



KIMBERLEY
Expeditions

12-DAY BROOME-DARWIN ITINERARY

Day 1: We welcome you aboard MV REEF PRINCE in Broome

Your Kimberley cruise from Broome begins today from the beautiful pearling town of Broome. We will arrange a charter bus to pick you up between 8am & 9am and transport you to board the vessel from one of a number beaches in Broome depending on tide and wind direction.

This is the first of many beach landings and tender rides you will encounter on your 12-day expedition. Our crew will welcome you aboard and after a crew introduction we will depart Broome.

On our way north there will be a safety briefing, morning tea and a vessel induction. After lunch we may have a fishing session by trolling lures from Reef Prince's 2 game fishing chairs located in the 2 rear corners. Target species are spanish mackerel, queenfish and tuna.

In season (July – Sept) we also have the option to do some whale watching.

Your trip director will also have a discussion with you about the trip's itinerary.

Overnight we'll cruise up the Dampier Peninsula and into the Kimberley.



Day 2: Yampi Sound, Talbot Bay and the Horizontal Fall

For breakfast and a geology talk we stop at Myridi Cove and marvel at the incredible geology of Yampi Sound.

Yampi Sound is nestled within the Buccaneer Archipelago that has over 800 Islands so the area is visually stunning.

It's then only a 25-minute scenic tender ride to Croc Creek (with lots of stops on the way) where we travel up to a waterfall system and hike to the top of the waterfalls and swim in a crystal-clear freshwater pool.

Reptiles, birds and some unique fauna are also in the area.

After lunch we cruise past the iron ore mining operations on Cockatoo and Koolan Islands before transiting through the "Gutter" and down into Talbot Bay. This area is scenic overload with most guests electing to stay outside and take in the amazing vista during the transit.

After lunch we experience the awesome power of the Horizontal Falls. Your attention will be taken by the incredible geology that abounds this area. David Attenborough called it the 8th wonder of the natural world!

The adventurous can cling on to the rails of our tender "Regent" during the fast boat ride through the falls. Nearby Cyclone Creek is a fantastic scenic tour in the tenders that showcases the best of the geological formations in the region. The S-bend within the creek system is another tidal pinch phenomenon similar to the Horizontal Falls.

We generally have sunset drinks and a cheeseboard on the bow or the top deck as we depart Talbot Bay. We continue steaming into the night out towards Raft Point.

Other alternate options in the area include Dugong Inlet (for high tides and earlier in the season with its 3 waterfalls), Silver Gull Creek and Nares Point.





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Day 3: Raft Point, Montgomery Reef and Ruby Falls – 3 Bucket lists!

Day 3 is an early start and up at dawn to watch the colours of the Kimberley come alive with sunrise over the iconic Raft Point. Then after breakfast it's into the tenders for the first of 3 excursions for the day with a 75-minute tour of Bird Rock, Steep Island and Raft Point.

These areas are bird rookeries and are culturally significant to the local indigenous people.

Then we head off to see Montgomery Reef 'rise' out of the ocean as the tide ebbs. Jump in the tenders for an extended reef cruise to study the marine life of Turtle Gully before transiting for miles up into the Montgomery Reef system. Many of our guests describe this as their most memorable moment onboard. We then transit for 2 hours back past Raft Point and into Doubtful Bay to the incredible Red Cone Creek and Ruby Falls.

This 2.5-hour excursion involves a tender tour to the end of the creek system to view the picturesque keyhole and Ruby Falls followed by a rope-assisted climb up the side of the rock face and a 300m rocky walk into the freshwater swimming hole. It is long and thin with a rock race at the end which is fun to wallow in and view the local wildlife and fauna.

With a low tide required for Montgomery Reef and a high tide for Ruby Falls the itinerary may be reversed. Other alternate options in the area include the Kingfisher Islands, the 3-Ways (for excellent fishing and crabbing) or the scenic Sale River.



Day 4: Sampson Inlet, The Slate Islands and Deception Bay.

We wake up in the tranquil Sampson Inlet. This area was one of the Kimberley's first pearling leases.

After a healthy breakfast we explore the inlet and search for the local short-eared rock wallabies along the steep and rocky foreshores. The oysters in the area are superb and fishing can also be fun with mackerel and long-tail tuna often found in the mouth of the inlet.

We then head out to rocky islands of Bumpas Island (a bird rookery) and the Slate Islands which have some incredible rock formations (including the gravity defying Colosseum). The area has multiple beaches suitable for a swim and an explore.

For the fisherman, the area is popular for trolling for pelagic and reef species.

Deception Bay is only a 1-hour transit and is a favourite excursion of the Reef Prince crew. It is a 3-hour tour which involves a scenic tour of the 3-mile long creek system in the corner of the bay. This area is diverse with lots of varied flora and fauna, mangroves to high sided gorges (and everything in between) and finally, Butterfly Gorge.

