

## West Coast Epic: Stage 3 Coral Bay to Broome

### The Pilbara Explorer

Saturday 02 June, 2018 to Sunday 17 June, 2018

### 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 beachside resort by a marine sanctuary, or a donga room in a remote outback 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 Perth 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 the ocean, 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. Often 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 25-30km 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 35-45km to lunch around 12-1pm. Half hour to an hour, often in a bakery or cafe.
- Ride 35-45km 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, followed by dinner – usually at the motel restaurant.
- Off to bed!

Location	Distance	Date	B	L	D	A
Coral Bay (Rest Day)	NA	Sat 2 Jun 2018	--	--	Y	Y
Coral Bay to Giralia Station	106km	Sun 3 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Giralia Station to Nanutarra Roadhouse	153km	Mon 4 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Nanutarra to Cheela Plains	182km	Tue 5 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cheela Plains to Paraburdoo	94km	Wed 6 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Paraburdoo to Tom Price	78km	Thu 7 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tom Price to Karijini Eco Retreat	81km	Fri 8 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Karijini National Park (Rest Day)	NA	Sat 9 Jun 2018	Y	--	Y	Y
Karijini to Auski	132km	Sun 10 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Auski to Yule River (Bush Camp)	97km	Mon 11 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Yule River (Bush Camp) to Port Hedland	163km	Tue 12 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Port Hedland to Pardoo	146km	Wed 13 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pardoo to Sandfire Roadhouse	139km	Thu 14 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sandfire Roadhouse to Port Smith Lagoon	176km	Fri 15 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Port Smith Lagoon to Broome	144km	Sat 16 Jun 2018	Y	Y	Y	Y
Broome	NA	Sun 17 Jun 2018	--	--	--	--
Total distance cycled	1691km		14	13	15	15
Average daily distance	130km					

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

### **Coral Bay (Rest Day) — NA — Sat 2 Jun 2018 — - - D A**

Day 15. Today is a changeover point on the ride so some cyclists may be leaving us here after Stage 2 and some may be joining us for Stage 3. To get to Coral Bay to join the ride for Stage 3, you are likely to fly into Learmonth airport which is 120km north towards Exmouth. Local airport transfers can be arranged, or we may drive up to the airport for arriving and departing cyclists, depending on the final number of people coming and going – please register your interest on the booking form and we will finalise details closer to the date. In Coral Bay our cyclists have take the opportunity to [swim with the Whale Sharks](#) (optional extra on the booking form). Our accommodation also has a tour desk and ticket hut right next to reception which will give you all of the options to make the most of your free day here. Hire a snorkel and head for the beach or jump on a tour to explore more of Ningaloo Reef. If you are joining the ride in Coral Bay and wish to partake in the rest day activities you will need to arrive at least a day earlier (Fri 1 Jun). Contact us for more info or if you would like to book accom for Fri 1 Jun.

### **Coral Bay to Giralia Station — 106km — Sun 3 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 16. STAGE THREE – THE PILBARA EXPLORER. We hope that you enjoyed your time at the beach in Coral Bay as we head inland through the Pilbara region for the next ten days to discover some genuine outback experiences and a wonder of nature in Karijini National Park. First stop is Giralia Station, which was run as a working station until 2005, then sold to the Department Conservation and Land Management and now operates as an outback stopover for visitors from all over the World. The great-grandson of the original owner still resides on the property and welcomes guests to the former sheep station. With a variety of accommodation and known for their good dinners, it will be the perfect place to enjoy our first night of outback tranquillity after leaving the coast. Giralia has even featured on TV programmes such as Holiday (UK), Getaway (Aus), Postcards (Aus), Vox Tours (Germany) and Good Morning Britain (UK).

### **Giralia Station to Nanutarra Roadhouse — 153km — Mon 4 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 17. The landscape to Nanutarra, while arid and open, is colourful with red sand dunes and flowering shrubs. There is a series of quite unusual dunes that are perfectly placed apart, like giant speed humps and make you feel ant-size travelling through them. The roadhouse is adjacent to where the Ashburton river is crossed by the North West Coastal Highway and also just short of the turn off for route 136 to Paraburdoo, Tom Price and Karijini which we will take tomorrow. The coming of the roadhouse changed the face of travel through these parts. Where men once trundled down dusty outback pathways eating salted meat and damper, travellers could now fuel up their vehicles and buy ice-creams and cool drinks to ease their thirst. So spare a thought for these early pioneers – the hardy men and women who opened up the land while battling the elements in this once lonely outpost.

### **Nanutarra to Cheela Plains — 182km — Tue 5 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 18. After our overnight we head for a short distance north before leaving the NW Coastal Highway which has been a constant companion since Perth and turn inland. This long stretch of road provides an unusual visual phenomenon that can also be seen in the Queensland Gulf country; painted grids on the road instead of real cattle

grids. It seems that the cattle are easily fooled in these parts too – and it's certainly better for cyclists! It's a long day in the saddle (the longest day of the tour) and we have made good in-roads into the journey inland by the time we hit Cheela Plains – our overnight stop. The place is a family owned and managed cattle station located in the semi-arid, pastoral rangelands of the Pilbara in Western Australia. Along with the grazing enterprise, the owners run the station stay accommodation to offer a real outback experience in the heart of the Pilbara.

