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## **NINGALOO REEF MARINE PARK - ATTRACTIONS**

### **Location**

Situated on the Tropic of Capricorn, Western Australia, the sheltered, beautiful turquoise waters of Ningaloo Reef are excellent for sea kayaking!

Our 5 day tour departs from the town of Exmouth, 1260 kilometres north of Perth.

### **Ningaloo Reef Marine Park**

Is Australia's largest fringing/barrier reef and runs for over 320 kilometres, from Quobba Station in the south, near Carnarvon town, to North West Cape, near the townsite of Exmouth.

Within the Ningaloo Reef Marine Park there are numerous sanctuary zones, totalling 34% of the total area: all with outstanding natural features and attractions. On past trips we have been amazed at the aquatic and bird life, including turtles, dugongs, humpback whales, rays, fish galore, dolphins, ospreys, huge sea eagles, pelicans etc.

[www.ningaloo reefteach.com](http://www.ningaloo reefteach.com) lots of interesting local information.

### **Exmouth Town**

Capricorn Seakayaking operates from our base in Exmouth town. The 5 Day Sea Kayak Safari we offer operates within Cape Range National Park, about 50kms drive from town. Exmouth has a population of approx 2,100 residents, this number more than quadruples in the peak season – July/August.

Learmonth (Exmouth) airport is 37 kms from Exmouth town.

An airport shuttle bus is available cost \$20

Coral Bay is situated approx 155kms south of Exmouth, on the west coast.

### **Cape Range National Park**

Cape Range National Park borders a section of Ningaloo Reef and is managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation. Wildlife abounds throughout the park and Cape Range provides bushwalking opportunities as well as great views.

### **Seakayaking and Snorkelling**

The snorkelling we offer from the sea kayaks is phenomenal. Inside the reef it is rarely more than 4 meters deep - perfect for even novice snorkellers.

Snorkelling options; walk off the beach, anchor the kayaks and jump over the side (getting back in is not a problem - it's just not graceful!), and sometimes we just drift snorkel with the current, kayaks in tow.

Please note: we have discovered some excellent "un-named" snorkel spots and they are accessible only by kayak.

## **CLIMATE and SEASONS**

We run tours from April to early October, when we generally have light to moderate winds, with day temperatures between 20-32 C.

Ningaloo has mild warm winters although cooler night breezes from the desert can make nights cold once the sun goes down (6-10 C) from May to September. The summers (November to February) are warm to hot, dry and windy with occasional cyclones (hurricanes), generally not the best sea kayaking conditions.

Water temperatures mean we only need to wear wetsuits snorkelling in June, July, August, and September – unless you are a softie!  
It can rain at any time of year, but is an arid area.

## **5 DAY TOUR – BASE CAMP**

These 5 day tours are for the person wanting to escape to a relaxing place. Each night we camp out in 2 person tents or swags beneath the stars, yet have the luxury of a 4x4 support vehicle and camper trailer at base camp, so camping and cooking is easy. All cooking and camping happens at our base camp - a trailer set-up with gas cookers, fridge, eskis, awnings, chairs, tables - all the gear we need for comfortable camping.

At the end of each day we drive back to our base camp. We have 2 vehicles for the vehicle shuffling.

## **GROUP SIZES**

We need a minimum of 4 persons to ensure a tour is viable.

16 persons is the group maximum size.

Larger group bookings are possible, the largest school group so far we had 44 persons sea kayaking and camping!

## **TRANSPORT OPTIONS ex PERTH**

### **PRIVATE VEHICLE**

Approximations; 1260 kilometres from Perth, 12 - 15 hours drive, \$250-\$300 fuel, one-way. Recommended for those travelling in groups, and/or holidaying for a longer time. Driving at dawn, dusk and night is not recommended due to cattle, kangaroos, emus etc on the roads.

You can usually park your car at our base while on tour.

### **BUS**

The cheapest option for those travelling alone but is a long trip (17 hrs)

Greyhound Pioneer, Enquiries ph 131499 [www.greyhound.com.au](http://www.greyhound.com.au)

Various backpacker bus companies do the Perth- Exmouth tour and usually do an express Exmouth to Perth return (cheaper than the Greyhound bus)

### **AIR**

From Perth heading north to Exmouth (Learmonth Airport).

Our recommended option for those with the money, and/or limited time. It takes between 2 hours (jet) and 4 (turbo Prop) hours one way, and follows the coastline. Try for a window seat (left side on northward journey and right side on southward flight). Skywest, ph 1300 660 088 (within Australia only)

[www.skywest.com.au](http://www.skywest.com.au)

It is **IMPORTANT** to book ASAP, as there are only a limited number of cheaper Advance Purchase Airfares available.

## **EXMOUTH ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS**

Camping Grounds, Backpackers/YHA, Motel/Lodge, Hotel/Resort.

We can recommend various options, depending on your budget, if you want breakfast provided, if you have a car, or intend walking – Exmouth is a small town.

