



Home to Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Uluru, the Tjoritja West MacDonnell Ranges, Kakadu, Litchfield plus so many other incredible places and attractions – the Northern Territory is an adventure lover’s dream.

For locals or interstate travellers looking ahead, we’ve put together a list of the best places to camp, hike, road trip and more so that you can plan your next getaway.

Some of these areas still have restrictions in place, or are opening very soon so we’ve included them and as soon as locals are given the green light to travel regionally again, you can go ahead with planning your trip. For the best up-to-date information on restrictions, check on the NT’s government’s website [here](#).

With that out of the way, let’s get stuck into it!

If you just want to jump ahead to check out certain activities, then click the links below:

- [Water adventures](#)
- [Camping & sightseeing](#)
- [Hiking & walking](#)
- [4WDing and road trips](#)

## Water adventures

### **Esey National Park – Mataranka Thermal Pool & Bitter Springs**

Gifted with awe-inspiring natural springs, Esey National Park is located off the Stuart Highway about 1.5km south of Mataranka.

Opening from June 5, [Bitter Springs](#) is the larger of the two famous springs in the park and with water flowing gently throughout, you simply cannot resist jumping in to float around. Then after some time relaxing by the waters edge, there’s nothing to stop you doing the whole thing again. If you can get there super early, then you may be lucky enough to enjoy the pristine water and peaceful surrounds all to yourself.



*Relax and unwind at Bitter Springs. Image: Aaron Schubert*

Mataranka Thermal Pool is a popular spot for a day of relaxing and swimming. This is smaller than Bitter Springs, with incredibly warm water that you can spend hours relaxing in. Head [here](#) for updated information on when the park will be fully open to public again.



*Head to Mataranka Thermal Pool for a day of swimming. Image: Aaron Schubert*

### **Berry Springs**

If you’ve got a day up your sleeve, drive 45 minutes from Darwin for a whole afternoon of swimming at Berry Springs. Bring a picnic and enjoy lunch in the shaded barbeque areas before paddling in the beautiful clear swimming pools. Berry Springs is currently open for swimming but for more details, check out this source [here](#).





*If you're close to Darwin, Berry Springs is an ideal day trip. Image: Faye Martin*

## Palmerston Water Park

With free entry and a 14m high 6 lane race water slide on offer, plus a wading pool for smaller kids and a host of other facilities – there's no excuse not to grab some friends and family for an afternoon at [Palmerston Water Park](#). This park has barbeques and shaded picnic areas so you can relax in the shade with some lunch in between activities, and it's only a short drive from Darwin.



*Take the kids for a day at Palmerston Water Park. Image: Palmerston Water Park*

## Camping & sightseeing

### Litchfield National Park

A major attraction in the NT and just under an hour and a half from Darwin this national park won't disappoint. With world-class scenery, waterfalls and gorges, beautiful walks and hikes, and even camping facilities available, all of it can be enjoyed as soon as you've pitched your tent. [Buley Rock Hole](#), [Wangi Falls](#), [Florence Falls](#) and Sandy Creek are a few of the top spots, though some parts of the park are still closed, so head [here](#) for up to date info on the area.



*Explore the wonders of Litchfield NP. Image: Aaron Schubert*

### Lorella Springs

Opening in early June to local Territorians, you'll be able to head to [Lorella Springs Wilderness Park](#) for all the swimming, 4WDing, birdwatching, fishing, yabbing, and crabbing that you can handle.

This spot is towards the north-eastern part of the Territory and spans one-million-acres with the coast bounding its northern side. It's full of hot springs, amazing water holes, waterfalls, gorges and pristine beauty that will make for life-long memories and a fun packed family trip. It's located 30km off the Savannah way, in between Borraloola and Roper Bar. For more details and up to date health and safety information, head to the Lorella Springs website [here](#).



*Swim, 4WD, camp, fish, explore and more in Lorella Springs. Image: Aaron Schubert*

### Kakadu

Featuring 20,000 square kilometres of floodplains, estuaries, waterfalls and stone country to experience, Kakadu is Australia's largest and arguably the most scenic national park. Located 133km from Darwin and 149km from Katherine, you can do it in a 2WD, but to truly get the most out of your trip, a 4WD is ideal. Grab your park pass, and camp out at the campgrounds, caravan park or other accommodation nearby. While you're there check out



Maguk's infinity pool, Jim Jim Falls, Ubirr, the Yellow Water River Cruise, Twin Falls and other hidden gems [in the park](#).

