

PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A HOLIDAY OF FUN AND ADVENTURE THAT IS... **TAGALONG TOURS** OF AUSTRALIA

www.tagalongtours.com.au

Hi Folks,

As we look forward to another year, it's appropriate to spend a few moments reflecting on the experiences of 2011. As everyone would remember, Tropical Cyclone Yasi swept across Far North Queensland, creating devastation in many areas. One of those areas affected was the Bloomfield River crossing at Wujal Wujal. The causeway was washed away in early February during the cyclone and as a result, our



Split Rock Aboriginal Art Site

Cape York Tours had to be modified until early June, when the repairs to the crossing were finished. Lakefield National Park was also closed until early July due to substantial flooding, with many of the tracks severely damaged with wash outs.

Tagalong Tours was the first tour company to take a tour through to Cape York after the wet season, arriving in Seisia on May 5. This tour was a private charter with two couples from Switzerland who managed to fulfill their dream of standing on the very northern tip of Australia.

During June, July and August, further

tours were conducted to the Cape with a variety of adventurers, coming from as far away as Perth, Melbourne



Twin Falls Cape York

and Kangaroo Island in South Australia. They came in a variety of vehicles including Toyota Hiluxes, which are the most popular 4WDs on our tours, Toyota Prados, Mitsubishi Pajeros, a Nissan Navara, a Toyota Land Cruiser and a Ford Courier. They all made it safely back to Cairns, although a few needed some running repairs along the way to make sure that they got there.

The fishing was pretty good in Weipa during last season and several of our customers took advantage of the free day that we have there, to throw a line in. Another special treat that



Hann River Lakefield N.P.

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came our way in June was meeting up with John Rooth, that well known television 4WD and Off Road presenter. Roothy and his camera crew were travelling around the Cape filming segments for his upcoming TV series on Cape York.

On the August Tour a whale was spotted breaching off the eastern side of the Tip of Cape York. It is very rare to see these large mammals so far north, so it was a special moment for us all. In fact the skipper of the Thursday Island Ferry told us that it was only the second time he had ever



The Tip of Cape York

seen a whale during his lengthy time spent in and around Torres Strait.

The usual fun spots on the Old Telegraph Track lived up to their reputation, with Palm Creek near Bramwell Junction being the worst offender, as usual.

Cape York Tours

04.06.12—17.06.12

02.07.12—15.07.12

06.08.12—19.08.12

03.09.12—16.09.12

Simpson Desert Tour
07.05.12-16.05.12

**"NO OTHER TOUR COMPANY OFFERS YOU
THIS MUCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK
FOR THE PRICE"**

Gulf Savannah Tour
02.10.12-11.10.12

We had an interesting experience travelling through Mt Mulligan Station on the August Tour. A film crew making a documentary about three large trucks in the outback, managed to get all of them completely bogged in a dry river crossing. We couldn't get past them and we were held up for several hours.



Dalhousie Ruins

After getting underway eventually, we were able to make up time on day three of the tour. Cockatoo Creek on the OTT claimed a radiator on one particular crossing and some repairs were required at Eliot Falls and Seisia.

In October, we conducted a memorable east west crossing of the Simpson Desert. This tour was postponed from May due to flooding around Eyre Creek and then was delayed again in late September due to bush fires further out in the desert. The temperatures reached 47 degrees during the day so the air conditioned vehicles provided a very welcome escape from the heat.



Chambers Pillar

The dunes proved to be slow going for our group, with the average speed for the 3 days between Birdsville and Dalhousie Springs around 20 kilometers an hour. As most of this particular tour consists of bush camping, there were many opportunities to photograph the spectacular sunrises and sunsets along the way. The dinners at the Cunnamulla Outback Campfire, the Birdsville Hotel, the Innamincka Hotel and Bojangles Saloon Bar & Grill in Alice Springs were a welcome experience for our weary travellers.

We had to negotiate a 20 kilometer detour around to the south of Big Red due to the large expanse of water left behind after the wet season. It was an incredible sight to see this huge lake in such a vast expanse of red sand. Eyre Creek still had water flowing in it and we had to navigate a crossing through the lush green scrub on its banks.

Chambers Pillar was the most spectacular natural landmark on the tour, and the sunrise coming up over the horizon, gave us beautiful images of this majestic-



Sturt's Desert Pea

The wildflowers in the desert were in abundance and we sighted several



Wild Camels in Simpson Desert

large mobs of camels moving freely in their remote environment.

It was a great trip and a fabulous time was had by all on the tour.



The Famous Birdsville Hotel

ic red and yellow outcrop of sandstone jutting 50 meters up from the plain.

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All the best for a safe and healthy New Year and we hope to see you on one of our tours somewhere out in the bush in 2012.

Cheers, Paul.