



Australian Bush Hospitality Pty Ltd. trading as:

**diamantina touring company**

since 1988 abn 14 051 678 212

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## **ITINERARY SIMPSON DESERT EXPEDITION 2016 DEPARTS ADELAIDE 1ST MAY ARRIVES ALICE SPRINGS 11TH MAY 11 DAYS**

### **DAY 1**

We depart Adelaide and travel north to Port Augusta. We enter the Flinders Ranges at Pichi Richi Gorge, and shortly leave the beaten track to follow station tracks along the back roads through spectacular scenery to the famous Prairie Hotel at Parachilna. We travel on to our first nights camp in Parachilna Gorge.

### **DAY 2**

Your first morning in the outback. Awake to birdsong and a hearty breakfast before we break camp and head to Brachina Gorge. We follow the award winning self interpretive geological trail tracing 200 million years of geological history as we wind beneath the native pines and red quartzite ridges. Our next stop is the highest town in South Australia - Blinman. Winding our way through the ranges we arrive at our camp at Chambers Gorge. There is the option of climbing to the summit for some awe inspiring views, or wandering down the gorge amongst spectacular river red gums. If you want, do both.

### **DAY 3**

We cross the Balcanoona Plain to Italowie Gorge and enter the Gammon Ranges National Park. We travel on private station roads. Tonight we camp on private property near a little known Aboriginal art site displaying thousands of stone carvings on the red walls of a spectacular gorge.

### **DAY 4**

We depart the Flinders Ranges at Copley and head north onto the plains. We will also visit the Leigh Creek Coal Fields and the ghost town of Farina before arriving at Marree. We have time to look at the town and its history. Marree was a "Ghan" town, home to the Afghan Cameleers, and we look at some of the historic houses, including that of the famous Bejah Dervish. From Marree there is also the option to take an unforgettable flight over Lake Eyre. We commence our journey up the fabled Birdsville Track past the ruins of the Lake Harry Date Plantation. After a two hour drive through Dulkaninna and Clayton stations we arrive at Etadunna Station and travel to our camp on the floodplain of the mighty Cooper beneath box coolabah trees.

### **DAY 5**

By arrangement with the owners of Etadunna we drive on station tracks out to the lonely ruins of the Bethesda Lutheran Mission on the banks of Coopers Creek. Here we will look at one of the most extraordinary stories of European/Aboriginal contact amid the sandhills of the Tirari Desert. We continue up the Birdsville Track to Mungerannie Station. Northward we visit the lonely grave of the Page family who tragically lost their lives when their vehicle broke down in the summer of 1962. We camp on Clifton Hills Station, the largest on the Birdsville Track.





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#### DAYS 6-9

We arrive in Birdsville marking our completion of the Birdsville Track. There is plenty to do here, and after checking out the city sights and visiting the Dingo Caves and Acacia Peuce reserve, we depart civilisation and head west. We commence our crossing of the fabled Simpson Desert, the world's largest sand dune desert, an experience of epic proportions. Our first challenge is to cross the 40 metre Nappanericca Dune, otherwise known as Big Red. One over, we are firmly in the dunefield, and for the next three days we follow abandoned oil exploration tracks and seismic tracks through this extraordinary landscape. There are plenty of interesting stops along the way including Eyre Creek, the tri state border at Poeppels Corner, the flour gypsum outcrops known as the Approdinna Attora knolls, the numerous salt lakes of Pirra Pirra Poorlwanana, and native wells known as Mikiri, where the original Wangkangurru inhabited until they walked out of the desert in 1901. On our final day travelling through the desert we arrive at Dalhousie Springs, where the desert dust can be washed off with a swim in delightful warm artesian water. We camp at Mt Dare homestead.

#### DAY 10

We cross the Finke River, reputed to be the oldest river in the world, and continue on to the heritage listed Old Andado Station, once home to outback legends Mac and Mollie Clarke. We also visit the Mac Clarke acacia peuce reserve and continue north to our camp near the Rodinna Range.

#### DAY 11

We travel north past Santa Theresa Mission, arriving in Alice Springs late morning, and the end of an extraordinary expedition.

