



Karijini EXPERIENCE

A celebration of culture
and landscapes



Visitors to the annual Karijini Experience enjoyed a diverse and inclusive program of high-quality arts and cultural experiences, while also forging a connection with the homeland of the Banjima people, amongst the awe-inspiring landscape of Karijini National Park.

by Richard Campbell



The beauty and awe of Karijini National Park must be experienced firsthand to get a full understanding of its depth, both in terms of natural landscape and its heritage. When visitors drive into the park they can feel the warmth, and there is no doubt that it is a special place.

The Banjima people have looked after this Country for thousands of years, and each year, people gather in celebration of the people on Country at the annual Karijini Experience event.

Visitors take in the stories and language of the Banjima people, starting with a welcome ceremony and opening Barlgabi corroboree before four days of

guided walks, workshops, entertainment and storytelling before the final Barlgabi and Yurlu Lounge concert.

The experience honours the long-held culture with respect and understanding of Country.

A WEEK TO REMEMBER

The Karijini Experience is not just one event; it is made up of more than 50 related events that bring together four days of culture, art, food and music on Country.

In 2024, the Karijini Experience ran from 4 to 7 April and events included culture weaving (including an immersive weaving workshop using First Nations knowledge and cultural practices), kids sewing, art workshops, bush medicine and even football skills provided by the Perth Football Club.

Storytelling, language workshops and sharing of artefacts gave visitors exposure to the Banjima culture. In the evenings, kangaroo and damper was prepared using traditional methods and shared with visitors.

A moving tribute was paid to the late Mr Maitland Parker, a key figure behind the Karijini Experience. The family put together a pictorial and historical account of his involvement on Banjima homeland.

To supplement each day, live entertainment brought people together through music and dance. Bands and solo musicians performed each night, all with Aboriginal roots and influences—two Western Australian bands, Bradley Hall

and Broken Tides, as well as soloists from NSW and Victoria.

The headline act was Dan Sultan on his second trip to the Karijini Experience, who performed in the event finale, the Yurlu Lounge.

SPOILT FOR CHOICE

One of the greatest explorations of culture is through food. Visitors enjoyed two dining experiences with Fervor at Dales Gorge, who offered Aboriginal produce and flavours through a degustation that rivalled upmarket city restaurants.

Indigenous chef, Zach Green, introduced Iluka Kitchen and presented two dinners. He also offered cooking demonstrations and prepared meals for the Elders. Iluka provided a great option for visitors to have onsite food available from one of the region's leading chefs.

Visitors enjoyed a fitting film under the stars called 'Sweet As', which was shot in the Pilbara region with fantastic backdrops and a moving story line. Fashion parades promoted local talent on the catwalk in the red dirt Karijini landscape. The show was put together by Wonnarua woman, Amanda Healy of the fashion house Kirrikin, and featured Banjima artist and fashion designer, Kaninda.

Another highlight enjoyed was the Jundunmunnah Art Exhibition held at the Karijini Visitor Centre; a showing and sales opportunity for local Indigenous artists fostering their incredible talent and showing off the rich culture of the region.

Previous page

Main Banjima guided walks were held daily throughout the event.

Inset from top Traditional dance in celebration of Country. A variety of workshops were enjoyed by young and old. Visitors enjoyed Aboriginal produce and flavours.

Above The stunning backdrop of Karijini National Park.

Photos – CMS Events

Discover more about Karijini National Park

Scan this QR code or visit Parks and Wildlife Service's 'LANDSCOPE' playlist on YouTube.



