Katherine Attractions

While its star attraction is undoubtedly the famous Ntirimuk (Katherine Gorge), Katherine and its surrounds include great fishing, hidden natural wonders and a rich indigenous and pioneering history. The region stretches from the Gulf of Carpentaria to the West Australian border. Around 300 kilometres south of Darwin, Katherine is set on the banks of the Katherine River.

Katherine was named by explorer John McDouall Stuart in the late 1860s after the daughter of one of his expedition sponsors. The area was renamed ‘Ntirimuk’ – meaning ‘cicada place’ – in 1898 when traditional owners, Aboriginal peoples, gained title to the land.

Arts, Culture and Indigenous Experiences

Discover the wealth of Aboriginal arts and crafts from the region, with galleries such as Gulf Tiki Time, Minji Aboriginal Arts and Crafts, and Top Didj Art and Gallery specializing in original artworks, didgeridoos, carvings and Ingenious items. See vibrant art, vibrant displays and a performance of Karakundy Yijardj Wilu Arts & Cultural Centre. Partake in the Top Didj Cultural Experience where Maxie Lanks tells about tribal language, history, gathering techniques and weapons used. Try your hand at painting, firelighting, boomerang and spear throwing using a salmon. Session times are at 9.30am and 2.30pm daily, March – December and bookings are essential.

Cutta Cutta Caves Nature Park

The park covers an area of 1499 hectares of karst limestone landscape. The main feature is the caves – a stunning creation of stalactites and stalagmites home to five species of bats, including the rare ghost and horseshoe bats. Guided tours are conducted daily. 27km south of Katherine. Admission fee applies.

Top Didj Cultural Experience

Located just five minutes drive from the centre of Katherine, crystal clear pools wind through the trees at a constant temperature of 32°C. The grey, shadied banks make this an excellent location to enjoy fresh water. Access is from the Victoria Highway or Riverbank Drive. Wheelchair access is available via Croc Street.

Katherine Museum

Housing-Aboriginal artefacts and Overland Telegraph, rural, WWI and aviation history displays – including Dr Clyde Fenton’s original Flying Doctor plane. Picnic facilities are free to visitors. Entry fee applies for visiting exhibits. Open daily 9am – 4pm.

Katherine Outback Experience

Meet local Kempy-gan-the-Tine Tom Curtin, as he provides an authentic and unique insight into the training of stock heroes and dogs for Northern Territory cattle stations.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 4:30-6:00

Leliyn (Edith Falls)

Part of Nitmiluk National Park, the area offers a variety of walking trails and swimming opportunities. A picnic area, campground and kiosk are provided near the base of the falls. 4km north of Katherine. No pets, fishing or generators.

Mataranka

Mataranka is an interesting stop along the Stuart Highway, 1300 138 886 tourismtopend.com.au

Katherine Hot Springs

NT Rare Rocks

Elsey National Park

Known as the ‘Capital of the Never Never’, the area was home to Jeannie Gunn who wrote the famous book about Elsey Station titled ‘We of the Never Never’. A visit to the station cemetery and homestead replicate the sense of isolation and hardship confronting early settlers. Today, Mataranka is a modern town servicing outlying cattle stations and communities, and is renowned for its sandy-bottomed thermal pools. A full range of accommodation, facilities and attractions means a two or three day stay is needed.

Mataranka townships sit on the upper reaches of the Roper River, an hour’s drive southeast of Katherine.

Nitmiluk National Park

Explore the gorges at your own pace by canoe with time to marvel at the scenery.

Nitmiluk National Park – Gorge Tours

13 magnificent gorges sculpted from the sandstone bedrock over the millennia by the Katherine River. Choose from a variety of tours including culturally based cruises, on-board dining and canoing.

Nitmiluk National Park – Bushwalking

There are numerous walking tracks in the park offering a variety of experiences, ranging from strolls along the rivershore, overnight walks and the Jatbula Trail – a five day walk from Nitmiluk Gorge to Leliyn (Edith Falls). Overnight walkers are required to register with the Parks and Wildlife NT at the Nitmiluk Visitor Centre.

Nitmiluk National Park and Katherine Cave – Canoeing

Explore the gorges at your own pace by canoe with time to marvel at the scenery. Overnight canoe hire is available with camping at the fifth gihge, 9km from the Nitmiluk Visitor Centre. Canoe may be hired from Nitmiluk Town all 6km and 1km, or contact Geckos Canoeing for fully inclusive guided canoe adventures on the Katherine River. Canoe hire is also available at Springvale Homestead. Subject to weather conditions and operates in the dry season only.

NT Rare Rocks

MT Rare Rocks is a rock and gem shop and manufacturer of stone products with semi-precious stones and tumbled stones including crystals from Wave Hill Station, sapphire, deep materia and rainbow siltstone from Newry Station. Many products are available onsite and online.