## **RECOMMENDED EXMOUTH TOUR OPTIONS**

Swimming with the Whale Sharks. Season: April to June

Scuba Diving: numerous sites eg. Muiron Islands

Whale Watching, snorkelling with manta rays, season July to October

Exmouth Dive Centre ph + 61 8 99491201

[www.exmouthdiving.com.au](http://www.exmouthdiving.com.au)

## **CAR HIRE**

Avis, Budget and local hire operators with cheaper vehicles available

## **RESTAURANTS**

There are numerous eateries around Exmouth, please enquire

We can recommend various options.

**If you require assistance please contact us for more detail.**

## **TRIP ITINERARY – subject to change**

### **Day 1**

**Meet at our base in Exmouth around 8 am.**

**We can park cars at our shed – limited space inside.**

**We do free pick ups from your accommodation as requested.**

**Pack and sort gear, buy last minute items from shops eg. ice, sunblock**

**Drive around into Cape Range National Park, have morning tea.**

**Set up our base camp in the Park before driving to the southern end of the Park have lunch, and get our kayaking/snorkelling gear sorted. Our usual launching spot is Yardie Creek.**

**Kayak/safety skills briefing, then kayak north, to our base camp.**

**Relax, prepare and cook dinner, enjoy new company and the fabulous desert night sky, stars, stars, stars!**

### **Day 2**

**Rise by 7am. Breakfast, prepare and pack lunch, and head off past Osprey Bay, Sandy Bay to Mandu Mandu via 2 fantastic snorkelling spots including Pilgrammuna and maybe Blue Lagoon.**

**Enjoy our delicious morning tea and lunch on the beach. We drive back to camp for a snack, drink and relax, maybe watch the sunset over the Indian Ocean from atop a sand dune with chilled wine in hand.**

### **Day 3**

**Rise by 7am. Breakfast, prepare and pack lunch, and head back to Mandu Mandu, before starting kayaking north again. Snorkel the magnificent Oyster Stacks and Turquoise Bay.**

**More yummy beachside food and drinks throughout the day, and have a relaxing late afternoon.**

**Another evening feast is prepared and enjoyed.**

### **Day 4**

**Today is our options day. More snorkelling, a short kayak, a visit to the Milyering Visitors Centre – managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation is a popular option. It has educational displays, and marine environmental resource materials, videos on the whale sharks etc.**

**We'll often enjoy a late afternoon gorge walk, viewing the rare black footed rock wallaby in Yardie Creek or walk Mandu Mandu Gorge before heading back to camp.**

### **Day 5**

**After breakfast we usually pack up our tents and personal gear before heading off to kayak our last stretch, Lakeside Bombies are a regular highlight maybe paddle around the amazing Mangrove Bay – so full of marine life, and finish after lunch. We complete the pack up of our base camp, home for the last few days and then drive back to Exmouth, usually arriving around 3pm. We drop you off at your accommodation.**

**TOUR COMPLETE**

**That evening we usually meet at a local restaurant for our last meal together, we can eat, drink and tell lies about how big the sharks were!**

## **NINGALOO REEF 5 DAY TOUR - A TYPICAL DAY**

The day starts with breakfast around 7am. Depending on what everyone feels like, we have a choice of pancakes, porridge, fruit, cereal, muesli, or bacon and tomatoes, plus freshly brewed coffee and tea. We aim to get our days gear ready so we can start kayaking by 8.30 am, as this gives us longer time to relax, snorkel, swim etc. at the end of the day.

Once on the water, we might build on some kayak skills, as we cruise the shallow waters inside the reef. Sights we may see during the day include; jumping schools of trevally, flying fish, small reef sharks, dolphins, ospreys, rays, dugongs and lots of turtles.

In season, humpback whales can be seen breaching outside the reef, and a very special treat is to see the striking black and white shape of a huge manta ray as it majestically sweeps by. An hour or so into the morning paddle, an attractive, beckoning beach will be chosen for morning tea and a chance to stretch the legs, and go snorkelling. Then its back into our kayaks for a few more watery kilometres before a longer stop for lunch which consists of pitta bread or crackers and various meats, spreads, salads, fruit, tea and coffee.

The distance we paddle each day is between 6 and 14 kilometres. The kayaking generally takes between 2 and 4 hours with lots of snorkelling and relaxing during the day. Most days we will aim to finish between 2 - 4pm, or earlier if the wind is kind to us and we can put up the Parafoils (sailing with kites).

Back at base camp a snack, cold drink or a cup of tea, is a welcome reward for weary paddlers. Finding a nice position on a sand hill to watch the sun go down with a glass of wine in hand is a very relaxing way to end the day.

We all take turns to help prepare the healthy and delicious evening meal, which becomes a very social affair - vegetarians are catered for. Any fish people can catch are a welcome addition to our meals. Evenings are spent enjoying the company, conversation, the stars, and the sound of gently lapping water.

We try to make our camps as environmentally friendly as possible, and hopefully when we leave, you won't know we've been there.

We ask for help to prepare meals, cook and clean.