

## The Top End Tour Darwin to Broome

**Kakadu, Katherine, Kimberley and The Bungle Bungles**

**Wednesday 22 May, 2019 to Saturday 15 June, 2019**

### Day to Day

Imagine waking up in the early daylight and looking around and wondering where you are. You may have just spent the night under an impossibly starry sky in the great Australian outback, a lodge on the banks of a legendary river, or a donga room in a remote roadhouse. Either way, you want to get up and get on your bike again ready for another day on this legendary AllTrails long-haul cycle tour from Darwin to Broome.

After a hearty breakfast you head on your way as the AllTrails team load your luggage and head up the road to set up your morning tea. The food breaks are at set times enabling all riders to plan their day and the amount of time required to enjoy the sights along the way before arriving at the next food break.

You depart morning tea with a clear focus and understanding of the next leg of the day to lunch which is arranged and/or prepared by our crew. Lunch is a great time to relax, refuel your body and chat to your friends, be it in a bakery, a country pub, the rest area of a remote highway, overlooking a river, or deep in a National Park.

Our safety and support vehicles are never far away, one trailing the group as a warning to motorists of the cycling group ahead, and at least one other vehicle travelling among and ahead of the group preparing the food stops, arranging directional signage where required and being on-call for cyclists with mechanical failures or other requirements.

We have 2-way radio communications with trucks and other large vehicles on the road to further increase safety for our cyclists as well as first-aid qualified, and bike mechanic qualified staff. Safety is our number one priority and we strive to make each day as safe as possible - another great advantage of cycling on a tour with AllTrails.

After reaching your overnight destination, usually mid-afternoon, you check in and enjoy a cuppa and snack, shower, or soak in the bath. Sometimes there is a pool for you to lounge around and cool off in, or you may decide to explore the surroundings, go for a walk, share a cold drink with friends or simply relax. It is your life, it's your ride, enjoy it.

A briefing for all cyclists at 6pm before the evening meal is always interesting, finding out what happened that day, and a run-down on the sights and special attractions to look out for the next day. Lots of laughs and stories are shared before we settle down to a good healthy meal and a few drinks. The famous camaraderie developed on an AllTrails bike ride lasts a lifetime.

Bedtime is not far away, where you put your head down remembering the day and dreaming of tomorrow...

### A typical day on the ride:

- Breakfast 7am, Depart 8am
- Ride 30-50km to morning tea around 9-10am, half hour stop, usually on the side of the road. Coffee/tea with home-made biscuits, slice, fresh fruits, served up, of course, with some entertaining banter and fun.
- Ride 30-50km to lunch around 12-1pm. Half hour to an hour, often in a bakery or cafe.
- Ride 30-50km to our overnight accommodation, usually arriving around 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.
- Dinner at 6:30pm – usually at the motel restaurant.
- Free time and off to bed!

Location	Distance	Date	B	L	D	A
Darwin (meeting day)	NA	Wed 22 May 2019	--	--	Y	Y
Darwin to Annaburroo	148 or 101km	Thu 23 May 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Annaburroo to Jabiru	141 or 98km	Fri 24 May 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jabiru to Yellow Water	53km	Sat 25 May 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Yellow Water (rest day)	NA	Sun 26 May 2019	Y	--	--	Y
Yellow Water to Pine Creek	164 or 107km	Mon 27 May 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pine Creek to Katherine	129 or 68km	Tue 28 May 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Katherine (rest day)	NA	Wed 29 May 2019	Y	--	Y	Y
Katherine to Mathison Rest Area (overnight Katherine)	103km	Thu 30 May 2019	Y	Y	--	Y
Mathison Rest Area to Victoria River	92km	Fri 31 May 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Victoria River to Timber Creek	90km	Sat 1 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Timber Creek to Saddle Creek Bush Camp	118km	Sun 2 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Saddle Creek Bush Camp to Kununurra	111km	Mon 3 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Kununurra (rest day)	NA	Tue 4 Jun 2019	Y	--	Y	Y
Kununurra to Doon Doon Roadhouse Camp	106km	Wed 5 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Doon Doon to Warmun Roadhouse	91km	Thu 6 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Warmun Roadhouse to Halls Creek	163km	Fri 7 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Halls Creek (rest day)	NA	Sat 8 Jun 2019	Y	--	--	Y
Halls Creek to Larawa Station Nature Stay Bush Camp	156km	Sun 9 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Larawa Station to Fitzroy Crossing	146km	Mon 10 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fitzroy Crossing (rest day)	NA	Tue 11 Jun 2019	Y	Y	--	Y
Fitzroy Crossing to Ellendale Bush Camp	89km	Wed 12 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Ellendale to Willare Bridge Roadhouse	143km	Thu 13 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Willare Bridge Roadhouse to Broome	166km	Fri 14 Jun 2019	Y	Y	Y	Y
Broome	NA	Sat 15 Jun 2019	Y	--	--	--
Total distance cycled	2209km		24	19	20	24
Average daily distance	123km					

