



13 Day West Coast Explorer 4WD Safari Perth to Broome

Day 1 – Thursday 1st May (L,D)

You will be collected from your Perth hotel at 7.30am this morning to begin your 13 day 4WD safari along the West Coast to Broome.

Our day starts by driving along the coast to Lancelin, home to huge 45 degree angle dunes, which are the biggest in Western Australia. After taking a look at the dunes and enjoying the view from the peaks, we make our way along the new Indian Ocean Drive, winding its way from Lancelin to Cervantes. Our destination is Nambung National Park and the Pinnacles.

These amazing natural limestone structures, some standing as high as five metres, were formed approximately 25,000 to 30,000 years ago, after the sea receded and left deposits of sea shells. Over time, coastal winds removed the surrounding sand, leaving the pillars exposed to the elements. The thousands of pillars rising from the shifting yellow sands, resemble a landscape from a science fiction movie.

We view the Pinnacles from the Pinnacles View lookout and a 1.2 km. loop walk takes us to a lookout over the Pinnacles desert area.

Our final drive along the coast to Geraldton is stunning and we can admire the views as we drive up the coast.

The rest of the afternoon is spent relaxing at our camp in Geraldton, which is located right on the beachfront.

Overnight mobile camp- Sunset Beach Holiday Park, Geraldton

****upgrade to cabins with en-suites, may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment****

Day 2 – Friday 2nd May (B,L,D)

After breakfast we continue north along the Coral Coast to Hutt Lagoon, at Port Gregory. A beautiful scenic drive takes us to an endless white beach and a stunning Pink Lake. The Pink Lake gets its spectacular colour from the algal blooms of the microscopic algae, which are harvested and sold as dietary supplements.

Today we take a look at the Coastal Gorges of Kalbarri NP including Red Bluff, Pot Alley Gorge, Rainbow Valley, Eagle Gorge, Shell House, Mushroom Rock (3km loop walk), and the most spectacular of the lot, Island Rock and the Natural Arch, provide spectacular views of this rugged piece of coastline. The ocean here has carved out massive chunks of soft limestone coast and created towering cliff formations approximately 100 metres high, strange rocky shapes, secluded beaches and colourful layered sands and silts compacted and layered in stone.

There's no camping in the National Park so tonight's camp is at nearby Murchison House Station, a 150 year old working cattle station, one of the oldest and largest in WA.

This afternoon, depending on time, you may be able to have a wander around the old homestead buildings. Soak up the history and take the opportunity to "tread the boards" of one of W.A.'s oldest shearing sheds. There's also an ever changing collection of farm animals that live around the homestead. A surprising collection of military vehicles, earthmoving equipment, vintage cars and farm machinery is scattered around the homestead and outlines the development of Murchison House from 1860 to the present day.

Overnight mobile camp – Murchison House Station, with toilets and showers

****upgrade to Shearers Rooms with shared bathrooms, may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment****

Day 3 – Saturday 3rd May (B,L,D)

This morning we explore Kalbarri National Park. Driving through the park, the Murchison River Gorges slash abruptly through Sand Plain from the Highway to Kalbarri town. It is estimated that these tumblagooda sandstone walls were created 400 million years ago on the tidal flats of an ancient sea. Fossil tracks and sea fossils can be found in many places along the river. Rippled surfaces can be seen around Nature's Window, formed during ancient times by waves moving over tidal flats in a shallow sea.

We visit Ross Graham Lookout and Hawkes Head Lookout for expansive views over the Murchison River Gorge. Further north, we also visit The Loop, Z Bend and Natures Window.

A 400m walk from The Loop car park brings you to one of WA's most iconic natural attractions, Nature's Window. This natural rock arch frames the river view perfectly and is a must-snap photograph opportunity in Kalbarri National Park.

Considered by many to offer the most breathtaking view in the park, the Z-Bend lookout can be reached by a 500-metre walk trail from the car park. Gazing down, the gorge plunges 150 metres to the river below where river redgums create a striking contrast against the earthy Tumblagooda sandstone.

We exit the park via the south east and continue to Monkey Mia, part of the Shark Bay World Heritage Area, renowned for its incredible diversity and is home to sea turtles, dolphins, whales, dugongs, a variety of small marine life and sea grasses.

