

Almost New Year: December 27-31, 2021

Major revision: 23 October 2021

List price - \$695 For information about our advance purchase and other discounts, see our discount page, <https://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/discounts>

Summary. **Walk the wonder of the Top End in the Wet.**

Enjoy the spectacular waterfalls and wildflowers by day. Relax in comfortable accommodation two nights, camp next to secluded bush pools on the other two.



Russell Willis at Depot Creek, wet season

We walk, we know. When some of the places we normally visit on this trip were closed to bushwalkers, Walkabouts owner Russell Willis decided to create a new, easier trip at a special low price rather than overlap with the two walks on Kakadu Highlights No. 1.

Itinerary

Day 0 This is the day **BEFORE** departure. Pre-trip meeting, 6.30 p.m., Pool Side Bar & Restaurant, Double Tree Hilton, 122 The Esplanade. There are two Double Tree Hiltons next door to each other. The correct one is closer to Daly Street, the taller of the two. **This meeting is important.** If you cannot make the meeting, please advise us well in advance.

Day 1 Leave Darwin early morning. Day walk at Burrells Creek. Finish walk and drive to Emerald Springs. Overnight in accommodation.

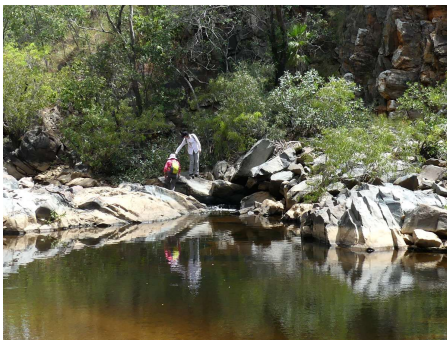
Day 2 Short drive, then walk to lower Depot Creek, set up camp. Short walk from camp.

Day 3 Day walk all the way to the end of the gorge. Return to camp.

Day 4 Return to vehicle. Drive to Batchelor or beyond. Overnight in accommodation.

Day 5 Litchfield day walk. Return to Darwin.

Now for the details



Burrells Creek daywalk

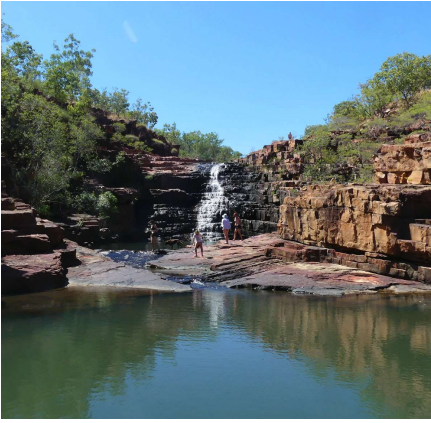
We leave Darwin early in the morning. After a brief stop in Adelaide River, we drive to Burrells Creek. If we have two vehicles, we leave one at one end of the walk and the other where we begin. The walk is only about five km, but one pool follows another as we swim our way downstream. The photo here was taken in April so you'll have to imagine what it will be like with a lot more water flowing. A lot of the terrain is fairly rugged, but with only day packs to carry it won't be too difficult. After the walk, we continue south to the Emerald Springs

roadhouse where we have dinner and spend the night.

The next day we head to Depot Creek where we find a wonderful small gorge unknown even to most locals. You will learn why Russell has run regular overnight wet season trips there for local bushwalkers for the past few years. In a dry year, we might be able to drive all the way to the creek.



Depot Creek swim stop



Lower Depot Falls, May

In a wet one, we might need to do an extra 3 km in each direction. It's worth it.

By spending two nights, we will have time to go all the way to the lower falls shown at left. While Russell has been there in the Wet before, this will be the first time this century.

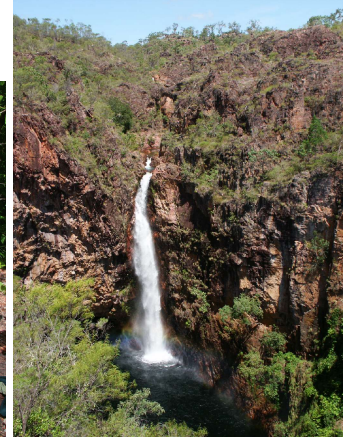
We return to the vehicles and drive to Batchelor or a bit further where we spend a final night in accommodation. This allows us to get an early start for our waterfall walks in Litchfield the next morning.

We'll be able to swim at some of the pools but not at others. We should have some of the places we visit all to ourselves.