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

### **Darwin (meeting day) — NA — Wed 22 May 2019 — - - D A**

Day 1: Meeting day. Darwin is a fascinating tropical city - a melting pot of people and cultures that prides itself on its unique and friendly laid-back lifestyle. While a sophisticated, modern city in its own right, it is also one steeped in history, being on the front line of both WWII and cyclone Tracy, which left the town uninhabitable. It has bounced back on both occasions to become the vibrant capital that it is today. Get here early to enjoy the history, aboriginal art scene and excellent hospitality.

This afternoon we will have a ride registration, check over your bike, meet and greet the group and have your pre-departure briefing. In the evening we invite you to join the staff and fellow riders at a nearby restaurant for a welcome dinner. Both dinner and accommodation are included in your tour price.

### **Darwin to Annaburroo — 148 or 101km — Thu 23 May 2019 — B L D A**

Day 2: The Ride begins! And what a day to start off with - filled to the brim with highlights, action and adventure. Riding out of Darwin, we follow the quiet back roads as they open up to the Top-End landscape and its iconic burnt patches from recent dry season fires and the fresh green growth of Darwin Woolly-butt, Stringy Bark, and Bloodwood trees that follow. At 50km we stop in at the gorgeous Berry Springs Nature Park, a popular swimming and picnic area with several pools and a small waterfall fed by crystal clear spring water and surrounded by natural bush. We'll give you as much time as we can here for a longer-than-usual morning tea break for you to refresh before turning north east and rolling out another 50km before our lunch stop at Wak Wak. Here, if time allows, you can enjoy the famous 'Jumping Crocodile Cruise' - yes, the one that you have seen on TV where the croc jumps out of the water to eat the dangling meat held out on a stick by a Park Ranger.

This afternoon you are on the home straight with the last 50km into Annaburroo where you can kick back and relax at the Mary River Wilderness Retreat - a friendly and welcoming retreat with lovely grounds, lots of birdlife and a couple of swimming pools to choose from as you relax into your afternoon. Tonight we have our nightly group briefing and dinner together to celebrate the first day on the bike and the start of our top end journey.

### **Annaburroo to Jabiru — 141 or 98km — Fri 24 May 2019 — B L D A**

Day 3: Today is the day that you hit Kakadu! There is magic in the air as you find yourself immersed in this region of natural beauty and ancient cultural history. The kilometres will sail past as you follow the bitumen that winds through the famous Australian outback landscape. It's something special to be cycling in the outback - the vast sky and land, the harsh environment, the tough animals that somehow survive out here, and the plant life that has customised itself to the location. It looks great from the road but you know that hiding behind it all are the stunning natural treasures that you will discover in the coming days as you work your way through Kakadu.

Jabiru is at the end of the Arnhem Hwy as the road turns south west and becomes the Kakadu Hwy. Our overnight accommodation is the unique 'Crocodile Hotel' - one of the world's most distinctive hotels, shaped (from a birds-eye view) like a saltwater crocodile. Besides the novelty of the buildings, it's a great place to stay with plenty of resort facilities, a swimming pool (located at the 'heart' of the Crocodile), and a collection of indigenous art including paintings and didgeridoos, some available for purchase. Tonight we have our nightly group briefing and dinner together at the hotel.

