

**VOYAGE INFORMATION**

Voyage Name	Kimberley in Depth
Voyage Code	KID080721G
Dates	08 – 20 July, 2021
Duration	13 days / 12 nights
Start	Darwin
Finish	Broome
Ship	<i>Greg Mortimer</i>
Optional Activities	Heli-flight to Mitchell Falls Seaplane flight over Horizontal Waterfalls
Forms Due	08 April, 2021

**VOYAGE SUMMARY**

Explore the rugged beauty of the Kimberley coast in depth. Marvel at the contortions of a rocky landscape that's been sculpted across an implausible geological timescale. Be awed by the power of its waters, with massive tides, foaming whirlpools and rapid currents. Visit Aboriginal rock art galleries and ponder the enigmatic beings of *Wandjina* and *Gwion Gwion* traditions. Meander along mighty rivers and winding creeks while you search the banks for a sunning 'saltie' saltwater crocodile, or catch a glimpse a shy dugong in the waters around you. Sit quietly alongside lush mangrove forests listening to a morning chorus of birdsong. At sea, look for humpback whales, green sea turtles, manta rays, sea snakes and the endemic snubfin dolphin. At the end of each day's adventure, savour the spectacular palette of Kimberley sunset hues.

**ITINERARY OVERVIEW**

Day 1	Embark ship in Darwin
Day 2	At sea, crossing Joseph Bonaparte Gulf
Day 3	Koolama Bay, King George River
Days 4–5	Vansittart Bay, Northwestern Kimberley, Montague Sound
Days 6–7	Prince Frederick Harbour, Hunter River, Prince Regent National Park
Days 8–11	Collier Bay, Montgomery Reef, Horizontal Falls, Yampi Sound Area
Day 12	Lacepede Islands
Day 13	Disembark in Broome

**VOYAGE HIGHLIGHTS**

- Cruise the majestic King George River below towering sandstone cliffs, to 80-metre-high King George Falls.
- Experience the remote northwestern reaches of the Kimberley coast, with its striking scenery and vast human history.
- Contemplate the enigmatic *Wandjina* and *Gwion Gwion* beings at Aboriginal rock art galleries.
- Scan the shorelines, mangroves, woodlands and skies for an abundance of birdlife, including terns, herons, egrets, flycatchers, frigatebirds, boobies, pelicans and sea eagles.
- Explore the remote Prince Regent National Park – a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve – with its range of bird species and striking scenery.

- Keep an eye out for some of the estimated 40,000 humpback whales returning from Antarctica to give birth in the warmer waters of Lalang-Garram/Camden Sound Marine Park.
- Discover Montgomery Reef – Australia’s largest in-shore reef – and the diversity of its lively marine life.
- Delight in Mother Nature’s artistry displayed in the contorted and weathered rock sculptures around Yampi Sound.

## **EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS**

- Arrival transfer from airport or hotel to Greg Mortimer on Day 1
- Departure transfer from Greg Mortimer to airport or hotel on last day
- Onboard accommodation during voyage including daily cabin service
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner
- Captain’s Welcome and Farewell reception including four-course dinner, house cocktails, house beer and wine, non-alcoholic beverages
- All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises
- Fast boat ride through the Horizontal Waterfalls
- Educational lectures and guiding services from expedition team
- Complimentary access to onboard expedition doctor and medical clinic
- A spray jacket per person
- Comprehensive pre-departure information
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees
- Gratuities for ship crew

## **EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS**

- International or domestic flights, not mentioned in the itinerary
- Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary
- Airport arrival or departure taxes
- Passport, visa, and vaccination charges
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
- Hotels and meals not included in itinerary
- Optional excursions not included in the itinerary
- Optional activity surcharges
- All items of a personal nature including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, Wi-Fi, email or phone charges

**DETAILED ITINERARY****Day 1            Embark in Darwin**

You're welcomed aboard the *Greg Mortimer*, and shown your cabin before mandatory safety drills are carried out. Enjoy a welcome drink and meet fellow expeditioners at our voyage briefing, and Captain's Welcome Dinner. Enjoy the rich colours of a Top End sunset as we depart Darwin Harbour and set sail on our Kimberley adventures.

**Day 2            At sea**

First sighted by Abel Tasman in 1644 - and named by French explorer Nicholas Baudin in 1803 after Napoleon's brother – the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf is an inlet of the Timor Sea with relatively shallow waters. As such, the seas can get quite choppy compared to the Kimberley's mostly protected waters. Enjoy a day at sea, and with informative talks to introduce you to the magic of the Kimberley coast's compelling natural and human history.

**Day 3            Koolama Bay, King George River**

Wake to your first Kimberley dawn in Koolama Bay, and make your first foray off the 'mother ship' with the expedition team as we head to the mouth of the King George River by Zodiac. Cruise this majestic waterway below towering, rust-red sandstone cliffs to its 80-metre-high twin falls, and enjoy explorations of these striking surrounds from water level.

