

# SAVANNAH WAY

## 22-Day ITINERARY

The Savannah Way is a collection of linked outback roads and highways that form a spectacular touring route traversing northern Australia from Cairns to Broome. Along the way it passes many national parks and reserves including several that have World Heritage status.

It crosses the Northern Territory's vast Katherine Region, which is the focus of the itinerary below. Whilst the majority of the Savannah Way is sealed there are large sections of unsealed, but well maintained gravel highways. A large four-wheel drive vehicle is recommended to fully appreciate this epic touring route.

### Day 1 – Day 7

This, the Queensland section, takes you from Cairns to Hells Gate. Leave Cairns behind and drive into the Atherton Tablelands and across the dividing range where the Savannah Woodland and your outback adventure begins. Spend several days exploring the vast Queensland Gulf Region at your own pace. Don't miss the Undara Lava Tubes or Cobbold Gorge. A sunset at the remote fishing town of Karumba and a leisurely canoe paddle along the stunning gorge at Lawn Hill National Park are also highlights.

### Day 8

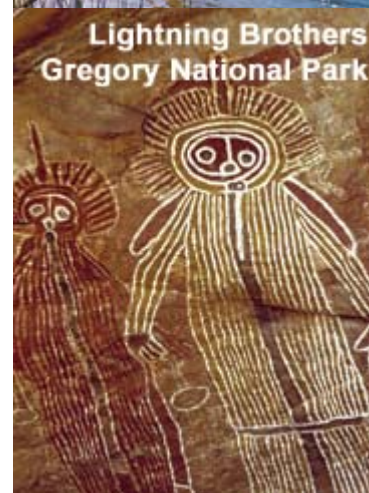
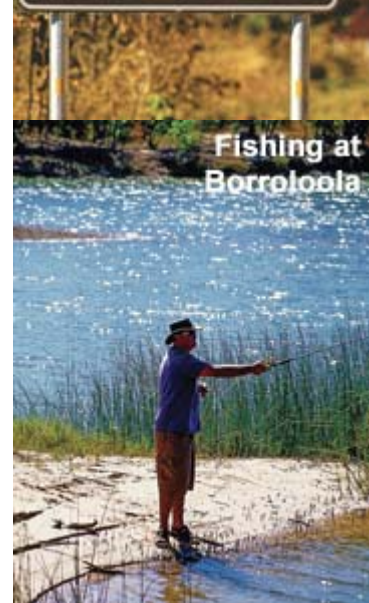
Hell's Gate to Borroloola. Borroloola is a remote community beside the McArthur River in the gulf region of the Northern Territory. It is famed for unique history, characters and excellent fishing. Many visitors use Borroloola as a base for barramundi fishing expeditions. The town is an ideal location to stock up before exploring the gulf region. A major attraction in the region is the Sir Edward Pellew group of islands. The Borroloola Museum was once the old police station built in 1886. There is a collection of artefacts, documents and photographs that detail Borroloola's interesting past including the influence of the Macassan (Indonesian) contact in the earlier part of last century.

### Day 9

Half an hour's drive from Borroloola is the King Ash Bay Boat and Fishing Club - a sport fishing mecca and the host of the annual Borroloola Fishing Classic. Access to the picturesque Sir Edward Pellew Islands at the mouth of the McArthur River is possible from King Ash Bay. It is worth lingering an extra day to experience some of the best fishing anywhere in Australia. Boat hire (including house boats) and fishing tours are available out of King Ash Bay.

### Day 10 - Day 11

Borroloola to Roper Bar. Caranbirini is a small conservation reserve located 46 km south of Borroloola on the western extremity of the Bukalara Range. The nature reserve has unusual sandstone escarpment and spire 25 metres in height. The area includes some aboriginal art sites, a waterhole and a range of endangered species. The Reserve also protects a number of habitats and plays an important role in preserving the region's unique flora and fauna as it is located within the ecological transition zone between the tropical north and drier centre.



## SAVANNAH WAY

### 22-Day ITINERARY

Cape Crawford is situated near the intersection between the Carpentaria and Tablelands Highway. Lindsay Crawford was the drover who discovered the so called 'Lost City' in the nearby Abner Ranges in 1880. The Lost City covers an area of about eight square kilometres and is dotted with towering sandstone formations. These natural pillars remind many observers of skyscrapers.