Butterfly Gorge is within a small creek system with a rock bar at the end. It involves a stunning 300m rocky walk to a very secluded freshwater swimming hole that has a ledge filled with indigenous rock art beside it.

Other alternate options in the area include, Hall Point for a swim and sightseeing, Wilson Point which is a popular calving area for humpback whales in season, Kuri Bay (the home of Australia's first cultured pearl farm) and Camden Settlement/Sheep Island (the first European settlement in The Kimberley).





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Day 5: St. Georges Basin and the Prince Regent River.

We take a tour to view the early morning rays of light shining onto the Islands within the St. Georges Basin. Famed explorer Phillip Parker King exclaimed that the area boasted "The most impressive scenery anywhere along the WA coastline".

Once back onboard, we head out onto the foredeck as we cruise through the scenic St Georges Basin and past the iconic flat-topped mesas of Mt. Trafalgar and Mt. Waterloo.

Then it's into the mighty Prince Regent River system. Whilst there is so much to do and see in this river system, the highlight is the amazing Kings Cascades Waterfalls. For the adventurous, there is a walk to the top of the falls and a fabulous swimming area fringed with blue gums and pandanus. On the other side of the swimming hole is a multi-layered rocky area offset with mini waterfalls (some of which you can sit under or behind) and smaller splash pools to enjoy a dip. Kings Cascades is one of the tour highlights and a favourite amongst the guests.

As the river system must be transited during the high tide, this day's itinerary often varies in time and order. Within the Prince Regent River system are scenic locations such as Camp Creek, Cathedral Falls (the highest in the region at 50m high), 2 rock art sites and fabulous bottom fishing for species like fingermark, golden snapper and mangrove jack.

Other alternate options in the area include Hanover Bay with its beautiful scenery, many beaches, brolga rock art & bower bird nests and Rothsay Waters with its amazing fishing locations, Valley of the Palms and rock art sites.



Day 6: Careening Bay, Porosis Creek and The Hunter River

In the morning we admire the work of the crew of Phillip Parker King. Careening Bay was named by Phillip Parker King after his ship, 'HMC Mermaid', was careened during his first voyage of discovery in the Kimberley.

We visit the site of a large boab tree bearing the inscription "HMC Mermaid – 1820", still clearly visible over 200 years later. The area is filled with other interesting flora such as cycads and tamarind trees.

In the afternoon we explore the famous Porosis Creek and Hunter River systems. This ecosystem is a favourite for bird watchers. We have a chance to spot a Great Billed Heron, or a Chestnut Rail. There are kingfishers galore! On the turn of the tide fishermen can try their luck on a multitude of species that are regularly caught in the Hunter River. The area is visually stunning with its jagged mountain ranges and high rocky escarpments. It's also popular with our crew as a sunset drinks cruise location. Sharks and crocodiles are in abundance too.

Other alternate options in the area are numerous and include Ivy Cove (with another iconic boab tree), Dolphin Island with its swim beach and Wandjina art site, Naturalist Beach with its surrounding waterways and the Roe River.



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Day 6: Optional Helicopter Flight to the Mitchell Plateau.

There may also be an option to do a 23 minute (each way) helicopter flight from Naturalist Beach (which is at the mouth of the Hunter River and only 15 minutes steam from Porossis Creek). This flight with Helispirit Tours takes in the Hunter River, the Mitchell River, the Mitchell Plateau and finally the Mitchell Falls before landing and enjoying 90 minutes at the plateau (with Reef Prince's Cruise Director) to walk to the falls and returning via helicopter, passing another set of falls and Porossis Creek before returning to Naturalist Beach. Expressions of interest can be made at the time of your booking and the Kimberley Expeditions team will contact you again 60 days prior to departure to confirm availability for those guests that are interested. There are minimum numbers required. The price for the 2023 season was \$750 per person and may rise for the 2024 season.



Day 7: Andadan Islands, Prudhoe Island and Swifts Bay

For day 7 we have options.

If we didn't get to the Andadan Islands the previous day due to the tides and optional Helicopter flights, then we can explore the area in the morning. This is a new site for the Reef Prince crew and has been 4 years in the process of detailed mapping and exploring of the area. We have finally put together a 5-mile one-way scenic tender tour that incorporates the best of the region. Highlights include amazing rock formations, multiple sea cave to explore, many options for beach and sand spit swims, small and detailed waterways to explore, large overhangs, rock art and even a crystal island! The 3+ hour tour was a favourite with the guests during the 2023 season.

In the afternoon we can head out away from the coast and explore Prudhoe Island. This continental island has a multitude of things to do with some of the highlights being a walk to the peak at Petroglyph Point and marvel at the ancient stone engraved petroglyphs.

Around the corner is a beach that is full of turtle tracks and turtle nests during the laying season.

Inside the bay is a wonderful beach that is great for a walk and a shallow swim and further around into the bay is a crystal creek that is filled with large clumps of quartz crystals. This is very popular with the ladies. The area is a fantastic spot for reef fishing with species like snapper, coral trout, emperors and sweetlips.

