



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

## Remote Area Programs Information for participants joining **Western Deserts Expedition 2011**

### **Preliminary Information for All Participants.**

Our remote area programs will have some participants traveling in our desert equipped Landcruisers and Patrols while others will be traveling in their own vehicles. These programs provide expedition travel to some of the most remote and isolated parts of inland Australia. To safely complete the program a lot of consideration and planning goes into vehicle preparation and ensuring that we have adequate fuel, water, food and protection for a safe and enjoyable experience. To this end we need to carry only essential items and possibly forego many of the daily trappings of our normal daily life. If you are used to having a daily shower and washing in many liters of water this will not be possible for most of the program – although you should be able to shower at least once every three days. If you like many cans of drink per day or lots of fine bottled wine, this is not possible. And finally if you like a complete change of clothing each day this may not be possible either! Sounds terrible - but if you are looking forward to real adventure travel there are many alternatives to these comforts and the rewards in this part of Australia are certainly worth a few deprivations. As you know the program involves a high proportion of travel in desert that is typically dry. Although there are several known points where we can fill up with water these can be unreliable and quality cannot be guaranteed. Outback travel presents challenges beyond the norm. Sometimes we have to divert our itinerary due to flooding, track closures, Aboriginal business, mechanical or safety issues—or to witness incredible events like wildflower shows or wildlife events. You need to have a flexible attitude. The outback is a big place and you can expect some very rough travel on tracks that have no maintenance. This program is NOT suitable for people with lower back problems or people unable to withstand long periods sitting in a vehicle. You also need to be aware that there are places where prompt medical evacuation is not possible. Some areas the expedition travels through are too remote for helicopters and there are no landing strips for Flying Doctor planes. The only evacuation is by vehicle and in an emergency this can still take some days.

### **The expedition staff:**

Your Expedition staff collectively has over 40 years of experience traveling through remote parts of Australia and has the mechanical knowledge necessary in the case of emergency. They also have remote area first aid training. They have extensive experience in leading groups in inland Australia and have a broad knowledge of landscape features so will be able to assist participants to interpret these. We carry a number of reference books and maps for inland Australia and will be responsible for participant welfare and the “learning for fun” part of the program. During travel time we maintain commentary both in the Diamantina vehicles and by radio for self drive participants. On a daily basis you will find yourself coping with a limited amount of washing water and wisely using a cloth washer – you will find that a five litre ice cream container makes an ideal wash dish. ‘Wet-ones’ have proved to be a good substitute for a quick wipe down before meals. We recommend that you bring clothing which can be washed when we do have a plentiful supply of water – we carry the buckets, you bring the soap and the line. There will occasionally be time for you to wash and dry clothes, however pack sensibly to minimise the need to. Showers can be purchased, for between \$3 and \$5 at towns like Kunawarrtji, Newman and Forrest.





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The success of any expedition relies on the group dynamic. You are likely to be travelling with people from other countries, different socio-economic backgrounds and different takes on life, politics etc. That is one of the wonderful things about humanity. If you are intolerant of other people you may need to reconsider participating, as you will be in close quarters with other people for the duration of the expedition.

## For Participants in our vehicles

### What to Pack

Below is a recommended list of items to pack, it is not prescriptive. When thinking about clothing, remember there are significant climate variations. —You will experience all kinds of weather.

Two sets long pants/2 short  
Light shirts with collars,  
a warm roll neck or woollen for evenings  
is good,  
a t-shirt or two.  
Jumper or Polar-fleece  
Wide brimmed hat and beanie  
Boots or walking shoes, and  
sandals or thongs or the like  
Socks –  
Undies – whatever you think is a fair thing.  
Waterproof jacket/windcheater  
Pyjamas (optional). Thermal  
underwear is a good alternative  
Swimming costume (optional  
but good when having a bush  
shower)  
Sandals or thongs  
Toilet bag (soap, comb, brush,  
toothbrush, toothpaste,  
deodorant, shampoo)  
Washing soap, 10 m line and pegs  
Spare glasses  
Medicines (tablets, potions, lotions,

Towel—micro fiber are good  
Sun screen cream  
Insect repellent  
Washer  
Small bowl for washing (eg 5 liter plastic  
ice  
cream container or equivalent)  
Wet ones/baby wipes  
Water bottle for drinking  
Camera ,spare film and batteries  
Torch and spare batteries – we  
recommend  
the led miners lamps  
Spare plastic bags  
Needle and thread  
Small backpack to carry your day to day  
items  
Pen, diary  
Money and credit cards  
Tickets  
Fly net  
Pair of gardening gloves –  
handy for collecting wood etc.





