



### **West Coast Explorer – Perth to Broome – 16 Day**

The West Coast Explorer is a wonderful celebration of Nature-based tourism at its best as you walk, swim and cruise your way through the National Parks and scenic highlights of the West Coast. While this trek is more suited to the cooler months of May to September, certain times of the year will yield Whale Sharks and wildflowers as you contrast the desert and gorges with the magnificent waters of Coral Bay and Monkey Mia. A nature-lovers delight as you explore one of the untouched gems of Australia!

#### **Suggested Itinerary**

##### **Day 1 Perth to Geraldton**

Travel north from Perth up the Brand Highway and turn left to Cervantes. After a stop at this sea-side town, continue through to Nambung National Park to explore and see fascinating expanse of the Pinnacles. Return through Cervantes to the Brand Highway and head north through Eneabba to Dongerra and on to

**Overnight camping in a Caravan Park at Geraldton. (Full facilities- Shower, toilet and washing machine)** (480km (6 hours) driving, 1 hour walking)

##### **Day 2 Geraldton to Kalbarri**

Head north again and turn left to explore the Kalbarri National Park. Detour to the right to the Murchison River at Hawks Head and again right to see Natures Window and the Z bend, absolutely outstanding weathered formations. From July until November the wildflowers can be quite magnificent! After lunch, continue through to Kalbarri and explore the beach areas before setting up your

**Overnight camp in a Caravan Park at Kalbarri.** (264km (4 hours) driving, 2 hours walking)

##### **Day 3 Kalbarri to Monkey Mia**

Return to the North West Coastal Highway and turn left. Head north through to Billabong Roadhouse for a stop. Turn left at the Overlander Roadhouse and head through the Nanga Bay Resort to Shell Beach for a stop at this aptly named beach. Stop also and view the ancient stromatolites. Continue through to Denham and on to Monkey Mia. Interacting with the dolphins and swimming in the ocean is a wonderful experience at the resort.

**Overnight camping, Monkey Mia Resort. (Full facilities)** (450 km (5 hours) driving)

##### **Day 4 Monkey Mia to Carnarvon**

Return to Denham and then back to the highway at the Overlander Roadhouse. Continuing north, you travel through to Carnarvon. After a stop to take in the views from the OTC Tracking dish, drive to the historic waterfront heritage precinct where you can explore the old buildings, walk the one-mile jetty and visit the Lighthouse Cottage Museum. Set up for your

**Overnight camp at the Caravan Park in Carnarvon. (Full facilities)** (356km (4 hours) driving, 2 hours walking)

##### **Day 5 Carnarvon to Kennedy Range National Park**

Head east up the Gascoyne River Valley to the small town of Gascoyne Junction. After a morning stop, head north to Kennedy Range National Park turn off to the left. Turn left at the crossroads and travel to the southern access point. A short walk up the gorge will reward with swimming in deep pools beneath huge red cliffs. Retrace your tracks to the crossroads and turn left to the camping area. This afternoon you can walk up the impressive gorge before your

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**Overnight camp in the Kennedy Range National Park. (Toilet only)** (223 (4 hours) driving, 3 hours walking)

### **Day 6 Kennedy Range to Mt Augustus**

Return to the crossroads and turn left. Make your way to the car park and, after a walk up the gorge, there are more beautiful swimming opportunities. Returning to Gascoyne Junction, continue heading further into the Gascoyne Valley as you make your way to Landor. Journey north to the **Mt Augustus Outback Tourist Resort** and perhaps take in the sunset on the rock before your

**Overnight camp. (Shower and toilet)** (381km (6 hours) driving, 2 hours walking)

### **Day 7 Mt Augustus**

You have a full day to explore the world's largest Rock, Mt Augustus. 8km long and twice the size of Uluru, Burringurrah (Mt Augustus) rises 717m above the surrounding plain. It provides a challenging 12km return walk to the summit for the experienced and fit walkers, with plenty of water. For the less active, there are a number of shorter, but equally as interesting, walks to see Aboriginal carvings, such as the Ooramboo site or the Edney trail. Take the Burringurrah drive around the rock to access all the gorges and walks. Explore this wonderful monocline before sunset and returning to

**Your overnight camp at Mt Augustus Outback Tourist Resort. (Shower and toilet)** (70 km (2 hours) driving, 12km (6 hours) walking)

### **Day 8 Mt Augustus to Coral Bay**

Today you head back west along station roads through to Cobra Station, an alternative camping area to Mt Augustus Resort. You continue through Lyndon Station to Minilya Roadhouse and the North West Coastal Highway. Turn left off to Coral Bay and travel through the Giralia Range to Coral Bay and the Ningaloo Reef. After several days in the Outback, you'll appreciate the azure waters and spectacular reef.

**Overnight camping, Coral Bay. (Full facilities).** (481km (8 hours driving))

### **Day 9 Coral Bay**

Snorkelling off the beach will allow wonderful coral viewing. Other opportunities include glass-bottomed boats and fishing. Much more than a day can quite easily be spent here if time allows!