MT Rare Rocks

Barramundi Feeding

Feed a barramundi at the Territory Manor ‘Feed the Barra Show’. This daily free tour is a must see. Watch large barramundi being hand-fed while learning about these fascinating fish and how they live and breed in the rivers and waters around the Top End. Feeding times 9.30am and 1pm.

Bitter Springs Thermal Pools

This tropical spring-fed thermal pool is located just 3km from Mataranka townships. Set among palms and tropical woodland, it is ideal for bushwalking, swimming or a shady lunch spot for somewhere to simply relax. Toilet facilities, picnic benches and barbecues are available. Open daily, free entry.

Kathedral Station Stay

Get up as close and personal as you like with gentle tropical beef cattle, antilipines and birds – even the hoots of some you are lucky. Native savannah woodlands consist and naturally sustain these Coolahde Brahman, 10km south of Mataranka. Experience a family farm set perfectly with the environment; not agisted. Relax and friendly outback hospitality at its best.

Elsey Homestead Replica

A significant part of Australia’s heritage, the old Elsey Cemetery, 21km from Mataranka, is the final resting place of many local characters written about in the famous 1930s novel ‘We of the Never Never’ by Jeannie Gunn. Inscriptions here date from 1896.

Katherine National Park

Elsey National Park

This tropical spring-fed thermal pool is located just 50km north of Katherine. The Homestead, an authentic replica of the original, was constructed for the film ‘We of the Never Never’ with every detail lovingly duplicated, down to the hand-forged localopal open gate. Visitors can appreciate how life was on the station in those early years of the last century. Open daily, free entry.

Korwaran (Mataranka Falls)

Access is to the falls is via a moderate 1km return walk of around four hours. Follow the Roper River down to the falls dam that tures 8000g of gently ripples. These tails dam are created by soil build-up, on rocks and vegetation, from the spring water gradually forming a terr or dam across the path of the river. Building up over the years the dam redirect the water flow into waterfalls. Enjoy a leisurely canoe trip on the Waterhouse River at Mataranka or the Roper River. Canoes hire are at Mataranka Falls located 12 Miles South and 4 Miles North for canoe and boat hire (maximum 15hp).

Elsey Thermal Pool

Mataranka Thermal Pools

Mataranka Thermal Pool was dedicated as a reserve in 1967 to ensure the preservation of the thermal spring and surrounding palm forest. The pool is at a constant 34°C and flows from Rainbow Springs of an amazing 152 million litres a day. Pets must be restrained in the private pet parking bay outside the park and the camping area. Open daily, free entry.

Mataranka Homestead

The Homestead, an authentic replica of the original, was constructed for the film ‘We of the Never Never’ with every detail lovingly duplicated, down to the hand-forged localopal open gate. Visitors can appreciate how life was on the station in those early years of the last century. Open daily, free entry.

Elsey Homestead Replica

Key

Accommodation

Telephone

08 9951 4665

Coodare Station Stay

08 9951 5030

Mataranka Cables and Camping

08 9951 4616

Territory Manor Motel and Caravan Park

08 9951 5030

ELSEY NATIONAL PARK

STIRLING MILL WWII SITE

PADDINGTON ADOBE

MORRIS HOMESTEAD

ROPER RIVER

MATARANKA THERMAL POOL

MATARANKA TOWNSHIP

LILIYAN FALLS (EDITH FALLS)

ROLF HACEK TRAIL

STANFORD MILL

MANTLOGY CREEK CAVES

ELSEY MEMORIAL CEMETERY

HUNTER ROAD

BITTER SPRINGS THERMAL POOLS

MATARANKA THERMAL POOL

KOROWAN (MATARANKA FALLS)

ROPER ROAD

JUROEN MILL

BRIGHTON MILL

BOWEN MILL

ROPER RIVER

LILIYAN FALLS (EDITH FALLS)

MATARANKA THERMAL POOL

HUNTER ROAD

MATARANKA TOWNSHIP

PADDINGTON ADOBE

MORRIS HOMESTEAD

STIRLING MILL WWII SITE

ROLLING MILL

MATARANKA TOWNSHIP

MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY

MATARANKA TOWNSHIP

STIRLING MILL WWII SITE

MATARANKA TOWNSHIP

PADDINGTON ADOBE

MORRIS HOMESTEAD

Stuart Highway

MARTIN ROAD

Little Roper River

Bitter Springs Thermal Pools

Forum Mill WWII Site

Stuart Highway

Martin Road

Roper River

Mataranka T:j

Elsey National Park

MATARANKA

Katherine and Mataranka Attractions

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Katherine and Mataranka Attractions