



Welcome pack

CONGRATULATIONS and WELCOME to the Run Larapinta Stage Race

Well done on committing to a life-changing, epic adventure - one that will test your resolve whilst taking you through a magical and challenging landscape with a group of amazing people from across Australia.

Now that you have committed to the event (and secured an entry!) we share with you a Welcome Pack of information, so you know more about the experiences to come and have the resources you need to prepare for them. Run Larapinta is an event like no other, so we want to ensure you're ready to revel in it and not be overwhelmed when race week comes around.

This welcome pack includes:

- Participant action points
- Training and preparation (*including a free training planner from Hanny Allston*)
- Equipment lists and recommendations
- Connecting with your Run Larapinta community
- Travel and accommodation suggestions; plus race transfers.
- Tips and tricks from those who have gone before you.

There is A LOT of information here, we suggest you read one article at a time. Let it sink in, write some notes, and put them into action before reading the next article. You have plenty of time over the coming months so take your time and process what you read (and get excited!).

We are really excited that you'll be joining us in the Red Centre and we can't wait to see your smiles as you experience the Run Larapinta Stage Race.

The Rapid Ascent team

Participant action points

Participant Dashboard

You can log in to your participant dashboard in our entry system at any time to review your entry details, check orders, the package inclusions, add/amend merchandise and other items such as transfers and first aid kits. If you entered in a rush why not check your details now (like DOB, emergency contact and e-mail address...)

- [Entry DASHBOARD Here](#)

Entry Changes

If you need to make a change to your entry or wish to withdraw from Run Larapinta, please contact us via info@rapidascent.com.au. Please be aware of our full refund policy [HERE](#).

Forgot your Merchandise?

We have a great range of event merchandise including first-aid gear, trail gaiters, socks, hats, buffs and more.

Add to your order [HERE](#)

Malbunka Entry Qualifications

Malbunka runners should be aware of our Entry Qualification requirements [HERE](#). These must be fulfilled and submitted before the race, so check the requirements and submit or plan your race calendar now. Email Rapid Ascent as required info@rapidascent.com.au

Training and preparation

We are honoured to have Hanny Allston on board as the official training partner for the event. Hanny is a champion ultra-distance trail runner and a coach to others who seek the wild potential inside themselves. She is also the co-owner and manager of the Find Your Feet – our official retail partner.

Training plan - FREE

Hanny Allston has prepared a [FREE Training Plan](#) for all athletes participating in the Run Larapinta Stage Races. This incredibly comprehensive plan covers both the Malbunka and Namatjira events and is a superb guide to help get you to the start line (and finish line) in the best possible shape and we cannot recommend it highly enough for those training towards the event.

- [Download Training Planner HERE](#)
- Enter the code **RUNLARAPINTARACE** at checkout to get it for free

In Hanny's own words:

"What I loved about the Run Larapinta event was the wide-open spaces, relaxed event atmosphere, camaraderie with other athletes, and an opportunity to run through a landscape I might not otherwise have the opportunity to visit. From this experience I learnt that the key to success was in the preparation, knowledge of how to stay fuelled and hydrated in this unforgiving landscape, and also in the mental approach to the race. The focus of this 19-week training planner is to help you to find your feet, using your Run Larapinta goal as a foundation for personal growth and wilder adventures by following the wave training theory.

As you will see in this training planner, there are plenty of opportunities to select carefully from a breadth of sessions on offer. This is to ensure that you do not place too many stresses on your body thereby risking injury, illness and disengagement from the goal. Feel free to modify any sessions to ensure that you are getting the rest and recuperation that you require to maintain your enjoyment in the goal and your physical health. After all, we are all unique human beings, and our bodies are certainly not machines!"

Hanny's Trail Running Guidebook

Hanny has also prepared a **Trail Running Guidebook** that is another terrific resource and will help you better understand the training planner and her broader thoughts on how to prepare for any event and become a better, stronger and more sustainable runner long term.

