

TRIP NOTES
KIMBERLEY 10 DAY TOUR

The Kimberley is one of the last Australian frontiers, a place soaked in indigenous culture and pioneering history. It takes no time at all to feel the spirit of the country, it is said to capture your soul.

It also offers fantastic hiking experiences; whether it be exploring unexpected and spectacular swimming holes or trekking through open eucalypt forests dotted with the iconic and wonderfully shaped boab trees endemic to this region. Each walk is different to the next and offers a new experience.

The Kimberley is famous for the Gibb River Road. On this tour you will explore the region, hiking by day and at night camping under the stars.

We start and end the tour in Kununurra. On tour you are sure to love the breathtaking sights and picturesque scenery of this ancient land. See wallabies, dingoes, kangaroos, crocodiles, lizards and an incredibly diverse bird life.

Your time in the Kimberley allows you to experience the beauty and wonder of the natural environment whilst enjoying fabulous homestyle meals.

This trip departs and ends in Kununurra (the gateway to the Kimberley) 10 days

Park Trek will supply a swag (canvas bed roll) that contains a mattress. You will need to bring along your own sleeping bag that is suited to the local conditions. Your sleeping bag will be rolled in your swag each day. You may also choose to bring a small pillow and camping mat which can also be rolled in the swag during the day.

Maximum group size is 15 passengers.

Includes:

- Two experienced and professional guides who will care for you for the duration of the walking tour
- Comfortable 4WD transport
- Most meals
- Trail snacks for hiking
- Pick up and drop at 2x below Kununurra locations
- All national park fees

Accommodation suggestions in Kununurra

- The Kununurra Lakeside Resort, 50 Casuarina Way, Kununurra P: 08 9169 1092
- The Kimberley Grande Resort, 20 Victoria Highway, Kununurra. P: 1300 955 549

Highlights:

- Guided walks in the Purnululu (Bungle Bungles) National Park including Cathedral Gorge, The Dome Walk and Echidna Chasm Walk
- Soak in Zebedee Springs on El Questro Wilderness Park
- Sunset photography opportunity of Pentecost River and Cockburn Ranges
- Guided walk into Manning Gorge on Mount Barnett Station
- Guided walks into Bell Gorge and Galvins Gorge
- Guided walks exploring the remote Mount Hart Station
- Guided walk through Tunnel Creek and exploration of Windjana Gorge

What's not Included:

- Flights
- Pre or Post tour accommodation
- Alcohol
- Soft drinks, ice creams and souvenirs at roadside stops

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DAY ONE

Echidna Chasm Walk, Purnululu National Park
2.7km – moderate to hard
Approx 3-4 hours walking

Depart Kununurra at 6.30am from the Lakeside Resort and 7am from the Kimberley Grande (please be ready to go just before pickup time). We make our way to the northern end of the Purnululu National Park and stop at a Roadhouse for a delicious breakfast.
As we travel onwards we arrive to our campsite, and set up our temporary home, before heading to Echidna Chasm for our first walk.

This is a return walk through a narrow chasm with some large boulders to be scrambled over. Visually stunning as you look up between the narrow gap of tall red cliffs to the brilliant blue sky way above. This walk starts almost right away in a dry creek bed and there are lots of rocks to climb over. Before long you are in the gorge and will notice the sides close in dramatically. The rocky path continues as you weave your way through the tight spaces between the rock walls.

Following we return to camp to prepare for dinner. Your guides will watch the sunset timings closely— tonight we head off to a lookout for an (optional) sunset viewing platform.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight**:** Purnululu National Park - Walardi Campground.

The facilities are basic: bush toilets and bore water taps. There are no showers and it is not recommended that you drink the bore water unless you boil or treat it.
Fires are not permitted.
There is no mobile phone coverage in the Park.





DAY TWO

Cathedral Gorge and the Dome Walk, Purnululu National Park—5.3km – easy to moderate
Approx 2 hours walking

We get up, have breakfast and pack up camp then make our way to the Piccaninny Creek carpark where we prepare for two walks.

