



BETTER READ TOURS

# MEMOIR WRITING IN PARIS

Writing Retreat with

**Patti Miller**

15 – 24 October 2025



“It must mean something, a dream that can propel you to the other side of the world. Couldn't it be the heart wanting something it needs, this longing for elsewhere? After all, we are all strangers wandering around this planet, apparently lost most of the time, looking for something or someone – or some place”.

*Patti Miller*

“This great world of ours is the looking-glass in which we must gaze to come to know ourselves from the right slant”.

*Michel de Montaigne*





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## ABOUT

**Imagine yourself writing in Paris, the city made for, and by writers. The streets and cafés are buzzing; the autumnal light is soft and golden. Your heart and mind breathe in the city each morning as you step out of your Parisian apartment on the way to writing class.**

Presented by award-winning author and Australia's leading life-writing mentor, Patti Miller, **Memoir Writing in Paris** is more than just a retreat or literary tour. Across ten days of exploring Paris and seven structured writing workshops, you'll experience a deep immersion in the ideas, techniques and craft of writing memoir. This course has been designed to extend and enrich all levels of experience.

Through expert instruction and the support of a small group of like-minded travellers and writers, Memoir Writing in Paris is a transformative experience.

Each morning you'll devote time to your project in workshops held in a central Parisian apartment, and in the afternoons you'll be free to explore the city that inspired history's greatest revolutionaries, poets, writers and artists with the help of our erudite local guides.

Whether you've always dreamed of writing but don't know where to start; have a story to tell but want guidance on form and technique; or have a well established writing practice and seek new frontiers of inspiration – our writing sojourn in Paris is for you.

# TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

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In the city where Proust penned *In Search of Lost Time* and Anaïs Nin kept her revolutionary diary, your own stories will find their voice.

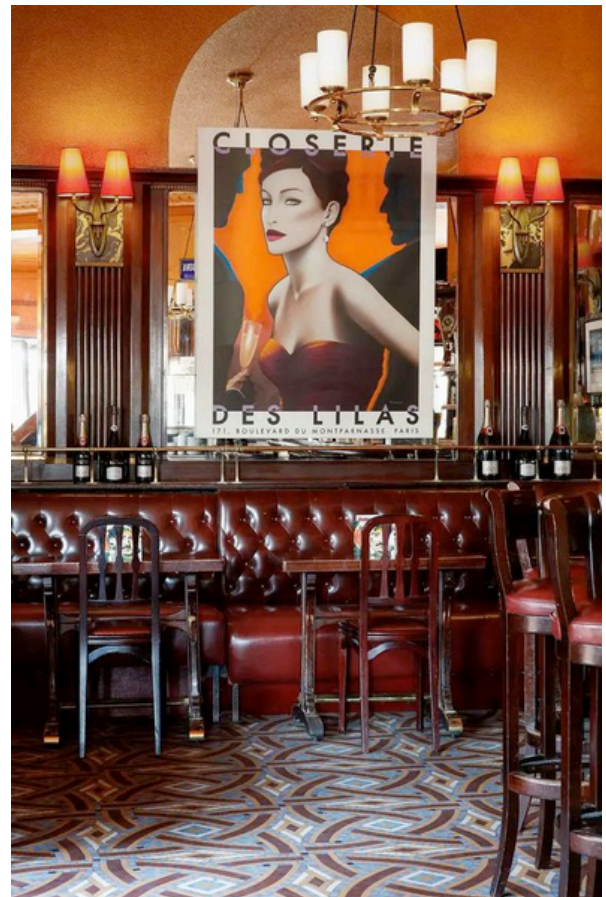
Set during Autumn, the season of memories and recollection – of ‘mellow fruitfulness’ as Keats once put it – our retreat is designed to make you feel like a local Parisian writer and find meaning where the past meets the present on the page.

In the workshops you’ll write and share ideas in a creative, supportive and encouraging environment, learning about the art and craft of memoir writing. In a one-on-one consultation with Patti, you’ll be able to discuss your project in detail and receive personalised writing guidance.

