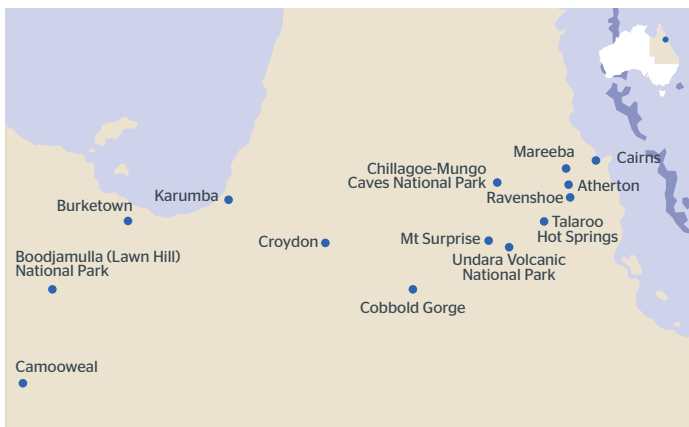


Spend nine days on the road exploring the Savannah Way

Get set for one epic road trip in Outback Queensland



Buckle up and prepare for a 3,700km (2300 mi) journey along the Savannah Way. Beginning in the tropical paradise and gateway to the Great Barrier Reef, Cairns, and finishing in the 'Barramundi Capital of Australia'; Burketown. For those with time to spare and a keen sense of adventure, add an extra two days to your travels to explore the ancient landscapes of Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park.

Make your way across the top of Australia for one unreal adventure. Stop by country pubs for an outback meal and a cold drink, explore striking outback landscapes, and try your luck finding a shiny memento while fossicking rich gem fields. Connect with indigenous culture while uncovering hidden gems from lava tubes to gorges, salt pans and heritage-listed rainforests.

1 Day one: Cairns to Undara 306km/190 mi, 4hr

Morning

Arrive in Cairns bright and early, either by car or plane. You may like to fly in a day earlier and stay in town. The Crystalbrook's Riley or Flynn boast gorgeous views of the marina. If you've got a little extra time up your sleeve, spend a couple of days exploring Cairns, Port Douglas and the Daintree Rainforest.

Take in sweeping views of Cairns, the rainforest and out to the reef with Kuranda Scenic Railway swapping your return journey for Skyrail Rainforest Cableway.

The railway was built between 1882 and 1891 and is one of the most iconic rail journeys in Queensland. It takes just under two hours to journey from Cairns to Kuranda winding past dense rainforest, ravines and waterfalls. Travel Heritage, Gold or Royale Class and enjoy the luxuries that each offer in the original timber and refurbished carriages.

Boasting an aerial perspective of the rainforest below, the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway glides just metres above the tropical canopy highlighting panoramic views of Barron Gorge and Australia's Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

For something a little more grounded, make your way to Mareeba, just an hour's drive west of Cairns and spend your morning wandering through Skybury - Australia's oldest coffee plantation. Explore the grounds and discover more about the process of harvesting coffee beans and papaya before heading to the café and enjoying a tasty meal accompanied by freshly roasted coffee.

Once you're caffeinated and fueled with food, it's time to hit the road and embark on the first leg of your Savannah Way drive, Cairns to Undara (with a few more pitstops along the way).

Afternoon

Let your sense of adventure run wild as you explore the Atherton Tablelands. Your trip begins in the historic and highest town in Queensland - Ravenshoe. The lush mountain region is also home to the state's highest pub, the Ravenshoe Hotel, well worth visiting for a tasty lunch and warm country hospitality.

Embrace the tropics as you wander the unspoilt rainforests of the Atherton Tablelands. Take to the waterfall circuit and tick the majestic trio off your list - Milla Milla Falls, Zillie Falls and Ellinjaa Falls.

Evening

For a truly memorable first day, continue onto Undara and book an overnight stay at the award-winning Queensland Rail carriage at Undara Experience located at the gateway to the Undara Volcanic National Park.

2 Day two: Undarra

Morning

Enjoy a slow morning waking up at the Undara Experience, surrounded by Australian bushland. You'll likely spot a few friendly kangaroos, wallabies and kookaburras right on your doorstep as you sip your morning coffee.

Visit the Ringers Camp for their famous Bush Breakfast cooked by campfire and accompanied by the morning bird chorus.

