

21-Day Wonders of West Coast and Kimberley

21 days

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Highlights

- Darwin City Tour ? Darwin Museum, East Point
- Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge Cruise
- Katherine Outback Experience
- Darwin City Sites
- Adelaide War Cemetery
- Nitmiluk National Park
- Katherine Outback Experience
- Durak Homestead
- Ord River Cruise
- Café Sandalwood BMG Dinner
- Hoochery Distillery
- Emma Gorge ? Hike & Swim (Strong Fitness Required)
- El Questro Wilderness Park
- El Questro Station
- Indigenous Guided Argyle Diamond Mine Tour
- Chamberlain Gorge Cruise
- Kimberley Aboriginal Art Gallery Experience
- Geiki Gorge Cruise
- Cable Beach Sunset Drinks
- Gantheaume Point Broome ? Dinosaur Footprints
- Karijini National Park ? Falls, gorges and swimming
- Coral Bay Glass Bottom Boat Cruise ? Ningaloo Reef
- Space & Technology Museum Carnarvon
- Hamlin Pool Stromatolites
- Shell Beach
- Monkey Mia Dolphins
- Kalbarri National Park
- HMAS Sydney Memorial Geraldton
- Pinnacles at Nambung National Park
- Yachep National Park ? Aboriginal experience

Inclusions

- Specialist team of two highly experienced Travel Director and Driver Guide
- Local Specialists (Guides)
- Centrally located premium hotels
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

Exclusions

- Airfare unless specified as included within the itinerary
- Taxes as applicable
- Travel Insurance and Cancellation Protection (strongly recommended, ask us for a quote!)
- Gratuities for Local Guides, Tour Managers, and/or Bus Drivers
- Meals not specifically mentioned as included in the itinerary
- Items (attractions and sightseeing & entrance fees) not listed as included in the itinerary

Itinerary

Day 1: Welcome to Perth

The Western Australian capital is colourful in more ways than one. There are alleys lined with eye-popping street art and installations, an homage to the state's creatives. And wildflowers and natives blanketing 400-hectare Kings Park and Botanic Garden, set on a pretty bend of the Swan River. At the middle of it all is the Anzac Memorial, a spot as humbling as it is serene. Discover the sights on a tour, then head to dinner to meet your fellow adventurers. They'll be best mates in no time.

Overnight: Perth

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 2: Perth - Geraldton

Talk about starting on a high. First stop is Yanchep National Park, where your Aboriginal guide decodes native plants and tells Dreamtime stories of how the land was created. Prepare to get hands-on, tasting bush tucker and even playing the didgeridoo. Well, trying to play it... Just as scene-stealing and spiritual are Nambung National Park's Pinnacles, a staggering collection of natural limestone structures, jutting into the sky - up to 3.5 metres high. Some 30,000 years ago, the sea receded and left deposits of shells. Over time, coastal winds removed the sand, leaving behind this surreal moonscape. Arriving in Geraldton, pay homage to the 645 Australian sailors who were lost off the WA coast during WWII at the HMAS Sydney Memorial. Then discover the rest of the seaside town at your own pace, cycling to the red-and-white striped lighthouse, wandering the foreshore or visiting the cathedral.

Overnight: Geraldton

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 3: Geraldton - Monkey Mia

Prepare yourself for the 'living fossils' at Hamelin Pool, home to the most abundant colony of stromatolites in the world. These astounding creatures show us what life was like 3,500-million years ago, when there was no other complex life on Earth. You're officially in the state's World Heritage listed Shark Bay, the largest of its kind in Australia with more than 1,000 kilometers of beaches. Not all of them sandy - welcome to Shell Beach. Here, the snow-white colour comes from billions of tiny coquina bivalve shells, up to 10 metres deep and stretching for 70 kilometers. And just when you thought the outlook couldn't get any better, you arrive at Monkey Mia.

Overnight: Monkey Mia

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 4: Monkey Mia Free Time

If you didn't fall in love with the gin-clear waters, powdery sand and rusty-red dunes of Monkey Mia last night, you certainly will today. Meet the wild resident dolphins that turn up to the shore every morning to interact with humans. They arrive in a pod, and splash about in the shallows, before dancing off to catch a few waves. When it's time to tear yourself away, the afternoon is yours, at leisure. Sign up to see yet more dolphins on a sunset cruise, perhaps? Or enjoy a bird's-eye perspective of Shark Bay on a scenic flight.

Overnight: Monkey Mia

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 5: Monkey Mia - Carnarvon

From this thriving marine ecosystem to overhead attractions, your next stop is the Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum. Did you know it played a role in the 1969 moon landing, and was instrumental in the space race? These are among the gallery's claims to fame, as you'll discover touring the collection. Your visit here, with passionate guides, is interactive and educational, so prepare to channel your inner Neil Armstrong and try on space suits before climbing aboard a supercraft simulator.