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## Baggage

Don't you often find that when you go away you pack more gear than you really need? As this tour is an expedition, space and weight are at a premium. We emphasise that your crew will be eternally grateful if all your clothing can fit in a soft bag not weighing more than 15kgs. We request a soft bag because they are easier for us to pack. Don't bring your very best Gucci bags, just something rugged and preferably fairly airtight that you don't mind getting dusty. Ideally you should have 2 bags. One for your clothing, which is stowed and inaccessible during the day, and a **SMALL** day bag that you carry in the vehicle holding items that you may require while you are traveling i.e.: Camera, Binoculars, Torch Water bottle Note pad/pencil. We emphasise small as it will have to fit at your feet, on your lap or in between seats in the vehicle. There are also a few days where we stop for a shower while traveling and you will want to bring your towel and toiletries with you on these days in the vehicle. Make sure you bring spare batteries for any electronic appliance.

## A great Souvenir!!

Since fossils and Aboriginal artifacts are off limits by law, and the usual assortment of tea towels and spoons are as tacky as always, you may like to bring along a packet of zip lock glad sandwich bags. Fill them with different coloured sands en route, and when you get home, layer them into a spaghetti jar. We will be visiting Aboriginal Art Centres along the way; items purchased can be shipped home, which is safer than having them bounce around in the vehicles. Major Credit cards are usually accepted.

## Communication with the Outside World

Whilst some come to get away from friends and family, others like to stay in touch. To this end, we pass public phones on Days 1,3,5,9,10,11,15,17,19,20,21. If there is an emergency at home while you are away and you need to be contacted we have a satellite phone for emergencies only. The number to call is 0418561890. Messages to this phone are passed on daily. There is also mobile (Next G) access at Marble Bar, Newman, Telfer, Willuna, Leonora, and also along the Transcontinental Railway Line.

## Toilet and personal hygiene

By nature deserts are dry places, and as we are traveling to the more remote desert areas, water is at a premium. Showers will be available to purchase at Kunawarrtji, Newman and Forrest. You can use a bucket of warm water when we are camped near water. Toilet is usually a shovel and a toilet roll (which we provide- with a box of matches). A tub of water and antiseptic soap is for hand washing, and the vehicles all have antiseptic hand cream pump packs in the door pockets. A good way to wash when we are in remote areas is to bring a flannel and a small container (something the size of a margarine Container) and some "soap on tap". You may also want to bring along some antiseptic cream – dry hand wash. You'd be surprised how creative you can be. We traveled with a hairdresser once who washed and conditioned her hair with one cup of water!!!!

## Meals

Provisioning for a remote area desert expedition requires careful menu planning. Once we are on the road there are limited opportunities for re-provisioning. We serve modern contemporary cuisine from all over the world including Greek, Italian, Thai etc. Do not expect just meat and three vegetables. You can expect to eat very well. If you have any food allergies or dislikes you must advise us at least three weeks prior to travel. We are unable to amend the menu or make special dietary considerations once we are on the road.





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## Drinks

Our drinking water in camp is rainwater or potable bore water. We also provide cordial with lunch, tea and coffee in camp and a glass of table wine with dinner. If you wish to bring something else to drink please feel free. We have an icebox to store beer and soft drinks and room to store spirits. You can stock up on soft drinks at many stops en route. Alcoholic beverages should be brought with you. You can restock at Marble Bar, Newman, Willuna and Kookynie, otherwise there are no opportunities to restock en route. (The Kingoonya Pub has no take away). We find that people tend to drink more than they think they will, so err on the side of indulgence rather than temperance. Whilst this is in no way intended to suggest we encourage the consumption of alcohol, the desert climate, combined with balmy evenings under the stars is certainly conducive to a moderate tippie if you are that way inclined. Make sure the beverages you are bringing with you are stored in glass or plastic. Modern cans don't stand up to the vibration caused by corrugated roads and tend to break. For wines, ensure your boxes have large cardboard separators. Clinking bottles in the back of the vehicles will send your drivers and fellow guests nuts.

## Alcohol and Aboriginal Lands

As we are traveling on Aboriginal lands during our trip, there may be a couple of camps where we will be required by law to keep the grog cupboard locked. There are heavy fines for consumption of alcohol on Aboriginal lands, so this condition must be stringently adhered to.