This morning we have time for an optional scenic flight over the region (guest own expense) though please choose carefully—flight OR the Cathedral Gorge Walk.

Cathedral Gorge— This is where you start to see those typical rock formations the National Park is famous for and you can't help but be a little excited when you start this walk.

The trail starts heading towards the domes then turns to follow the dry Picaninny creek bed. You are walking on flat but uneven terrain with a mixture of sand and large rock slabs. When the track turns toward the gorge the sides narrow and there is some stair climbing and descending.

Before long you will sight the cathedral. This is a massive natural amphitheatre that is sure to impress. Apart from other walkers, it's very quiet and cool. We stop for a snack and relax to enjoy the atmosphere.

We then return almost to the start of the trail and head to the domes for a loop walk. Here you will see some Aboriginal rock art and appreciate the age of the environment.

We're on the road by lunch time and spend the rest of the day travelling to Halls Creek.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Overnight: Halls Creek Caravan Park—Campground

Featuring hot showers and laundry facilities.

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DAY THREE

Tunnel Creek and Windjana Gorge
6.5km – easy to moderate
Approx 3 hours walking

After breakfast we head off, arriving at Fitzroy Crossing for morning tea and a great time to stretch your legs.

By lunch we arrive at Tunnel Creek, then grab our torches and some shoes that can get wet and make our way to Windjana Gorge National Park - one of the most beautiful gorges in the Kimberley.

We start at Tunnel Creek. The walk starts off right near the cave entrance. There is a small descent down to get to the opening then you will get a view of the large smooth boulders you have to straddle. We then duck down under the low roof to enter the cave.

After carefully choosing our path through the smaller rocks and water we turn our head lamps on and start the trail through the dark section of the cave. It's relatively flat but there are a lot of wobbly rocks to navigate. There is a sandy section in the middle and then we come across the second roof collapse and see some interesting roots growing right through the cave roof. At the end there is a large pool of water.

Please note there are some parts of this walk where you will get wet and some small sections where you may be required to swim depending on the time of year and water levels.

Not far from Tunnel Creek is our next top at Windjana Gorge. We are sure to see dozens of freshwater crocodiles sunning themselves on the banks of the Lennard River here.

We start by walking through an opening in the rocks that takes us through a small cave like tunnel. We then walk alongside the beautiful limestone cliffs for a bit on flat ground with beautiful eucalypts overhead.

There are no major obstacles to walk over and the path is quite wide in some places. We follow the creek bed for a while and can then pop down onto the sand where to get a good look at some freshwater crocodiles.

The views of the surrounding cliffs are epic and it's a very pleasant stroll up the creek bed, all the while seeing crocodiles in their natural habitat. The geology here is incredible, some of the best limestone to get a good look at in Australia. An absolutely fascinating place.

We then hop back in the vehicle and travel onwards to our Campground for the night—offering a civilised shower.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight: Bandilgnan (Windjana Gorge) Campground

DAY FOUR

Annie Creek, Dolerite Gorge, Barkers Pool, Sunset Hill
Approx 3km, 2 hours walking

We start off driving to Mt Hart, then start exploring with a short walk at Annie Creek. Here we admire an impressive boab tree being strangled by a fig – a great photo opportunity. Close by is Annie Creek Walk and Waterhole. A short easy walk beside a reed filled creek adorned with ghost gums. Bird watchers will love this spot, particularly the red backed fairy wrens flitting amongst the Pandanus. A small waterhole at the end is just large enough for a swim for those that want to refresh.

We then head to Dolerite Gorge. The walk starts off easy, but soon we follow the creek bed where there are lots of small rocks so you need to watch where you're walking. Soon we reach the gorge and need to start rock hopping to follow the track.

We come to a nice waterhole suitable for swimming. For those that want to continue exploring we can follow the track markers by continuing the rock and boulder hopping following the creek. We need to cross the creek three times before coming to a section of the gorge where it begins to narrow where you will find another waterhole suitable for swimming.

After Dolerite Gorge we have a short stop at Barker Pools, another lovely birdwatching and swimming spot.

