DriveNow

Helping travellers since 2003 find the best deals on campervan and car rental

TOP END AND KIMBERLEY ROAD TRIP · 10 DAYS ONE WAY

Darwin to Broome 10 Day Self Drive Itinerary

Another great itinerary from our Res team taking you on a 2200km journey from Darwin across to Broome. As this trip takes you through country subject to flooding in the wet season (November - May) timing of your trip is particularly important — Kimberley road restrictions mean many sections close without warning during wet conditions.

DISTANCE	DAYS	ROUTE	DRIVING TIME
About 2,200 km	10 days, 7 drives	One way, Darwin to Broome	About 31 h 30 min by campervan

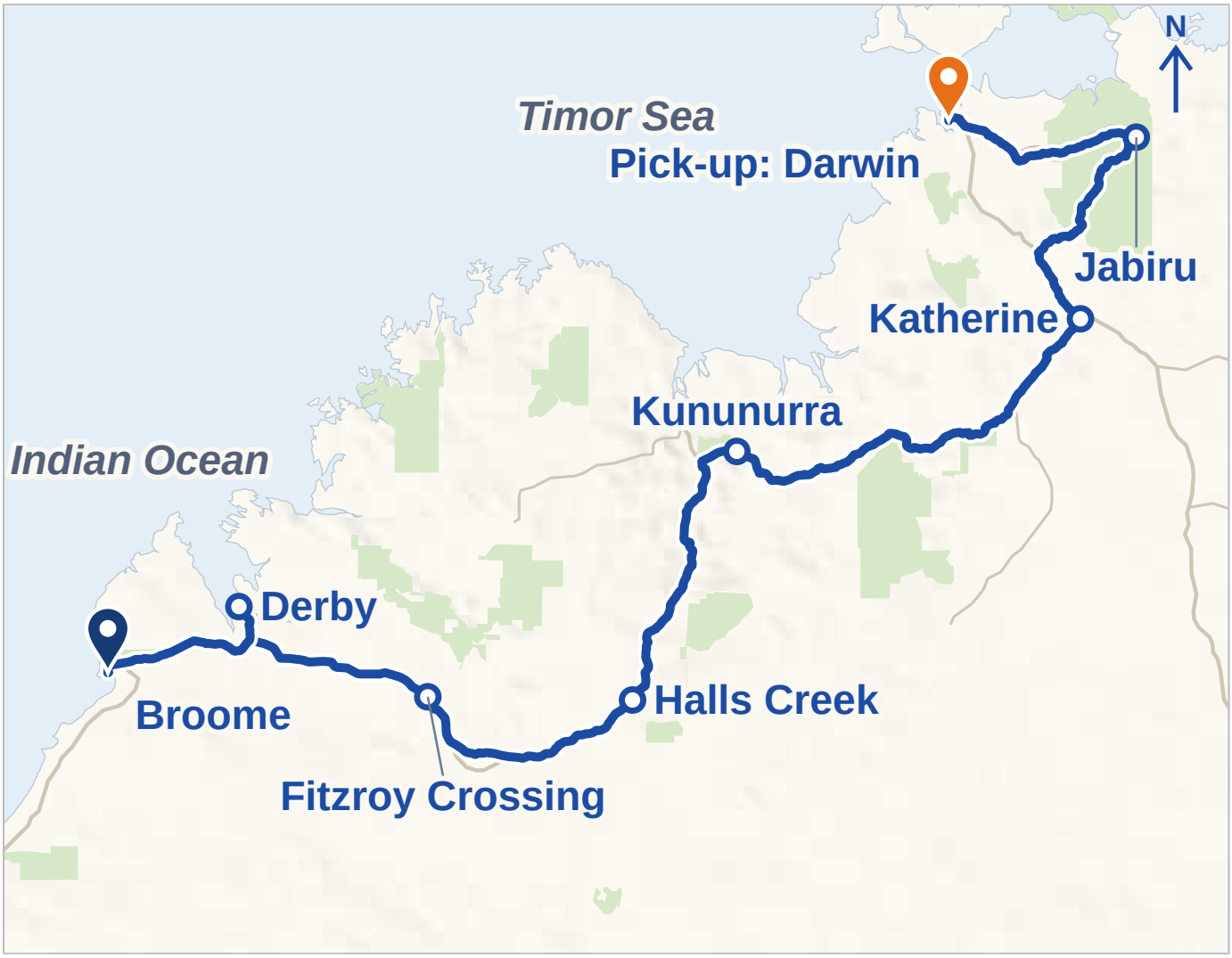
LONGEST DRIVE	VEHICLE
515 km, Katherine to Kununurra	Campervan

