

≡ Territory ≡ Art Trails





Territory Art Trails

The Northern Territory is defined by its vibrant arts, cultural heritage and creative industries born out of its unique history and diversity – being home to some of the oldest continuing living cultures on earth.

Cultural and artistic expression is very much a part of the NT's identity and the arts sector is much more than meets the eye. From cultural festivals by the sea to desert choirs and bustling Aboriginal art fairs, the NT celebrates Aboriginal culture and art as fundamental to our identity and welcomes a diversity of cultures from around the globe that also play an intrinsic part in the Territory's character, economy and appeal.

The energy and vision of artists and residents from across the diverse regional and remote communities that make up the Territory are what makes it such a distinctive and vibrant place to visit and live.

Take a journey along the Art Trails of the Northern Territory to see where you end up. Be inspired from the following suggested itineraries or create your own experience >>>

Cover images

Top: Djilpin Arts, Beswick

Lower Left: Mimi Aboriginal Arts and Crafts, Katherine

Lower Right: Colourful pots of Hermannsburg

This image: Arlpwe Art and Culture Centre, Ali Curung





Djilpin Arts, Beswick



Maruku Arts, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park



Darwin Festival



Ubirr, Kakadu National Park



Dyed Pandanus, Kakadu

ROCK ART SITES

You can find some of Australia’s most significant and ancient Aboriginal cultural rock art sites around the Northern Territory – some areas are easily accessible to many visitors, others are more remote and many remain undiscovered to this day (by Western culture). National parks across the NT work with the traditional owners to protect these sites – considered some of the most well-preserved Indigenous artworks in the world.

ABORIGINAL ART CENTRES AND GALLERIES

Scattered throughout the Territory are art centres and galleries offering the sale of some of the best Indigenous and non-Indigenous works in the world including unique and contemporary pieces. To ensure that we are supporting best practice, only art centres and galleries that are accredited through the Indigenous Arts Code and/or accredited through relevant organisations featured on the Art Trails, so you can feel secure, knowing that you are buying art in an ethical way and are supporting the artist and/or the local Aboriginal community when purchasing art work.

ART AND CULTURAL TOURS

Art features prominently across the NT in all shapes and forms from contemporary music, theatre and dance to Aboriginal art, carving and textiles, and can be accessed and experienced through our tourism industry. Get hands on with art and culture in the Northern Territory through the many different day and extended tours.

ART AND CULTURAL FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

There is lots to celebrate within the creative arts industry, and we love a good festival here in the Territory. From music, culture and public art to a combination of all three – there is an event that will make you want to come back year after year. Make sure you check out the full **festival and events calendar** so you can add on to your Northern Territory Art Trail!

DISCOVERING THE ART TRAILS OF THE TERRITORY

Discover your Territory Art Trail by road, and self-drive your way around the NT. The Northern Territory is a great place for a road trip holiday with plenty to do between stops, excellent road conditions and lots of opportunities to discover some magical spots. Travel on unsealed roads is to be expected throughout the Northern Territory so please remember to drive safely, whether you are hiring a car, or using your own. Some roads require 4WD or high clearance vehicles only.

You can check the local road report **here**. Many art centres are located within Aboriginal communities and may have strict entry policies, or require you to obtain a permit. Please ensure you contact the relevant permits office in advance. Information on drive holidays in the Northern Territory can be found on our **website**. During certain seasons some art centres and tours are not open or available, please ensure you contact the centre or tour provider and make arrangements well in advance. Please respect the rules and regulations of each Aboriginal community when entering.

Important things to remember



Support the ethical sale of authentic Aboriginal art only



Call ahead when visiting remote art centres



Photography – always ask, be sure it is not a sacred site



Respect the culture, land and people



Ensure you apply for permits on Aboriginal land in advance

Katherine & Kakadu

6 Day Art Trail



START
Darwin

END
Darwin

Kakadu National Park



Take a self-drive trip and spoil yourself in a rich arts and cultural environment for the next six days. An abundance of Aboriginal art awaits at the World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park and the spectacular area of the Katherine region, which has long been a meeting place for Indigenous people. Home to some of the oldest living cultures and some of the world's greatest concentration of rock art sites, you will see rock art paintings dating more than 20,000 years. There is an incredible record of Aboriginal life over thousands of years with archaeological excavations dating 65,000 years, which is some of the oldest occupation sites found in Australia.