Afternoon:

Strap on a backpack and lace up your walking shoes, it's time to explore one of Australia's greatest geological wonders, Undara Volcanic National Park. The park is home to the longest and oldest lava tube system in the world. Formed around 190,000 years ago from a volcanic eruption, the lava created hollow tubes and underground caves you can now explore on foot.

The lava tubes are accessible by guided tour which are only available from April to October due to weather interruptions. You'll find different styles of tours running daily and are best booked in advance. The Archway Explorer Lava Tube Tour departing from the Undara Experience takes around two hours and is ideal for all

An oasis of ancient gorges, tropical rainforest and fossilised history dating back millions of years, nine days on the road exploring the Savannah Way barely scratches the surface of this iconic Australian road trip.

 **9 Days
8 Nights**

 **Weather**

In Cairns, temperatures range from 23.6 - 31.4°C (74.5 - 88.5°F) in summer and 17.5 - 26°C (63.5 - 78.8°F) in winter. In Burketown, summer temperatures range from 25 - 36°C (77 - 96.8°F) and winter from 14 - 28°C (57.2 - 82.4°F).

 **How to get there and get around**

The region is service by Cairns Airport. While a 2WD will take you from Cairns to Burketown, a 4WD is required to participate in Yalguri's Marrija 4WD Cultural Tour and to get around Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park.

 **Traveller type**
Couples, Adventurers

Best time to visit

The main route in the Savannah Way is closed in summer due to it being temporarily impassable following prolonged periods of rain. Because of this, many businesses shut down for the summer period. The best time to visit is April - October, when routes are reliable and businesses are open to let you experience the best of the Savannah Way.

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fitness levels. The Wind Tunnel Explorer Tour will have you navigating the lava tubes in their rawest form, with less infrastructure and a little more grit.

Alternatively, the Wildlife at Sunset Tour will have you stepping into the natural environment of some of Australia's most iconic wildlife while enjoying a majestic sunset accompanied by cheese and sparkling wine before heading into the lava tubes at dusk.

Evening

Stay another night in a Queensland Rail carriage at Undara Experience, glamp outback style at Undara Experience's Swag Tent Village or head to their Outback Caravan Park for drive up, unpowered, or powered campsites and park your van for the night.

3 Day three: Undara – via Mount Surprise to Talaroo Hot Springs, 104km/65 mi, 1hr 30 min

Morning

A three-hour drive will connect you with **Chillagoe-Mungo Caves National Park**. Rich in natural and cultural heritage, this park is home to impressive limestone caves, small galleries of Aboriginal rock art, and a historically significant mining site.

Book a guided ranger tour and explore the Donna, Trezinn and Royal Arch limestone caves decorated by stalactites, stalagmites and flowstones. For advanced explorers, take to one of the many walking trails leading to a number of the caves that can be explored without a guide and at your own leisure.

Afternoon

After a morning spent exploring the caves, it's time to embrace the treasure hunt, fossicking for semi-precious gemstones at O'Briens Creek fossicking area in Mount Surprise, a three-hour drive from the caves.

Mount Surprise is a rural railway town, sitting on the edge of giant lava flow from an ancient volcano and is a hub for gem fossicking, producing topaz, quartz, spinel, garnet, cairngorm and aquamarine. Keep in mind you'll need to acquire a Fossickers Licence before starting your search, purchased in the town or online.

Evening

Spend the night at the **Talaroo Hot Springs** where you can stay and play in their iconic outback private soaking pools. Navigate the magical landscape and discover the significance they hold for the Ewamian people, steeped in history and wildlife on a Talaroo Hot Springs Tour. Take a stroll along the Einasleigh River following an elevated boardwalk and spend the evening relaxing in the geothermal mineral waters of the **Talaroo Hot Springs Soaking Pools**.

Spend the night glamping at the Hot Springs in an eco tent (catering to two people). Located close by is a camp kitchen and bathroom facilities, or if you've brought your own, you can pitch a tent or park your motorhome or caravan at the caravan park.

Optional detour: Make your way one and a half hours (77km/49mi) from Mt Surprise to Copperfield Gorge. Located in Einasleigh, Copperfield Gorge was created by an ancient lava flow eroding

the Copperfield River and now makes for a relaxing natural swimming spot, with quiet beaches.

