

it's in our nature to explore

KIMBERLEY EAST & WEST

Like all great travellers, I have seen more than I remember,
and remember more than I have seen.

Benjamin Disraeli

For many, a 4WD trip through the Kimberley is a journey of a lifetime. But such a road-trip is confined to a narrow strip, with access to the coast being almost impossible. *Orion's* Kimberley-East & West voyages reveal not just the rugged West Kimberley coast but include a visit to Wyndham, gateway to the dramatic East Kimberley.

Sailing between Darwin and Broome, you'll see the Kimberley opened up in a unique way. There's age-old rock and art, rugged gorges, inlets and waterfalls plunging 80 metres. Contrast all this with the East Kimberley for a truly all-encompassing experience. The countryside around Wyndham is wide and vast but it is what you can experience from Wyndham that is the reason for our visit: be ready to journey to places like Lake Argyle, the Bungle Bungles, Kununurra, the Argyle Diamond Mine and famed El Questro Station.

DARWIN, NORTHERN TERRITORY – *embark*

Latitude: 12°28'S | Longitude: 130°49'E

Darwin is Australia's closest city to the equator and the gateway to the Top End. Following bombing during World War II, Darwin was more a frontier town of crocodile and buffalo shooters and pioneer cattlemen. After Cyclone Tracy wiped out the city in 1974 it was rebuilt as Australia's cosmopolitan northernmost tropical capital. Despite this, much architecture remains from the city's early periods, with museums, markets and an incredible diversity of restaurants to entertain you.

PULAU NDANA, ROTI – *wet landing*

Latitude: 10°57'S | Longitude: 122°51'E

Pulau Ndana is the southern most island in East Nusa Tenggara, which in turn is the southern most province of Indonesia. This tiny island together with a scattering of smaller islands and the much larger Pulau Roti make up the regency of Roti (often spelt Rote). Ndana is "owned" by a local traditional king who has given us special permission to land here. Ndana is isolated and uninhabited, and has some beautiful beaches with great reefs and abundant marine life. Pods of dolphins frequent the area and a large herd of deer live on the island itself, often coming down close to the beach to graze on the grass growing on the edge of the dunes.

The Roti regency is dry, one of the driest parts of Indonesia and resembles nearby Timor in both climate and plant life. Agriculture is a mainstay, but is not practiced on a large scale due to the dry climate. Fishing is an important part of daily life from both a subsistence and commercial point of view.

KERA ISLAND, KUPANG, WEST TIMOR – *wet landing*

Latitude: 10°05'S | Longitude: 123°33'E

Kera Island is a small "paradise" just a few miles offshore from the noisy, hustle and bustle of West Timor's crowded capital Kupang. West Timor is part of the larger, predominately Christian Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara. Falling within the Kupang municipality, this tiny island is popular with Kupang locals as a way to escape the grind and the crowds of the city.

Kera has a virtually unknown link to the Kimberley region, in the form of a Macassan fishing village that has existed on the island for hundreds of years. Long before the arrival of European settlement in the Kimberley, the Aboriginal people had traded with Macassan fishermen who came down to the top end of Australia from Sulawesi, via intermediary islands like Kera, predominately to collect Trepang, or sea cucumbers, a delicacy in parts of Asia. Macassan boats feature in Aboriginal art work across the top end and steel implements, tobacco and other products were introduced to the Aboriginal people through trade with the Macassans before Europeans arrived in Australia.

WYNDHAM (GATEWAY TO THE EAST KIMBERLEY), WESTERN AUSTRALIA – *dry landing*

Latitude: 15°27'S | Longitude: 128°6'E

Wyndham is the northernmost town in Western Australia and, for us, is the staging post for opportunities to discover the East Kimberley. A wide variety of experiences are possible today. You won't be able to do them all but be ready to devote the day to travel if you want to gain a glimpse of this incredible land. Wyndham itself is surrounded by some of the most spectacular landforms, rivers and wetlands in the Kimberley. The nearby Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve is a chain of billabongs and lagoons forming a sanctuary for one of the finest water bird habitats and bird watching areas in the state.

The frontier township of Kununurra is about an hour's drive inland and the green capital of the north, owing its verdant surrounds to the largest manmade lake on the Australian mainland; the nearby Lake Argyle and the smaller Lake Kununurra.

The region is also famous for the Argyle Diamond mine, the world's primary source of rare pink diamonds, which have become the company's signature stone. Argyle Diamonds is the world's largest supplier of diamonds producing over 30 million carats which accounts for around 25% of the world's natural diamond production.

The entrance to El Questro cattle station is a 45 minute drive south-west from Wyndham. The station is a million acre wilderness park and a cruise on the park's Chamberlain Gorge is a must. The Gorge is a 3km fresh waterhole bounded by tropical vegetation dwarfed by a towering 200ft escarpment.

Purnululu National Park affords a breathtaking perspective of the Bungle Bungles. They are an incredible sight, and resemble a beehive forming deep chasms with palm trees and long gorges. To appreciate the overall aspect of this weird landscape, one has to take to the air.

Optional tours will operate from Wyndham to explore El Questro and the Bungle Bungles.

