Family Bushwalk No. 2: Litchfield Nat'l Park: July 4-10, 2027

List price - $3095 per adult | Kids under 12: 50% off | Ages 12–16: 33% off.
Advance purchase up to 20% off for everyone.(See Page 6 for full discount terms).

Who is this trip for? Designed specifically for families with young children (and parents new to multi-day bushwalking). While our Kakadu walks are too demanding for most under-10s, this Litchfield itinerary uses short pack-walks (1–2.5 km) to reach private, secluded waterfall camps – giving your family plenty of time to swim, explore, and travel at a kid-friendly pace.


Having a splash at Surprise Falls

This trip takes you to some of the nicest permanently flowing creeks and largest pools in Litchfield. You see a variety of landscapes, deep gorges, beautiful swimming pools and cascades as well as the small wonders nature provides.

Itinerary

Note 1 **Day 0 is the day before departure.**

Note 2 **This itinerary is subject to change.**

Day 0 **Pre-trip meeting, 6.30 p.m., Pool Side Bar & Restaurant, Hilton Gardens, 122 The Esplanade.** There are two 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 7:30 to 8 a.m. pick up as arranged at the pre-trip meeting. Acclimatisation day. Short walk or walks at Fogg Dam. https://www.aussiemob.com/fogg-dam/
Pudakul Aboriginal cultural tour. https://www.pudakul.com.au/
Drive to Batchelor Caravan park. Bird feeding at 5 PM.

Day 2 Drive into Litchfield. Easy walk from Buley Rockhole to Florence Falls. Visit some of the popular tourist sites. Drive to Walker Creek. Walk about 1½ km to a campsite next to our own private pool. Bush camp.


Family selfie

Day 3 Drive to Tjaynera Falls. Carry full packs along the marked trail and drop them off. Continue without packs to the plunge pool. Swim at the spring fed waterfall. Return to our packs, climb a hill and walk about 1 km to a bush camp next to another waterfall and pool. Afternoon swimming.

Day 4 Explore upstream without full packs. Lots of pools for swimming. How far we go will depend on the wishes of the group.

Day 5 Return to the vehicle and drive the 4WD track to Surprise Falls. Swim stop. Continue to the main road, then the 4WD track to Sybel Springs where we leave the car and walk about 2 km to our campsite at Tableland Falls.

Day 6 Day hike upstream along Tableland Creek. Lots of pools for swimming. How far we go will depend on the wishes of the group.

Day 7 Return to the vehicle, return to Darwin.

Now for the details ....



On the Pudakul tour

We leave Darwin early on the first morning so that we have time to have a good look at Fogg Dam. While we won't see the amazing concentration of waterbirds that are there during and just after the wet season, there is always something to see. We spotted the seldom seen, rainbow pitta on a trip at a similar time of year.

Depending on what time the tour is offered, we may visit Fogg Dam before or after the Pudakul tour. It is run by a former member of the Kakadu Board of Management. He and his family will give you an insight into traditional practices as well as the cultural beliefs that remain so important to them today.



Batchelor bird feeding

We then drive to the Batchelor Caravan park for the afternoon bird feeding. For something like 20 years, the different owners of the park have been feeding the wild birds. We sit quietly and watch them from a few metres away. Red-collared lorikeets are among the most common. These birds are wild, not tame. Sudden moves may cause them to take off, but they will be back. They know they are onto a good thing.



Rest stop, Buley to Florence trail

Early the next morning, we drive to Litchfield. Our first walk will be from Buley Rockhole to Florence Falls. These are two of the best known places in the park. The walking trail between them is less visited and offers numerous quiet pools where we can stop for a secluded swim. We spend most of the rest of the day visiting some of the more popular tourist sites like Wangi and Tolmer Falls. The girl in the photo above right was fascinated by the colourful fungi and insects we found along the way.



Tjaebetaba Falls Trail

Now, it's time to put on our packs. A walk of about 1½ km brings to our chosen campsite on Walker Creek. There are seven campsites, each with its own private pool.



Walker Creek campsite pool



Tjaynera Falls

Now the real walks begin. The southern part of Litchfield is wilder and accessible only by 4WD. We'll have much of the rest of the trip to ourselves. We return to the vehicle, take the 4WD track to the Tjaynera Falls campsite, park the car, put on our packs and set off along the trail to Tjaynera Falls. Not far before the falls, we drop our packs and continue to the plunge pool for a swim.

After the swim, we return to our packs, climb a steep (but not too high) hill and walk about 1 km upstream to our campsite. Unlike those in the official campsite far below, we are right next to our own private pool and waterfall.



Dinner time, Tjaynera Creek campsite



Having a swim upstream of Tjaynera camp

We spend the next day exploring upstream without packs, swimming in some of the many pools before returning to our camp.

The next morning, we return to the main trail and walk back to the cars. The photo at right shows the descent just before we reach the marked trail.



Returning to the main Tjaynera trail



Litchfield Track creek crossing

We return to the vehicle and continue down the 4WD track toward Surprise Falls and Tableland Creek. The drive is part of the adventure with a number of creek crossings, wildlife spotting – and Surprise Falls. This beautiful spot is accessible only by 4WD and a walk of about 1 km from the car park.



