



Broome to Kununurra – 10 Day 4wd Self- Drive Adventure

A one-way journey from Broome to Kununurra or reverse, this journey takes in the infamous Gibb River Road and all its spectacular gorges and waterfalls. The Mitchell Plateau is one of Australia's most pristine Wilderness areas and is rich with Aboriginal Wandjina and Gwion (Bradshaw) art sites. El Questro provides a fitting finale to a wonderful Kimberley experience. It is strongly recommended that a 3-Day Bungle Bungle extension be also undertaken from Kununurra.

Suggested Itinerary

Day 1 Broome to Fitzroy Crossing

Ensure the Darnku Heritage Cruise is booked for this afternoon in Fitzroy Crossing. Conservation and Land Management (CALM) run a cheaper, shorter cruise if preferred. Depart early from your accommodation and drive through Kimberley cattle country for the morning. After a morning stop near the Fitzroy River at Willare, you can detour to Derby and visit the wharf and Prison Boab Tree. Ensure you have adequate alcohol supplies for the next 7 nights before leaving Derby or Fitzroy Crossing. You arrive in Fitzroy Crossing and head out to the gorge before enjoying an afternoon Darnku Heritage Cruise on Geikie Gorge. Your camping this evening is at the

Fitzroy River Safari Lodge (Full facilities- shower, laundry and toilet) (5 hours (400 km) driving, 1&1/2 hours (12 km) cruising.)

Day 2 Fitzroy Crossing to Windjana Gorge

Retracing our steps a short distance up the Great Northern Highway, you turn off to the right (signposted) to Tunnel Creek, a 3/4 km subterranean walk through the Napier Range. Continue on with a stop at the ruins of Lillilmooloora, (signposted) to right, site of the first dramatic chapter in the story of the Aboriginal resistance fighter, Jandamarra, before heading right towards Windjana Gorge (signposted) and establishing camp.

Overnight camping Windjana Gorge National Park. (Toilet & shower facilities.) (3 hours (151 km) driving, 1&1/2 hours (3km) walking.)

Day 3 Windjana Gorge National Park to Bell Gorge National Park

A morning walking into Windjana Gorge will be very rewarding as you explore this ancient fossil reef forming imposing walls and see crocodiles basking in the sun. The Gorge is nearly 5km long and the energetic may wish to walk right to the end. Continue on to the Gibb River Road and turn right, making your way to the Lennard River, where you may be able to stop for a swim.

Travel past the Queen Victoria's Head Rock formation as you pass through the Napier Range before turning left to Lennard Gorge (signposted) in the afternoon and soak in the impressive scenery, although the track is usually very rough. Return to the GRR, turn left and continue down to the Bell Gorge (signposted) Turn off to the left and make your way to camp.

Overnight camping at Silent Grove, Bell Gorge. (Toilet & shower facilities) (3&1/2 hours driving (140 km), 2 hours (4 km) walking,

Day 4 Bell Gorge National Park to Manning Gorge

After a drive to the carpark and a morning walk into Bell Gorge; retrace your steps to the Gibb River Road. Head off left down the Gibb River Road to your next stop, picturesque Galvans Gorge (signposted) on the left for a lunchtime interlude. Park at the gate and walk to the fall. After a stop at Mt Barnett Roadhouse to pay camp fees, you make your way to Lower Manning Gorge. You can walk that afternoon to beautiful Manning Gorge to see the waterfall and some Gwion (Bradshaw) figures. For the less energetic, you can stop for a swim and relax beneath shady paperbarks and perhaps take the walk in the morning.

10 Day Kimberley Dreaming

Overnight camping Manning Gorge (Toilet facilities) (3 hours (155 km) driving, 3 hours (9 km) walking.)

Day 5 Manning Gorge to Miners Pool

After a morning stop at Mt Barnett Roadhouse, turn left back on the GRR and cross the Barnett River. Turn left to (signposted) Barnett River Gorge. Keep veering right until you get to the carpark or stop at the rocky creek crossing and walk from there. Time can be spent at Barnett River Gorge before heading left on down the road towards the Kalumbaru turn-off. Proceeding straight ahead and leaving the GRR, you can make a stop and perhaps a swim at Gibb River before the journey northwards for an hour to Drysdale River Station (signposted) to the left for fuel and to pay camp fees. Return to the Kalumbaru road, turn left and take the right track before the river crossing (signposted) to Miners Pool to set up camp for the evening and perhaps a swim.

Overnight camping Miners Pool. (Toilet facilities.) (5 hours (320 km) driving, 1 hours (2 km) walking.)