Overnight mobile camp – Monkey Mia Resort, with toilets and showers (2 night stay)

*****upgrade to Garden Villa rooms with en-suites, may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment. Other room types may also be available****

Day 4 – Sunday 4th May (B,L,D)

This morning we wander down to Dolphin Beach early to see if we can catch a glimpse of the Bottle Nosed Dolphins that have visited the beautiful beach each day for the past 40 years. The dolphins visit the beach throughout the day but feeding is restricted to mornings, between 8:00 and 12:00 midday, to encourage the dolphins to spend more time offshore doing their normal activities in the afternoon. There may be three feedings each morning, but there are no set feeding times because the dolphins are encouraged to behave as naturally as possible.

After our dolphin experience we have the rest of the day to explore Monkey Mia and Denham. At Denham, Ocean Park is an ecofriendly and interactive aquarium which enables visitors to see, touch and learn about many fascinating marine creatures that are found in this heritage listed area. There are also optional scenic flights, cruises, camel rides, we can visit the Shark Bay Interpretative and Discovery Centre or the Black Pearl Farm, take an Aboriginal cultural tour, we can take a walk, hire a kayak or just laze on the beach !

optional extra activities are at own expense

Overnight mobile camp – Monkey Mia Resort, with toilets and showers

Day 5 – Monday 5th May (B,L,D)

We have another chance to see the dolphins again this morning before we explore Francois Peron National Park. We'll have a look around the Homestead Precinct, which provides an insight into how life was when the park was a working sheep station. The 'Hot Tub' is a popular stop to relax and soak in the hot artesian waters that originally supplied vital water to the station's stock.

After a look around Denham, we continue to Little Lagoon for lunch and then make our way south down Cape Peron along a scenic coastal drive to Eagle Bluff, named after the osprey or sea eagles which nest on the rock island just offshore. The boardwalk is the ideal place to view the Useless Loop salt pile and marine life of the clear blue Shark Bay waters including turtles, sharks, rays and maybe even a dugong! The vistas are simply breathtaking.

Further along is Shell Beach, which is made of tonnes of tiny white Hamelin cockle shells (unique to this area), heaped into massive ridges up to 10m - it's a spectacular sight and we'll need our sunglasses as the glare can be quite blinding !. Further inland, the shell deposits have compacted and cemented together to form a rock called coquina. Blocks of coquina were used to build some of Shark Bay's oldest buildings, including St Andrew's Church in Denham. A coquinite quarry can be visited at Hamelin Pool, adjacent to the historic Telegraph Station.

Overnight mobile camp – Hamelin Station, with toilets and showers

****upgrade to rooms with shared bathrooms, may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment****

Day 6 – Tuesday 6th May (B,L,D)

We start today by visiting the Stromatolites, which are the oldest living organisms on the planet, first appearing on earth about 3.5 billion years ago. Hamelin Pool is the location of the best example in the world of living marine stromatolites as the water of Hamelin Bay is twice as saline as usual sea water.

We can also visit the nearby Hamelin Pool Telegraph Station (including the post office and postmaster's quarters), one of the few surviving relics from the chain of stations that once stretched from Wyndham, in the far north of Western Australia, around to Albany in the far south. Long before the stromatolites were discovered, Hamelin Pool was an important transport and communication hub and the buildings are now listed on Western Australia's State Register of Heritage Places and have been turned into a museum.

We depart Hamelin for Coral Bay, passing through Carnarvon. En-route we stop at White Bluff Lookout for stunning views of the bay. Coral Bay is a small but picturesque resort town offers coral gardens just metres off pristine white beaches. We can have a swim and snorkel here at Paradise Beach or Bills Bay, take a quad bike tour, a scenic flight or hire double sea kayaks, which are a great way to explore the sheltered lagoons where the water is rarely more than three metres deep.

Coral Bay is also home to a reef shark nursery, which is just 20 minutes walk north of Main Beach. Mantra Rays can be seen year round at Coral Bay. With wingspans of several metres, these graceful giants migrate in huge schools.