Overnight: Carnarvon

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 6: Carnarvon - Exmouth

Don't want to get your hair wet? You're in luck. Today's cruise in a glass-bottomed boat allows you to glimpse the World Heritage listed Ningaloo Coast, and its extraordinary marine life, in comfort. Gliding around Coral Bay, your guide will point out colourful corals, turtles and playful fish - more than 500 species call this protected patch of ocean home. This pocket of the state is also blessed with Cape Range National Park, where immense gorges and waterfalls characterize the countryside. But your focus here should be firmly on the ocean, whether you're swimming in it or cruising above it, or gazing over it from Vlamingh Head Lighthouse.

Overnight: Exmouth

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 7: Exmouth Free Time

Depending on the time of year, Ningaloo Reef is home to both whale sharks and humpback whales. Thanks to the region's ethically minded operators, you can now opt to snorkel with both. There's nothing quite as humbling as spotting these enormous creatures in the wild. But if you prefer to stay dry, there are still ways to take in the coastline. Book an optional sunset cruise and you may well see a humpback breaching and blowing, dolphins in your wake. The decision is all yours today. We wouldn't blame you for simply strolling along the sand...

Overnight: Exmouth

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 8: Exmouth - Karijini National Park

There are a few (hundred) kilometers of Pilbara to cover between Exmouth on the coast and inland Karijini National Park. A frontier like no other, Karijini is a place where gorges seem to cleave off the edge of the Earth, waterfalls tumble from escarpments and remote turquoise rock pools shimmer like precious gems. The wilderness is wilder, the colours brighter, the air clearer. If you didn't know any better, you'd think someone had taken the glasses off your nose and cleaned them for the first time. Even darkness doesn't temper the natural drama. You're miles from the nearest town, and in the absence of light pollution you can look forward to dazzling stargazing, even from bed in your safari-tent.

Overnight:

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 9: Karijini National Park

Bring your stamina and your camera - today's Karijini tour weaves deep into the national park. It took billions of years to create the geological wonders you see: the red layered cliffs, the quiet gorges, the soaring gum trees and distinctive termite mounds. It covers a staggering 630,000 hectares just north of the Tropic of Capricorn in the Hamersley Range, making it WA's second-largest national park. Its location also makes it steamy - if you packed your swimsuit, cooling off under waterfalls and drifting about in waterholes comes highly recommended.

Overnight: Karijini

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 10: Karijini National Park - Port Hedland

The eye-opening colours of the Pilbara region are your backdrop today - rich red earth streaked with mineral deposits. It's sparsely populated, but you will find people in the major hub of Port Hedland. There are plenty of local characters to meet over dinner at your hotel, which gets busy when musicians begin to play. Before you leave, head to a lookout to spot migrating humpback whales and snubfin dolphins cruising along the coast, season pending

Overnight: Karijini

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11: Port Hedland - Broome

The reason Broome was born is because of pearls - the waters here grow some of the best oysters in the world, as you'll discover on a city tour. The 'pearl rush' saw fortune-seekers from around the world descend. And many never left, making Broome one of the most multicultural destinations in Australia. Today, the city is just as well known for its sizzling Indian Ocean sunsets, best enjoyed from a vantage on, or near, Cable Beach. This stretch of sand is long. So long that it can accommodate 4WDs, camels and foot-traffic. Perch here, or head to a waterside café. Order a drink, and settle in.

Overnight: Broome

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 12: Broome Free Time

Today is yours to explore. There are many reasons to linger in town, browsing pearl boutiques, tackling some of Cable Beach's 22 kilometers, exploring colourful Chinatown. Or venture further afield on an optional experience to witness the full force of some of the world's biggest tides. The Horizontal Falls is no ordinary waterfall. Here, changing tides push an immense amount of water through two narrow chasms in a short period of time. And voila - the appearance of a waterfall, tipped on its side. What does one do when faced with this rush? Tackle it in a speedboat, of course. For a different perspective, head to the skies on a scenic flight. Or do both.

Overnight: Broome

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 13 : Broome - Fitzroy Crossing

Things are bigger in Broome, including the footprints. Some 125 million years ago dinosaurs left their mark along the coast. Glimpse their stomping ground before venturing toward Fitzroy Crossing, a remote town and the gateway to Danggu (Geikie) Gorge. This remarkable part of the Kimberley was formed by the Fitzroy River carving the Napier Range. This all happened in Devonian times,

some 350 million years ago. It's a fertile home to everything from freshwater crocs to fruit bats and wallabies, which will gaze at you from the top of the 30-metre-high cliffs that surround. That's not the only reason to look up - keep watch for white-bellied sea eagles and rare, purple-crowned fairy wrens. It's a fertile home for creatures big and small, from freshwater crocs to fruit bats.