In the afternoons and evenings, you’re free to explore the city made famous by Balzac, Flaubert, Hemingway, Stein, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Sand, and de Beauvoir. Perhaps you’ll sit and write on a café terrace with a coffee or a glass of wine, or ask your dedicated local guide, Mélissa – a Parisian jazz chanteuse and writer – for some insider tips about where to find inspiration.

You’ll also receive a lecture on the history and culture of Paris and a ‘literary ramble’ tour with an expert on French literary history. On your day off, you’ll take the train with Mélissa to Provins, a UNESCO world heritage site and fortified medieval town, where you’ll enjoy lunch after a morning of exploring.

You will visit some local literary haunts and engage in stimulating discussions over drinks, as great thinkers have always done in Paris. For our Welcome Lunch and Farewell Dinner we’ll dine in some of Paris’ most historic belle époque bistros which have hosted generations of writers before us.



# PATTI MILLER

## BETTER READ TOURS



Patti Miller is a best-selling author and Australia's leading memoir-writing mentor.

She has written ten books, including the writing manuals *Writing Your Life*, *The Memoir Book*, and *Writing True Stories*, which was recently updated in 2024. Other works include a novel, *Child*, and six memoir/creative non-fiction books: *The Last One Who Remembers*; *Whatever The Gods Do*; *The Mind of a Thief*, which was long and short-listed for numerous prizes, and the winner of the 2013 NSW Premier's Prize for History; *Ransacking Paris*; *The Joy of High Places*; and her latest, *True Friends*. Patti also regularly publishes personal essays and feature articles in literary magazines and other publications.

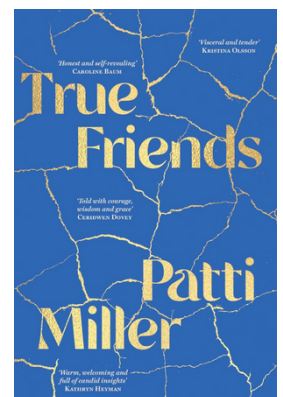
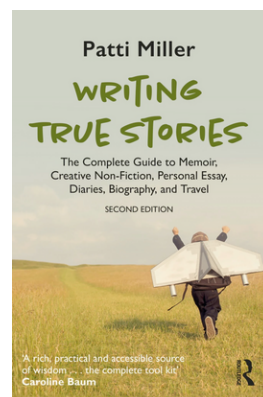
Patti holds a BA and MA in writing from the University of Technology, Sydney and more than 30 years' teaching experience in universities and writers' centres around Australia, and in Fiji, Bali, London and France. She spent a year writing in Paris, and currently teaches at the Faber Academy in Sydney and London. Patti regularly returns to France to write and is thus familiar with the joys and rewards it offers.

Patti has helped 60 other writers turn their life stories into successful, commercially published books. These include, amongst others: *The Erratics*, by Vicky Laveau-Harvie; *Only*, by Caroline Baum; *Rosetta*, by Alexandra Joel; and *Is This My Beautiful Life?* By Jessica Rowe. Visit Patti's website below for a comprehensive list of clients.

### Connect with Patti:

WEB: [lifestories.com.au](http://lifestories.com.au)

FACEBOOK: [@LifeStoriesWorkshop](https://www.facebook.com/LifeStoriesWorkshop)



# WRITING COURSE

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France is the birthplace of modern memoir, the country where Montaigne wrote his *Essays* about the nature of Self, and where Rousseau lived most of the extraordinary life he describes in *Confessions*. Through the combination of structured workshops, one-on-one consultation, and personal exploration, you too will discover your voice and story.

