

Murray River: Stage 2 Albury to Mildura

The Holiday Towns Tour

Monday 26 February, 2018 to Thursday 08 March, 2018

Day to Day

A typical day on the ride:

Full breakfast 7am, Depart 8am

Ride 25-30km to morning tea around 9-10am, half hour stop, usually on the side of the road. Coffee or tea with home-made biscuits, slice, and fresh fruits, served up, of course, with some entertaining banter and fun.

Ride 35-45km to lunch around 12-1pm. Half hour to an hour, often in a bakery or cafe.

Ride 20-40km to our overnight accommodation, usually arriving around 2-3pm. Check-in, make a cup of tea or have a drink by the pool, or a soak in the bath. Explore the town or visit the local attractions.

Evening briefing at 6pm with lots of laughs and stories about today's ride and safety tips for tomorrow, followed by dinner - usually at the hotel restaurant.

Off to bed!

Location	Distance	Date	B	L	D	A
Arrive Albury	NA	Mon 26 Feb 2018	--	--	Y	Y
Albury to Yarrawonga	99km	Tue 27 Feb 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Yarrawonga to Barooga	54km	Wed 28 Feb 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Barooga to Echuca	107km	Thu 1 Mar 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Echuca REST DAY	NA	Fri 2 Mar 2018	Y	--	--	Y
Echuca to Barham	91km	Sat 3 Mar 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Barham to Swan Hill	73km	Sun 4 Mar 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Swan Hill to Tooleybuc	48km	Mon 5 Mar 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tooleybuc to Euston	99km	Tue 6 Mar 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Euston to Mildura	80km	Wed 7 Mar 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mildura	NA	Thu 8 Mar 2018	Y	--	--	--
Total distance cycled	651km		10	8	9	10
Average daily distance	81km					

Meal and accom inclusions noted as B, L, D, A (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation)

Arrive Albury — NA — Mon 26 Feb 2018 — - - D A

If you are starting your ride on Stage 2, catch a flight to Albury anytime today and head to our hotel - just 10 minutes from the airport. The AllTrails staff and cyclists on Stage 1 will be arriving into Albury by mid-late afternoon after today's riding. Tonight we will have a group dinner to welcome to new cyclists and brief you on the days ahead. Dinner and accommodation is included tonight for all Stage 2 participants.

Albury to Yarrawonga — 99km — Tue 27 Feb 2018 — B L D A

THE HOLIDAY TOWNS TOUR: You are in for a treat over the next 9 days as we wind our way alongside the Murray River, staying at some great riverside accommodations in some favourite holiday towns. Many of the towns along this stage of the tour are 'twin-towns' with the southern part of town located in VIC and the northern part of town located in NSW, which is why you will notice many double-barrelled names. Today provides some good examples as we depart Albury-Wodonga, destined for Yarrawonga-Mulwala. The ride itself is a lovely cruise through the rural pastoral lands on the north (NSW) side of the river, punctuated by the larger settlements of Howlong and Corowa enroute to our destination at Yarrawonga and our first class accommodation positioned perfectly overlooking majestic Lake Mulwala.

Yarrawonga to Barooga — 54km — Wed 28 Feb 2018 — B L D A

Yarrawonga-Mulwala is an 'Inland Aquatic Paradise' with plenty to see and do from a leisurely round of golf, to exploring the river beaches and walking tracks or sampling some local wines and produce. You'll have a bit of time to check out more of the town this morning as we only have a short ride today so you don't need to head off at the crack of dawn. Lake Mulwala is an unforgettable sight, lying between the twin towns, with its majestic and ghostly river red gums that are a constant presence around this part of the Murray. They also emanate 'Australiana' with their unmistakable eucalyptus leaves and peeling bark. Take it all in as you head further west today on a route that will take us temporarily away from the river on the NSW side before bringing us back to the twin towns of Cobram-Barooga, famous for its sandy river beaches. Arriving into Barooga we continue across the river to lunch at Thompsons Beach Cobram, then head back to Barooga to check in to your accommodation. Make sure you head down to the riverside beaches, perhaps for a swim, or just for a nice walk.

