



6 Day Pilbara and Ningaloo Reef 4WD Safari, Exmouth to Karratha

Day 1 (L,D)

You will be collected from your Exmouth accommodation at 7.30am this morning for your 6 day 4WD Tour through the Pilbara and Ningaloo Reef.

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 beach at Turquoise Bay. 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.

As well as the beaches, we can do some bird watching at Mangrove Bay and 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. You may also like to take the Mandu Mandu Gorge lookout for a stunning view over the coast walk.

We take a short cruise through Yardie Creek Gorge, which is a highlight of the National park. The ancient gorge has deep blue waters, red limestone cliff faces and a wonderful array of birds and wildlife, including the rare black-footed wallaby, with euros and red kangaroos dotting the coastal plain. A sandbar traps the water and the striking reflections of the sheer canyon's multi-coloured bands are breathtaking.

****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 cabin accommodation with shared facilities – Exmouth

Day 2 (B,L,D)

Today we depart the Ningaloo and take a scenic drive west inland, travelling on the North West Coastal Highway and then through the Hamersley Ranges.

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 3 (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.

Our first stop within the park is 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.

Finish today at Joffre Lookout, where rock steps take you down to the lookout to view this spectacular curved waterfall forming a natural amphitheatre.

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 4 (B,L,D)

This morning we take a short walk into Lower Weano Gorge and to Handrail Pool, which is a beautiful spot for a swim.

Then enjoy the scenery at Junction Pool Lookout and Oxer Lookout, located at the junction of four mighty gorges and offering one of the most stunning panoramas in WA.

An optional walk into Hancock Gorge is also available (depending on fitness level). Hancock Gorge is one of the most spectacular gorges in Karijini National Park and after descending a ladder, navigating the rocks and Spider Gorge, we reach Kermit's Pool.

We finish the day at Knox Lookout, where we'll take the steps down to the lookout and watch the view spread out in the distance.

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

Day 5 (B,L,D)

We'll explore the western part of the park this morning, 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 depart Karijini and drive through the old mining town of Wittenoom en-route to our camp tonight , which is halfway between Karijini and Millstream-Chichester National Parks.

Overnight mobile camp- Mt Florance Station campground (a working cattle station), with toilets and showers

Day 6 (B,L)

We spend today in Millstream-Chichester National Park, which is a lush oasis of deep gorges and palm-fringed rock pools which provides a stark contrast to the surrounding landscape of rocky escarpments and rolling spinifex-covered hills.

We enter the park from the south and visit the Millstream Visitor Centre and museum, which is the old homestead from the pastoral station the early European settlers established and ran for over 100 years. We also have the option of taking the short Homestead walk.

We also take a walk to the top of Mount Herbert, where we are treated to a splendid view of the savannah lands, including Pyramid, Sherlock and Warambie stations.

A final swim is available at Python Pool, a permanent freshwater plunge pool at the base of a cliff in the Chichester Range escarpment.

Leaving Millstream- Chichester, we travel to the mining town of Karratha, the heart of the West Pilbara Coast, adjoining the port of Dampier. We arrive into Karratha late afternoon and you will be dropped off at your accommodation.

END ITINERARY

B= Breakfast L= Lunch D= Dinner

Departs Exmouth to Karratha in 2015, on 6th May only and
departs Karratha to Exmouth on 3rd October

AUD \$2995 per adult twin share

\$2695 per child (age 10 - 15 years) twin share

\$3225 single supplement for own tent / room

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

Maximum 10 passengers

Prices include GST and are valid until 31/10/15

Inclusions:

- Seat in OKA 4WD vehicle, with purpose built heavy duty trailer
- Professional driver guide AND a camp host (for groups over 6)
- Meals, as stated
- 4 nights camping equipment hire and camping fees
- Entry fees to National Parks
- 1 night in cabin accommodation
- Yardie Creek cruise at Cape Range NP
- Use of snorkelling equipment (mask and snorkel only- no flippers)

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 hire of kayaks, paddleboards, camel rides and scenic flights etc.

Itinerary is exclusive to Sacred Earth Safaris and is subject to availability, road, weather and cultural conditions