



## ***A JOURNEY THROUGH EAST ARNHEM LAND***



See the world's oldest living culture firsthand as we take you on a journey into the remote East Arnhem Land. The tour travels overland from Darwin then along the Central Arnhem Road visiting various Aboriginal homelands and communities en route to Nhulunbuy (Gove).

Venture North is honoured to offer this in depth cultural safari through this fascinating part of the world. Our exclusive itinerary provides travellers with an intimate glimpse into the lives of Yolngu (Aboriginal) people in Arnhem Land and the opportunity to meet and interact with them on their home soil.

On this small group 4WD safari you'll experience an authentic Australia with the Traditional Owners of the land as you bushwalk, fish, hunt, collect bush tucker (native foods) and learn about their ancient traditions of song, dance and ceremony.

Prepare yourself for an adventure without hesitating to expect the unexpected. The Arnhem Land region doesn't necessarily have the same customs and traditions as you may be familiar with. Things won't always run on time and not everything goes to plan (this is often part of the experience), never the less we assure you will walk away with an amazing experience that you'll never forget.

**- Hugh and Aaron Gange (owners of Venture North)**

## **DAY 1 (B, L, D)**

At 06.00am your Venture North guide will collect you from your Darwin accommodation for the beginning of your 7 day cultural safari. Today we will travel south through Katherine en route to the southern entrance to Arnhem Land. Arnhem Land comprises of vast amounts of Aboriginal owned land (approximately 100,000 square km) where many local people are still governed by their traditional ways. Access is strictly regulated through a permit system.

Today will be the biggest drive of the trip as we initially travel 3 hours south to Katherine on the Stuart Highway. Just past Katherine we'll join the Central Arnhem Road which continues all the way to Nhulunbuy. From here it's another 4-5 hours on both bitumen and dirt to our destination; Bagetti Homestead.

Bagetti is an Aboriginal outstation approximately 30km from the community of Bulman on the Central Arnhem Road. The Homestead is situated on the banks of the beautiful Wilton River, a great fishing spot for Barramundi. Lazarus Murray and his family are the Traditional Owners of the area and welcome visitors to their country to share their culture.

Overnight: Bush camping - Bagetti

## **DAY 2 (B, L, D)**

Depart after breakfast and travel deeper into Arnhem Land to Baniyala. The community of Baniyala, often referred to as Yilpara, is one of the larger homelands in East Arnhem Land and sits on Blue Mud Bay approximately 200km from Nhulunbuy. The name Blue Mud Bay became well known after a landmark High Court decision (aka the Blue Mud Bay decision) which gave Indigenous people exclusive rights to the tidal water overlying their land.

Here at Baniyala you will learn about the local culture with various Yolngu people from the community.

Overnight: Bush camping - Baliyana

## **DAY 3 (B, L, D)**

Today we will continue on to the small homeland of Bukudal. Bukudal is Djapu Clan's country and is located on the southern side of the historic Caledon Bay. Here the Mununggurr brothers; Barayuwa, Lulpangi, Malakunya, Moyamoya, Wurrpadaya, Guthunitjpi and Rulitjpirr take great pride in welcoming visitors and sharing their unique culture.

Caledon Bay was the site where in the early 1930's fighting broke out between the local Yolngu people and intruders on their land/sea (Japanese fishermen and police). The violence that ensued resulted in many deaths and became national news. Anthropologist Donald Thomson was sent out to defuse the

situation and formed a strong bond with the leader of the Djapu Clan, Wonggu Mununggurr. Mr Thomson then returned to Darwin with a message stick from Wonggu for his sons who had been imprisoned for the killings and persuaded the government to release them as a sign of good faith and to ensure the fighting stopped. On the last day of the tour you will see Wonggu's actual message stick which is now displayed in the Yirrkala Art Centre.

This afternoon you can relax and enjoy the picturesque coastal view as you sit and learn about the culture and history of this region.

Overnight: Bush camping - Bukudal

#### **DAY 4 (B, L, D)**

Today we will embark on a full day of cultural activities with our Yolngu hosts. Often the group will be separated into gender to learn about men's and women's 'business', e.g. activities such as spear making is a man's domain while basket weaving and craft is a women's activity.

This evening learn the art of Indigenous music around the camp fire.

Overnight: Bush camping - Bukudal

#### **DAY 5 (B, L, D)**

After breakfast we'll depart and continue north to the community of Yirrkala to visit the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre, arguably one of the best and most significant Indigenous art centres in Australia.

The art centre includes an extensive gallery of Aboriginal art and artefacts, a fascinating museum and a theaterette featuring many films of the area. The East Arnhem region is home to many important artists who specialise in paintings on bark as well as intricate pandanus weavings. The region is also considered to be the home of the Yidaki (commonly referred to as the didgeridoo) which the centre displays and sells a wide variety of.

One of the jewels in Buku-Larrnggay Mulka's crown are the two four metre tall Yirrkala Church Panels (1962-3) that have been classified as some of Australia's most important historical art works. The centre also features the message stick that Wonggu sent his sons in the early 1930's (as mentioned previously) which is another significant story in modern Indigenous/Australian history.

