

Alice Springs NT to Adelaide SA Stage 8 September 2017

In this eighth stage of the trip we head home from the Centre, and leave the warmer and drier weather behind.

This stage started on 13 September 2017.



Stuart Highway Desert Flowers

So we spent a week in Alice Springs. I don't actually like staying in caravan parks all that much, but the Macdonnell Range Caravan Park is one of the better ones. It has nice big sites and green grass. But after being out in the national park it was hard to have near neighbours again.

I needed to fly to Sydney from Alice Springs for a work commitment and so this was a necessity. It felt good to have lashings of water for washing and showers. That poor little washing machine has a hard life when arriving at caravan parks....



Alice Springs

We did very little while in town other than do grocery shopping, some geocaching and have dinner at our firm favourite restaurant, Casa Nostra! While I flew to Sydney Val did some maintenance on the van like checking wheel nuts and bearings, and washing the windows. There was a lot of red dust on the van but it is still there at the time of writing (at home!).

The weather was lovely, with sunny and crystal clear days, but it was getting noticeably warmer each day and it confirmed our decision to move on toward home was sound.

We left Alice fairly early, and headed South on the Stuart Highway. We have travelled this highway many, many times but this was the first time in 6 years we have been past Cadney Homestead (last year we turned East there across the Painted Desert). It was easy driving after

all those kms of gravel and corrugations. Our aim was to camp at our favourite gravel pit just to the North of Coober Pedy. It is a quiet spot, well off the road and no one else seems to have discovered it so far!

(Coober Pedy Gravel Pit S28 27.972. E134 11.927)

Early the next morning, very early, we set out after a lovely peaceful night under the desert stars, and steadily headed South. As I mentioned before, it is quite some time since we have been on this stretch of the Stuart Highway and there was so much to see, with a changing scenery around every bend. We stopped at Coober Pedy for fuel (and a geocache) and kept going. We had lunch in the van by pulling off the road and making a sandwich, but otherwise we chugged on. Normally we do not travel so steadily these days but our plan was to reach Mambray Creek Campground in Mt Remarkable National Park and camp there for a few days.

Mambray Creek

S32 50 31 E138 0 59



We reached the campground (site no 11 in the Baroota campground) by mid afternoon. This is the first time we have stayed in this small and quieter part of the park and it was delightful. There are only 11 individual sites here and they are each well spaced. Our site was able to easily fit our van and was within easy walking distance from the (drop) toilet. Apart from a water tap and fireplace, there are no other facilities. And lo and behold, there was good internet and phone reception! Bliss.

We decided to spend three nights here and were able to easily book the site as the school holidays were still a week or two away. We drove over to Melrose on a day trip one day, and on another day we nabbed an earthcache in the gorge. In the photo above I am leaning against a tree at the site

of the cache. I am leaning on the tree out of exhaustion as it was a looong walk through that gorge. OK, I am unfit.

After three relaxing days, we were ready to head over to the Yorke Peninsular where we had a travel auction caravan park site booked at Stansbury. We feared, as in REALLY feared, that after all that peace and solitude at Mambray Creek, a caravan park site would be claustrophobic.

However, it turned out we had a lovely spot right on the beach (site 105), and well separated from the neighbours tent. More about that neighbour's tent; in the wee hours of the morning a strong wind came up and blew the tent down. Val went out and helped them to pack it up, as the occupants were only a mother and two small children. They left the next day, probably traumatised by the event.

The weather was kind to us at Stansbury but windy. We did a lot of day tripping around the Yorke Peninsular, and found some great future camp sites as well as a heap of geocaches.



What really impressed me was the natural beauty and the pristine state of the beaches and towns. I really enjoyed the week we spent on the Yorke Peninsular and am trying to find a way to get back there as soon as possible 😊

But on the final Monday morning we packed up and again turned the nose of the car for home. We arrived home about lunchtime, to cold and sunny weather.

It had been about four months since we left home on the first leg of the trip and it felt like only a couple of weeks had passed.

Folk always ask what the highlights of a trip to have been. This time around there are too many to really identify one or two, as there were so many special places. I can without hesitation say that we had more than our fair share of problems, including the fridge and the diesel heater - although both were addressed - eventually.

Favourite Spots

However, here are the standout spots which immediately come to mind. Let's forget the gremlins for the time being.

The highlights of this year's trip included:

Weddin Mountains NP

Scenery plus!

Free!



Carnarvon Gorge's

Oh, the view!



Sandstone Park

Lara Wetlands

A camp on the water



Crossing the Plenty Highway from Boulia QLD to Alice Springs NT

Spectacular scenery



Mount Remarkable's Baroota Campsite NP

Nature and tranquillity

