

# Cape York Journeys

**ALCOHOL RESTRICTIONS**

Differing restrictions apply in each indigenous Local Authority area. Check with the official website for restrictions and ensure you know where the area boundaries are.

<http://www.qld.gov.au/atsi/health-staying-active/community-alcohol-restrictions/>

**ROAD CONDITIONS**

Conditions vary on each road from easy 2WD on bitumen or good gravel to extremely difficult 4WD.

Check with the local Authority, not only on condition, but also on the need for any permits, particularly for Private, Mining or indigenous tracks.

**CAMPING PERMITS.**

Camping in National Parks requires e-permits before arriving. Check with the National Parks website for details.

[http://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/experiences/camping/camping\\_bookings.html](http://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/experiences/camping/camping_bookings.html)

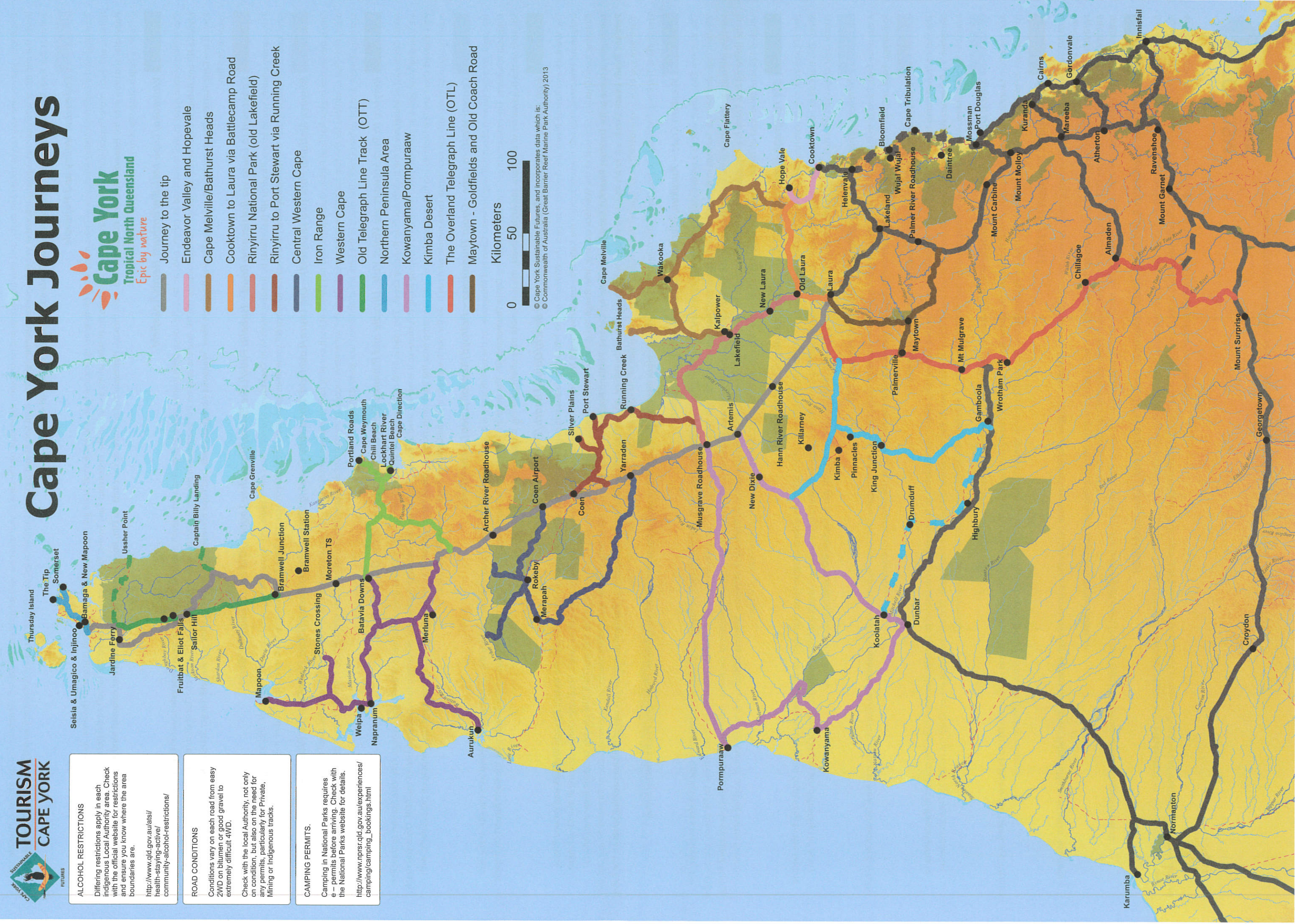


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Kilometers



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### **Journey to the tip - The Epic Journey (4WD or Adventure 4WD)**

This 800km journey one way can be rough and dusty, or it may be smooth and no problem, depending on the time of year and how well it has been maintained. Generally, you can expect corrugation, dust holes, the odd dip or washout that is poorly marked or yet to be marked, wandering cattle, feral horses and pigs, and suicidal kangaroos. Driving at night is not recommended because many animals are more active at this time. **Drive to the prevailing condition – highlights on – CB radios to Channel 40**

