

Katherine & surrounds

Seven-day itinerary

Boat cruise, Nitmiluk Gorge
Tourism NT/Katie Goldie



Aboriginal art
Tourism NT/Felix Baker

Katherine Hot Springs
Tourism NT/Nicholas Kave



With seven days to discover the beauty of Katherine, you'll see how this region is prime adventure territory.

Discover gorges, waterholes, waterfalls and thermal springs and learn about the history and traditions of the traditional owners while exploring galleries, rock art sites and on cultural tours.

Nitmiluk National Park, Katherine Hot Springs and Eley National Park are all a must when visiting the Katherine region.



DAY 1

The town of Katherine is only a 3.5 hour drive south of Darwin on the Stuart Highway, with many great things to see and do along the way.

The **Adelaide River Inn** is the perfect place to refresh with a cool drink and meet 'Charlie', the taxidermied Buffalo who starred in *Crocodile Dundee*. While you're in town, visit the **Adelaide River War Cemetery**, a reminder of the impact of WWII on the Territory and commemorating military and civilian casualties.

Further along the road is Pine Creek, a town with pioneering and gold mining history. Visit the **National Trust Museum** and wander around Pine Creek Railway Precinct, an important transport hub during the 1870s mining boom and WWII. Afterwards, stop in for lunch and a

cool drink at the Lazy Lizard Tavern. Be sure to check out the uniquely carved images of local wildlife onto the termite mound mud brick structure while you're at the outback Tavern.

Next stop, a dip in the **Katherine Hot Springs** – a series of clear pools fed by natural thermal springs. On the banks of the Katherine River, it's a great place to relax and enjoy a picnic. If you are up for more excitement, check out the Pop Rocket Café. Here you can hire high quality on and off-road bikes for selfguided and guided tours. Explore the trails at your own pace or join an organised bike tour tailored to your needs.

There are **many options** for where to lay your head in Katherine, including central hotels, backpackers, campsites and a luxury lodge.

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Top 10

1. Explore the mighty **Nitmiluk Gorge** by canoe, cruise or helicopter
2. Conquer the world-famous **Jatbula Trail**
3. Enjoy an authentic cultural experience with Top Didj Cultural Experience and Art Gallery
4. Watch award-winning country music artist and horseman **Tom Curtain** at Katherine Outback Experience for a show that will give you a taste of life on a real outback Australian cattle station
5. Explore the natural swimming holes in **Eley National Park**
6. Go underground at the **Cutta Cutta Caves**
7. Relax in the pools at **Katherine Hot Springs**
8. Take your seat under the stars for a real Aussie dinner at **Marksie's Stockman's Camp**
9. Take a swim or a short hike around **Leliyn (Edith Falls)**
10. Delight in a meal at Adelaide River Inn, and meet the famous 'Charlie the Buffalo' from the movie 'Crocodile Dundee'



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**



Top Didj cultural experience
Tourism NT/Geoffrey Reid



Marksies Camp Dinner, Katherine
Tourism NT/Shanaa McNaught

DAY 2

First, stop in at the Black Russian Caravan Park for the best smoky bean jaffle you'll ever have! Tasty treats are served hot from the retro pop-up van in the grounds of the **Katherine Information Centre**. There are shaded areas for the kids to play while you savour your toasties, washed down with one of the best lattes in the NT.

After breakfast, call in at the Aboriginal **art galleries** in Katherine to browse or invest in some original pieces by artists from the region and beyond. You may even be lucky enough to meet the artist.

Gallop-Thru-Time Gallery and Framing offers a comprehensive range of Aboriginal and contemporary art from the Katherine region. Along with a resident framer to offer expert advice on framing, packaging and shipping for your convenience.

The **Top Didj Art Gallery and Aboriginal Cultural Experience** offers the chance to meet with local Aboriginal artists. You can also get involved and create some of your own artwork and learn traditional painting styles, or try your hand at spear throwing using a woomera. Guests can also have an opportunity to try a traditional way to start a fire using two sticks.

Dine under the stars at **Marksie's Stockman's Camp Tucker Night** which is conveniently located at the same site as Top Didj. In surroundings reminiscent of an outback stockman's camp, you will feast on traditional outback tucker cooked using a range of Aboriginal spices to develop unique tastes. Partake in a scavenger hunt, or sit back and enjoy humorous yarns and stories with your host, Geoff Mark.



Black Russian Caravan Cafe
Tourism NT/Matt Cherubino

Katherine Township



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DAY 3

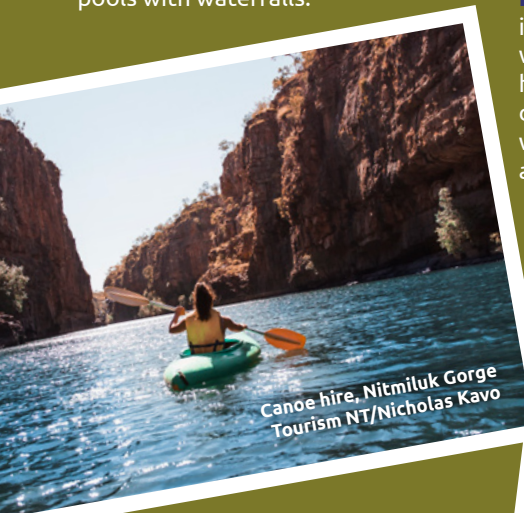
Just 30 km up the road from the township of Katherine is the world renowned Nitmiluk National Park. Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge is a network of 13 gorges carved by the Katherine River from ancient sandstone country. Start the day at the **Nitmiluk Visitor Centre** for advice on the many ways you can experience the spectacular gorge – you can walk, swim, canoe, boat or fly!

