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Territory Arts Trail



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**



Territory Arts Trail

The Northern Territory is defined by its vibrant arts, cultural heritage and creative industries born out of its unique history and diversity, including being home to some of the oldest continuing living cultures on earth. The Northern Territory is proud of the strong culture of the traditional owners of the land who have, and continue to, tell their stories through their art. There was no written language for the Aboriginal people, therefore all stories were either danced, sung, or drawn. Traditional Aboriginal art tells stories of their daily life, their laws, their food, and their beliefs.

Cultural and artistic expression is very much a part of the NT identity and the arts sector is much more than meets the eye. From cultural festivals by the sea to desert choirs, the NT welcomes a diversity of cultures from around the globe that play an intrinsic part of the Territory's character, economy and appeal.

The energy and vision of artists and residents from across the diverse regional and remote communities that make up the Territory are what makes the Territory a vibrant place to live in and to visit.

Take a journey on the Territory Arts Trail to see where you end up. Be inspired from the following suggested itineraries or create your own online [here >>>](#)

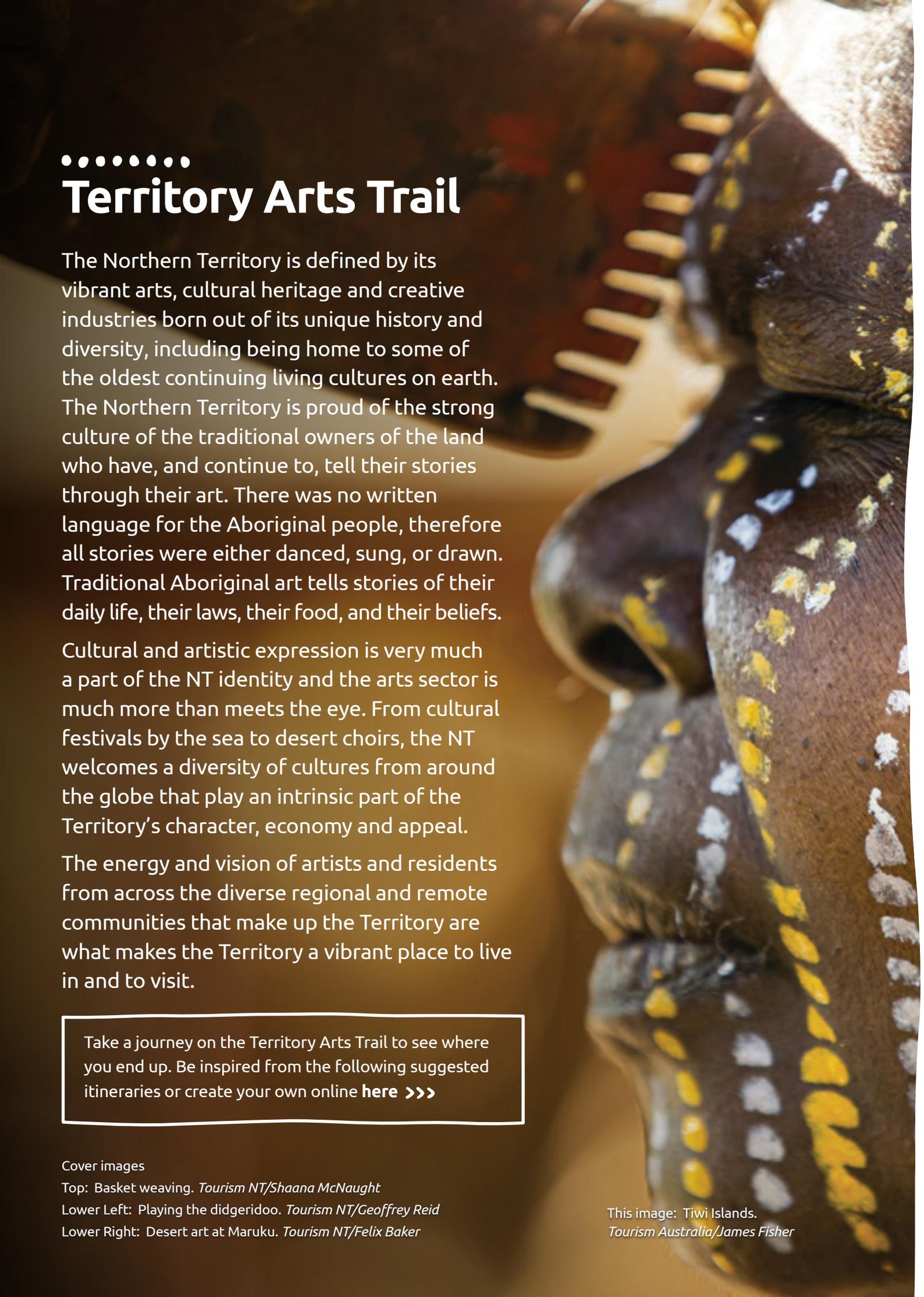
Cover images

Top: Basket weaving. *Tourism NT/Shana McNaught*

Lower Left: Playing the didgeridoo. *Tourism NT/Geoffrey Reid*

Lower Right: Desert art at Maruku. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

This image: Tiwi Islands.
Tourism Australia/James Fisher





Top: Driving on the Stuart Highway through Karlu Karlu.
Tourism NT/Jason Van Miert