Across seven mornings, you'll attend your writing workshop with Patti in a charming, centrally located apartment. Here you'll learn about topics such as Beginning Again, Original Memory, Texture and Detail, the Narrator, Narrative Structure, the Difficulties of Truth Telling, Organising Your Material, Structural Trouble-Shooting, the Borderlands with Fiction, Travel Memoir, and many others. Each day will follow a rhythmic pattern with classes, shaped around Patti's updated edition of *Writing True Stories*, and a curated selection of readings which will be provided before you depart for Paris.

You'll be given daily writing exercises and prompts based on the course content which provide you with ample opportunities for development and growth. These are designed to help you tap into your memories and get to the core of what it is you want to write about. You will also share your work with the group, in a warm and encouraging environment.

Parisian-style morning teas, with tea coffee and treats from the local pâtisserie, will be provided in each workshop.

You'll also have the opportunity to schedule an individual writing consultation with Patti. During this time you can discuss your personal writing project in-depth without interruption. This is an invaluable opportunity to sort through and solve those writing blocks with a memoir-writing expert, all in the unique ambience of a Parisian café.



# FAQs



## What level of writing experience is required?

This course is designed for people who have already begun their writing journey or have some idea about the story they want to tell, but it is not a pre-requisite that you participate in a writing workshop prior to the tour. Having said that, we do believe a writing course with Patti before joining Writing Memoir in Paris is an ideal preparation for the intensive writing journey in Paris. Details about Patti's writing courses can be found on the Faber Academy website ([faberwritingacademy.com.au/course/writing\\_memoir](http://faberwritingacademy.com.au/course/writing_memoir)) or Patti's own website ([lifestories.com.au](http://lifestories.com.au)). We also recommend that you glance through Patti's text *Writing True Stories* before booking so that you understand her creative approach to writing workshops.

## Do I have to share my work?

Workshopping – that is, reading and discussing each other's writing in a supportive and creative environment – is a central aspect of the course. It gives each writer the essential experience of being part of a writing community, and it will also build your confidence as a writer.

## Should I bring a laptop?

If you prefer to work on a laptop you are welcome to do so, but during the course you will not be using a desk so please consider if this will be the most comfortable way for you to sit. We find that many people prefer to use a pen and notebook for classes, then transcribe their work to their laptop later.

## What other materials do I need?

The writing workshops will be based on Patti's updated edition of *Writing True Stories*, which will be your textbook during the course. Please make sure you purchase it before leaving Australia. You will receive a 10% discount on this book, along with Patti's other works, if purchased through Better Read Than Dead.

Before departure, you'll also receive a curated reading guide which will be referred to in the classes, as well as an extended reading list to facilitate your immersion in the literary culture of Paris and the art of memoir.

# THE WRITER'S LIFE

This is a writing sojourn for independent-minded travellers rather than those seeking a fully escorted tour. At the same time, it is for people who enjoy stimulating conversations with like-minded company, who share a love of writing, travel and literature.

During the retreat you'll be staying in a well-appointed, one-bedroom apartment in the centre of Paris so you can live as a writer in your own independent space. The studios are located together in a central 'apartment hotel', which means you will easily be able to connect with your fellow writers or enjoy your own private space and independence. You'll have a double bed (or single, if you have opted for twin-share), desk, kitchenette and WIFI along with all other 4-star amenities including access to a

laundry service and a 24-hr concierge. A thoughtful welcome pack will be in your room on arrival providing you with tea, coffee and other essentials to make you feel at home. Breakfast in the restaurant downstairs is included in your package.

You will walk a few minutes to the class venue, using one of our maps as a guide. As you settle into your daily routines of the writer's life, you'll have the pleasure of getting to know your own local neighbourhood – from the boulangerie where you buy your baguettes, to the café or bar where you'll sit with a coffee or apéro and scribble observations in your notebook.



BETTER READ TOURS







Dr DAY 1

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B-Br DAY 2

### WEDNESDAY 15TH OCT ARRIVAL IN PARIS

On arrival at your apartment in Paris, you'll receive a **welcome pack** with immediate food requirements, Navigo métro pass and general orientation information.

