OVERVIEW: EXPEDITION MADIGAN (EAST) - $3315

"Here then was a bit of interesting exploration to be done, to find out what lay behind the forbidding borders of this unknown land..."
– CT Madigan, Crossing the Dead Heart

Named after explorer Dr Cecil Thomas Madigan, who made the trek on camels, the Madigan Line (East) is one of the more challenging and interesting ways of crossing the Simpson Desert. Madigan planned the ground crossing by aerial survey in 1937 and in the winter of 1939 the party of nine, including a biologist, a botanist, a photographer and a radio operator, with 19 camels, made the exhausting crossing from Andado station in the Northern Territory to Birdsville in 25 days.

The Madigan Line follows the route taken by Cecil Madigan’s exploratory crossing of the Simpson Desert in 1939. Unlike the southern tracks that cross the Simpson which are all in South Australia, the Madigan is mostly in the Northern Territory. Unlike the French Line, WAA Line and Rig Road, there is no formed track for the Madigan Line – just 2 wheel lines visible in the distance ahead.

Madigan Line (East) leaves from Birdsville and follows the Madigan Line in reverse tackling the steeper eastern faces of the dunes.

Only a handful of 4×4 adventurers travel this way each year.

We re-trace the steps of the expedition and learn about this unique environment – it’s history of European and indigenous exploration, the flora and fauna unique to the desert, how the desert was formed and why the sand dunes are so remarkable.

The Madigan provides an excellent opportunity to drive several different terrains.

Waypoint Expeditions supplies a support vehicle fully equipped with recovery equipment, satellite phone, GPS tracking equipment, emergency locator beacon and remote area first aid equipment.

Each Waypoint Expedition is a carefully thought out, planned, and researched route to provide you with a unique experience where you not just “tag along” but participate in culture of place. We hope, by the time you have finished your journey with us, you will have a new appreciation of the cultural and historical significance of the Simpson Desert as well as its importance as one of Australia’s great wilderness areas.

Travel with Waypoint – experts in outback adventuring for over 20 years.

*** ALL TAG ALONG TOURS***

Due to the nature of where we travel - the ever-changing track conditions and other influences itineraries should be taken as a guide only.

TOUR INCLUSIONS

- 13 days of intermediate to advanced 4WDing
- Invaluable tips and tricks to combat Australia’s desert regions
- Local expert and touring guide
- Knowledge about indigenous and European history of the area
- Knowledge about flora and fauna native to the area
- 12 nights of million star camping
- Central Land Council Permit Fees
- Munga-Thirri National Park Fees
- Munga-Thirri camping fees
- Chambers Pillar access and camping fees
- Hay River Track access fees
- Private land owner fees
- Welcome (Birdsville) and farewell (Alice Springs) dinners with complimentary drink
- Satellite comms & tracking
- Remote Area Qualified staff with Outback 1st Aid Kit

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

- Insurance
- 4WD Recovery costs
- Alcoholic beverages
- UHF Radios (can be hired)
- Camping equipment
**ITINERARY 2019**

**Day 00 - June 27**
Rendezvous Birdsville
1530 – 1630 Meet in the BBQ area at the Birdsville Caravan Park for a quick meet and greet.
1630-1700 Sam from the Birdsville Roadhouse shares his tips and tricks for tackling the Simpson Desert.
1800 Welcome Dinner at the Birdsville Hotel.

**Day 01 - June 28**
Eyre Creek
After a leisurely breakfast at the Birdsville Bakery and prep morning we head out to Big Red around midday for your chance to climb the dune, take photos and prepare for the track ahead. First up is Little Red and then head to Eyre Creek where we explore the creek system before setting camp for the night (c.60km).

**Day 02 - June 29**
Annandale
Leaving the QAA line we north up through the Eyre Creek system through Dickerie Bore, Madigan Camp 22 and the ruins of Annandale Homestead and set camp by Annandale Waterhole (c. 65km).
There’s ample time through the afternoon to explore the waterhole which is home to a wide variety of birdlife and wander through the homestead ruins.

**Day 03 - June 30**
Camp 20
A leisurely departure from Annandale continues our journey north along the Eyre Creek system through Madigan Camp 21, Moochala and West Kudderee waterholes before arriving at Madigan Camp 20. (c. 30km)
We may (dependent on cattle movements) spend the afternoon exploring Lake Mancoonie and the head of the Mulligan River before setting camp (c. 70km).

**Day 04 - July 1**
Camp 17
Departing Camp 20 we turn west and follow an old fence line and head into Munga Thirri NP. We visit Camps 19 & 18 and Mudlooc Well after which the going becomes slow before passing through the first of many pretty Gidgee Groves and exiting the NP crossing into the Northern Territory where it’s a short hop to Camp 17 (c. 80km).

**Day 05 - July 2**
Red Sand Dune Camp
Departing Camp 17 we continue west and begin to tackle the first of the Lo Range sand dunes before reaching Madigan Soak. From there we press on to Camp 16 and the Blaze tree before turning north and heading up a river system to our Red Sand Dune Camp (c. 40km).

**Day 06 - July 3**
Camp 12
Departing Red Sand Dune Camp we continue north up the river system over some rocky terrain and Camp 15. From here we turn west again passing through Camp 14, Madigan’s Claypan Camp 13, several steep dunes before settling down at Camp 12 (c. 60km).

**Day 07 - July 4**
Madigan Claypan #2
Departing Camp 12 we continue west through steep sand dune country interspersed by Gidgee groves. We pass through Camps 11 & 10 which are less than 2km apart, on past Camp 9 to a lovely little claypan camp which we’ve named Madigan Claypan #2 (c. 65km).

