

OUTBIKE

'GULF TO GULF' 2025 RIDER INFORMATION (ENTRIES TO 30 SEP 2024)

G2G RIDE IN BRIEF

The **Gulf to Gulf** rides between Spencer Gulf and the Gulf of Carpentaria in 30 days, all the way across Australia! A quarter of the route is gravel, notably the 520km Birdsville Track. About 400km has been sealed since we began the event in 2005, when Outbike was an offshoot of our tour company 'Wayward Bus'. Birdsville-Karumba is almost all-sealed at the end of 2023 (about 20km gravel remaining).

It's getting a bit easier but there's still plenty of gravel!

Outbike's director (and founder) Ralph Jackson has extensive cycle-tour experience in Australia, NZ, UK & Europe (mostly 1980s). Ralph rode the G2G in halves over the first two events in 2005 and 2006.

2025 NORTHBOUND 15 May start from Pt Augusta, arrival Karumba 13 June

Riders can transfer on our bus from Adelaide to Port Augusta on 14 May and on from Karumba to Cairns 15-16 June following the end-of-ride free day (on 14th).

HALF-RIDES & SECTIONS: Options are offered in 2025 for 15-day half-rides and 6-8 day sections, subject to limited places. Riders can elect to leave or join enroute at MARREE, BIRDSVILLE or MT ISA.

- We will run a vehicle from Marree to Port Augusta and back for riders and fresh supplies
- There is a twice-weekly REX flight from Brisbane to Birdsville which connects neatly
- Mt Isa has frequent flights, daily buses and twice-weekly rail connections

Day by Day <approx distances>:

Port Augusta <40> Quorn <65> Hawker <55> Wilpena <80> Angorichina <85> Copley <115> Marree x 2 nts <55> Clayton Station* <85> Cooper Creek* <65> Mungerannie Pub x 2 nts <315 in 4 days***> Birdsville x 2 nts <190 in 2 days*> Bedourie <195 in 2 days*> Boulia <300 in 3 days**> Mt Isa x 2 nts <120 Sunday> Cloncurry <185 in 2 days*> Four Ways, Burke 'n Wills Roadhouse <200 in 2 days*> Normanton <70> Karumba Point

* denotes bush camp (11 nights, of these 3 are rest areas or campsites with basic facilities)

Rest days:

- **Marree** is a fascinating old town, once the railhead for the Ghan. Flights to Lake Eyre are offered.
- **Mungerannie** is a roadhouse pub with bore-fed warm artesian lake.
- **Birdsville** is iconic and historic. A drive 40km west out to 'Big Red' for sunset.
- **Mt Isa** with tours of the copper mine and WW2 underground hospital.
- **Karumba** has plenty to see and do for our day prior to the ride.

Shorter days:

- Time in the towns of **Quorn** and **Hawker**.
- Walks or flights at **Wilpena Pound**.
- Spa tub at the rest area outside **Clayton Station**.
- A dip in **Bedourie's** artesian baths.
- Afternoon time in **Boulia**, catch the show at the Min-Min Centre.
- Explore **Normanton**, home of the **Gulflander Train**.

Rider numbers: For 2025 we aim for between 15 and 25 riders. We may overbook to 27-28 to allow for the usual withdrawals and deferrals.

Team: Staff of 3 to 4 crew plus 2-3 helpers to give a high level of service together with 3 or 4 support vehicles.

Daily Grind: Typical distances are around 100km on sealed roads (longest 120km) or 80km a day on dirt.

Included Meals, Nights, Transfers:

Ride includes 30/31 nights camping (11 at bush sites and rest areas, with most nights at campgrounds with good facilities), hearty breakfasts on all days, snacks galore, lunches on 26 ride days, dinners on 11 bush nights plus Wilpena and Angorichina (dine at local pubs or make use of campsite-kitchens on other nights), extensive rider support and transfers on our bus from/to Cairns/Adelaide.

Cost for full ride:

- Participation per rider in 2025 is \$8000 AUD for the full event.