### **Jabiru to Yellow Water — 53km — Sat 25 May 2019 — B L D A**

Day 4: It's a bit of a shorter ride today, which you will enjoy after some challenging distances over the last few days. This morning you can take it easy, enjoy your breakfast at a leisurely pace, take a wander around the grounds at the Croc Hotel, then head out on our 53km cycle to Yellow Water where we stay at the impressive Cooida Lodge. Again the scenery from the road is beautiful and so unique to this part of the world, but it's what lies beyond that awaits you at our next overnight stop.

Cooinda Lodge is a village style property located beneath a canopy of trees beside Yellow Water Billabong, home to world-renowned Yellow Water Cruises. Here you will see crocodiles (from a safe distance!) and birds on the flood plain amongst Paperbark, Pandanus and Fresh Water Mangroves - it's spectacular. With a relaxed resort atmosphere, this afternoon you can take a dip in the pool, check out the local crafts in the store or kick back at one of the bars. We do suggest having a look at the touring options available here as you won't want to miss out. Take up the opportunity this afternoon or plan for your rest day tomorrow.

#### **Yellow Water (rest day) — NA — Sun 26 May 2019 — B - - A**

Day 5: Cooinda Lodge is said to be 'The Ultimate Base to Explore Kakadu' and for that reason we had to stop here for a rest day. Your touring options are plentiful from the world renowned cruises on the Yellow Water Billabong to fishing tours to 4WD tours where you can explore deeper into the Kakadu National Park and see more of the highlights that are not accessible by paved road (and are therefore not as busy with visitors).

All of these tours can be booked at the lodge and we encourage you to make the most of this experience with a tour or two that piques your interest.

#### **Yellow Water to Pine Creek — 164 or 107km — Mon 27 May 2019 — B L D A**

Day 6: We hit the road early, and after your rest day you'll be rearing to go and ready to push through the kilometres out of Kakadu National Park and towards State Highway One, The Stuart Highway. This is the main road through the middle of the country, starting in Darwin in the north, travelling down through the Red Centre and Alice Springs, into South Australia to Port Augusta near Adelaide. Named after Scottish explorer John McDouall Stuart, who was the first European to cross Australia from south to north, the highway's 2800 kms approximates the route Stuart took.

As we reach the Stuart highway, we also reach Pine Creek, our overnight stop. This was the scene of a gold rush in the 1870's from which some timber and iron buildings still remain today. Ironically, the town was officially named Playford in 1889 after the South Australian Commissioner of Crown Lands. Playford's desire for immortality was misplaced and the town continued to be known as Pine Creek in spite of the government's attempt to honour him. After over 80 years, the town is now officially known by its original name. Worth a visit are the Railway Museum and the Old Repeater Station, Mining exhibition. Unfortunately, Ah Toy's Bakery and general store has closed down after 80 years but it's worth an internet search to read about the story.

#### **Pine Creek to Katherine — 129 or 68km — Tue 28 May 2019 — B L D A**

Day 7: Travelling out from Pine Creek the road becomes quite undulating, which is to be enjoyed before the flats of the Victoria Hwy, and the hillcrests also provide grand views over the beautiful tropical scenery. There are also many large termite (dirt) mounds, some are over 5 metres high. They are constructed by tiny insects that size-for-size, build structures that dwarf our own human constructions and very silently consume more grass than all of Australia's large herbivores combined!

We stop on the way at Edith Falls, a beautiful swimming and camping area with lovely paperbark and pandanus-fringed pools, before reaching the bustling town of Katherine, sitting proudly next to the Katherine River. Named by explorer John McDouall Stuart on his third and final attempt of his trans-continental crossing, it has long been a stopping point with the first permanent running water for thousands of kilometres for those travelling up from the south. The Katherine River is a mixed blessing however, causing plenty of floods and leaving the watermark up to 2m high on buildings all over town, as well as stories of crocodiles swimming down the main street. When you cross the bridge, which crosses one of the thirteen stunning gorges of the Katherine River your mind will boggle at how much water must pass through here to cause a wet season flood.

