



KIMBERLEY TREK & PADDLE TOUR

Frequently Asked Questions

Booking your travel

We recommend that you book your flights through our Travel Manager to ensure that you get the best connections and fares for your individual travel requirements.

When booking your flights you need to:

- arrive in Kununurra the day before your trek starts, unless you go up early.
- depart Kununurra for Darwin the day after your trek finishes unless you wish to take an extension option.
- Air North fly from Darwin to Kununurra daily

What to wear on the plane

You will be arriving in a hot humid environment. Wear appropriate clothing; if you are travelling from a cold environment carry a lightweight set in your hand luggage that you can change into when you arrive.

Staying longer?

Free Spirit Adventures includes in your trek price pre and post accommodation in Kununurra, which means the night before your trek starts and the night the trek finishes. If you require extra nights' accommodation please let us know and we can book this for you.

Travel insurance

You are required to provide Free Spirit Adventures with details of your Travel Insurance. We suggest you take out insurance as soon as you make any form of payment; in unforeseen training accidents or family emergencies, you may have some protection. Travel insurance can be arranged through our Travel Manager.

You MUST ensure your insurance covers Helicopter evacuation in medical emergencies.

If you purchase travel insurance through our Travel Manager, we will receive a copy of your policy. **If you arrange your own insurance, please supply us with a copy of your Travel Insurance Policy and ensure we have the following information:**

- Travel Insurance Company's 24 hour emergency contact phone number
- Your Name
- Policy No.
- Travel Dates and Destination
- Date of Birth etc...

Please note:

If you retire from the trek for reasons other than medical, you will need to pay for the evacuation "up front" (normally with credit card or a cash transfer to the relevant company) *Other extra costs are of course accommodation, meals.*

Who meets me in Kununurra?

A Free Spirit Adventures representative OR a hotel staff representative will meet you after you pass through the gate to collect your luggage. Look for our staff member or a Hotel rep holding up a Free Spirit Adventures sign.

What happens in Kununurra?

Once collected from the Airport, you will be taken to the Hotel and allocated a room. Your leader will provide information about a Trek briefing which will be held that evening. Meals in the Hotel and alcohol are at your own expense.

Air North (fine print)

Check-in - domestic flights

Customers are required to be checked in at least 60 minutes before the flight is due to depart.

If passengers have not completed check in 30 minutes prior to departure, travel will not be permitted. Depending on your fare conditions, a failure to check-in on time may also result in:

- the loss of the fare. You will need to make a new booking and pay for a new ticket if you wish to travel, or
- the payment of a change fee plus any difference between the fare for your new booking and the original fare.

Checked baggage

Baggage allowance on Air North services is 13 kilograms per person with maximum linear dimensions length x width x depth up to 140cm.

Excess baggage

Any baggage in excess of 13kgs will be considered 'excess baggage' and will be carried on a space available basis. Excess baggage charges, will be applied to all baggage in excess of 20kgs.

What is the accommodation like?

Our accommodation is million star whilst on the trek and paddle phase. We sleep out in the open in Mosquito domes supplied by Free Spirit Adventures beneath the Southern Cross. In Kununurra, we stay in one of several hotels depending on availability.

Storage rooms are available where you can leave your spare bags whilst on the trek. Please remember you are responsible for purchases of food and alcohol whilst in the hotel.

Briefing

Your Trek Leader will run a briefing at your hotel the night before your trek. This informative session is designed to let you know of departure times, changes, ask questions etc. It also allows you to get acquainted with the rest of the group if you're not already.

Money on the trek

You are in a remote area where there is no opportunity to purchase any goods.

Your Safety is our priority

Free Spirit Adventures is committed to your safety. Our leaders are ' Wilderness First Aid trained.

If needed, all staff can make stretchers. We carry satellite phones with direct contact with the evacuation helicopter, medical assistance and regular contact with our Office.

The general safety is very good and risk of incidents on the trek is very minimal. We are in a very remote and harsh environment however and there are the inherent risks associated with this type of environment.

