glen Helen Homestead is another old homestead with bar and restaurant. Finke River is running behind it and you can swim in the waterhole there. I haven't been there and can't give you more details about the place.

For more information on what to see and do and what's new in Alice Springs, go to:

ALICE SPRINGS VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Mon-Fri: 8 am to 6 pm / Sat-Sun: 9:30am to 4pm

Corner of Todd Mall & Parsons St, Alice Springs NT 0870

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This post includes almost every point of interest for Alice Springs and Central Australia. As Australia is a vast continent, you need to be efficient with your time.

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