

# Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region Destination Management Plan

## ANNUAL REPORT CARD 2022

The Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region Destination Management Plan (DMP) focuses on development priorities for the sustainable growth of tourism in the region over 10 years.

There are six DMPs that identify key strengths and assets across Northern Territory regions, and provide a comprehensive overview of comparative advantages, current product offerings and visitor profiles.

### The six destinations are:

- Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region
- Lasseter region
- Barkly region
- Big Rivers region
- East Arnhem Land region
- Greater Darwin region



The Annual Report Card measures the progress of outcomes and includes key performance metrics for the region such as visitor numbers, expenditure, satisfaction rating, online feedback/ reviews and digital data.

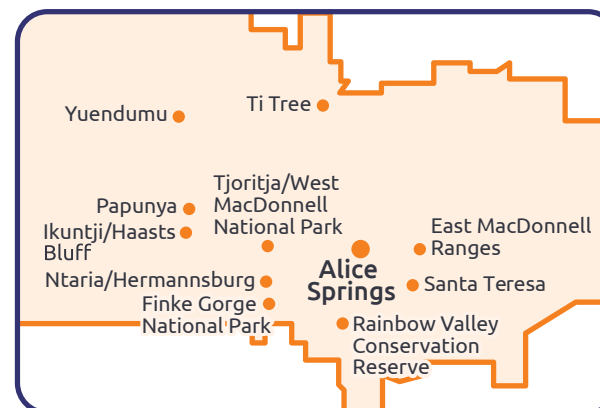
The DMPs are reviewed every two years to ensure action plans and the prioritisation of product development opportunities align within the context of the current environment, including demand.

DMPs for the Big Rivers and three Central Australia regions (Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges, Barkly and Lasseter) were completed in late 2020, with the East Arnhem Land DMP completed in November 2021 and the Greater Darwin region DMP completed in May 2022.

### Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region

The Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region makes up a significant portion of Central Australia and is characterised by unique desert environments. Visitor experiences in the region focus on nature, Aboriginal culture, adventure, history and events. The region includes the Northern Territory's second most populated centre of Alice Springs, which forms an important service point for communities and visitors across Central Australia.

The visitor experiences are considered well aligned to the current demands in the visitor market. The region is an important connection for visitors to the neighbouring Lasseter region and draws visitors from other regions making it an important contributor to tourism across the Territory.



# Visitation and expenditure

## Year ending June 2022\*

Visitors ↓44%

235,000

Holiday: 103,000

Visiting friends/family:  
24,000

Expenditure ↓45%

\$217M

Business: 86,000

Other (i.e. work/study):  
26,000

\* With percentage changes compared to 2019 data

## Year ending June 2019

Visitors

419,000

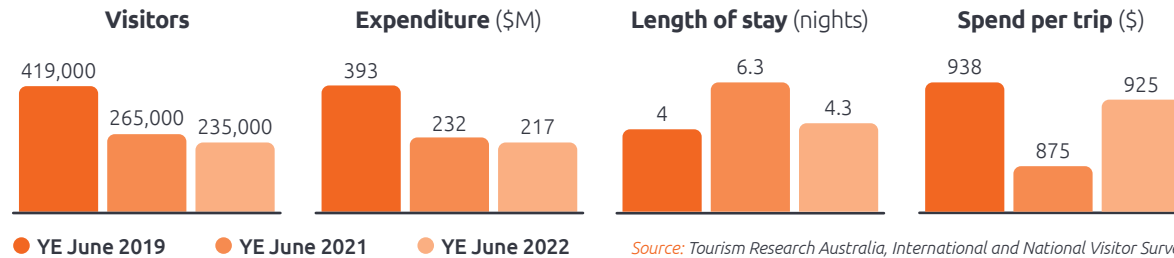
Expenditure

\$393M

Data to the year ending 2022 reflects visitation and expenditure during months when COVID restrictions were still heavily impacting the Northern Territory.

