





PLAYING THE DIDGERIDOO BODY ART

KINDLING A FLAME

AN EVENING AT THE TJAPUKAI CULTURAL PARK

Experiencing one of the world's oldest cultures

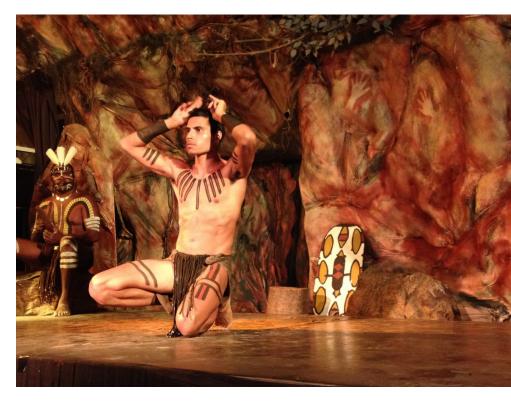
The air around us reverberated with the deep tones of the didgeridoo and the Tjapukai aboriginals stamped and gyrated to its beat. Their ebony bodies adorned with traditional vibrant body art. Soon it was our turn to get painted and we felt the cool swish of a paint brush as it added colour to our faces. Bright bands of colour sourced from local materials; ochre and iron clay pigment of red, yellow and white, and black from charcoal. We felt part of something special and free of any encumbrance we might have brought with us.

Next it was time to take the flickering tiki lit pathway to the site where the fire ceremony would take place. With great dexterity a spark was kindled from a spinning stick which in turn lit a handful she called to the fat frogs who were filled with water. She tickled them until they convulsed with laughter and the water within them gushed out and filled her winding tracks. These became the rivers and along their banks grew grass and trees. Animals and birds awoke and followed the rainbow serpent across the land. They were happy. The Rainbow Serpent made laws. Those that kept the laws were given human form. Those who broke the law were turned to stone. And so the dream time continues

Through song and dance we continued our journey as the ancient totems of the rainforest tribes of Queensland pounded their beat and the deep throated tones of the didgeridoo added base pulsating undertones. From the kangaroo hunt to foraging in the forest, from fishing with line and hook in the ocean to tribal art. There was feasting and plenty of interaction and this new found freedom seemed a world away from life back in the hotel in Cairns. Australia has many experiences to offer but an evening spent with its indigenous people was for me one of its highlights.







THE FIRE IS LIT
RAINBOW SERPENT
KANGAROO DANCE