We head back to camp at Mt Hart and have some time to relax this afternoon.

Just before sunset we make the 5 minute drive across the airstrip and up to Sunset Hill. We'll pull out our chairs, nibbles and drinks and relax whilst watching the country change from yellows and oranges to pinks and purples. A wonderful way to celebrate the day.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch. Dinner at guest own expense at on-site restaurant (pre-order may be required)

Overnight: Mt Hart campground



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DAY FIVE

Bell Gorge & Galvins Gorge
6.5km easy to moderate, Bell Gorge moderate to hard, approx. 3 hours walking

After breakfast we spend most of the day exploring three of the most popular and well-known gorges along the Gibb River Road.

We start with the most challenging walk today - into Bell Gorge, a 2.6km return walk in the King Leopold Range Conservation Park. Most of the walk is quite easy and meanders beside the pretty Bell Creek. Once we get to the Gorge it gets a little more difficult as we cross the creek on slippery rocks, and then scramble down the steep rock wall leading to the water's edge. Taking it carefully, it is well worth the effort. A waterfall cascades down the U-shaped cliffs into a deep pool perfect for swimming, with large flat rocks alongside that we warm ourselves on after the very refreshing water.

We finish with a walk to Galvins Gorge. About 1.6 km return, this is a lovely place to swim.

Afterwards we onward travel via Mt Barnett Road-house and check in to our campground.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight Manning River campground

There is no power here. Facilities include male and female showers and amenities. Hot showers.

DAY SIX

Manning Gorge Walk
6km – moderate
Approx 3.5-4 hours walking

Departing Manning River campground after breakfast we prepare for the Manning Gorge Walk. The walk is mostly in open rocky grass and woodlands, so can be sunny and hot.

To access the start of the walk we need to cross Manning River. This is an oasis in itself and a lovey spot for a swim before we embark on the walk. For those that want to keep dry, there is a small boat on a rope pully system that takes us across Manning River to the start of the walk.

Please note, you may be required to swim across if the boat is unavailable. For those not wishing to join the group, you can stay back at the campground to relax and enjoy life by the River.

The moderately graded walk is 2.4 kilometres one way to the first pool. Stay here for a swim and relax or walk further, exploring more pools and rock escarpments. Aboriginal rock art can be found here.

Back to the vehicle we journey to Ellenbrae Station. Here we stop for the famous homemade scones with jam and cream. You'll love the open air homestead with manicured lawns and gardens – a sanctuary amidst the dirt and dust.

The afternoon is at your leisure, and there is a nearby water-hole if you wish to go for a swim before dinner.

We head onto our camp for the night at Ellenbrae Station and then enjoy sunset down at the Pentecost River. We watch the sunset light up the Cockburn Ranges as they stand sentinel over this magnificent country and beautiful Pentecost River. This is a photographer's dream and you are guaranteed to take away some postcard perfect shots.

Meals—Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Overnight: We camp tonight at Ellenbrae Station where there are hot showers.



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DAY SEVEN

Amalia Gorge
4.9 km, approx. moderate to hard, Approx 4 hrs including swimming and walking

This morning we head off to Amalia Gorge enroute to our final destination El Questro Station, crossing the Pentecost River Crossing.

This walk is flat at the start and follows the rocky creek bed around and into the gorge. For the first 500 metres we walk over lots of small but unstable rocks, then you start walking into the gorge itself where there are some large sections of rock slabs to climb down. There is quite a bit of rock hopping before we see water. After a small cave we come across the first major waterhole for swimming. It's a lovely spot and you can see fish swimming around.
The track abruptly heads uphill and alongside a high rocky area with a small cliff. There is a rocky outcrop that you have to squeeze past that brings you close to the edge so care is needed. If you're unsure you can stay and swim in the pool rather than continuing on.
Optional Sunset drive tonight.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight: El Questro campground.

There are two amenities blocks alongside the camping area. We can swim in the river behind the campsites. The best waterhole is the one right behind the restaurant. There is a shop that has some food items if you wish. There are laundry facilities behind the amenities blocks There is mobile reception here (Telstra) at the station but not on the walks.