This will be the first wet season that the new bridge over the Finiss River will be open so we'll be able to take a short cut back to Darwin at the end, arriving sometime late afternoon.



One of Litchfield's lesser known pools



Tolmer Falls, February

Terrain and Difficulty

Overall Level 1 – you never carry more than two day's food and carry full packs only short distances.

Climate Level 4. It will be hot (although not as hot as you might think) and it will be humid. If we weren't spending two nights in accommodation, we might rate it as level 5.

The average daily maximum is 33-34°C (91-94°F). If we get a spell of relatively dry weather, the temperature could reach 40°C (104°F). The average minimum is 24°C (75°F). Sleeping bags are not needed. Rain is almost certain.

On average it will rain two days out of three, mostly in short, sharp bursts. Averages can, however, be misleading. Occasionally, it might rain for days at a time. (This makes it somewhat harder to walk but it also makes the waterfalls more spectacular and keeps it relatively cool.) Occasionally, it may rain very little. This makes it substantially hotter than normal. There will be many opportunities to swim and cool off, but you must be prepared for hot, humid conditions.


Terrain Level 1-3. Some of the walking will be on 4WD tracks. Some will be off-trail and may include a bit of rock-hopping. Most of the walking is through open woodland with a spear grass understorey.

Little of the walking on section one is on a marked trail. If you have never done any off-track walking through moderately rough terrain, nothing we can say can adequately describe the experience. The photos on our website, www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au, can give you a partial picture, but they cannot substitute for the real thing. Most of those who have not had any off-track walking experience find it more difficult than those who have done it before.



With our group fly, you can stay dry even when it's raining.

Anyone who does not regularly (average twice a month) go bushwalking carrying a full pack would benefit from doing some pre-trip training. Do this and you will almost certainly enjoy the trip. If you are not an experienced off-track bushwalker and you don't do any training or any other form of strenuous physical exercise, you might feel that the trip is more of an endurance test than the pleasure most people experience.

- Vegetation** Level 1-4. Much of the walking is through relatively flat, open woodland with a grassy understorey. Some short sections of grass may hide a broken rocky surface where you will have to be particularly careful. There may be some slow sections where you will have to pass through thick scrub. The vegetation can vary from year to year depending on when last burnt. Much of section two is on trails where the vegetation is not much of a problem.
- Hours** Generally 4-6 hours, not including breaks.
- Packs** **Pack weight** - level 1. You never carry more than two day's food and carry full packs only short distances.
- Art** Little or none.
- Campsites** Sandy beaches or grassy areas nearby if water levels are high.
- Swims** This is the best time to see the Top End waterfalls. There will be a chance for several swims per day. Many of these will be in pools we have all to ourselves. Ear infections are more likely at this time of year when you spend so much time swimming. If you have even the slightest symptom of an ear ache, make sure you tell the guide immediately. Prevention is easier than cure.
- Lowlights** Heat and humidity. Possible lack of rain can make it more uncomfortable than normal. Exceptional rain can force a change of itinerary.
- Highlights** Several waterfalls seen at their spectacular best. Great swimming. The lush green landscape that dry season visitors can only imagine.
- Wildlife** Birds are always present but spread out at this time of year. The two photos at right were taken in Litchfield on one of our wet season trips. The blue winged kookaburra was unusually tame. The water monitor was about a metre long.
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Notes

Exceptionally severe flooding can close roads. If we cannot do the intended walks, we will substitute something else appropriate to the conditions.

You should keep some money and a water bottle with you during the drives as it may be difficult to get into your pack during the day.

We will eat at the restaurants where we stay on the two nights we are in accommodation. Neither the cost of your drinks or the cost of these dinners is included in the price of the trip. The two evening meals where we camp are included.

What Is and Is **Not Included** in the Price

Included

- Transport during the trip
- Evening meals on the overnight walks

Not Included

- Overnight accommodation
- Evening meals in restaurants
- Your breakfasts & lunches
- Your drinks

Why not include everything?

Based on past experience, people have different preferences when it comes to accommodation, some will want a single room, some will want to share. One person will have a dinner that costs twice as much as that for someone else. It doesn't seem fair to charge everyone the same when the costs can be so different. We'll do the bookings for you but the cost will be in addition to the cost of the tour. Here are some approximate prices to give you an idea of the extra costs you'll be up for.

Accommodation

- Emerald Springs. Under new management. Rooms (doubles only) used to cost \$80.
- Batchelor and near Litchfield. Many options. Begin at about \$40 per person and go up to about \$140 for a private room.

Meals

- Main meals begin at about \$25 and go up to about \$50