After some time to unpack and settle in, we'll rendezvous at an iconic Parisian café in the evening for **flight recovery drinks**. Your Tour Manager, Mélissa, will be available all day to answer any questions.

### THURSDAY 16TH OCT WORKSHOP ONE + ORIENTATION

Our writing journey begins! After **breakfast**, walk to our nearby **workshop venue** using the map provided, arriving by **9.15am for a 9.30am start**.

A **Welcome Brunch** at the workshop venue will complete the morning. Champagne in the middle of the day? Oui, bien sûr!

**Free afternoon** and **evening**.

During class, we'll have a **talk on French memoir** by Patti, an introductory writing exercise, and **potted history of Paris** from our local literature and history expert, Martine. Our tour manager Mélissa will give us an **orientation to Paris**, including a refresher on using the métro. You'll also have the chance to introduce your own writing projects, and **schedule your individual consultation sessions with Patti**.



### MEAL KEYS:

Breakfast **B**  
 Morning Tea **MT**  
 Brunch **Br**  
 Lunch **L**  
 Drinks **Dr**  
 Dinner **D**



B-MT-Dr

DAY 4

B-MT-L

DAY 3

## FRIDAY 17TH OCT WORKSHOP TWO + WELCOME LUNCH

Meet at the class venue at **9.45am** for a **10am start**, finishing at **1pm**. In today's **workshop** we'll explore getting started and accessing 'Proustian' memory, with a break for coffee and a treat from the local patisserie.

After class, we'll go together to a *belle époque* brasserie for our **Welcome Lunch**.

**Free afternoon and evening.**



## SATURDAY 18TH OCT WORKSHOP THREE + LITERARY SOIRÉE

Attend your **workshop** from **10am to 1pm**, with our usual break for morning tea. Today we'll learn how important awareness, observation and the senses are for recreating the texture of 'lived reality' on the page, using detail and scene. The **afternoon will be free** for writing, exploring Paris or your individual consultation with Patti.

In the evening we'll enjoy a **literary soirée**, either at one of the English-speaking bookshops or at our own apartment venue.




**B-MT**  
**DAY 5**
**SUNDAY 19TH OCT**  
**WORKSHOP FOUR + LITERARY RAMBLE**

Today's **workshop**, from **10am to 1pm**, will be an introduction to the genre of travel memoir so that you may find the words to explore your own experience of Paris. We will look at what to pack in your travel memoir suitcase – and what to leave at home.



In the afternoon we'll take a **literary ramble** walking tour with an expert on French literature and Paris.

**Free evening.**


**B-L**  
**DAY 6**
**MONDAY 20TH OCT**  
**DAY TOUR TO PROVINS**

Today after **breakfast** we'll take a train with MéliSSa to **Provins**, a UNESCO-listed medieval town with 12th-century ramparts, ancient underground tunnels, and preserved stone towers. Provins is also famous for its medieval-inspired rose-based products and sweets.

After exploring, we'll enjoy **lunch** and a falconry show before heading back to Paris.

**Free evening.**




**B-MT-Dr**  
**DAY 7**
**TUESDAY 21ST OCT**  
**WORKSHOP FIVE + WRITERS' NIGHT IN PARIS**

In this morning's **workshop, 10am to 1pm**, we will extend the area of memoir into the rich genre of the personal essay, where the idea behind the writing is the driving force.

