



LARAPINTA TRAIL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM | 6 DAYS

THE LARAPINTA TRAIL IS AN EXTENDED BUSHWALKING TRACK RUNNING WEST FROM ALICE SPRINGS TO MOUNT SONDER (RWETYEPME). ITS 223 KILOMETRES ARE FAST GAINING A REPUTATION FOR OFFERING ONE OF THE FINEST WALKING EXPERIENCES IN THE WORLD THROUGH THE STEEP RED SLOPES OF THE WEST MACDONNELL RANGES/NATIONAL PARK (TJORITJA).

Have you ever wanted to share your time helping our natural environment? Gain an insight into the management of one of our remote national parks? Camp and sleep under the stars? Experience some of Central Australia's most stunning landscapes? Many people who have travelled through Central Australia or walked the Larapinta Trail have expressed a desire to return and experience it in a new and often giving way.

Trek Larapinta is proud to work in conjunction with Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife and other land management organisations to provide a 6 day Volunteer Program on the Larapinta Trail. You will work closely with the land managers to help maintain the trail, with time to also explore some of the spectacular parts of the West MacDonnell National Park. You will be hosted at Two Mile campsite, offering camping accommodation in a pristine natural setting with a swimming hole at your doorstep.

Whether this is your first time or you've been before, active participation in the Volunteer Program is sure to be a memorable and rewarding way to experience this land.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All meals and snacks from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 6 and all catering equipment.
- All camping equipment including sleeping bag, swag, pillow, bed linen and tent.
- Transportation provided in commercially registered, expertly maintained tour vehicles, with hotel pick up and drop off.
- 2 Trek Larapinta professional wilderness guides.
- Group first aid kit and satellite phone in the event of an emergency.
- All camping and National Park fees.
- Travelling with a culturally and environmentally responsible business.
- Small group with a maximum of 14 participants.
- **Tours do not include pre or post trip airfares or accommodation.**

IMPORTANT NOTES

The 6 day Larapinta Trail Volunteer Program requires a moderate level of general fitness. As the Larapinta Trail becomes more popular the perception of its difficulty decreases. This however is not the case. The trail remains unrelentingly rocky and hard underfoot and weather extremes can be experienced at any time of year, so the more prepared you are the more you will enjoy the experience.

Days vary between 5 and 8 hours of easy to moderate walking/activity, depending on the section of the trail and work undertaken.

More information on preparation is included in the following pages, along with information on the itinerary, what equipment you need to bring, what we supply and general information to consider for your 6 day program.

TREK GRADING : INTRO/MODERATE TREK

See: www.trektoursaustralia.com.au/trek-grading for more information about gradings.

Note: This itinerary is subject to change due to community regulations as well as governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

Please use this itinerary as a guide only.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please read through the following information and please contact us at info@trektoursaustralia.com.au with any questions. We also recommend reading the information that the NT Parks and wildlife service provide at <https://nt.gov.au/leisure/recreation/bushwalking-hiking/larapinta-trail>

See the www.trektoursaustralia.com.au/booking-conditions/ for booking conditions and payment details.

DAY 1

Collecting you from your hotel in Alice Springs at 7.30am we drive through the ranges to Ormiston Gorge, where we begin our adventure on the Ormiston Pound walk, one of our favourite places and a must do for anyone visiting Central Australia. It's an easier day and a beautiful introduction to the West Macs. Our trek takes us up to the high escarpment which overlooks the natural impoundment before descending into the pound itself. We finish the loop by walking through the gorgeous Ormiston Gorge. A delicious lunch is served in the gorge before a short transfer finds us riverside at Two Mile campsite - our home for the next five nights. A chance to settle down by the fire with a nice cup of tea and soak up your beautiful surroundings. A delicious meal finishes a spectacular day, and tonight you sleep under the blanket of a billion stars in our comfortable swags.