#### **Cheela Plains to Paraburdoo — 94km — Wed 6 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 19. After yesterday's long day you'll be ready for a shorter day today which it is, but you'll still need to put in the effort as it's nearly 100km and the first half of the day is on a gentle but constant incline. Paraburdoo is a 'company town'. Large mining companies built these towns for the workers and as supply and administrative bases for mining projects further afield. Paraburdoo was built in 1970 and takes its name from the local Aboriginal language 'Piru-pardu' meaning 'Meat Feathers' because of the town's proliferation of white Corellas. It is renowned for its beautiful scenery, wildlife diversity and interesting short history - including UFO sightings, the discovery of 200-year-old bones, royal visits and the reported birth-place of 'Red Dog' – the dog made famous in the film of the same name. Paraburdoo's highest recorded maximum temperature is 48.9C and the lowest recorded temperature is 1.5C.

#### **Paraburdoo to Tom Price — 78km — Thu 7 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 20. Today is another short ride but again, don't slack off. It is the day on the tour with the most elevation metres to be climbed as we head into Tom Price, Western Australia's highest town at 747 metres above sea-level. It's not exactly Alpe d'Huez but it will get the blood pumping with approximately 600m to be climbed alongside 250m of downhill for the 78km day. Tom Price is a friendly, shady, mining and tourist town of 6,500 people. The town's most prominent feature is Mt Nameless, at 1128 metres above sea level. Not surprisingly the Aboriginal people who have inhabited the area for at least 28,000 years were a little more inventive and had a name for the mountain; Jarndrumunhna, meaning 'place of the rock wallaby'. The 2-hour return walk to the top provides magnificent views of the surrounding ranges and the Tom Price township and iron ore mine site.

#### **Tom Price to Karijini Eco Retreat — 81km — Fri 8 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 21. Departing Tom Price we head back to the main road which becomes Karijini Drive, and it is not long after joining this road that we hit our highest point of the tour at approximately 865m above sea-level. Take it all in but don't waste too much time as we are about to begin three days in Karijini National Park – the jewel in this stage's crown. The scenery is spectacular as we near the eco-retreat where we will be staying for two nights - an environmentally friendly retreat and campground nestled in the pristine bushland at Joffre Gorge - in the heart of the world class National Park. Our campers will enjoy the great location in the multi-award winning retreat, while the accommodated cyclists will have the full 'glamping' experience with a touch of luxury and a taste of fine outback hospitality. Designed with the environment in mind, the semi-permanent deluxe eco tents, cabins, campground and facilities incorporate eco-friendly practices which ensure environmentally sustainable management of the natural and cultural values of one of the most ancient landscapes on earth. We will have a group dinner tonight to celebrate the half-way point of the stage and plan our rest day activities tomorrow.

#### **Karijini National Park (Rest Day) — NA — Sat 9 Jun 2018 — B - D A**

Day 22. Karijini National Park is an iconic, unspoiled nature-based destination offering a unique and diverse landscape and an unforgettable West Australian outback experience. Karijini is famous for its dramatic creeks, spectacular gorges, towering sheer sided chasms up to 100 metres deep, tranquil sunken gardens, deep fern fringed pools, permanently cascading waterfalls and turquoise waterholes. Rest Day Activity: Looking for something to do on your rest day? Why not join the AllTrails staff on their visit to Dales Gorge. We will be exploring the Gorge Rim, Fortescue Falls, Fern Pool, and the Circular Pool. This walk should take approximately 4 hours and will take in some of the best highlights of Karijini.

### **Karijini to Auski — 132km — Sun 10 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 23. Most of today's ride is spent in the National Park and cycling through here is an experience that few people in the world get to enjoy so soak up the last of this magical location as we head towards the Great Northern Highway and turn north to our overnight accommodation at the Auski Tourist Village. As we head north we also begin our descent out of the higher elevations of Karijini and you will enjoy a beautiful long downhill at the end of the day's ride.

### **Auski to Yule River (Bush Camp) — 97km — Mon 11 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 24. We begin today with a flat ride out of Auski to the Fortescue floodplain before a gradual climb as we get further from the centre of the Hamersley Range of which the Karijini National Park sits in the middle of. As you look back during the ride, you will pick up beautiful views of the range from various vantage points. The road from here has easy to moderate undulations with further short steep sections as you approach and leave waterways. Tonight we all camp at Yule River as we are too remote for any accommodation. Enjoy the cool desert night amongst the Spinifex plains, and don't worry if camping isn't usually 'your thing' as it's always a fun experience where friendships and bonds are strengthened – not to mention the impossibly starry night sky that will blow your mind on a clear night (which they usually are).