**Free afternoon.**

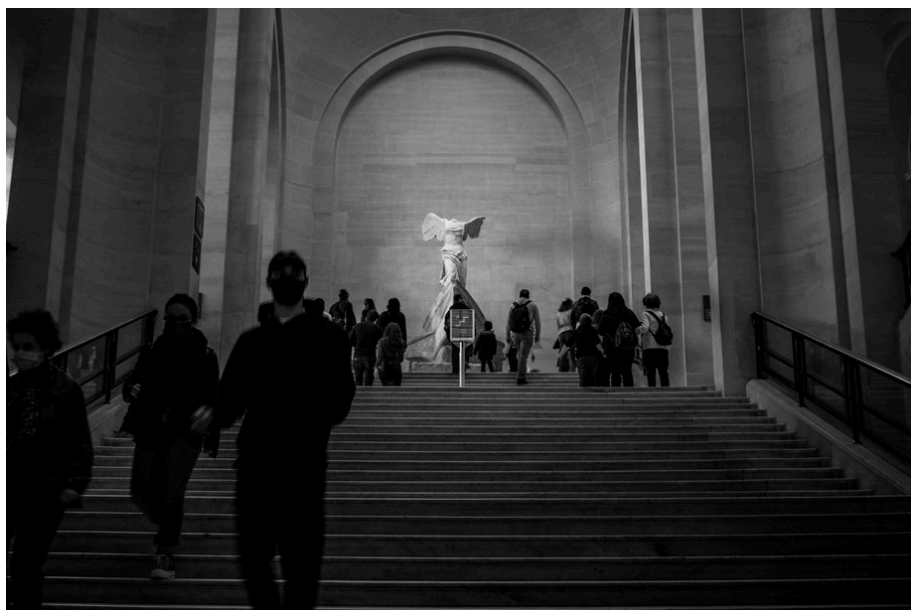
In the evening, we'll meet for **cocktails** at a secret venue to experience an authentic aspect of the **Parisian writer's life**.


**B-MT**  
**DAY 8**
**WEDNESDAY 22ND OCT**  
**WORKSHOP SIX**

Today in our **workshop, 10am to 1pm**, we will start exploring structure and form, starting with beauty and truth, as we always must.

We will uncover the patterns of narrative structures to find out how we can cast the spell of story.

**Free afternoon and evening.**




**B-MT-D DAY 9**
**THURSDAY 23RD OCT  
WORKSHOP SEVEN + FAREWELL DINNER**

Our final **workshop, from 10am to 1pm**. We will explore the difficulties of truth-telling and the dangers of self-indulgence – the pitfalls of writing the self. We will also bravely face how far we can go before memoir becomes fiction.

**Free afternoon.**

In the evening we'll meet for a very special **Farewell Dinner** at one of the city's most famous literary haunts to celebrate ten days of truth, beauty, challenge and joy in our writing and in our daily life in Paris.


**B DAY 10**
**FRIDAY 24TH OCT  
AU REVOIR, PARIS**

**Farewells** and final **breakfast**.  
Au revoir, Paris – until next time.





### INCLUDED IN COST

- Seven workshops with Australia's leading memoir writing mentor, Patti Miller.
- 30min one-on-one consultation with Patti in a Paris café.
- Dedicated tour manager and local Parisian guide, Mélissa Lesnie.
- Curated reading guide.
- 4-star accommodation in a central Parisian one-bedroom apartment, including daily breakfast (8 nights).
- Lecture with a local expert on French culture and literary history.\*
- Walking tour of Paris with expert on French culture and literary history.\*
- Full escorted day tour to Provins.\*
- All entrance fees on tours and experiences (as listed in itinerary).
- All meals and drinks (as listed in itinerary) including exclusive dining experiences for Welcome Lunch and Farewell Dinner.\*
- Welcome pack on arrival with essential items and maps
- Navigo métro pass for the duration of your stay.

\*Subject to amendment, pending availability.

### EXCLUDED FROM COST

- Airfares to and from France
- Any transfers not mentioned in itinerary
- Any visas you may require.
- Travel Insurance. (This is compulsory)
- Meals, services, drinks or gratuities not mentioned in the itinerary.
- Incidentals and expenditures of a personal nature.
- Covid-19 testing, medication or medical expenses

## PRICING

Price is in \$AUD. To book, please email [tours@betterread.com.au](mailto:tours@betterread.com.au) or submit a [booking form](#) on our website for more information. Please read the booking conditions on page 17 and note the following pay dates.

