

Kakadu Day Walks: August 20-26 2017

Our 2015 experimental trip where we offered real walks without having to carry a full pack was such a success that we decided to try it again.

Kakadu has dozens of short marked trails. We will choose a variety to try and give you a good overview of the park. We may even use our bushwalking permit to take you beyond where other day walkers can go. You can see a list of all the marked day walks in Kakadu at <http://www.parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu/do/walks.html>

We will stay in budget accommodation some nights, campgrounds on others. Some of the walks we will do would not be practical without camping. For others, camping is a potential problem.

If we stay in accommodation, we will probably choose to eat in a restaurant. If we camp, we will cook.

This is a **DRAFT**, emphasise **DRAFT** itinerary. An exceptionally good or poor wet season could mean that we have to change some of the walks. Or, we may be able to include a special walk with Aboriginal guides as we did in 2015.

Day 1: 20 Aug Pick up will be early, about 7 am from your accommodation in Darwin.



[Crocodile on the East Alligator](#)



[Guluyambi guide demonstrating how to produce pigments used in rock art](#)

We drive to Ubirr in Kakadu. There are three walks of differing lengths: the Manggarre Rainforest Walk (up to 1½ km and up to an hour,

the last part of the walk is restricted to women only), the Bardedjilidji Sandstone Walk (2½ km, about 2 hours) and the Sandstone and River Walk (6½ km, about 4 hours).

Depending on the time we arrive, we expect to begin with either the Manggarre or Bardedjilidj walk. We need to be finished before 11 am so you can join the free Ranger guided walk at 11 am at Ubirr. (2hrs, 1km loop).

If we have any time to spare, you can do the short walk that you've missed before joining the 3 pm Guluyambi Cruise on the East Alligator River which gives you an even better appreciation of the local people and their culture. See

<http://www.kakaduculturaltours.com.au/guluyambi-cultural-cruise> for more information.

After the cruise, you return to Jabiru and your accommodation at Anbinik where we hope to stay in into their Bush Bungalows. See

<http://www.kakadu.net.au/accommodation-at-anbinik-kakadu-resort/>

We have very deliberately chosen accommodation that is not airconditioned (it does have fans) as you will need to be acclimatised to the weather for the walks.

We plan to have dinner at the nearby Jabiru Social Club. Local licensing regulations mean that you need to have photo ID with you.

Day 2, 21 Aug Early start as we need to be at Gubalanya (Oenpelli) in Arnhem Land before 8:30 am to join the Injalak Hill art site walk. The walk takes 2½ to 3 hours. For more information see <http://injalak.com/rock-art-tours/>

Click on the home page link on the page above to find out more about Injalak. If you have any interest in a possible purchase of Aboriginal art, this is almost certainly the best place to do it. We do any of the Ubirr walks we may have missed. Overnight at Anbinik

Day 3, 22 Aug We will do the Ilgajarr and/or Bubba Wetlands walk, then the Mirray Lookout before going to Cooinda for lunch. We finish the day by driving to the Garnamarr campground near Jim Jim Falls.

Day 4, 23 Aug We drive the 4WD track to Jim Jim and do the walk to the bottom of the falls. After that, we return to the vehicle and drive to Twin Falls where we do a walk to the top of the falls. If time permits, we may be able to do the boat cruise up Twin Falls Gorge.

After the walk, we drive back to the Garnamarr campground. (Hot showers and flush toilets.)

Day 5, 24 Aug We visit Maguk and do a walk up above where the day trippers can go. We'll have lunch next to our own private pool before returning to the car and driving to the unserviced Kambolgie campground in the southern part of the park.

Day 6, 25 Aug A short drive from Kambolgie brings us to the start of the Yurmikmik walk. We will do a loop that takes in both Motorcar and Kurrundie Creeks before driving to the serviced Gunlom campground.

Day 7, 26 Aug We begin with a walk to the top of Gunlom. After a look at the top of the falls, we continue upstream a short distance to where we can enjoy our own private pool before returning to the car and then back to Darwin.



On the Ilgajarr walk, early morning



Walking above Twin Falls, it's not all this flat, but there are lots of swims available.



Walking along Motorcar Creek on 2015 experimental day walk trip.