After lunch we will travel to another small homeland called Bawaka. Bawaka is set on a beautiful beach in an area known as Port Bradshaw and is approximately two hours' drive south of Nhulunbuy.

Bawaka is the name given to the homeland which belongs to the Burarrwanga family. In order to

provide income for their family they have created a cultural awareness program. The experience here is predominantly delivered by members of the Burarrwanga family, or otherwise related family members from the wider Gumatj clan group.

Visitors to Bawaka experience daily life of traditional Yolngu people and are provided with an insight into Yolngu culture, kinship, language and customs as well as traditional hunting and gathering methods.

Overnight: Bush camping – Bawaka

## DAY 6 (B, L, D)

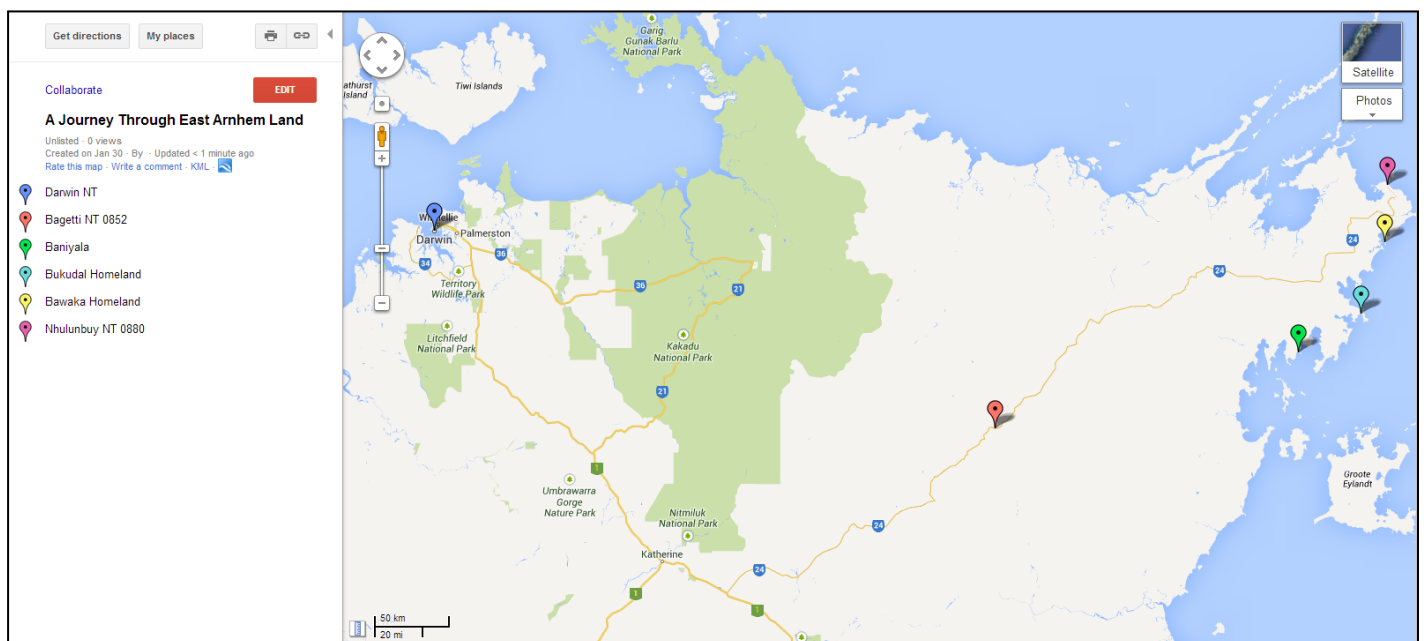
Today we will embark on a full day of different cultural activities with our Yolngu hosts. Again the group may be separated into genders for certain talks and activities.

This evening sit back and experience the techniques and flavours of traditional bush cooking on camp fire coals.

Overnight: Bush camping - Bawaka

## DAY 7 (B, L)

This morning we will say goodbye to our hosts and journey on to Nhulunbuy. After a farewell lunch at the local pub you will be dropped off at the Gove Airport for your 3.20pm flight back to Darwin.



## **TOUR COST:**

PER ADULT: AUD \$5,990.00 Gross (based on a minimum of 4 passengers).

The above is subject to availability, permits and valid until 31 May 2014.

The above itinerary is also subject to change at short notice due to weather conditions and for cultural reasons throughout Arnhem Land.

## **INCLUDES:**

- Professional guide/driver
- Luxury 4wd Landcruiser vehicle
- Fully equipped 4-WD trailer
- Camping equipment - tents, swags, sleeping bags, sheets and pillows
- All camping fees
- Arnhem Land road transit permits and fees
- Community fees
- All Indigenous guide fees
- All cultural activities
- Flight from Nhulunbuy to Darwin
- Refreshments
- Meals as stated (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner)

## **EXCLUDES:**

- Pre/Post tour accommodation

*Please note no alcohol is permitted on this tour.*

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