#### **Katherine (rest day) — NA — Wed 29 May 2019 — B - D A**

Day 8: Today is the end of Stage One and the start of Stage Two so some cyclists may be coming and going today as they finish or begin their tour with us here. For those who are here all day we will be offering transfers to Nitmiluk

National Park where you can canoe, cruise and swim between sheer cliffs to the sandy freshwater beaches of the main gorges, and view ancient Aboriginal rock paintings high on the rock faces. Waterfalls and rock pools are found along walking tracks and for those looking for some high-time excitement; you can also explore the area by helicopter (activities are at your own cost).

There is also plenty to see in town, visit the Katherine School of the Air, the Outback Heritage Museum or relax by the natural spring-fed crystal-clear pool of the Katherine Hot Springs set in picturesque surroundings with lush green lawns, shady paperbarks and pandanus palms. For those who just cannot stay off the bike visit Springvale Homestead, 8 kilometres south-west of Katherine and the oldest original homestead in the Territory, built in 1879 by Alfred Giles the former Overland Telegraph linesman.

### **Katherine to Mathison Rest Area (overnight Katherine) — 103km — Thu 30 May 2019 — B L - A**

Day 9: We are back on the bike after a great rest at Katherine and it's here that we leave the Stuart Highway which is southbound headed for Port Augusta and Adelaide, and take the Victoria Highway which will point us westward towards WA and Broome.

This section takes you into both dry and beautiful country with some nice undulations - as you get into your rhythm it won't be long before we reach Mathison Rest Area which in the past has been the first of our 'bush camps' on tour. This year however we have decided to transfer cyclists back to Katherine for another night of comfort before we head out into the remote expanses of western NT.

### **Mathison Rest Area to Victoria River — 92km — Fri 31 May 2019 — B L D A**

Day 10: This morning we pack up our gear after breakfast and head back to Mathison rest area and begin our riding along the Victoria Highway. Gentle to flat grades take you through open and arid Spinifex grasslands, until entering Gregory National Park within 40 kms of Victoria River Gorge, where there are some fantastic long to moderate downhill sections. The highlight of the day is the scenery of flat-top mountains and the colourful gorges nearing Victoria River, Northern Territory's largest River.

Victoria River Roadhouse is a friendly place with a stunning backdrop of the red Stokes Range. There is also a bit of Top End humour with a large sign proclaiming 'Under New Management' with the word 'Management' crossed out and replaced with 'Wife'.

### **Victoria River to Timber Creek — 90km — Sat 1 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 11: The superb and generally easy ride alongside the colourful Victoria River Gorge within Gregory National Park continues for another 8 km leading out into open country. It is mostly flat riding apart from a gentle 4 km climb at about the 58 km mark near Kuwang Lookout, which overlooks the plains to distant mountains.

Timber creek is a small outback town with huge boab trees lining the main street. There are some nice walks, a lookout, a museum at the old police station ruins and a river tour (at own expense). Keep an eye out for the rare and colourful Gouldian Finch as the area is home to 70 mating pairs. For those who consider themselves a tweeter there is even a bird hide on the Timber Creek Heritage Trail.

### **Timber Creek to Saddle Creek Bush Camp — 118km — Sun 2 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 12: It is a beautiful ride leaving Timber Creek alongside the Gregory River. Named after Augustus Charles Gregory who was the first European to see the magnificent country you will be riding through. Setting off on foot he completed the first trip across northern Australia from west to east, in the mid 1850s. He completed eight thousand kilometres overland, by the time he reached Moreton Bay, on the Pacific Coast amazingly without loss of life to his crew of six. Both the Boab tree (*Adansonia gregorii*), and the National Park here, are named in his honour.

Tonight everyone will sleep under the night sky looking out towards the Pinkerton range. With a nice fire, great company and facilities, even if they are a little basic, we are sure to have a great night.

### **Saddle Creek Bush Camp to Kununurra — 111km — Mon 3 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 13: The Boab trees that seem to have so much character in their squat, plump, almost human shapes, will have become a frequent roadside highlight. Over the last two days, you will have noticed some beautiful examples with many trees over 2000 years old! These trees were just as big and impressive when Gregory and his expedition team passed through this country over 150 years ago.

