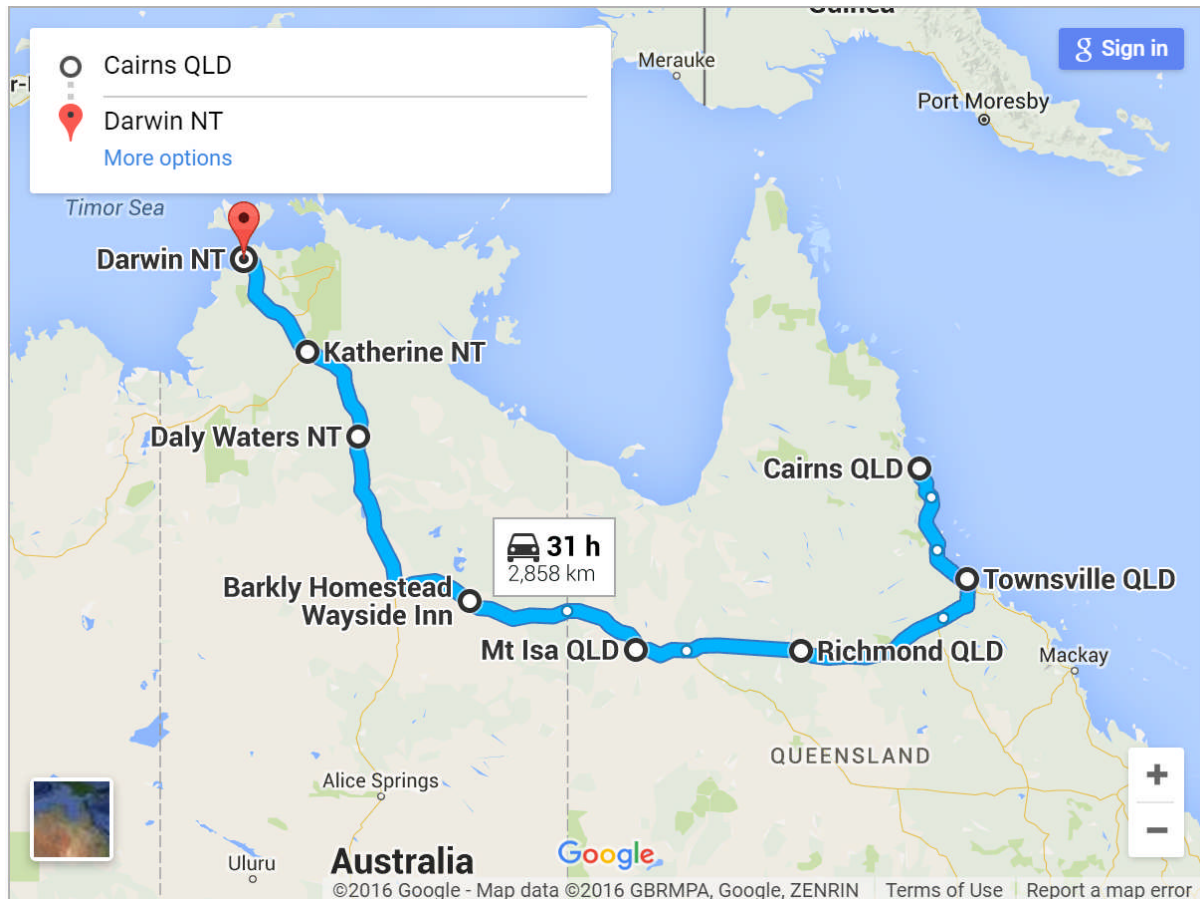


8 days from Cairns to Darwin

Travel across Northern Australia on this almost 3000km journey and take in some of Australia's most iconic and rugged country in this Tropical Rain Forest to Top End adventure.



Day 1. Cairns

Pick up your campervan in Cairns today. Allow at least 1–1.5 hours in order to familiarise yourself with the vehicle before you leave the depot.

Cairns is home to many of the natural wonders found in Australia, including the Great Barrier Reef. Try snorkelling amongst the vibrant reef and colourful fish, or stay on the boat and learn about the ecosystem of the reef.

An hour or 2 north of Cairns you'll find the Daintree Cape Tribulation Rainforest, a world heritage site. Explore the untouched jungles and rainforests of North Queensland.

Stay: Cairns Holiday Park

Day 2. Cairns to Townsville

Depart this morning and take the National Highway A1 to the Bruce Highway/ State Route 14 in Burdell. Continue along State Route 14 and drive to Denham Street/ State Route 16 in Townsville City.