### **Endeavour Valley and Hopevale**

Travelling on the Endeavour Valley Road, you will pass many small farms growing tropical fruit, and some small scale grazing properties. Passion fruit is grown in the area, as well as dragon fruit, limes, lychees, and many more tropical fruits - the Endeavour River has some small falls, which are within the Endeavour Falls Tourist Park - Continue on past the turnoff to **Battlecamp Road** until you reach **Hopevale**, and drop in to the **Hopevale Arts and Cultural Centre**. Pass through **Hopevale** and on towards the coast via **Elim Road** where there are spectacular **coloured sand formations** which can be reached on foot - a beach camp site is run by local elder Eddie Deemal.

### **Wakooka/Cape Melville/Bathurst Heads/Lakefield**

This section of road is not as well maintained as others, and can be quite rough, with many creek crossings, and some beach driving. It heads north from **Hopevale** towards **Cape Flattery**, then up to **Cape Melville NP** and **Bathurst Bay**. There is camping inside and outside the NP, and the sand on the beaches can be very fine so beware when driving on the beach. Places of interest on the route include the turnoff the **Cape Flattery** (beach access only), **Starcke River** and **Jannie River**, **Wakooka Aboriginal Lands**, and **Cape Melville National Park** ending at **Lakefield** Ranger Station. **Bathurst Head** is a great spot to camp and fish.

### **Cooktown to Laura via Battlecamp Road – Isabella Falls/Lake Emma/Horseshoe Lagoon/Old Laura/Laura (100km)**

This journey enables you to access **Rinyirru NP (Lakefield)** by heading north from **Cooktown**, and continues on to **Laura**, the home of many amazing rock art galleries. This section of road can stay closed until June, due to the crossing over the **Normanby River**, and because **Rinyirru NP** sometimes opens late. The southern access to **Cape Melville** is also from the eastern end of this road.

### **Rinyirru National Park (Old Lakefield) – Old Laura/Lakefield/Normanby Crossing/Breeza Plains/Bizant/Nifold Plans/Marina Plains/Annie River**

This is the second largest National Park in Queensland, and has plenty of bush camping for the independent traveller. The park is very flat, with meandering rivers that swell in the wet creating a huge flood plain, and ideal conditions for the famous barramundi to breed. Once the waterways recede, many lagoons and waterholes remain teaming with birdlife, and fish. There is great camping along the **Normanby** and **Hann Rivers**, and **Salt Water Creek**. The roads in the park are maintained to a good standard.

### **Rinyirru to Port Stewart via Violet Vale, Lilyvale and Running Creek and on to Coen via the Old Coen Track**

About 18km east of **Musgrave** is the turnoff north to **Running Creek**. This road is 4WD and crosses the **Stewart River** near the coast at the northern end. It does pass through **Lilly Vale Station** so travellers are asked to leave gates as you find them. There is no camping along this route so it is mainly used as a short cut to **Port Stewart** at this stage and allows you to bypass a section of the **PDR**. Once you reach **Port Stewart** there are few facilities (no fuel or general store). You can camp near the boat ramp; however, **Silver Plains Station** is a short distance from the coast and has camping on the property, with opportunity to interact with the local **Lama Lama** people who run it. At the north western end, the **Old Coen Track** is a great 4WD track.

### **Central Western Cape - Oyala Thumotang – Holroyd/Kendall/Coen/Archer Rivers**

The southern road turns in about half way between **Coen** and **Musgrave** - at the turnoff there is a sign to **Yarraden Station**. On your right hand side is the old **Hamilton Goldfield** with the site of the old **Ebagoola** township. The road continues in a loop through the **Oyala Thumotang NP**. The northern entry to **Oyala Thumotang NP** is a few km past the **Quarantine Station** near the **Coen Airport** on the left situated on the headwaters of the **Coen** and **Archer Rivers**, this is a remote park offering fishing, camping and bird watching.

### **Iron Range – Lockhart/Portland Roads/Chill Beach/Quintel Beach/Frenchman's Track**

The **Wenlock** and **Pascoe Rivers** are crossed. Just past the **Wenlock** on the left is the old **Batavia goldfields**. Past the **Wenlock River** you travel through the **Kaanju Ngaachi Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers Indigenous Protected Area** and then on through the **Kutini Payamu (Iron Range) National Park**. Bush camp on the western side of the **Wenlock** or have a hot shower while camping at the **Chuwlangun Camping Area (Chuwla)**, 5km east of the **Wenlock** crossing. **Iron Range** has great birdwatching with 15 endemic species, and walking trails in the National Park. The thriving **Lockhart River** indigenous community is home to the **Lockhart River Art Gang (Lockart River Art Centre)**. **Portland Roads** community is a small idyllic refuge by the sea. It offers beachfront accommodation at **Portland House** and the **Portland Roads Beach Shack**, ask locals about the jetty, WWII historic sites, birdwatching, and fishing. **Chill Beach** is reached just south of **Portland Roads** and is one of the best camping spots on the Cape. make sure you book your e-permit early. **Quintel Beach** is just on the eastern side of the **Lockhart** community and has the barge ramp.