### **Day 10 Coral Bay to Cape Range National Park**

Take the Yardie Road north along the coast up to Ningaloo Station and beyond to the Cape Range National Park. Stop at Yardie Creek and take a short walk up the valley to Yardie Gorge to have a swim before heading north. There are many wonderful beaches passed that are accessible and protected by the Ningaloo Reef that you can stop at to swim and explore. Take the Mandu Mandu turnoff and walk the 3km track into the gorge along the ancient river bed through the Limestone Range. Continue up to Milyering Visitors Centre to register and get information before continuing up to Mangrove Bay. The bird and fauna hides here are great, especially late in the afternoon, where kangaroos and emus may also be seen. Return to your

**Overnight camp at Ned's Camp. (Toilet facility)** (112km (3 hours) driving, 5km (3 hours) walking)

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### **Day 11 Cape Range National Park to Karratha**

Continue north out of the National Park to North West Cape and then head south past the Harold Holt Naval Base to Exmouth. In season, it is highly recommended that you take a trip to watch or swim with the whale sharks in season. After a stop, head south again to the Shothole Canyon road and turn right. Take the steep but rewarding walk to the canyon lip. Return to the main road and turn right to the Charles Knife Road and detour to the right to the Thomas Carter lookout for panoramic views. If you have two vehicles, you may consider doing the walk that links the lookout to Shothole Canyon by using a vehicle shuffle. Continue south to the Giralia turn-off to the left and return to the North West Coastal Highway, turning left. Continue on to Nanutarra Roadhouse for a stop and past the Fortescue Roadhouse, crossing the Fortescue River, to your

**Overnight camping in a caravan park at Karratha. (Full facilities).** (579km (6 & ½ hours) driving, 2 km (1 & 1/2 hours) walking.)

### **Day 12 Karratha to Karajina National Park**

After a morning look around the mining town of Karratha, administrative capital of the Pilbara, continue up the road to Roebourne. A detour to the left to the historic town of Cossack is worthwhile to see the fine old Sandstone buildings and visit the museum, with relics of the old Pearling Days. Return to the NW Coastal Highway and continue on to the Karajina turnoff. Turning right, travel through the Chichester Range and on to the Millstream-Chichester National Park. Turn right to Python Pool and walk up to the glorious plunge Pool for a swim and lunch. Continue on to the Millstream turnoff and drive through to the Snappy Gum Drive turn to stop at Crossing Pool. Continue around the loop road to informative Millstream Homestead and Visitors Centre and Chinderwarriner Pool, taking the Homestead Walk. Return to the main road and turn right. Continue through to the Wittenoom- Nanutarra Road and turn right to Hamersley Gorge for a walk and swim. Retrace your tracks to the Tom Price Road and turn left at the Hamersley- Mt Bruce Road. Turn left again at Karajini Drive and left into the National Park for your

**Overnight camp at Joffre Gorge. (Toilet Facilities)** (430km (6 hours) driving, 2 hours walking)

### **Day 13 Karajini National Park**

Spend the morning exploring the wonderful gorges, lookouts and plunge pools. Weano, Knox, Hancock and Joffre Gorges are spectacular and very accessible. Ensure that you undertake walks that are suitable for your level of fitness. After lunch, make your way down Banjima Drive to the wonderful Karajini Visitors Centre and continue through to your

**Overnight camping at Dales Gorge camping area. (Toilet facilities)** This afternoon explore Fortescue Falls, Circular Pool and Dales Gorge or save some for the morning. 42km (1 hour) driving, 5 hours walking.)

### **Day 14 Karajini National Park to Marble Bar**

Return to Banjima Drive and turn left back to Karajini Drive. Turn right at the Great Northern Highway and travel through the Ophthalmia Range to the mining town of Newman. After a stop, travel over the Fortescue River and on to Nullagine. Make your way to Marble Bar, renowned as the hottest town in Australia with a period of 161 days over the old 100-degree mark! This afternoon explore the Jasper Bar that gives the town its name, Chinaman's Pool for a swim. Visit some of the wonderful old buildings, such as the historic Government Offices and the Ironclad Hotel before setting up your

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**Overnight camp in the Marble Bar Caravan Park. (Full facilities)** (483km (6 hours) driving, 1 hour walking)

### **Day 15 Marble Bar to Sandfire Roadhouse**

Head out to the Comet Mine for a morning underground mine tour at 9.30 and to visit the museum. Continue through to the Great Northern Highway and turn left to detour to Port Headland for lunch. After a look around, retrace your tracks north up the Highway and cross the De Grey River for a stop at Pardoo Roadhouse, a renowned 'cyclone magnet' and on to your overnight camp at Sandfire Roadhouse, on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert. Overnight camping, Sandfire Roadhouse. Full facilities. (505 km (5 & ½ hours driving))

### **Day 16 Sandfire Roadhouse to Broome**

Continue north up the highway and detour to Port Smith for a swim and to see the bird park and tropical gardens. Return to the Great Northern Highway and head left. Drive to the Broome Highway junction at Roebuck Plains Roadhouse and make a morning stop. As you approach Broome, take the turn off to the left to Broome Bird Observatory. Situated on Roebuck Bay, it has an outstanding number of migratory birds visiting the shoreline. Return to the Highway and turn left. Take the turn right to Willie Beach Pearl Farm and arrive in time for the 2.15 tour. Return to the Highway make your way to Cable Beach for a champagne sunset and a fitting end to a wonderful journey. (420km (5 hours) driving, 1 hour walking) Perhaps consider adding a 3 Day Cape Leveque Aboriginal Experience extension 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 Pilbara and North Gascoyne, 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](http://www.guidebooks.com.au)  
Hema Maps for an idea of the range of maps and information on suppliers - -  
[www.hemamaps.com.au](http://www.hemamaps.com.au)  
National Park Information- [www.calm.wa.gov.au/national\\_parks/index.html](http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/national_parks/index.html)  
Aboriginal books- [www.magabala.com.au](http://www.magabala.com.au)