DAY EIGHT

Zebedee Springs, and El Questro Trail
6km – easy to moderate—approx 5 hours walking and swimming
We rise early, have breakfast and enjoy a soak in the warm pools of Zebedee Springs. An easy walk through Sand and Livistonia Palms brings us to rejuvenating thermal springs. Truly idyllic, a rich red layered sandstone wall stands guard over the crystal clear pools in which we soak.

Most of this walk is quite flat but it is rocky and uneven underfoot. We wander through some gorgeous vegetation with several types of Pandanus and some very tall Livistona palms.
There are some tricky bits with rocks to climb over for the first half of the walk. We then start to see some bigger pools of water collecting in waterholes and enter a thinner section of the gorge with tall sides rising above you on both sides. This area is very lush and beautiful with gorgeous rainforest species.
We take the group through a rocky section nice and steady and eventually reach the halfway pool. There are some lovely waterfalls here.

The track continues over a large boulder which is possible depending on the fitness level and willingness of the group. Regardless if you push on or stay at the halfway pool it is a sensational walk.

Optional scenic flight this afternoon (guest own expense) - Please do not book before 3.30pm.

Meals—Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight: El Questro campground

DAY NINE

Champagne Springs
Difficult—4.8km, 5hrs approx. walking

Be prepared as hiking to Champagne Springs is a little different and considered a little bit tricky. The walk is a 4.8km riverside trail is long and filled with broken terrain, particularly in the second half of the hike. Upon reaching the top you'll be rewarded with cooling pools, lush scenery and a cascading waterfall. The only thing left to do is take the much easier walk back down.

The second half of the trail and the top pools offer little shade.

The afternoon allows time for an optional cruise, optional scenic flight or time to relax.
Please consult your guides at the beginning of the trip, as pre-bookings recommended.
All bookings for 3pm onwards are appreciated.

Meals—Breakfast and lunch (dinner own expense at El Questro's Steakhouse restaurant)

Overnight: El Questro campground

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DAY TEN

Emma Gorge Walk
5km - easy to moderate
Approx 2.5 hour return (walking and swimming)

Our last day of tour we pack up and depart the campground.

Today we make our way onto Emma Gorge and Falls. This is a 5km easy to moderate return walk that takes us into a large crevice cut into the Cockburn Ranges.

The deeper we go into the Gorge, the higher the ochre rich walls rise on either side of us. The trail goes from easy and flat to rock scrambling and creek crossing.

It is worth the effort as we arrive at spectacular Emma; overwhelming in both her beauty and her refreshingly cold water. You can swim across the large water hole to where droplets of water fall from a large overhang creating the illusion of rain.

The colours are breath taking as you look up at the walls of the gorge.

Meals—Breakfast and lunch

Flights: Due to long distances and kilometres travelled, it is recommended to book a return flight the day after the tour returns.

