

The wild, *Wild West*

TRACY MORRIS and her tribe take us on a dusty adventure to the Coral Coast and Australia's westernmost point to enjoy the remoteness and serenity that only a 4WD and a tent can provide.



Watch a video of the family's wild adventures at Australia's westernmost point by scanning the QR code here:



Let your tyres down and, ladies, tighten up your bra straps in preparation for some jiggling, as we're about to take you on a very bumpy adventure.

Venturing out to Western Australia's Steep Point, the westernmost point of mainland Australia, is something we have always wanted to do. Famous for its amazing camping locations, abundance of fishing opportunities and stunning remote coastline, this wild beauty of the Coral Coast is more than just a compass point to tick off your list.

Adventure awaits

We've prepared ourselves for at least seven days of off-grid, remote 'awesomeness' and have stocked up with plenty of food, water and an extra supply of diesel. Our little ones, Marli (5) and Ziggy (2), wave goodbye to our beloved caravan (parked at a beautiful waterfront camp) and off we head.

Bumping our way along 140 kilometres of unsealed 4WD track, the kids spot the occasional kangaroo, emu and feral goat. After all that shaking, it's a relief to arrive at the magnificent Zuytdorp Cliffs. It feels like we are standing on the edge of the world as we gaze in awe at the sheer limestone cliffs, which at some points drop as far as 200 metres into



the wild Indian Ocean below. The cliffs stretch on as far as the eye can see and with no phone reception, people or modern-day luxuries close by, we realise just how remote we really are.

We notice a grumbling noise coming from a hole in the ground. It sounds like there is a huge angry beast below us. Suddenly, a huge gush of wind and sea spray erupts from the hole and the imaginary beast lets out a mighty roar. This is the biggest blowhole we have seen and, of course, we all scream, jump and run away as quickly as we can.

We spend the rest of the afternoon safely away from the cliff edge, exploring moon-like craters of water and spotting the most vibrant purple crabs we have ever seen. Rob tries his hand at crazy cliff fishing and we snack on tins of baked beans.

Hunting and gathering

With the light fading, it's time to set up camp and we find the perfect spot on the water's edge. With the help of our mini adventurers, we pitch our tent and settle into our cosy temporary canvas home. Our thoughts now turn to dinner and the kids ask for their



fishing rods. To their delight, they catch a few small wrasse right out the front of our camp. We release them to swim another day as Rob emerges from the water with his spear and two fresh tusk fish that will feed our tribe very nicely indeed.

In the days that follow we discover untrodden tracks that lead to remote beaches and bays. The kids have a ball chasing the waves and combing the sand for shells and treasure. They find a variety of beautiful treasures including clams, starfish and sand dollars. Among the vibrant blue water around Steep Point we spot whales playing offshore, as well as manta rays, dugongs and dolphins.

Road schooling

With an abundance of sea life in the area, we are spoilt and delighted at every turn. Each day naturally morphs into a science lesson. At Hamelin Pool, in the Shark Bay World Heritage Area, we see stromatolites, the oldest living fossils on Earth at a whopping 3.7 billion years old. We learn that the water that surrounds them is twice as salty as normal seawater, and that it can get as hot as a sweltering 45 degrees over the summer months.

The science lesson turns to astronomy and space exploration in Carnarvon, a lovely town between the Shark Bay and Ningaloo



Coast regions that is famous for its bananas and blowholes. Here, we the visit the **Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum** and its historic telecommunications dish, built to support NASA's Gemini, Apollo and Skylab programs. Around 75 kilometres northwest of Carnarvon, the kids learn to snorkel for the first time with a friendly sea turtle just down the road at pretty Point Quobba.

There is a saying in the camping community, that 'the west is best' and given how sandy, salty and sun-kissed we are after going wild in the west, we have to agree. ●

01 Shark Bay from the sky 02 Beach camping bliss
03 Setting up camp 04 Dinner is served 05 Catching dinner
06 The Zuytdorp Cliffs are an amazing sight
07 Kids among the cactus. All images © Tracy Morris/
The Blonde Nomads

Coral Coast Report Card



Info westernaustralia.com

experiencesharkbay.com

Do carnarvonmuseum.org.au