Barooga to Echuca — 107km — Thu 1 Mar 2018 — B L D A

We have more exciting things on the horizon today as you depart Barooga (NSW), and enjoy a scenic 2.5km cycle through the forested Cobram Regional Park before crossing over the river into sister-city Cobram (VIC). After getting through town and heading south for a short stint, we turn west onto a long stretch of quiet road that continues straight for around 50km. It's a great chance to get into your rhythm on the bike and absorb the wide open skies and open farmland that you are pushing yourself through. As you hit the Murray again and cross the border for the second time today it's not far to our destination - one of the most popular spots on the Murray, the historic Echuca-Moama. This place is a true gem and a wonderful location for our rest day tomorrow. During your time in Echuca, a Paddlesteamer experience is a must-do so tonight we have arranged a group dinner on one of the Paddlesteamer

restaurants - a great way to unwind before taking the day off tomorrow.

Echuca REST DAY — NA — Fri 2 Mar 2018 — B - - A

Echuca-Moama represents not only a bygone era with its Paddlesteamers and horse & carriage rides but also showcases all the conveniences of the modern era including the very best for those who appreciate good food and wine. There is a broad range of exciting activities to indulge in during your day off here including historic attractions, watersports, and unique river experiences. The wharf is recognised as one of Australia's finest heritage icons and is home to the largest Paddlesteamer fleet in the world. Head down and check it all out, or kick back and take it easy at our great resort accommodation complete with gym, sauna, 2 x pools and a tennis court - all set on 4 landscaped acres backing onto the rivergum bushland on the banks of the mighty Murray.

Echuca to Barham — 91km — Sat 3 Mar 2018 — B L D A

Today's ride continues along the Murray Valley Highway through Gunbower and Kohuna, with Gunbower National Park on the right between you and the Murray. The area's wetlands and billabongs are internationally recognised and is popular for camping, fishing and relaxing on the bends of the Murray River. When water flows along Little Gunbower Creek, the area is known for its spectacular birdlife. It's also on today's ride that you may notice that the path of the Murray turns noticeably and follows a north-westerly direction rather than the consistent westerly direction that we have been following up until now. Though you'll be well rested after yesterday's day off to take on the challenge of the day, our support vehicles are never far away if anyone needs a lift. Our destination of Barham was once known as an important trading stop on the river-boat journeys and also developed sawmills which provided red gum sleepers for the Victorian Railways. Now it is best known for its citrus groves, fishing, and relaxing at the man-made lakes on the river's edge. The twin towns of Barham-Koondrook service the extensive pastoral and horticultural regions of the surrounding areas, but they are also adapting to the increasing demands of tourists. A track through the caravan park leads to a boat ramp and sand bar which form a safe swimming hole if you're keen for a dip this afternoon after checking into our accommodation, a smaller motel with a big reputation for great service and wonderful welcoming hosts.

Barham to Swan Hill — 73km — Sun 4 Mar 2018 — B L D A

Today we can stick pretty close to the river as we cycle many of the backroads on the way to Swan Hill. A stop in the small river town of Murrabit for morning tea will show you the location of the locally-renowned Country Market before we make our way away from the river for a short time and meeting the main road at Lake Tutchewop Wildlife Reserve and continuing on to our lunch stop at Lake Boga which is fast becoming a destination in its own right. During World War II the location was transformed into a flying boat repair depot housing 1,500 servicemen and women. The township is known as the aquatic playground of Northern Victoria and you will witness any number of water activities happening here on a nice summer's day. But we must push on through the final 20km to the historic town of Swan Hill. In 1853 Francis Cadell in his Paddle Steamer Lady Augusta navigated the Murray from its mouth in South Australia reaching Swan Hill, his farthest point upstream. The boat was welcomed by the whole of the town's population - 12 people. The town grew up around the punt crossing, as it was the only crossing of the Murray within 100 km. Burke and Wills crossed the Murray here in 1860. The punt operated until 1896 until it was superseded by a bridge. Make sure you look around this interesting town and take in some of its history which is well documented and plays an important part in Australia's colonial past.

