

Highlights

- 10 nights on board *Oceanic Discoverer*
- Mitchell Falls
- Bigge Island Rock Art Galleries
- Montgomery Reef
- Horizontal Falls
- Buccaneer Archipelago
- Sunset on Cable Beach



The Kimberley

14 days, departs Aug 16

The region known simply as “The Kimberley” takes its evocative name from its most imposing landmark, an ancient mountain range visible from the rugged sea coast. Covering more than 400,000 square kilometres (an area three times the size of England) in North West Australia, it is a place universally acknowledged as one of the world’s last – and most beautiful – wilderness areas. From the mighty King George and Mitchell Falls in the north to the tidal phenomenon of the Horizontal Falls in the south, and all of the icons in between, you’ll discover the best that the Kimberley has to offer on this remarkable journey into the heart of this remarkable frontier land.

Much of the Kimberley coast is remote and inaccessible and many of its most spectacular sights can only be reached by small ship. The purpose-built *Oceanic Discoverer* is the ideal small ship for exploring this remarkable region – luxurious, large enough to be comfortable and safe, but small enough to manoeuvre in the tidal waters and amongst the uninhabited islands of this rugged coastline. Add in the “go anywhere” versatility of the *Xplorer* excursion vessel and a fleet of inflatable zodiacs and you’re sure to make the most of every minute of your adventure. Throughout the expedition the ship’s attentive all-Australian staff will be with you every step of the way, whilst the experienced Expedition Leader and knowledgeable Guest Lecturers ensure your Kimberley expedition is truly memorable.

Day 1 (L,D) MELBOURNE, DARWIN

Following Melbourne metropolitan home pick ups, we transfer to Melbourne Airport for our flight to Darwin. Interstate passengers fly direct to Darwin. On arrival in Darwin we transfer to our comfortable resort in central Darwin, the Mirambeena Resort. Relax as we enjoy a drink and dinner together.

Day 2 (B,L,D) DARWIN, CRUISE COMMENCES

This morning we board our state-of-the-art small ship *Oceanic Discoverer* for an 11:00 a.m. departure. Fawelling Darwin Harbour we cross Cambridge Gulf and sail into Western Australian waters. This afternoon join our Expedition Staff for an informative introduction to the Kimberley before meeting your fellow travellers and friendly crew at the Captain’s Welcome Cocktails.

Day 3 (B,L,D) KING GEORGE RIVER AND FALLS

Today we discover the first of the Kimberley’s “big” rivers, the mighty King George. Aboard *Xplorer*, our specially designed excursion vessel, we explore scenic gorges and, in our inflatable zodiacs, we cruise close to the base



of magnificent King George Falls, the tallest waterfall in Western Australia towering some 80 metres above the river below. Later, we visit Tranquil Bay for beach walking and exploration.

Day 4 (B,L,D) VANSITTART BAY, DC3 ISLAND, JAR ISLAND

Join our Expedition Leader on a walk across salt flats to view the wreckage of a US Air Force DC3 which crash landed on the beach during WWII. Later, visit Jar Island and discover the island’s outstanding rock art gallery. Our Guest Lecturers will point out fine examples of the Kimberley’s mysterious Bradshaw Paintings (Gwion), dating back some 20,000 years.

Day 5 (B,L,D) HATHAWAY’S HIDEAWAY, MITCHELL FALLS

After anchoring in Winyalken Bay we travel ashore aboard *Xplorer* to explore the maze of natural sandstone caves known as Hathaway’s Hideaway. Later, helicopters are available for optional scenic flights over the Mitchell Plateau for close up views of the mighty four-tiered Mitchell Falls (additional expense payable on board). This evening, enjoy a spectacular Indian Ocean sunset as we indulge in a gourmet Aussie Beach BBQ.

Day 6 (B,L,D) BIGGE ISLAND, CAREENING BAY

Discover the rock art gallery on Bigge Island, featuring fine examples of both Wandjina and Bradshaw art. Then explore Careening Bay, named by Phillip Parker King after his ship

The Kimberley

HMC Mermaid which was careened here during his second voyage of discovery in the Kimberley. Our lecturers lead us to the site of a large boab tree bearing the inscription "HMC Mermaid – 1820", still clearly visible almost 200 years later.