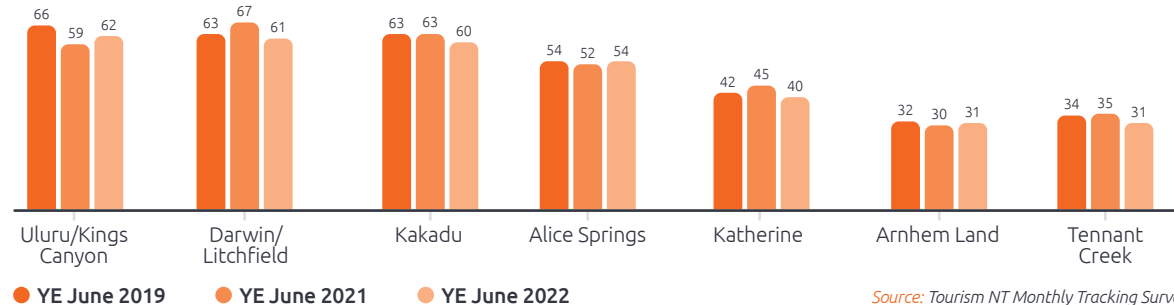
Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey

## Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges key data



## Places in the NT you would visit

### Annual shifts by NT considerers (%)

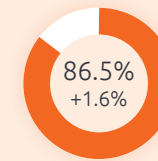


# Visitor satisfaction

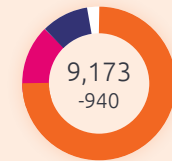
## Year ending June 2022 with percentage changes compared to previous 12 months\*

\*Based on establishments – attractions, hotels, caravan parks and wayside inns (not food and hospitality providers) – ReviewPro data.

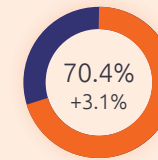
### Global review index



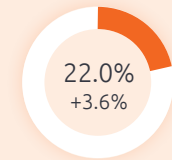
### Reviews



### Semantic analysis



### Management response



● positive (80%+) ● neutral (79-60%) ● negative (59-0%)

### Positive reviews:

Food and drink ↑ 6.4%  
Experience ↑ 2.2%  
Sustainability ↑ 1.4%  
Cleanliness ↑ 3.1%  
Service ↑ 7.9%

### Negative reviews:

Value ↓ 1.7%  
Camping ↓ 8.5%  
Room ↓ 0.5%  
Security ↓ 4.2%  
Establishment ↓ 0.2%

The Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region saw a Global Review Index (GRI) increase of 1.6%. Visitors reported high satisfaction in food and drink, particularly at hotels and on tours. Positive mentions of service increased by 7.9% with a large number of reviews specific to car and campervan hire, attractions and accommodation providers. Negative mentions for camping increased by 8.5% and were specific to both caravan parks and private campsites of tour operators. Negative mentions of security also increased, mainly due to faulty accommodation door locks.

# Collective stakeholder progress on regional priorities

## Locality and opportunity

## Progress and regional achievements

**Alice Springs:** establish the First Nations Gallery of Australia.

Site selection at Wills Terrace, at the base of Anzac Hill, is complete and design concepts, including Arrernte name of gallery are progressing through community consultation.

**Alice Springs:** establish a new contemporary visitor information centre.

NT Government has purchased a site on the Stuart Highway. The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) has commissioned an environmental study of the site and established a project working group.

**Alice Springs:** complete the revitalisation of the Alice Springs CBD.

Works continued throughout the year on implementation of the Alice Springs CBD Master Plan including new landscaping, lighting and visitor amenities.

**Alice Springs:** refresh and expand Alice Springs Desert Park offerings and facilities.

Café facilities at the Alice Springs Desert Park have reopened to visitors following the engagement of a new cafe operator.

**Alice Springs:** develop night time experiences.

Tourism Evening Experiences Development Round 1 grant funding awarded to:

- Old Gaol twilight tour at Alice Springs Women's Museum of Australia
- Dinner Under the Stars experience at National Road Transport Hall of Fame
- Sunset to Sunrise Adventure Program at Earth Sanctuary
- Wildlife Experience Survival dinner at Ooraminna Station Homestead.

**Alice Springs:** establish and improve quality accommodation offerings in Alice Springs.

Private investor, IRIS Capital, purchased a number of hospitality businesses in Alice Springs, with plans for upgrades and refurbishment in progress for Crowne Plaza Lasseters including an expansion of the hotel by 235 rooms.