At around 69 kms we arrive at the WA/NT border and must leave behind all fruit, vegetables, farming equipment and cane toads that you may be carrying with you. Then it is a short walk across the line and we all become 1 ½ hours younger, adjustments should be made to your watches accordingly. Then it is a flat 40 km ride that crosses 'Golden Gate Bridge' to Kununurra where we rest up and enjoy the welcome change of a good size town with a nice hotel and plenty of things to do off the bike. Kununurra is a booming town on the eastern edge of the Kimberley. According to the Mirima Language Centre the name is based on the Miriwoong word "Goonoonoorrang", which simply means large river, and the vast majority of the attractions here involve water, lots of water. And water means life, amazing flora, abundant wildlife and excellent fishing.

### **Kununurra (rest day) — NA — Tue 4 Jun 2019 — B - D A**

Day 14: Today you can either take it easy and enjoy the day – have a look around town, visit a mango farm, take a swim in the Lake, tune your bike, relax – or take the opportunity to explore the Bungle Bungles.

Kununurra is about 300km north of Purnululu (Bungle Bungles) and is a base for scenic flights out to this spectacular hidden area of world-renowned rock formations. A number of tour companies offer trips and we will gather together our group and offer a couple of trips as an optional extra activity. There are a few highlights closer to town such as the Hidden Valley in Mirima National Park, which provides great views of the area and are similar, although much smaller, to the Bungle Bungle formations. If the landscape looks a little familiar, perhaps it is because the movie 'Australia' was filmed in the surrounding area. Today is also the end of Stage Two and the start of Stage Three so we may have a few cyclists coming and going as they finish or begin their tour with us.

### **Kununurra to Doon Doon Roadhouse Camp — 106km — Wed 5 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 15: The Kimberley covers an area larger than the state of Victoria and has a population of only 38,000; it is pristine and virtually untouched. With only one sealed road passing through one of the world's largest true wildernesses, our route is clear.

It is a scenic route out of Kununurra, crossing the dam bridge, a vital part of the Ord River scheme, which provides the water that gave rise to the town's existence. After crossing the Durham River Bridge an initial short climb continues into a long moderate climb bringing you eventually into gently undulating to flat country, including a 7 km gentle downhill! After 45km you reach the turnoff for the Great Northern Highway which we will follow to Broome. Tonight we camp at the Doon Doon Roadhouse with green lawns and good facilities.

### **Doon Doon to Warmun Roadhouse — 91km — Thu 6 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 16: Today we ride a short distance west of the world famous Argyle Diamond mine – one of the world's largest suppliers of diamonds, producing approximately 20 million carats each year from its operations in the East Kimberley Region. Argyle commenced mining its main ore body in 1985, and has since produced more than 750 million carats of diamonds. The majority of which are truly rare and beautiful pink diamonds – the mine's signature stone – destined for the jewellery industry. People had searched the hills for gold for over 100 years, but it was not until someone made the possible connection between the Kimberley and the rich diamond area of the Kimberley region in South Africa, which the area was supposedly named after because of the geological similarities that looking for diamonds begun. Since 1985 the mine has been operating and employs over 750 people, half of which are local indigenous people.

After the day's ride we end up at Warmun Roadhouse which began as a stopping point for travellers moving to and from the Halls Creek goldfields. Drinks were laid out on racks and covered with wet hessian sacks to provide



travellers who could pay, often in gold, a somewhat cool beverage. Those days are now long gone with good facilities and accommodation. There are two recommended activities to fill your afternoon if you wish. A flight over the Bungle Bungles with a helicopter, which can be booked on arrival (at own expense) and the aboriginal art centre based in Warmun community only 2km south of the roadhouse. The art here is unique, using only traditional ochres and pigments. The centre is wholly owned and managed by the artists with 100% of the income from sales going back into the community.

### **Warmun Roadhouse to Halls Creek — 163km — Fri 7 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 17: Today you will be riding parallel to the King Leopold Ranges and even small hills provide you with stunning views of the region. Over billions of years the Kimberley landscape has been sculpted by violent tropical storms, ice ages and inland seas creating a unique environment like nothing else on the planet.