From Coral Bay we continue north towards Exmouth and to Bullara Station at the bottom of the Exmouth Gulf..

Overnight mobile camp – Bullara Station, with toilets and showers (3 night stay)

****upgrade to Shearers Rooms with shared bathrooms, may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment****

Day 7 – Wednesday 7th May (B,L,D)

Today we explore Ningaloo Reef Marine Park. Ningaloo is the largest fringing coral reef in Australia. It is the only large reef in the world found so close to a continental land mass; about 100 metres offshore at its nearest point and less than seven kilometres at its furthest.

The shallow lagoons formed by the reef, and the deeper offshore waters, create a diverse array of habitats for a multitude of colourful corals and more than 500 species of fish. Many other creatures are found in the park, including whale sharks (the world's largest fish), turtles, dugongs, dolphins, manta rays and humpback whales.

We access the marine park via the western side of Cape Range National Park, where spectacular rocky gorges, carved by ancient rivers, adjoin one of the most pristine and beautiful coastlines in the world. The area is well known for the striking contrast between the clear blue seas, coral reefs, sandy beaches and rugged scenery.

We have the whole day to explore this stunning coastline, where we can snorkel, swim and relax on the beaches. The reef offers 250 species of corals, including cabbage corals, brain corals, lavender corals and delicate colourful branching corals, which form gardens in the shallow lagoons. Green turtles have extensive rookeries inside the reef, dugong feed on seagrasses within the lagoons, there are multitudes of colourful reef fish, occasional oceanic fish species, as well as rays, sharks and dolphins.

Popular beaches include Lakeside, Pilgramunna, Turquoise Bay and Sandy Bay and as well as the beaches, we can visit the Milyering Visitor Centre, do some bird watching at Mangrove Bay or visit the Oyster Stacks, which are five isolated islets that protrude from the reef. Not a great place to snorkel but worth a look as they are literally covered with oysters.

****reef walking shoes are recommended during our time at Ningaloo Reef due to the presence of fireweed, fire coral, stingrays, toadfish, stonefish and sea urchins****

Overnight mobile camp – Bullara Station, with toilets and showers

Day 8 – Thursday 8th May (B,L,D)

Today, there are optional tours available including a boat cruise, taking a glass bottom boat, a fishing trip or doing a dive. Most cruises start from Bundegi Beach (the start of Ningaloo Reef) or at Tantabiddi on the western side of the Cape, which are also both worth a visit on their own.

****optional extra activities are at own expense****

You may like to visit the Jurabi Turtle Education Centre situated adjacent to popular nesting sites for 3 of the world's 7 species of marine turtle (all 3 are threatened species) : green turtles, loggerhead turtles and hawksbill turtles.

We'll also visit Vlamingh Head Lighthouse, which stands on the northernmost tip of the Cape Range. It overlooks Lighthouse Bay, offering panoramic views over Ningaloo Reef and we may be lucky to see humpback whales migrating south to their feeding grounds in Antarctica with their calves.

Overnight mobile camp – Bullara Station, with toilets and showers

Day 9 – Friday 9th May (B,L,D)

Today we depart Bullara and head east, away from the coast, onto the North West Coastal Highway and then into the Pilbara, travelling through the Hamersley Ranges and Paraburdoo.

Overnight mobile camp- Tom Price Tourist Park campground, with toilets and showers

******upgrade to cabins with en-suites may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment******

Day 10 – Saturday 10th May (B,L,D)

Today we make our way into Karijini National Park, in the Hamersley Range. Karijini is Western Australia's second largest national park, encompassing some 627,442 hectares of spectacular, rugged scenery, ancient geological formations and a variety of arid-land ecosystems.

Massive mountains and escarpments rise out of the flat valleys. The high plateau is dissected by breathtaking gorges, and stony, tree-lined watercourses wind their way over the dusty plain. The slow process of erosion has carved the shape of the land out of rocks that are 2,000 million years old, to form this intriguing landscape and complex ecology.

A variety of ecosystems are represented in the park and these are home to a range of wildlife including a variety of birds, native rodents, native marsupial carnivores (such as the Pilbara ningui- resident, but nocturnal and shy), red kangaroos, euros, Rothschild's rock wallabies, bats, dingoes, reptiles and amphibians such as frogs, geckoes, goannas, dragons and legless lizards. Termites and the pebble mound mouse also make their homes here in the form of mounds.

