

INTERPRETATION PLAN



Kimberley Getaways

****Please note: This example is completely fictitious - it should give a good idea of how this template can be utilised in your business ****

NAME	DATE	SIGNED
Plan Prepared by		
John Doe	01/04/2019	John Doe
Plan Reviewed by	Annual Update / Review	
John Doe	01/04/2019	

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OVERVIEW OF THE INTERPRETATION PLAN

SCOPE

Kimberley Getaways run a 3-day tour that visits three national parks within the region. These include Tunnel Creek National Park, Windjana Gorge National Park and Geikie Gorge National Park. The region is an important cultural area for the Bunuba people of the Kimberley and this is a large component of our operation.

Tunnel Creek National Park

The Tunnel Creek National Park tour takes guests to a cave system made of limestone, the remains of an ancient reef system which existed here 350 - 375 million years ago and the oldest cave system in Western Australia. The tunnel is inhabited by fish, bats and freshwater crocodiles, but is otherwise quite barren.

Windjana Gorge National Park

Created by the Lennard River, Windjana Gorge is over 3kms long and shielded by 300m high walls. At its base, deep freshwater pools are surrounded by native fig, liechardt and cadjeput trees. These species attract corellas and fruit bats to the area and the pools play home to freshwater crocodiles, fish species, eels and snakes.

Geikie Gorge National Park

Geikie Gorge has been carved by the Fitzroy River through part of an ancient limestone barrier reef which snakes across the west Kimberley. It was created in an ancient sea that covered a large part of the Kimberley approximately 350 million years ago. The gorge is occupied by crocodiles, fish, flying-foxes and a wide array of bird species including sea eagles and rare purple-crowned fairy-wrens.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Kimberley Getaways' objective of our interpretation material is to not only reveal the natural wonders of the Kimberley to our guests, but also to educate them on many features and of the culture within the region. Our key objectives include:

- Developing an appreciation for this natural wonder
- Identifying environmental impacts from human influence
- Creating an understanding of the cultural significance of the region
- Acknowledging conservation initiatives
- Educating on the history of the region and its formation
- Promoting sustainable tourism
- Providing different levels of interpretation depending on the level of interest

INTERPRETATION TOPICS

Our tour provides guests with a fair amount of information to absorb and take on board, as we believe in the relevance of every topic and the impact the information we provide will have on their lives. We aim to make our tour as fascinating as possible as there is so much information about the Kimberley that is interesting. The topics we cover in our tours include:

- Local history
- The natural landscapes and their formation
- Wildlife found at each site and their habits
- Key bird species
- Local fish species
- Fishing techniques
- Aboriginal culture and heritage
- Climate change impacts
- Conservation methods and environmental management

INTERPRETATION RESOURCES, MATERIALS AND DELIVERY

SUMMARY OF INTERPRETIVE MATERIALS

Guest introduction

Upon arrival, all guest are briefed on our operation and our vision for tourism within the Kimberley region. We outline our goals for environmental management and detail how each guest can contribute to this through correct practices, waste and water minimisation and cultural respect. We identify the processes in place for waste disposal and which bins are delegated for waste and which for recyclables.

Tunnel Creek National Park

We offer information brochures on the tour bus when heading to the tunnel network. These provide basic details of the site, its cultural significance, the species found in the caves and what to wear and bring into the caves. Most of the interpretative information on this tour is delivered by our guides during the tour and any questions answered during this time. The importance of bringing all litter and belongs back out of the cave systems is also stressed by our guides.

Windjana Gorge National Park

Information brochures on the history of the gorge, the hiking trails in the area, bird watching sites and fossil viewing sites as well as other iconic landmarks are provided to all guests. Our guides outline the rules and guidelines for activities within the park including no fishing and no photography of sacred Aboriginal sights.

Geikie Gorge National Park

Information brochures are again used to educate guests on the activities available at Geikie Gorge and on the local fauna and flora of the area. We provide an overview of the boat tour, introducing our Indigenous guides and outlining what will be involved in the trip. During this time, a boat safety speech is given and the importance of not littering the waterways is also covered. Information is given on the bird and fish species located at the gorge and prime locations for fishing and viewings are identified. We also schedule

the time of departure for the boat trip, meal times and tutorial times (fishing, guided walks and cultural speeches).

