



Aerial view of Alice Springs township.
Image courtesy of Tourism NT.

Story: Sheryl Allen

LOCATION: Alice Springs
18.5 hours south of Darwin
17.0 hours north of Adelaide

POPULATION: 27,500

INDUSTRIES: Tourism, services

CLIMATE: Desert
Summer: 20.9°C – 35.9°C
Winter: 3.7°C – 19.5°C
Rainfall: 279mm

Alice Springs is Australia's most famous outback town, regarded by many as the heart and soul of the country.

Established by early explorers and grown by pastoralists, gold and gem prospectors, cameleers, telegraphers, railroaders and WWII soldiers, today's Alice Springs is the regional hub of the Red Centre. It services a remote and diverse catchment spanning half a million square kilometres, including pastoralists, mining operations, defence facilities, national parks and the pick of Australia's iconic tourist destinations.

Alice Springs' unique lifestyle attracts a remarkable variety of people – those looking to find (or lose) themselves, to discover adventure, to kick back a little, to improve their income, to spend their retirement or to just experience something different.

"Alice Springs is definitely a transit town," confirmed Landmark's Anthony Hyland. "There's a high turnover of people on mine or station contract work, or visiting from interstate or overseas."

"It can be hard to find a rental property. Locals are seeing the opportunity to invest in properties to rent out and many newcomers also opt to purchase rather than rent. It means there are a number of residential properties for sale."

"We've had a great start to the year with more than 28.5 inches of rain by mid-May, so we're seeing more rural holdings come to the market as landholders have done their time here and look to retire or move on to other things."

The region abounds in natural assets. The dramatic MacDonnell Ranges with its gorges, chasms, waterholes and hiking trails, spreads hundreds of kilometres east and west of the town. To the southeast is the vast wilderness of the Simpson Desert. Uluru (formerly known as Ayers Rock) is the gem in Australia's tourism offering and a 450km drive away – considered a short trip in these parts! To the west, the Tanamai Track carves a treacherous, adventurer-only course to Halls Creek in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Alice Springs is rich in culture, including a very strong Aboriginal art community that garners interest from around the world. The Todd Mall, in the CBD area, embodies the cultural depth of Alice Springs and is an excellent starting point for getting to know the town.

Being almost equidistant from Darwin and Adelaide makes Alice Springs a natural stop-over point on the journey and an important transport link for the wider region. The Stuart Highway caters for road transport and daily flights to and

from major cities and Uluru take care of the air traffic. There are daily express coach services to Adelaide, Darwin and Brisbane. The main rail link between Darwin and Adelaide carries The Ghan on its legendary twice-weekly train journey between the two capitals.

Alice Springs is blessed with the services and infrastructure you'd expect to find in a capital city. There are numerous options for primary, secondary and tertiary education, a very strong commercial sector with many government departments represented and a bustling retail and eatery culture.

And where else but Alice Springs could get away with a calendar of quirky events including the Henley-on-Todd Regatta, Alice Desert Festival Camel Cup, Beanie Festival and Finke Desert Race?

CONTACT:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: Renovated five bedroom brick home \$700,000

Two or three bedroom unit \$350,000 – \$550,000

Rural: Cattle stations \$800 – \$1,000 a beast area