View Larger Google Map (http://maps.google.com.au/maps?f=d&source=embed&saddr=Darwin,+Northern+Territory&daddr=Jabiru,+Northern+Territory+to:Katherine,+Northern+Territory+to:Kununurra,+Western+Australia+to:Halls+Creek,+Western+Australia+to:Fitzroy+Crossing,+Western+Australia+to:Derby,+Western+Australia+to:Broome,+Western+Australia&geocode=FRzVQf8dqXzMByk_B_hh-6DALDEwfCQqqBcCBA%3BFQOhPv8dtd3qBylrbFbiH5K3LDFghCQqqBcCBA%3BFTlII_8dQDHiByk3g_yHzr-6LDHATyUqqBcCBQ%3BFZZQD_8dfGesByl3pRQnIvSZLDFAx3kkOPYABA%3BFUns6f4d7A-cByn7GHYVCl6dLDEwx3kkOPYABA%3BFQFh6v4dpwd8BynplTiUe6KBLDEgyHkkOPYABA%3BFYL39_4dGXJeBynj6pKO1E58LDEAyHkkOPYABA%3BFQsW7v4d50xJBymTtid_5S56LDFQEXokOPYABQ&aq=0&oq=Jab&sll=-15.613675,127.532945&sspn=24.126402,19.35791&vpsrc=0&hl=en&mra=ls&ie=UTF8&t=m&ll=-15.613675,127.539115&spn=6.37225,10.60447)

This trip crosses the Country of the Larrakia, Bininj, Mungguy, Jawoyn, Miriwoong, Gajerrong, Bunuba, Gooniyandi, Walmajarri, Nyikina, Yawuru and other First Nations peoples. Traditional Custodians



Mirima National Park, Kununurra, day 5 · Illustrative image



Planning overview, not navigation. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors · coastline Natural Earth · relief Terrain Tiles (Geoscience Australia, SRTM).

> Special caution and planning should be taken when travelling in remote areas to ensure sufficient provisions, fuel and prescribed medicines are carried. Weather conditions can make sealed roads impassable, particularly during the northern Wet season.

BEFORE YOU BOOK

Hiring a campervan for this trip

One way to Broome

Apollo, Britz, Maui, Maui Elite and Mighty charge a $310 one-way fee and a $930 Broome fee for pick-ups from 1 April 2027; before then, $300 and $900. The Broome fee applies when you pick up or drop off in Broome, once per hire. Both are in the total we quote. They and Campervan Village need at least 10 days from Darwin to Broome, so this 10-day trip meets the minimum. More on one way from Darwin and the Broome fee.

When you can go

Apollo, Britz, Maui and Mighty close their Darwin and Broome branches from 1 December to 31 March, so their one-ways across the north run from April to November. Campervan Village takes one-ways into Broome from December to March too, but much of this route floods in the wet season.

4WD-only sights

The Bungle Bungles (Purnululu), El Questro, Wolfe Creek Crater, Windjana Gorge and Tunnel Creek are reached on unsealed roads. Take a tour or a scenic flight from the nearest town, or hire a 4WD and ask for the rental company's permission, which Apollo, Britz, Mighty and Campervan Village give only on the day of pick-up. 2WD vans can't use the unsealed sections (Gibb River Road and the Bungle Bungles).