**Day 4            Vansittart Bay: Jar Island & Anjo Peninsula**

Named by explorer Phillip Parker King due to the pottery shards he found there (likely from Macassan fishermen looking for *trepang*, or sea cucumber), Jar Island offers encounters with ancient rock art galleries, including the mysterious, human-like *Gwion Gwion* (also known as Bradshaw) figures. On the bay's eastern side, land on a pristine white beach of the Anjo Peninsula and take a short walk across salt flats leads to the well-preserved wreck of a C-53 (a cargo variation of the DC-3) that crash landed here in World War II.

**Day 5            Northwestern Kimberley /Montague Sound**

Sailing on to the remote north-western reaches of the Kimberley, we may explore either the treasures of either Swift Bay or Bigge Island. Both offer exceptional opportunities to explore rugged sandstone shelters, caves and overhangs whose surfaces are adorned with rock art of the *Wunambal* people, including the more recent *Wandjina* style.

**Day 6            Prince Frederick Harbour, Hunter River**

Delight in the breath-taking scenery of Prince Frederick Harbour and the Hunter River – from the colossal sandstone escarpments and full palette of greens in the lush mangrove forests, to the rhythmic flitting of a friarbird, soaring flight of a white-bellied sea eagle, and flicker of a sunning saltwater crocodile's eye. Join the expedition team to explore these dynamic waterways by Zodiac.

*An optional scenic heli-flight may be on offer today (or possibly from Swift Bay), allowing for a visit to Mitchell Falls as well as spectacular bird's eye view of the diverse colours, textures and patterns of the landscape – from the brilliant blue coastal waters to the rugged gorges of the Mitchell Plateau.*

**Day 7            Prince Regent National Park**

Careening Bay gained its name as the place where Phillip Parker King chose to careen and repair His Majesty's Cutter *Mermaid* in September 1820. While there, the crew carved 'HMC Mermaid 1820' into a large boob tree. Visit this slice of early Australian history; look for vibrant *mulla mulla*, ancient cycads and spiralling pandanus in the surrounding woodland; and relax with a gentle stroll along the wide sandy beach.

Enjoy forays into the coastal fringes of the Prince Regent National Park, and discover the outstanding biodiversity that earned it 'UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve' status before sailing southwards into the waters of the Lalang-Garam/Camden Sounds Marine Park. Considered the most important humpback whale nursery in the southern hemisphere, it's a seasonal sanctuary for an estimated 40,000 humpback whales returning from Antarctica to give birth in these warmer waters. Keep watch for the sea snakes, dugongs, sea turtles, and dolphins that also call it home.

## **Days 8–11      Collier Bay, Talbot Bay & Yampi Sound Area**

*Over these next expedition days, the nature and timing of our outings will be dictated by the tides and tidal currents.*

The striking landscape and natural wonders around Collier Bay provide a myriad of adventures. Discover Montgomery Reef – Australia's largest in-shore reef, covering some 400 square kilometres – and the diversity of its lively marine life. On a falling tide, witness the extraordinary phenomenon as the reef appears to 'rise' from the sea as foaming water cascades off it, and seabirds arrive to forage as the reef's tasty inhabitants are exposed. Be equally enthralled by the unique geology and massive tides that create the Horizontal Waterfalls in Talbot Bay where you have the opportunity to take a thrilling boat ride through the falls\*. Quietly cruise the meandering waterways of Cyclone Creek, and remain alert for glimpses of shy rock wallabies. Marvel at Mother Nature's artistry in the contorted sculptures of the rocky landscape around Yampi Sound, and explore a maze of jewel-like islands encircled by foaming whirlpools and rapid currents.

*\*Please note that while Zodiacs are not permitted to pass through the Horizontal Falls, our explorations will include views from the outer waters of Talbot Bay. We plan to offer you the opportunity to pass through the falls on a fast boat with a local operator (included in expedition cost). You may also have the option to spy this unique landscape from above on an optional seaplane flight (additional cost).*

## **Day 12              Lacepede Islands; At sea**

Weather permitting, delight in the thousands of brown boobies and that call the Lacepede Islands – a group of offshore sand and coral cays – their breeding grounds. The brown booby colony is possibly the largest in the world, with an estimated 18,000 breeding pairs. Other seabirds may also be spied, including lesser frigatebirds, crested and roseate terns, eastern reef egrets, and pied oystercatchers; as well as the bobbing heads of curious green turtles or sleek shovel-nosed rays in the waters around you. While landings are not possible on this designated Class A Nature Reserve, exceptional Zodiac cruising along the island's shores will thrill.

As we set sail for Broome, toast your adventures in the wash of a final Kimberley sunset and celebrate with friends – both new and old - at the Captain's Farewell Dinner.

## **Day 13              Disembark in Broome**

In Broome, the 'port of pearls', farewell the crew, expedition team and fellow travellers before your transfer to the airport or your hotel accommodation.

**Important note:** *In the spirit of expedition travel, we encourage exploration and adventure offering flexibility in challenging environments. This itinerary is only a guide and is subject to change due to tides, weather, sea state and other conditions beyond our control.*