Surprise Falls from above



Sybel Springs track

Back in the car, we finish the drive out to the main road, drive about 7 km on the bitumen and turn off onto a rough unmarked track that goes to a place called Sybel Springs. The track is rough, quite steep in places. The photo at left shows one of the easier bits. From the end of the track, a steep descent brings us to the main pool.



Sybel Springs



Sybel Springs car park, dry season weekend

Sybel Springs has a lovely small waterfall and pool, but, as shown in the car park photo, it can get quite crowded with local adventurers on dry season weekends. Most people stop here and miss the magic that lies only 2½ km further. That magic not only requires a walk, it requires carrying a pack if you want to camp there. We saw no one else at our camp the weekend the two photos above were taken.



Swimming at Tableland Falls



Tableland Falls camp, same pool as left

The three photos here give you a tiny taste of what it is actually like. A shady, sandy campsite next to the falls plunge pool where we spend two nights. On our day walk, one pool follows another, waterfall follows waterfall. We can't swim in them all but we most certainly will swim in some of the best. The beauty of a walk like this is that we have no set destination, we can take our time and enjoy all the wonders that nature provides.

On the final day, we return to the vehicle(s), drive out to the main road and back to Darwin, arriving sometime in the afternoon.



Tableland Creek upstream of camp

Terrain and Difficulty

Overall Level 2.

Climate Level 2. Although July is one of the two coolest months of the year, the maximum temperature on most days will still average 30-31ºC (84-86ºF). Although the average nightly minimum is about 16-18ºC (65ºF), it is not uncommon for the temperature to drop as low as 10ºC (50ºF). Occasionally it goes lower still. Sleeping bags are essential. Rain is highly unlikely.

Terrain Level 2-3. The terrain ranges from open woodland to narrow rainforest gorges. Most is relatively flat and easy. A few places require scrambling over river stones of a variety of sizes. There are a few steep, but short climbs. The leisurely pace makes it easier than many of our other trips.

Almost none of the walking on the overnight walks is on a marked trail. Once we leave the main trails, there are no formed paths or boardwalks. We follow creek beds, push our way through the open scrub, scramble over small rocks, and tackle a few short, steep rocky climbs (see photos above). While the distances with full packs are short (1 km to 2.5 km), walking on uneven ground takes more balance and energy than a standard trail walk.



Young children – and parents – who have never done anything like this may find it difficult at first but most of them adapt very quickly.

How to Prepare: You don't need to be an expert bushwalker, just reasonably active. If your family doesn't regularly walk with backpacks, doing a few hilly weekend walks with loaded packs in the months before departure will make a huge difference – turning a tough workout into a relaxed family adventure.

Vegetation Level 2. Mostly open woodland or open areas along the creeks. There are short, but steep climbs on both the overnight walks.

Hours 4-6 hours most days.

Packs **Pack weight** - level 1-2. You need to carry two days food. Parents will need to carry any food and gear that younger children cannot manage themselves.

Art There is little or no rock art on these walks.

Campsites Sand on the two-night walks. Hard ground at Walker Creek, grass at the caravan park. We should have the bush campsites to ourselves.

Swims Swimming is excellent. Good pools at all campsites. This is what the kids normally love the most.

Lowlights Long drive from Darwin at the beginning and end.


Happy swimmers

Highlights The waterfalls and crystal clear pools.

Wildlife This is another highlight for most children (and many of their parents.) Birds are always present but spread out at this time of year. You are unlikely to see many large animals on the walks but might on the long 4WD drive.


White-faced heron


Red dragonfly


Spider catching a beetle


Water monitor


Water buffalo next to the Litchfield 4WD track

The photos above are all from our Litchfield walks. We never know exactly what we'll see until we get there.

Fishing If you bring a line, you MIGHT catch a sooty grunter at the Tableland camp.

Notes

It is absolutely essential that anyone booking this trip watches out Bushwalking Essentials video or reads out Bushwalking Essentials Guide,
https://captovate.responsivesiteeditor.com/site/01744755/bushwalking-essentials

This will tell you what you need to bring while keeping your packs as light as possible.

The price includes all park and camping fees, evening meals, transport and the services of an experienced guide. Accommodation at Batchelor on the first night is available at an extra cost.

We do not supply personal camping gear. Each family brings their own backpacks, lightweight shelter (tent or mozzie dome), sleeping bags & mats, bowl/cup/spoon, head torch, and trowel. (Parents must carry any gear or food their children cannot manage.)

We provide and cook the evening meals. Everyone will need to provide their own breakfasts and lunches.

This trip could also be run 11-17 July if people prefer.

The guide will try and spend more time with the little things which might be interesting and unusual for the children: insects, lizards, etc. (Young children can bring a sense of wonder to things older people take for granted.)

Make sure you keep some money and a water bottle with you during the drives. It may not be possible to get into your pack until the vehicle is unloaded at the end.

Parents/guardians must keep an eye on their own children, especially on young children who may not be able to swim.

We plan to have more and longer breaks and do even more swimming than on our standard trips.

Dehydration can be a major problem for young children. (See our *Bushwalking Guide*.) It is absolutely essential to make sure your children drink enough to need several "wee stops" during the day. Everyone should be able to carry at least 1 litre of water on the overland stretches.

Family discounts	1/3 off for age 12-16 ½ off for children under 12 no discount for more than two children unless accompanied by two adults
Other discounts	Our standard advance purchase and past client discounts apply. The other discounts listed on our discount page do not. www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/discounts We need the equivalent of six adult fares to run this trip.