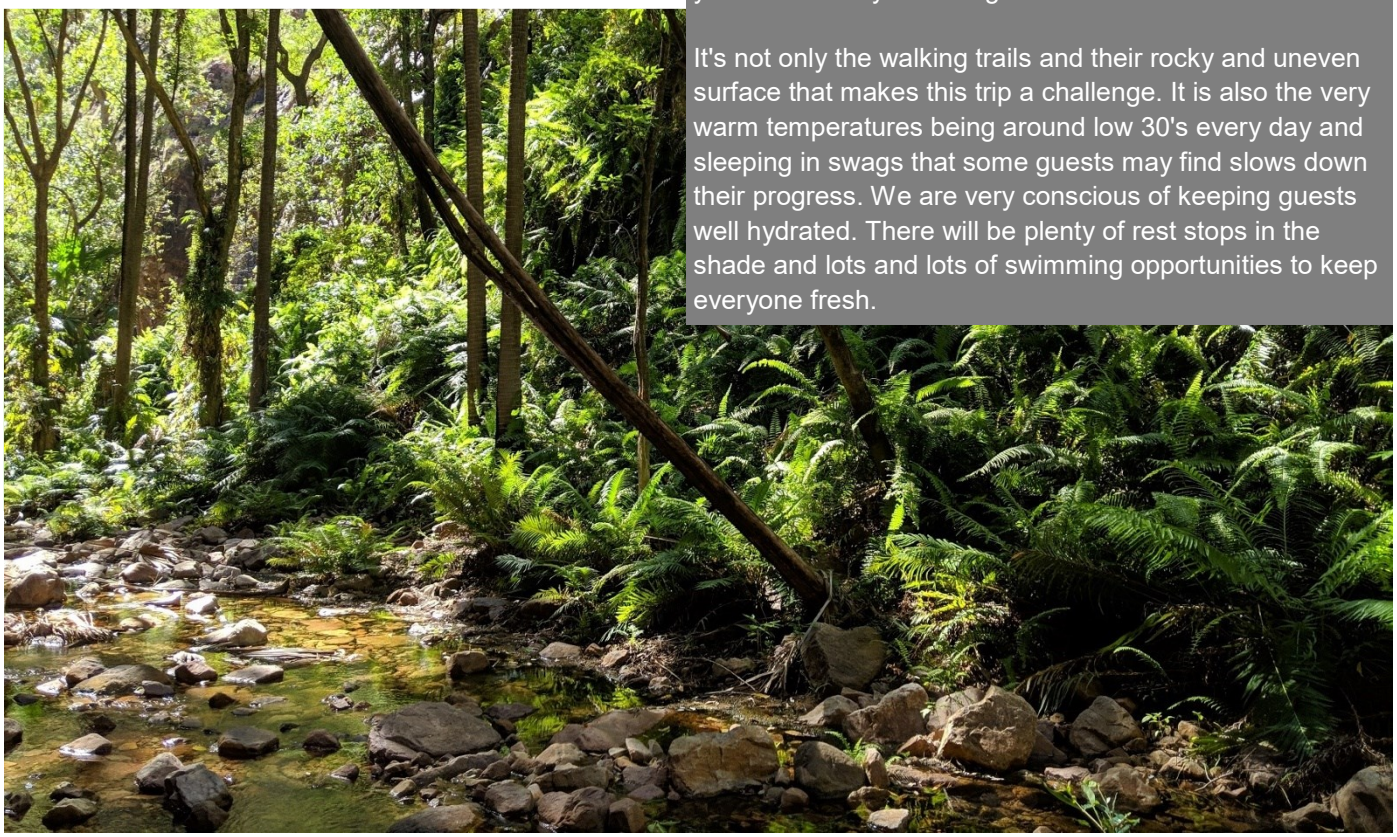
Cost: Please consult the Park Trek Website
No single supplement applies for this tour

Coping with the conditions

Much of our walking will be structured around having time to relax at water holes or shaded areas during the heat of the day. You will be required to carry at least 2 to 3 litres of water for even a half days outing. We find most guests prefer a camel back type drinking bladder and the 3 litre one is perfect. Alternately you can bring standard drinking bottles. Please make sure your day pack can accommodate 3 litres of water along with your lunch and other daily requirements including swimmers. We find that most guests will drink between 4 to 6 litres of water per day. We suggest electrolytes in your travel kit. You'll need to be healthy, able bodied and have a reasonable level of fitness and agility to hike into the amazing gorges, as well as the many other locations we go to. The terrain is rocky and very uneven underfoot so expect some clambering over rocks to get access to the many special corners of The Kimberley.

Walking terrain We have graded this trip to be moderate in nature. The gradient on trails is gentle however it's the uneven rocky terrain that can be challenging for some. There are times where you will need to negotiate particularly rocky, uneven and often wet terrain to get to some of the amazing gorge waterholes. You will need to be able to clamber over rocks at times to get past an obstacle. Be ready to help each other at times and listen to your guides as they show you the best and safest way though some sections of track. We recommend if you are training for this trip to walk in areas with lots of uneven rocky terrain if possible. A good pair of boots is essential and it's very important to check the condition of the glue that holds the sole together. Ask a good outdoor store if your unsure of your hiking boots condition.