Costs and transfers for shorter rides:

- Half rides are \$4200 and include either the Adelaide to Pt Augusta or Karumba to Cairns transfer.
- The 4 'sections' are \$2400 each. Section 1 includes the prior Adelaide to Pt Augusta transfer. Sections 1 and 2 include the Marree to Pt Augusta or vice-versa transfer. Section 4 includes the Karumba rest day and 2-day Cairns transfer.
- Travel in and out of Birdsville (twice-weekly flights to BNE) and/or Mt Isa (flights, bus or rail) is not included.

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North vs South: Since the first event in 2005 the G2G has run Northbound except for 2022, when we ran two events, in both directions. Here are a few points re the differences from a Northbound perspective:

Northbound

- travels 'with the seasons', starting from the south in late Autumn, arriving in the Gulf Country in early winter as the weather cools
- benefits from prevailing SE breezes, often 10-20 kph
- traffic is lighter in May-June (vs June-July if we run a later southbound event)
- is more prone to disruption from outback river floodwaters following the Dec-Mar monsoon season
- sun is ahead, more glare and 'less colour' in the landscape (so ride with a mirror!)

Rain is a rare event throughout the route in the months April to July. But over the 30 days, chances are we'll encounter some rain somewhere, more likely in the south.

Bikes: MTBs recommended. Hybrid, cross-country and gravel bikes are good too but wider tyres run best over loose gravel, bulldust and sandy patches. Two sets of tyres are suggested, knobbles 45-55+mm for the dirt and narrower 32-38mm for faster riding on bitumen. Note that MTB 29" rims also take 700c tyres.

Be Fit and Ready: You don't have to 'ride hard' each day to do this event – it is more about going the distance (and preserving yourself). Riders should have recent experience at completing multiple 100km days and competence at riding on dirt roads. Make sure your bike and body are compatible for successive long days. Riders should ensure they are 'butt-ready' as groin wear and tear is the #1 reason for taking a softer seat on the sag vehicle. For riders who tend to be tender, dual-suspension MTB may be the best choice.

Hire: We will have a number of 27.5 or 29/700c light MTBs for hire at \$500 for the 30 days with two sets of tyres, knobbly for dirt (45-55mm) and narrower for road (32-38mm). You may like to bring your own saddle, pedals and bar-ends.

Transfer between Cairns and Karumba: Taking 2 days with a night camped and sightseeing enroute. Transfer, camping and breakfast are included in the ride cost. Other meals and any admissions are extra.

Transfer between Port Augusta and Adelaide: By mini-coaches is included.

Camping: We provide the tents, pop-ups or hiker domes, for double or solo use (no sharing required)). For mattress, we provide at least 2 layers, a closed cell insulation mat and a self-inflating soft foam mat – so you'll have at least 5-6cm of comfort under you. Sleeping bags are available for hire. Sacks of spares bags and

blankets are carried for colder nights. We have tables, stools and comfortable chairs. There are gazebos (some with insect mesh) and shade cloths we can set up. We have pop-ups for showers (solar heated water bags) and toilets (porta-potty and thunder-buckets). There are basins and buckets aplenty for washing your kit. Hygiene is a priority.

On many nights we will have a campfire.

Drinks: You may bring alcoholic drinks to have on our bush overnights but we ask that they not be consumed before 4pm (earlier if all rides are in) – and in moderation. Sometimes riders doing fundraising will co-ordinate bulk purchases.

Entertainments: There'll be books, games and sports gear. Maybe a 'talent quest' and other silliness. On many nights we're all in bed by 8pm!

Power: We have solar panels, battery storage and inverters to provide power in remote locations. We've had a bulky, noisy petrol-powered generator in the past but won't bring it 2024-25 as we now find our increased solar/battery kit sufficient for the fridges, campsite lighting and keeping everyone's gizmos powered up.

Dietary requests: Please advise at time of entry. Typically we have several GF and/or vegetarian.

Breakfasts and Lunches: Fuel up on healthy buffet breakfasts. Enjoy a second helping on the porridge. Pack lunch before setting out and we'll keep it cool for you to have at the lunch rendezvous.

Morning Tea: Our crew and vehicles will be typically at 25-40kms intervals with thermoses, filter coffee and tea, cold drinks, fruit, cake, biscuits and other snacks.

