



MEDIA INFORMATION

RECENT HISTORY

Archaeological work in Cleland Hills, north of Uluru, in 1987 suggests that Aboriginal people were living in this region at least 22,000 years ago, while work in the MacDonnell Ranges in 1994 suggests habitation in Central Australia dates back 30,000 years.

DISCOVERY OF ULURU (AYERS ROCK)

In 1873, Englishman William Christie Gosse became the first European to climb Uluru (Ayers Rock), after a three month trek from Alice Springs with a camel train, Afghan cameleers and eight months of provisions. Gosse named the Rock after Sir Henry Ayers, then Chief Secretary who later became Premier of South Australia. It might well have taken another name had explorer Ernest Giles managed to reach and climb the Rock when he sighted it a year earlier. Giles did manage, however, to sight Kata Tjuta (The Olgas) in 1872, and named them after Queen Olga of Wurttemberg. He was then forced to turn back to Alice after being blocked by the treacherous salty marshes of Lake Amadeus, 50 kilometres to the north of Uluru.

THE FIRST FLIGHT TO AYERS ROCK

In 1930, the first aeroplane landed at Uluru, piloted by journalist Errol Coote. He was a member of Harold Lasseter's original support party when Lasseter made his unsuccessful attempt to locate a reef of gold in the south-west corner of the Northern Territory.

THE FIRST TRACK TO AYERS ROCK

The 1930s also marked the carving of the first rough track from Eridunda (193 kilometres south west of Alice Springs) to Uluru by pastoralist Sid Stanes of Eridunda Station. The track traversed sand dune country and, after heavy rains, was badly rutted, boggy and often impassable. It was not until the early 1940s that the first graded road linked the Alice and Uluru.

TOURISM *development*

1950'S	Tourism officially arrived at Uluru, when Alice Springs resident Len Tull ran the first tours and established a base camp to the west of the Uluru climb.	1990	RED CENTRE HOTEL, NOW KNOWN AS VOYAGES OUTBACK PIONEER HOTEL & LODGE, WAS OPENED.
1958	VISITOR NUMBERS WERE FIRST OFFICIALLY RECORDED, AND THE RECORDS SHOW THAT 2,296 INTREPID SOULS TRAVELLED FROM ALICE SPRINGS FOR UP TO 12 HOURS THROUGH DUST OR MUD, DEPENDING ON THE SEASON, TO SEE WHAT WAS TO BECOME THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS ROCK.	1992	The Northern Territory conducted a review of commercial Resort operations and infrastructure and (as a result) government instigated a complete restructure of Yulara in early 1992. 8 years of competition at Yulara had failed to deliver sufficient returns to warrant ongoing public sector ownership and management, accumulating \$90 million of debt. In July 1992 The Yulara Development Company Limited was dissolved and the Ayers Rock Resort Company Limited was constituted. The Sheraton Hotel was sold and all hotels now came under one management.
1959	Leases were granted to 2 tour companies for the operation of a hotel, 4 motels, a store and service station at Uluru.	1994	ULURU-KATA TJUTA NATIONAL PARK BECAME DUAL WORLD HERITAGE LISTED; IN 1987 FOR ITS OUTSTANDING NATURAL VALUES AND THEN IN 1994 FOR ITS OUTSTANDING CULTURAL VALUES.
1960'S	IMPROVEMENTS WERE MADE TO THE ALICE SPRINGS-ULURU ROAD, LEADING TO AN INCREASE OF VISITORS TO MORE THAN 23,000 BY 1968.	1997	The decision to fully privatise the Yulara township and accompanying 104 square kilometres of land attracted the interest of General Property Trust (GPT) and in 1997 the Ayers Rock Resort Company Limited was sold for \$220 million.
1970'S	It was decided that the accommodation village and airstrip should be moved outside of the Park area. The Aboriginal Land Council cleared the location for the new town site and planning for the development got underway.	2000	AYERS ROCK RESORT MANAGEMENT CHANGED ITS NAME TO VOYAGES HOTELS & RESORTS.
1980	THE START OF BASIC ROAD, AIRPORT AND UTILITIES CONSTRUCTION COMMENCED UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF THE YULARA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD.	2003	\$100 million master plan completed, including major upgrade of Desert Gardens Hotel, refurbishment of Emu Walk Apartments, expansion of Outback Pioneer Hotel & Lodge, launch of The Lost Camel (transformed in 2011 to staff accommodation), extension of residential facilities, and significant capital works to improve resort infrastructure.
1983	The Ayers Rock Campground was opened.	2006	An established 344,357 visitors were recorded visiting Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park
1984	THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL AND THE SHERATON PROPERTY NOW KNOWN RESPECTIVELY AS VOYAGES DESERT GARDENS HOTEL AND VOYAGES SAILS IN THE DESERT WERE OPENED. THE RESORT TOWN SQUARE, INCLUDING THE BANK, BECAME OPERATIONAL AND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL WAS COMPLETED.	2011	THE INDIGENOUS LAND CORPORATION PURCHASED AYERS ROCK RESORT AND ESTABLISHED VOYAGES INDIGENOUS TOURISM AUSTRALIA.
1985	The Commonwealth Government handed the Ayers Rock (Uluru) National Park back to Traditional Aboriginal Owners.	2012	Voyages Invested \$43 million in improving the Resort experience including total refurbishment of the 5-star Sails in the Desert hotel and the addition of Uluru Meeting Place conference facility.
1986	THE PARK MANAGEMENT WAS TRANSFERRED FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY TO THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.	2013	In line with Voyages commitment to increase Indigenous employment, Indigenous staff numbers grew from 2 in 2010 to 204 including 60 trainees. A total of 74 trainees successfully completed their traineeship at the National Indigenous Training Academy.
1988	Yulara Matsonettes, currently known as Emu Walk Apartments, were officially opened.	2014	MARKS THE 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF AYERS ROCK RESORT.
1989	The new coach campground was opened.		