## Photos and Aboriginal Lands

There is some sensitivity towards photography of both people and land features on Aboriginal Lands. When we arrive in Communities, please ensure your cameras are not visible. Before photographing any person, please ask for their permission. Usually they will give it quite happily, but sometimes not. Imagine people climbing over your back fence armed with cameras trying to photograph you in your backyard – same deal. Some of the areas we are traveling through are traditional lands with spiritual significance to the Traditional Owners. Permission may also need to be obtained to photograph natural features.

## Accidents can happen

We are traveling into some of the most remote country in the world, and have to be well prepared. Your tour guides are trained in advanced and remote area first aid and we carry extensive first aid equipment, however we are not a mobile dispensary, nor do we carry pain killers for everyday use. We are not permitted to provide you with any medication so we recommend you bring the following. Adequate personal medication you may need Band-Aids or Elastoplasts Paracetamol or Aspirin Stingose, adequate supplies of any personal medication.

## Seating

We are traveling in a convoy. You will be required to change seats every day, moving through the convoy one seat at a time, allowing all members of the expedition a chance to sit in all seats.

## Camp Duties

As a member of the expedition you will be expected to assist in camp duties including washing dishes, food preparation, collecting firewood and assisting in packing and unpacking of vehicles. This is part of being a team member and will contribute to both the success of the expedition and your enjoyment.

## Electronic devices

We supply limited facilities to recharge electronic devices. We do not use generators, however we have 12 volt to 240 volt invertors to charge devices with a standard Australian 240 volt power lead. We also have cigarette lighter plugs in all vehicles. Be sure to bring plenty of batteries and spare SD cards for your cameras as these are not available en route.





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## Information for Self-drive, Tag-along Drivers and their Passengers

Self drive participants travel in our convoy/. On a regular day of travel the Expedition Leader travels in the lead vehicle with the main convoy behind spaced apart at safe distances. The order of travel is at the discretion of the tour leader, and will change during the trip. The rear vehicle is always a tour company vehicle for safety. In addition to the inclusions mentioned elsewhere for all participants, self-drive, tagalong participants are assured of satellite phone support for emergency situations, mechanical assistance and back up, knowledge of the area and practical advice for the unskilled four wheel driver. We do NOT provide vehicle recovery if we cannot get the vehicle moving. Recovery is YOUR responsibility in the event that we cannot repair the vehicle. It is a requirement that all self drive participants follow directions of the tour leader as to safe traveling speeds and general convoy etiquette. As a team member you will need to operate your vehicle as a member of the convoy as a whole. On arrival in camp you will be directed where to park your vehicle.

## Vehicle Preparation

Do not overload your vehicle. Be prudent when packing. Store everything in sturdy containers. Keep liquids in plastic, and pack everything tightly in your vehicle so nothing moves around. Anything that can spill will as the terrain is very rough. An overloaded vehicle will just put more pressure on your running gear and make it harder for you. We provide tables, lighting in camp and all catering equipment. Feel free to bring a comfy fold out chair.

## Vehicle Service and Spares

Ensure that your vehicle has had a complete service prior to traveling and is in top shape. Bring along any spares

## Tyres

Our program route covers the most demanding types of terrain including sand, stones, gibber, mud and bitumen. Therefore tyres should be in top condition, 3/4 tread or more. Tubeless tyres are preferable however split rims are OK. In sand you will need to deflate your tyres to 16-20psi. You will need to bring a tyre gauge and a 12 volt pump. Bring at least one spare tyre in top condition as well as plugs and patches. We provide bead breakers.

## Roof Rack

It is recommended that roof racks should be steel and of an approved type. Do not overload your roof rack. Keep your centre of gravity as low as possible. Heavy tool boxes are better stored low in your vehicle.

**Bull Bars** Bull bars are recommended. You should also ensure you have a front and rear anchor point in case we need to recover your vehicle with our winches or straps.

## Fuel Range

This varies greatly depending on the terrain, distances between outlets. On the Canning you will need to carry 200 liters plus of fuel for a standard 4X4 vehicle, like a Nissan Patrol or Toyota Landcruiser. Fuel can be purchased en route, however there are some long periods between fuel stops, especially from Kookynie to Forrest. You need a range of 1100km. Carry your extra fuel in sealed, approved fuel containers that are anchored to your vehicle, preferably low to your centre of gravity. Make sure the lids are always tightly screwed on.