Any information required by our guests is usually answered by a guide on the spot. Their extensive knowledge of the region helps with the interpretation of any confusing information.

DETAILS OF INTERPRETIVE CONTENT

Interpretive resources include:

- National park information DVD on bus
- Cave safety DVD
- Photo book of destinations featuring past guests
- A variety of books about the Kimberley region
- Bird identification charts
- Fish identification chart
- Website information
- Green traveller information
- Climate change information – offsetting emissions

Active interpretation includes:

- Guides on boats / tours
- Night time talks and presentations
- Fishing tutorials
- Interaction through discussions / activities
- Dreamtime stories and teachings from Bunaba guides

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Reference books, such as
 - Field, G. (2000) Developing ecotours and other interpretive activity programs: A guidebook for planning, designing, promoting and conducting ecotourism activity programs
 - McGregor, W. (2004) The languages of the Kimberley, Western Australia
 - Petheram, R. J. & Kok, B. (2003) Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia
- Fact sheets and guest training materials provided by Ecotourism Australia
- Our Indigenous guides share their stories first-hand
- Best practice guidelines in protected areas from IUCN
- Climate change information
 - <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/climate-change/climate-projections-western-australia>
 - Just For Kids: What's Climate Change? And What Can I Do? - The Climate Reality Project

INTERPRETATION FOR TARGET GROUPS

- Our brochures are available in multiple languages to ensure guests understand our sustainability policy, guidelines and safety information.
- Our guides speak multiple languages including English, Spanish, German, Chinese and Japanese
- Safety information is provided at eye level for printed text.

PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN INTERPRETATION QUALITY

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Customer feedback is very important to our operation and we try to obtain as much as possible. Because our tours are quite intimate there is often feedback from guests during the tour. We also have a guest book that we pass around the bus on our final day for people to leave any comments about their experience.

On top of this we send all of our guests a thank you email after the tour is over. In this email we provide a link to our website and encourage guests to leave any feedback they may have, positive or negative. This information is recorded in our database and we always try to act on any advice given.

EVALUATION OF INTERPRETIVE MATERIALS

Kimberley Getaways provides an extensive range of information to our guests. This information comes in the form of information brochures, DVDs, identification charts, and verbal communication. We aim to ensure all our interpretive material is accurate, relevant, and understandable.

Through our guestbook, post tour emails, website feedback forms and discussions with guests, we utilize feedback on our interpretative materials so they can be evaluated. We then consider which interpretive materials need improving and work towards updating them.

We inspect our bird and fish identification charts at least once a year to ensure our guests can identify species that remain living in the Kimberley. It is not often that there are changes to be made, however if the population numbers decrease or increase, we feel this is worthy to mention, and we notify our guests to raise awareness.

Our climate change interpretive materials include the multitude of ways carbon emissions can be minimised and offset, as well as any other key facts to share. If we come across new or alternative ways to minimise or offset emissions, we update our materials.

STAFF & GUIDE TRAINING AND INITIATIVES

We have two certified EcoGuides within our operation that have been running tours in the region for the past 15 years. These guides are certified by Ecotourism Australia and have been responsible for the induction and in field training of other staff. All crew hold a current First Aid certificate and a drivers licence with 'F' extension for operating our bus.

Our two Indigenous guides for the Geikie Gorge river cruise each hold a Marine Engine Driver Master 4 licence. These employees belong to the Bunuba people and have extensive physical and cultural knowledge of the region. They have been responsible for passing on invaluable cultural knowledge to all of our staff regarding the natural landscape, bush food, fishing hotspots, Dreamtime stories and natural icons within the region.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We are currently in the process of adding another element to our tour with the help of local Indigenous communities. It will be an extension to our current itinerary where we visit a local community for cultural demonstrations. These will include hunting and gathering lessons led by the community and a bush tucker cook up of local cuisine.

Our aim has been to involve more of the local communities and generate employment and income. This addition will also provide our guests with a unique experience and allow them to experience how the local Indigenous population has lived for countless generations.