Day 6 Miners Pool to Mitchell Falls

Return to the Kalumbaru road, turn right and cross the Drysdale River. Turn left (signposted) to Mitchell Plateau and make a stop at King Edward River to inspect the crossing before attempting it. Turn down the track immediately left and park in the carpark and walk to the Wandjina and Gwion (Bradshaw) art. Retrace your steps to the Plateau track and turn left. Turn right to the main King Edward River Camping area and stop for a swim and lunch. Ascending the Mitchell Plateau, you enter a world of forests of Livistona Palms, ancient Aboriginal Wandjina and Gwion (Bradshaw) art, magnificent waterfalls and isolated swimming holes. The track can be quite rough all the way. Your overnight camp is on water at Mertons Creek.

Overnight camping Mitchell Falls. (Toilet facilities.) (4 hours (139 km) driving, 1 hour (3 km) walking)

Day 7 Mitchell Falls

A full day is available to fully explore this magnificent waterfall and its associated aboriginal art. Call in with the Helicopter pilots' camp at the start and arrange a 'taxi' from the falls back to the carpark (about \$60) departing the falls about 3pm or a longer scenic flight. Walk from the carpark to Little Merton Falls (down the hill to the left) and see wonderful Aboriginal art in overhangs under the falls. Continue through open woodland to another Gwion (Bradshaw) artsite, visible across the creek to the left. After a stop at impressive Big Merton Falls, you arrive at Mitchell Falls and spend time swimming and exploring this magnificent area. Cross the river and walk past the heli-pad to the wonderful lookout facing the falls. For the adventurous, you may find the track near this lookout down the other side of the hill to the river. Aboriginal Art may be found down the bottom on the other side of the river in overhangs. Walk or fly back to the carpark.

Overnight camping Mitchell Fall. (Toilet facilities.) (3 hours (6km) walking, (the helicopter can usually be taken one way from the falls.)

Day 8 Mitchell Falls to Gibb River

Retracing your steps back to the Kalumbaru Road, stop for a leg stretch at the Lawley Lookout on the left. Continue off the Mitchell Plateau and stop and view more galleries of Aboriginal Bradshaw Art down a track off to the left when you come down off the Plateau. Stop again at King Edward River and relax for a while at its refreshing waters. Recross the river and turn right at the Kalumbaru road. Continue back past Drysdale River Station, where you will need to refuel. Proceed on down to the Gibb River for a bush camp. Stop at Miners Pool or Drysdale Station if you prefer the facilities.

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Overnight Bush Camp, Gibb River. (No facilities) (6 hours (250 km) driving.)

Day 9 Gibb River to El Questro

Returning to the Gibb River Road, turn left and continue the GRR trek. Cross the Durack River (Check the depth early in the season). After stopping to view the magnificent Cockburn Range at the lookout on the right, descend the range and ford the Pentecost River. Continue on to Emma Gorge (signposted to left) and call in to the office to purchase a wilderness pass and a station map. Walk to the gorge and droplet waterfall for a refreshing swim. Retrace your tracks to the El Questro turn-off (signposted to left) and make your way through to the station. There are choices of camping areas. Black Cockatoo at the Station is best if you want facilities.

Overnight camping El Questro Station (Full facilities.) (5 hours (281 km) driving, 2 hours (3km) walking)

Day 10 El Questro to Kununurra

Set off this morning to explore beautiful Zebedee thermal springs (signposted) to right to relax in the tropical surroundings. This afternoon drive to Chamberlain Gorge (signposted) to give you an opportunity to view the Station Homestead from a distance. Return towards the store and turn left to Branco's Lookout (signposted) for a vista over the Pentecost River. Retrace your tracks to the Gibb River Road and turn right. Stop at MB Rocks (unsignposted) to right to see the Aboriginal Art. Continue to the bitumen and turn right to Kununurra (signposted) down the Great Northern Highway. (2&1/2 hours (150 km) driving, 1/2 hours (1km) walking.)

Finish in Kununurra. This trip is also available Kununurra to Broome. See '3 Day Bungal Explorer' for Bungal Extension or 3 Day Cape Leveque Aboriginal Experience from Broome.

Recommended References

The above itineraries are not intended as the sole guide to the details of your route. Four Wheel Drive Hire Service recommends the following references be consulted or purchased prior to departure.

Map

Hema Maps – The Kimberley, Great Desert Tracks of Australia NW

Guide Book

The Kimberley- An Adventurers Guide by Ron and Viv Moon
Discover Australia by 4WD by Ron and Viv Moon.

Background Reading

Kings in Grass Castles by Mary Durack
The Australian Geographic Guide to the Kimberley.
The Explorers by Tim Flannery

Websites

Moon Guidebooks- www.guidebooks.com.au
Hema Maps for an idea of the range of maps and information on suppliers -
www.hemamaps.com.au
Detailed Track notes-www.mynrma.com.au/travel/go/outback_tracks/index.shtml
National Park Information- www.calm.wa.gov.au/national_parks/index.html
Aboriginal books- www.magabala.com.au
Darngku Heritage Cruise- www.darngku.com.au