



1 Weeks Worth of Alice



Day 1

If you have arrived in Alice Springs by any other means than driving, it is highly recommended that the first thing you do is hire a vehicle for the week. There is so much to see and do in and around Alice Springs and having your own reliable mode of transport will mean you won't miss a thing!

Make your first destination the Alice Springs Desert Park. Situated on Larapinta Drive, the Desert Park is a 'must see' for every visitor to the Red Centre. Spot rare and endangered animals in the low light of the nocturnal house and dodge the star attractions at the 'free-flying birds of prey' show. Here you will see the desert come to life! Walk along the 1.6 kilometre trail and experience 3 separate habitat areas within the park. There are also informative talks throughout the day, including a presentation on Aboriginal Survival. Make your way around the park at your leisure, and then relax with some refreshments at the onsite café.

Make your way to the Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historical Reserve and get your body moving on a mountain bike tour, leaving from the Trail Station. Tours leave at 2:30pm daily and are led by an experienced local rider, all gear provided. You can organise to go at a time of your choosing if you give the company 24 hours prior notice. No experience is needed; this is a great activity for people of all ages!

Check into your accommodation. There are many lodging options available in Alice Springs, including: luxury hotel rooms to camping under the stars. Take your pick, and get a good night's rest ready for a big day tomorrow.

Day 2

Rise early and take to the skies in a hot air balloon for a magnificent bird's eye view of Alice Springs and the Red Centre. As you drift into an outback sunrise of pastel blues, purples and yellows, keep an eye out for native wildlife and the iconic Red Kangaroo down below. Once your feet are planted firmly again on the ground, it is time to indulge in a cooked breakfast at the Bean Tree Café which you can find nestled in the Olive Pink Botanic Garden. It is Australia's only arid zone botanic garden and the perfect place to relax for breakfast or lunch amongst the native surrounds. Take the time to wander along the walking trails to see the hundreds of plant species that are native to the Red Centre, or spot some of the 80 bird species which have been recorded at the park.

Next stop is the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Get amongst the interactive displays and step inside a full-sized replica on a modern PC-12 airplane, part of the exciting new collection. Here, you will gain an insight into the iconic Australian outback service established by pioneers in 1928. There is an onsite café, where you can dine under the original verandah and enjoy the amazing blue skies Alice Springs is known for. Sit back and relax with a coffee, especially blended for the RFDS by a local coffee roaster. The 'Flying Doctor Coffee' can be purchased from the onsite RFDS Doc Shop, so be sure to pick some up to take home with you while you are browsing through their other goodies!

It is now time to get up close and personal with some of the Northern Territory's favourite wildlife at the Reptile Centre, which is home to the largest reptile display in Central Australia. Here you will get to meet Terry the Saltwater Crocodile, see huge perentie goannas, thorny devils, frill-neck lizards and some of the world's most venomous snakes. Join one of the daily shows to learn more about some lizards and pythons, which is followed by a supervised handling session – a perfect photo opportunity! Finish off your night with dinner from one of the many restaurants in town, and be sure to get a good night's rest. You have a big day ahead tomorrow, you will be heading out of town on an overnight camping trip!





Day 3

Rise early to embark on today's adventure to Gemtree Caravan and Tourist Park. 140km north-east of Alice Springs, Gemtree is a true oasis in the mulga country and the gateway to the Central Australian gem fields. Arrive in time to join a Fossicking Tour to try your luck at finding your own gems, and have them appraised on-site by experts. If you would like to stretch your legs and further explore the area, Gemtree has 250 acres of natural bushland for you to enjoy, and is perfect if you would like to head out on one of the many self-guided nature trails or drive tours.

A set menu is on offer each evening in the Camp Oven Kitchen, followed by many entertainment options, including Campfire Karaoke on Sundays, quiz and movie nights and drinks by the pool.

Accommodation ranges from air conditioned cabins, on-site caravans to camp sites, however make sure you call ahead to book in, as cabins are very popular during high season.

Day 4

Make your way back to Alice Springs, and spend the day learning about local Aboriginal Art. First stop is the Araluen Arts Centre. Here, you will get to see contemporary works by the region's most famous artists, including Albert Namatjira. The centre also plays host to the annual Beanie Festival in June each year, which is a much-anticipated quirky and colourful exhibition and competition, and a 'must-do' if you are in town during this time.

Head back into town to the Todd Mall, which is lined with commercial galleries dealing in Aboriginal art. Stop at Papunya Tula Artists to see the renowned dot paintings, then at Mbantua Art Gallery and Cultural Museum, which have one of the largest collections of Aboriginal art in Australia and specializes in art from the Utopia region. While you are in the area, enjoy lunch at one of the many trendy café's dotted throughout the Todd Mall.

