

# CENTRAL ARNHEM ROAD

Central Arnhem Road

## Highlights

- \* Experience one of Australia's most iconic drives
- \* Immerse yourself in the oldest living cultures on earth
- \* Pick yourself up a one of a kind art piece
- \* Spot an abundance of wildlife including kangaroos, wallabies, buffalo, emus, and donkeys

## JOURNEY THROUGH 60,000 YEARS OF HISTORY

Experience one of Australia's most iconic drives, the Central Arnhem Road, and discover the road less travelled in East Arnhem Land. The Central Arnhem Road is 675 kilometres long and is predominately unsealed dirt with a few small river crossings along the way. The drive begins 50km south of Katherine and finishes in Nhulunbuy on the Gove Peninsula, taking you on a journey through 60,000 years of history in East Arnhem Land's vast untouched wilderness.

**Distance:** 730km (Katherine to Nhulunbuy)

**Time:** 2 days with optional stops to extend

**How:** Self drive with 4WD vehicle

### DAY 1 - Katherine to Mainoru Store - 250km

After stocking up on supplies and checking over your vehicle in either Katherine or Mataranka, your adventure begins when you turn off the Stuart Highway onto the Central Arnhem Road.

#### STOP - BESWICK

The first stop on the list is the Aboriginal community of Beswick (Wulgala), only 60 kilometres from the Stuart Highway turnoff. At Beswick you can enjoy the hospitality of the Djilpin Arts, where a barista-made coffee and a stroll through the gallery will slow down the pace. Call in advance and arrange a private tour of the Blanas Collection, a permanent showcase of culturally significant art works in the West Arnhem painting style, curated by late elder and mago (dijeridu) master David Blanas. Access and guided tours can also be arranged for the stunning Beswick Falls. There is a well-stocked store, 24-hour self-serve fuel and accommodation at the art centre if you decide to spend a little extra time exploring Beswick.

