

Eight Day North West Outback Itinerary

From vast lands to living stories.



1 Day one

Morning:

After flying into Cairns, Queensland's thriving tropical city, meet the school's bus charter and embark on the trip into the Outback.

Afternoon:

Stop for lunch in beautiful Atherton and, if time permits, the below nearby activities are recommended. Crystal Caves allows groups to take a self-guided tour through 300 square metres of tunnels and grottos built to feature million-year-old natural crystals and prehistoric fossils. The attraction includes interactive displays which give students the chance to touch and photograph the crystals and even crack their own. Nandrioya Falls is part of a network of walking trails in the Palmerston section of Wooroonooran National Park. Beginning at the Henrietta Creek campground, the trail to the falls runs about 6.6 kilometres and winds into the rainforest before forking to form a circuit. The picturesque falls are the perfect place for groups to relax, swim and enjoy the Wet Tropics World Heritage rainforest. Drive to Undara.

Evening:

Arrive in Undara and check into accommodation.

2 Day two

Morning:

Embark on a tour through the famous Undara Lava Tubes. 'Undara' is an Aboriginal word meaning 'long way'. The park protects one of the longest lava tube cave systems in the world. About 190,000 years ago, a large volcano erupted violently, spewing molten lava over the surrounding landscape. The lava flowed rapidly down a dry riverbed. The top, outer-layer cooled and formed a crust, while the molten lava below drained outwards, leaving behind a series of hollow tubes. The roofs of some tubes collapsed, creating ideal conditions for dry rainforest to grow and wildlife to shelter. Drive to Talaroo.

Afternoon:

Arrive at Talaroo Hot Springs and join the Hot Springs Discovery Tour after lunch. Talaroo Hot Springs are located between Mount Surprise and Georgetown, in the heart of Queensland's untouched Gulf Savannah, and are an unmissable part of the Savannah Way. Drive to Cobbold Gorge.

Evening:

Arrive in Cobbold Gorge and check into accommodation.

3 Day three

Morning:

Take a tour of Cobbold Gorge. Queensland's youngest gorge is set amongst an ancient landscape. It all began 1,700 million years ago. Sand and mud sediment was deposited on what was then the ocean floor, until eventually layers built up to be more than 10 kilometres thick. Movement in the Earth's crust caused the sediments to compress, forming the Hampstead Sandstone. Further movement caused the sedimentary rock to fracture. Torrential wet seasons over many years, spilled torrents of water through the narrow fractures, creating deep gorges and permanent springs and seepages.

Afternoon:

After the tour, depart Cobbold Gorge and head towards Normanton, stopping in Croydon for a packed lunch.

Evening:

Arrive in Normanton and check into accommodation.



8 Days
7 Nights



Journey

Cairns to Atherton
approx. 93km / 1h 26m

Atherton to Undara
approx. 190km / 2h 16m

Undara to Talaroo
approx. 116km / 1h 32m

Talaroo to Cobbold Gorge
approx. 164km / 1h 23m

Cobbold Gorge to Normanton
approx. 386km / 4h 40m

Normanton to Karumba
approx. 70km / 46m

Karumba to Mount Isa
approx. 568km / 6h 17m

Mount Isa to Lake Moondarra
approx. 18km / 19m

NOTE: This itinerary is provided by way of example only and is not an exhaustive list of available activities in the region. Each school should consider whether it is suitable for their group and amend as required.

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Barramundi Discovery Centre



Cobbold Gorge



Lake Moondarra



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4 Day four

Morning and Afternoon:

Take a day trip to Delta Downs Station which is one of Australia's most successful Indigenous run enterprises. First established around 1889, nearly 100 years later in 1983 it became Australia's first cattle station run by Traditional Owners and has grown to employ about 30 local Indigenous people. Delta Downs is spread over 1 million acres and runs 40,000 to 45,000 cattle depending on the time of year. Drive to Karumba.

Evening:

Arrive in Karumba and check into accommodation. Speak to the team at the Barramundi Centre to assist in organizing group accommodation.

5 Day five

Morning:

Take a group tour of the Barramundi Discovery Centre and discover the amazing secrets of the mighty barramundi. This is the only hatchery in the world to breed the Southern Gulf strain of this iconic fish. The state-of-the-art Interpretive Centre provides the history, stories, lifecycle and habits of these sought-after fish. The Centre also offers lunch with views over the saltwater lagoon.

Afternoon:

Following lunch, embark on the Croc & Crab Tour nature cruise which will provide an afternoon of excitement and anticipation as students get a chance to witness crocodiles swimming and sunning themselves on the muddy banks. Afternoon tea is included on this tour.

Evening:

Return to Karumba accommodation and evening at leisure.

6 Day six

Morning and Afternoon:

A huge day of travel is ahead but watching the ever-changing Outback scenery as it passes by will be an unforgettable experience for the group. Stop where you see fit along the drive and drop into Cloncurry for lunch to stretch the legs while exploring the John Flynn Place Museum and Art Gallery.

Evening:

Arrive in Mount Isa and check into accommodation.

7 Day seven

Morning and Afternoon:

Outback at Isa is Mount Isa's major tourism hub, bringing together the Visitor Information Centre, Hard Times Mine Underground Tour, Isa Experience, Outback Park, the Mount Isa Regional Art Gallery, the Riversleigh Fossil Discovery Centre and the Outback at Isa Café in one central precinct.

School groups can plan their visit and book tours with the support of friendly staff at the award-winning Visitor Information Centre. Students can explore Mount Isa's mining and rodeo heritage in the Isa Experience and Rodeo Hall of Fame, take part in a hands-on underground tour at the Hard Times Mine, and step back millions of years at the Riversleigh Fossil Discovery Centre. Experiences also include guided bush tucker tours, learning about native foods and survival plants, or time spent exploring exhibitions at the regional art gallery.

Afternoon:

After enjoying lunch at the Centre, head to Lake Moondarra for the afternoon. Located just 17 kilometres from the city centre, the safe, still water is perfect for swimming, boating, sailing and canoeing. Lake Moondarra also hosts an array of birdlife and provides excellent photographic opportunities. Keen birdwatchers can obtain a species list from Outback at Isa.

Evening:

Head to the Underground Hospital Museum for a unique night visit. Explore the tunnels after dark and, for those keen on an extra challenge, take part in the optional escape room experience on site.

8 Day eight

Embark on the journey home.

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