4 Day four: Talaroo Hot Springs – Cobbold Gorge 146km/90 mi, 2hr 10min

Morning

Start your morning with a soak in the springs before hitting the road to the **Cobbold Gorge**, a hidden outback oasis in the heart of the Savannah region. Just over two hours drive from Talaroo Hot Springs, Cobbold Gorge is the youngest gorge in Queensland dating back 10,000 years (a short time in Outback Queensland terms).

Access to the Gorge is by guide only, and well worth it for access to the rugged landscape and turquoise water below. The main **Cobbold Gorge Tour** includes a walk to the escarpment over the glass bridge followed by a boat cruise.

The custom-made, electric-powered boats travel in silence, ensuring minimal disturbance to wildlife, meaning you'll likely spot one of the resident freshwater crocodiles along the way.

Discover the history and cultural significance of the land as your Savannah Guide shares about the geological processes that formed the Gorge, and the bush tucker surrounding it.

Afternoon

Spend the rest of the day exploring the Gorge from all angles. Take to the sky and explore from above on a 15 or 30 minute



Must see and do

Stand up paddleboard (SUP) Cobbold Gorge with **Cobbold Gorge Tours** for a truly memorable experience exploring Queensland's youngest (10,000-year-old!) gorge.



Did you know?

The town of Normanton is home to 'Krys the Savannah King' (also known as the Big Crocodile Krys), a giant crocodile statue that's been created and scaled to the true size of an 8.6m (28ft) saltwater crocodile, said to be the largest ever captured.



Wildlife calendar

Discover an abundance of wildlife native to Outback Queensland all year round like kangaroos, wallabies, emus, koalas, fresh water crocodiles and an abundance of birdlife.



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Magurli Tours



Boodjamulla National Park



Gulflander

scenic helicopter flight gifting a birds-eye view over Cobbold Gorge, Newcastle Ranges and Robin Hood Station.

Or, for a slower, yet equally thrilling activity, glide through the narrows of the Gorge with a one-hour Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) guided tour.

Evening

Make your way to **Cobbold Village** for the night and check into their choice of campsites, self-contained cabins, accessible accommodation or motel style rooms.

Take full advantage of the infinity pool and swim up bar before enjoying dinner under the stars with a table on the deck at the onsite MacDonalds Deck Licensed Bar and Bistro. Alternatively, cook up your own meal for the night using the BBQ area and camp kitchen.

Optional detour: Continue south-east and leave the Savannah Way towards Townsville.

5 Day five: Cobbold Gorge - Croydon 232km/144mi, 3 hr

Morning

Begin your day with a barista-made coffee and a cooked breakfast at the MacDonalds Deck Licensed Bar and Bistro before jumping back in the car to drive to the historic gold town of **Croydon**.

The total drive will take you around three hours so you'll want to break it up with a couple of stops along the way. Take your first break in Georgetown, located on the Etheridge River with an abundance of heritage buildings, spectacular outback scenery and home to some of the best gemstone areas in Queensland.

Visit the **TerrEstrial Centre** and view the Ted Elliott Mineral Collection, one of the largest private collections of gemstones and minerals in Australia with a display of more than 4,500 pieces.

Stretch your legs along the Georgetown River Walk, a 6km (3.7 mi) trail offering a glimpse into the township's past following the Etheridge River and Sandy Creek.

Afternoon

Spend your afternoon in Croydon, which was put on the map when gold was discovered in 1885.

The **True Blue Visitor Information Centre** is a great place to start your tour, featuring a collection of heritage items, information and audio visual displays. Head outdoors and make your way across the outdoor heritage displays, a mining machinery collection and historic buildings including the police station, jail, sergeant's residence, town hall and courthouse (built in 1887).

Situated on the original Iguana Mine Site, the Croydon Mining Museum is home to a restored gold mining stamper, a miner's

hut and a wide range of historic mining equipment and relics of the 1900s.

Optional detour: The **Gulflander** train travels from Normanton (one hour and 40 minutes drive) via Croydon weekly, taking you on an unforgettable multi-day historic rail journey.

Evening

Enjoy a night filled with outback country hospitality and a delicious meal at the Croydon Club Hotel.

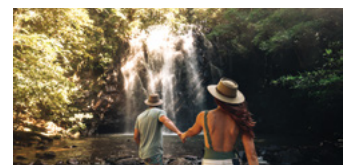
Alternatively, stay at the Croydon caravan park with access to a BBQ, laundry and kitchen facilities along with a swimming pool. Book their cabin accommodation or stay in your caravan or tent in a powered or unpowered site.