Though Kakadu is still currently closed, there are plans to reopen soon, so head to this site [here](#) for updated details.



*Plan your adventure in Kakadu NP. Image: Faye Martin*

## Tjoritja/West MacDonnell National Park - Simpson's Gap

Home to the near-endangered Black-Footed Rock Wallaby, the Simpson's Gap area of Tjoritja National Park provides lovely short walks with spectacular views of the range. There's also a waterhole and opportunities at dawn and dusk for spotting Wallaby mobs as they feed. Although access to most of the National Park is currently limited, Simpson's Gap is open and so too is the [Simpson's Gap Cycle Path](#). So if you're itching to get on the bike and explore the open road, it's time to oil that chain!

Starting at Flynns Grave and extending to Simpson's Gap, the cycle path totals 17 kilometres in length and is suitable for people of all fitness levels and ages. Whether you want to go for a short ride or a longer one, this path provides panoramic scenery, plenty of wildlife spotting and informative signs along the way to stop and have a read while you rest.

Despite current closure of many areas in the West MacDonnell Ranges, it's still worth planning that trip because once restrictions are lifted, there is so [much more](#) to explore.



*Simpson's Gap is open and ready for adventure. Image: Uncool Cycling Club*

## Hiking and walking

### Larapinta trail

This [trail](#) is not for the faint hearted, but for those who are up for it, the challenge will reward the hiker with some of the most incredible views of the West MacDonnell ranges. Covering 223km of arduous country, and divided into 12 sections, it has so many highlights along the way. On this trail, you will pass by Simpsons Gap, Ellery Creek Big Hole, Ormiston Gorge, Glen Helen as well as Mount Sonder.

It's definitely a trail to spend some time preparing for, and as it's still presently closed, you can start your preparations now to take on this iconic Australian walking trail in the near future. For updates on the trail, check in with this website [here](#).



*For hiking enthusiasts, the Larapinta is the challenge you've been looking for. Image: Kevin Leslie*

### Jatbula Trail

This one way walk is 62km long and takes you through the stunning [Nitmiluk National Park](#). You'll begin the journey at Nitmiluk Gorge and continue in the footsteps of Jawoyn People



who travelled parts of this trail traditionally, with it finishing up at Leliyn (Edith Falls). Though not open at the moment, you can still plan your hike for a future date and keep your eyes peeled for updates on when it opens [here](#).



*You'll need bushwalking experience to tackle the Jatbula trail. Image: Peter Eve & Tourism NT*

## **4WDing & road trips**

### **King's Canyon and Watarrka National Park**

For many adventure lovers, [King's Canyon](#) is a location that will be on your bucket list. This park is home to an amazing array of animals, plants, birds and reptiles as well as the main event – the ancient red sandstone walls of the gorge itself. King's Canyon is part of Watarrka National Park, which unfortunately is closed currently, so for updates on when it's open head the NT Government's website [here](#).



*The garden of Eden at Kings Canyon. Image: Bob West*

### **Chamber's Pillar - Itirkawarra**

For those drawn to the outback, Chamber's Pillar – Itirkawarra will be a worthwhile spot to add to your bucket list once restrictions have been lifted on [June 5th](#). The famous sandstone formations – Chamber's Pillar, Castle Rock and Window Rock are highly important and culturally significant in the creation stories of the Arrente Traditional Owners.

This reserve is located around 160km from Alice Springs along Old South Road, and a 4WD is recommended. It's best to [plan your visit](#) when the sun is rising or setting so as to experience the spectacular play of colours, light and shadow across the pillar.



*Sunset at Chamber's Pillar/Itirkawarra. Image: Bob West*

### **Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**

This sacred place is probably somewhere that most outdoor enthusiasts would want to visit once in their lifetime. Though currently [still closed](#), it's well worth looking into taking a [trip here](#) to not only just view this iconic rock formation, but also to learn about the ancient cultural history of the traditional Anangu land owners.



*Uluru base walk at Sunrise. Image: Sputnik*

**What's your favourite place in the NT?**