


# Tour Guides

## Cultural Protocols

The Larrakia people are the traditional owners of the Darwin area. They developed a brochure for visitors to their community to explain how they expect visitors to behave and what they should know about Larrakia land. They have 10 cultural protocols or "rules" for visitors.



### CULTURAL PROTOCOLS

The Larrakia people have always welcomed people onto our land throughout the long struggle for the recognition of our land.

The Larrakia aim to foster partnerships according to the cultural protocols, which we ask you to understand and respect.

1. The Larrakia people are the Aboriginal traditional owners of all land and waters of the greater Darwin area including identified Aboriginal living areas.
2. Aboriginal law requires respect for the cultural authority of the traditional owners.
3. Larrakia speak for Larrakia country; other traditional owners speak for their traditional lands.
4. We have a mutual obligation to care for our country with our neighbours.
5. Visitors should be aware that we have a body of knowledge in our land and waters, which includes sites of significance.
6. Larrakia people expect visitors and service providers to be aware of Larrakia cultural obligations and to respect and acknowledge them.
7. Visitors have the right to be treated with respect and understanding.
8. All visitors are responsible for their behaviour and should respect guidance of Larrakia.
9. Learning about country is everybody's responsibility and it is also the responsibility of government and non-government agencies.
10. Inappropriate behaviour reflects badly on Larrakia people and we do not accept it.

### "COMMUNITY HARMONY" PROJECT

The "Community Harmony" Project in Darwin and Palmerston is a joint initiative of the Larrakia Nation, peak Aboriginal organisations, the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments and City Councils to address long standing community concerns about the health and well-being of "itinerants" and the anti-social behaviour of some members of this group.

Strategy initiatives include:

- Development and promotion of the **Larrakia Nation Cultural Protocols**
- Larrakia Hosts** to provide a cultural presence for residents and visitors throughout Darwin and Palmerston
- Larrakia Nation Information and Referrals Office** providing a proof of identification facility, referral service and return to home strategy
- Community Day Patrol** for early intervention
- Day Facility and Day Time Activities** such as music, arts and crafts to provide positive alternatives to the "itinerant" lifestyle
- Accommodation options** including basic shelter and rental facilities
- Data Collection and Research** including first language research
- Additional withdrawal and long term care options**

The rationale behind these initiatives is to encourage "itinerants" in Darwin and Palmerston to find pathways out of the destructive cycle of alcohol and substance abuse towards either a return to home or a more productive lifestyle in town.

### LARRAKIA CULTURAL AWARENESS PROJECT


The Larrakia Cultural Awareness Project intends to provide visitors to the NT Museum at Bullocky Point with the opportunity to meet with local Larrakia people and learn something of our culture through our art, crafts, storytelling, interpretative walks and traditional dancing. It is also an opportunity for our elders to teach our young people more about Larrakia culture, dance and traditions.

A changing program of events during the dry season will allow visitors to become involved in weaving, painting, storytelling and guided walks through Larrakia country. The program will be advised daily and is subject to change due to cultural commitments and the availability of guides, dancers and artists.


### KARAWA

Karawa, the new premises for the Larrakia Nation on Murphy Road at the Darwin Airport provides a new presence for Larrakia people in Darwin. The facility includes office premises for the Larrakia Nation, Larrakia Aged Care, and the "Community Harmony" Project in Darwin and Palmerston. A range of cultural, social and economic initiatives are being developed at the facility including:


- CDEP and Work for the Dole Programs
- Certified training opportunities
- Tourism opportunities
- Cultural activities including canoe making, traditional arts and crafts and a retail art and craft outlet
- Larrakia nursery, landscaping and garden maintenance businesses
- Indigenous markets
- Event management, particularly hosting visiting dignitaries.




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ATISC  
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## THE LARRAKIA PEOPLE



Artwork: KOOTJAI RAYMOND

*"The Larrakia have been custodians of the Darwin area for thousands of years – they deserve our support and our respect."*

CLARE MARTIN, CHIEF MINISTER OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUGUST 2002

The Larrakia People Cultural Protocols include information about traditional owners.

The Larrakia People Cultural Protocols also include information about how visitors should respect Larrakia culture.

What other information does the Larrakia People Cultural Protocols contain?





This brochure called “Welcome to Country” was produced by the Australian Government for foreign tourists coming to Australia to educate them on showing respect, acting responsibly and explaining what they need to know about visiting an indigenous community. It’s not specific to any community but highlights information relevant to all remote communities.



areas it may not be clear whose traditional lands you are visiting or travelling through. Checking with local tourism agencies, local governments, land and community councils, parks and wildlife agencies or local Aboriginal organisations may provide you with this information. This simple act of inquiring about whose traditional lands you are visiting, is itself, a mark of respect.

There may also be opportunities for you to personally acknowledge the privilege of visiting a group's country or special places.

*“Country got ears and country knows its people”*  
Nyaparu Tarran 2004

### Being a responsible traveller

The choices you make when travelling can and do make a difference. Respecting Indigenous culture and country is a matter of travelling thoughtfully. Use the following points as a guide.

#### Respecting people's privacy

- Many Aboriginal communities or lands require permits to enter – this helps ensure people's privacy. You may need to organise permits with land or community councils well in advance.
- If you are visiting an Aboriginal community, wait until you are invited to approach homes or groups of people.
- Funerals and cultural ceremonies are times of special privacy – use extra sensitivity in communities at these times.

#### Respecting restrictions

- There may be places that are closed to visitors because of their cultural significance – heed advice if you are asked not to enter an area.
- In some places it is culturally inappropriate to swim or fish in waterways, waterholes and/or sea country.
- Some places can only be visited by men or women – please respect these protocols where they apply to non-Indigenous people.
- When in doubt about where you can or cannot go, it is good practice to “ask first”.
- The possession or consumption of alcohol is restricted in some Indigenous communities – these restrictions also apply to visitors.



#### Talking to Indigenous people

- If you are talking to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, recognise that they may communicate differently to non-Indigenous people – English may be a second or third language.
- Access to specific cultural knowledge or stories may not be open to everyone – it is best to avoid direct questions about matters that could be sensitive, unless invited to do so.
- Dress etiquette applies when visiting some Indigenous communities – if in doubt avoid wearing short skirts, short shorts or other revealing clothes.

#### Taking photographs and filming

- Always ask before filming or taking photos of a person, a group of people or cultural activities.
- Photographing and filming some places and objects is restricted for cultural reasons – please respect this important request from traditional owners.
- If you intend to use your photographs in a publication or for other commercial purposes, you will need to seek copyright permission from the people featured in the photo.

#### Taking home a memento

- Locally produced Aboriginal art and craftworks make an excellent memory of your visit to a place – if possible choose items designed and made by Aboriginal people. Look and ask for items that have a label of cultural authenticity.
- Purchasing items from Aboriginal people through respected outlets helps to create economic support for people in communities where there may be limited opportunities for employment.
- Please do not remove rocks or other objects from Aboriginal land or waters without the permission of traditional owners. Disturbing cultural sites is also prohibited by Australian law.

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The Welcome to Country brochure advises tourists some places may be closed to visitors.

What else does it advise visitors in the **Respecting restrictions** section?

What other information does the Larrakia People Cultural Protocols contain?