Halls Creek is famous for Western Australia's first gold discovery in 1885. In the following two years over 10,000 men landed in the Kimberley in the hope of finding gold. Others walked across from Queensland and up through the Tanami desert from Alice Springs! Nobody knows how many died along the waterless stretches or at crocodile infested rivers. For those who did make it to the goldfields the conditions were extremely tough and while many walked away with nothing, a few become heroes. One was Russian Jack, whose mate got seriously ill and with the nearest doctor in Wyndham, he loaded his mate in a wheelbarrow and pushed him 300 km to the port.

In 1955 what was left of the town was moved 15 kms north, next to the airport and the proposed highway. In 1956 the last camel train left the town bringing an end to the old times and with the sealing of the Great Northern Highway the town has become quite modern and grown again to over 1500 people to support the surrounding pastoral and mining industries.

### **Halls Creek (rest day) — NA — Sat 8 Jun 2019 — B - - A**

Day 18: In 1885 a prospector named Charles Hall struck gold at the edges of the Great Sandy and Tanami Deserts in remote North West Australia – a huge 28 ounce gold nugget. It was the first discovery of payable gold in WA and the beginning of a short lived but important gold rush, leading to the development of a small centre for commerce and trade just 15 km from the current site of Halls Creek. By 1954, old Halls Creek was all but abandoned as people moved to the new town site, and now stands in ruins. Today you can see the foundations of the old mine shaft, sections of the old post-office and the cemetery, where many Kimberley pioneers were buried. Halls Creek was also the last stop for farmers driving cattle along the legendary Canning Stock Route.

Halls Creek is now home to successful farming and mining industries and is a great base for exploring the area's natural and historical attractions such as Purnululu National Park and Bungle Bungle Range (scenic flights if you have not taken the opportunity to explore yet). You can also visit the second largest meteorite crater in the world at Wolfe Creek Crater National Park. Marvel at the China Wall, a six-metre high wall of quartz rock believed to be part of the longest single fault of its type in the world. Check out the old Halls Creek town site, a reminder of the town's mining history. Enjoy the peace and beauty of the fresh water springs at Palm Springs or Caroline's Pool, or head out to Sawpit Gorge for a swim and a picnic. Plenty to do (or nothing to do) for your rest day.

### **Halls Creek to Larawa Station Nature Stay Bush Camp — 156km — Sun 9 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 19: Travelling east along the most southern section of the ride we hope to have the prevailing winds push us along as we cycle through this ancient landscape. The ranges you will see throughout your ride are some of the oldest in the world. Once giant mountain system like those of the Himalayas, the ranges have been eroded down over many 100's of millions of years to what geologists describe today as the skeletons of the earth.

Tonight we all camp at Larawa Station Nature Stay - a relaxing location with gorgeous birdlife and waterholes, including well-maintained toilet facilities and showers. With the cool clear nights of the dry season and so close to the Tanami desert we should have a beautiful night to experience our million star outback accommodation.

### **Larawa Station to Fitzroy Crossing — 146km — Mon 10 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 20: Today is another long day in the saddle and takes you along the southern Kimberley over 400 kms inland and bordering one of Australia's largest deserts, the Great Sandy Desert. On the other side of Cummins Range, thousands of sand dunes stretch out for what appears like a never-ending horizon of sand. It is also where the Canning Stock Route winds 2,000 kms south through some of the world's most inhospitable country.

Fitzroy Crossing is set on the banks of the mighty Fitzroy River and has seen its share of wet season floods, the last in early 2017. Look at the photos in the reception area and you will see why the building sits up on a small hill. The original town site is definitely worth a visit, either today or before you set off tomorrow. The town's claim to fame comes from the legendary Crossing Inn, built in 1897 as a shanty inn and trade store for the locals and those long distance travellers waiting to ford the Fitzroy River, which sometimes took months! With a new higher bridge built in 1974, the focus of the town grew away from its original site.

### **Fitzroy Crossing (rest day) — NA — Tue 11 Jun 2019 — B L - A**

Day 21: Today we have a day off the bike and will all enjoy the Windjana Gorge & Tunnel Creek day tour (included in trip price) where you will hear the amazing true story of Bunuba man, Jandamarra, and be shown the places he went to during his three-year warfare with settlers and authorities. He was only in his mid twenties when he was gunned down in 1897, but in his short life he created a legacy that will never be forgotten. He led one of the longest and most successful campaigns to defend Aboriginal country in Australian history.