If time permits and if we visited Prudhoe Island in the morning, then we can head back into the mainland to Swifts Bay and explore the rock art sites of the area in the afternoon. There are 4 main sites with 2 of them giving a very good cross section of Kimberley rock art both in the Gwion Gwion (Bradshaw) or the more recent Wandjina style.





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Day 8: Woku Woku Island and Vansittart Bay

With tide permitting, we might stop for an early walk at Woku Woku Island. This area has a massive Boab Tree (also inscribed by Phillip Parker King) and a large Boab Grove on the opposite shore. The area is rich in history as it was a popular area for Macassan fisherman to harvest and process Sea Cucumbers.

Vansittart Bay is a popular area and is filled with many things to do and the fishing is superb.

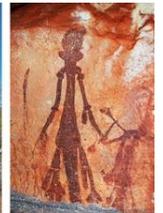
We will take you on an easy walk across a salt flat to witness the site of a crashed WW2 DC-3 airplane.

Well preserved in the Kimberley bush, your guide will recall the fateful day in early 1942.

Around the perimeter of the wreck site is the best Kimberley wildflower site that we know of. In season (July-Sept) it is full of an abundance of small and colourful wildflowers.

It is only a short cruise across the bay to Rocky Cove. This rock art site has some fabulous examples of Bradshaw (Gwion Gwion) Paintings and a special cave full of the more modern Wandjina rock art. The Gwion Gwion art is thought to be some of the world's oldest indigenous art, dating back over 20,000 years. It is a 2-hour, 1.4km one-way bush walk to explore the many rock art panels on offer.

Other alternate options in the area include Jar Island with its 2 art sites & rocky headlands, the Anjo Peninsula and the Drysdale River.



Day 9: Glycosmis Bay, Pangali Cove and the King George River

In the morning and depending on the tide, we can visit Glycosmis Bay. This area has an incredible amphitheater that is home to a series of large waterfalls that run early in the season.

Pangali Cove is also an early season stop with its WW2 history, a waterfall and freshwater swimming hole.

Tranquil Bay has a stunning backdrop of high cliffs and an inner lagoon that is perfect for walk & sightsee.

The best of the Kimberley's 'big' rivers is the mighty King George! While entering the river on the high tide we can enjoy the soaring cliffs and two breath-taking falls of mammoth proportions. The advantage of the Reef Prince's shallow draft and jet engines is that we are able to cross the bar into the river system and transit the entire way to the twin falls – a treat that many of the other cruise boats are not able to do.

Feel the spray mist produced from billions of litres of water falling almost a hundred meters as the Reef Prince is steered expertly to the base of the majestic falls.

We then enter the tenders and go back into the falls area and down the river which enables us to get right up to the falls, into the smaller side tributaries and stop to admire the wildlife both above and below the water. There is also a third waterfall in a smaller offshoot called the Fountain of Youth that is accessible by tenders at high tide and usually has a couple of crocs floating around.

That night we usually have a unique alfresco dining experience and one heck of a party whilst anchored under the twin falls as we enjoy the tranquility and protection of the 100m high gorge walls surrounding the Reef Prince.





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Day 10: The Berkeley River

In the very early hours of the morning, the captain sneaks us out of the King George River in the dark and transits down the steep walled coastline of the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf and on towards our last full day in the Kimberley.

Saving the best till last is the iconic Berkeley River!

It's a high tide only access over the bar and then into the 10-mile long river system, we transit the full length in the Reef Prince marveling at the narrow sweeping bends with the high sandstone walls on both sides. It's breathtaking!

Once at the end there are so many options with scenic tours to the Malcolm Douglas Pools, a visit to the Amphitheatre and the Berkeley Eye. We generally cruise back down in the tenders to explore the smaller side tributaries whilst the Reef Prince heads back to the half way point where we meet again for lunch. After lunch we can explore the Casuarina Creek system, Casuarina Falls and even go for a last fish.

Generally, we stay in the river system overnight and exit 24 hours after we came in on the high tide. With its millpond flat conditions and a sunset overlooking Mount Casuarina, it can be another sensational evening onboard the MV Reef Prince – AND – The infamous Cruise Directors Kimberley Quiz!!! Don't worry, it's a team's event with prizes and is A LOT of fun and frivolity.



Day 11 Crossing the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf

This morning the captain takes the Reef Prince out of the Berkeley River. Relax while the amazing coastline disappears as we start our journey across the Bonaparte Gulf. It's an all-day crossing and we sail into Northern Territory waters overnight.

Day 12 Arriving in Darwin Harbour

This morning we head into Darwin Harbour. It's a stunning view to watch the sun come up over the city skyline as we transit towards Fisherman's Wharf.

Farewell your fellow travelers. Sadly it's the end of your Kimberley Cruise from Broome. We disembark Darwin at around 10am and say goodbye to the crew. Guests will be transferred to their hotel of choice in the Darwin CBD by coach.



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