Enjoy your dinner cooked in a bush setting and served under the Milky Way. Your host, a local Arrernte man, will introduce you to bush foods and traditional cooking for this special three-course meal set in the West MacDonnell Ranges.





Day 5

Today, get to know the outskirts of Alice Springs and hit the road heading west. Make sure you pack an overnight bag and some walking shoes as you will be camping this evening. Camping equipment can be hired in town if you require. Drive 18 kilometres west of Alice Springs along Larapinta Road to Simpsons Gap, which is an impressive opening between the towering cliffs of the West MacDonnell Ranges. The area is also an important spiritual site to the Arrernte Aboriginal people, where several dreaming trails and stories cross. Be sure to get up close for a great photo opportunity.

Continue on along Larapinta Drive, turning right at Namatjira Drive. Approximately 80km along the Drive you will arrive at Glen Helen Homestead Lodge. The landscape around Glen Helen is truly spectacular with towering sandstone walls greeting you as you arrive. Enjoy your lunch teamed with a cold drink as you relax on the back verandah of the restored homestead overlooking the majestic Glen Helen Gorge.

If you are feeling adventurous, sign up for a 4WD tour or a scenic helicopter flight to discover more of the area. Enjoy dinner at the Namatjira Gallery Restaurant before retiring for the night at one of the accommodation options including fixed tents or motel.

Day 6

Rise early and return 10km to Ormiston Gorge and Pound. This is a great place for a cool dip in the near permanent waterhole surrounded by the towering red walls of the gorge. If you are feeling active, take on the 3-4 hours Ormiston Pound Walk which completes a full circuit from the Walks Information Shelter and finishes at the main waterhole. Take in the beautiful local birdlife and admire the amazing Central Australian landscapes.

If you would rather enjoy a shorter walk, the 20 minute trek to the Ghost Gum Lookout is a must-do and is most popular with visitors. The view across the Gorge and down into the waterhole is a sight to behold. Enjoy some light refreshments at the on-site kiosk before making your way back east towards Alice Springs.

Stop over at Ellery Creek Big Hole where you can enjoy a refreshing swim. This location is one of the most popular and picturesque camping, swimming and picnic spots in the region, and you will understand why when you set eyes on the spectacular waterhole surrounded by high red cliffs and the sandy creek.

Arrive in Alice Springs just in time for a sunset camel tour at Pyndan Camel Tracks. A camel ride will definitely be an experience you will want to tell your friends about. The camel ride starts at Pyndan Camel Tracks yard, through White Gums Station and follows an avenue of Iron Bark and Mulga trees across a clay pan flat, and climbs a slight incline to get sweeping views across the MacDonnell Ranges. You will be led on your ride by one of Pyndan's camel experts who will tell you more about these iconic animals.





Day 7

A visit to the top of Anzac Hill is a must-do for a panoramic view of the town. Sunrise is the perfect time to do this, as you watch the sun slowly rise to light up the MacDonnell Ranges and beautiful desert town below. You can drive your car to the top, or if you are feeling active, you can walk to the top via the 'Lions Walk'.

You've experienced the west and now it's time to check out the East MacDonnell Ranges. Don't forget to pack some lunch! See Aboriginal rock paintings at Emily Gap, an Aboriginal sacred site 14 km from Alice Springs. The paintings tell the local Arrernte people's story of the caterpillar dreaming, which describes how Alice Springs was formed. A further 10 minutes along the Ross Highway is Jessie Gap another Aboriginal rock art site. Take the five-minute walk into the gap along a shady creek to see the sacred paintings on the gap wall. Interpretive signage explains the stories of the paintings.

Further along the Ross Highway turn off at Trepina Gorge Nature Park. It's known for its walking trails, Aboriginal rock art, dramatic ridges and bluffs, and its two excellent, shady camp grounds. Take the easy 500-metre return stroll down to the gorge and its semi-permanent waterhole or the 20-minute walk to the lookout for views of the dramatic gorgeous country. Or follow the challenging but rewarding 90-minute return Chain of Ponds loop past rock pools and up to a lookout above the gorge. Enjoy your lunch with the amazing views of the East MacDonnell Ranges.

Head back into town and enjoy a beverage or two at the Alice Springs Brewing Co, home to all your brewing needs! Or if you'd prefer a cocktail, Tempo Wine and Cocktail Bar is the right place for you. Relish in one of the many dining options around town and enjoy your last night!



Bucket List Items

- ☐ Experience a #RedCentreNT sunrise
- ☐ Spot the iconic Red Kangaroo
- ☐ Spot a shooting star!
- ☐ Camel ride
- ☐ Try some local brew
- ☐ Walk on the Larapinta Trail
- ☐ Dip your toes in Ellery Creek Bighole
- ☐ Purchase some Aboriginal art