

STOP GUESSING START DOING



Consider this curated guide your ultimate road trip handbook to the Northern Territory!

Take a journey from the tropical Top End through sprawling national parks and secret waterfalls, to the remote Aboriginal communities and sacred rock formations along Explorer's Way. In Alice Springs uncover a burgeoning local scene, explore the rich landscape of the MacDonnell Ranges and as you journey into the Red Centre, immerse yourself in the ancient history of the local Anangu Aboriginal people and tick off some of Australia's most iconic natural landmarks.

Use our suggested three-day itineraries as a starting point to explore the best of these diverse and unique regions.

So hire a car, make a road trip playlist and do the NT.

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FIND OUT MORE 



TOP END

DAY ONE: DARWIN

Mindil Beach Sunset Markets

Soak up the sights, smells and sounds of Darwin's iconic beachfront markets, offering over 300 stalls of local arts, crafts and street food, as well as magical sunset views. Held every Thursday and Sunday from April to October.

The Precinct Tavern

Boasting over 46 craft beers on tap, upscale pub grub and a breezy outdoor beer garden, this bustling waterfront venue is the perfect pit-stop for an ice-cold brew and a bite to eat after a busy day of exploring.

Crococaurus Cove

Where else can you swim side-by-side with an enormous saltwater croc, get up close and personal with local reptiles, and bait up a fishing rod to feed baby jumping crocs - this urban wildlife reserve truly has it all!

DAY THREE: KAKADU NATIONAL PARK

Ubirr

Embark on the 1km walking loop and see Kakadu's famous Aboriginal rock art including some of the longest historical records of any group, or venture a little further to the panoramic lookout and stay to watch a magical sunset!

Gunlom Plunge Pool

Located at the peak of Gunlom Waterfall and offering some of the most incredible vistas of the countryside, this pristine natural infinity pool takes a steep climb to reach, but the views from the top make it well worthwhile - don't forget the camera!

Yellow Water Billabong

Nestled in the heart of Heritage-listed Kakadu, this sprawling wetland is a nature-lovers paradise, teeming with wildlife, birdlife and plantlife. Jump onboard a cruise for the ultimate wildlife encounter and keep your eyes peeled for crocs.

DAY TWO: LITCHFIELD NATIONAL PARK

Termite Mounds

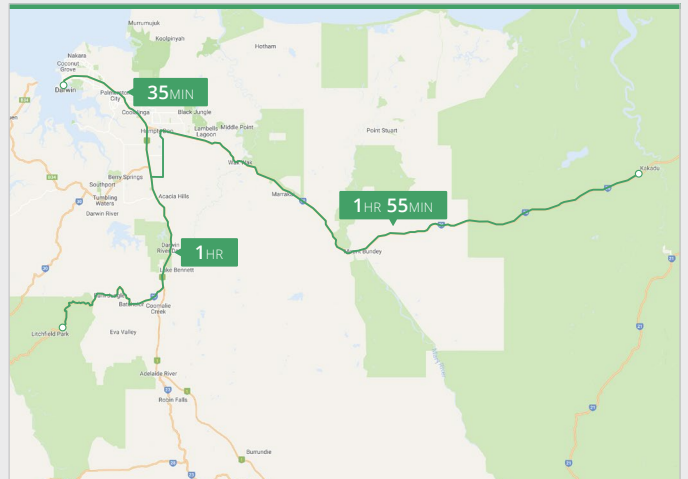
Marvel at the sheer size and intricate architecture of these unusual natural structures as you wander the boardwalk alongside towering Cathedral termite mounds and north-south facing Magnetic termite mounds that are unique to this area.

Florence Creek Walk

Grab bathers and walking shoes and experience the jaw-dropping scenery, crystal clear swimming holes and native wildlife along this scenic 3.2km walking trail between Florence Falls and Buley Rockholes - suitable for all fitness levels.

Wangi Falls

Boasting a pristine plunge pool fed by cascading waterfalls, a shaded picnic area with barbecues, several bushwalking trails, and a campground this natural oasis is a must-visit for those seeking the ultimate outback adventure.