Communications

We carry a satellite phone on our treks. The purpose of the satellite phone is for emergency use only. It is used to ring in to the office with updates, GPS position or used in an emergency (where a helicopter may be needed).

As there is no electricity along the trek we cannot charge the battery. The Trek Leader may only switch the phone on a couple of times a day (to save the battery). The battery is fully charged before the trek starts.

The satellite phone is not to be used by our trekkers for personal use.

If a trekker wants to keep in touch with family or work whilst they are trekking they need to bring their own satellite phone.

How can I be contacted if there is an emergency at home?

If an emergency requires your attention the following procedures should be followed. It must be understood that communications in these areas is not guaranteed due to weather and other environmental conditions.

1. Your family member contacts our office (who will assess if it is a genuine emergency; a sick cat would not fit this criteria!) The sat phone is required for "on track" emergencies and battery life is limited.
2. Our office will text a message to the satellite phone; when the trek leader initializes the phone at 6.00pm each night, he / she will receive the message and immediately contact the office for instructions.

Fitness

Your experience is directly related to your level of fitness!! It is very important to prepare yourself for the challenge ahead. We have a recommended training schedule on our website, this is a guide only. Many of our trekkers have used a similar training guide for Kokoda and Tasmania and have found it very helpful in their preparation. You cannot train on too many hills. The more training you do now, the more successful and enjoyable your trek. You should also be training with a pack as you will need to carry your own pack with 10-12 kg.

Fatigue, overheating and dehydration are conditions that you need to avoid and be aware of on the trek. Lots of fluid with re-hydration formulas such as Gastrolyte will help. It is important to wear light clothes, as it is very hot and humid in the Kimberley. **You must train in the clothes that you intend to wear whilst trekking! It is also very important to make sure that you have good**

walking boots. Good footwear is important for a successful trek. Prior preparation is the key to a successful trek. The Kimberley can be an arduous trek and should be treated with the highest respect. Free Spirit Adventures reserves the right to refuse participation or retire any trekker/s if they are deemed to be unfit or unprepared to complete the journey.

Food

You are responsible for all food and beverage costs whilst in Kununurra.

Free Spirit Adventures needs to be advised when booking if there are any particular dietary requirements. We do our best to manage your requirements but please be aware we are operating in a remote area where everything needs to be carried in (and out). We are able to supply Gluten Free and Vegetarian menus on request.

Electrolytes and water

You will need to carry a minimum of 3 litres of water on you. It is essential you hydrate in this environment. Your Trek Leader will advise the best places to fill up your water. It is essential that you take electrolytes/Gatorade/Staminade etc with you. Put electrolyte in your water, every time you fill up, it prevents dehydration from high perspiration due to exertion and high humidity. Dehydration can become a major issue in all hot environments. It is very important to keep drinking fluids on the trek. Because of the higher level of activity, temperature and humidity you will tend to sweat more. With the increased fluid intake and sweating you also tend to flush out of your system essential minerals, salts etc. This is why it is important to use electrolytes, salt replacements and Glucose type products. Water purifying tablets can be taken as a precaution. The water is generally very good in the Kimberley but always check with the Trek Leader about the quality of the water. With the different environments, conditions, food and water, upset stomachs, vomiting and diarrhoea can occur. Please ensure you bring adequate medication as per our personnel first aid kit.

Washing / cleaning / Toilets /shower facilities

There are no facilities within the area we operate. When toileting, paper needs to be burnt and faecal material covered over. The hardness of the ground prevents digging holes. This is the standard procedure for this type of environment.

You do need to take your own toilet paper (1 roll). We also suggest a pack of “wet ones” Please bring biodegradable products in line with Free Spirit Adventures’ environmental policy of being eco friendly.

Rivers and waterholes are used for the shower and washing facilities. We ask that you “soap up” on the bank and pour water over you so that soap does not enter the river or do not use soap. Washing of clothes should be done in the same manner and not in the river.

Does my mobile phone work?

Your mobile phone will only work in a 10-14 km range of Kununurra. You will not have any reception on the trek.

Who cooks and what do we eat?