Middle: Hermansburg Potters.
Tourism NT/Felix Baker

Lower: Small Aboriginal community of Wanmarra. *Tourism NT/Jordan Hammond*



Discovering the Territory Arts Trails

Discover your Territory Arts Trail by road, and self-drive your way around the NT. The Northern Territory is a great place for a drive holiday with plenty to do between stops, excellent road conditions and opportunities to discover some magical spots you just don't get to explore if you are on a tour. Travel on dirt roads is to be expected throughout the Northern Territory so please remember to drive safely, whether you are hiring a car, or using your own. Some roads require 4WD or high clearance vehicles only. You can check the local road report [here >>>](#)

Many art centres are located within Aboriginal communities and do require access permits. Please contact the **Northern Land Council** and/or the **Central Land Council** to apply. During certain seasons some art centres and tours are not open or available, please ensure you contact and make arrangements well in advance.



Important things to remember



Support the ethical sale of authentic Aboriginal art only



Photography – always ask, be sure it is not a sacred site



Ensure you apply for permits on Aboriginal land



Call ahead when visiting remote art centres

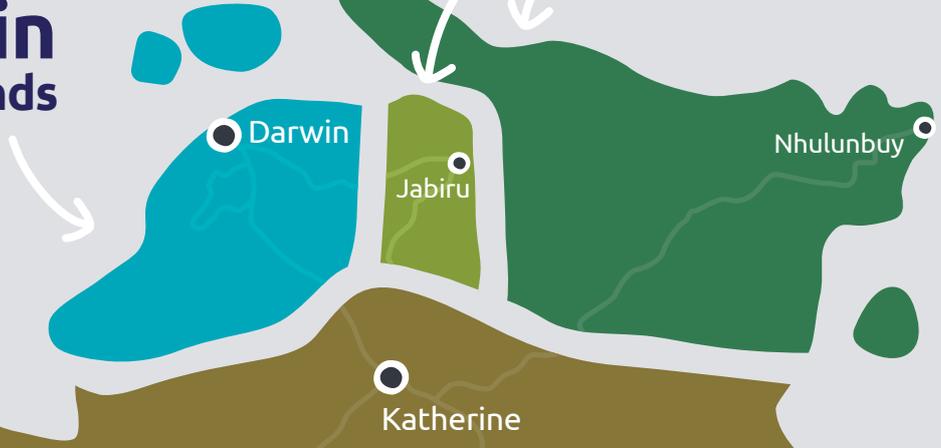


Respect the culture, land and people



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Darwin
& surrounds

.....
Kakadu
& Arnhem Land



.....
Katherine
& surrounds

Katherine

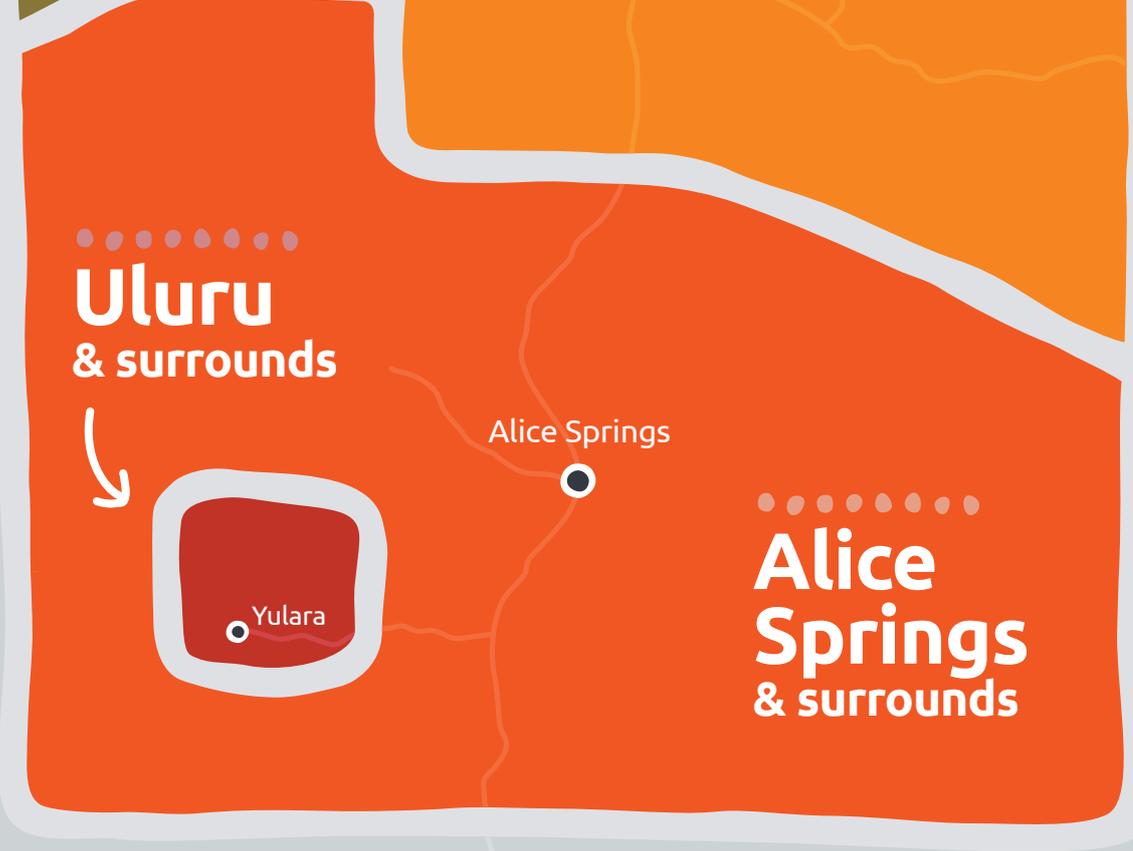


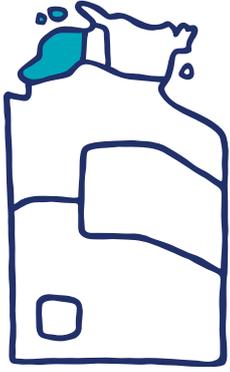
.....
Uluru
& surrounds



Alice Springs

.....
Alice Springs
& surrounds





Darwin & surrounds

Darwin is the Northern Territory's epicentre and a melting pot of the region's best art and culture. It will surprise and delight you with a plethora of art and cultural activities right at your accommodation doorstep. From galleries, street art adorning buildings, festivals and events – there's never a dull moment in this dazzling tropical city.

The Tiwi Islands are just a quick flight or a two and half hour ferry ride to the north of Darwin. Tiwi has a bustling strong and vibrant community, which is famous for its art. Every year the Tiwi Islands Grand Final day attracts thousands of visitors and is an explosion of sport, culture, and their annual art sale.



Top left: Cultural experience at Pudukul. *Tourism NT/Nick Pincott*

