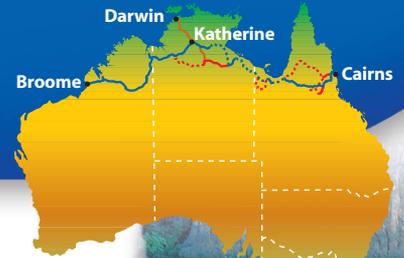




# Australia's Adventure Drive

# FACT SHEET



## Savannah Stories

From late September to early November a peculiar cloud formation occurs across Queensland's **Gulf of Carpentaria**. **The Morning Glory** is a series of long cigar shaped cloud formations that roll out of the Gulf in lines of three or four, usually in the early hours before daylight. Occurring in only two places in the world, the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Gulf of Mexico, these multiple formations follow behind each other, accompanied by a violent wind called a 'shock wave'. The cloud itself does not travel much further than 60km inland but the wind has been registered as far south as Alice Springs. The appearance of these formations heralds the unstable and changeable weather of the build-up to the 'Wet'.

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The **Undara Lava Tubes** are the world's longest lava tubes – created during volcanic activity more than 190,000 years ago. "Undara" is an Aboriginal word for "long way" and studies of the geology show that lava flowed more than 90 km to the north and over 160 km to the north west – creating the world's longest lava flow from a single volcano. An estimated 233km of lava flowed from the volcano at about 1200°C, covering more than 1550km<sup>2</sup> of land. The main branch of the lava tube system extends for more than 110km. **The Wall**, a ridge created by lava flowing for more than 40km along a major watercourse, stands 20m above the surrounding countryside and is most like the smaller basaltic ridges on the moon.

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If only the walls of the **Daly Waters Pub** could talk... it is one of the most colourful outback pubs in Australia and was built in the 1930s to service early Qantas passengers and crew on refuelling stops at what was Australia's first international airfield. Situated about 600km south of Darwin, the pub was also a popular watering hole for pilots during WWII. It is filled with unusual artefacts which include bar stools made from the axles and hub of vehicles, ash trays made from hub-caps and a collection of old irons and bottles. The walls and ceilings are covered with relics from the past, signed banknotes in every imaginable currency, drivers licences from around the world and other forms of identification travellers have stuck to the walls.

The tiny Northern Territory township of **Mataranka** became famous for the classic Australian tale, "We of the Never Never", written by Jeannie Gunn, after her time spent on Eley Station during the pioneering days. Revisit the region almost 100 years on. The history of old Eley Station can be found in the "**Never Never**" **Cemetery** south of town, so too can a replica of the original Eley Station homestead.

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Does it really exist? Unfold the mystery of the "**Lost City**" for yourself, at Cape Crawford in the Northern Territory. At 1.4 billion years in the making, these rocks are some of the oldest in the world. They consist of 95% silica and are held together by an outer crust made mainly of iron, giving them their red colour. Shaped like skyscrapers and stretching far into the horizon, they are only accessible by helicopter.

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**Waterfalls year round!** Horizontal and reversible! Yes, there is such a phenomenon along the Savannah Way. The massive tidal flows of the West Kimberley coast create a waterfall effect as the water courses through the narrow gorges of Talbot Bay in the Buccaneer Archipelago near Derby. This is known as the **Horizontal Falls**. The waterfalls created by the incoming and outgoing tides vary in vigor according to the daily and monthly tidal variations. Spring tides, when the moon is new or full, see the falls flowing strongly due to the great difference between high and low tides. But even at neap tides the bay and coastline is spectacularly beautiful.

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330 metres above the sea level the **Bastion** forms a spectacular backdrop along the Savannah Way. The Bastion Range, or Daharwi Range (its local Aboriginal name), overlooks the small frontier town of Wyndham, the northernmost town in Western Australia. At the top of the range, the **Five Rivers Lookout** provides stunning views over the surrounding mangrove swamps, mudflats and hills. The lookout is a popular vantage point to view the sunset. At the base of the Bastion is the **Three Mile Valley Walking Trails**, an ideal place for bushwalking. Two walk trails begin from the BBQ area in the Valley; one trail follows the Three Mile Valley Creek while the second trail heads up the Bastion Range.

