



11 DAYS LUXURY KIMBERLEY CRUISE - DARWIN TO BROOME

Extraordinary natural drama is unveiled on this thrilling Kimberley expedition. Immerse yourself in a wilderness of raw beauty, where red cliffs rise from turquoise waters, Indian Ocean beaches meet gentle waves, and teardrop atolls of coral bustle with birdlife. Join local guides to admire rock art, witness dramatic tides that reveal reefs, and encounter the outback's crocodiles. This unforgettable July adventure weaves from Darwin's shores to Broome.



ITINERARY

Day 1 - Darwin

"Australia's capital of the north is a uniquely tropical city, and a historically isolated outpost of this vast, diverse country. Reaching up towards the equator, a full 2,000 miles from Sydney and Melbourne, the city was named in honour of Charles Darwin by the British settlers who established a frontier outpost here. With a unique history, beautiful islands nearby, and a



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palette of sizzling Pacific flavours, colourful Darwin is an enchanting and exotic Australian destination. Crocodiles patrol the jungled waterways and tropical rainforests around Australia's gateway to the Top End. Explore via airboat to look down on the veiny waterways of the mist-laced Kakadu National Park. The sounds of chattering birdlife and the gentle splash of fountains and waterfalls will fill your ears in George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens. Soak it all in, before kicking back and relaxing with a picnic and a crackling barbecue. The sunshine and famous tropical pink sunsets mean many visitors naturally gravitate to the city's soft sands to relax at spots like pretty Mindil Beach, as evening approaches. The adjoining market is filled with souvenirs and crafts stands and is the perfect great place to enjoy some fiery Asian flavours. Stroll the stalls, grab some food, and crack open an ice-frosted beer as the sunset show begins. It may be remote, but Darwin found itself on the front line during the Pacific War, as the Japanese air force unloaded their bombs onto the city in 1942. This relaxed unassuming city has a deeply resilient backbone, however, and you can explore the museums to learn more of the war's impact on Darwin, as well as the devastating effects of one of Australia's worst natural disasters, Cyclone Tracy in 1973."

Day 2 - Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 3 - Ashmore Reef

Lost in the immensity of Indian Ocean and situated 630 km of Broome, Ashmore Reef Marine Park is an Australian External Territory that covers 583 square km. With its diverse shades of blue, its underwater wonders and feathery friends, this protected area is one of Australia's most beautiful natural treasures. The three tiny islands and their surrounding waters are home to an oasis of flourishing wildlife. Ashmore Reef is known to be the favourite place of more than 40 bird species. 100,000 seabirds breed there every year, including crested terns, white-tailed tropicbirds and greater frigatebirds. The islands are also a haven for thousands of migratory shorebirds like curlew sandpipers, bar-tailed godwits and great knots - some of them coming from very far places like Siberia! On the ocean side, the colourful reef is home to around 500 species of fish but also marine turtles, dugongs and many playful dolphins. Given the rich and fragile environment, Ashmore Reef has been declared a Sanctuary zone, providing the highest level of protection for the wildlife and minimising disturbance from human activities. Only scientific research is permitted but the visitors can access to the Recreational Use Zone, which includes a small area of the West Island, and thus discover this unique place.

Day 4 - Day at sea

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Day 5 - Wyndham

Wyndham is a small settlement with the spirit of a Kimberley outback township. It was established in 1886 with the Halls

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Creek gold rush and sits on the Cambridge Gulf where several rivers converge. Today Wyndham has a population of roughly 900 people and operates largely as a port exporting cattle, servicing the mining industry and hosting a few small ships. For these vessels Wyndham is a gateway to the nearby Ord River. Conversely, cruising the peaceful and tree-lined Ord River is a chance to look for freshwater crocodiles, fruit bats, short-eared rock wallabies and a variety of birds, including Mangrove Herons and Mangrove Gerygones. Please note: All destinations on voyages in the Kimberley region, and the order in which they are visited, are subject to tidal variations and weather conditions.

Day 6 - King George River (Kimberley, Western Australia)

The King George Falls is one of the Kimberley's most magnificent natural wonders. At 80 meters (260 feet), the thundering spectacle of twin cascades are among the highest in Australia. The river weaves through an amazing landscape of near vertical red rock formations and a parade of wildlife -- carnivorous saltwater crocodiles and amazing birdlife, including giant raptors and the Brahminy Kite.

Day 7 - Vansittart Bay (Jar Island)

Vansittart Bay is located near the northern tip of Western Australia. The bay was named by Phillip Parker King during one of his four surveys of Northern Australia during the early 19th century. Interesting parts of the bay include Jar Island and the opportunity to view Bradshaw (Gwion Gwion) and Wandjina styles of rock art. For these two different rock art styles there are two sites in close proximity. An area with an example of a more recent history is the Anjo Peninsula. A beach landing and a short hike across a lagoon or -depending on tides- a walk around the lagoon will lead to a World War II site. An almost intact wreck of an old airplane, a C-53, can be seen there.