**Frenchmans Track** is a 4WD route to **Iron Range**. The rugged track fords the **Wenlock River** and has some very rough and boggy sections before the deep, challenging **Pascoe River** crossing.

### **Western Cape – Aurukun, Merluna, Napranum, Weipa, Mapoon**

The Western Cape offers visitors a unique insight into the history of Cape York and a rich and varied travel experience. The mining town of **Weipa** is a great place to replenish supplies before exploring the Western Cape and beyond. Services in the region include accommodation, supermarkets, fuel, post office, newsagency, specialty shops, bakery, butcher, café, and 4WD and fishing tackle supply stores, public services, internet, airport. Attractions include fishing, camping, sight seeing, cultural experiences, mine tours. **Aurukun** is situated near the mouths of the **Archer** and **Watson Rivers**, and has excellent fishing in the sheltered bay. There is a new guesthouse in town. **Mapoon** is a very small and remote township approximately 90km north of **Weipa**. **Merluna Station** is a privately owned working Cattle Station situated 120 kms south east of **Weipa**. **Stones Crossing** is situated on the **Wenlock River**, **Stones Crossing** is about 71km north-east of **Weipa**.

### **Old Telegraph Line Track (OTT)/Captain Billy Landing/Usher Point**

One of Cape York's most notorious 4WD tracks, the **OTT** is an unmaintained route following the path of the original overland telegraph line, starting from **Bramwell Junction** and continuing to the **Jardine River**. This track takes you through some beautiful countryside, and requires all the proper recovery gear, and ideally some previous 'adventure 4WD' experience. The highlights are definitely the many crystal clear creeks you will cross., providing great swimming and camping opportunities. Off route tracks take you to **Captain Billy Landing** and **Usher Point**.

### **Northern Peninsula Area/ Tip of the Cape/Somerset/ Punsand Bay**

A day drive from **Bamaga** to the **Tip of the Cape**. The road is of a good gravel standard, subject to seasonal corrugation and dust. Return through **Punsand Bay** and **Loyalty Beach** to **New Mapoon** and return to **Bamaga**. Food and fuel are available at the **NPA** communities. Souvenirs are available at the 'Croc Tent' at the **Somerset** intersection.

### **Artemis/Dixie/Koolatah/Kowanyama/Pormpuraaw/Musgrave**

The section from **Artemis** turn off through **Dixie** to **Koolatah** must be treated with respect at all times. **Koolatah** to **Kowanyama** is considered to be trafficable seasonally. The road from **Kowanyama** to **Musgrave** via **Pormpuraaw** is once again seasonal. Food and fuel are available at **Kowanyama**, **Pormpuraaw** and **Musgrave Roadhouse**. There are camping places along the route, and accommodation available in **Pormpuraaw**. Attractions include fishing, camping bird watching and cultural experiences. These communities are alcohol prohibited.

### **Kimba Desert – Mungana/Strathleven/King Junction/Pinnacles/Kimba/Killarney - Drumduff**

Accessed from **Laura** or **Mungana** in the south, these roads cross the **Kimba Desert**, a dry but heavily forested area. The route connects with the **Artemis** route or the **OTL** to **Fairview** and **Laura**. A connection running parallel to the **Mitchell River** (north side) crosses the **Palmer River** to **Drumduff** and on to **Koolatah**. There is also a causeway from **Highbury** across the **Mitchell** joining it.

### **The Overland Telegraph Line (OTL)**

**MOUNT SURPRISE TO FAIRVIEW** - Heading north, follows the old **OTL** track to **Almaden**, **Chillagoe**, and **Wrotham Park** before heading north through **Mount Mulgrave**, **Palmerville** (turn off to **Maytown**), **Fairlight** and **Fairview**.

**FAIRVIEW TO BRAMWELL** - Follows the **PDR** to the **Bamaga Turnoff** and then heads north along the **Northern Peninsula Road** to **Bramwell Junction**.

**BRAMWELL TO JARDINE** - Follows the **OTT**. There are over 16 creek crossings along the 4WD section of the **OTT**.

**JARDINE RIVER TO PEAK POINT** - Follows roughly the **OTL** to the north of the **Jardine River** bed crossing. **Peak Point** was the jumping off point for the original undersea cable to **Thursday Island**.

### **MAYTOWN – Goldfields & Old Coach Road - Maytown and Old Coach Road (Adventure 4WD)**

A great 4WD adventure to start your Cape York journey from the **Burke Developmental Road** through **Palmer River Goldfields**, or start from the **Mulligan Highway** to **Maytown** ruins, at the **Whites Creek** Road turnoff 17km south of the **Palmer River Roadhouse**. Circuit route through the **Palmer River** gold fields to **Laura**. The road is definitely seasonal, and subject to flooding and washout. Carry food and fuel as there is none available other than at **Lakeland**, **Laura** and the **Palmer River Roadhouse**.

