OVERVIEW: EXPEDITION SIMPSON (WEST) - $3570

“The Simpson Desert is many things to many people – formiddable and implacable, intolerant to the ill-advised and underprepared; a place to be respected and admired. It is a land for all Australians to enjoy.”

- Mark Shepard, The Simpson Desert: Natural History and Human Endeavour

Bordering three states, the Simpson Desert is one of the most outstanding and largest parallel sand dune deserts in the world. It is a place of beauty, resilience, contrasting moods and colour. Its windswept landscape comprises more than 1,100 dunes, shaped into long red waves by westerly winds, exhibiting a diversity of landforms and providing habitats for a range of flora and fauna. It’s steeped in Aboriginal and European history and is of great ecological and cultural importance as well as its status as one of Australia’s great wilderness areas.

Waypoint Expedition’s crossing of the Simpson is approx. twice as long as the conventional crossing and takes it the very best of the desert and its environments. We are challenged by a great variety of driving conditions, with real opportunities to witness flora and fauna unique to the desert, and explore a fascinating history of exploration and habitation.

Sand dunes unfold over 100s of kms in an seemingly endless procession of towering crests and swales (interdune). It is the biggest and best example of a parallel sand dune desert. Located in Australia’s and heart it receives marginally more rain the Sahara Desert (approx 130mm) and while the landscape might seem consistent and familiar the biological and geological change is quite significant.

The desert is home to a surprising variety of vegetation surviving off marginal rainfalls. It is also home to over 190 bird species, reptiles and mammals, many of them unique to this environment.

There were originally 7 Aboriginal communities living out here moving in and out of the desert region as the seasons allowed and the first European exploration was in 1845 with Charles Sturt and finishing with CT Madigan’s scientific expedition of 1939. In 1962 Reg Sprigg made the first motorised crossing opening a small period of mineral exploration which established the main crossings. By the late 60s, Munga-Thirri and Simpson Desert Conservation Parks had been established and Witjira followed in 1985 and by the late 80s and early 90s tourism had developed and continues to flourish today.

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.

*** 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.
EXPEDITION SIMPSON (WEST)

WAYPOINT EXPEDITIONS

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 Uncle's 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
Mt Dare Station
Leaving Chambers Pillar we head down the Fine Rd where you can spend some time negotiating the desert race track which runs along side. Passing through Finke we south to Mt Dare (c. 274km).

Day 03
3 O’Clock Creek
Most of today is spent exploring the Dalhousie Ruins and the Springs before we heading to camp at 3 O’Clock Creek (c. 60km).

Day 04
WPT RR CAMP
Leaving Dalhousie we head out into the Simpson Desert proper passing through some very nice interdune systems, Griselda, Camel Flat and turn onto the Rig Rd. The campsite for this afternoon is a special one and great for night photography (198km).

Day 05
Lone Gum
We continue east on the Rig Road and visit abandoned wells and Womma Hill Then its up the Erabena Track to our campsite at Lone Gum. Not swagman nor billabong in sight but it’s a coolibah tree. (62km)

Day 06
Knolls Camp
Heading north to the WAA line before turning east. After crossing a huge salt lake we turn north and onto the slow going Knolls Track towards the Approdinja Altora Knolls and Lake Tamblyn and our nicely tucked away camp site (c. 56km).

Day 07
Poeppel Corner
Today’s run to Poeppel Corner takes us down the French Line - and it here we can see the best of the worst track damage on the Simpson Desert (a timely reminder of the importance of sustainable 4WD driving).

Day 08
Shot Line Camp
Today’s run up to Shot Line takes in quite some history with the most prolific presence of old exploration along this track. We deviate to visit an old Aboriginal well site and dwelling remains before heading north up the K1 Line (c. 80km).

Day 09
HRT Camp #3
We head out east across the Shot Line, before meandering north along the Hay River Track with a few stops a long the way - 2017 - there were two spectacular wedge-tail eagles nesting close to the track. (c. 70km)

Day 10
Camp 17
We visit the Madigan Blaze Tree before leaving the HRT and tracking east through some steep dune country where there’s great opportunities to refine sustainable driving techniques, a visit to Madigan Soak and Creek before heading into Camp 17 (c. 70km).

Day 11
Camp 20
Departing Camp 17 we continue east across the border and head into Munga Thrirri NP. We visit Camps 18 & 19 and Mudloo Well. We follow an old fence line to Camp 20 and turn south towards Annadale to camp on the banks of the waterhole. (c. 80km).

Day 12
Annandale
A leisurely departure from Camp 20 sees short run to Annandale Waterhole. Explore the ruins, enjoy the cool shade and interesting walks around the waterhole. Plenty of time to relax and enjoy the surroundings (c. 35km)

Day 13
Eyre Creek
We say goodbye 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 14
Eyre Creek
We say goodbye to Eyre Creek and head to Big Red before heading into Birdsville.

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

WAYPOINT EXPEDITIONS

FAQs

WHAT IS THE DISTANCE OF THIS TOUR?
1350KM

WHERE ARE THE FUELLING POINTS?
Alice Springs [119] Maryvale
Maryvale [215km] Mt Dare
Mt Dare [900km] Birdsville

DO I NEED TO CARRY EXTRA FUEL?
Yes – the longest distance between fuel stops is 870km 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 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.

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