9km/5-6hr walk

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2 - DAY 6

Early on day 2 meet the NT Parks and Wildlife Rangers that you will be working with closely on the trail for the next week. After hearing about the tasks scheduled for the week transfer to the trail. Typical tasks will vary depending on the current requirements of the park and land managers, but could include weed control, vegetation clearing, replacing trail markers and signage, erosion control, painting of park infrastructure and fencing. You work alongside our guides and park rangers along different parts of the trail. At the end of each day transfer back to camp at Two Mile for a swim and a rest. Enjoy delicious meals around the camp fire in gorgeous surroundings before a very deep and relaxing sleep under the stars. With time to also explore some of the spectacular parts of the park, the program is not all work! On the final day return to your Alice Springs Hotel is between 4-5pm.

**Meals: Day 2 - Day 5 : Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Day 6: Breakfast, Lunch**

THINGS TO KNOW:

6 DAYS IN THE BUSH

6 days out in the bush and on the trail is a great experience. Be sure that your boots are broken in and your personal equipment is in good shape.

Although we come together as individuals, we share the experience as a group. There is always time for personal space, but by helping each other out and showing consideration for your fellow walkers, we can ensure a rewarding experience for all. Your guides are always available to talk to whilst on tour to help manage the wellbeing of you and the group.

For fundamental safety, group members need to be aware of each other's location whilst walking, remembering the old bush walking rule of 'keeping an eye on the person behind you'. This may require walkers to adjust their pace to the group. Faster walkers soon adjust to the joys of pausing in the shade, taking time to listen to the interpretive guide and absorbing the wonders of the trail.

WHAT YOU CARRY

Minimal weight: Because you have two guides—one on the trail to carry safety equipment and one back at camp organising the logistics of the tour—you only carry a day pack for your walk.

In your pack: Most of the weight will be water to sustain you while walking in the Central Australian climate, which (apart from the rare splashes of rain) is generally sunny and dry even on cold days. We recommend you carry at least 3 litres of water each day. In addition to water, you carry whatever snacks you'd like for the day, a windproof/rainproof jacket, warm layer and any personal items (such as camera and binoculars) you'd like with you on the trail.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT WATER

Keeping yourself hydrated is even more important than keeping your feet blister free. Drinking enough water while walking will help you with the stamina and clear thinking you need to walk the trail. Please bring reusable water bottles or a bladder such as a Camelbak to carry a **minimum of 3 litres** for the day walks. Even in the cooler months, the dry air can cause you to drink more than you realise. We can't stress enough the importance of keeping your fluid intake up.

HEALTH AND FITNESS

You need to have at least a moderate level of health and fitness for the 6 day trek. The more physically ready you are the less likely you are to sustain an injury. Please talk to us if you have any health issues or other injuries which may affect your time with us, and don't be afraid to see your GP for advice on participating in this trip before you confirm your booking.

The Larapinta Trail is physically hard and just because you are on a guided trek doesn't mean it gets any easier! So, be as ready as you can be. Engage in aerobic activity 3-4 times a week for at least 1 hour each session during the 3 months prior to your trip; this might include walking, cycling, swimming etc.

Start to do some long bush walks as regularly as you can and do some full day bush walks with your pack weighing around 5-6kg to get your body used to walking with a load, starting at least 2 months in advance of the trek.

The Larapinta Trail is known for its unevenness and hardness under foot so make sure you do some walking over rough terrain (if you can find it). Feel free to talk to the Trek Larapinta staff about being prepared.

GOOD MEALS ALL DAY

With sustaining food for breakfast, fresh & tasty meals for lunch, quality camp-cooked food for dinner and plenty of snacks for the trail, you are bound to enjoy your meals with Trek Larapinta. We provide plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, real coffee and tea. We pride ourselves on our fresh and healthy food.

CATERING FOR DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

With sufficient prior notice we are able to cater for vegetarian, dairy free and gluten free dietary requirements only. A vegan diet is also possible however please note suitable alternatives are not always available. More difficult special diets **cannot** be catered for in the remote environments we operate in. If you have a medical allergy to a specific food please get in touch **prior to booking** to discuss whether we can accommodate you. We appreciate your understanding with catering limitations for our treks.

