THE ASHES

The Ashes – Australia v England

4th & 5th Test package – Melbourne and Sydney – OTA 6649/2

Like us you're probably still recovering after the explosive and dramatic Ashes series last summer. Truly a contest between the best two sides in the world, this had everything you could ask for from a Test series and more, with refreshingly high levels of sportsmanship on display. The action was relentless all the way to the last day at the Oval, where the nerves were jangling as England clung on to regain the elusive Ashes with that unforgettable century from Kevin Pietersen.



So much has changed since the previous time the sides met. England have steadily established themselves as a major force in world cricket and Your Sporting Challenge has had the privilege of watching them do it from the West Indies to South Africa, as we have built on our excellent Ashes tour in 2002/03 to cement our place as one of the major players in the international cricket tour market. Who would have thought that Michael Vaughan, hero of the Barmy Army last time Down Under with three centuries, would be returning so soon as captain, with the Ashes tucked safely under his belt? Even at the start of the recent series few would have predicted the dominance the England team achieved at times over the Aussies, and the way they came from one down in the series proved beyond doubt that England finally has a team to match the worlds best.

Such a superb Test series just left us all wanting more, and England's next trip to Australia in 2006/7 is now the most eagerly awaited of all time. As we have seen this summer, the Aussies don't give in without a fight, and they will be doing their utmost to wrestle that precious urn back from England's grasp. Any Ashes contest is always worth seeing, particularly at the magnificently atmospheric sporting arenas of Melbourne and Sydney, but England's incredible performance in 2005 has really changed the landscape of Test cricket. Only one thing can top their achievements last summer, and that is winning it again in the Aussies' back yard. England are a young side that can still improve, which is why expectations for this series are massive. Whatever the result it seems more exciting, absorbing cricket is guaranteed. If you only ever go to one Ashes tour, this could well be the one to start planning for.

It really doesn't get any bigger than the next Ashes series, and you could be there at the climax courtesy of Your Sporting Challenge. Take in the excitement and tradition of the Boxing Day test at Melbourne, and bring the New Year in with a bang in Sydney where – hopefully - you might just witness England retaining the Ashes.

It's Englands biggest challenge, and the team will certainly be counting on your support. Don't miss out on the Ashes tour of a lifetime.

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Mon - Fri
9am - 5.30pm

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A Your Sporting Challenge Ashes tour combines quality hotels and efficient transport with an uncluttered schedule, which gives you the freedom to spend your time as you please. There will be a lot of fantastic cricket to take in, so you probably want to be able to choose how to spend that precious free time in two amazing cities. If there is anything we can do to help make your stay more enjoyable however, like perhaps organising a group sightseeing trip or round of golf, we will be on hand throughout. If you would like to discuss any aspect of the tour, please call one of our representatives on:

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Unlike many other tour operators, YSC keeps the cost (and the fuss) to a minimum while making sure you are always comfortable and looked after all the way. The tour is fully escorted by a YSC Tour Manager who will make sure all the travel arrangements run smoothly, so you can relax and enjoy the holiday of a lifetime in your own way. It really is the best way to cheer the boys on and discover the delights of Melbourne and Sydney into the bargain, without ever compromising on quality. We'll take care of everything, except the result of course.

Your Sporting Challenge cricket tours always attract a friendly crowd, with a mixture of men and women of all ages and group sizes creating a great atmosphere throughout the tour of a lifetime.

It has been a long time since England toured Australia as holders of the Ashes, and demand is expected to reach exceptional levels. Places are limited so please contact us now to secure your place and avoid disappointment.

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Melbourne



Melbourne is marvellous. Australia's second-largest city and Victoria's thriving capital is a restless, image-conscious centre with a bucketful of style. Of all Australia's cities, Melbourne is perhaps the most European in feel. Trams rattle through streets fronted by stern Victorian public buildings, while parks, outdoor cafes and restaurants lend it a Mediterranean air.

A leafy bay side community on the 'upside-down', brown Yarra River, Melbourne is a melting pot of cultures, in turns, cosmopolitan, suburban, cultivated, conservative and a haven for the genuine sporting enthusiast. Visitors come for its shopping, restaurants; nightlife and sporting calendar, and most agree that it's one of the world's most liveable cities. In a city known to experience all four-seasons in one day your hosts, the Melbournians, are equally as passionate about their fashion and restaurants as they are about their cricket and beer.



In the last 10 years the centre of Melbourne has undergone a renaissance. Innumerable hip boutiques, restaurants and bars crowd the alleys and Victorian-era arcades off the main streets. The south-bank of the river, which is only a short walk from your hotel, has been transformed into a swanky waterside socialising area housing bars, restaurants and Australia's largest casino. Add to this great dining-out spots including the bayside suburb of St Kilda, Lygon Street in Carlton for its Italian cuisine, Brunswick Street in Fitzroy for its offbeat cafe culture, and Little Bourke Street in the city centre for its superb range of Chinese cuisines and you'll be spoilt for choice.

Melbourne is an amazing city that you'll definitely want to visit again and again.