**KING GEORGE RIVER & FALLS,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA** – by Zodiac

Latitude: 13°57'S | Longitude: 127°19'E

Today *Orion* will drop anchor in Koolama Bay. Originally known as King George Bay, the area was renamed after the merchant ship Koolama was bombed near here by Japanese aircraft during World War II. The 12km journey up the King George River reveals some of the world's most spectacular scenery and a wealth of bird species. The almost vertical sheer canyon walls have been eroded over millions of years and look like stacks of sandstone reminiscent of a child's building blocks. The King George River drains the Gardner Plateau and the falls are the highest single-drop falls in the whole of the Kimberley (80m or 262ft). Whether you experience the mighty thundering of the falls early in the season, or have the chance to get up close and personal later in the year, you'll be in awe of the sight.

BIGGE ISLAND, WESTERN AUSTRALIA – wet landing

Latitude: 14°05'S | Longitude: 125°25'E

Bigge Island is a rugged and barren moonscape. Small Monjon rock wallabies and the Northern Quoll thrive here free of feral predators found on the mainland. The island is famous as a site for some amazing rock art, including "first-contact" art spread over many sites, which have been interpreted as representing seafaring European visitors in the 19th century. Join the expedition team as they point out the Wandjina art that is in evidence. The Wandjina figures are distinctive for what appear to be haloes around the head of each figure. Painted by the Wunambal people, you will also see images of sailing ships and figures smoking a pipe.

**HUNTER RIVER (FOR MITCHELL FALLS),
WESTERN AUSTRALIA** – wet landing

Latitude: 15°05'S | Longitude: 125°25'E

Morning light reveals arguably one of the most scenic parts of the Kimberley coast. Prince Frederick Harbour and the Hunter River are lined with green rainforest, mangroves and soaring red cliffs. Cliffs at the river mouth are some 200 metres high and to the north Mt. Anderson rises to an impressive 480 metres. *Orion* will drop anchor close to Naturalist Island, the proper name of which is "Wunumpurramarra", on the northern side of the harbour.

Join the expedition team for a guided Zodiac excursion upstream into the mangrove-lined tributaries to see and hear the prolific birdlife and perhaps spot saltwater crocodiles. These waters are rich with fish so don't miss the opportunity to join your guide in *Orion's* fishing boat for some sport. It is from the beach on Naturalist Island that the helicopters will depart

for a spectacular flight seeing excursion to the Mitchell Falls. En route you'll cross the vast Mitchell Plateau, much of which is inaccessible by road and is now a national park because of its scenic and biological importance. At the massive canyon formed by the falls you may walk, swim in the waterhole or just sit back and soak up the dramatically beautiful surroundings.

**MONTGOMERY REEF & RAFT POINT,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA** – wet landing

Latitude: 15°56'S | Longitude: 124°12'E

Arriving at high tide, you'll see very little of Montgomery Reef. However as the tide drops rapidly away a raging torrent of water, cascading off the top of this 400ha reef, erupts as miles of surrounding reef appears to slowly rise out of the ocean. A Zodiac will maneuver you into a channel in the reef as water cascades down on either side. It's the perfect spot to watch cormorants, egrets and sandpipers forage for sea life trapped on the surface of the reef. Below the waterline opportunistic sea turtles, reef sharks and many larger fish also take advantage of this feast. After landing ashore by Zodiac at Raft Point, your expedition leader will guide you on a climb up to a saddle of rock that forms a spectacular outdoor Aboriginal art gallery. The art is an account of the mythical Wandjina tribe on a 'Great Fish Chase'. There are images of the Wandjina spirits with their distinctive haloes and dugong, crocodiles, fish and snakes.

BROOME, WESTERN AUSTRALIA – disembark

Latitude: 18°0'S | Longitude: 122°13'E

The charismatic town of Broome has a colourful history and a unique, cosmopolitan feel, which stems from its early pearling days when over 400 luggers plied the coast. The town is full of contrasts: stroll along kilometres of pristine white sand and swim in the clear water of Cable Beach or skim across tidal flats aboard a hovercraft to Gantheaume Point, home of the 130 million year old Dinosaur Footprints.

Itineraries for voyages in these regions are influenced by extreme tides, wildlife encounters and prevailing weather conditions. Exact schedules will be announced on board.

11 Night Kimberley – East & West

Day 1	Darwin, Northern Territory
Day 2	at sea
Day 3	Pulau Ndana, Roti*
Day 4	Kera Island, Kupang, West Timor*
Day 5	at sea
Day 6	Wyndham (for East Kimberley), WA
Day 7	King George River & Falls, WA
Day 8	Bigge Island, WA
Day 9	Hunter River (for Mitchell Falls), WA
Day 10	Montgomery Reef/Raft Point, WA
Day 11	Broome (overnight), WA
Day 12	Broome, Western Australia

2008 : May 30, August 18

*International ports

Expedition Fares		
Ctgy	Type	11nt
B	Stateroom	\$ 8,180
A	Stateroom	\$ 9,495
JS	Junior Suite	\$11,280
DS	Deluxe Suite	\$12,360
BS	Balcony Suite	\$14,750
OS	Owners' Suite	\$17,135



Expedition Fares – per person in Australian Dollars

Early Booking Rewards are offered on a "First-in, best-dressed" basis - refer to page 5