The Guidebook provides athletes of any ability a safe pathway to prepare to your chosen adventures and contains a snapshot of key lessons that Hanny learnt on her journey to becoming a world champion and elite trail running record holder. Hanny shares her theories on training & racing strategies, nutrition & hydration, equipment, how to avoid the common injuries, running technique, and psychology and much more.

- Purchase a copy for \$36.95 from her website [HERE](#).
- Contact Hanny [HERE](#)

Equipment

The landscape in the MacDonnell Ranges is particularly harsh and competitors need to be prepared with the right equipment in order to stay safe and be prepared for all outcomes. At the same time, Rapid Ascent considers all competitors are mature adults with a high degree of self-preservation and the ability to think for yourselves – so we list only the bare minimums as mandatory gear and expect you as experienced runners to be able to think what else you need.

We strongly recommend you train with all your mandatory gear during your preparation for the event. Don't leave it to the last minute to buy the gear but get it sorted well beforehand and practice with it in training.

The lists below are also on the [event website](#) but are included and explained here for further clarity...

Mandatory gear

The following items must be carried by all runners in either The Malbunka or The Namatjira, and will be checked at competitor registration. Runners will **not** start if you are missing any item from the following:

- **Race Number Plate x 2** (supplied in Registration Pack): This must be worn on your front (large) and back/backpack (small), attached to the outermost garment at all times. We suggest attaching the front number plate to a thin elastic strap or a 'triathlon race belt' so it can more easily be worn on the outside when you take layers off.
- **First Aid Kit*** - minimum contents: 2 x crepe bandages, 6 x wound closure strips, 1 x triangular bandage, 2 x non-stick wound dressing pads and a pair of surgical gloves. *(Available to purchase online now to collect at rego).*
- **Space blanket*** - Must be full size; not trimmed or altered. *(Available to purchase online now to collect at rego).*
- **A whistle*** - Mouth whistle; easily accessible whilst running. *(Available to purchase online now to collect at rego).*
- **Mobile phone** - Telstra recommended as it provides the best coverage on hill tops.
- **Long sleeve thermal top** - polypropylene, wool or similar. Note: cotton, lycra or any 'compressions' garments do not qualify.
- **Water containers** – all runners must have the ability to carry 3lt of water / hydration at specific stages during the event. This can be from a number of different vessels and bladders / soft flasks.
- **Maps on your phone** – All competitors must have the course routes (for the stages you are racing) saved to your phone in an app that works when not in phone reception. *Mapping files will be emailed to you with instructions nearer the event.*
- **A beanie** to keep your head warm – a Headsock or 'Buff' is sufficient.
- **Matches** or cigarette lighter.
- **Torch / Headtorch.** Must be bright enough to illuminate the track at least 50m ahead of you (we recommend a minimum of 150 lumens) with sufficient battery power to last you to the finish. This is mandatory for stage 1, and STRONGLY RECOMMENDED for all other stages in case of emergency.

➤ [*ORDER Merchandise Online HERE >>](#)

Recommended gear list, additional to the items listed above:

- A second pair of running shoes in case you get a blow out or blisters in your first pair
- A means of carrying additional water (bigger bladder, soft flasks or bottles)
- Additional clothing to match the conditions expected on the day. BE SENSIBLE.
- Hat and sunglasses and sunscreen (in a small tube you can carry with you)
- Polypro gloves and arm warmers for the cool morning starts
- Waterproof bag or snap lock for your mobile phone
- Food and additional water / hydration
- Vaseline, Body Glide or other body lubricant – including some in a small tube you can carry with you
- Sports injury tape (like Elastoplast)
- Foam roller and massage ball (and yoga mat?) to loosen up your legs after each stage
- External power source so you can recharge your phone on the course (especially if using the maps and taking a lot of photos!)
- Recommend travel insurance in case you need helicopter rescue on the course – or enquire with your ambulance membership or with your personal accident insurance.