4* Docklands Apartments

Signature's Docklands Serviced Apartments offer a range of modern two bedroom apartments for the corporate or leisure traveller. Situated on the waterfront these prestige residential towers offer a great location on Victoria Harbour, 200 metres to Telstra Dome and 1 kilometre to the Melbourne city centre.

This accommodation offers resort style living adjacent to the Melbourne CBD. Guests have immediate access to shops, restaurants/cafes and theatres. A public marina is available and there are water ferry services to Crown Casino, Southbank and Federation Square.



All apartments have an open plan lounge-dining room with great balconies and are self-catering with full kitchen and laundry facilities. The apartments also have a security intercom, direct dial telephone, and are serviced weekly.

All guests are welcome to use the outdoor heated pool, gymnasium or BBQ facilities located in a garden courtyard. The property is a 4 1/2 star RACV Rated.

Docklands precinct is right on the doorstep of the CBD. You can train it, tram it, walk it, boat it, ferry it or cab it. As Australia's biggest urban development, Docklands offers unrivalled position and lifestyle.

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Sydney



No words can describe how great a city Sydney really is. This spectacular ocean-side city is consistently voted the world's best by visitors, and by adding an Ashes Test match we think it simply doesn't get any better.

Sydney, Australia's oldest city, is built around the glittering, emerald expanse of waterway which makes up Sydney Harbour, a series of natural inlets and beaches culminating in Sydney Cove which is dominated by the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge. As the economic powerhouse of the nation Sydney offers an invigorating blend of the old and the new, the raw and the refined and is the country's capital in everything but name. Visitors are struck by the harbour's beauty, especially at night when the high-rise towers around Circular Quay, the girders of the Harbour Bridge and the 'sails' of the Opera House are all lit up. It's then that the harbour waters take on a magical swirl of reflected colours - red, blue, green.



Sydney has much, much more to offer than the harbour alone. The cities birthplace is the historic Rocks area whose narrow streets are packed with attractive colonial buildings and up-market shops. The city is home to one of the world's most exciting restaurant scenes and offers superb shopping and friendly locals. Sydney is also home to Australia's most famous beach, Bondi, and the opportunity to rent a boogie board or take the pretty coastal walk over sandstone headlands to Tamarama maybe to good to miss. The nightlife is lively and vibrant, and with over 300 sunshine days a year the great outdoors is the place to be!

Sydney is a fantastic place to finish the tour.

4* Mercure Sydney



Mercure Sydney is ideally located next to central station – Syndeys' major transport hub and offers 4* quality accommodation with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The hotel is situated right in the heart of the entertainment district with Her Majesty's and Capitol Theatre right at your doorstep. Chinatown, Darling Harbour and the Sydney Entertainment Centre are all within walking distance. The 21 level hotel, which is bounded by George Street and Railway Square, offers two restaurants and a bar alongside an excellent indoor rooftop swimming pool with sauna and gym.

The hotels rooms offer: A safety deposit box in each room, Mini bar, Pay-per-view channels, Radio, Satellite/Cable colour TV, Hair dryer in bathroom, and 24hour room service.



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Singapore



If there is one word that best captures Singapore, it is “unique”. A dynamic city rich in contrast and colour, you'll find a harmonious blend of culture, cuisine, arts and architecture here. Brimming with unbridled energy, this little dynamo in Southeast Asia embodies the finest of both East and West.

A day's visit will take you from the past to the future, from exotic ethnic enclave to efficient business centre, from serene gardens to sleek skyscrapers. Located at one of the crossroads of the world, Singapore's strategic position has helped it grow into a major centre for trade, communications and tourism. It is linked to Malaysia by two causeway bridges, and the key islands of the Riau archipelago of Indonesia are just a quick ferry trip away. Thailand and the Philippines are a short plane journey away. Singapore, with an airport served by more than 69 airlines, is very much the gateway to Southeast Asia.



Whilst in Singapore we will be visiting the World famous ‘Raffles Hotel’, which was declared a National monument in 1987 and restored in 1991. Home of the Singapore Sling, the Long Bar with its earthy decor was inspired by Malayan plantations in the 1920's. Over the years, the hotel has evolved into one of the world's most beloved Grand Hotels and welcomed innumerable celebrities, writers, and royalty. The hotel is renowned and loved for it's inimitable style and unsurpassed excellence in service and facilities.

4* Novotel Clarke Quay



The Novotel Clarke Quay Singapore is conveniently located near the famed Orchard Road Shopping Paradise, the Suntec City convention centre and the Singapore Exposition Hall. It is also next to Clarke Quay, Boat Quay and Robertson Quay, which offer an exciting blend of entertainment, shopping and a variety of dining experiences from international cuisine to delectable local fare. The hotel features 402 beautifully appointed rooms, 5 meeting rooms, fitness centre, swimming pool, restaurants and bar.

The hotels rooms offer: Air conditioning, Safe deposit box in room, Mini Bar, Phone, Satellite / Cable colour TV, 24 hour room service.