Overnight: Fitzroy

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 14: Fitzroy Crossing - Halls Creek

Dive deep into First Nations culture on a visit to an art gallery, a community venue supporting Aboriginal creatives in the Fitzroy Crossing region. Your destination for the night is Halls Creek: small in population, but big in personality. Like your last port, Aboriginal Songlines are strong. These communities have lived on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert for millennia. European influence is more recent, thanks to a brief gold rush which revealed the potential of the land for cattle stations.

Overnight: Halls Creek

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 15: Halls Creek - Emma Gorge

When the Argyle Diamond Mine was in operation, it produced more than 95% of the world's pink diamonds. Oh, the carats that have come out of here! It stopped mining these rare (and dazzling) gems at the end of 2020, but you can still visit the immense site with an Aboriginal guide. Which means you not only go behind the scenes of operations, but also learn about the significance of the land - the traditional Barramundi Dreaming site - to Aboriginal communities. From here you're on the epic Gibb River Road, a wild adventure that traverses 660 kilometers across the Kimberley. You're getting a taster en route to El Questro Wilderness Park, backdropped by the rusty red Cockburn Ranges. Hidden among the pandanus and palms are a string of slick safari-style tents. Which means you can gaze at the stars while you drift off to a chorus of frogs and cicadas.

Overnight:

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 16: El Questro Wilderness Park

No alarm-clock necessary: nature wakes you here. The Kimberley's sounds follow you across the mighty Pentecost River to Chamberlain Gorge, a dreamy fresh waterhole where wallabies and crocs play (not with each other). Your boat is dwarfed by the gorge's soaring 60-metre escarpments, a brilliant shade of orange in the morning sun. Days in this part of WA can heat up. This afternoon's remedy? A splash in the resort's pool, perhaps, or a dip in a waterhole within Emma Gorge. The latter is a challenge to reach - you will work up a sweat hiking there. But diving in at the end is worth the effort. Be sure to be back on your patio in time for sundowners.

Overnight: El Questro Wilderness Park

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 17: Emma Gorge - Kununurra

Kununurra appears to have been dropped in the middle of nowhere, born through the Ord River Irrigation Scheme. It now waters crops like sugarcane, turned into lip-smacking rum at family-owned Hoochery Distillery. Go behind the scenes with the owners; there's time for a tasting, or sit down to a slice of delicious rum cake - your morning tea sorted. See what life was like in the region for early pioneers at the Durack Homestead Museum, which was meticulously moved and recreated before the land it formerly sat on was flooded as part of the Irrigation Scheme. The same project not only helped water the countryside but created Lake Argyle. A sunset cruise here, surrounded by tens of thousands of freshwater crocs and an astounding array of birds, is something you won't forget in a hurry.

Overnight: Kununurra

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 18: Kununurra

Today is one of decisions: An optional early-morning flight over (or 4WD tour of) the beehive rock formations of the Bungle Bungles in World Heritage listed Purnululu National Park? Or a wander with your Travel Director through Mirima National Park, known as the 'mini-Bungles' for its resemblance to its more well-known neighbour. Both experiences reveal the mind-boggling geology of this part of the world. Regardless, sunset should be enjoyed atop Kelly's Knob. Follow the lead of locals, who hang out here on a nightly basis - because there's no such thing as a 'bad' sunset.

Overnight: Kununurra

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 19: Kununurra - Katherine

Say goodbye to WA and hello to the NT, your introduction to the state the vast pastoral lands that characterise the outback here. Locals come with plenty of country swagger, as you'll discover when you meet the horseman and award-winning musician Tom Curtain for an afternoon of knee-slappin' fun on a working station. Tom's quite the entertainer, and regales visitors with songs and stories during his Katherine Outback Experience. It's not a show or a tour, but an immersive adventure. One that is real, raw, and side-splitting at times.

Overnight: Kununurra

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 20: Katherine - Darwin

Nature takes over at Nitmiluk National Park on Jawoyn land. The history and culture of the Traditional Landowners comes into full focus as you set off on a cruise through dramatic Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge. Remarkably, this is one of 13 gorges carved through the national park, and at every bend in the river, the sun casts its soaring sandstone cliffs a different colour. Your northern sojourn begins with yet more insights into the region's historic events - the huge impact WWII had here is remembered in a war cemetery on the banks of the Adelaide River. It's a sombre affair. More reminders of WWII await in sultry Darwin, where a city tour showcases architectural style as well as the events that have shaped it over the years.

Overnight: Darwin

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

Day 21: Farewell from Darwin

It's hard to believe this epic adventure has come to an end. Three weeks of incredible memories to take home with you.

Overnight: Darwin

Included Meal(s): Breakfast