Top right: Tiwi Islands art centre tours through SeaLink NT. *Tourism Australia/James Fisher*

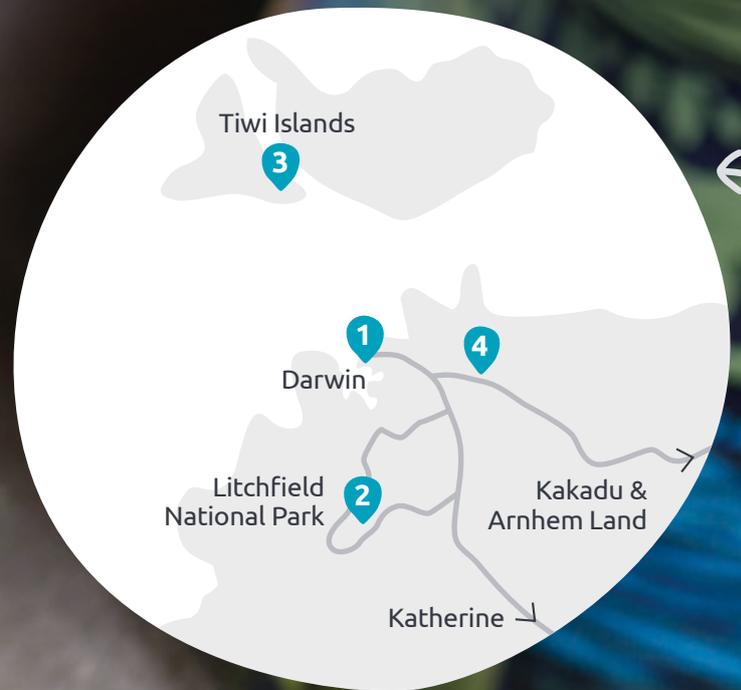
Middle left: An Aboriginal artist painting at Tiwi Design. *Tourism NT/Shana McNaught*

Middle right: *Between the Moon and the Stars* exhibition, 2019. *Image courtesy of MAGNT*

Lower left: Tiwi Island artist painting bird sculpture. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

Lower right: Darwin street art. *Tourism NT/Friederike Franze*

Darwin & surrounds



1 Visit **Aboriginal Bush Traders** on the Esplanade in Darwin city. Stop in for a coffee and look at the art on display here. Explore the huge array of city street art around Darwin at your own leisure. You can download the Darwin street art app via your smart phone, or for a Google Street View map click [here >>>](#) Check out what is happening at **Mayfair Gallery, Outstation Art** gallery and the **Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory**.

Bruce Munro Tropical Light is a brand new exhibition to be launched in Darwin November 2019 and running until April 2020. It is a must see when visiting during the tropical summer. Check out some of the optional touring experiences you can combine to experience this at its best.

2 Travel out to Litchfield National Park with **NT Indigenous Tours**. Tess, your guide will take you through her country to learn about the culture of the region as well as checking out the spectacular waterfalls of the area.

3 Explore the beautiful **Tiwi Islands with Sealink** which includes a visit to some of the art centres located on Bathurst Island.

4 Visit **Pudakul Aboriginal Cultural Tours** for a 2 hour cultural experience where you will learn a bit about bush tucker, culture, hunting and creating baskets from native plants.





Festivals to look out for

National Indigenous Music Awards (NIMAs)	Aug 2020
NATSIAA	Aug to Nov 2020
Darwin Festival	6 to 23 Aug 2020
Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair	Aug 2020
Bruce Munro Tropical Light	Nov 2019 to Apr 2020
Darwin Street Art Festival	Sept 2020

If you have more time

Grab yourself a hire car and explore further out of Darwin by visiting either Kakadu and Arnhem Land or Katherine and surrounds. Both locations have some great accommodation and touring options to support the fantastic art and cultural offering. Just an easy 3 hour drive from Darwin city on sealed roads, with plenty to do along the way, it's definitely well worth including in your arts trail journey.