The ominously named 'Heartbreak Hotel' has campsites, a pub and motel. Helicopter tours are run out of the area to the Lost City while further north, Lorella Springs and Limmen Bight Fishing Camp has camping facilities, fuel, provisions and fishing. The Roper is a popular fishing base and the last place to refuel before Mataranka (Open Monday to Saturday, 9 am-6 pm, Sunday 1pm-6pm). There is also a store, motel accommodation and campsites. Note that alcohol is not available at Roper Bar and is prohibited in the surrounding Aboriginal communities.

#### Day 12

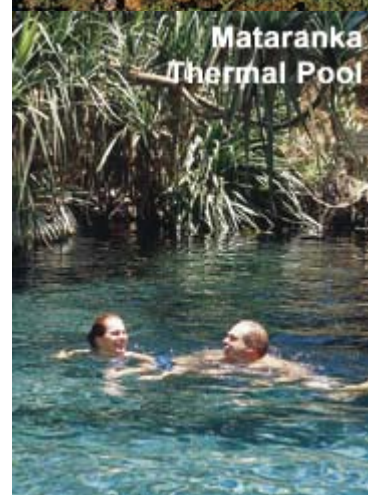
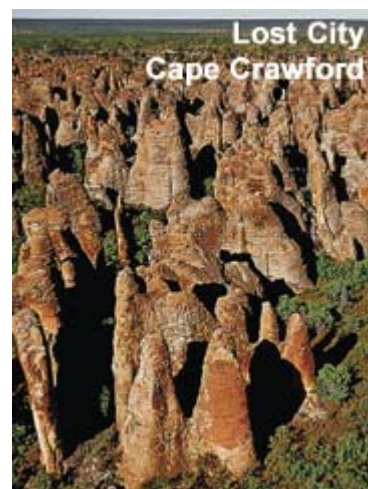
Roper Bar to Mataranka. The Mataranka area was once Eley Station and inspired Jeanie Gunn's book 'We of the Never Never'. It still retains something of a mystic feel. The 13,840 hectare park's main attractions are the idyllic palm fringed thermal pools of Rainbow and Bitter Springs and the serene Roper River. The aquatic delights of Eley are a fine reward after a long day on the road. At Mataranka you have the choice of the more direct and sealed route north to Katherine then west along the Victoria Highway or south to Daly Waters then onto the Buchanan and Buntine Highways and Gregory National Park.

#### Day 13

Mataranka to Gregory National Park. Drive the Buchanan Highway to Top Springs then continue on through Victoria River Downs Station to meet up with Victoria Highway near Timber Creek. The main entrance into Gregory National Park is found along the Victoria Highway. The main sites of interest are Bullita Homestead and Limestone Gorge.

Gregory National Park covers an area of around 13,000 square km in the transition zone between tropical and semi-arid regions of the Northern Territory. The park features spectacular range, gorge and Karst formations, as well as significant traces of Aboriginal culture, European exploration and pastoral history. Please note that the last few kilometres into Limestone Gorge is a challenging four wheel drive track. There is plenty to keep visitors with a sense of adventure an extra day or so in Gregory National Park.

Timber Creek also makes a good base to explore Gregory National Park as it is the only real settlement between Katherine and Kununurra offering motel accommodation, camping, groceries and fuel. There are also excellent boat cruises and fishing trips available on the mighty Victoria River out of Timber Creek.



# SAVANNAH WAY

---

## 22-Day ITINERARY

### **Day 14 - Day 15**

Timber Creek to Kununurra. Keep River National Park, just before the Western Australia border contains spectacular landscapes and some Aboriginal art sites linked by walking trails. Cross into Western Australia and base yourself in Kununurra for a day or two and explore the many sights on offer in the East Kimberley region including Lake Argyle, the Bungle Bungles and El Questro Station. Please note that there is a one and a half hour time difference on crossing the Western Australia border.

### **Day 16 - Day 22**

Kununurra to Broome. Spend the next few days making your way to Broome through the ruggedly beautiful Kimberley Region of Western Australia.

