



Australian Bush Hospitality Pty Ltd. trading as:

**diamantina touring company**

since 1988 abn 14 051 678 212

74 Jamieson Icolia Road  
Jamieson 3723 Australia

phone: 0357 770681  
mobile: 0418 561890  
res@diamantina-tour.com.au

## Hay River Expedition 2011

### Detailed Itinerary

Words cannot describe the beauty of Lake Eyre – vast, surreal; it is a place that has attracted great Australian artists like Storer, Olsen and Williams to return over and over again. This expedition takes in the wilds of the Tirari Desert and the Lower Cooper from a base at Etadunna Station on the Birdsville Track. It then heads north across the Warburton River into the Simpson Desert. Leaving Poeppels Corner it takes the path less travelled northward along abandoned oil exploration roads to Kilpatha Native Well and Beachcomber Oil Well. From here it crosses untracked sand dunes to the terminus of the Hay River, soaked up by the sands of the Simpson. Heading north the pink sandy bed of the Hay River becomes more obvious, fringed with stands of River Red Gums, one tree blazed by Cecil Madigan when he made his Camp 16 during his 1939 expedition. Further north is spectacular Lake Caroline, a vast claypan. The final camp on the Hay includes a drive out to view sunset on the awe inspiring and remote Goyder's Pillar, which completes a north south crossing of the Simpson Desert. The expedition then travels via the Plenty Highway to end in Alice Springs. In just 12 days this expedition travels through an extraordinary diversity of desert landscapes, the ideal shorter Diamantina expedition!

B = Breakfast L = Lunch D = Evening Meal C = Camping M = Cell Phone Coverage (usually Telstra in remote regions) P = Payphone Available S = Shower or swim

#### Day 1

The adventure begins picking up at Adelaide City hotels at 07.00am and travels north to Port Augusta at the head of Spencer Gulf. After refuelling we continue north following the western flanks of the Flinders Ranges to our camp at Parachilna Gorge. You will be introduced to the operation, your guides, and given a full briefing about the coming expedition. Then you will enjoy the first of a range of wonderful contemporary Australian meals cooked over the open fire in camp ovens, Bedourie ovens and grills.

L D C M P

#### Day 2

Your first morning in the outback. We continue on to the ghost town of Farina. Further north is Lyndhurst, at the junction of the Oodnadatta and Strzelecki Tracks. At Marree we refuel before heading north along the Birdsville Track to Etadunna Station. We camp amongst the Coolabah trees near Dead mans Hole in the flood Plain of the Cooper. We head to the former site of the Bethesda Lutheran Mission on the banks of Lake Killalpaninna, and explore the ruins. We hear about the extraordinary clash of cultures that occurred here during the fifty years that the Lutherans, including Strehlow and Reuter administered to the Dieri people. We also visit the grave of Phebe Millner, wife of the drover who first moved stock from Adelaide to Darwin.. B L D C M P





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### Day 3

We return to the Birdsville Track and turn north, shortly crossing the Cooper again. We travel through Mulka Station, which records Australia's lowest average rainfall. At Mungerannie there is the chance for a shower and refreshments at the bar of this remote pub situated half way up the Birdsville Track. We continue north on to Clifton Hills Station, the largest on the Birdsville Track and turn off onto the K1 Line - an oil exploration road that marks the start of our south-north crossing of the Simpson Desert.

[B L D C](#)

### Day 4

Following a long swale north we visit Poeppel Corner, the tri state border between Queensland, the Northern Territory and South Australia. From here we are on the road less travelled. Our track crosses Lake Poeppel and winds through valleys lined with Gidgee Trees as we make our way north to Kilpatha Native Well. Whilst oil exploration parties hoping to tap into its aquifer destroyed the well, the area is an archaeological site of immense significance, and holds clues to how the Wangkangurru people lived in one of the harshest environments on the continent. There are the remains of a wiltja that we know was constructed over 100 years ago, as the Wangkangurru left the Simpson Desert in 1901. We continue north to the site of the abandoned Beachcomber Well and commence an eastward section over the sandhills.

[B L D C](#)

### Day 5

The dunes are becoming a deeper red the further north we travel - the largest dunes of our crossing are encountered on this section. As the track winds northward we start to see the odd stunted coolabah tree, evidence that we are coming closer the southernmost section of the Hay River. We visit Camp 16, where in 1939 Cecil T Madigan blazed a tree to signify his route during his historic crossing of the Simpson Desert. [B L D C](#)

### Day 6

The track winds northward along the riverbed of the Hay, past spectacular stands of majestic River Red Gums. The river bed is now becoming more defined the further north we travel. We detour to visit spectacular Lake Caroline, a vast red claypan. There is a wonderful feeling of remoteness in this seldom trafficked section of the Simpson Desert.

[B L D C S P](#)





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### Day 7

Not far up the track we cross the Tropic of Capricorn. Further north we have a short climb to the summit of Mt Winneke to gaze out at the vast spectacle of the northern Simpson Desert, with the tree line of the Hay River stretching out to the horizon. We replenish our water at Batton Hill Camp, and travel out to the fabled Goyders Pillar for an unforgettable sunset at this singular geological feature discovered by the surveyor Winneke. This singular peak juts spectacularly above the surrounding plains.

BLDC

### Day 8

We depart Atnetye Aboriginal Lands and visit Jervois Station, owned by the Broad family who also own Etadunna. There is a small shop here, and the chance to have a shower. We continue on along the Plenty Highway for our final camp at a rocky outcrop near Gemtree.

BLDCS

### Day 9

We travel west to meet the Stuart Highway. Southward we cross the Tropic of Capricorn and the highway's highest point above sea level before arriving in Alice Springs hotels mid morning and the end of an incredible adventure.

BLDCMS