Visit the Anderson Park Botanic Gardens and explore the 25 acres of natural flora and fauna. Stroll down the Grand Avenues and Tropical Orchards, or wander through the World Cycad Garden. Take a picnic and make a full day of it!

For the history fans amongst us, visit the Army Museum of North Queensland. The museum is actually located in the Jezzine Barracks, where Australian military units have called home for the past 120 years. The three collections focus on distinct periods of time in Australian war history, beginning with the Australian Army in Queensland during the 1800s, up to more contemporary conflicts since World War 2.

Distance: 347 km, 4 hours 10 minutes.

Stay: The Lakes Holiday Park

Day 3. Townsville to Richmond

Depart this morning and take the Southern Port Road to National Highway A6 in Stuart. Follow the National Highway A6 to Goldring Street in Richmond.

Check out the Kronosaurus Korner, Australia's premier marine fossil museum. Some 120 million years ago, much of Queensland was under water. Here, marine animals thrived. As the sea slowly moved out, we were left with the fossils of marine animals from the past. Richmond, in particular, is home to many of these discoveries, and is finding more each year. Join the palaeontologists on one of their many digs and try and find a fossil yourself, or explore the centre for a fun afternoon.

Distance: 499 km, 5 hours 12 minutes.

Stay: Lakeview Holiday Park

Day 4. Richmond to Mt Isa

Depart this morning and head southeast on Goldring Road towards Harris Street. Turn right onto National Highway A6 and follow to Julia Creek. Follow the National Highway A2, and then turn right onto Corbould Street.

Mt Isa is a mining town, so a visit to the mines is a must-see when you're there! The award-winning Hard Times Mine tour gives you the experience of being an actual miner. You'll be taken down into the mines by an actual miner, and learn about how they form the mines themselves. Have a go at the air-leg drill, and feel the earth move under your touch.

To continue the underground theme, see Mt Isa's underground hospital. A slightly ominous atmosphere, the hospital was built during World War 2, to protect it against the threat of bombs.

Distance: 406 km, 4 hours 18 minutes

Stay: Mt Isa Caravan Park

Day 5. Mt Isa to Barkly Homestead

Return to the National Highway A2 and across into the Northern Territory. Continue along the National Highway 66, and turn left at the Barkly Homestead.

Take in the Northern Territory and the outback at the Barkly Homestead. Enjoy seeing native animals run in the wild, or watch a world-famous sunset. Have dinner at the Barkly Bar and Grill, and have one of their popular steaks. Recharge and ready yourself for the driving of the next day.

Distance: 450 km, 4 hours 51 minutes.

Stay: Barkly Homestead

Day 6. Barkly Homestead to Daly Waters

Depart this morning and return to the National Highway 66. Turn right onto National Highway 87. Continue along National Highway 1 until you reach Daly Waters.

Daly Waters is the original Australian pub. Nowhere else will you find something so quintessentially Australian. From the décor, to the food and people, you will find something to love about this small town. They serve the classic Aussie meals such as parras and steaks, but also don't be afraid to try some kangaroo or crocodile.

Distance: 567 km, 6 hours 12 minutes.

Stay: The Daly Waters Pub

Day 7. Daly Waters to Katherine

Depart this morning and take the National Highway 1. Turn right onto Chamber Drive, and then left onto First Street to enter Katherine.

Discover Katherine through its waterways, and take a cruise through the mighty Katherine Gorge. View the landscapes as it slowly changes throughout your journey in Nitmiluk National Park, and try and spot the local wallabies. If you're up for something more adventurous, hire a canoe or kayak, and drift along the water.

The Top End is notorious for its crocodiles, so why not take a croc-spotting tour and see them for yourself. Visit one of the crocodile farms and research facilities, and watch the crocodiles jump out of the water as they are fed. A terrifying but mysterious animal, you will learn about its history in the indigenous culture, as well as the protective measures in place for the animals.

Distance: 273 km, 3 hours.

Stay: BIG4 Katherine Low Level Caravan Park

Day 8. Katherine to Darwin



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Depart this morning and return to the National Highway 1. Keep right and continue onto Tiger Brennan Drive. Follow the signs to Darwin.

Visit the Kakadu National Park, and learn about the oldest living culture in the world, and how it connects to the sacred land. The national park is full of activities, so be selective in what you decide to do.

There is nothing quite like swimming in the natural pools around the park, including the Jim Jim plunge pool. Surrounded by the rainforest landscape, you are transported away from modern civilisation into this natural oasis. Another highlight would be one of the many cultural tours, where you can learn everything from rock art to searching for bush foods.

Allow up to 60 minutes to return your campervan.

Distance: 316 km, 3 hours 10 minutes.

Stay: Hidden Valley Tourist Park