

DESTINATION

DIAMANTINA NATIONAL PARK

The Diamantina National Park covers 500,000 ha of Queensland's channel country. The Park encompasses weathered sandstone ranges, floodplains, expanses of Mitchell grass, claypans and sand dunes.

Diamantina National Park features a one-way circuit drive that begins 20 kilometres from the Ranger's Headquarters and covers the wide variety of landscapes that make up the Park.



The land was formerly a grazing property, Diamantina Lakes, which was sold to the Queensland Government in 1992. The property is well-sited, alongside one of two permanent waterholes, created by the 'Diamantina Gates' – two gaps at the junction of the Goyder and Hamilton Ranges – that concentrate the Diamantina channels into narrow streams, running between the low limestone hills.



The narrowing is clearly visible from 'Janet's Leap', a vantage spot above the river and so named because at the handing over of the Diamantina Lakes Station one of the onlookers said that Janet Holmes a'Court might as well jump off the cliff as sell the property to National Parks. She didn't jump and we all can appreciate the results of the transfer.

We opted for Hunters Gorge campsite, because it has a deeper waterhole and sits on the Diamantina, whereas the other site at Gum Waterhole is on Whistling Duck Creek.

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Dune country gives way to claypans eight kilometres into the circuit drive, flowed by gibber plains. The gibber plains were formed as ancient mountain ranges eroded and their once forest-crowned tops leached iron, creating hard mesa caps and clumped particles – today's gibbers.

The gibber plains change into grassland – Flinders and Mitchell Grass – that edges up to the large depression of Lake Constance.

The grassland slopes down gradually to low-lying channel country, with cracked, black soil, then the grass returns, backed by large dunes.

Warracoota Waterhole has never been known to run dry and was an important source of water and wildlife for the Maiawali people.

It also attracted early settlers and there is ample evidence of European occupation, including limestone structures, meat tins, wire and remnants of pumping equipment.

Boundary Bore is worth a visit, to see how so many typical Outback water sources are created.



The Gumhole stock yards were beautifully made from gidgee and coolabah wood and remain in good condition today.

Ingenuity shows in the use of a welded-on horseshoe to make a gate-pull. The track continues to a stockmen's camp, complete with tin shade structure, before returning to the main road.

Minimum time needed in Diamantina National Park – four days



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