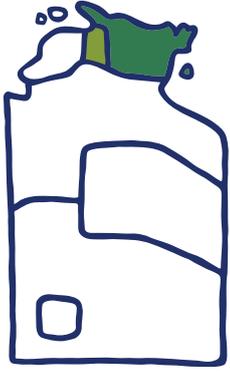
(Please note that access permits apply for some locations).

[Take me to Kakadu & Arnhem Land](#)

[Take me to Katherine & surrounds](#)

Not keen on driving yourself? Book a tour with **Lords Kakadu & Arnhem Land Safaris.** >>>

They can tailor a tour to suit you, or you can choose from one of their **extended tours.** >>>



Kakadu & Arnhem Land



Top far left: Venture North in Arnhem Land.
Tourism NT/James Fisher

Top mid-left: Painting workshop in Kakadu.
Tourism NT/Navin Chandra

Top mid-right: Cultural experience in Arnhem Land.
Tourism NT/Shana McNaught

Top far right: Screenprinting fabric at Injalak Arts in Gunbulanya. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

Lower left: Visitors learning about the art at Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre in Yirrkala.
Tourism NT/Shana McNaught

Lower middle: Weaving workshop in Arnhem Land.
Tourism NT/James Fisher

Lower right: Arnhem Land artist painting.
Tourism NT/James Fisher

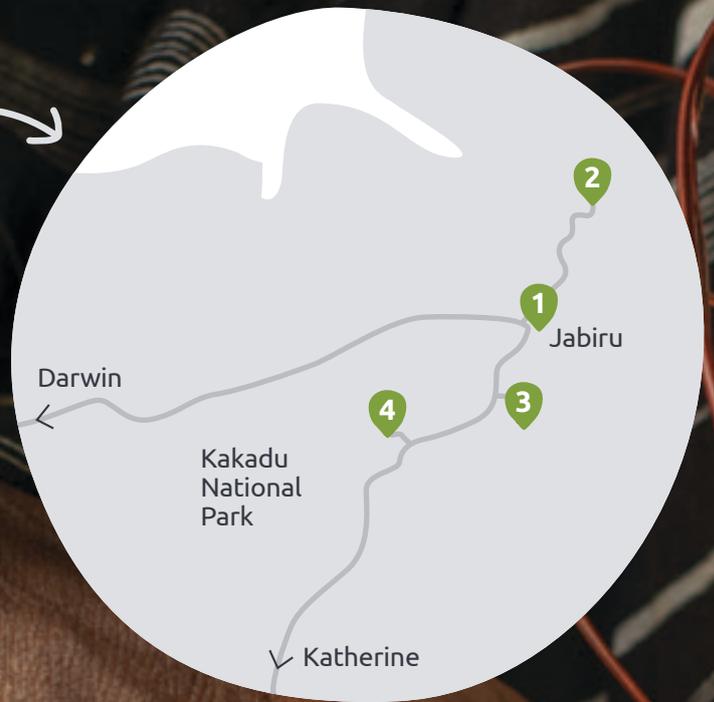


An abundance of Aboriginal art awaits at the world heritage-listed Kakadu National Park and Arnhem Land. Home to some of the oldest living cultures and some of the world's greatest concentration of rock art sites, you will see rock art paintings dating back to over 20,000 years. There is an incredible record of Aboriginal life over thousands of years with archaeological excavations dating back to 65,000 years old, which is some of the oldest occupation sites found in Australia.

The stunning coastline of Arnhem Land boasts remote sandy beaches, incredible escarpments and beautiful art. A permit is required to enter Arnhem Land, where you can discover incredible culture and history in a scenic location. The Yolŋu people of East Arnhem Land today live in a unique environment where western culture meets traditional lifestyle. Immerse yourself in the remarkable culture of these regions by visiting the indigenous art centres, participate in cultural tours, or simply relax on a camping holiday.



Kakadu & Arnhem Land



- 1 Join your Aboriginal guide with **Kakadu Cultural Tours** to explore some ancient Aboriginal rock art. Learn about the culture and have an opportunity to visit a remote Aboriginal art centre.
- 2 Visit **Ubirr rock art** site.
- 3 Travel down to **Burrungkuy (Nourlangie)** and explore the Aboriginal rock art and stories here.
- 4 Tour around the **Warradjan Cultural Centre** at Coinda at your own leisure. While in Coinda, don't miss out on a sunrise or sunset **Yellow Water Billabong Cruise** with Kakadu Tourism.