His story is a sad one, but one worth hearing in full. Jandamarra travelled like a bird through his country to the anger and frustration of the troopers who seemed to forever be chasing this elusive man. Even worse was when Jandamarra would sneak into the police officer's camp, steal their flour and sprinkle it on the ground leaving only his footprints behind. The police officers would wake knowing that he could have taken their lives, but instead he choose to make fun of them. You'll experience where Jandamarra hid in the caves and where the first gun battle was located and follow the storyline through Windjana Gorge to its finale in Tunnel Creek. Prepare for a day of great story-telling, spectacular scenery and engaging insight into the local area.

### **Fitzroy Crossing to Ellendale Bush Camp — 89km — Wed 12 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 22: Before we head out from Fitzroy Crossing today we will take a quick trip up to Geike Gorge which has been carved by the Fitzroy River through part of an ancient limestone barrier reef which snakes across the west Kimberley. It was laid down in an ancient sea that covered a large part of the Kimberley in Devonian times, some 350 million years ago. The result today is a spectacular gorge famed for its sheer white and grey walls, abundant wildlife and awesome boat tours.

After an early morning tour we will ride out with a new appreciation and understanding of the local area thanks to our tour yesterday and you will recognise some of the names and places as we head to Ellendale bush camp next to Mount Wynne Creek where we have the last of our 'bush camp' evenings.

### **Ellendale to Willare Bridge Roadhouse — 143km — Thu 13 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 23: Long straight sections of road lead you to your overnight accommodation. Often the prevailing easterlies can get quite strong along here in the mornings and the kilometres seem to disappear over the flat road. With the Great Sandy Desert only 50 km away on the other side of the Fitzroy River the vegetation is predominately grasslands, however there are boab trees, which dot the landscape like resting giants. Aboriginals used the giants as shelter, food and medicine. For the white settlers they served as easily recognisable landmarks and meeting points, and impromptu prison cells. There is a particularly large boab a few metres from the road where we will have a break that has a girth close to 20 metres and is at least 1,500 years old, making it one of the oldest creatures in Australia.

Our destination of Willare Bridge Roadhouse is in the heartland of Yeeda cattle country. A place where local cattlemen and travelers stop for a drink and a good meal as they enjoy the incredible Kimberley. With a good supplies store, restaurant, swimming pool and a beer garden, it's a great place to land after a long day on the bike.



### **Willare Bridge Roadhouse to Broome — 166km — Fri 14 Jun 2019 — B L D A**

Day 24: Our last stretch into Broome crosses some interesting lagoons with birdlife. Keep a lookout for the long legged Brolga crane, Australia's most stately bird. It is pale grey with red markings on the face and can sometimes be seen performing an elegant dance. Hard to miss are the Jabiru, Australia's only stork and one of our largest birds standing 1.5m tall and with a massive 2.3m wingspan. The head and neck colour is an amazing glossy, shimmery, black with blue, green and purple.

After Roebuck Plains Roadhouse the roads becomes more moderately undulating. With only 30 km to go all that is left is pumping those legs till Broome! We made it! What an amazing 3 weeks across the Kimberley. Tonight we celebrate with a group farewell dinner and awards night.

### **Broome — NA — Sat 15 Jun 2019 — B - - -**

Day 25: Have a sleep in - you deserve it! There are plenty of places around town or at the hotel to grab some breakfast or brunch. Do it in your own time - there is no schedule for today...Broome is well worth spending a few days if you have the time, as there is plenty to see. Why not bring the family up to meet you after your big ride?

Broome highlights: Relax down on beautiful Cable Beach - famous for its pristine white sand and sunset camel rides, Art galleries specialising in local and indigenous art, The Historical Society Museum - one of the best regional museums in Australia, Dinosaur footprints laid down over 120 million years old can be seen on very low tides, The Japanese Cemetery - final resting place for over 900 Japanese pearl divers, Sun Pictures Outdoor Theatre - opening in 1916 and believed to be the oldest operating picture garden in the world, Willie Creek Pearl Farm - demonstrations of the intricate process of cultured pearling and live oyster seeding. And if you're really lucky, you might even get a glimpse of the stairway to heaven!