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Cricket Grounds

MCG - The People's Ground



Built in 1853 and home to the first-ever international Test the Melbourne Cricket Ground is considered to be one of the Worlds leading sporting arenas. The MCG is very close to central Melbourne, with either a short train or tram ride, or even a stroll along the banks of the Yarra, required to reach the arena.

Apart from the magnificent cricketing contests it has witnessed, the stadium also provides its visitors with world-class facilities, and has a well-known Australian Gallery of Sport, which includes some of the most priceless pieces of memorabilia in Australian sporting history. In the final stages of redevelopment prior to the Commonwealth Games in the summer of 2006 the stadium will boast a seating capacity in excess of 100,000. The Boxing Day Test at the MCG is a truly spectacular event with every Aussie roaring on the home team over their Christmas hampers and beer.

The Sydney Cricket Ground – S.C.G.



The S.C.G. is one of Australia's premier sporting and entertainment venues. It is located at Moore Park, only 4kms from the centre of Sydney and adjacent to the popular bars, restaurants, cinemas and shops of Fox Studios Australia. The historic Sydney Cricket Ground, which has a capacity of 44,000, boasts an impressive list of credentials, encompassing cricket, Australian Rules football, rugby league, rugby union and soccer.

The S.C.G. has witnessed a number of highlights over the years from Don Bradmans, and Australia's, highest first-class innings score of 452 (for NSW against Queensland) in 1930 to Darren Goughs first English Ashes hatrick of the last century in 1999! Those who joined Your Sporting Challenge in Australia in 2003 were honoured to see the then Australian skipper Steve Waugh become only the third player to reach 10,000 Test runs, on his way to completing a brilliant 29th Test century from the final ball of play on day two of the Test.

The Sydney Cricket Ground provides the perfect balance between the big crowd atmosphere and intimacy with the on-field action.

Tickets

For those who confirm that they wish to join Your Sporting Challenge for the Melbourne and Sydney Tests we are pleased to be able to offer the following four-day tickets (with the fifth day to be purchased at face value if required in Australia), which we will issue on a first-confirmed-first-serve basis. The prices listed below can be used as a guide and will be confirmed by Cricket Australia on June 1st. At this stage Y.S.C. will use the relevant exchange rate for the sterling conversion.

Melbourne	Platinum seats	Estimated AUS $322 (or £130.00)
Sydney	Silver seats	Estimated AUS $254 (or £110.00)
	Bronze seats	Estimated AUS $204 (or £90.00)

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Itinerary:

21st December - Singapore Airlines flight SQ319 departs London Heathrow at 18:30.

22nd December - Singapore Airlines flight SQ319 arrives in Singapore at 14:15, the onward flight to Melbourne SQ237 departs at 23:40. - During our brief stay in Singapore we will be taken for a city tour, including a stop at the World famous Raffles Hotel for a light finger buffet and a Singapore Sling.

23rd December - Singapore Airlines flight SQ237 arrives in Melbourne at 08:55. - Transfer to the 'Docklands Apartments' in central Melbourne where we will be spending eight nights on a bed and breakfast basis. - In the evening there will be an informal get-together, with no-doubt a few drinks, to enable everyone to meet your fellow England supporters on the tour.

24th-25th December - Leisure time.

26th-30th December - 100th Test Match at the M.C.G. Australia v England

31st December - Early afternoon flight from Melbourne to Sydney with QANTAS. - Transfer to the 'Mercure Sydney' in central Sydney where we will be spending eight nights on a bed and breakfast basis. - Evening at leisure.

1st January - Leisure time.

2nd-6th January - Final Test in the 'Ashes' series. Australia v England

7th January - Leisure time.

8th January - Singapore Airlines flight SQ220 departs Sydney at 08:15 to arrive in Singapore at 14:20. - Transfer to the 'Novotel Clarke Quay' in central Singapore where we will be spending one night on a bed and breakfast basis. - Evening at leisure.

9th January - Singapore Airlines flight SQ320 departs Singapore at 12:40 to arrive in London Heathrow Singapore at 19:10.

Package includes:

- Return flights with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow.
- City tour of Singapore, including finger buffet and 'Singapore Sling' at Raffles Hotel.
- Eight nights bed and breakfast accommodation at the superb 4* serviced 'Docklands Apartments' in central Melbourne.
- Welcome drink.
- Internal flight from Melbourne to Sydney with QANTAS on New Years Eve.
- Eight nights bed and breakfast accommodation at the 4* 'Mercure Sydney' in central Sydney.
- One nights bed and breakfast 4* accommodation at the 'Novotel Clarke Quay' in central Singapore.
- Access to guaranteed Test Match Tickets at face value.
- All airport transfers.
- Match transfers in Sydney (The MCG is accessible on foot or by public transport).
- Services of a Your Sporting Challenge representative with local knowledge.

Cost:

£3,295 per person based on twin share.

(£1,000 per person single supplement)

RESERVE YOUR PLACE TODAY

Exceptional demand means we are accepting £500 deposit to guarantee your place.



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