



Part three of this series on the Oodnadatta Track covers William Creek to the final destination. You can read [part one](#), and [part two](#) of the series first if you need to catch up.

## **William Creek - Oodnadatta (202km) and Beyond**

### **What will you see**

This section continues our shadowing of the route taken by John McDouall Stuart, the Overland Telegraph Line and the Old Ghan railway, at least until Oodnadatta. The track continues to be well maintained, with occasional corrugated sections and bulldust holes. I'd recommend keeping those headlights on, reduce tyre pressures and take it easy on the speed. The Cooper Tires website has a very useful guide to appropriate tyre pressures in a range of terrains

### **The Towns**

#### **Oodnadatta**

The namesake of this track is a reasonably well-sized town with a significant aboriginal community, government workers and business people making up the population. Among Oodnadatta's claims to fame is as one of the hottest places in Australia - not somewhere suitable for tourists in the height of summer, but generally a delight in the cooler months. An excellent museum is housed in the old railway station and the famous Pink Roadhouse beckons for re-fuelling and an Oodnaburger and chips.



#### **Accommodation**

Algebuckina, 53km south of Oodnadatta, is the site of the most significant bridge on the Old Ghan Railway. There is good camping around the bridge area and to the east of the track along the Neales River.

#### **Side Trips**

111km north of William Creek is the 16km track to the east leading to the old Peake Telegraph Station on the original Overland Telegraph Line. There are significant remains well worth a look.

### **Along The Way**

#### **Old Ghan Rail Sidings**

There are many sidings along this section but the ones particularly worth a stop are



(distances are from William Creek):

## **Edwards Creek (82km)**

Look out for these ruins to the east of the track. Edwards Creek was once a major staging area on the old Ghan railway, it housed a large number of rail and maintenance staff.

## **Algebuckina (142km)**

The old buildings are a little off to the west of the track, not long before crossing the Neales River and the Algebuckina bridge.

## **Old Peake Telegraph Station**

111km north of William Creek is the turnoff west to the significant settlement that was the Peake Telegraph Station. This is a Public Access Route, meaning it passes through a pastoral property, so respect the track and surroundings and keep a good lookout for stock. It is important not to go near any stock watering points. The track can be rough, so a 4WD is recommended.

## **Algebuckina Bridge**

Still the longest bridge in South Australia, this large structure took the Ghan rail line over the Neales River. At the southern end, you will see an old car wreck, said to be the result of a fool-hardy attempt to drive across the bridge when the river was in flood, only to be confronted by an oncoming train that duly bull-dozed it off the end of the bridge. On the northern end are several graves.

## **Ways Home From Here**

A number of options are available for the traveller, depending on the time available, direction heading and type of vehicle.

### **If heading NORTH**

The Oodnadatta Track continues on for 211km from Oodnadatta, meeting the Stuart Highway at Marla. From there the road is sealed all the way to Darwin. This is also a good way to go if seeing Uluru, Kata Tjuta and Kings Canyon are on your wish list.

It is possible to continue your love affair with the Old Ghan, fairly closely following the original rail alignment through to Alice Springs. In fact, in sections, you actually drive on top of it. This option requires a well-equipped 4WD taking you through quite isolated areas.

There is over 500km of dirt track of variable condition, taking you through Hamilton Station, Finke and Maryvale, with fuel available at Finke and Maryvale. For the really adventurous experience, take the 45km track west from Maryvale to the historic Chambers Pillar. There is



a good campground at the pillar.

Again for the adventurous, take the track north through Hamilton Station and turn off west to Mount Dare 9km north of the Eringa ruins. From Mount Dare, head north on the Old Andado Track, passing the historic Old Andado Homestead and the Aboriginal community of Santa Teresa, eventually arriving in Alice Springs.

## If heading WEST

Oodnadatta also a major starting point for a trip across the Simpson Desert. Attempting this requires excellent preparation, a highly equipped 4WD and the ability to be completely self-sufficient (see the [3-part blog "Crossing The Simpson Desert"](#)).

## If heading SOUTH

Southwest of Oodnadatta is the 197km track to Coober Pedy on the Stuart Highway. This is a well-made dirt road and a good way to go if travelling back to Adelaide.



## Distances and Services

From William Creek to Oodnadatta is only 202km, with no towns or services on this section of the track. There are numerous camping opportunities near old rail ruins and at creek crossings.

## The Last Bit - What Else You Might Need To Know

### Permits

No permits are required to travel or camp along any sections of the Oodnadatta Track.

### Key Contacts

- **Outback Road Conditions** - phone 1300 361 033 or log on to [www.dtei.sa.gov.au](http://www.dtei.sa.gov.au) and follow the links.
- **Marree Police Station** - phone (08) 8675 8346
- **Oodnadatta Police Station** - (08) 8670 7805
- **Coward Springs Campground** - 08 8675 8336
- **William Creek Hotel** - 08 8670 7880
- **Pink Roadhouse Oodnadatta** - (08) 86 707 822

Check out our blog for tons of [outback touring information](#), or go to [our website](#) and set yourself up to tackle the Oodnadatta Track.