ALCOHOL

Our insurance restricts us from supplying or selling alcohol, so please purchase your requirements in Alice Springs the day prior to your departure. If you are purchasing beer try to find cans as they travel better and cool down quicker. Fresh food takes priority in our fridges, however we can keep some of your beverages cold each day.

FOOTWEAR

The surface on much of the trail is hard and rocky, with sharp quartzite rock. It is very tough on boots and feet and sometimes older footwear can crack, break or fall apart. It's good to get the balance of boots that are worn-in but not worn-out. If the boots are "worn-in", it will reduce the chances that you'll get blisters. But if the boots are "worn-out", they are likely to fall apart on the tough surfaces of the trail.

So it helps to check your shoes well in advance of the walk. If they don't look certain to make the distance, it's helpful to buy a new pair at least a few months in advance and break them in properly prior to the trip. Retailers in quality outdoor-gear should also be able to give you good advice on buying new shoes. Your feet are likely to get hot rather than cold. Simple, good-quality breathable leather or synthetic trekking boots or good-quality, low-cut walking shoes are fine. It also helps to have good quality socks to fit your footwear. We wear well-padded thinner style of Merino wool sock or a synthetic moisture-wicking sock. Another thing to consider is packing a spare pair of alternative lightweight shoes or boots which you would be able to use in case of damage or blisters.

Comfortable footwear for around camp such as sneakers or sandals are great. We like to wear Ugg boots during the cool evenings!

CLOTHING

Temperatures do vary during the year (see temperature chart). You will know your preferred walking attire, but, as a guide, always bring clothing that can protect you from the sun during your day's walk, like a long sleeve shirt with a collar, a hat and some sunglasses. Long pants are good to have on cooler days, but shorts are very handy for most of the year (we don't recommend cotton or denim). Warm, lightweight jumpers for walking and a good rain coat are essential items. Ankle gaiters can help keep grass seeds and sand out off your shoes but are not essential (we wear the cotton ankle/sock protectors). Thermal layers are also very handy as they are light and warm. Think about the layering system when choosing your clothes.

For after the day's walk, casual clothing is all you need, plus some warm layers— including a beanie and gloves— for the chilly drop-off in temperature at night.

FEET

The temperature within your boots and also the hard and uneven terrain can quickly cause blisters or exacerbate other foot problems. Before a walk like this, have any corns, calluses etc. seen to, and make sure problem nails are trimmed and all nails cut. Come prepared with some form of blister prevention and, if you are prone to blisters, always tape up before the days walk **“prevention is the cure”**. Your feet will be very valuable to you during this tour, and a little preparation can go a long way.

OUR CAMP SITE

We will camp at Two Mile beside the mighty Finke River. This campsite is set up individually for each trip and is NOT the private semi-permanent campsites experienced on some of our other Larapinta Trail treks. There is a Total Fire Ban on the Larapinta trail, however Two Mile is off trail so we will be able to enjoy the delights of a camp fire.

TOILETS

At all our bush camps we set up a portable composting toilet. Our composting toilet is simple yet comfortable, clean and private. On the trail, responsible and minimal impact bush toilet protocol is to ensure that you toilet at least 100m from any trail or watercourse (including the sandy banks of ephemeral rivers in these regions) and dig at least 15cm down to make sure that it can be covered in such a way to avoid visual pollution or its discovery by fossicking animals.

SHOWERING

The trail is arid and somewhat remote, so whatever water we wish to use we need to bring in ourselves. We have a simple bush bathing system where you are provided with a small bowl of hot water whenever possible to freshen up. Make sure you bring a face washer, towel and natural biodegradable soaps, if used.

SLEEPING

Swags and the sky: Whether you've slept in a swag hundreds of times or never before, we think you'll enjoy this part of being out on the trail. A swag is a foam mattress protected by canvas, and in it we put bedding (sleeping bag, linen and pillow) that's clean, cosy and warm. We also provide you with a tent, so you can sleep inside or out under a ceiling of stars. Sleeping bags rated to minus 5 degrees are provided.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT SWIMMING IN WATERHOLES

We can swim in some of the waterholes we come to. As part of responsible and minimal impact travel, we can't wash in them, and it's good to have a bit of a “bird bath” or “wipe off” beforehand, to remove sunscreens so we can avoid polluting these valuable drinking sources for animals in this desert land. The water can be a bit chilly, but it can be refreshing to take a plunge after walking for a day, so bring along some bathers as well as your towel.