Lunch stop: Typically at 50-80kms with one of our crew and a vehicle on site.

Afternoon Tea: On our longer days we may add an afternoon refreshment stop at 75-100 kms. We may also add water points on long/warm days.

Cups, crockery, cutlery: We ask riders to bring their own plate, bowl, cutlery and coffee mug and cup, best kept in a calico bag or similar. Check out the collapsible kits now popular.

Please carry a collapsible cup in your jersey pocket or on your bike.

Support vehicles: We plan to use at least one 21-seat mini-coach (with large enclosed trailer), a truck and our 4wd Nissan X-Trail or similar. One vehicle will always be to the rear and act as a sag-wagon for riders in distress or who have fallen well behind. Other vehicles will move through the ride during the day, setting up morning tea and lunch points.

Chores: We will have most things covered with our crew and helpers. For the bush campsites where we have more camp set-up and to prepare dinners, we'll run a roster for riders to assist.

Crew: Our 3-4 crew include the role of Ride Director, Catering and Operations. We also aim to have an experienced bike mechanic on the team (as we did on 2022 rides). All have current First Aid training.

Volunteer non-rider helpers: We can use up to 3 non-riding helpers for campsite, rider support and catering tasks. It's a great way to see a lot of Outback Australia at next to no cost.

Medical: Registrants will be required to advise of medical conditions on the registration form. We reserve the right to ask for a doctor's letter. If the Ride Manager becomes concerned on the event for an entrant's ride-fitness or ability to ride on safely, they may discuss with the rider possibilities to tackle shorter distances for a day or more – combined with rest and recovery, riding on the vehicles.

Communications: Several UHF hand-helds are available for issue amongst riders. Ride vehicles have UHF radio. Satellite message devices are carried by at least 2 crew. In 2022 Telstra had the best mobile coverage on the route.

First Aid and measures vs mozzies: Comprehensive first-aid kits will be on all vehicles. We carry plenty of sunscreen and personal insect repellent (good to bring your own too). Riders should do all they practically can to avoid mosquito and other insect bites (loose light-coloured clothing that covers limbs, footwear and using personal repellent. In 2016 we had 2 cases of Ross River (including Ralph the ride director).

Traffic: The full ride does approx. 2240 kms along remote roads including around 600 kms on dirt. As it is mostly in Outback SA and Queensland, none of the roads are too busy however care needs to be taken, especially with single lane bitumen, dust clouds, passing trucks and road trains. We recommend riding with a mirror and being prepared to pull over if a large vehicle is likely to pass closely or create serious dust (eg if the vehicle also faces oncoming traffic – or on sections where you are on narrow road).

How busy are the roads? Traffic volumes per day, total in both directions approx (using annual estimates divided by 365):

- Birdsville to Bedourie on the Eyre Development Road – 30 vehicles a day
- Bedourie to Mt Isa on the Diamantina Development Road – 45 vehicles a day
- Mt Isa to Cloncurry on the Barkly Hwy – 600 vehicles a day.

FROM 2022 WE SCHEDULED THIS STAGE ON SUNDAYS TO LESSEN THE NUMBER OF TRUCKS AND GIVE THE OPTION OF TRAVELLING ON THE INLANDER TRAIN.

- Cloncurry to Karumba on the Burke Development Road – 75 vehicles a day

Sourced from Queensland Department of Transport & Main Roads about a decade ago.

Ride Guide: We issue a descriptive day by day ride guide.

Signage: Our vehicles will display 'CYCLISTS ON ROAD' signs. Be advised we do not place marshals and signage along the daily route. Instructions will be given ahead of any route aspects that may be confusing.

Weather and Road Conditions, Floodwaters & Route Diversions: Conditions in the Outback are subject to change due to occurrences such as rains and floods. Diversions could range from a few hours to several days and may involve travel on our buses.

