

# Swimming with Crocodiles in Darwin's Cage of Death

by **Fiona Harper** • 3 minute read



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## Saltwater crocodiles are one of Australia's most fearsome creatures. Travel Writer Fiona Harper slips into the Cage of Death with an apex predator.

Fifty millimetres of clear perspex is all that separates me from the jaws of Australia's most opportunistic predator and the world's largest, most dangerous reptile. A saltwater crocodile weighing in at a hefty 900 kg, Axel is 5.1 metres of terrifying reptilian testosterone. He's also a seasoned performer and has all the right moves. I'm equally fascinated and petrified. Having signed up for the Cage of Death experience at Darwin's **Crocosaur Cove** I'm also questioning my sanity as my friend and I slip into his enclosure.

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Axel hovers on the surface eyeballing us as we don snorkelling masks and drop down into the water. I squeal like a 10 year old at a Justin Bieber concert as the realisation hits me that we're sharing the same water! Axel hovers gracefully about a metre away, his beguiling crocodile grin leering back at me. His deep caramel eyes glint in the sunlight. From my plastic sanctuary I make eye contact, equally admiring his magnificence while covering in fear. With a gentle swish of his tail he edges closer, our eyes locked on each other. He turns his nose up at the meat, seemingly far more interested in devouring the tasty two ladies dangling in his vision. Axel backs away sulkily as the park guide controlling our destiny decides to hoist us out of the enclosure.



We're lowered into another pond, this one inhabited by the parks breeding pair, appropriately named William and Kate. Kate's unimpressed by our arrival but William perks up immediately. He's not as big as Axel but is every bit as fearsome, being a fertile male in the prime of his life. If he was capable of wolf-whistling, well, here is the moment to let one rip. Fuelled by the sort of testosterone that causes mayhem in the lap dancing club down the road, he struts and poses before making a bee line for us. I'm flattered at the attention, but prefer relationship icebreakers to move at a slower pace. And I'm not a big fan of an overbite of which William suffers badly from.

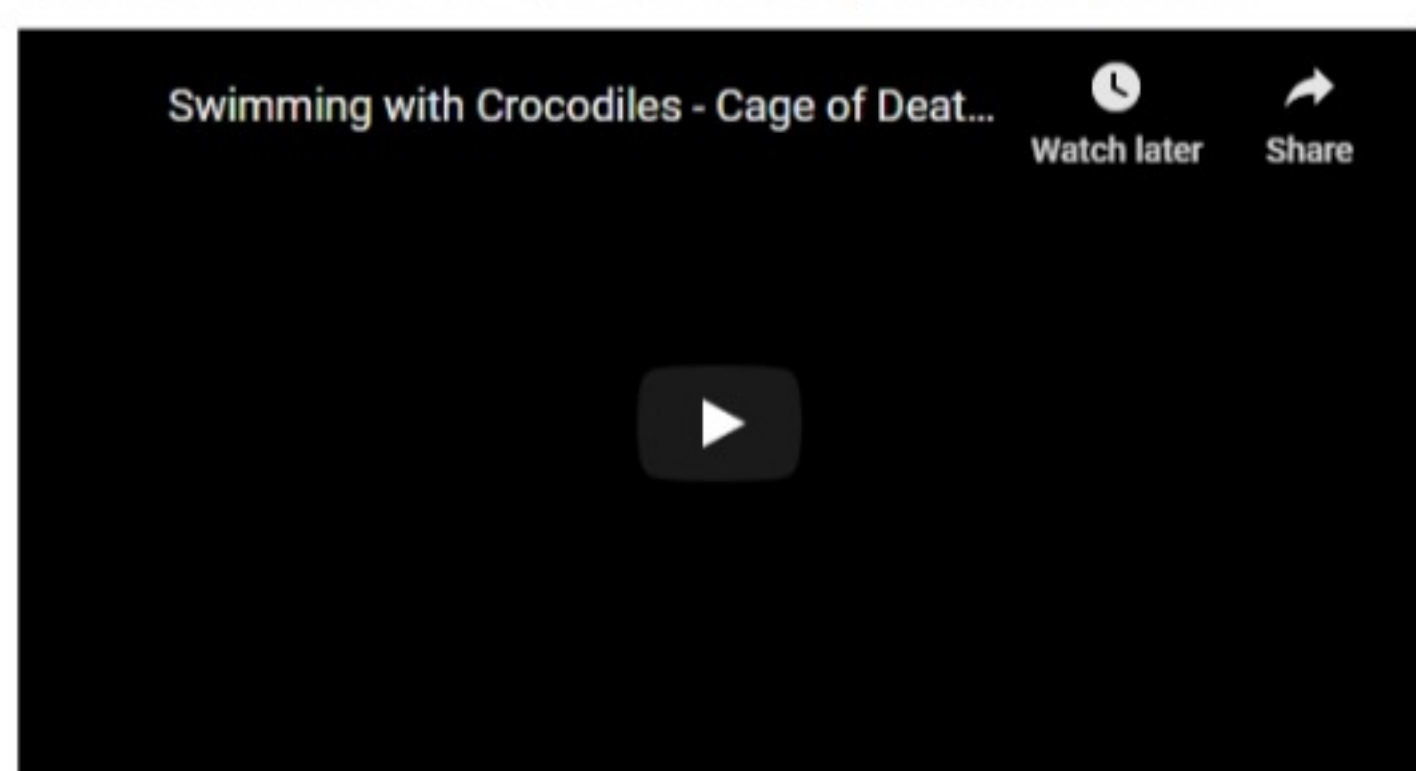


My fingers through the hole and touch him. When he launches himself from the water and knocks our cage my heart nearly jumps out of my chest. I hysterically gulp down mouthfuls of water and nearly drown. He nudges in close and my friend leans forward to reward him with a mock kiss, 50 mm of plastic the only thing preventing their lips from touching. She almost goes into coronary arrest when a dangling piece of meat diverts his attention and he snaps his jaws shut around it inches from her head.



We regain our dignity as we're hoisted out of the enclosure and a crowd of onlookers have gathered. I'm not quite sure where the 'death' part of the experience comes into the equation but I'm relieved that we've all survived the encounter. I've always had a hefty amount of respect and awe for this apex predator. Breathing the same air, paddling the same water has changed none of that. My fear is affirmed. Crocs rule.

Watch the video below! Would you be brave enough to try it for yourself?



Find out more at [www.crocosauruscove.com](http://www.crocosauruscove.com)

Fiona Harper is a travel writer specialising in cruising, active and soft adventures. Follow her at Travel Boating Lifestyle [www.travelboatinglifestyle.com](http://www.travelboatinglifestyle.com)

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