Quarantine at the WA border

Generally, no fresh fruit or vegetables, and no honey unless it's certified, can be taken into Western Australia. The checkpoint is on the Victoria Highway near Lake Argyle, east of Kununurra, and is open 24 hours, all year. Eat or bin them before the border (what you can bring into WA (https://www.dpird.wa.gov.au/individuals/what-can-I-bring-into-WA/)).

Your route

All rental vendors in Australia have restrictions on where their vehicles can be taken, so discuss your planned route with the rental company when you pick up. Get the rental company's permission before taking the vehicle somewhere it restricts. If you take it there without permission, you may lose your excess reduction and be fully responsible for any damage. You may also have to pay for towing and recovery, and for damage to other people's property. See road restrictions and when you are fully responsible.

Picking up in Darwin

Most Darwin branches hand over vans until 3pm; at weekends, hours are shorter or branches are closed (pick-up times and late flights). If your flight lands after late morning, it's often easier to stay the night and collect next morning. More on campervan hire in Darwin: branches, hours and each brand's rules.

Allow plenty of time at the branch for the paperwork, the vehicle inspection and the van demonstration, and bring every driver's licence. See what to expect when you pick up your campervan: choosing a pick-up time, the inspection and demonstration, the documents to bring and online check-in, and the Darwin branches. Flying in? See airport pick-ups and what to do about late pick-ups.

DAYS 1–3

The Top End

PICK-UP DAY IN DARWIN

DAY 1

Darwin

PICK-UP

Pick up your campervan or car in Darwin today. If you are travelling in a campervan, allow plenty of time at the depot so the rental company can show you how it works before you leave. Before commencing your journey across the Top End ensure that you stock up with supplies and water. There are supermarkets at Palmerston and Coolalinga on the Stuart highway about 22kms south of Winnellie. The longest leg of this trip is 514km from Katherine to Kununurra, so plan your fuel stops in advance.

Stay BIG4 Howard Springs Holiday Park, Darwin

DRIVE

255 km from Darwin | **about 3 h 30 min** by campervan |

Via **Stuart Highway**

DAY 2

Darwin to Kakadu

Head south on the Stuart Highway and turn left along the Arnhem Highway for a stop-over in Jabiru. You need a Kakadu park pass (https://kakadu.gov.au/plan/passes/). Check out Yellow Water, Mamukala, Iligadjarr, Ubirr and Bubba wetland.

Jim Jim Falls is probably out of reach for most as it requires a 4 wheel drive 4 hour round trip - possible to jump on a tour out of Jabiru to make the trip. Rental companies restrict the 4WD road, and Jim Jim Falls is closed for all of 2026 while damaged roads are repaired; Parks Australia expects it to reopen for the 2027 dry season.

Stay Aurora Kakadu Lodge, Jabiru - Cabins, Powered and Unpowered sites, great Pool, bistro & bar

DRIVE

305 km from Jabiru | **about 5 h 45 min** by campervan

Via **Kakadu and Stuart highways, through Pine Creek**

DAY 3

Jabiru to Katherine

Depart this morning and head south for Katherine. Travel along the Kakadu Highway and back onto the Stuart Highway via Pine Creek, and arrive into Katherine in the afternoon.

The Katherine River flows through 13 separate gorges that carve their way through the Arnhem Land Plateau. You can canoe, cruise and swim between sheer cliffs to the sandy freshwater beaches of the main gorges, and view ancient Aboriginal rock paintings high on the rock faces. Waterfalls and rock pools are found along over 100 kilometres of walking tracks, beginning at the park's visitor centre.

Katherine offers a wide range of accommodation, facilities and attractions, including museums, art galleries, character-filled pubs and historic sites. Other attractions within easy reach of the town include the Katherine Hot Springs and Leliyn (Edith Falls). Cutta Cutta Caves Nature Park is closed for 2026 while its cave lighting is upgraded, and is expected to reopen in 2027.