STAYING IN TOUCH

On some of the high ridgelines you may find limited Telstra reception. There is also Telstra service at Standley Chasm. Optus customers may also have limited service at Ormiston Gorge. Otherwise there is no mobile service on the trail. We encourage you to ‘switch off! In addition to other emergency communication devices we carry a satellite telephone on all of our tours for use in emergencies.

CAMERAS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We are able to charge most camera batteries via your own charger plugged into our sine wave inverter. We are also able to charge electronic devices via USB connections. Don't forget spare memory cards and other camera accessories you may need.

BAGS

You'll need a good quality day-pack with a comfortable harness for walking and another, larger bag to hold all your other things back at camp. Large backpacks or other soft bags are easier for us to fit in the trailer than suitcases and also tend to be better suited to camping. We have limited space so the smaller your luggage bag the better. Enquire about leaving excess luggage at your hotel.

VEHICLE STORAGE

We don't have any facilities for vehicle storage. If driving to Alice Springs please arrange to leave your car at your hotel or other storage facility such as the airport.

FLIGHTS

Please arrange your flights into Alice Springs at least one day before the program starts and arrange your departure flights from Alice Springs at least one day after the program finishes.

PRE/POST TREK ACCOMMODATION

Trek Larapinta has secured discounted accommodation at a number of Alice Springs hotels.

For further information about the hotels and to book please check out our website at: www.trektoursaustralia.com.au/accommodation/

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Trek Larapinta recommends all travellers have adequate insurance/cover for their trip. We highly recommend insurance cover that covers any loss which may be suffered due to cancellation.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT WEATHER

Winter weather in Central Australia is near-perfect for walking. You predominantly enjoy sunny blue skies, but with the moderate temperatures of winter rather than the baking heat of summer. But when night falls, the temperature drops fast! So come prepared for warm days and chilly nights. The Larapinta can experience heavy rainfall periods so make sure you have a good working raincoat with you.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Av. Max	28	23	20	20	22	26
Av. Min	12	8	5	4	6	10
Rainy Days	2	3	3	3	2	2

WHAT EQUIPMENT TO BRING ON THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The following list sets out all the clothing and equipment you are required to bring for you to participate in the Larapinta Trail Volunteer Program.

Day pack with waist harness (minimum 25L - 30L) and waterproof cover	Beanie	
Good quality reusable water bottles/ bladder (minimum 4L)	Swimmers and travel towel	
Walking/working (enclosed) shoes or boots	Head torch and spare batteries (essential)	
Sunscreen	Prescription medicine	
Sun hat (preferably broad rimmed)	Insect repellent cream (please do not bring spray repellent)	
Sunglasses	Toiletries - biodegradable soap and waterless hand sanitiser gel	
Fly head net	Face washer	
Rain / windproof jacket with storm hood attached. We recommend waterproof breathable fabric (Gortex or equivalent membrane)	Personal first aid kit – incl. blister protection & hydralytes	
Warm jacket (down, polar fleece, synthetic)	A good book or two!	
Warm jumper - woolen or polar fleece /synthetic fibre	Waterproof overpants (Gortex or equivalent membrane)- not essential but can be useful if wet optional	
Comfortable walking/working attire (not jeans or cotton). We recommend light weight, quick drying materials	Garden style low cut gaiters optional	
Thermals - top and bottom (wool or synthetic)	Camera optional	
Warm trousers to wear around camp	Binoculars optional	
Spare comfortable shoes or sandals to wear around camp	Walking poles optional	
Warm gloves	Working/gardening gloves (we provide but please bring along if you have your own favourites) optional	
	Power bank for electronics optional	
Table to be used as a guide only. Please contact us with any questions.		