3)



4)

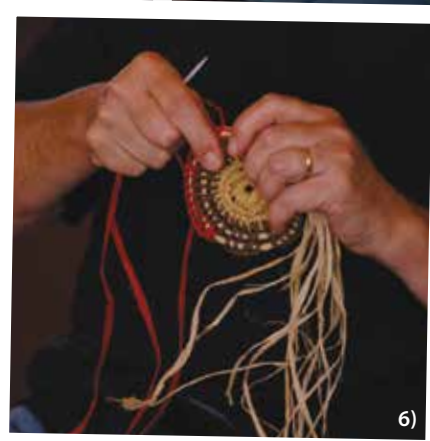


5)

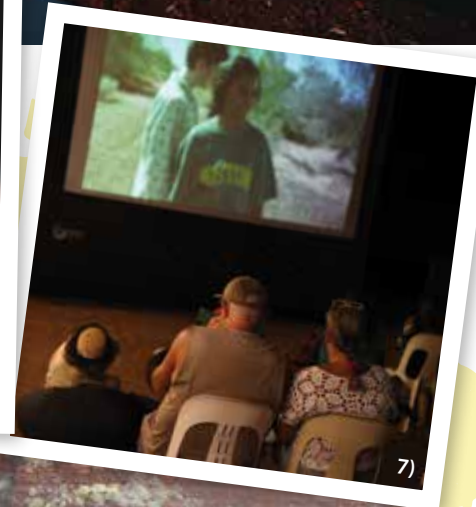
“One of the greatest explorations of culture is through food.”



● Karijini National Park



6)



7)

MAKE THE TRIP

While the schedule of the Karijini Experience was action packed, including early morning yoga sessions and massage, the trip to the Pilbara was well worth it for visitors.

Outside of the Karijini Experience event, the vast landscape and expansive gorges of the region, including the impressive Joffre Gorge, are incredible to witness. Especially for those who want to be a little more adventurous and go hiking followed by a refreshing break in one of the natural pools.

.....
Opposite page: 1) Perth Football Club workshop and skills session. 2) Models getting ready to show off local artists in the fashion parade.

This page: 3) Sharing traditional face painting techniques as part of the Banjima experience.

4) Bradley Hall Band on the first night.

5) Fervor's dining experience at Dales Gorge.

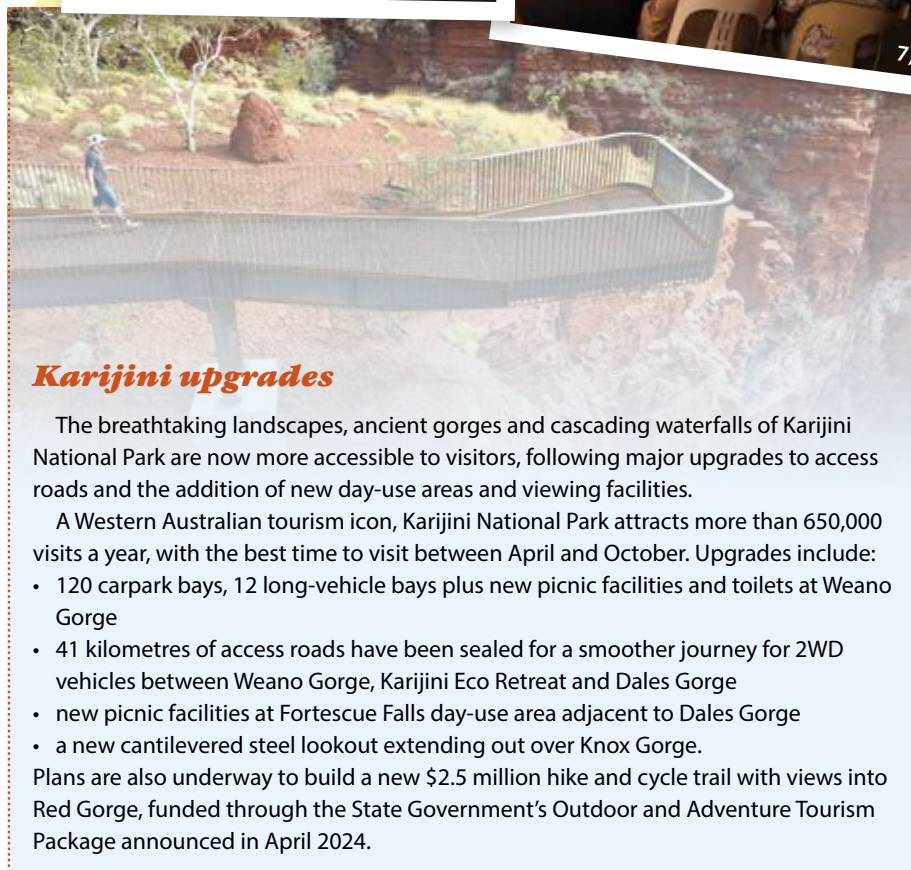
6) Culture weaving was very popular under the main marquee.

