

If there's ever a place you should have on your bucket list, it's the Kimberley in Western Australia. Covering a whopping 423,000 km<sup>2</sup>, the Kimberley is one of the world's last wilderness frontiers.

In 2014, [Lonely Planet](#) ranked the Kimberley second place in the top 10 regions of the world. With stunning gorges, waterfalls and 4WD tracks along the breathtaking coastline, you can camp out in the huge array of flora and fauna - truly the ultimate adventure.

In 2015, we spent 5 weeks travelling the Kimberley, and came home with a more accurate appreciation of this fantastic country. We travelled from Perth in our Land Cruiser, and camped in an [Oztent RV5](#) for about 33 nights, with one night in an Airbnb and one in a caravan park cabin. I cannot recommend this region more - it is absolutely stunning!

*The stunning Windjana Gorge National Park in the Kimberley Region, Western Australia. Image: Aaron Schubert.*

## Where is the Kimberley?

The Kimberley is located in the north-east corner of Western Australia. It starts near Broome, and heads north to the coast and east to the WA/NT border. There are two ways by road to cross the Kimberley; up the Gibb River Road, or along the Great Northern Highway.

The Kimberley has quite a small population, which grows significantly with tourists and adventurers over the dry season. People come from all over the world to explore the ancient, untouched paradise. Tourism is a major part of the Kimberley along with agriculture and some mining, but it is a remote part of the world with huge distances between major towns. I'll do my best to express how truly beautiful the Kimberley is, but I'm sure the photos will do it greater justice (although not as nice as it is in person... you really have to get there!).

## Experiencing the Kimberley

There are a variety of different ways to see the Kimberley, and you will have to pick the most suitable one given the time you have, the vastness of the region and what you are most comfortable with. You can travel via car to some areas of the region, otherwise, 4WD, plane, boat or helicopter are your other options.

There are a variety of tours that take you to every area imaginable, with the full array of accommodation options as expected in the bigger towns and tapering off to more limited choices the more remote it gets. The Gibb River Road, for example, primarily has camping options, with less choice for cabins and resorts.

*One of the many incredible sunsets you can see at Kooljaman at Cape Leveque. Image: Aaron Schubert.*

## Weather in the Kimberley

The Kimberley has two distinct seasons - the wet and dry. In the wet season, it's hot, humid and gets a heap of rain. This runs from November to April, and a large portion of the Kimberley becomes inaccessible or closed. Major towns are the exception to this, however.

The dry season, though, from May to October is when the weather is perfect – sunny, warm and cloudless days. The exact dates vary from year to year. Some years the rain didn't stop until late May, so you need to be flexible when planning your trip.

## When's the best time to visit?

Ideally, as early on in the dry season. This is when the water is at its highest (and most spectacular), numbers are low and the weather is beautiful. School holidays are always busy in the Kimberley, and as time goes on, the weather gets warmer and the water levels drop. If you can't get there in May or June though, July and August are both spectacular months to visit. After August, it starts to heat up which means the water levels will drop – so there'll be less to see.



*Car Camping at Cable Beach Caravan Park. Image: Aaron Schubert.*

## What's the camping like?

The Kimberley and camping go hand in hand. Whether it's on one of the many stops along the Gibb River Road, or overlooking the pristine beaches of Cape Leveque, a tent, caravan or camper trailer is the ultimate way to see the Kimberley.

I'm going to make a brave call here, and suggest that camping in the Kimberley is some of the best you'll do anywhere in Australia. Being such a massive area, I'll break it down into a few different regions in relation to camping.

## Broome

Broome is one of the major towns in the Kimberley, located on some of the best coastlines WA has to offer. There are about 8 caravan parks where you can camp, spread throughout the town. We stayed at Cable Beach Caravan Park, and would recommend it. If you want to stay outside of Broome, the Roebuck Plains Roadhouse Caravan Park is good for a stop (it's about 35km from the Great northern highway turn off).

There are no free camping options in Broome. You have to head north towards Cape Leveque to find free spots, along with other more affordable campsites. Broome is a fantastic place, but many people do find it too touristy, so bear that in mind – it's not for everyone!