Cooinda Lodge Kakadu Hotel

★★★★★ Kakadu National Park, Kakadu Highway, Kakadu, Australia

Minimalistic rooms and no WiFi aren't your usual selling points but this off-the-grid eco retreat is all about an authentic outback experience! Owned by the local Aboriginal community and within walking distance to waterways, there's no better base to explore Kakadu.





KATHERINE & SURROUNDS

DAY ONE: NITMILUK NATIONAL PARK

Leliyn
Whether you're stopping by for a quick dip under the cascading falls, hiking the 2.6 kilometre Leliyn Trail to Sweetwater Pool, or staying the night at the bushy campground, Edith Falls is an idyllic spot that the whole family will enjoy!

Butterfly Gorge Nature Park
An easy 10-minute walk from the carpark, tucked away at the base of a sandstone plateau, this tranquil paradise boasts shaded riverine walks, secluded rock pools nestled between narrow gorges, and a plethora of wildlife including the common crow butterfly.

Scenic Flight
Take in the grandeur and beauty of this dramatic region from above with an awe-inspiring scenic flight over wild rivers, rocky gorges, majestic waterfalls, and rugged escarpments whilst hearing about the rich culture, history and wildlife.

DAY THREE: ELSEY NATIONAL PARK

Mataranka Thermal Pool and Rainbow Springs
Boasting shimmering spring-fed waters that average a balmy 30 degrees, and surrounded by shady Mataranka palms and lush rainforest, it's easy to see why this famous thermal pool is a favourite with visitors and locals alike!

Daly Waters Pub
If venues could speak, this historic 1930's era pub would have a tale or two, to tell! From the memorabilia adorned bar to the warm outback hospitality, and classic pub fare, this storied tavern is an unmissable local landmark.

Bitter Springs
Originally discovered by surveyors for the Overland Telegraph Line in the nineteenth century, this sparkling emerald thermal pool is true hidden gem, you could easily spend a few days splashing and exploring and still find it hard to leave!

DAY TWO: KATHERINE REGION

Katherine Hot Springs
Relax and unwind with a soothing dip in the series of crystal clear hot springs situated at the bank of the Katherine River. Believed by many to contain healing properties, this natural wonder is a must-visit during the dry season.

Cutta Cutta Caves Nature Park
Spanning over 3,000 acres of limestone karst and tropical cave systems that are found in only a few locations in northern Australia, this reserve is home to unique ecology, a variety of wildlife including the endangered Gouldian Finch, and millions of years of history.

Top Didj Cultural Experience and Art Gallery
Browse local Aboriginal artwork or get hands on with an interactive cultural experience where you'll learn about Indigenous style painting, spear throwing, fire sticks and basket weaving with Top End Aboriginal artist, Manuel Pamkal.



Cicada Lodge, Katherine

★★★★★ Gorge Road, Katherine, Australia 0850

Nestled within Nitmiluk National Park overlooking Katherine Gorge, this boutique eco resort captures the cultural and natural surrounds, allowing guests to experience the wonders of the Top End in style, fusing comfort and convenience seamlessly.



BARKLY REGION

DAY ONE: TENNANT CREEK

Nyinkka Art and Cultural Centre
Set on the sacred site of Nyinkka, a spiky tailed goanna, this Aboriginal art centre and museum is the best place to see the work of local Warumungu artists, learn about bush medicine plants and immerse yourself in their rich culture and history.

Kunjarra (The Pebbles)
As the sun sets over this mysterious boulder formation and the granite rocks glow to red you might gain an insight into why this is a sacred site used by the local Warumungu people for dancing and healing rites of the Munga Munga dreaming.

Kelly's Ranch
Saddle up and embark on a scenic two and a half hour bush tucker trail ride with local Warumungu horseman Jerry Kelly. On horseback you'll journey through the vast tablelands with a rest stop for damper and a cup of billy tea while Kelly shares stories of life on the land.

DAY THREE: ENROUTE TO ALICE SPRINGS

Arlpwe Art and Cultural Centre
Head to this art gallery, art centre and pottery studio in the remote Aboriginal community, Ali Curung to meet Aboriginal artists in residence and watch as they create intricately detailed paintings and traditional artifacts.