Swan Hill to Tooleybuc — 48km — Mon 5 Mar 2018 — B L D A

It's a shorter day on the bike today as we cut through the fertile lands around Tyntynder South and Beverford and on past small settlements, caravan parks on the banks of the Murray, farming pastures and the odd winery. Our destination of Tooleybuc is a small town, set amid irrigated farms growing citrus fruit and vines, has a lot of the community involvement based around the local sporting club, which provides a range of modern facilities such as tennis, golf and bowls, and a country pub. The word is to 'Try your luck in Tooleybuc'. In another great use of Tooleybuc rhyming words, you may see quite a few stubby coolers for sale around town saying 'Where the #!?! is Tooleybuc' - perhaps a perfect souvenir for your stay here...

Tooleybuc to Euston — 99km — Tue 6 Mar 2018 — B L D A

You will notice the agricultural and farming visible from the road as the locals make use of this vital water-source flowing through an otherwise dry part of the country. Robinvale (VIC) and Euston (NSW) are nestled on opposite banks of one of the most user-friendly stretches of the Murray River. Here you will find strong horticultural and multicultural traditions both in the town itself and the surrounding areas and national parks. Interestingly, Robinvale-Euston is sister town with Villers-Bretonneux in France. Robinvale's proud link with France extends back to World War I, when the son of Robinvale's founding family (Herbert and Margaret Cuttle) was killed in air combat over Caix, near the village of Villers-Bretonneux. In memory of their airman son (Lieutenant George Robin Cuttle) the family renamed their new settlement on the Murray 'Robinvale' (valley of Robin). The town centre pays further tribute, named 'Caix Square'. Our accommodation tonight is again of a great standard which you will enjoy in this very small town.

Euston to Mildura — 80km — Wed 7 Mar 2018 — B L D A

Today we swap sides to the NSW side of the river for our ride to Mildura and this will be the last time on tour that we will be in NSW. Today truly takes you into the 'wide brown land' made famous by the Dorothea Mackellar poem as you can feel the remoteness that continues for thousands of kilometres north-west into the centre of Australia, into the great deserts, and into the 'Red Centre'. Mildura feels like the last major outpost before heading into another world. It's no wonder this place is referred to as the 'Oasis in the Desert' as you come in from the lonely highway to a rural city that enjoys abundant fresh local produce and award-winning wines, exciting natural wonders, warm and consistently sunny Mediterranean weather, and prolific agricultural districts bursting with grapes, citrus fruits, almonds, olives, and countless varieties of vegetables. The Murray River is responsible for yet another wonderful town that all Australians need to tick off their 'must-see' list. Mildura's big blue skies, sun soaked days and welcoming locals will cast a long and lasting impression, leaving treasured memories of your time here - we hope you enjoy yourself.

Mildura — NA — Thu 8 Mar 2018 — B - - -

Today's rest day in Mildura is based out of our tour hotel, the Mildura Grand Hotel, an historic landmark building with character and charm, yet with all of the modern amenities and comforts that you would expect. The hotel was originally the Mildura Coffee Palace, dating back to the earliest days of the irrigation settlement. Mildura was a planned temperance colony, part of the Chaffey brothers' vision for Mildura as a place without an ingrained drinking culture to distract working men from their duties. In 1889 tenders were called for the building of the Coffee Palace. On the ground floor, plans revealed a billiard room, dining room, offices, smoking room, kitchen, storeroom, servants' quarters and large underground cellars. On the first floor 21 bedrooms were to be constructed. Sceptics

described the Coffee Palace as a 'gross over-development', however the Coffee Palace prospered and extensive additions were planned only two months after its doors opened to the public. Two sisters, Mrs Annie Yule and Miss May Williams, ran the premises from 1904 until 1915. In 1915, as the temperance movement was failing, Miss Williams applied to the Licensing Court for a Wine Licence but the application attracted great opposition from prohibitionists. Eventually a Wine License was granted and was followed by a full licence in 1919. From 1924 to 1963 the hotel continued being rebuilt and modernised and by the end of 1966 most of the rooms had private facilities, making the Mildura Grand Hotel one of the most modern in the state. A wonderful base for your rest day in Mildura, which is a stand-out among so many other great towns along the river. Set on the banks of the magnificent Murray River, Australia's most important waterway, Mildura provides an irresistible array of water-based, nature-based, local produce and cultural holiday experiences. Enjoy. If you are departing the tour today there are plenty of flights leaving from the airport which is 15 mins from our hotel. Most flights go to Melbourne with connections to other cities but there is one flight direct to both Sydney and Adelaide with Rex Airlines. Thanks for joining us!