7) Relaxing to enjoy the screening under the stars of 'Sweet As',

filmed in the Pilbara. *Photos – CMS Events*

Right New lookout extending over Knox Gorge.

Photo – Shem Bisluk/DBCA



Karijini upgrades

The breathtaking landscapes, ancient gorges and cascading waterfalls of Karijini National Park are now more accessible to visitors, following major upgrades to access roads and the addition of new day-use areas and viewing facilities.

A Western Australian tourism icon, Karijini National Park attracts more than 650,000 visits a year, with the best time to visit between April and October. Upgrades include:

- 120 carpark bays, 12 long-vehicle bays plus new picnic facilities and toilets at Weano Gorge
- 41 kilometres of access roads have been sealed for a smoother journey for 2WD vehicles between Weano Gorge, Karijini Eco Retreat and Dales Gorge
- new picnic facilities at Fortescue Falls day-use area adjacent to Dales Gorge
- a new cantilevered steel lookout extending out over Knox Gorge.

Plans are also underway to build a new \$2.5 million hike and cycle trail with views into Red Gorge, funded through the State Government's Outdoor and Adventure Tourism Package announced in April 2024.



TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS



Class 2

No previous experience required. Suitable for all fitness levels.



Class 3

Some bushwalking experience and minimal navigation skills. Moderate level of fitness required.



Class 4

Experienced bushwalkers and moderate navigation skills. May require navigation equipment. Self-reliant in emergency first aid and weather hazards. Good level of fitness required.



Class 5

Very experienced bushwalkers only. High level of navigation skills with navigation equipment. Self-reliant in emergency first aid and weather hazards. High level of fitness required.



WARNING! Flash floods can occur at Karijini. If it rains while you are in the gorges, please leave gorges safely and promptly.



EXPLORING KARIJINI GORGES

In the north of Karijini National Park, small creek beds, hidden in the rolling hillsides and dry for most of the year, suddenly plunge down 100-metre chasms. Further downstream the gorges become wider and their sides change from sheer cliffs to steep slopes of loose rock. Finally the drainage systems emerge as alluvial fans into the Fortescue Valley. The gorges provide a refreshing retreat from the arid plains above. Visitors can take one of the many walk trails through the gorges and experience the spectacular scenery, dramatic waterfalls and clear, fresh pools.

Trails in Karijini are rated from Class 2 to 5. Please see trail classification information (left).

Dales Gorge See the tranquil sunken gardens, deep sedge-fringed pools, and permanently cascading waterfalls.

Joffre and Knox gorges Appreciate the power of water shaping the landscape. There are impressive waterfalls, and deep, cold pools. See for yourself how the gorges were formed.

Hancock and Weano gorges Experience the spectacular views, precipitous cliffs and narrow passages. Banded iron rock formations tower over the valleys far below.

Kalamina Gorge A great introduction to the gorge system with its delightful trail and picnicking area.

Hamersley Gorge This gorge has dramatic colours, textures and reflections.

Above Handrail Pool, Weano Gorge.
Photo – Remi Bremont

Left Guided tours are popular in the gorges.
Photo – CMS Events

Richard Campbell is the Director of CMS Events that hosted the Karijini Experience event. He can be contacted at (08) 9201 9888 or richard@cmsevents.com.au