There's a restaurant at the visitor centre where you can take a break and appreciate the views overlooking the gorge or you can wander through the many cultural displays.

If you're feeling adventurous, **hire a canoe** and experience Nitmiluk Gorge from a completely different perspective. Fasten your life jacket. Lie back and let yourself drift off on an unforgettable journey surrounded by the dramatic cliff faces of the gorge. Take a packed lunch and enjoy a break near some fresh rock pools. You can even camp out under the stars if you wish.

If you'd rather kick back, relax and be guided comfortably through Nitmiluk Gorge, check out one of the many **boat cruises** on offer – the dinner cruise is highly recommended. A guide will provide commentary on the local flora, fauna and ancient Aboriginal rock paintings, and share the culture of the traditional owners, the Jawoyn people with you.

Another great way to see this country is on foot. Follow a well-marked track over the sandstone plateau for a short walk, or embark on a multi-day hike. The 60 km **Jatbula Trail** takes in most of Nitmiluk National Park's landscapes – monsoon rainforest, stone country, upland swamp, woodland and rock pools with waterfalls.



There are many diverse **accommodation options** to choose from tonight. Pitch a tent in the camping area in the Park, relax in a **self-contained chalet**, or treat yourself to a luxury experience at **Cicada Lodge**. Dining options are available within the Park including buffet breakfast or lunch as well as an al-a-carte menu at Sugar Bag Café in the Visitors' Centre, or in season, (May – October) relax at Jatti Poolside Bistro for a refreshing drink or relaxing dinner.



DAY 4

Nitmiluk National Park extends north to Kakadu National Park and is part of the magnificent Arnhem Land escarpment. If you are feeling adventurous, a great way to get a sense of its size and beauty is from the air. **Helicopter flights** take off year-round (weather dependent) from the helipad near the Nitmiluk Visitor Centre or from near the gorge at Maud Creek airstrip. Heli-flights offer unforgettable experiences including exclusive landings at ancient rock art or spectacular waterfall swim sites.

A must-see while in the region is the **Katherine Outback Experience** with Tom Curtain. Tom is equally renowned for his award winning music skills as he is for his horseman abilities. Watch in awe during his 90 minute show as you witness authentic horse-breaking and a working dog demonstration.



DAY 5

Prepare yourself for something truly spectacular. Travel 27 km south of Katherine to the Cutta Cutta Caves Nature Park. The Park covers 1,499 hectares of limestone landscape, with the main features being impressive limestone stalactites and stalagmites. Formed millions of years ago, the caves are still growing today and are found about 15 m below the surface. Guided tours are conducted daily.

Head back into town for lunch. On the main street of Katherine Terrace you'll find popular cafés and eateries to tantalise your taste buds. Spend some time browsing the local shops.

Immerse yourself in local culture this afternoon at Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre (GYRACC). The centre is a new cross culture enterprise that aims to showcase the cultural diversity and artistic richness of the region. The centre aspires to become a 'model for reconciliation' in the community through the presentation of exhibitions and performances of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural expression together. Take home a 'piece of Katherine' from the gift shop that stocks stunning local arts and crafts.





Bitter Springs, Eley National Park, Mataranka
Tourism NT/Carmen Huter



Bitter Springs, Eley National Park, Mataranka
Tourism NT/Mitch Cox

DAY 6

Today you take off for **Mataranka**, a small township about 106 km south-east of Katherine and great a place to spend the day. The area was made famous by the 1902 novel 'We of the Never Never' – a book written about nearby Eley Station by Jeannie Gunn. You can visit the graves of the book's characters in the Eley Memorial Cemetery or wander through the replica Eley Homestead, made for the filming of the movie. Visit the Never Never Museum to learn about local Aboriginal history.

Take a rejuvenating swim in the **Mataranka Thermal Pool**. Fed by spring water from the Daly and Georgina basins, it has a sandy bottom, is surrounded by a palm forest, and its waters are a constant 34 degrees Celsius.

The beautiful **Bitter Springs Thermal Pool** is also worth checking out, and is very close by to Mataranka. If you take a snorkel and mask and look among the roots of the pandanus along the banks, you'll come face to face with northern yellow-faced turtles and long neck turtles.

On your way back to Katherine, make a detour to Beswick to visit **Djilpin Arts**. It's approximately 40 minutes' drive along the Central Arnhem Highway, off the Stuart Highway. Here you can view some great local artwork on display and listen to stories of family and culture told through dance and song.

DAY 7

Today your journey back to Darwin takes in **Leliyn/Edith Falls**, where you can have a cooling swim in the huge, pandanus-fringed plunge pool fed by waterfalls.

The area is great for bushwalking – challenge yourself to walk the 2.6 km steep rocky loop that is the Leliyn Trail. Your reward is a refreshing swim in the upper pool of the falls halfway through the walk.

Pack a picnic lunch and head up to **Sweetwater Pool** – a large tranquil swimming hole on the Edith River that can be reached by walking the 8.6 km return track from Edith Falls. The walk includes a steep climb at the start and scenic lookouts along the way. The early morning or late afternoon light at Sweetwater Pool creates stunning reflections.

On your journey back to Darwin opt to take a short detour and spend some time exploring the plunge pools and waterfalls of **Litchfield National Park**.



Aboriginal artist, Katherine
Tourism NT/Felix Baker