Image: Close-up of artist weaving with natural pandanus fibre in Arnhem Land.
Tourism NT/James Fisher



Festivals to look out for

Garma Festival 31 Jul to 3 Aug 2020

Kakadu National Park
ranger program >>> late May to Oct 2020

Other must do's

Kakadu Animal Tracks Safaris >>>

Bardedjilidji walk >>>

Nanguluwurr >>>

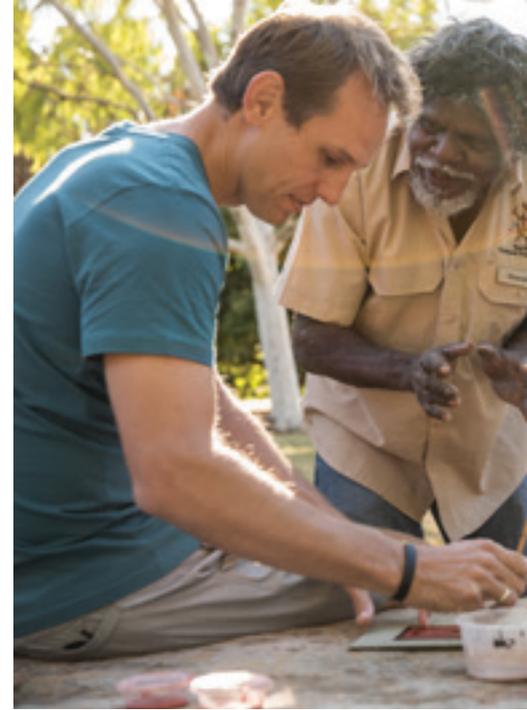
Murrawuddi Gallery >>>

**Arnhem
Land** Davidson's Arnhem
Land Safari's >>>

Lirrwi Tourism >>>

Black Point Cultural Centre >>>

Buku Larrnggay Arts Centre >>>



Top left: Close-up of woven basket.
Tourism NT/Felix Baker

Top right: Cultural experience with Top Didj. *Tourism NT/James Fisher*

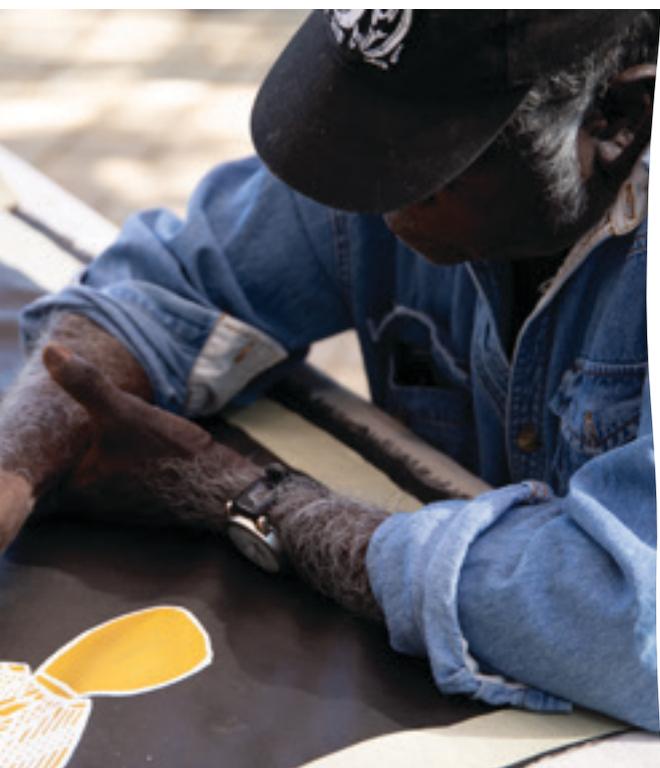
Middle left: Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre. *Tourism NT/Shaana McNaught*

Middle right: An Aboriginal artist painting at Mimi Aboriginal Arts and Crafts. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

Lower left: Aboriginal art in the Katherine region. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

Lower right: An Aboriginal artist weaving at Mimi Arts and Crafts. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*





Katherine & surrounds

Katherine is known as the place where the outback meets the tropics, and has long been a meeting point for the indigenous people from surrounding regions, and continues to be so today. With outdoor adventures incorporating cultural experiences, and incredible history and culture in the town's museums and galleries, there is something for all art lovers in this region! The Katherine Museum showcases Aboriginal artefacts from the region, together with items that depict the rich heritage of this area from WWII, the first flying doctor and the Overland Telegraph line. The crème de la crème of this region is Nitmiluk - one of the world's most iconic national parks and only a short drive from Katherine's town centre. From bushwalks to boat cruises to helicopter flights, there are multiple ways to immerse yourself in the Aboriginal culture within Nitmiluk National Park.

Katherine and the surrounding areas will be a great addition to your Northern Territory Arts Trail journey. You can continue onto Katherine after Kakadu, or travel here from Darwin. Katherine is approximately a 3 hour drive from Darwin, and just 1½ hours from Cooina via the Kakadu highway.

Katherine & surrounds



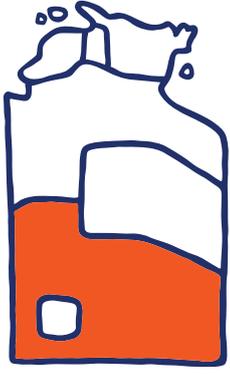
1 Visit our good friends at **Top Didj Cultural Experience and Art Gallery**. Manuel will teach you about his culture including how to throw a spear, how to make fire and show you the art of Rarrk painting – a traditional painting method from Manuel’s homeland in the Northern Territory.

2 Visit the **Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre** in East Katherine. This beautiful gallery showcases a range of indigenous and non-indigenous art work from around the Northern Territory. The centre also includes work from the local region and provides learning opportunities for the community.