**Central Australia:** expand Aboriginal cultural experiences.

- Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region is well represented on the Aboriginal Tourism Committee by Chair Paul Ah Chee and member Nova Pomare.
- Central Australia Aboriginal Tourism working group established to coordinate Government and not for profit support to enhance quality and quantity of Aboriginal tourism experiences in Central Australia.
- Aboriginal Tourism Grant Program Round 3 awarded a total of \$36,321 in grant funding to Tangentyere Artists Aboriginal Art Centre and Iltja Ntjarra Many Hands Art Centre.
- Aboriginal Tourism Grant Round 4 awarded \$88,227.27 in grant funding to Standley Chasm to expand its Cultural Centre.
- Partnered with Central Land Council to positively influence Aboriginal tourism outcomes from CLC/ABA Economic Stimulus Funding.
- Supported six Aboriginal Tourism Operators and entrepreneurs to attend the first Northern Territory Aboriginal Tourism Forum, held in Darwin.

**Central Australia:** establish a Red Centre Adventure Ride.

Supported NT Parks and Wildlife in the development of a 260km Red Centre Adventure Ride between Alice Springs and Glen Helen.

**Central Australia:** enhance the Binns Track Experience.

Supported Arltunga Bush Pub and Eco Retreat through Aboriginal tourism grant program to further develop a new visitor entrance for the bush retreat.

**MacDonnell Ranges:** seal the Mereenie Loop road.

Funding allocated for sealing of the Mereenie Loop road within 5 years. Construction commencement is subject to Traditional Owner and community consultations, and further design.

**MacDonnell Ranges region:** install and upgrade wayfinding signage across the region.

Red Centre Way wayfinding structures have been updated with new maps and information.

# Collective stakeholder progress on regional priorities

## Locality and opportunity

## Progress and regional achievements

**MacDonnell Ranges region:** develop new walking trail experiences in East MacDonnell Ranges.

A feasibility study tender has closed for a new multi-day walking experience, Atnarpa Trail, from Ruby Gap to Ross River. Currently in assessment phase.

**MacDonnell Ranges region:** enhance visitor experience at Glen Helen.

Supported the G'Day Group at Glen Helen in their endeavours to invest in upgrades, particularly in addressing future water supply issues.

**Ntaria/Hermannsburg:** finalise the redevelopment of the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.

Stage 1 of restoration completed 2022. Stage 2 works being finalised including design of the carpark area that will allow for 12 coach bays and 31 car parks.

**Ntaria/Hermannsburg:** develop the Namatjira Art Gallery.

Preferred site for gallery identified through discussions with Central Land Council and Traditional Owners.

**Plenty Highway:** develop tourism infrastructure along the Plenty Highway.

Supported Aboriginal tourism operators on the Plenty Highway to continue planning for new small campgrounds in the Atitjere region.

## Future focus

- Support the development of priority investment opportunities including sealing the Mereenie Loop Road, Outback Way and First Nations Gallery of Australia.
- Continue partnership with Ntaria Community to establish a purpose built art gallery.
- Commence planning for the development of a visitor campground at Ntaria/Hermannsburg as recommended in their Visitor Experience Master Plan.
- Support Aboriginal tourism operators to close the gap between supply and demand for cultural experiences through implementation of the Aboriginal Tourism Strategy.
- Support Aboriginal tourism operators to participate in the Northern Territory's Aboriginal tourism delegation led by the Aboriginal Tourism Committee to the World Indigenous Tourism Summit in Perth, from 13 - 16 March 2023.
- Finalise design and begin construction of new Visitor Information Centre in Alice Springs.
- Support NT Parks and Wildlife in actioning the NT Parks Master Plan, including partnering to address accessibility issues within the Parks estate.
- Work with operators to grow the domestic school group market in the region.
- Continue to support NT Parks and Wildlife to establish the Red Centre Adventure Ride.
- Continue support for Atnarpa Trail, a new multi-day walking trail between Ross River and Ruby Gap.
- Support tourism operators to develop new sustainable visitor experiences and encourage improved sustainability practices.
- Ensure regional tourism signage is adequate, appropriate and properly maintained.
- Partner with DIPL to ensure all road signage is contemporary and in good condition.
- Continue to promote and encourage dispersal of visitors across the region through appropriate information facilities.

For further information please contact  
Tourism NT:  
**[tourism.development@nt.gov.au](mailto:tourism.development@nt.gov.au)**  
**08 8951 8518**

Read more about Destination Management Plans here:  
**[tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/destination-management-plans](https://tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/destination-management-plans)**.