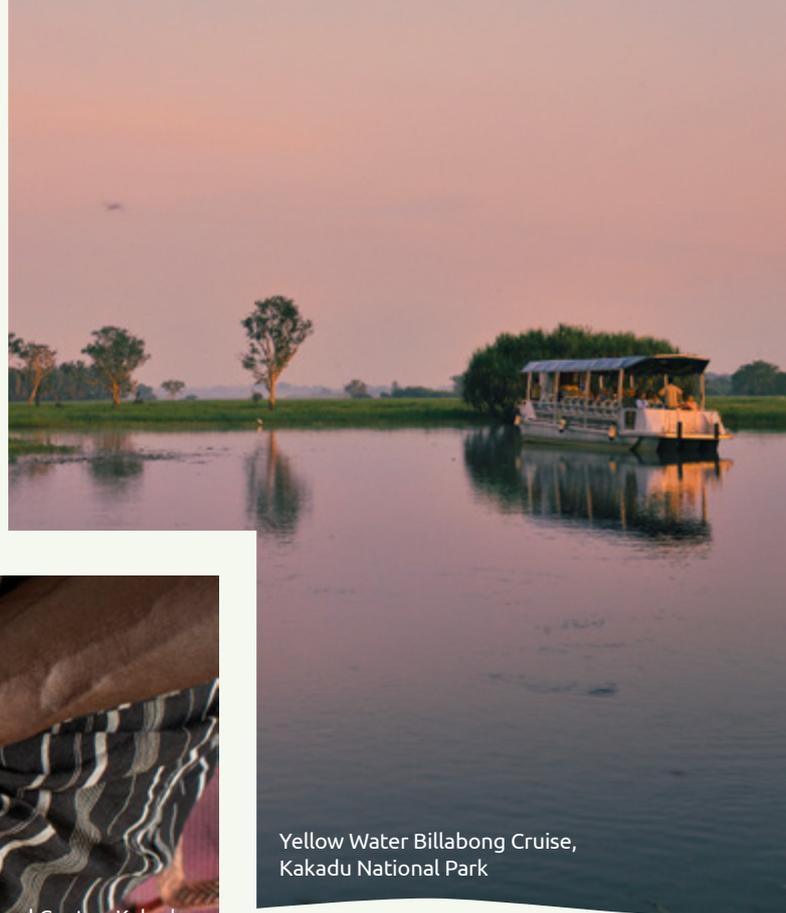
DAY 1 AND 2: KAKADU

Drive out to Kakadu National Park today and stop in at the Bowali Visitor Centre in Jabiru for an initial introduction of the area.

Visit **Injalak Arts and Crafts**, a dynamic Aboriginal art centre, producing pandanus weavings, hand printed textiles, paintings and carvings, located in Gunbalanya not far from the East Alligator River out of Kakadu National Park. The easiest way to access Injalak is through a local touring company like **Kakadu Cultural Tours**. Visit the spectacular **Ubirr** and explore the Aboriginal rock art and stories from the variety of galleries here. These rocks have served as a canvas of Aboriginal life for thousands of years.



Street Art, Katherine



Yellow Water Billabong Cruise, Kakadu National Park



Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Kakadu

DAY 3: KAKADU

Join Traditional Owner, Victor Cooper from **Ayal Aboriginal Tours** who will take you on a tour to an exclusive area of Kakadu and teach you about the local wildlife, bushfoods and his connection to country.

Tour around **Marrawuddi Gallery** in Jabiru. Owned and controlled by the Mirarr clan, who are the Traditional Owners of parts of Kakadu and Western Arnhem Land, offer artwork created only by Bininj (Aboriginal people) from Kakadu and surrounding country. Explore the range of weavings, jewellery and paintings on display. You may also purchase direct from the gallery here.

From Jabiru, continue onto Coinda and spend some time at the **Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre**. The Centre is a must see and offers displays that illustrate stories from the local Traditional Owners, educational videos as well as a gallery offering a range of arts and crafts to purchase. This afternoon, make sure you book a sunset **Yellow Water Billabong Cruise** with Kakadu Tourism. Experience the billabong, plant and animal life as well as the changing colours of a Kakadu sunset, you will see where a lot of traditional art gets its inspiration from.

DAY 4: KATHERINE

Continuing on your Kakadu and Katherine Art Trail journey, head south on the Kakadu Highway towards Katherine. Katherine is known as the place where the outback meets the tropics, and has long been a meeting point for Aboriginal people from surrounding regions, and continues to be today. With outdoor adventures incorporating cultural experiences, and incredible history and culture in the town's museums and galleries, there is something for all art lovers in this region! The crème de la crème of this region is Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge on the lands of the Jawoyn people - one of the world's most iconic national parks and only a short drive from Katherine's town centre. Immerse yourself in Aboriginal culture with rock art sites and dreamtime stories that bring the gorge to life.

From bushwalks to boat cruises to helicopter flights, there are multiple ways to fully experience the beauty of Nitmiluk Gorge.

Visit our good friends at **Top Didj Cultural Experience and art gallery**. Manuel will teach you about his culture including how to throw a spear, how to make fire and show you the art of Rarrk painting – a traditional painting method from Manuel's homeland in the Northern Territory.