Day 8 - Hunter River Region (Western Australia)

The Hunter River is home to an immense mangrove system surrounded by soaring red sandstone cliffs. Narrow mangrove channels shelter numerous bird species, mudskippers, fiddler crabs and the infamous saltwater crocodile; the most aggressive crocodile species known to man. Naturalist Island at the mouth of the river has a stunning stretch of sandy beach that makes a perfect landing site for small helicopters that can pick up visitors wishing to explore some of the Kimberley's vast interior. The highlight inland is the famous Mitchell Falls where four tiers of waterfalls plunge into deep pools that flow out into the mighty Mitchell River. The headwaters of the falls are cool and a dip in the fresh water is a welcome reprieve from the heat of the heartland.

Days 9 - 10 - Buccaneer Archipelago Region

Set off the coast of Western Australia, the Buccaneer Archipelago is one of the Kimberley's finest secrets. The Archipelago, 50 k2 (19 sq mi), is made up of around 800 islands and protect the mainland from the huge 12 metre tides and astonishing speed of the Yampi (or, in traditional Aborigine, "Yampee") Sound. The speed and power of the water many not make for pleasant bathing, but do however result in fantastic natural phenomena. One fine example is the horizontal reversible waterfall in Talbot Bay. The tidal pull is responsible for the "reversible" nature of the falls, however, this also hides narrow gaps between the islands, making for treacherous sailing conditions. Isolated graves of sailors and divers are testimony to the danger. William Dampier sighted the Archipelago in 1688 but it would not be until 1821 that the Archipelago would become known as Buccaneer (a term coined by Captain Phillip Parker King) "in commemoration of William Dampier's visit to this part of the coast ". Commander John Lort Stokes also noted

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the area in his 1838 record. Enterprising individuals were initially attracted to the Buccaneer Archipelago in the 1800s due to the superior pearling as well as the rich iron ore deposits. Pearling conducted by luggers in the 1880s was concentrated in Cygnet Bay, Cascade Bay, Cone Bay and Strickland Bay. More recently, mining operators established open-cut mines on Koolan Island on the east side of the Sound. Some of the richest iron ore in the world is extracted here to this day.

Day 11 - Broome (Kimberley)

Gateway to the oldest and most elusive of all Australia's nine regions, Broome is where your Kimberley adventure begins. The ancient landscape has long held travellers spellbound: The Kimberley is three times larger than England but has a population of just 35,000, is over 65,000 years old and is home to 2,000 km of coastline. Almost impenetrable, incredibly remote, the red baked earth, prolific wildlife, majestic canyons and swimming holes are the stuff of Australian wilderness dreams. English explorer William Dampier was the first explorer to set foot in Broome in 1668. However, the land had long been used as a trading route between east and west Kimberley for Aboriginal families. These semi-nomadic tribes respected strict unwritten rules regarding ownership of the land. The Yawuru people remain the Native Title holders for the township of Broome to this day. Broome itself has over 84 Aboriginal communities affiliated to it, 78 of which are considered remote. The city grew from its nascent pearling industry of the late 19th century. Pearl diving was dangerous in the waters surrounding Broome and for many years divers were limited to Aboriginal slaves, skin divers who faced cyclones, sharks, crocodiles, ear and chest infections in order to bring up as many pearl shells as possible for their masters. Natural pearls were rare and extremely valuable, and

when found, were placed in a locked box. At the peak of its industry, around 1914, Broome was responsible for 80% of the world's pearl trade.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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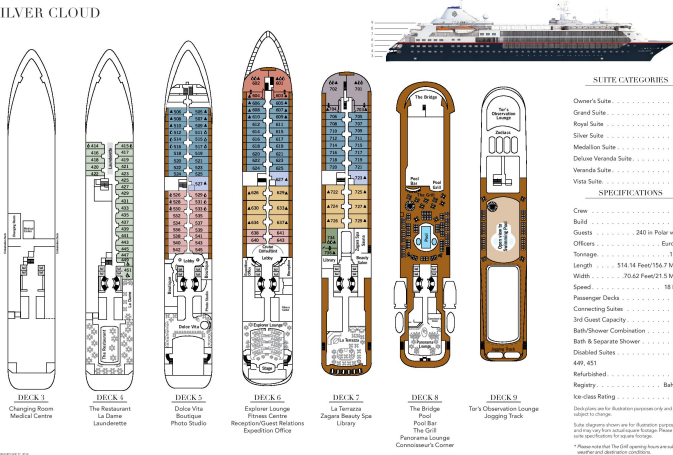
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