On The Verandah
presents

Wild Marks:
Painting the Kimberley with Debbie Mackinnon

Kimberley Painting Workshop with Debbie Mackinnon
July 18 – 24, 2026

A note from Debbie:
With a focus on playful experimentation rather than polished outcomes, the week is designed to spark new ideas, deepen your creative voice, and connect you to the land in a truly meaningful way.

Expect to sketch beneath boab trees, respond to the colours and textures of the bush, and use foraged tools to make surprising, instinctive marks.

Daily sessions include time to explore, reflect, and develop your work using a range of materials and processes, with demonstrations by Debbie. Some painting experience will be useful, but the retreat is open to all who are ready to explore, take creative risks, and be inspired by place.

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Included meals: 6B 5L 6D

Day 1, SAT July 18. (Included meals: D)

Our friendly guides will pick you up from your Kununurra hotel or from the airport in the morning between 10.30 and 11am. We'll go for an early lunch, then head out to our base for the week, Digger's Rest. (You'll have an opportunity to purchase your drinks for the week before we leave town.)

Enjoy the drive through scenic marsh country, savannah dotted with boab trees with glimpses the King River. At the station, meet the owners over a cup of tea and we'll show you to your accommodation. Later, come on down to set up your art table in preparation for a week of creating and join us around the fire for happy hour! After a delicious dinner, we'll sit around the crackling campfire under a sky full of magnificent stars!

Day 2, SUN July 19 (Included meals: B/L/D)

Join your tutor, Debbie for a day spent around the station, exploring the landscape through expressive mark-making, mixed media drawing, and painting – both en plein air and on the verandahs with the buzz of cattle station life going on around you! In the afternoon, we'll take you to one of our favourite sunset spots, serve nibbles and pour the complimentary ice-cold bubbles. As a Kimberley sunset develops, you can sketch, paint or simply capture photos across the savannah of the Cockburn Ranges catching crimson hues. After a hearty dinner, relax and gather around the fire.

Day 3, MON July 20 (Included meals: B/L/D)

After breakfast we visit the internationally significant RAMSAR wetlands known as Marlgu Billabong. Keep the camera handy for abundant, world-class wildlife sightings. There might even be a crocodile lurking around, so keep your eyes peeled! We'll wind our way back to the station, taking in the varied landscapes, no doubt stopping to eke out a few sketches with Debbie, arriving at the station with time to freshen up for another tasty meal.

Day 4, TUE July 21 (Included meals: B/L/D)

Join us for an optional billy tea around the fire from 5.30am then kickstart your day with a refreshing pre-breakfast walk with your On The Verandah guide – also optional! See the kettle boab, mother boab or salt arm and get ready for an exciting and fulfilling day ahead!

After a nourishing breakfast, begin a big day of painting with Debbie, beginning with some on-location work and moving under cover for the heat of the day. We'll head out again in the cool afternoon to experience ancient escarpments, endless skies and the stillness of the "long view".

Day 5, WED July 22 (Included meals: B/L/D)

After and early breakfast, we'll take a 20-minute drive to explore a waterlily billabong with a stunning, complimentary rocky backdrop before talking a walk along a nearby valley for more surprising vistas and morning tea. Back at the station, continue with your works and start some new ones too, exploring further, the techniques Debbie has shared. After dinner, bring your torch, get creative and have a giggle with some Light Painting with Rachel.

Day 6, THUR July 23 (Included meals: B/L/D)

Join us for an optional billy tea around the fire from 5.30am and an optional pre-breakfast drive to an area we call the rapids to see if we can track down the local pelican "mega-fleet" and some bronze-pink boab trees. Today you'll have uninterrupted time to work on your art and later, with Debbie's help, set up a mini group exhibition. Dress in your Kimberley finery for the "official opening," bubbles and nibbles, to celebrate a week of fun, new artworks and new friendships.

Day 7, FRI July 24 (Included meals: B)

Start your day with an early walk out on the flat, watching the colours come up on the Cockburn Ranges and listening to the sights and sounds of the Kimberley waking up, or have an easy morning savouring the serenity around your hut. We leave Digger's Rest mid-morning to travel back to Kununurra and have lunch together. We'll have you back to the airport or your hotel before 2pm. If possible, book a flight that departs after 3pm. Flights that leave slightly earlier may be accommodated – please check with us before booking an earlier flight.