

# Experience Aboriginal culture in the Top End

## Seven-day itinerary

Ayal Aboriginal Tours, Kakadu

### TOP 10


1. Order a bush tucker infused breakfast and browse the gallery at **Aboriginal Bush Traders**
2. Uncover Darwin's Aboriginal art trail at the **Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory**
3. Experience being on Country with **Pudakul Aboriginal Cultural Tours**
4. Hop over to the **Tiwi Islands** for an immersive tour of Tiwi art and culture
5. Explore the World Heritage-listed ancient rock art sites of **Kakadu National Park**
6. Spot crocodiles and birdlife at sunrise on a **Yellow Water Billabong Cruise**
7. Learn stories first hand walking with a Jawoyn guide along **Nitmiluk Gorge**
8. Listen to stories at **Top Didj Cultural Experience and Art Gallery** in Katherine
9. Visit the cultural centres of **Kakadu National Park** and **Nitmiluk National Park**
10. Buy ethically sourced art work at one of the **Aboriginal art galleries** in the Top End.

### DAY 1


Welcome to the tropical city of Darwin on Larrakia Country. Start your morning at **Aboriginal Bush Traders**, located opposite the Top End Visitor Information Centre on Bennett Street in the CBD. Here you can try a bush-tucker infused breakfast and grab a coffee to go. Browse the gallery next door and view the latest exhibition.

Next stop, set the scene with a visit to the **Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT)**. Keep an eye out for the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander exhibition, held annually from early August to mid-January featuring First Nations artists from around Australia. For a lunch break, **Saltwater@Bundilla** is a great stop with a view overlooking the harbour, located on the grounds of the museum.

Looking to browse or buy ethical art? Continue the art journey this afternoon with a visit to other galleries that are members of the **Indigenous Art Code** including **Outstation Gallery** in Parap and **Readback Aboriginal Gallery** in Smith Street Mall.

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### DAY 2

Wake up early and get ready to immerse yourself in a Tiwi cultural tour on the **Tiwi Islands**. Book with Sealink, AAT Kings or Tarntipi Bush Camp to learn about the art and cultural history of Bathurst Island.

After stepping foot on the island, take part in a Welcome to Country and visit the community art centres where you can meet the artists at work.

The Tiwi Islands is renowned for its annual **Tiwi Islands Football Grand Final and Art Sale**, held every March in a celebration of football and community. To visit the Tiwi Islands, the best option is to book a day tour from Darwin.



Above: Rock art at Ubirr, Kakadu  
Left: Nitmiluk Gorge Tour  
Right: Tiwi Islands Football Grand Final & Annual Art Sale



## DAY 3

Hire a car in Darwin or take your own vehicle for a road trip to [Kakadu National Park](#), approximately 250 km from the city. Make sure to take plenty of water and a full tank of petrol before setting off. A park pass is required to visit the Bininj/Munggyu lands of Kakadu.

Your first stop along the Arnhem Highway is [Pudakul Aboriginal Cultural Tours](#), less than an hour from Darwin. Learn from the traditional owners and custodians of Limilngan-Wulna land as you walk through the property discovering traditional techniques from bush tucker to basket weaving.

Continue past the entrance to Kakadu and onwards to the [Bowali Visitor Centre](#) to discover what's on inside the Park and check the latest information on road conditions. Next stop, head to the township of Jabiru and visit [Marrawuddi Gallery](#), located across the road from the [Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel](#). The gallery is a hub for Kakadu and West Arnhem artists and is listed on the Indigenous Art Code to purchase ethically produced works.

Check into your accommodation for your overnight stay in Jabiru then drive to [Ubirr](#) for sunset. Wear sturdy shoes and leave yourself plenty of time to walk through the rock art galleries, among the best in the world. At the top of the lookout, admire the stunning colours of the Nadab floodplains stretching as far as the eye can see before making your way to the car and departing back to Jabiru for the evening.



Top: Pudakul Aboriginal Cultural Tours, Darwin region  
Above: Top Didj Cultural Experience, Katherine region

## DAY 4

Walk through the rock art shelters at [Burrungkuy \(Nourlangie\)](#) with [Yibekka Kakadu Rock Art Tours](#) on a 1.5 hour guided experience to discover paintings dating more than 20,000 years. Kakadu's rock art is regarded as one of the longest historical records of any group of people on Earth.