*The view from Cape Leveque at Sunset. Image: Aaron Schubert.*

## Cape Leveque

Roughly 200km north of Broome lies Cape Leveque, the peninsula that you can't miss on the map. Cape Leveque road takes you from Broome Road right to the top. A large portion of the road is bitumen, but the rest is a gravel/soft sand combination that causes havoc with many vehicles and trailers.

A lot of people comment that it's one of the roughest roads they've done, but it varies a lot depending on what time of year you go up. Either way, the trek is worth it. There are plenty

of places that you can call in to explore, and much more where you can camp. Willie creek, Quondong Point, Middle Lagoon and Kooljaman are a few of the more common ones. We stayed at Middle Lagoon and Kooljaman, and loved both places. The beaches are clear, the sunsets are amazing and the water is warm. In terms of a remote, coastal camping experience you really don't get much better. We didn't do so well fishing, but that's pretty normal for us!

 *Check out that stunning view of Mitchell Falls along the Gibb River Road. Image: Aaron Schubert.*


## Gibb River Road

The Gibb River Road for many people is the primary reason for visiting the Kimberley. It's a 660km track that runs from near Derby through to Kununurra or Wyndham. It's long been known as one of the best 4WD adventures you can do in Australia, with spectacular views, incredible swimming holes and more natural beauty than you can possibly imagine. Whilst the main track is 660km, there are a huge number of side roads that take you to the attractions. We did around 2000km on the Gibb River road and didn't even visit every spot along the way.

Camping options range from a couple of free camps through to the many stations and National Park campsites. The most common places to visit are [Windjana Gorge](#), [Tunnel Creek](#), [Bell Gorge](#), [Mornington](#), [Manning Gorge](#), [Mount Elizabeth](#), [Mitchell Falls](#) and [El Questro](#). Most campgrounds have water, flushing toilets and showers, which is greatly appreciated considering how remote you are. National parks are \$15 per night per person, with stations around the same price (up to about \$22). Not exactly cheap, but it's a price that seems insignificant when you are up there.

## Lake Argyle and the Bungle Bungles

I'll make a mention of [Lake Argyle](#) and the [Bungle Bungles](#), purely because they are truly magnificent. The caravan park at Lake Argyle is stunning, with an amazing [infinity pool](#).

 *A bird's eye helicopter view of the Bungle Bungles. Image: Aaron Schubert.*


## The best way to travel the Kimberley

I'm probably a bit biased here, but the best way to travel the Kimberley is by [4WD](#). Your access levels are greatly improved, and you don't have to be as concerned about vehicle damage.

## Make sure you're prepared

The Kimberley is a remote part of the world. Don't visit without due preparation - consider the distance between fuel stops, whether your vehicle is suitable, carry enough water and do your research beforehand. It's not a place that you need to be afraid about as you will bump

into others, but at the same time don't go unprepared as it will literally cost you dearly if something goes wrong.

 *Take time to prepare, so you can experience a remote sunset like this one at Cable Beach.  
Image: Aaron Schubert.*

## How long do you need?

Some people do the Gibb River Road in 2 days and say they've done it, personally, I think you'll get more out of it on a longer trip. We did Perth to Broome, Cape Leveque, the Gibb River Road, Lake Argyle, Bungle Bungles, 80-mile beach and back to Perth in 5 weeks, and had a ball. It wasn't too rushed, although we did kill the kilometres in the first few and last few days.

I'd suggest at least 7 days on the Gibb River Road (we did 17), 3 at Cape Leveque, 2 at Lake Argyle and 2 at the Bungles.

The 2017 Kimberley season is going to be massive. They have had a huge amount of rainfall (far more than other years), which means everything is greener, and the waterfalls, rivers and pools are even nicer to visit. If you haven't got the Kimberley on your bucket list, you better write it down. You'll have an amazing trip that will stay in your memories for life!

***Who's travelled the Kimberley region? What hidden spot did you find that we missed?***