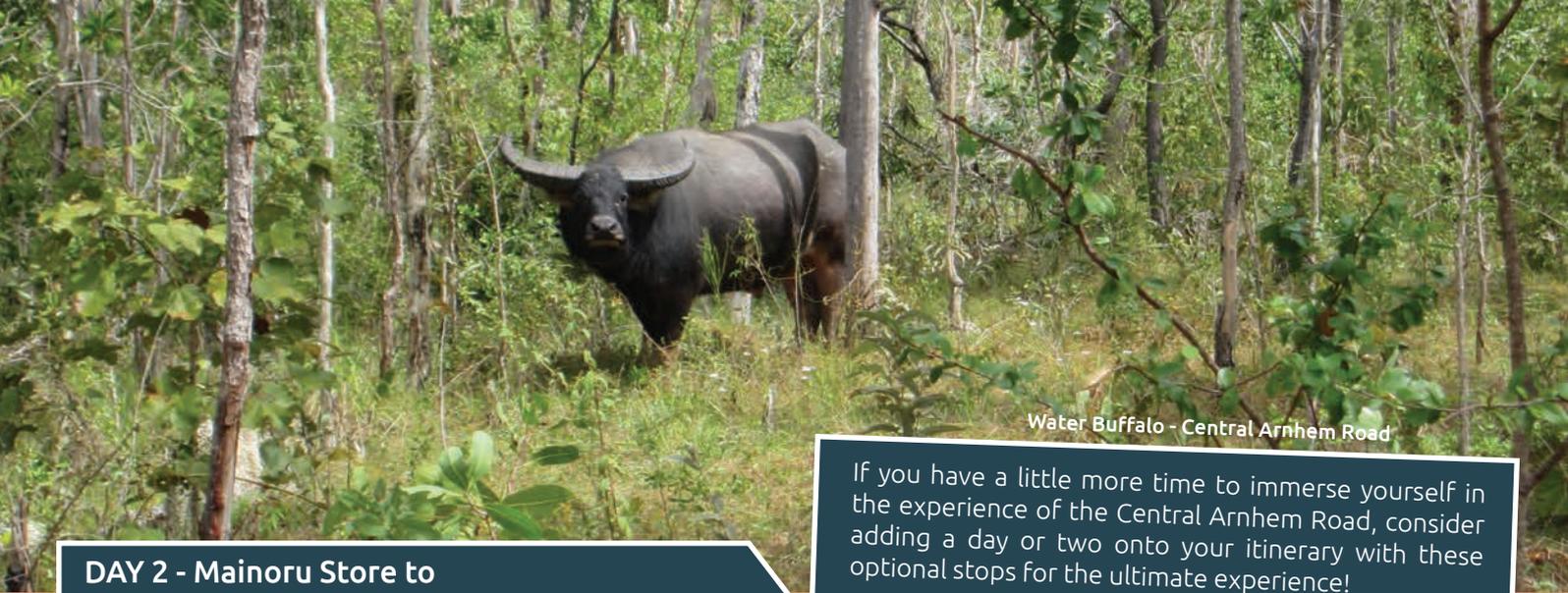


#### STOP - JURASSIC PARK LOOKOUT

After leaving Beswick, continue your journey east for about 60 kilometres and keep your eye out for the next stop: a lookout known to locals as 'Jurassic Park'. The lookout has breathtaking views over an escarpment and is a great place to stretch your legs. The stop is not sign posted so make sure you keep your eye out for the rest bay on the right side of the road.

#### STOP - MAINORU STORE

Continuing the drive along the Central Arnhem Road for 80 kilometres, the last stop for the day is Mainoru Store where campgrounds, rooms with wifi, fuel and luscious green lawns alongside the Mainoru River make it an ideal spot to rest up for the second day of your journey. This picturesque freshwater river is alive with birdlife and guests are encouraged to try a bit of fishing off the banks. Be sure to keep your eye out for the resident water buffalo grazing on the lawn at dawn and dusk and throughout the night!



Water Buffalo - Central Arnhem Road

If you have a little more time to immerse yourself in the experience of the Central Arnhem Road, consider adding a day or two onto your itinerary with these optional stops for the ultimate experience!

**DAY 2 - Mainoru Store to Nhulunbuy - 480km**

After a wakeup call from the blue-winged Kookaburra, it is time to continue on your Central Arnhem Road journey. Keep your eye out for a variety of animals such as kangaroos, wallabies, emus, frilled neck lizards, buffalo, wild brumbies and donkeys along the way as you approach Bulman community (Gulin Gulin), 60 kilometres from Mainoru Store.

**STOP - BULMAN**

Bulman has a well-stocked general store with fuel bowsers and is your last chance to replenish your snacks and fuel if you are travelling straight through to Nhulunbuy from here. Pulling back onto the highway and heading in the direction of Nhulunbuy, enjoy the remoteness of the Central Arnhem Road and the beautiful scenery passing you by. It is approximately 370 kilometres before arriving at your next stop so sit back, turn the music up and enjoy the ride.

**STOP - GUWATJURUMURRU (GIDDY RIVER)**

Guwatjulumurru (Giddy River) is the perfect place to stop for a picnic lunch before travelling the remaining 55 kilometres into Nhulunbuy. The road into the recreational areas will only take you a few hundred metres off the Central Arnhem Road, and the picnic areas are nice and shady with access to a freshwater stream. A Dhimurru permit is required to visit this area so make sure you book ahead if you are planning on stopping here.

**WELCOME TO NHULUNBUY**

The final destination on your Central Arnhem Road journey is Nhulunbuy, the picturesque town located on the Gove Peninsula. Base yourself in this vibrant community for an East Arnhem Land adventure with close access to a wide range of recreational areas, fishing charters, cultural experiences and accommodation.