Today we explore the park, including Joffre Lookout, where rock steps take us down to the lookout to view this spectacular curved waterfall forming a natural amphitheatre.

We spend the afternoon exploring Handrail Pool and enjoying the scenery at Junction Pool and Oxer Lookout, located at the junction of four mighty gorges and offering one of the most stunning panoramas in WA.

A short walk into Lower Weano Gorge brings you to Handrail Pool, which is a beautiful spot for a swim.

Overnight mobile camp- Karijini Eco Retreat campground, with toilets and showers (2 night stay).

******upgrade to deluxe eco tents with en-suites may be available for an extra charge- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment******

Day 11 – Sunday 11th May (B,L,D)

We start today at Knox Lookout, where we'll take the steps down to the lookout and watch the view spread out in the distance. It's spectacular in the early morning light.

After a look around the Visitors Centre, we'll explore the western part of the park today, starting at Dales Gorge, through to Fortescue Falls, Fern Pool and Circular Pool.

Have a refreshing swim in the spring-fed permanent falls of Fortescue falls, ramble along the gorge floor to the lovely fern framed Fern Pool and enjoy the hidden gardens of Circular Pool.

We have the whole day to explore, swim, relax and take in the scenery here.

Overnight mobile camp- Karijini Eco Retreat campground, with toilets and showers

Day 12 – Monday 12th May (B,L,D)

We exit the park through the north today and enjoy a final dip in the far north west, at Hamersley gorge and waterfall, where we'll find amazing coloured banded iron formations. Take a dip in the natural spa pool at the Gorge and enjoy a spa treatment the way nature intended – surrounded by amazing rock formations almost as old as the Earth itself.

We continue to Port Headland, one of the largest and busiest iron ore ports in the world. Once in Port Headland, we stop on the waters edge at Marrapikurinya Park, for the best views of industry in motion in the harbour.

Overnight accommodation – budget room with shared bathroom at Cooke Point Holiday Park in Port Headland

Day 13 – Tuesday 13th May (B,L)

As we depart Port Headland this morning, we stop at Redbank Bridge, the perfect lookout point for BHP Billiton's trains as they transport iron ore from Mount Whaleback in Newman to the port. The trains some of the longest in the world, reaching up to 3km long. This spot also offers spectacular views of Dampier Salt's towering stockpile.

The final leg of our journey takes us to Broome. En-route we have lunch at the pristine Eighty mile beach, where the Great Sandy Desert meets the Indian Ocean. The area is also a protected RAMSAR listed wetland of international significance and regularly supports over 400,000 shorebirds.

We arrive into Broome late afternoon and you will be dropped off at your accommodation.

END ITINERARY

B= Breakfast L= Lunch D= Dinner

Departs Perth to Broome in 2014, on 1st May only and
departs Broome to Perth on 21st September

If you would prefer to depart the tour in Port Headland you will finish the tour on the morning of day 13

AUD \$4995 per adult twin share
\$4795 per child (age 10 - 15 years) twin share
\$5245 per person single room / tent

Fully accommodated tour is \$5950 per person, twin share and \$7090 single room

****solo travellers must have single room / tent****

A camp host will accompany the tour to set camp up for you each night

Prices valid until March 31st 2015

Maximum 10 passengers

Inclusions:

- Seat in OKA 4WD vehicle, with purpose built heavy duty trailer
- Professional driver guide AND a camp host (new for 2014)
- Meals, as stated
- Camping equipment hire and camping fees
- Entry fees to National Parks
- 1 night in a budget room with shared bathroom in Port Headland
- Use of snorkelling equipment (mask and snorkel only- no flippers)
- Use of fishing rods and lures

Exclusions:

- Arrival/departure flights
- Travel insurance
- Alcohol
- Pre and post tour accommodation
- Upgrades to accommodation while on tour- please enquire when booking to avoid disappointment
- Extra optional activities, such as cruises, hire of kayaks, diving trips and entry into Aquariums etc.