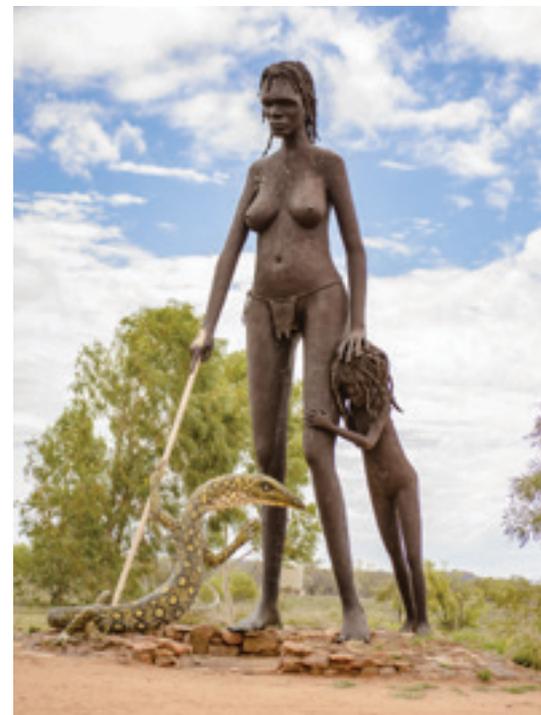
3 Venture down to **Nitmiluk National Park** in the afternoon to take a gorge cruise to see some rock art, explore the area and learn about the local Jawoyn culture.

4 For more Aboriginal art and culture, travel south for an hour to the small community of Beswick to check out the **Djilpin Arts Centre**. You will require a permit to enter the Beswick community, you can apply through the **Northern Land Council**.

5 On your way back to Darwin, stop off at **Umbrawarra Gorge** and take a walk to check out some Aboriginal rock art here. Remember to bring your bathers, and maybe even a picnic.

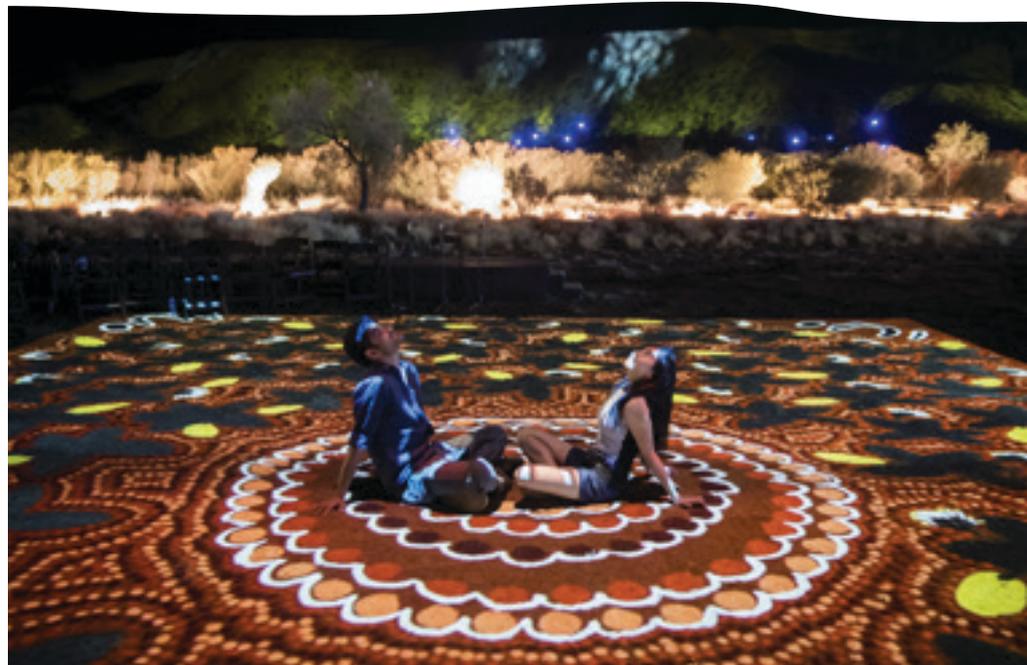


Alice Springs & surrounds



Noted as the “red heart” or spiritual centre of Australia, Alice Springs is a nationally significant arts hub. A vibrant centre for artists and artwork from the larger central desert region, it is home to some of the most important names in Aboriginal art with artists regularly exhibiting their work nationally and internationally. A range of art galleries dotted along the Todd Mall in the CBD showcase the diversity and strength of arts and crafts in the region. The Araluen Cultural Precinct is the hub of visual arts for the region, and hosts collections from local and Australian artists.

Make sure you align your trip with one of many art and cultural festivals such as the quirky Alice Springs Beanie Festival, which showcases thousands of handmade beanies, each one a work of art; or Desert Mob, a much anticipated annual event which is a statement of Aboriginal art from remote art centres in Central Australia. See the remarkable MacDonnell Ranges being lit up with Parrtjima, an incredible festival of light running in April each year. Art lovers will be able to immerse themselves in the Red Centre’s strong Aboriginal culture and landscape.