Day 7 (B,L,D) PRINCE REGENT RIVER, KING CASCADES

We cruise the mighty Prince Regent River aboard *Xplorer* to breathtaking King Cascades, an unusual and picturesque waterfall cascading over terraced rock formations. Enjoy a picnic lunch at beautiful Camp Creek where there is time for a leisurely swim in the fresh water pools.

Day 8 (B,L,D) MONTGOMERY REEF, DOUBTFUL BAY

Today savour a truly unforgettable moment as Montgomery Reef "rises" out of the ocean as the tide ebbs. Join our Expedition Staff aboard the *Xplorer* and zodiacs to experience this natural phenomenon up close and discover the reef's diverse marine life including turtles, manta rays and reef sharks. Later, cruise through scenic Doubtful Bay.

Day 9 (B,L,D) RAFT POINT, RUBY FALLS

Cruising through Kuri Bay, home of the south sea pearl industry, we travel ashore at Raft Point and visit a secluded and very interesting Aboriginal rock art gallery to view Wandjina art and the mysterious Bradshaw Paintings (Gwion). Later, explore Red Cone Creek and enjoy a cooling dip at Ruby Falls.

Day 10 (B,L,D) HORIZONTAL FALLS, BUCCANEER ARCHIPELAGO

Cruise through the Buccaneer Archipelago, home to over 800 islands. In Talbot Bay, the region's 12 metre tides create an amazing spectacle - the unique Horizontal Falls, described by legendary naturalist David

Attenborough as "one of the greatest natural wonders in the world". Board the zodiacs for an exhilarating ride through the falls. Later, explore Silica Beach on Hidden Island with its stunning white sands and crystal clear waters.

Day 11 (B,L,D) LACEPEDE ISLANDS

We cruise through Pender Bay and, subject to weather and tides, visit the Lacepede Islands, a series of low islands consisting of coarse sand and coral rubble lying atop a platform reef. This nature reserve has been identified by BirdLife International as an Important Bird Area as it supports up to 18,000 breeding pairs of Brown Boobies and Roseate Terns, possibly the largest such population in the world. Board the zodiacs and explore the island's lagoon, keeping an eye out for many species of marine bird life including Australian Pelicans, frigate birds, egrets, gulls and terns. The islands are also renowned as Western Australia's most significant breeding grounds for the Green Turtle, often seen nesting on the islands. This evening we farewell new-found friends as we enjoy the Captain's Farewell Cocktails.

Day 12 (B,L,D) CRUISE CONCLUDES, BROOME

Our unforgettable cruise along the Kimberley coast concludes in Broome around 8:00 a.m. this morning. We farewell *Oceanic Discoverer* and her crew before spending the day exploring the historic township, including the Courthouse which dates back to 1889. Enjoy sunset with drinks and nibbles at Cable Beach prior to dinner at the Shell Museum. Our home for the next two nights is The Mangrove, Broome (or similar).

Day 13 (B,L,D) BROOME

A day at leisure to explore the sights of Broome. Perhaps wander through Chinatown, tour the Pearl Luger Museum or visit Sun Pictures, the world's oldest open air cinema. You may also wish to visit a working pearling farm (own expense).

Day 14 (B,L) BROOME, HOME

We depart from Broome just prior to Midday, lunch as we fly. Our direct flight is due to arrive Melbourne late afternoon. Interstate passengers fly direct or on connecting flights to their home ports. Melbourne metropolitan home and hotel transfers complete a memorable holiday into the heart of the magnificent Kimberley.



This itinerary is an indication of the destinations we visit and activities on offer. While every effort will be made to follow this itinerary we reserve the right to vary this itinerary to make allowances for weather, tidal conditions and any other event that may affect the operation of the vessel.

Fares: (p.p.t.s)	
ex Melbourne	\$14,850
ex Sydney	\$14,850
ex Brisbane	\$14,750
ex Adelaide	\$14,850
ex Hobart/Launceston	\$15,200
ex Perth	\$14,750
single supplement*	\$ 4,395
Deposit of \$1,500 within 7 days of booking.	
Balance due 45 days prior to departure.	