6 Day six: Croydon - Karumba 226km/140 mi, 2hr 30 min

Morning

Today's journey will be spent heading towards the northern Queensland coast to **Karumba**, famous for barramundi fishing.

Start the day with a refreshing dip in Lake Belmore in Croydon, the largest fresh body of water in the Gulf Savannah region. The lake has plenty of beach sand areas, shaded shelters and BBQ facilities to enjoy a morning by the water. Launch a boat or cast a line trying your luck at luring red claw, barramundi or black bream released into the lake every year.



Local Tip

Tick three magnificent waterfalls off your must-see list in one hit and hit the waterfall circuit in the Atherton Tablelands as you depart Cairns. The majestic trio - Milla Milla Falls, Zillie Falls and Ellinjaa Falls are tucked away in the dense Wet Tropics Rainforest.



Did you know?

The **World Heritage-listed Riversleigh Fossil Site** in Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park is one of the top 10 places to view fossils in the world. Discover 25 million years of animal life including many that are now extinct, from Tasmanian tigers to marsupial 'lions', a 15-million-year-old platypus and possums with sharp teeth.



Cobbold Gorge

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Les Wilson Barramundi Discovery Centre



Karumba



Gregory River

Keep in mind you'll need to have a Stocked Impoundment Permit (SIP) before you can go fishing.

Afternoon

Continue on to the coastal town of Karumba, located on the edge of the Gulf of Carpentaria, around a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Croydon.

Visit **Les Wilson Barramundi Discovery Centre**, home to the only hatchery in the world to breed the Southern Gulf strain of barramundi. The centre shares the stories, lifecycle and habits of the barramundi with interactive displays alongside other treasures of the southern Gulf including birdlife, wetlands and mangroves.

Their 'Feed a Barra' tour will get you up close and personal with the big fish as the experienced guides share stories and hand feed the largest of the fish.

Feeling peckish? Grab a coffee and some food to enjoy overlooking the saltwater lagoon at the Centre's Barra Bites Café.

Eager to snag a barramundi or your own? Head out on a fishing adventure charter and try your luck at catching and cooking a wild-caught barramundi.

If fishing fever hasn't got you yet, enjoy local barramundi and prawns paired with an ice-cold beer at the Sunset Tavern, the perfect venue for dinner right on the water gifting prime sunset views.

Evening

Stay at the family and pet-friendly **Karumba Point Sunset Caravan Park**, located walking distance from the Sunset Tavern. Park your home on wheels for the night or book a deluxe family villa, equipped to accommodate up to four people.

7 Day seven: Karumba - Burketown 295km/183 mi, 3.5 hr

Morning

Hit the road from Karumba with some snacks and a great playlist for the three-and-a-half-hour drive to Burketown.

Burketown is a remote Savannahland outpost named after Burke and Wills, Australia's most famous pair of colonial explorers who passed through in 1861.

Now fondly known as the "Barramundi Fishing Capital of the World" the town is made up of a pub, a school, a handful of shops and a council office. But its real beauty is its natural landscape - boasting an expanse of river systems, wetlands and salt pans that make an extensive ecosystem and breeding ground for barramundi, prawns, crocodiles and birdlife. During the wet season, the large salt pans in town are transformed into over two million hectares of wetlands; the largest of their kind in Australia.

Keep an eye out for the town's celebrated cloud formation - Morning Glory. This rare meteorological phenomenon is visible from September to November. Take to the sky with Savannah Aviation who offer chartered cloud viewing flights for an overhead perspective.

Afternoon

Discover the rich culture of the land with **Yagurli Tours**, run by the Ganggalidda and Garawa peoples. The Marrija 4WD Cultural Tour provides exclusive access to Australia's largest salt pans while sharing local knowledge and traditional uses of native plant species.

For those keen to learn more about the river systems, the Malara Fishing Charter

is the perfect opportunity to explore the waterways and discover the cultural heritage associated with river systems alongside learning traditional fishing practices.

Watch the sun dip below the horizon of the Albert River on the Gambumanda Sunset Cruise. Experience the magic of the outback while gliding along the water learning the Dreamtime stories of the Ganggalidda people, as well as the significance of the river system and its diverse range of animals and birdlife.