20% Discount Offer on gear at Find Your Feet

Find Your Feet is a longstanding friend and supporter of Rapid Ascent and has all the equipment and apparel you need to perform wilder. Run Larapinta entrants receive a 20% discount on all items from vest packs, shoes, sports nutrition and much more! Make the most of this considerable discount and support our sponsor.

- Browse [Website HERE](#)
- Quote the code **RUNLARAPINTA2024** for 20% discount

Race travel and accommodation

There is A LOT of information about Travel and Accommodation on the [EVENT WEBSITE](#) so we won't repeat that information here and strongly recommend you read the details on the website. Particular points to note are...

Travel

Consider the following points:

- It is most likely the Alice Springs climate and terrain is very different to your home, so we encourage you to arrive at least 1 day before racing starts. This allows you to start to acclimatize, look around the township and go for a sample run well before the pressures of registration and race day 1
- We conduct a simple 'meet and greet' drinks session the night before racing starts that's really nice to attend. The Race Directors and our staff attend so you can chat to us, meet other competitors and make sure your phone is set up with the mapping app in plenty of time
- It is well worth adding 1-2 days after racing for some sightseeing. Book a hot air balloon flight, visit the Desert Park or book a tour of the MacDonnell Ranges – or just lounge around the hotel pool! There are a list of [things to do here](#).
- Non running partners and friends are also welcome to come and join the event. Often non-runners join our volunteer team and get to travel in our 4WDs and visit some spectacular sites along the race courses while helping with the event (you can learn more about volunteer opportunities [here](#)). Equally so, there is heaps of things to do and places to visit in Alice Springs or within a 1hr drive so often non runners help us for a day or two and do a day or two of sightseeing as well. If you have someone who is interested in volunteering ask them to flag their interest [HERE](#)

Accommodation

Remember you need to book your own accommodation. Our event website has a lot of information about accommodation and the details of our appointed accommodation partners and other options. Please [READ THE WEBSITE HERE](#) for the most up to date details. **A few points:**

All stages of the 2026 Run Larapinta Stage Race will be **based out of Alice Springs** – so we encourage competitors to stay at one of our two recommended hotels in Alice Springs for the duration of the event:

- **The Mercure Alice Springs Resort** – a 4 star hotel near the centre of town with special discounted rates.
 - [CLICK HERE](#) to book with them and receive the 20% special discount rate by booking direct.
>>SOME EVENT DATES RECENTLY SOLD OUT – PLEASE CHECK WITH MERCURE HB0K7@accor.com
- **Discovery Parks Alice Springs** – a caravan park with cabins and other options – as a more budget friendly accommodation option but still has a great range of facilities like pool, shade and shop.
 - [CLICK HERE](#) to view their accommodation range; and book directly via email by mentioning Run Larapinta alicesprings.managers@discoveryparks.com.au

NOTE: Airport and Race Transfers will be made from these two accommodations venues only.

Race transfers and buses

We provide a transfer service from the event hotel(s) to the start and back from the finish each day, as well as **Airport Transfer**. This is the easiest and best way to get to / from each stage and really builds the camaraderie between runners as you get to know each other chatting on the bus each day. Approx 80% of participants take the race transfers. **THESE ARE INCLUDED if you booked the 'Full Package' Entry Option.**

Didn't book the 'Full Package'?

You can add the race transfers to your entry booking as a separate item in from the event [merchandise store](#) for \$275pp and will include all race transfers (to/from start/finish) for all 4 stages. Airport transfers additional at \$40.

A few pointers about the race transfer buses:

- Race transfers pick up and drop off from the event hotels only – Mercure Alice Springs and Discovery Parks.
- At each start line you can give us your warm clothing and other items you don't want to run with and we'll take them to the finish line for you each day
- The buses are comfortable 55-seater coaches with comfortable seats – why not bring your morning coffee on the bus and try and sit next to a different person each day!
- The return buses from the finish line leave when they are full. Sometimes there is up to a 45min – 1hr wait for the next bus but the finish lines are very comfortable locations with shade, seats, café and other supplies. We ensure that the last bus waits for the last runner so everyone who's booked can get a lift.

