OVERVIEW: EXPEDITION MADIGAN (WEST) - $3315

“Former crossings had all ended in failure... This little desert was obviously a tough nut to crack, and the journey was not one to be lightly undertaken.”
– 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 (West) leaves from Alice Springs and joins the Madigan Line and follows it as Madigan did in 1939.

Only a small number of 4×4 adventurers travel this route 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

Day 00
Rendezvous Alice Springs
1530 - 1630 Meet and greet at the Diplomat Motel.
1630 - 1700 Russell from the ASP 4x4 shares his tips and tricks for tackling the Simpson Desert.
1800 - Welcome Dinner at the Uncles Tavern (Diplomat Motel).

Day 01
Chambers Pillar
After a leisurely breakfast at the Hub we south towards Titjikala via Ewaringa Reserve and then onto Chambers Pillar we have plenty of time to take in the sights before setting camp for the night (c.160km).

Day 02
Lambert Centre
Leaving Chambers Pillar we head down the Finke Rd where you can spend some time negotiating the desert race track which runs along side. Passing through Finke we head back west to visit the Geographic Centre (Lambert Centre) (c. 204km).

Day 03
Old Andado
Leaving the centre of Australia we head back towards Finke and New Crown Station (last refuel) and then onto our camp for the night at Old Andado Station (c. 150km).

Day 04
The Twins
We spend the morning at Old Andado before making the short run up to Mac Clarke for a walk through the reserve. Departing Mac Clarke we head onto the Madigan Line. Here we have the choice of visiting the original Camp 1 before heading up past Camp 2 and into the Twins and Madigan’s Cairn for our camp (c. 80km).

Day 05
Camp 5 / Colson Track
Departing Twins we continue east and begin to tackle the first of the sand dunes passing through Camp 2A before reaching the Colson Track and heading north to Camp 5. (c. 85km)

Day 06
Madigan Claypan #2
Heading into the desert proper we continue east through a creek system, past the lonely termite mound and steep sand dune country interspersed by Gidgee groves. We visit Camps 7 & 8 over the S-bend dune before arriving at Madigan Claypan #2, our camp for the night. (c. 65km)

Day 07
Camp 12
Departing Madigan Claypan #2 we continue east through camps 10 & 11 which are less than 2kms apart, a series of challenging sand dunes, and Madigan’s Claypan before heading into Camp 12 for the night (c. 65km).

Day 08
Red Sand Dune Camp
Departing Camp 12 we continue east through steep sand dune country interspersed by Gidgee groves. It can be slow going (ave 8km per hour). We pass through Camps 13 & 14 before reaching Camp 15 and the Hay River system. We turn south and make camp amongst some brilliant red sand dunes (c. 60km).

Day 09
Camp 17
Departing Camp 17 we head south to Camp 16 and Madigan’s Blaze tree. From here we turn west and more slowing going through the rugged heart of the Simpson dune system before settling in at Camp 17 (c. 40km).

Day 10
Camp 20
Departing Camp 17 we cross the border into Old and Munga-Thirri NP. We pass through Camps 18 & 19 and Mudloo Well before exiting the NP and picking up old fenceline and following it in the Camp 20. (c. 80km).

Day 11
Annandale
We spend the morning exploring Muncoonie water system and the Mulligan River before turning south to the hard to find Camp 21 and historic ruins Annandale Homestead and Waterhole (c. 30km).

Day 12
Eyre Creek
We say good bye to Annandale and track south through the Eyre Creek system and Camp 22. We pass through Dickerie and Kings Bore before making camp at Eyre Creek and the QAA line (c. 70km).

Day 13
Birdsville
After a tour of the Eyre Creek we’re heading back east along the QAA line for the short run into Big Red. It’s a chance to climb the dune and get some photos. After we head the 40kms into Birdsville where they’ll be plenty time to freshen up for the Farewell Dinner at the Birdsville Hotel (c. 60km).

*** PLS NOTE Days are indicative only - Final camp locations will be determined by the days proceedings..
**EXPEDITION MADIGAN (WEST)**

**WAYPOINT EXPEDITIONS**

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**FAQs**

WHAT IS THE DISTANCE OF THIS TOUR?
1190KM

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

DO I NEED TO CARRY EXTRA FUEL?
Yes – the longest distance between fuel stops is 800km through mostly 4WD terrain. Recommend 3 x 20lt jerries 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 9 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 300km 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 (WEST) is available once a season. There is the reverse option - MADIGAN LINE (EAST) 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.

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**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