End the day with Yaliya's Stories - Indigenous Storytelling under the Stars. Discover the brilliance of the outback night sky, exploring with telescopes as your guide shares Dreamtime stories aligning with the phases of the moon.

Evening

Spend the night in Burketown at one of the Roadhouses like the Tiranna Springs Roadhouse staying in a unit or their camp and caravan sites equipped with a camp kitchen, and laundry.

8 Day eight: Burketown - via Gregory to Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park 234km/145 mi, 2hr, 50 min

Morning

Enjoy a hearty breakfast in **Burketown** and savour your final moment immersed in the Savannah way.

Make your way from Burketown to **Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park**, a two-and-a-half-hour drive passing through the frontier town of Gregory.

The Gregory River is the town's main attraction and provides a peaceful stream to canoe all year around. Rent



Food

Enjoy freshly caught barramundi and prawns in Karumba at the aptly named Sunset Tavern. Taste the famous barramundi pie at the Burketown bakery and sample freshly roasted coffee in the Atherton Tablelands at Skybury, Australia's oldest plantation.



Did you know?

You can find 164 volcanoes tucked away in Undara Volcanic National Park. The park is home to the world's largest lava tubes created when the volcano erupted 190,000 years ago and the molten lava flowed for 16km (10 mi).



Norman River

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Riversleigh World Heritage Site



Gregory Downs Hotel



Camooweal Caves

a canoe and enjoy a paddle down the river, also a popular location for free riverside camping.

Enjoy a delicious coffee and a bite to eat at Gregory's much-loved General Store or grab a pub meal at the historic Gregory Downs Hotel.

Afternoon

Continue on toward Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park, arguably one of Queensland's most beautiful hidden gems.

The emerald green watery oasis and surrounding gorge is home to an abundance of wildlife. Its walking and canoe trails are a must for bird and animal watchers.

The site is also rich in archaeological significance with fossils dating back 25 million years.

In fact, **Riversleigh World Heritage Site** is one of the world's richest fossil sites, offering a glimpse into the history of Australian mammals preserved in limestone. **D Site**, found in Riversleigh, was one of the first major fossil deposits and is the only publicly accessible part of this World Heritage Area. Its fossils are from the late Oligocene period, dating

back 25 million years. Fossils found at D Site include the fossilised bones of large flightless birds and the world's largest freshwater crocodile.

Evening

The best way to enjoy the abundant beauty of the national park is to stay right in the thick of it at the Lawn Hill Gorge camping area, just a stone's throw away from the Gorge. Alternatively, stay at **Adels Grove camping park** a little further out or pitch a tent at the Miyumba camping area, close to the Riversleigh Fossil site, for a prehistoric night stay.

9 Day nine: Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park

Morning

Wake up to the sounds of nature and curious wildlife in Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park ready for a final day of exploring.

Launch a canoe in the gorge at first light and experience the raw outback beauty following the Lawn Hill Gorge canoe trail, or, lace up your hiking boots and hit the dirt tracks watching as the sun glows over the Gorge.

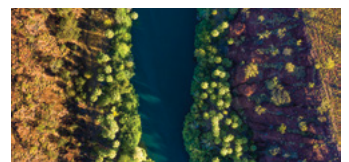
The Indarri Falls and Upper Gorge Canyon walking trails are ideal for gaining a glimpse of Lawn Hill Gorge from above before cooling off with a dip in the creek at the falls.

Afternoon

Cross one final adventure off your list before making your way back home and head to **Camooweal** located on the Queensland-Northern Territory border, three hours from Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park.

The Camooweal National Park is home to an abundance of rare sinkholes and caves dating back millions of years when water percolated through layers of soluble dolomite.

Explore the caves and caverns at your own pace, stopping to enjoy the abundance of birdlife in the park. For advanced cavers, you can explore a world below with a network of caves beneath the Camooweal region.



Boodjamulla

Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park is currently closed due to extensive damage to visitor facilities and critical park infrastructure. Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park is expected to reopen in July 2025 and is a great option for a road trip once reopened. Keep up with Boodjamulla's flood recovery [here](#).

Once Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park re-opens, here's how you can extend your itinerary to immerse yourself in nature's finest.



If you are new to driving in Queensland, scan the QR code for more tips to keep you and your travel companions safe.

Visit teq.queensland.com/trade/itineraries



Lawn Hill Gorge

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