Top left: Colourful pots of Hermannsburg. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

Top middle: Woven creations at Tjanpi Desert Weavers. *Tourism NT/Felix Baker*

Top right: Parrtjima - A Festival in Light 2017. *Tourism NT/James Horan*

Lower left: Aboriginal artwork at Mbantua Gallery. *Tourism NT/Shana McNaught*

Lower middle: Aileron Hotel and Roadhouse. *Tourism NT/Yuri Kardashyan*

Lower right: Yubu Napa Art Gallery. *Tourism NT/Shana McNaught*

Alice Springs & surrounds



Festivals to look out for

DesertMob >>> Sep 2020 TBA

Alice Springs
Beanie Festival >>> 26 to 29 Jun 2020

Parrtjima Festival >>> 3 to 20 Apr 2020

Bush Bands Bash >>> Sep 2020 TBA

Other must do's

Papunya Tjupi Artists >>>

Ikuntji Artists >>>

Arlpwe Arts Centre >>>

Warlukurlangu Artists (Yuendumu) >>>

Yeperenye/Emily & Jessie Gaps Nature Park >>>

Ewaninga Rock Carvings >>>

If you have more time

Got a bit more time to explore further out of Alice Springs? We highly recommend you include a trip to Uluru and surrounds into your Arts Trail adventure. It almost seems essential to include both of these extraordinary significant sites to really capture the deep connection the Aboriginal people have to their country. By visiting, you may also find your own connection with the land and culture. Whether you are driving your own car, hiring one or prefer to fly, you won't be disappointed in the Red Centre.

[Take me to Uluru & surrounds](#)

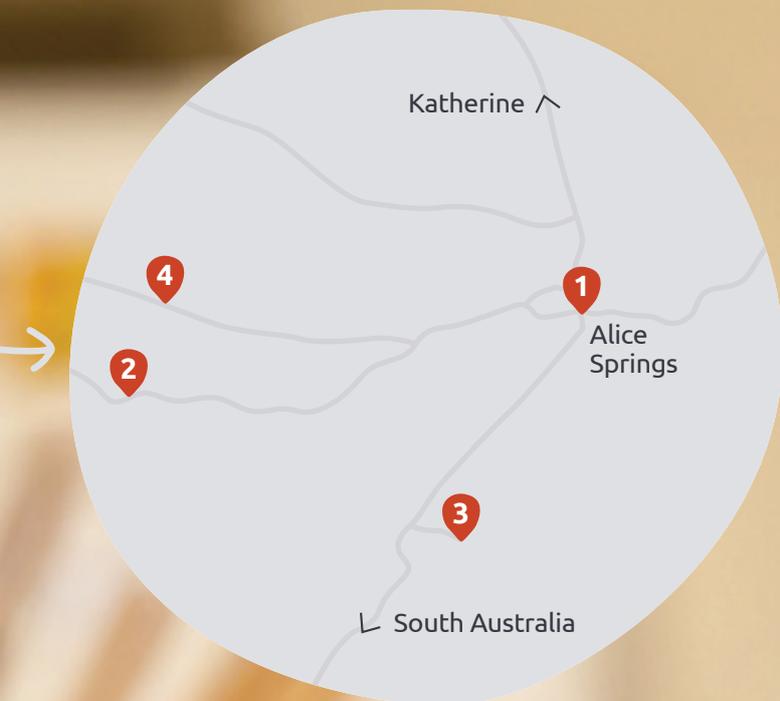


Image: An Aboriginal artist painting at the Tangentyere Artists Aboriginal Art Centre.
Tourism NT/Felix Baker

1 Take a morning tour with Alison from **Journey the Dreaming** to learn about the natural and cultural environment of Alice Springs. Hire a car and visit some of the best art galleries the Red Centre has.

Stop at the **Araluen Arts Centre** which incorporates exhibitions, museums, craft and a research centre. You can also include stops at **Tangentyere Artists**, and **Iltja Ntjarra** if you have time.

Experience a hands on art and cultural experience with Kumalie Riley from **Tinkerbee**. Learn about the traditional symbols and explore storytelling through art and culture while you create your own piece of art.

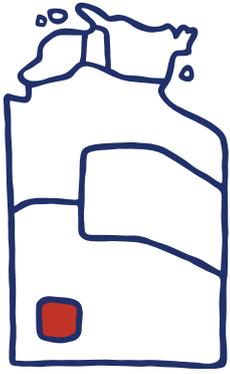
To get more of a local art fix check out **Tjanpi Desert Weavers** and **Kathleen Buzzacott Art Studio** which are just out of Alice Springs town.

Top off your Alice Springs visit with a tour of the senses with an evening under the stars with Bob from **RT Tours**. Enjoy a delicious three course meal in the open air at Simpsons Gap cooked on a bush oven with native flavours from the local area.

2 Travel out along Namatjira drive to visit **Hermannsburg Historic Precinct**, approximately one and a half hours from Alice Springs. Home to artist Albert Namatjira, you will be able to explore the precinct and even visit the house he grew up in.