Terrain and Difficulty

Overall Level 1

Climate Level 3. By August, it is normally starting to heat up. The humidity is usually fairly low, but this cannot be guaranteed. The maximum temperature on most days will average 33-34°C. The average nightly minimum is about 18-20°C (65°F), but it has been known to drop as low as 10°C. If you bring a sleeping bag, you won't need a heavy one. Rain is unlikely but possible so you should have something to use as shelter if we do get rain.

Terrain Most of the walks have a few steep climbs, none of which is over 200 m. As short as they are, these climbs are strenuous. Some may require using your hands to hold on as you climb up or down. None are technically difficult. None require ropes or other special equipment. There will be some places where you have to step from stone to stone as you walk along the edge of a creek.

The creeks are low enough so that swimming across with packs is will not be necessary. It may, however, be necessary to wade across slippery rocks through waist deep water. Your guide can help if you need assistance.

While most of the walking is on marked trails, if we do the longer walks, some will be completely off-trail. If you have never done any off-track walking through moderately rough terrain, nothing we can say can adequately describe the experience. The photos on our website, www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au, can give you a partial picture, but they cannot substitute for the real thing.

Most of those who have not had any off-track walking experience find it more difficult than those who have done it before.

Anyone who does not regularly (average twice a month) go bushwalking carrying a full pack would benefit from doing some pre-trip training. Do this and you will almost certainly enjoy the trip. If you are not an experienced off-track bushwalker and you don't do any training or any other form of strenuous physical exercise, you might feel that the trip is more of an endurance test than the pleasure most people experience.

- Vegetation** Level 2-3. Much of the walking is through relatively flat, open woodland with a grassy understorey. Some short sections of grass may hide a broken rocky surface where you will have to be particularly careful. There may be some slow sections where you will have to pass through thick scrub. The vegetation can vary from year to year depending on when last burnt. At this time of year, the spear grass has finished seeding and dried out.
- Hours** Generally 4-7 hours, none of which will involve carrying a full pack.
- Packs** **Pack weight** - level 0. Day packs only. However, if we camp, whether you bring a sleeping bag and/or tent is a matter of personal choice. But, if you don't bring a sleeping bag, you should bring something like a set of thermals in case we do get a cool night. Similarly if you don't bring a tent, you should bring something you can put over yourself to keep yourself dry in case we get a storm.
- Art** We will see some of the commonly visited art sites. We may visit sites that other day walkers will never get to see.
- Campsites** Managed or unmanaged campgrounds.
- Swims** Less than on most of our trips but there will be opportunities for swims in the pool at Anbinik and on the walks on the last four days. If we do the itinerary above, you will have your own private pool on a number of occasions on days 4-7.
- Lowlights** Possible tourist crowds at the beginning and end of all the walks.
- Highlights** Good weather. Great swimming holes. Aboriginal art sites.
- Wildlife** Birds are always present and are beginning to concentrate near the waterholes as the land dries out. This would be an excellent walk for keen birdwatchers. You are unlikely to see many large animals.
- Fishing** Not permitted on this walk.
- Maps** The 1:50,000 Jim Jim Falls shows where we walk at Jim Jim and Twin Falls; the Callanan map shows the Yurmikmik area; the Goodparla map shows where we walk at Maguk and Gunlom. Walking tracks are not shown and, in any case, some of our walking will be off-track. 1:250 000 Kakadu park map shows all areas but is not suitable for navigation.

Fitness Note

While this trip is easier than any of our pack-carrying trips, we must emphasise some of the points make on our How Hard page, <http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/howhard.shtml>

The absolute minimum level of fitness required for our easiest trips is to be able to comfortably walk 10 km in 2½ hours on level ground while carrying a small pack.

You will not have to walk this fast on this trip but your ability to do so is a good indicator of whether or not you are fit enough to cope with the conditions you will encounter.

This test is not enough. Some of our walking may be off-trail. If you have done little or no off-track walking in rough conditions or you have not done extended walks in hot conditions, you need to study our information on rock hopping and climate before deciding to try one of our trips.

Links to this information are on our How Hard page,
<http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/howhard.shtml>

General Notes

You can leave food and clothing in the vehicle during the walks.

Make sure you keep some money and a water bottle with you during the drives. It is unlikely that you will be able to easily get things out of your pack during the day.

A daypack will be useful on all walks. If you don't have a day pack, you will need to use your main pack.

The vehicle or vehicles we will use are registered as self-drive hire cars and will be driven by those taking part in the tour. All are manual shift Landcruiser troopcarriers with three rows of forward facing seats.