

OUTBACK ADVENTURE

NOWAK TRAVELOGUE | APRIL, MAY | 2012

The Long Road to Longreach

Longreach is in the heart of Queensland's 'mulga country'. The trees around here are stunted and gnarled. After 3 days we have traveled 1250km. We still have 2500km to Darwin from here and are only now realizing how big this country really is.

We read that the outback country of Queensland is rich in flora and fauna. Over our three days we have seen lots of cotton, maize and sorghum crops, fewer and fewer trees, flat uninspiring landscapes that seemed to go on forever and a large number of road kill (mainly kangaroos and a spiny anteater and goanna or two) which appear to sustain large numbers of crows and eagles.

At Mitchell yesterday we stopped and had lunch. The main street was dotted with amazing bottle trees - really large round trunks that seemed out of place in Australia. The place was very quiet - I imagine most country towns are dead on Good Friday.



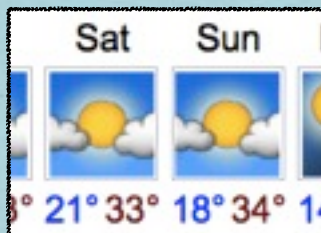
Visiting Your Own Back Yard.

We have talked often about what countries we would prefer to visit before we die. We have no real desire to visit USA or parts of Asia or India. South America is not really on our radar either but China might be. We get asked by friends why we want to travel to far away countries when there is so much to see right here in Australia. Our answer is simple - we can always go and see our own country when we get to a

stage in life when we run out of money for international travel., or we get too old for these long trips. After 3 days on the road we are now not so sure. Its a bloody long way to drive - further than we realized. Anyway, the long lonely roads allow for plenty of time to squat by the road in peace! The huge skies dominate the landscape == our journey begins.



END OF DAY Because of the vast distance we intend to travel on this trip we decided that we would not rush. Initially we need to drive 5 hours on average each day. It means we can settle back and relax at the end of the day



WEATHER? We did not know what sort of clothes we should bring along with us. On the second night we had to put on a doona it was so cold. But the days are warming up as we go north - today it was 33C.



THE OUTBACK We are not familiar with where the Outback starts and stops. Fortunately, we came across this sign near Longreach. Now we know.

THE NIGHT SKY



COSMOS OBSERVATORY CENTRE

Ooh, Aah and Brilliant - we heard these words often when we viewed the incredible beauty of the Milky Way Galaxy and other stars and planets through the powerful telescopes at the Charleville Cosmos Centre.

The guides at the Centre told us about binary stars, star clusters, planets and the Moon. The highlights were seeing Saturn and its rings, star clusters 17,000 light years away, and craters in detail on the Moon.

The Long Road North



THE BLUE SKY OVER A GREEN LAND

It is amazing how this country is so green and lush. Normally the Outback is dry and dusty but the recent rains and resultant floods have had their effect. Road and bridge maintenance everywhere.



Distances

Global and Celestial

1 light year = 9 trillion kms

Brissy - Darwin 3750km

Darwin - Broome 1100km

Earth - Mars 54,000,000km

Earth - Sun 150,000,000km

Earth - closest star

39,900,000,000,000km

Incomprehensible!!!!



NUMBERS

Number of kilometers we expect to travel

11k

Number of days allocated to this holiday

60