After your tour, return to Jabiru for lunch and prepare for your afternoon adventure with [Ayal Aboriginal Cultural Tours](#). Take an air-conditioned 4WD to the Gabarlgu Billabong and the South Alligator mangrove forest. The tour includes afternoon tea and transport back to your accommodation for the evening.

## DAY 5

Being an early bird in Kakadu reaps its rewards and the (Ngurrungurrudjba) [Yellow Water Billabong Cruise](#) at sunrise is as spectacular as it gets. Learn the traditional names of wildlife that inhabit the area and get an up-close view of the crocodiles that call the national park home. After the cruise, check out and take the three-hour drive to Katherine to check into your accommodation for two nights.

Get familiar with the town with a visit to the [Godinymayin Yijard River Arts and Culture Centre](#), a community cultural space that showcases performance projects, local exhibitions and Aboriginal art. The centre has an on-site café for visitors to enjoy. This afternoon you have the option for sunset on the lands of the Jawoyn people at Baruwey Lookout at Nitmiluk Gorge or to go for dinner at Kumbidjee restaurant located on Gorge Road.

## DAY 6

Start the day with a visit to [Top Didj Cultural Tours and Art Gallery](#), located on Gorge Road, just before Nitmiluk Gorge. Book ahead for the 2.5 hour morning tour where you will learn first-hand from Top End Aboriginal artist, Manuel, a great story teller and teacher. Next stop, head to the [Nitmiluk Visitor Centre](#) located at Nitmiluk Gorge to prepare for your afternoon experience.

The [Nitmiluk Tours Ancient Garlarr River Safari](#) allows you to go deeper into the 13-gorge system and discover Jawoyn stories from the traditional owners with visits to the well preserved rock art galleries. Make the most of the afternoon as the sun starts to set and the colours on the gorge walls change into the evening.

## DAY 7

After a week around the [Top End](#), it's time to head back to Larrakia Country. Arriving in town, relax and reflect over a sunset on Country at Bundilla Beach where you can walk along and feel the sand between your feet. There are [plenty of restaurants](#) to choose from for a sundowner in the area – only a 5 minute drive from the city.

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### Visitor protocols and permits

When visiting the NT, please respect Country by ensuring you have the required permits and national park passes, enough fuel and appropriate recovery equipment specific for the area you are travelling. When booking a cultural tour, the permit is included in the ticket. Please check ahead with the tour operator.

### Acknowledgement of Country

*We respectfully acknowledge and honour the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory and recognise the continuation of culture, connection to lands, water and country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.*

# Discover Aboriginal culture in the Red Centre



## Seven-day itinerary

Cultural tour at Standley Chasm  
Angkerle Atwatye

### TOP 10

1. Discover Aboriginal art at the **Araluen Arts Centre** in Alice Springs
2. Stop in at **Tjanpi Desert Weavers** to discover contemporary fibre works
3. Take a road trip to explore the birthplace of renowned watercolour artist, the late Albert Namatjira in **Hermannsburg**
4. Try bush tucker and walk through the walls of **Standley Chasm** with a local guide
5. Learn on Country with the Abbott family at **Karreke Aboriginal Cultural Experience**
6. Try your hand at a dot painting workshop with **Maruku Arts** at Uluru
7. Go further at Uluru and join a tour with a traditional owner on **SEIT Patji Cultural Tour**
8. Sit down under a blanket of stars and sample bush-infused flavours at a **Tali Wiru dinner**
9. See the rock art of **Uluru** and visit a peaceful ancient waterhole on the Kuniya walk
10. Choose an Aboriginal art work at one of the **Indigenous Art Code** approved galleries in the Red Centre

#### DAY 1

Arrive in the Red Centre hub of **Alice Springs** to start your week-long trip of Aboriginal cultural experiences.

The **Araluen Cultural Precinct** is the perfect first stop to get acquainted with the art and culture of the region. Next on the trail, learn about the unique skill of desert weaving at **Tjanpi Desert Weavers** before heading to one of the cafes in Todd Mall for lunch in town.