Red Centre Farm, Ti Tree
Don't be fooled by this unassuming roadside stop. This mango farm is the place for delicious mango swirl ice cream, sweet chutneys, preserves, frozen fruit and of course, fresh mangoes in the summer season.

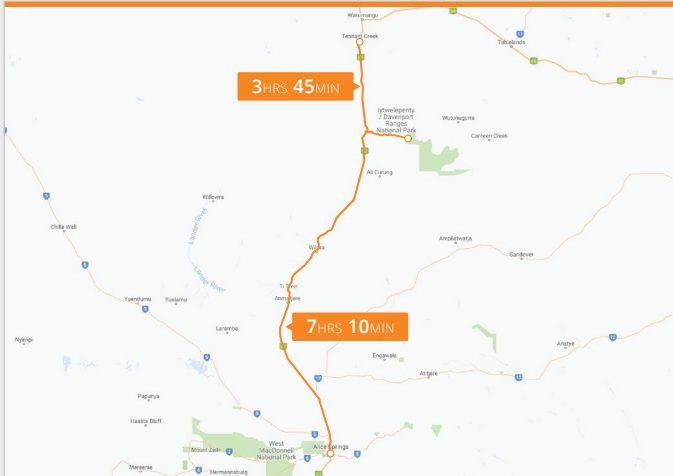
Gem Fossicking in Gentree
Buy a bucket of garnet bearing gravel and go fossicking for your own semi-precious stone at the gateway to the mineral-rich Harts Range region. You can have your finds appraised, sorted and cut at the onsite gem room and gallery.

DAY TWO: DAVENPORT RANGE

Karlu Karlu (Devil's Marbles)
Wake early at the nearby campsite and witness these sacred boulders, scattered across the valley and balancing precariously on top of one another, change from an earthy pink to deep red as the sun rises above the horizon.

Iytwelepenty (Davenport Range National Park)
You won't find established walking tracks in this untouched piece of bushland rich with magnificent gorges, swimming holes and an abundance of bird species. Best traversed in a 4WD, it's the kind of place you spend a day exploring without a specific destination in mind.

Camp Under The Stars
There's no experience more authentically outback than setting up camp and rolling out a sleeping bag to spend the night under the stars. You'll find free bush campsites along the Stuart Highway and in the National Parks.



DoubleTree By Hilton, Alice Springs

★★★★★ 82 Barrett Drive, 0870 Alice Springs, Australia [📄](#)

Book a room with a view at this eco hotel for breathtaking views over the MacDonnell Mountain Ranges. Boasting an onsite golf course, pool bar, gourmet Asian restaurant, and within walking distance to downtown Alice Springs, expect comfort and value.



RED CENTRE

DAY ONE: ALICE SPRINGS

Outback Ballooning
Rise with the sun and drift across the rugged MacDonnell Ranges with nothing but crisp morning air beneath you in this unforgettable outback experience. If heights aren't your thing, take off on a ground balloon and meet the group for drinks at the landing site.

Todd Mall
Every small town has its hub and this is Alice Springs'. You'll find the best brew at The Goods Coffee Shop and if you're looking for a night out head to Epilogue Lounge for an open mic comedy night, weekend soul session or funky motown party.

The Kangaroo Sanctuary
If you want to snuggle with an orphaned joey look no further than Kangaroo Dundee's sanctuary, now complete with a rescue centre and hospital. Don't miss the guided sunset tour through the 188-acre wildlife reserve to see the red kangaroos waking up.

DAY THREE: ULURU

Bush Tucker Journeys
Taste local native bush tucker, learn about the Aboriginal katjii (hunting spears) and tjutjina (clubs), see a live didgeridoo performance and enjoy a candlelit dinner beneath the stars overlooking Uluru at this unmissable series of cultural experiences run by Ayers Rock Resort.

Kata Tjuta (The Olgas)
Rise before dawn and embark on the challenging 7.4-kilometre Valley of the Winds Walk that winds through creek beds and takes you up close to these sacred ochre domes that are estimated to be 500 million years old.