- In 2016 we made it to Birdsville with hours to spare before a deluge that cut the town off and held us up for 4 days – which we managed to catch up on.
- In 2019 flood water closed the upper Birdsville Track from February to June so for 4.5 days we drove around via the Strzelecki Track, Innamincka, the Dig Tree and other remote trails to reach Birdsville.
- On the 2022 Northbound we started the ride with the Birdsville Track closed. It opened ahead of us. The Diamantina River bridge at Birdsville went under floodwaters later on the day we rode out (cutting the town off from the east and south). We had to ride the Lake Machattie detour, adding 60km of mostly gravel though many riders loved the diversion – but they didn't know how pretty Cuttaburra Crossing is!
- Departing on the 2022 Southbound ride, the bridge at Birdsville was still under floodwaters. It opened about a week ahead. The Birdsville Track we found to be mostly recently graded, the best we've ever experienced it.

Deposits and payment schedule for confirmed events:

- Registration form, signed waiver and \$100 deposit holds a ride place
- A second deposit payment of \$900 is due by 30 September 2024
- Full payment is due by end of February 2025.

NAB Account: My Europe Base Pty Ltd BSB 085 005 AC 85859 9966

Participation and cancellation conditions: See below.

Fund raising for charity: While we have not linked our events to any charity, if any rider seeks to raise funds through their participation they are welcome to advise us of the cause. We can put items on our website and Facebook with links to help promote.

Images on the event: We do take images during events that we may later use on social media and in promotion. Participating in any Outbike event, you acknowledge that you may appear in such images. Note that we will not use a close-up photo of any rider without asking their approval.

OUTBIKE

Ride beyond The Beyond!

Outbike is a trading name of My Europe Base Pty Ltd ABN 41053515834
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GULF TO GULF 2025

Conditions of participation

Liability: The operator (and their staff and agents) aim to conduct the event as advertised, professionally, safely and to the best of their abilities but shall not be held liable for the ultimate safety of riders.

Health and experience: Riders should be in good health and have suitable experience including long days and safe riding with vehicle traffic. The operator reserves the right to terminate the participation of a rider if the operator feels it is unsafe for the rider to continue. In this case the rider will be given the choice of assisting instead.

Covid: The event will operate to any Covid-safe requirements applying. See also 'Cancellation Conditions' below.

Alterations: The operator is not responsible for inconvenience or extra costs incurred in circumstances beyond the operator's control such as delays or alterations caused by weather events, road conditions, other transport or equipment failure. The operator reserves the right to alter the schedule according to circumstances.

Note that in 2019 the Birdsville Track was closed by floods for months ahead of our event. We rode it for 200km, reaching Mungerannie Roadhouse, and with the track still closed, we packed up and relocated, detouring over 1000km on dusty dirt roads in 4+ days in our 3 vehicles via the rugged Strzelecki Track and Innamincka. This lost 4 riding days but put the event back on schedule. In 2016 Birdsville copped a rare downfall of 60mm over the 24 hours just after our arrival and the town was closed off for 5 days. With some very long ride days we made up time and reached Karumba on what was to be a rest day. On both events riders were not put to extra expense through these re-arrangements. Be ready to adapt if we need to.

Images: During the event images will be taken by our crew and other riders. All participants on the event agree that their image may appear on social media of Outbike and possibly elsewhere. Images may be used by Outbike for promotion.

Cancellation Conditions:

1. Deposit payments are NOT REFUNDABLE on cancellation but may be deferred to future G2G events.
2. By 28 February 2025 participants will be paid in full or liable to lose their place. Cancellation between these dates and the start of the event will receive a 50% refund. In circumstances of unavoidable cancellation, we may agree to deferring any payment lost towards a future event.
3. If the event is cancelled by Outbike due to Covid or other circumstance, full refunds of any payments will be made.

Travel insurance: Consider a policy to cover cancellation or other unseen events. Note that ambulance costs are either free (including RFDS) or unlikely to exceed \$1500 maximum (varies QLD/SA and where you are resident). International entries should have travel insurance anyway.

2025 min/max numbers: To proceed, the event is subject to minimum numbers of 15 riders. We aim for a maximum of 25 riders but will accept up to 27-28 entries to allow for late withdrawals and deferrals.

Ralph Jackson, Rides Manager / Director of Outbike & Arcadia Travel

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