

Kakadu Easy Overnight Walks No. 1: September 1-6, 2015 Updated: 2 August

Note. This is the first of the special \$300 six-day trips with short overnight pack carries advertised in our December newsletter. **The price is so cheap because this trip is an experiment.** We have never tried a trip like this before. Please bear that in mind if you are interested. If it works and we offer similar trips next year, the list price will be over \$1000.

This six day trip will consist of two walks during which you will need to carry a full pack a total of less than 15 km. You will, however, need to carry a day pack for much more. On both of these walks, you camp next to a nice pool and have time for swimming during the day.

Walk 1: Jim Jim Falls

The nearly 350 kilometre drive from Darwin to the Jim Jim car park will take most of the day. From the car park we follow the the Barrk Marlam walk to the top of the falls, then walk something like another one km upstream to a base camp where we stay for three nights. The



Top pool, Anbadjgoran



View from the top of Jim Jim

total distance walked with a pack is about 5 km each way. We will do two leisurely day walks from there, one to the top of the Rainforest Gorge (Anbadgoran) and one to the Jim Jim monoliths. To get an idea what this is like, please have a look at our Jim Jim and Rainforest Gorge page,

<http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/jjrainforest.shtml>

On the fourth day, we return to the Barrk Marlam trail and follow it back to the car park. We then drive the 10 km to Twin Falls.

Walk 2: Twin Falls Creek

At the Twin Falls car park, we put our packs back on and follow the marked trail to the top of the falls, setting up a camp about 2-3 km above the falls. The total distance walked with a pack would be about no more than 5 km. From our camp, we would do a long day walk through the upper Twin Falls Gorge to visit the Amphitheatre Falls. See our Twin Falls Creek page for more information,

<http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/twin.shtml>

On the final day, we put on our packs and return to the vehicles. If people wish, it should be possible to do the guided boat and walking trip to the base of the falls. The price of this is not included in the cost of the tour.

Terrain and Difficulty

Overall Level 2

Climate Level 3. By September it is normally starting to heat up again. The humidity is usually fairly low, but this cannot be guaranteed. The maximum temperature on most days will average 33-34°C. The average nightly minimum is about 18-20°C (65°F), but it has been known to drop to 10°C. If you bring a sleeping bag, you won't need a heavy one. Rain is unlikely but possible so you should have something to use as shelter if we do get rain.

Terrain Most of the walks have a few steep climbs, none of which is over 200 m. As short as they are, these climbs are strenuous. Some may require using your hands to hold on as you climb up or down. None are technically difficult. None require ropes or other special equipment. There will be some places where you have to step from stone to stone as you walk along the edge of a creek.

The creeks are low enough so that swimming across with packs is unlikely to be necessary. It may, however, be necessary to wade across slippery rocks through waist deep water. Your guide can help if you need assistance.

Little of the walking is on a marked trail. On some of the walks, **none** of the walking 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.

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 2-3. 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. At this time of year, the spear grass has finished seeding and dried out.
- Hours** Generally 4-6 hours, no more than three hours carrying a pack on one day.
- Packs** **Pack weight** - level 2. You need to carry no more than 3 days food. This will include about 1 kg of the evening meals. At this time of year, whether you bring a sleeping bag and/or tent is a matter of personal choice. But, if you don't bring a sleeping bag, you should bring something like a set of thermals in case we do get a cool night. Similarly if you don't bring a tent, you should bring something you can put over yourself to keep yourself dry in case we get a storm.
- Art** We visit a variety of art sites on the Jim Jim and Koolpin walks. We don't see much on the others.
- Campsites** Mix of sand and rock ledges. Most sites are excellent. You are unlikely to see anyone else at most of the campsites.
- Swims** Plenty of it. We will have good pools at almost every campsite and lunch spot.
- Lowlights** Possible tourist crowds at the beginning and end of all the walks.
- Highlights** Good weather. Great swimming holes. Aboriginal art sites.
- Wildlife** Birds are always present and are beginning to concentrate near the waterholes as the land dries out. This would be an excellent walk for keen birdwatchers. You are unlikely to see many large animals.
- Fishing** Not permitted on this walk.
- Maps** The 1:50,000 Jim Jim Falls map shows both walks; the 1:250 000 Kakadu park map shows all areas but is not suitable for navigation.

Fitness Note

While this trip is easier than any of our other pack-carrying trips, we must emphasise some of the points made on our How Hard page, <http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au/howhard.shtml>

The absolute minimum level of fitness required for our easiest trips is to be able to comfortably walk 10 km in 2½ hours on level ground while carrying a small pack.

You will not have to walk this fast on any of our trips but your ability to do so is a good indicator of whether or not you are fit enough to cope with the conditions you will encounter.

This test is not enough. If you have done little or no off-track walking in rough conditions or you have not done extended walks in hot conditions, you need to study our information on rock hopping and climate before deciding to try one of our trips. Links to this information are on our How Hard page,

General Notes

You can leave food and clothing for the second and/or third walk in the vehicle during the first one.

Make sure you keep some money and a water bottle with you during the drives. It is unlikely that you will be able to easily get things out of your pack during the day.

A daypack will be useful on both walks. If you don't have a day pack, you will need to use your big pack.

None of our normal discounts apply at this price.

Itinerary: Kakadu Easy No. 1

- Note 1** **Day 0 is the day before departure.**
- Note 2** **This itinerary is subject to change.** The description below assumes three nights at the first campsite and two at the second. Depending on which walks we do, this may change.
- Day 0** **We will be unable to have our normal pre-trip meeting.** You must be fully packed with space for the group food parcel and ready to go the next morning.
- Day 1** 7-8 a.m. pick up. Pick up is from your accommodation if you have notified us where you are staying at least a week before departure. Otherwise, pick up is from the Mitchell Street Tourist Precinct at 69 Mitchell Street.
Drive to Kakadu. Begin walk at Jim Jim carrying full packs. Bush camp.
- Day 2–3** Day walks.
- Day 4** Return to vehicle, drive to second walk, begin the second walk. Bush camp.
- Day 5** Day walk.
- Day 6** Return to vehicles. Return to Darwin.