

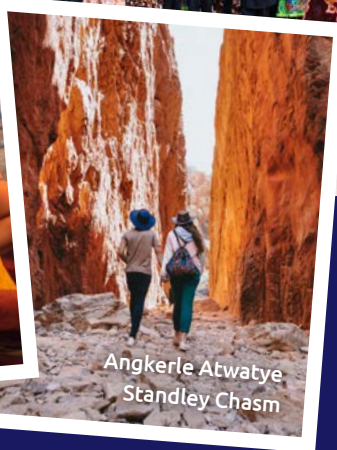
# Desert Song Festival

## Three-day itinerary

September



Outback Ballooning



Angkerle Atwatye Standley Chasm



Desert Song Festival



### DAY 1

Rise and shine takes on a whole new meaning once you're floating silently over the rugged West MacDonnell Ranges in a **hot air balloon at sunrise**. See the ranges from a majestic hot air balloon and get the kind of photos your followers on social media will fawn over. Select from half-hour or full-hour balloon flights; get your first impressions of Alice from the air and get your bubbly on after you touch back down.

After breakfast, and once you feel more grounded, jump in the car and head west to **Angkerle Atwatye Standley Chasm**. An easy 40-minute drive from Alice, you'll follow the western ridges of the MacDonnell Ranges deep into land owned and operated by Aboriginal people of the Arrrente nation.

This sacred place offers one of the Territory's most authentic and moving cultural exchanges.

Whether you choose to do the walk (1.2km) into the chasm under your own steam or take part in one of the incredible cultural tours led by members of the Angkerle Aboriginal Corporation, Angkerle Atwatye "the Gap of Water" will leave you in awe.

Inversely to the sun sitting low in the sky behind you, driving back into Alice Springs your spirits will be high and perfectly prepared for an evening filled with **Desert Song** events.

## Events that bring the different

The Northern Territory loves its events and festivals and the way they bring locals and visitors together to dance, sing, cheer, taste, share, and connect on Country in a way that's entirely different to anywhere else in the world.

The stunning MacDonnell Ranges and gorges of Central Australia, known for their spiritual significance to the traditional owners, create a backdrop like nowhere else to hold a celebration of the musically talented locally and from abroad. **Desert Song Festival** celebrates Aboriginal language and culture through choir, solo, and audience-led events. Be moved by the depth of wisdom and stories of this unique and unforgettable event.

### Alice Springs Town Map



## Accommodation in Alice Springs & surrounds

The Red Centre has everything from budget rooms and campgrounds to glamping and luxury hotels. So whether you're looking for a family-friendly haven or quiet and contemplative boutique stays; smack bang in the heart of town or farther afield – there are **accommodation options** for you here. Oh, and a word to the wise: if you like a room with a view we suggest asking for one that looks out towards the MacDonnell Ranges stretching east and west of the town.

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## DAY 2

Start your day with a good cup of coffee from one of the great cafés on either Todd or Hartley Streets. As you sip on a latte that rivals Melbourne's best, cast your mind back to that balloon experience yesterday. Picture the vibrant red earth beneath you and those golden tufts of grass dotting the landscape. The grass is called tjanpi and **Tjanpi Desert Weavers** is a social enterprise of the NPY Women's Council, representing over 400 women from 26 unique communities. The artists use the iconic grass to make artworks and sculptures. Their Wilkinson Street gallery and store is open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday and is a great place to kick off an art crawl across Alice.

Next stop **The Araluen Cultural Precinct** where you can lazily meander

through its myriad exhibition spaces, museums, and theatres. Special note to visit **Central Craft** in the precinct where you can watch and talk to artists at work before exploring the shop where local art and craft is sold. An easy 30-minute walk from the Precinct, **Watch This Space** is an Artist Run Initiative (ARI) that opens from midday Wednesday-Friday (10AM Saturday) and is a combined studio and exhibition space for local, contemporary artists.

With night falling, we suggest you finish your cultural exploration at **Epilogue Lounge** before warming up your vocal cords for a solid sing along at **Desert Song**. You'll find the young, the old, locals and interlopers alike at Epilogue Lounge, which is decidedly eclectic, but bona fide NT authentic.



Araluen Cultural Precinct



Epilogue Lounge



Desert Song Festival



Ellery Big Hole

## DAY 3

You've seen them from above, now it's time to get up close and personal with the MacDonnell Ranges. Rise early and grab the perfect Portuguese Tart, or a spelt sourdough loaf from the simply named, **The Bakery** on Todd Street before jumping in the car and heading west on Larapinta Drive.

Hopefully it's hot, because the **Tjoritja West MacDonnell National Park** is famous for its waterholes. The larger waterholes like Ellery Creek Big Hole, Ormiston Gorge, Redbank Gorge and

Glen Helen Gorge are filled with cold, clear, and famously restorative desert water you can swim in all year long. Ellery Creek Big Hole is spectacular, surrounded by tall red cliffs and a sandy creek backdrop that make for the perfect selfie (or seven).

Heading back to Alice Springs, stop in at **Alice Springs Brewing Co.** where you can sample a range of beers with personality as big as the Territory itself. Close out your **Desert Song Festival** experience in the crisp desert evening and enjoy the meeting of song and culture on Country.

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