	SINGLE ACCOM.	TWIN SHARE
<b>FULL PRICE</b>	<b>\$10,650</b>	<b>\$8,160</b>
Deposit to secure booking (30%)	\$3,195	\$2,448
Second Instalment due by 28 February 2025 (50%)	\$5,325	\$4,080
Final Payment due by 25 July 2025 (20%)	\$2,130	\$1,632

Full payment needs to be completed before 25 July 2025.

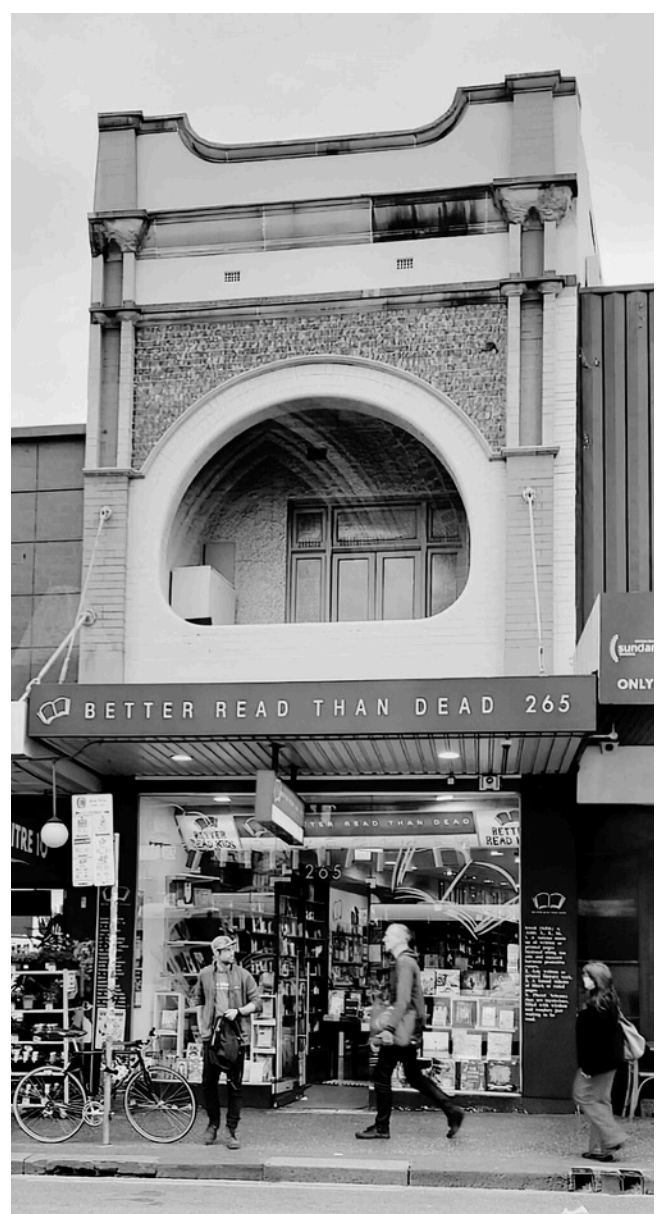


**BETTER READ THAN DEAD**, located in the heart of Newtown's lively King Street, is one of Sydney's most iconic independent bookshops – and Lonely Planet's favourite bookshop in Sydney. We have been an active member of Sydney's literary community for over two decades, renowned for our enthusiastic support of authors and our diverse literary events.

Better Read Tours launched in 2017 to combine Better Read Than Dead's wealth of literary knowledge with the expertise of a trusted educational tour company. We provide our clients with a programme of thoughtfully curated, fully escorted tours and writing retreats to the world's most fascinating literary destinations.

Our tour guides and writing mentors have been carefully chosen to provide insight into their selected destinations and give guidance on their craft. There is no one better suited to help you navigate these foreign shores and understand the historical, cultural and political events that have shaped the world's greatest and most influential writers.