Stay BIG4 Breeze Holiday Parks – Katherine (formerly Big 4 Katherine Holiday Park) - powered sites

DAYS 4–6 The East Kimberley

DRIVE

515 km from Katherine | **about 6 h 15 min** by campervan

Via **Victoria Highway**

DAY 4

Katherine to Kununurra

LONGEST DRIVE

Travel west along the Victoria Highway/National Highway 1 into Kununurra. You cross into Western Australia at the quarantine checkpoint near Lake Argyle. Kununurra is an Aboriginal word meaning 'meeting of big waters'. The town is the hub of industry, agriculture and mining in the east Kimberley, and Kununurra is one of the youngest towns in Western Australia.

Long drive Start early and share the driving.

Stay Hidden Valley Kununurra Caravan Park (formerly Hidden Valley Tourist Park) - powered sites

A DAY IN KUNUNURRA

DAY 5

Kununurra

2 NIGHTS

The Kununurra region is beautiful with unique wildlife, swimming, fishing, boating and bird watching. Near Lake Kununurra lies the magical Mirima (Hidden Valley) National Park. Visit the Bungle Bungles, boat cruises or canoeing safaris along the beautiful Ord River, or visit El Questro Wilderness Park (the Bungle Bungles and El Questro on a tour or scenic flight, or in a 4WD with the rental company's permission). Take your pick of a number of great excursions, ½ day tours & full day tours in the Kununurra region.

Stay Hidden Valley Kununurra Caravan Park

DRIVE

360 km from Kununurra | **about 5 h** by campervan |

Via **Victoria and Great Northern highways**

DAY 6

Kununurra to Halls Creek

Travel west along the Victoria Highway, then south on the Great Northern Highway (National Highway 1) into Halls Creek. On the edge of the Great Sandy Desert, Halls Creek is one of the towns closest to Purnululu National Park, the park of the famous Bungle Bungles. Also nearby is Wolfe Creek Crater, one of the world's largest meteorite craters to have yielded meteorite fragments. Tours of the crater and the Bungle Bungles are available from the town; the roads to both are unsealed.

Stay Halls Creek Caravan Park - powered sites

Check first:
We couldn't confirm that Halls Creek Caravan Park is still open: check it's open before you go.

DAYS 7–10

The West Kimberley

DRIVE

290 km from Halls Creek | **about 4 h** by campervan |

Via **Great Northern Highway**

DAY 7

Halls Creek to Fitzroy Crossing

Travel along the Great Northern Highway/National Highway 1 into Fitzroy Crossing. The gateway to Danggu Geikie Gorge National Park, a spectacular waterway with soaring weathered cliffs and abundant wildlife.

Explore Tunnel Creek National Park and Windjana Gorge National Park, Barramundi fishing, Helicopter flights or a Geikie Gorge river cruise (check tour times before you go). Tunnel Creek and Windjana Gorge are on unsealed roads: see them on a tour, or in a 4WD with the rental company's permission. Indigenous tours also offer an excellent insight to local Indigenous history and culture, including bush tucker and medicine.

Stay Fitzroy River Lodge - powered sites

DRIVE

260 km from Fitzroy Crossing | **about 3 h 45 min** by campervan |

Via **Great Northern Highway**

DAY 8

Fitzroy Crossing to Derby

Travel along the Great Northern Highway/National Highway 1 before turning right onto the Derby Highway. The town of Derby is located on the tidal mud flats on the edge of the King Sound. It has the highest tidal range of any port in Australia.

The boab tree is a major feature of Derby. It has been used as a street tree and many of the larger growing natural specimens have been preserved. The famous Boab Prison Tree is located 7 kilometres from the town. Derby is the main base for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the Kimberley. The base was established in Derby in 1955.