### **Yule River (Bush Camp) to Port Hedland — 163km — Tue 12 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 25. We pack up after our outback camping experience and head to the coast. It is our last day 'inland' and you'll have plenty of memories of your time in this special part of Australia where ancient creeks cut deep gorges into the red stone and steep escarpments rise from the desert plains. The terrain today is pretty much all a gentle downhill across long sections of bitumen through the desert. After rain, wildflowers decorate the roadside and wildlife thrives so keep an eye out. Port Hedland today is a town built through mining and has a population of 16,000. The town boasts the world's largest bulk tonnage export port, exporting 372.3 million tonnes per annum – to see some of the action head out to Nelson point for views of the BHP crushing and shipping area. Port Hedland is also a melting pot of over an estimated 72 nationalities and cultures, many employed in mining and related industries.

### **Port Hedland to Pardoo — 146km — Wed 13 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 26. As you depart Port Hedland there are a few railway crossings so be careful. You may also need to wait a while for one to pass - the trains here can be over 3 km long (the longest ever was 7.3 km). The scenery for the first part of today is still showing significant signs of life with creeks, rocky outcrops, mountains and desert plains, however around half way we reach De Grey River after which we truly head into the harsh outback environment. From here the water is scarce and life is much harder to sustain. After a long stint on the dry and open roads, our roadhouse accommodation is certainly a refreshing stop where you can shower, relax, and enjoy the hospitality, unique wildlife and glorious sunsets. Pardoo Roadhouse is famous for its homemade sausage rolls and the swimming pool is a refreshing crocodile free attraction.

#### **Pardoo to Sandfire Roadhouse — 139km — Thu 14 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 27. Off again today on your journey through one of the harshest environments in Australia. The road we travel never actually reaches the coast line until Broome, although you will get within 9 kilometres and perhaps you will smell the sea breeze blowing across the sand dunes. One reason for the roads construction so far inland is the wet season cyclones that can cause havoc at the coast. By putting roads further inland, the cyclones usually lose their destructive power by the time they reach the road. As we near Sandfire Roadhouse you leave the shire of East Pilbara, apparently the largest Shire in the world. Sandfire Roadhouse is a welcome sight, situated in the Great Sandy Desert, being almost 200 km from the nearest ice-cream. The roadhouse burnt down several years ago and has since been rebuilt next to a grove of shady mango trees.

#### **Sandfire Roadhouse to Port Smith Lagoon — 176km — Fri 15 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 28. For the first 50 km of today's ride you pedal across the vast Sandfire Plains, catching regular sights of the Great Sandy Desert dunes. The road continues through open plains and scrub that provide little shade. It can be quite a surprise to see healthy Brahman Cattle that graze in this region. Every now and again you may see a Willy Willy also called a Dust Devil (a miniature whirlwind that carries sand and small debris) – interesting to watch as they slowly zig-zag over the plains, but not very pleasant if one runs into you! Many unsupported cyclists fear the next section of the Highway as it is the longest stretch around Australia without water, 290km. With possible westerlies coming from the ocean or hot easterlies from the desert, it can be a daunting challenge. Lucky for you to have the full support and comfort of AllTrails to help you through. Today and tomorrow are very much desert rides, through low vegetation without even a creek line. On previous tours here we have had another compulsory bush camp tonight, however this time we will cycle to within 150km of Broome where a long driveway extends out to the Great Northern Highway from the coast. We will ferry our bikes down the 23km dirt road driveway to one of the Kimberley region's best kept secrets, Port Smith Lagoon and Caravan Park, for our final evening together. Take a stroll along the beach and look at the shells or try to spot whales a few kilometres off the coast from the cliffs. Try your hand at the nine-hole bush style golf course – just two dollars including club hire! Port Smith also operates a rehabilitation and release area for injured or orphaned kangaroos and wallabies. A great place to spend our final evening.

#### **Port Smith Lagoon to Broome — 144km — Sat 16 Jun 2018 — B L D A**

Day 29. On this two week ride you have really got a taste for the remoteness of Australia. You have cycled on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert, through the blood red sands of the Pilbara to one of Australia's best kept secrets in Karijini National Park; and explored the interesting layers that make up the Coral Coast. What an epic ride and filled with some of the best scenery outback Australia has to offer. But it's not over yet – we have approximately 100km across the Sandfire plains, and a 14km stretch through an ancient river delta without trees. Ludwig

Leichhardt who named the plains didn't have the luxury of picking his time of the year to travel here and found the sand as hot as fire. After coming off the plains we hit the Roebuck roadhouse and we turn left, saying goodbye to the Great Northern Highway and travelling along Broome Road for 35km into Broome itself and our final, well-deserved, destination. Congratulations – what a ride and what an effort. Tonight's accommodation is included for all cyclists and we will have one final celebratory dinner together to reflect on your huge achievements and an amazing experience.

### **Broome — NA — Sun 17 Jun 2018 — - - - -**

Day 30. 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!