## Communications

The lead vehicle will carry a satellite phone along with a UHF CB radio. It is essential for all vehicles





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to be fitted with a UHF CB radio to keep in contact with the Expedition Leader's vehicle. Any good brand of UHF CB will be appropriate; however a hand held unit is not suitable as they are difficult to hear whilst traveling. Ensure you have a sturdy antenna, one that will tolerate long periods of intense vibration due to corrugates. You may wish to bring a spare antenna.

## 240 Volt Generators

We do not permit the use of 12 volt generators therefore allowing all to enjoy the peace and quiet of the outback and wilderness. We use battery lighting for the main camp area. We suggest you carry 12 volt fluorescent tube lighting and/or a good torch. By all means play plenty of music in your vehicle during the day, however please do not have music playing in camp at night. Many people come to the outback for solitude and quiet, and musical tastes can be highly subjective.

## Vehicles

Due to the high flammability of spinifex we recommend the use of diesel vehicles. If you do have a petrol vehicle, it is ESSENTIAL that you protect your vehicle from the buildup of spinifex seed and constantly monitor and clear that seed. The stock route is littered with burnt out petrol engine vehicles. All vehicles should bring along a wire hook, a fire extinguisher and a water spray pump—like the one used to spray your garden. We regularly have trouble with Land Rovers, Range Rovers and Discoverys. They don't seem to like the extended travel on huge corrugates and the suspension seems to go down to highway mode and stay there. If you have one of these ensure your electronics and suspension system has been thoroughly checked prior to departure. Also there is no availability of rims for these vehicles in the outback. We recommend you bring an extra rim.

## Flags

This is a controversial issue. We do not use vehicle flags and in 22 years of operations have never found the need for one. Constant multi scanning by the lead vehicle and monitoring of terrain and the track ahead is sufficient.

## Recovery Gear

We carry a large selection of recovery gear. Bring along a snatch strap and some d shackles, we will look after the rest. You may wish to include a shovel.





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## Recommended Spares

Since this program covers difficult and remote areas, please think carefully before omitting any of the items listed below:

radiator hoses  
fan belts  
heater hose  
1 liter gear oil  
5 liters engine oil  
oil filter  
brake fluid  
fuel filter  
points  
insulation tape  
distributor cap  
rotor button  
jumper leads  
spark plugs  
condenser  
coil

spare globes and fuses  
wire  
5-minute araldite  
fuel tank sealer  
radiator sealer  
puncture repair kit  
can CRC or similar  
universal joint  
tyre pump  
pressure gauge  
spare wheel complete  
spare tubes or wheel complete  
spare ignition key  
fire extinguisher  
shade mesh to tie up under your  
vehicle and over radiator to protect  
from  
spinifex seed

## What to take (Per vehicle basic list)

tent or swag  
bucket  
12 volt fluorescent light or torch  
first aid kit and other items as listed for all  
participants  
containers for water for personal use and an  
emergency supply  
also 2 X 20 liter plastic water containers for use in  
the communal kitchen  
spare well sealed fuel containers  
snatch strap (good quality heavy duty)  
D shackles  
jack and board to place jack on (in sand),  
shovel (long handled is better).  
basic tool kit including appropriate tools for tyre  
changing.  
tubeless plug tyre repair kit is handy for tubeless  
tyres.

Tag-along vehicles will be required to carry up to three boxes of food materials in their vehicle for group use. Please reserve this space during vehicle preparation. Your tour staff will allocate and distribute these items at either Alice Springs or Newman.





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## Water availability and conservation

This program involves a high proportion of travel in desert, which is typically dry. Although there are known points where we can fill up with water these can be unreliable and quality cannot be guaranteed. Safe travel requires that water from different sources is not mixed, that water is used sparingly and that, except in cases of emergency, reserves are always kept. See the note above re carrying water for common use in addition to personal needs.

## Vehicle inspections

Each vehicle will be required to be inspected at least three weeks prior to departure to check mechanical condition and suitability for the terrain which will include a lot of dune crossings, gravel roads, creek crossings and possibly muddy conditions. Inspection can be performed with an approved vehicle. Please bring with you written proof of vehicle condition. This is a necessary requirement due to the remote and isolated areas we cover. If your vehicle is from 4X4 hire this is not necessary, however, if you do hire a vehicle, carefully inspect spare wheels, jacks, hoses, and have a good look over your vehicle prior to travel. Check for oil leaks. Do not trust the hirer to be providing you with a first rate vehicle!

**REMEMBER THE SECRET OF A SUCCESSFUL AND ENJOYABLE EXPEDITION IS GOOD VEHICLE PREPARATION.**