**OPTIONAL STOP 1 - Mainoru Store to Gapuwiyak - 310km**

From Mainoru Store head along the Central Arnhem Road towards Nhulunbuy for approximately 285 kilometres until you reach the Gapuwiyak turnoff on the left. From here it is a short 30 kilometre drive into Gapuwiyak, a small Yolŋu community that sits on the shores of the charming Lake Evella. Gapuwiyak is home to the Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts Centre and a community store to stock up on your road trip snacks, there is a prepaid fuel stop in the community. Stay the night to allow yourself enough time to enjoy this quaint community, take a stroll along the lakefront (the locals will tell you there aren't any crocs but watch out anyway!) and immerse yourself in culture at the art centre. You can explore accommodation options on our website.

**OPTIONAL STOP 2 - Mainoru Store to Bäniyala - 357km**

Keep heading along the Central Arnhem Road from Mainoru store for 328 kilometers until you reach the Bäniyala turnoff on the right; it is another 50 kilometres along the access road into the Yolŋu homeland of Bäniyala. Bäniyala is set on Blue Mud Bay in the Gulf of Carpentaria and is home to the Dholuwuy Campground as well as a small community store. Dholuwuy Campground is an outdoor enthusiasts dream with the campsites overlooking the bay. Keen anglers also have access to a boat ramp close by. To enjoy this spectacular location we highly recommend staying a couple of days to finish off your Central Arnhem Road journey on a high!



Check out the three and seven day Gove Peninsula itineraries for inspiration on how to make your experience in East Arnhem Land more memorable!

Need help planning? Feel free to contact us!

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Lake Evella - Gapuwiyak

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## TRAVEL TIPS

- A Transit Permit is required from the Northern Land Council to travel the Central Arnhem Road. This permit is free and easy to get.
- Camping trailers and caravans should be heavy duty. Road access can change during the year depending on conditions. The Northern Land Council will issue permits for cars towing trailers and caravans, but not for the trailer or caravan so make sure you check access before you travel, as well as your insurance policy.
- Your vehicle should be properly equipped with at least: one spare tyre (preferably two); water and emergency provisions; a comprehensive tool and puncture repair kit; first aid kit; gas cooking equipment; sunscreen and insect repellent. In the event of a breakdown, stay with your vehicle – it is easier to find than an individual.
- An adventure such as this requires drivers to take necessary precautions to ensure a safe journey. Some experience of driving on unsealed roads is recommended.
- The Central Arnhem Road is accessible year round. Roads can be temporarily closed due to flooding between October and May (the wet season). You can check road conditions on the NT Roads Report website.
- Beware of salt water crocodiles inhabiting all water ways along the Central Arnhem Road.
- There is no phone coverage along most of the Central Arnhem Road. See the Central Arnhem Road map for approximate locations where Telstra coverage is available.

## ESSENTIAL CONTACTS

### Emergency services (call 000 for emergencies)

- \* Nhulunbuy Police Station (08) 8987 1333
- \* Katherine Police Station (08) 8973 8000
- \* Bulman Police Station (08) 8976 4077
- \* Gapuwiyak Police Station (08) 8987 9318

- \* Gove District Hospital (08) 8987 0211
- \* Katherine District Hospital (08) 8973 9211

- \* Nhulunbuy Fire Station (08) 8987 1906
- \* Katherine Fire Station (08) 8973 8014

### Tilt tray/vehicle recovery providers

- \* Gove Rentals and Mechanical (08) 8987 1700
- \* Nhulunbuy Tyrepower (08) 8987 1610
- \* Patow 24 Hour Tilt Tray Service (Katherine) 0429 722 87
- \* Katherine Tilt Tray (08) 8972 3377

### Northern Land Council

- \* Katherine (08) 8971 9899
- \* Nhulunbuy (08) 8986 8500

### Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation

- \* Nhulunbuy (08) 8939 2700

### Remote stores/fuel

- \* Beswick (08) 8975 4523
- \* Bulman (08) 8975 4711
- \* Mainoru Store (08) 8977 4200
- \* BP Nhulunbuy (08) 8987 1122