All meals except the following are provided:

- Hotel meal night prior to trek
- Lunch on Trek day 1, prior to chopper departure
- Hotel Meal on completion of canoe leg

You have time to visit one of the many small cafes in Kununurra to buy Lunch prior to departing by Helicopter on our outward flight to the trek start.

All breakfasts are included at the hotel accommodation and on tour

For part of the trek, you will carry a Ration pak, the contents of which are listed below. These are quite substantial and provide 13000KJ/day energy. The main meal is “hydrated”, and is added to noodles. The remainder of meals consist of a bbq, and a pasta mix cooked by the group.

We can supplement these meals with Fish caught from the many small waterholes we pass during the days trekking. Or you can sport fish: catch and release for a bit of fun.

Ration Pak Contents

Breakfast

1 x 100g Muesli cereal with skim milk powder (just add water)

Lunch

1 x 85g Instant Noodles, 1 x 15g Yeast spread (vegemite), 1 x 35g Crackers, 1 x 26g fruit spread or 2 x 13g Jam

Dinner

1 x 85g Instant Noodles, 1 x 300g MEAL Pouch (one variant per combopack) BBQ Beef, Bean salad, Beef & Vegetable stew, Chicken with Pasta & Vegetables

Snacks

1 x 45g Choc Bar, 1 x 45g Candy Bar, 2 x 50g Muesli bars, 2 x 15g Fruit Grains

Other Components

1 x 85g Sweetened Condensed Milk, 1 x 16g Sports Drink, 1 x 10g Chocolate Drink, 1 x Tea Bag, 1 x Coffee, 2 x Sugar, 1 x Salt

What Other food should I take!

You can supplement the ration pak with a small amount of nibbles if you wish. Remember though, you are carrying your pack and every bit counts! Peanuts, jellybeans, snakes etc are light and easy to carry.

Each ration pak contains 1 tea bag, 1 coffee sachet and 1 hot chocolate sachet. You may wish to bring along additional sachets. Avoid jars of coffee.

Although there is a sports drink sachet in each pak, we suggest you supplement this with an electrolyte replacement of your choice, eg Staminade, gastrolyte, endure, hydrolyte.

Daily Procedures

Wake up call between 4.30& 5.00am, gear pack up

6.00-6.30 am Breakfast

6.45 am group “stretch” and brief

7.00 am walk

7.00 – 12.00 breaks and rests as required; normally 10 minutes every 1 hour. A 30 min mid morning break at a suitable place

12.00 – 1300 lunch

1300 – 1530 / 1600 walk

1600 Establish Camp

1730 dinner

1930 debrief

Track conditions

The conditions on the track vary due to the changes in the season. The seasons are broken up into the dry season and the wet season. These seasons also have sub seasons which fringe the wet and dry season. The dry season is normally from late May to late October. Good conditions can still be expected in April and November. It is possible to get rain during any season or month. Late November, December, January, February and March are wet with flooded river systems. The temperature will range from 24-28 degrees under the canopy and up to 40 degrees out in the open areas. The night time temperature can fall below 8 degrees at night.

Medical Condition

You are asked to complete a general health questionnaire about any condition that may effect you whilst on the activity. This is treated as confidential and will assist the leader / medical staff in the case of an accident / emergency.

Any prescription drugs should be clearly labeled with your name on the container.

What happens in an emergency

Minor injuries are treated on site by our leaders. More serious injuries if they occur would be treated at the Kununurra Hospital after a helicopter evacuation. We carry a satellite phone and have a Free Spirit Adventures Logistics staff member on standby in Kununurra at all times.

All trekkers are required to have travel insurance which covers medical emergencies.

What are the dangers?

The Kimberley is a remote area consisting of rugged mountain ranges, Spinifex grass and the normal dangers associated with travel in Australia. We limit the dangers by having a substantial risk management and risk reduction policy. The most likely injuries are minor joint sprains and strains with the most severe (but uncommon) being snake bite. Dehydration is always a concern and emphasis will be on reminding trekkers to regularly drink water.

Payments

Deposit

A \$500 non-refundable deposit payment is due when your booking is confirmed

Final Payment

Final payment is required 60 days prior to departure.

For more information

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