Our writing retreats merge our unique, local-infused itineraries with the opportunity to work closely with an experienced Australian writing mentor. Whether you're seeking focus for your creativity, inspiration in stunning new environs, advice on



how to hone your writing practice or turn your focus on to a particular project, these immersive workshops offer the perfect retreat from the day-to-day. We are always working hard to create new and compelling travel opportunities. Be the first to learn of new tours by following us on social media and subscribing to our newsletter.



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If you would like to secure your place, please complete the [booking enquiry form available through our website.](#)

OR

Complete the booking form on page 19 and email to [tours@betterread.com.au](mailto:tours@betterread.com.au) or post to Better Read Tours, c/o Better Read Bookshop, 265 King Street, Newtown NSW 2042.

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## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I SEND IN A BOOKING ENQUIRY FORM?

A representative of Better Read Tours will contact you via phone and email to discuss booking options. You will be offered a place and a tax invoice will be issued. To secure your place, a 30% deposit is required within 7 days of receiving your booking form. We will receipt your payment and issue a tax invoice showing your payment and any balance due. This deposit is non-refundable. However, in the unlikely event we do not get required numbers for the tour to go ahead, Better Read Tours will refund your deposit.

## CANCELLATION

Your 30% deposit is non-refundable. If you cancel your booking more than 90 days prior to the start of the tour, you will be eligible for a refund of up to 70% of the tour cost, depending on your payments already made. All requests for booking cancellations and refunds must be made in writing.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is compulsory for all participants taking this tour. We recommend you organise your travel insurance at the time of booking.

For more information:  
INSTAGRAM: [@betterreadtours](#)  
FACEBOOK: [@betterreadtours](#)  
TWITTER: [@betterreadtours](#)  
EMAIL: [tours@betterread.com.au](mailto:tours@betterread.com.au)  
WEBSITE: [betterreadtours.com](http://betterreadtours.com)  
TELEPHONE: **+61 475 761 717**





Please read the following terms and conditions carefully as they form part of all bookings except to the extent approved by variation in writing approved by a director of Better Read Tours Pty Ltd ABN 16 621 237 885 (BRT).

**Prices:** All prices are subject to availability and can be withdrawn or amended at any time without notice. Price and inclusions valid on tour dates only.

**Amendment/Cancellation Fees:** We reserve the right to charge you for any amendment or cancellation made by you (regardless of the reason). These charges can be up to 100% of the cost of the booking, regardless of whether travel has commenced. BRT reserves the right to charge cancellation fees over and above those charged by wholesalers, tour operators, airlines, cruise companies, etc. Fees may also apply where a booking is changed or tickets are reissued.

**Deposit & Final Payment:** To secure your reservation you will be required to pay a deposit of 30% of the total tour price, within 7 days of receiving your booking form. Your deposit forms the first part of three payment installments which must be received by us before documents are issued. The second instalment is required by 28th February 2025, and the final payment is required 25th July 2025. Subject to the Australian Consumer Law, the deposit is non-refundable.

**Travel Documents:** Travel documents are subject to certain conditions and/or restrictions including restrictions on refunds, changes of dates and subject to cancellation and/or amendment fees. All travel documents are non-transferable. All airline tickets must be issued in the identical name of the passport holder, as airlines are at liberty to deny carriage if the name varies and the booking may be cancelled. Any resulting fees will be at the traveller's own expense.

**Passports & Visas:** It is your responsibility to ensure that you have valid passports, visas and re-entry permits which meet the requirements of immigration and other government authorities. Any fines, penalties, payments or expenditures incurred as a result of such documents not meeting the requirements of those authorities will be your sole responsibility.

All travellers must have a valid passport for international travel and many countries require at least 6 months validity from the date of entry. It is your responsibility to obtain up-to-date information regarding visa and other travel document requirements for your trip relating to your personal circumstances. We recommend seeking advice from an external visa advisory service if you are unsure of what is required. We are unable to obtain visas on your behalf. We do not warrant the accuracy of information or assistance provided by us. Subject to the Australian Consumer Law, we accept no liability for any loss or damage, which you may suffer in reliance on information or assistance provided by us.