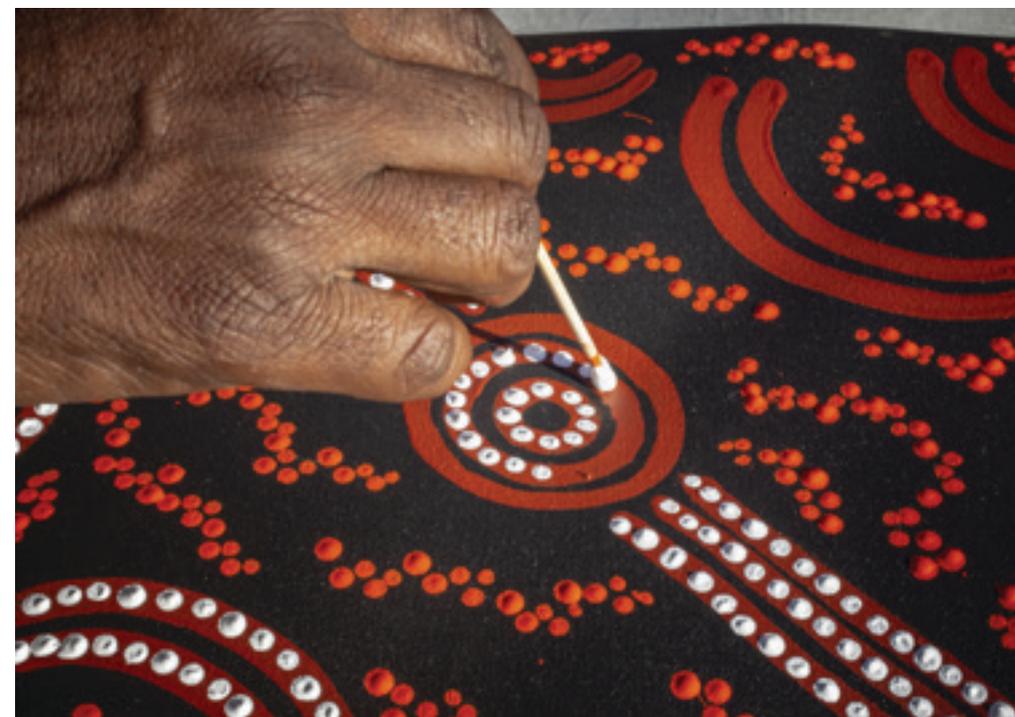
3 Take a tour with Ricky from **Rainbow Valley Cultural Tours**. Explore this exclusive area, only permitted by people on tour with Ricky, to view ancient and spectacular rock art and engravings, learning about the culture and history of the area.

4 Explore the **Ochre Pits** out in the West MacDonnell Ranges just over one hour drive from Alice Springs where the local Aboriginal people have mined for generations. Ochre is an important part of Aboriginal culture and was used in everyday life for painting, ceremonial body decoration, used in tools and medicine.



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Uluru is the global icon of Central Australia where you can be inspired by the power of the desert landscape in the heart of the outback, as many artists have before you. This region has an ancient indigenous culture rich in story, dance, and of course, art. There are many opportunities to experience authentic artwork whilst experiencing this unique landscape, ranging from rock art, paintings and historical artefacts. Get involved and take part in demonstrations and workshops with local artists for a truly unique and authentic experience, and purchase beautiful art pieces as memories of your trip.



Top left: Desert art at Maruku.
Tourism NT/Felix Baker

Top right: Karrke Aboriginal Cultural Experience.
Tourism NT/Archie Sartracom

Middle left: Field of Light glowing in the desert.
Tourism NT/Matt Glastonbury

Middle right: Learning dot painting with an artist.
Tourism NT/Shana McNaught

Lower left: Desert art at Maruku Arts.
Tourism NT/Felix Baker

Lower right: Cultural experience with Maruku Arts.
Tourism NT/Archie Sartracom

Uluru & surrounds



1 Visit the **Uluru Cultural Centre** to deepen your experience and understanding of **Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**. Check out what the ranger presentation times are at the centre or take a ranger-guided Mala Walk, which will take you to the base of Uluru where you will see some Aboriginal rock art.

Join a **Maruku Art** dot painting workshop tour in the square at Ayers Rock Resort. Hear from one of the local artists (and an assisting interpreter) and learn about the traditional art, symbols and tools to create your very own art piece.

You will be able to experience the **Field of Light** at Uluru until 2021, where the internationally acclaimed artist Bruce Munro has installed more than 50,000 lights to create a blanket of art across the desert landscape with the silhouette of Uluru as the backdrop.

2 To experience a bit more behind the scenes take a tour with SEIT Outback Australia on a **SEIT Patji Tour** where you will join Paddy and his family who will teach you about their culture and their family history, and how he himself fought for Aboriginal land rights.

3 On your way from Uluru to Kings Canyon is a quaint roadside stop known as **Curtin Springs**. Just one hour from Uluru, you will be surprised with the beautiful creations that have come from the desert outback. Curtin Springs have found a nifty way of getting rid of the pesky buffel grass by using it to create unique paper, and you can join a tour to make your own paper. There is also some unique pieces of jewellery and other craft available here to purchase.

4 Kings Canyon within **Watarrka National Park**. Whether you fly or drive, the landscape wildlife and environment out here is just as breathtaking. You can't go past visiting Kings Canyon to either do the full rim walk or other shorter optional walks that will all provide great views of the area.

5 Take a 30 minute drive from Kings Canyon and join Peter and Christine at **Karrke Aboriginal Cultural Tours** on a cultural experience that includes traditional bush tucker, paintings, war artefacts, bush medicine and more.



Other must do's

[Desert Awakenings \(Uluru\) >>>](#)

[Uluru Kata Tjuta Ranger guided activities >>>](#)



Image: A visitor listens to stories from a local Aboriginal artist from Maruku Arts.
Tourism NT/Archie Sartracom

northernterritory.com

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**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**

Different in every sense