Make your way to **Ilta Ntjarra Art Centre**, meaning 'many hands' in Western Arrente. The centre has a specific focus on encouraging artists of the Hermannsburg School, watercolour artists who paint in the stylistic form of the late Albert Namatjira.


Get on the road this afternoon with a trip to **Yeperenye / Emily and Jessie Gaps Nature Park**. This area is a significant site to the Central Arrente people and is home to caterpillar dreaming story, which tells the tale of how Alice Springs was formed. You can see rock art of this dreaming at Emily Gap.


#### DAY 2

Prepare ahead for today's road trip to the community of Hermannsburg, the birthplace of Albert Namatjira. Hermannsburg continues to uphold and develop its own contemporary styles of art. Visit the National Trust-listed **Hermannsburg Historic Precinct** to learn more about its history. Book a visit to **Hermannsburg Potters** to meet the artists at work and discover a style of clay art that uses traditional art with contemporary practices of pottery.

#### DAY 3

Head to west **Tjoritja (the West MacDonnell Ranges)** today on a tour with **Finke River Cultural Tours** as an Aboriginal guide takes you through mountain scenery and desert waterholes for a swim. You'll see and learn about the Rodna Waterhole and Itopalkara, which is known as the dog's back bone. Explore the mighty Lirra Pinta (Finke River) and be mesmerised by the Nthipa, dancing ladies, rock formation. The tour is a full day that takes you through 4WD tracks that are off the beaten track to go deeper into the region before returning to **Alice Springs**.

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Above: Araluen Arts Centre  
Left: Maruku Arts Cultural Experience



## DAY 4

Pack up and order ahead from [Kungkas Can Cook](#) to complement your picnic and try some of the bush delicacies of the region. Today's road trip takes you to [Angkerle Atwatye Standley Chasm](#), a place that highlights the havens that can be found amongst the red rock. Learn about the traditional methods of bush tucker and bush medicine or try your hand at a dot painting workshop on site.

Continue your journey to the [Ochre Pits](#) that was used to collect the raw material for painting and ceremonial body art. The site is still used by Arrente, the traditional owners and visitors are asked to respect the Country by not touching the rock. Continue the drive through the [Tjoritja](#) (West MacDonnell Ranges) to [Kings Canyon](#) and check in for your overnight stay.



## DAY 5

This morning you have the choice to rise early for the [Kings Canyon Rim Walk](#). Make sure to take your time visiting the Garden of Eden, a marked trail leads you into the deep canyon where you can see the impressive cycads and birdlife that shelter in the shade.

Grab breakfast at [Kings Canyon Resort](#) before driving onwards to [Karrke Aboriginal Cultural Tour](#). Meet the Abbott family who established Karrke to preserve and maintain their Luritja and Pertame (southern Arrente) languages for the future of younger generations.

Continue your journey to the township of Yulara to check in and rest up before a day of exploring [Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park](#).

## DAY 6

This morning take a walk on Country with a traditional owner on the [SEIT Patji Aboriginal Cultural Tour](#). Explore south of Uluru by 4WD with your Aboriginal guide, stopping along the journey to hear stories of land rights and the history of where Uluru is today. Continue on to a private sand dune to view the great expanse of the desert overlooking Uluru and [Kata Tjuta](#).

This evening settle into a five star setting under a blanket of stars at [Tali Wiru](#). This open-air gastronomic experience offers an intimate evening of fine dining infused with native ingredients on a remote sand dune overlooking Uluru and the distant domes of Kata Tjuta.

## DAY 7

Get a better understanding of Uluru's magnitude and spiritual importance this morning by taking the Kuniya walk to Mutitjulu Waterhole. The Kuniya walk is a living cultural landscape. When you walk through, you'll start to understand how the creation stories live on. Kuniya and her spirit are here, and the caves she protects are still used by Anangu. After your morning walk, learn more at [Cultural Centre](#) where you can learn about Anangu culture and the Park's natural environment through exhibits and free presentations.

After you've finished exploring, check out of your accommodation and reflect on your week in the [Red Centre](#) while driving back to Alice Springs or taking a flight from Ayers Rock Airport to your home city.



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Above: Karrke Aboriginal Tourism  
Right: SEIT Patji Cultural Tour