Stay Kimberley Entrance Caravan Park Derby - powered sites

DRIVE

225 km from Derby | **about 3 h 15 min** by campervan | Via **Derby Highway**

DAY 9

Derby to Broome

Travel along the Derby Highway before getting back onto the Great Northern Highway/National Highway 1 as you make your way into Broome.

Broome is a cosmopolitan town that has an interesting history and stunning natural beauty. Linked to its pearling and multicultural population, Broome has a reputation for its vibrant social life. Located in the attractive Roebuck Bay region, Broome is surrounded by sweeping white beaches, rich red outcrops and blazing turquoise water.

View the sunset on Cable Beach, Camel ride along Cable Beach, visit Gantheaume Point, Japanese Cemetery, Matso's Brewery, Pearl Luggers Museum, China Town, or the Malcolm Douglas Crocodile Park (formerly the Broome Crocodile Park) are some of the sights you can visit in Broome. Pearl Luggers runs fewer tours in the wet season, and the crocodile park opens in the afternoons; check their times before you go.

Stay Cable Beach Caravan Park Broome - powered sites

RETURN DAY IN BROOME

DAY 10

Broome Drop Off

RETURN

Today you will need to return your vehicle to the depot and prepare for your departure home or stay longer to soak up the character of unique and exotic Broome.

Returning in Broome

Apollo, Britz, Maui, Maui Elite and Mighty have no toilet or grey-water emptying service in Broome, so return their vans with both emptied; they charge $299 a tank if you don't. Campervan Village charges $250 if you return its van without emptying the toilet and grey-water tank. Every caravan park in town has a dump point. Fill up before you return the van, with the fuel type your rental company specifies. Drop-off times are often earlier than people expect, so check yours (returning the van).

Plan your last day around your branch's drop-off time. See returning your campervan: choosing a drop-off time, late returns and early returns, and the Broome branches.

Enjoy the trip across the top of Australia.

Traditional Custodians

Darwin (Garramilla): Larrakia people (City of Darwin (https://www.darwin.nt.gov.au/community/about-darwin))
Kakadu: Bininj in the north and Mungguy in the south (Kakadu National Park, DCCEEW (https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/national-parks/kakadu-national-park))
Katherine: Jawoyn, Dagoman and Wardaman (Katherine Town Council, Municipal Plan 2024/25 (https://www.katherine.nt.gov.au/Profiles/katherine/Assets/ClientData/Documents/Municipal_Plan/Municipal_Plan_2024-25_WEB.pdf))
Kununurra and the East Kimberley: Miriwoong and Gajerrong, among the East Kimberley peoples the shire acknowledges (Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley (https://shapeyourshire.swek.wa.gov.au/kununurra-reimagined))
The Fitzroy Valley: Bunuba, Gooniyandi, Walmajarri, Nyikina and other peoples of the West Kimberley (Shire of Derby/West Kimberley (https://www.sdwk.wa.gov.au/Profiles/sdwk/Assets/ClientData/Documents/PageCentre/2021-06-22_-_SDWK_SCP_-_Report_on_Community_Engagements_-_FINAL.pdf))
Broome (Rubibi): Yawuru (Shire of Broome (https://www.broome.wa.gov.au/Council/About-the-Shire-of-Broome/Our-Heritage))

Country boundaries are approximate, and some are shared or contested. These names follow local councils and park managers. The AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia (https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia) shows the wider picture.

Pay your respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which you are travelling, and to their Elders past, present and emerging. The Australian environment is fragile, so tread lightly: take only photos and leave only footprints.

DriveNow Disclaimer

DriveNow receives no money or commission for any holiday park, campground, hotel, restaurant, cafe, pub, tour or attraction named on this page. We include them because they suit a campervan trip, and we check them from time to time.

DriveNow's suggested itineraries help you plan your own trip. Distances and times are from mapped routes and are a guide only; campervan driving times are car times plus about 20%. Road conditions, closures, opening hours and prices change, so check them before you travel. Any reliance on this itinerary is at your own discretion.

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