Ayal Aboriginal Tours, Kakadu



Top Didj Cultural Experience, Katherine

Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture (GYRAC) centre, Katherine



Mimi Aboriginal Arts and Craft, Katherine



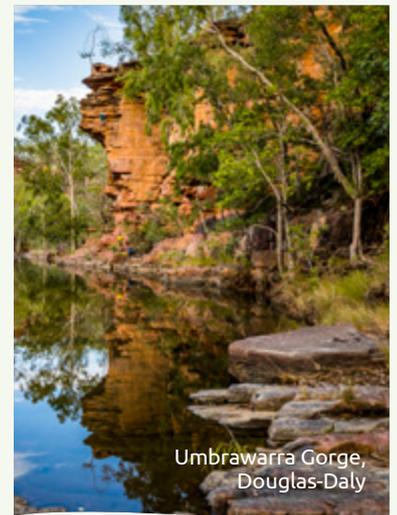
Edith Falls, Nitmiluk National Park



Basket weaving workshop at Nitmiluk



Umbrawarra Gorge, Douglas-Daly



DAY 5: KATHERINE

Today, explore the galleries of the region including the **Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture (GYRAC) centre** – the place to meet in Katherine for drama, dance, workshops and exhibitions. Godinymayin is named after a respected elder of the region, whose story was that of the rock wallaby, which is in the logo and public art.

Then sit down with the artists at **Mimi Aboriginal Arts and Craft** as they create diverse artworks in the particular styles of the region. Mimi Arts and Crafts is a not-for-profit, Aboriginal owned and operated art centre in Katherine Township. The centre offers a variety of artwork including weavings, paintings, carvings, digeridoos and other clothing apparel for purchase.

Venture down to **Nitmiluk National Park** in the afternoon to take a **gorge cruise** and see rock art, explore the area and learn about the local Jawoyn culture.

DAY 6: KATHERINE TO DARWIN

As you head back to Darwin, stop off at **Umbrawarra Gorge** if you have time, and take the 1km walk along the creek to view some Aboriginal rock art. The local Wagiman people are the traditional owners of this area, and to view the rock art here, you will need a keen eye. Remember to bring your bathers, and maybe even a picnic.



Nitmiluk Gorge cruise





Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala



Tropical paradise at Bawaka Homelands



Lirrwai Tourism, North East Arnhem Land



Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala



Carved & Painted artefacts from West Arnhem Land

Extra time? Explore the mythical Arnhem Land

There are some incredible Aboriginal art centres throughout Arnhem Land supporting world renowned artist's creating unique and profound works of art and sacred designs. The stunning coastline of Arnhem Land boasts remote sandy beaches, incredible escarpments and beautiful art connected to the land and the sea. A permit is required to enter Arnhem Land, through the Northern Land Council where you can discover incredible culture and history in a scenic location. The Yolngu people of East Arnhem Land live in a unique environment where western culture meets traditional lifestyle. Immerse yourself in the remarkable culture of these regions by visiting the Aboriginal owned art centres, participating in cultural tours, or simply relax on a camping holiday.

Ensure you speak with the art centres directly to arrange the best time to visit. **Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre**, **Gapuwiyak Arts Centre** and **Ngukurr Arts Centres** all offer something unique to each region depending on what you are seeking. Buku Art Centre, located in Yirrkala, was initially established in a shelter on a beach from a local artist Narritjin Maymuru where he sold his own art. The centre now has two divisions which represent a range of Yolngu artists exhibiting and selling art works plus a digital production studio. Gapawiyak Arts Centre produce a range of high quality art and is a great place to meet and learn about Yolngu culture. The Ngukurr Arts Centre sits on the banks of the Roper River in South East Arnhem Land. The centre offers art from a range of different artists across Arnhem Land, including paintings, print and textiles, jewellery and other merchandise.

There are a number of extended touring options, or operators that can assist with the planning of your very own unique art trail discovery. Contact **Lords Kakadu & Arnhem Land Safaris**, **Lirrwai Tourism** and **Davidson's Arnhemland Safaris** for touring options. **AAT Kings** offer a three-day short break fully guided tour which includes Kakadu and Tiwi Islands with significant rock art sites and art centres.



Darwin Festival



NT Travelling Film Festival,
Nitmiluk National Park



Barunga Festival



Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair



Darwin Street Art
Festival



Tiwi Islands
Grand Final and Art Sale

Festivals to look out for while you are in the Top End

NT Travelling Film Festival	17 Apr 2021	Telstra NATSIAA	Aug 2021 – TBC
Darwin Street Art Festival	20 May – 30 Sep 2021	National Indigenous Music Awards NIMA	Aug 2021 – TBC
Barunga Festival	11 – 13 Jun 2021	Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	6 – 8 Aug 2021
Darwin Fringe Festival	2 – 11 Jul 2021	Freedom Day Festival	27-29 Aug 2021
Garma Festival	31 Jul – 2 Aug 2021	Kakadu National Park ranger program	May – Sep TBC
Darwin Festival	5 - 22 Aug 2021	Tiwi Islands AFL Grand Final and Art Sale	Mar 2022 TBC