

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.


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.



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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 Baruweil 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.