

Gay'wu (Dillybag)

Women's Weaving Program



Bawaka Homeland is located on the beachfront in Port Bradshaw south of Nhulunbuy, North East Arnhem Land, Northern Territory. Access is usually by 4WD, the scenic trip takes approximately 90 minutes from Nhulunbuy (45 mins on dirt road and 45 mins on sand). Helicopter and boat access is also available.

Bawaka offers a beautiful tropical paradise with very limited access by visitors. It has unspoilt beaches, spectacular cliff-top ocean views, vast areas of bushland and an amazing array of marine life. There are two resident houses (approximately 10 residents) and several other old buildings. Power is supplied via a solar system and back up generator, a bore supplies ample fresh water.

The earliest history of Eastern Arnhem Land is recorded in the paintings, dances and songs of the Yolngu, which tell of creation ancestors bringing lands and waters, people, animals and plants into being and laying down the Law that governs them all. The Law defines who owns and manages the lands and waters, essential features of Yolngu identity and culture. Arnhem Land is one of the few areas in Australia where Aboriginal people still live a traditional life and maintain a strong culture.

Gay'wu (Dillybag) Women's Program

Our Vision

Bawaka Cultural Experiences Women's Program, is a gift of friendship, knowledge and strength to women visitors.

This program will build a positive future for our children and grandchildren, by strengthening our culture and creating economic independence.

Our vision holds all women and families, our country our culture, our knowledge and our stories.



An outline of your stay

Please Note: The program has been designed to be flexible in order to accommodate local conditions and to encourage visitors to settle into a different way of life for two days.

Day 1 we will depart Nhulunbuy at 7.30 am, arriving at Bawaka by 9.30am. On arrival you will be welcomed by the women and introduced to life in this remote and idyllic spot. The day will unfold through the sharing of the stories about this place. Today there will be plenty of time to relax and get to know each other, and you will be introduced to the language, family structure and relationships that tie women to the land and sea. You will come to understand the interwoven relationships of art, music and dance that these women practice.

Day 2 will start early with a special dawn session that leads the group into a deeper level of understanding and prepares for your participation in the healing session involving bush medicines. After lunch you will travel in the local area to see some of the places of particular significance to women. Your time at Bawaka concludes with an opportunity to sit together and reflect on your experience with the women. We depart for Nhulunbuy at 4pm, arriving at 5.30pm.

General Information and Conditions for Visitors

Below is information on a range of topics that will be useful for your visit to Bawaka. If you require any further information please contact the Tour Coordinator. To get the most out of the program you are encouraged to be on 'Yolngu time' – that is very flexible, so relax and enjoy. The most important thing you will need to bring with you is an open mind. Your enthusiasm, energy and curiosity will help make this an unforgettable experience.

ACCOMMODATION

Bawaka Homeland has two, three bedroom houses that are powered by solar electricity for lights, fans and refrigeration. Both have outdoor kitchen areas and verandahs. You will be staying in one of the houses, these are basic but comfortable. You are also welcome to sleep outdoors with us.

CATERING

All meals and snacks are provided. If you have any special dietary requirements please remember to provide information on the Booking Form. Food provided will be prepared by a non-indigenous person. You will also have opportunities to enjoy a variety of traditional Yolngu foods.

CLOTHING

Generally speaking we dress conservatively (long skirts and sleeveless tops) and would appreciate if you could do the same (no bikinis please). Also consider clothing that will give you protection from the sun and insect bites.

CLIMATE

The tropical dry season (May-October) is our 'winter' and temperatures hover around 28^o Celsius with superb tropical nights. Rainfall is usually during the tropical Wet season (November-April) and daytime temperatures are around 30-33^o Celsius with sea breezes.

DANGERS

• Crocodiles

Saltwater crocodiles inhabit the area. Visitors should exercise extreme caution in the proximity of any substantial body of water. Swimming is not recommended.

• Stingers

Box jellyfish and other potentially dangerous jellyfish inhabit coastal waters. They are particularly common between the months of October and May, but can be encountered at any time of the year. In the event of being stung, do not rub the affected area. Liberally apply vinegar, and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

• Other 'Bites'

Snakes, spiders, scorpions, and stonefish are among the other potentially dangerous creatures which may be encountered at any time of the year. Avoid contact situations and seek medical attention as soon as possible if bitten or stung. Sandflies and mosquitoes are prevalent and may carry infectious disease. Wearing appropriate clothing and the application of insect repellents will minimize the risks.