**Health:** It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of any health requirements for your travel destinations, including those specific to Covid-19. Whilst we have a duty of care to ensure the health and safety of our participants, we cannot enforce Covid-19 testing, mask-wearing or isolation. Should you come down with symptoms of Covid-19, please advise the Tour Leader and arrange a solution at the Tour Leader's discretion. All advice on Covid-19 is subject to the laws of the country you are in. You must carry all necessary vaccination and other medical documentation, and comply with any applicable health law, order or requirement reasonably necessary to protect the health or safety of any of our suppliers, fellow travellers or your-self. Better Read Tours expects that you have achieved a good level of fitness prior to departure that enables you to comfortably walk up stairs and to walk reasonable distances with vigour.

**Travel Insurance:** Travel insurance is strongly recommended by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for all overseas travel and is compulsory to participate in a Better Read Tours tour. Please note that travel insurance may not cover all potential losses.

**Fees & Charges:** Credit card charges may apply.

**Taxes:** Certain taxes are mandatory in various countries. There may also be an additional local tax charged at some airports. All taxes are subject to change without notice.



It is recommended that you visit the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs for all up to date information. [www.smarttraveller.org.au](http://www.smarttraveller.org.au)

**Termination and Variation:** We reserve the right to vary or cancel the itinerary where reasonably required as a consequence of matters outside of our control (including for public health, availability, civil unrest or other safety or economic reasons). In that event, we will provide a suitable similar experience or, if that is not possible, offer a credit or refund (at our election to the extent permitted by law). We also reserve the right to terminate your future participation in the itinerary where we have reasonable grounds for believing that your continuation provides a danger to our suppliers or other travellers. In this case (and subject to any law) we will only refund any amount that we can recover from suppliers for untaken parts of the tour.

**Agency:** BRT is a tour company and the travel supplier. We work to bring to you a unique travel experience. Better Read Tours will assist you in all possible areas should there be dissatisfaction with any service provided.

**Liability:** Subject to the Australian Consumer Law, we do not accept any liability of whatever nature for the acts, omissions or default, whether negligent or otherwise, of third-party providers over whom we have no direct control. Under circumstances where liability cannot be excluded, such liability is limited to the value of the purchased travel arrangements to the extent permissible. To the extent permitted by law, we do not accept any liability in contract, tort or otherwise for any injury, damage, loss (including consequential loss), delay, additional expenses or inconvenience caused directly or indirectly by any event or matter which is beyond our control or which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part.

**Privacy Policy:** Better Read Tours is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of personal information.

**Bookings:** Better Read Tours reserves the right to refuse any booking at our sole discretion. No reason needs to be given for such refusal.





## BETTER READ TOURS

### BOOKING ENQUIRY FORM

Thanks for booking with us. Better Read Tours will record your booking request and contact you via email or phone to confirm. A tax invoice will be sent via email with our PayPal details and the amount due.

Your booking is not confirmed until we acknowledge that a deposit has been received. If you have additional accommodation requirements, we are happy to advise you on who to enquire with.

All bookings are subject to our terms and conditions. When filling in this form, please ensure spelling is correct and your name is written exactly as it is on your passport. Type directly on to the form or print out, scan and complete.

Please send the completed booking request via email to [tours@betterread.com.au](mailto:tours@betterread.com.au) or post to Better Read Tours, c/o Better Read Bookshop, 265 King St Newtown NSW 2042. One form is to be completed per person. We look forward to assisting you.

DATE OF ENQUIRY:		REQUESTED EXPERIENCE	
TITLE	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	
ADDRESS			
S T A T E	POST CODE	COUNTRY	
BEST CONTACT NUMBER		SECONDARY NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS			
DOB	WOULD YOU LIKE TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH OUR NEWSLETTERS? YES      NO		
COMMENTS			



# TAKE THE JOURNEY

[www.betterreadtours.com](http://www.betterreadtours.com)