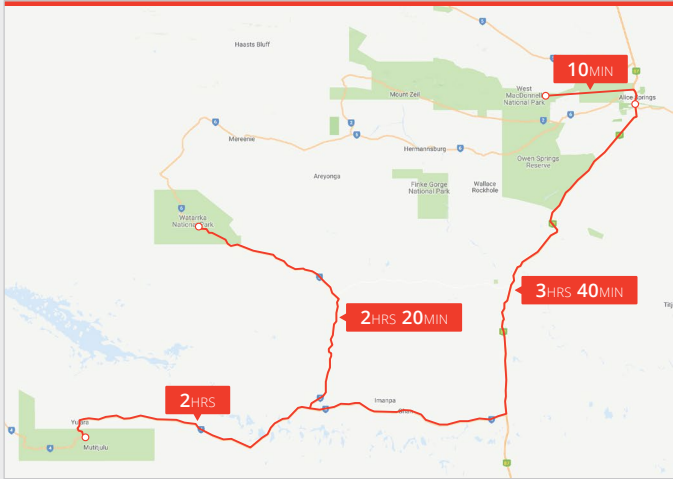
Uluru
Believed by the Anangu Aboriginal people to have been created at the beginning of time, marvel at this iconic natural landform at sunrise or sunset. Until 2020, the area surrounding this sacred site will be illuminated by a field of 50,000 stems of light at nightfall.

DAY TWO: WEST MACDONNELL RANGE

Tjoritja (West MacDonnell National Park)
Tackle a section of the epic Larapinta Trail that stretches through this rich landscape and spot black-footed wallabies at Simpsons Gap, swim in the waterhole at Rwyteyeme (Redbank Gorge), and wonder at the dramatic rockface of Angkerle Atwatye (Standley Chasm).

Ntaria (Hermannsburg)
The preserved buildings of Central Australia's first Lutheran Mission still stand in this Aboriginal community that was the home of famed Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira and the birthplace of the Hermannsburg watercolour movement.

Kings Canyon Rim Walk
Things only get easier on this moderate 6km circuit that skirts the edge of Kings Canyon. After you've conquered the 500 stairs, stretch the 4 hour hike into a whole-day activity and make the most of the secluded picnic spots and the Garden of Eden.



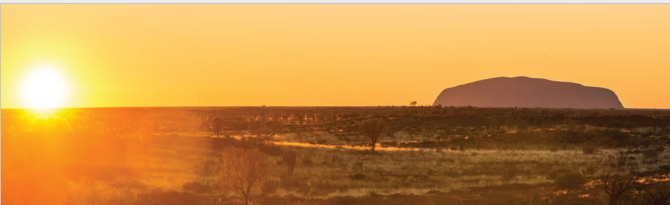
Sails In The Desert

★★★★★ 1 Yulara Drive, 0872 Yulara, Australia [📄](#)

This luxe outback stay, housed in the Ayers Rock Resort complex, immerses its guests in the ancient culture of the local Anangu people at every opportunity. Interior details have been designed by local Aboriginal artists and each stay includes an Indigenous activities program.



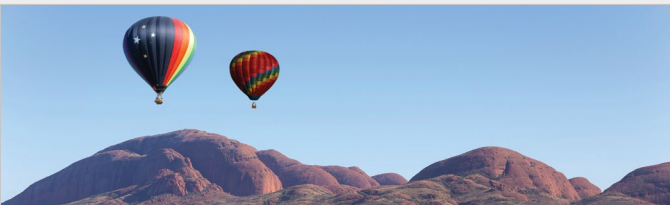
ACTIVITIES



Uluru Field of Light Sunrise Tour [✉](#)



Arnhem Land Injalak Hill Full-Day Tour from Jabiru [✉](#)



Early Morning Ballooning in Alice Springs [✉](#)



Kata Tjuta Small-Group Tour [✉](#)



2-Day Top End Safari Camp [✉](#)



Groote Eylandt 2-Day, 3 Night Fishing Safari [✉](#)