• Buffalo

Buffalo are relatively common in the local area. They are large, dangerous and unpredictable animals. Close contact should be avoided where possible. They present a particular risk for bushwalkers and are most likely to be encountered at dusk and dawn.

FIRST AID

There are first aid boxes in your transport vehicle to Bawaka and at the Homeland, however you may like to bring some first aid supplies if you are aware you are prone to certain injuries/complaints i.e. blisters, headaches, itching from insect bites. Your Tour Coordinator has a current Senior First Aid Certificate.

HATS / SUNSCREEN/ RAINCOATS / UMBRELLAS

As we will be spending most of our time outdoors, it is advisable to wear a broad brimmed hat and use sunscreen to guard against sunburn. If your visit is during the Wet Season (November – April) it is advisable to bring a light raincoat or umbrella.

LOCATION

Bawaka Homeland is located on the beachfront in Port Bradshaw south of Nhulunbuy, Northern Territory. Access is usually by 4WD, the scenic trip takes approximately 90 minutes from Nhulunbuy (45 mins on dirt road and 45 mins on sand). Helicopter and boat access is also available.

PERMITS

Before any travel is undertaken through Arnhem Land, (ie, to Bawaka), all participants must have a permit. These will be organised for participants through the Northern Land Council.

PUBLIC PHONE

A public phone is available for use. The phone accepts pre-paid phone cards only. You may give the number (8987 9492) to friends / family to contact you in an emergency.

PHOTOGRAPHY / INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Cameras are allowed, however, some sites of significance cannot be photographed. If in doubt, guests are requested to ask permission before taking photographs. You are only authorised to make a record (photographic, film, video or recording) of your visit for your personal use and any publication of the record is not authorised without written permission from Bawaka Cultural Experiences. This helps to protect the cultural and intellectual heritage and property of the Yolngu people.

PROGRAM NUMBERS

A minimum number of five participants are necessary for the program to be run. To ensure that the learning and engagement experience is personal, there is a maximum of eight participants.

SACRED SITES

There are a number of registered sacred sites at and around Bawaka. Unless you are being accompanied by a host to other areas, please stay in the community area to ensure that you do not unwittingly damage these sites or place yourself in a position of potential legal liability.

TOILETS / SHOWERS

Bawaka has two drop toilets and two cold water showers that are available for visitor use.

TOUR COORDINATOR

Adrienne Willing from the Tourism Hub is the Tour Coordinator. Adrienne is assisting our family to develop Bawaka Cultural Experiences. If you have questions about any aspect of the program prior to departure please contact Adrienne on 08 8987 0429 or 0447 087 091 or tourismhub@bigpond.com

TRANSPORT / ROAD CONDITIONS

The road to Bawaka is 4WD drive access only. The first 45 minutes is gravel road that is in reasonably good condition, the remaining 45 minutes is on sand tracks which are bouncy and rough, consequently those with back or neck problems should consider if this tour is suitable for them. Your driver is very experienced and the vehicle is equipped with a first aid kit and recovery equipment. The road may be closed for periods during the Wet season.

VEGETATION

A large number of edible native plants and fruits occur locally. However, there are also a number of highly toxic plants and visitors are strongly advised to avoid 'taste testing' unless advised to do so by a family member, who can provide expert advice on selections and preparation.

WALKING

There are a number of precautions visitors should consider before walking any substantial distance:

- A family member must accompany visitors on all walks away from the community area.
- Group walks will usually be planned for early morning or late afternoon. Please remember to carry water with you.
- Wear sensible clothing, sturdy footwear, a hat, and sunscreen to avoid sunburn.

WATER

It is essential to keep up a high fluid intake to avoid dehydration. Fresh drinking water is provided in the community area from a bore.

WHAT TO BRING

When you depart Nhulunbuy please minimise your luggage so that it fits in a small – medium pack. Any additional items can safely be stored at your accommodation and picked up on return to Nhulunbuy.

Water bottle
Walking Shoes and thongs or sandals
Hat / sun screen / insect repellent
Personal items (clothing / Toiletries)
Camera
Torch
Towel
Sleeping sheet – swag and pillow provided
Sarong

ART AND CRAFT FOR SALE

A variety of art and craft items will be available for sale including baskets, mats, necklaces, carvings and paintings. Please note we do not have Eftpos or credit card facilities at Bawaka.