



Carnarvon Gorge National Park is one of the most scenic places in Australia with flowing rivers, Aboriginal art, small waterfalls, and an abundance of wildlife. The Great Walk at Carnarvon Gorge has been by far one of my favourite overnight hikes. For more details on visiting Carnarvon Gorge in a camper or caravan, check out this guide [here](#).



The start of the hike.

What: Carnarvon Great Walk

Distance: 87km

Recommended length: 6 days (5 nights) for the hike plus 2-4 days extra on either side of the hike for driving and recovery.

Best time of year to hike: From March till October. This track is usually closed from November till February due to the heat/possible bush fires.



The art on the sandstone walls reflects the rich culture and history of the area.

Camping spots

Each walking spot requires a permit and these need to be booked and paid for prior to the hike. There are five walkers' camps on the Great Walk including the Big Bend Walkers' camp, Gadd's walkers' camp, West Branch walkers' camp, Consuelo camping zone; and Cabbage Tree camping zone. Each camping area has water (untreated) and most camping areas have a toilet.



There are 5 camps available for hikers.

What should I pack for the Great Walk?

Some things that are a must have (this list does not include all items required for the hike):

- A [lightweight tent](#)
- [Warm sleeping bag](#)
- A (comfortable) [hiking pack](#) (at least 60L +)
- A [Lifestraw/water purifying tablets](#)
- [First aid kit](#)
- Topographic map
- GPS and [PLB](#)
- [JetBoil](#) (best investment!)
- [Warm clothes](#) (the temperatures at night can get very cold)
- Good [hiking shoes](#) and [socks](#)
- [Food/water](#)
- [Toiletries](#)
- [Pocket knife](#)



- Lightweight utensils
- Protective gear (hat, sunscreen, sunglasses)



A water filter is one of the essentials you need to bring.

What were the highlights of the trip?

My top 5 highlights of the Great Walk include: 1) walking and exploring the gorge (including the Moss Garden, Amphitheatre, and Art Gallery); 2) the lookout at Battleship Spur; 3) camping in the wilderness; 4) seeing all the wildlife (including a platypus, a family of wild pigs, hearing dingoes/wild dogs at night, kangaroos/wallabies, and lots of birds); and 5) of course, being out in nature and exploring new places.



The lookout at Battleship Spur was a highlight.

Summary of the Great Walk

Day 1: Carnarvon Gorge Visitor Area to Gadd's walkers' camp (24.8km)

We left around 6am to start the Great Walk as we planned to do 24.8km+ of walking on the first day. Right at the start of the hike, we saw a platypus in the river! The first 10km of this walk is by far the most scenic where we explored the Moss Garden, the Amphitheatre, Ward's Canyon, the Art Gallery, and Cathedral Cave.

We had an early lunch at the Big Bend walkers' camp (this is another camping area where you can stay too), before moving our way out of the gorge and hiking/climbing up to the ridgeline (500 metres higher than the gorge). Once we made it on the ridge there was a lookout of the gorge that we just walked. This was another good spot for a snack.

We reached Gadd's walkers' camp before sunset, put up our tent, and prepared dinner. The stars were incredible and we had the place all to ourselves.



The scenery alongside the walking track at Carnarvon Gorge.

Day 2: Gadd's walkers' camp to West Branch walkers' camp (15.8km)

The second day of hiking was relatively flat as we moved away from the gorge and stayed on the plateau. The landscape was fairly dry (resulting in a fire ban in this area). We saw lots of Australian native flora and fauna (wild piglets and their mother). The West Branch camp has road access so there were a number of people in cars/campervans as well as hikers (even though it is very far away from everything!).

The amenities were nicer here with more toilets and more water access points. It was a very peaceful spot and had an abundance of Australian birds including budgies, lorikeets and



corellas.



Hiking the Carnarvon Gorge Great Walk.

Day 3: West Branch walkers' camp to Cabbage Tree camping zone (31.1km)

We left early to start this stretch as it was the longest out of all of them. There is the option to stay at Consuelo camping zone which is 17.3km from West Branch. Along this stretch, you walk through the Mahogany Forest where the plants and trees are much greener. Once we reached Cabbage Tree camping zone (after a solid day of hiking), we set up camp and ate another heated meal (thanks to our JetBoil). The bore water here tasted very metallic (even after using the Lifestraw and boiling the water) so I would recommend bringing plenty of water for this hike.



The Great Walk is one of my favourite overnight hikes.

Day 4: Cabbage Tree Camping Zone to the Carnarvon Gorge Visitor Area (15.3km)

Day four was our final stretch of the hike and for some reason felt like the hardest, possibly because of all the uphill/downhill sections, or possibly because we did a long hike the day before.

Along this stretch, there were sections with palm trees, small river crossings, and we also saw cows/bulls. Once we got back to the [Carnarvon Gorge Visitor Centre](#) we were glad to finally take off our packs and shoes and relax by the water. The Visitor Centre is also a great place to learn more about the history of the gorge or relax in the day-use area.



The end of the hike!

Who would I recommend this hike for?

I'd recommend this hike for people who have previously completed overnight hikes and who have the right gear to do these hikes.

If you are an avid hiker, it is definitely a trail that needs to be added to your bucket list!

What's your favourite walking trail in Queensland?