**Day 08 - July 5**
Camp 5 / Colson Track
Departing Madigan Claypan #2 we continue west through steep sand dune country interspersed by Gidgee groves. We pass through Camps 8 & 7 over an S-Bend dune before descending into an expansive creek system. We continue west past a lonely termite mound and onto Camp 5 just off the Colson Track. (c. 85km).

**Day 09 - July 6**
The Twins
Departing Camp 5 we head south on the Colson Track before turning west again and passing through Camp 2 and approaching the Madigan Line’s most difficult eastern dune. Once we’re over this it’s onto the Twins and the our camp featuring Madigan’s cairn (c. 50km).

**Day 10 - July 7**
Old Andado
We leave the Twins and head to Madigan Camp 2 and onto Marshall Bluff which provides stunning views of the surrounding country side. We run onto Camp 1A (original camp 1 relocation) and then have the option of going onto Mac Clarke Reserve via the original Camp 1 or Aranlabuka Swamp (c. 106km) and onto Old Andado Station.

**Day 11 - July 8**
Lambert Centre
We leave the Old Andado Homestead after relaxing morning amidst the history of this old station and head out to New Crown where there’s the opportunity to refuel and then onto the Lambert Centre, the geographical centre of Australia and make camp for the night. (c. 150km).

**Day 12 - July 9**
Chambers Pillar
We head back via Finke, the Desert Race Track and Tijikala… before running the one-way 45km trip to Chambers Pillar where we will make camp for the night. (c. 204km).

**Day 13 - July 10**
Alice Springs
Leaving Chambers Pillar via Tijikala, Maryborough and the Ewaringa Reserve we’ll make our way into Alice and our accommodation at the Diplomat - where there’ll be plenty of time to freshen up before our final evening meal and drinks.
FAQs

WHAT IS THE DISTANCE OF THIS TOUR?
1190KM

WHERE ARE THE FUELLING POINTS?
Birdsville [800KM] Finke
Finke [120KM] Maryvale
Maryvale [120KM] Alice Springs

DO I NEED TO CARRY EXTRA FUEL?
Yes – the longest distance between fuel stops is 800km through mostly 4WD terrain. Recommend 3 x 20lt jerrys of additional fuel for most vehicles.

HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD I CARRY?
This question is about preference and capacity but recommended you carry at least 50lt of drinking water and 50lt of general usage water. There may opportunity to refill general usage but the longest time between drinking water refills is 10 days.

ARE CAMPER TRAILERS/CARAVANS ALLOWED?
No. Unfortunately due the difficult nature of some of the tracks, the fragility of the environment and other considerations, camper trailers and caravans are not allowed. Please see the Trip Info page for transport options to move your towed assets.

WHAT TYPE OF 4WD IS SUITABLE FOR THESE EXPEDITIONS?
4WDs that have medium to high clearance and a high/low transfer case, with a quality set of springs and shock absorbers as well as All Terrain / Mud Terrain tyres with at least 70% tread. UHF Radio either hand held or fitted is a must as well. These expeditions are not suitable for AWDs.

DO WE GET TIME FOR SIGHTSEEING
Absolutely! You will get plenty of time to explore, bushwalk, fish, photograph, stargaze and take in the beauty and grandeur of the places we visit.

LIMITED 4WD EXPERIENCE?
WayPoint will assist and guide you in the basic skills of 4WD driving and sustainable 4WD driving to suit the terrain in which we will travel however consider doing a 4WD course prior to the trip as some advanced off road techniques will be required.

HOW LONG DO WE DRIVE EACH DAY?
No more than 200km per day. Most days are between 50-80km. We discuss the following day’s events around the campfire at night, or at our morning briefing sessions before departure. We are normally on the road at 9.30am each morning and stop for lunch between 12pm-1pm. We stop at all points of interest throughout the day and try to up camp around 3.30-4pm each day.

WHAT HAPPENS IF OUR VEHICLE BREAKS DOWN ON TOUR?
We will do our best to get you going again but if we can’t, we will discuss the options of getting your vehicle recovered and to where it can be repaired. We strongly recommend you have cover with a nationwide motoring association and also take out travel insurance.

HOW DO I BOOK?
MADIGAN LINE (EAST) is available once a season. There is the reverse option - MADIGAN LINE (WEST) also available once a season. Bookings can be made online via the payment gateway or an offline booking form.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BRING?
The most important thing to pack is a sense of adventure. Don’t worry if you have misplaced yours as you will soon find it on the tour! Once your place has been confirmed a Briefing Kit with all the information you will need will be sent to you. It will contain list of suggestions, spare parts, maps, camping requirements, etc.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I GET SICK OR INJURED?
If you become sick on the trip all efforts will be made to maintain your comfort and enjoyment. Our Expedition Leaders are first aid trained (Remote Area First Aid) and experienced in emergency management. In the event of an emergency the tour leader carries a Spot Tracker emergency beacon for emergency assistance and a Sat phone. Vehicles are also fitted with UHF radios for local radio contact and satellite tracking.

RESPECT THE DESERT
Please make best efforts to minimise impact on the desert environment

• Keep to well-defined access routes across the desert to avoid damaging the vegetation and fragile landscape
• Rubbish comes out – place in strong plastic bags (do not bury, it will be dug up)
• Keep the camp clean and tidy
• Burn or bury toilet paper
• Keep dirty/soapy water away from natural water supplies
• Conserve firewood
• Use of firearms and chainsaws is not permitted
• Abide by fireban regulations
• Do not feed animals
• Every animal, plant and rock is protected
• Aboriginal and European artefacts/sites are protected