



Darwin

Closer to Jakarta than to Australia's capital Canberra, the Northern Territory's tropical city rolls to its own frangipani-infused rhythm

WORDS FIONA HARPER

Unlike any other Australian city, Darwin's distance from the rest of the country is one of its main attractions. Over 700,000 visitors last year thought so too. Beyond its shady CBD streets, Australia's northern-most metropolis offers a rich flavour of the Top End life.

GO UNDERGROUND

Following Japanese air raids during WWII that wiped out fuel oil storage tanks, labourers carved out tunnels beneath Stokes Hill for storing precious oil supplies – the longest tunnel stretched nearly 200m into the escarpment. Take a self-guided tour of these **WWII**

Tunnels (Kitchener Drive, Darwin Waterfront; pictured bottom left) and relics, which reopened in 1992 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin. Photographs and interpretative boards deep in the bowels of the city recreate a time when Australia was under serious threat of invasion.

TRACE INDIGENOUS FOOTSTEPS


Take a **Pudakul Aboriginal Cultural Tour** on Limilngan-Wulna land near the Adelaide River. Learn about bush tucker and medicines as well as traditional spear making and hunting – *pudakul* is the aboriginal name for the freshwater hibiscus tree used to make hunting spears – from an Aboriginal-owned and operated business.

MONSTER ART

On show at the Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory until 14 February, the **Monster Pop!** exhibition (pictured bottom right) draws from the macabre and the ridiculous in popular Indonesian and Australian culture to highlight serious and sinister monstrosities. It delves into popular culture, exploring the connection with ancient traditions, iconography and fairy tales.

MADE IN THE TERRITORY

The **Territory Made pop-up markets** set up shop at the Darwin Botanic Gardens during the dry season (from April 2016), showing off an eclectic mix of locally made treasures. It promises to heighten the senses and feed the soul while helping over 100 local artisans show off their wares.

 SilkAir flies six times weekly between Singapore and Darwin



CRUISE CORROBOREE

Visit the Corroboree Billabong (90 minutes from the city) on the **Mary River Wetlands**, which lays claim to having the largest concentration of saltwater crocodiles in the world. Step aboard a Wetlands Cruise to view these predators in the wild from the safety of a purpose-built vessel. Birdlife also abounds – keep an eye out for long-legged jabirus, or majestic brolgas and their dancing courtship ritual.

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