It's not only the walking trails and their rocky and uneven surface that makes this trip a challenge. It is also the very warm temperatures being around low 30's every day and sleeping in swags that some guests may find slows down their progress. We are very conscious of keeping guests well hydrated. There will be plenty of rest stops in the shade and lots and lots of swimming opportunities to keep everyone fresh.



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GEAR LIST

As a walker you will need to have your own day pack, water bladder and hiking boots.

Weather in the Kimberley Dry Season varies greatly from day to night. The days are sunny and hot, with little breeze, usually reaching between 30 - 35 degrees and the nights and early mornings can be very cold, sometimes dipping to 0 degrees.

Please bring you gear in a soft bag rather than hard suitcase to help guides pack the trailer.

Here is a list of what we recommend you bring with you:

- Sleeping bag and small pillow to be stored in swags
- Sturdy, comfortable, worn in walking boots (please check the condition of the glue and sole)
- A pair of all terrain sandals or old runners with good grip as water shoes suitable for walking over uneven rocky surfaces that may be slippery and walking through water holes in the tunnel creek cave system.
- Walking socks
- Hat and sunglasses
- Water bottle or “camelback” – to carry up to 3 litres when walking
- Sunscreen
- Pants and shorts
- T-Shirts, to wear and spare for evenings
- Shirts, long sleeved and loose fitting
- Warm jacket or polo fleece
- Underwear / Thermals / Beanie & Gloves
- Fly net (drops over hat)
- Bathers or board-shorts (good for walking in to gorges and swimming in)
- Towel
- Thongs or sandals for relaxing in
- Toiletries
- Insect repellent (essential) and anti-histamine tablets or creams (if required)
- First aid, bandaids, headache tablets,
- Prescription medicine, glasses (including a spare set) etc
- Tissues
- Camera - extra batteries, memory cards etc.
- Head torch and batteries (this must be a head torch as free hands are required when moving around camp and eating meals around the fire etc).
- Portable phone/camera charger or power bank
- PPE - Masks, Hand sanitiser and Personal use rapid antigen tests

Please make sure your luggage is no more than 15kg and in a soft bag. No suitcases please. Soft bags, duffle style or backpacks are best. Your bag may get dusty at times whilst travelling outback roads. Approximate size of 60cm x 30cm x 30cm



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Travel insurance:
Please make sure you have comprehensive travel insurance. And also check that you are adequately covered for ambulance cover and unforeseen Covid-19 circumstances coverage

Communication while away in the Kimberley:
There is limited to no phone range while away, so it is best not to expect or rely on phone coverage. This includes El Questro, along the Gibb River Road and the Bungle Bungles. You will find details about wi-fi and phone coverage in the accommodation sections of the trip notes.

Safety:
We carry a satellite phone and guides carry vehicle based and hiking first aid kits. Our 4x4 vehicle carries recovery equipment in the unlikely event we get into a sticky situation.

Transport:
We travel in our 4WD vehicle which has been designed for travel in rugged and remote areas. Air conditioning, air vents and forward facing seats will ensure your comfort whilst travelling with us. Our vehicle is big enough to be comfortable yet small enough to travel the tight 4x4 tracks allowing us to access the best walking locations within the Kimberley.

Meals:
Most meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner and hiking snacks) are included unless otherwise mentioned on the itinerary. We provide drinking water, tea & coffee and cordial. Although often few and far between we encourage you to support local businesses en route if you feel like extra snacks, soft drinks, ice creams etc.
When Park Trek guides are organising you will enjoy brewed coffee and tea, stewed fruit, cereals and juice. Lunch will often include cold meats, salads along with an array of condiments and wraps/breads. We will also have fresh fruit. Dinner is a hearty, homestyle main and dessert.

We understand that some people may have special dietary requirements. Please note due to this style of touring and the remote location, Park Trek may be unable to cater to all dietary requirements for this Kimberley Camping tour. It is important to understand that we are often travelling in remote areas and therefore a certain degree of planning is required to cater for our groups. If you have any food allergies you must advise us at least four weeks prior to travel.

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