Considerable further details about the buses, including a departure schedule, is circulated in the Official Event Program approx. 2 weeks before the event.

Run Larapinta Facebook Group

The extended Run Larapinta community are a group of magnificent people who have either done the event before or are preparing for a future event – and they are happy and willing to assist anyone with any enquiry.

Please connect with and be part of the community by joining the [Run Larapinta FACEBOOK GROUP](#).

The group can be used to connect with past and present attendees, ask questions, share training info or pics; and get to know each other before meeting face to face in Alice Springs.

Please also share images and updates via Instagram using the **#runlarapinta** hash tag, and follow us on our [Rapid Ascent Ultra Running Events Facebook page](#) and [Instagram](#).



Tips and tricks from previous competitors

The following testimonials were prepared by previous competitors so they can pass on their learnings – from training beforehand to what to carry – these folks have done it all (multiple times).

Michelle Morrissey:

I have had the pleasure of taking part in the amazing Rapid Ascent Run Larapinta three times.

Preparing and training wise for me really is about time on legs. I try to include different terrains, some sandy stuff, regular trails, shaley surfaces, ascents and descents. The surfaces at Larapinta are so different, each stage, each hill, each k, constantly changing. Also practicing with choices of food and drink of course, you can be out there for a while!! And you will need layers, it can be freezing in the mornings and windy on the summits! Gloves, jackets, buffs! But then singlets, shorts, hats - all part of the challenge!

Once you arrive in Alice, attend the info sessions, you'll find out everything you need to know and there's lots of opportunity to ask anything else, nothing is a stupid question! You'll know where you have to be at what time, then someone tells you where and what time for the next day and the day after and the day after that, it's great!!

If you can, go to the group dinners, it's an amazing community vibe that stays with you.

The event itself is super well organised, listen to the RDs, the Medics and the vollies they are a wealth of valuable information. If they suggest something or if it's mandatory, it's for a very good reason!

Most importantly look forward to being awestruck and humbled. Soak up the many steps and moments because every corner you turn is wondrous and stunning. Run Larapinta is a "Bucket List" event for a reason.

Michelle Morrissey.

Laurent Rossignol

Find below a few (too many) thoughts - I got a bit excited - I tend to do that when it comes to Run Larapinta. This is a magnificent race and I am lucky enough to have done it 5 times!

Pack

- *Anything that will help with your recovery: foam roller, spiky ball, Lacrosse ball...*
- *Spares of every runner apparel (running shoes, water bladder, headtorch...)*
- *Take your absolute running essentials in your carry-on luggage for the plane trip. One year, all the Melbournians who arrived a day before landed in Alice without their luggage and we all had to scurry to get what we needed. I fly in my running shoes and have my vest pack and head torch in my hand luggage just in case!*
- *Take cups and a coffee plunger so that you can have a coffee on the bus in the morning and be the envy of everyone else*
- *Swimmers – the hotels have pools or swim in the waterholes at the end of the day.*

Training

- *I personally have long ditched training program as invariably get injured along the way but that is just me. You definitely want to go to the event fit and strong. It would be highly preferable to train for race conditions, that is lots of rocks, lots of hills, some sand for the riverbeds, and dry air. Ideally, you want to live in Alice and have the Larapinta track as your backyard. I happen to live in South Melbourne therefore no hills, no rocks, no dryness. I try to compensate by running on the beach and along the rocky artificial jetties built along the bay to keep my eye in for the rocks.*
- *I would definitely train carrying my mandatory gear at least some of the time – especially with the heavy water requirement of 3lt +*
- *I believe Larapinta is more a mental game than a physical one – you need to be able to lean into it and keep moving forward. You really have to embrace the experience, stay positive and constantly move forward, Perpetual Forward Motion...*

When running

- *Start slow! You will have plenty of time to make up 'perceived' lost ground and passing people will be up-lifting. A few sections start of dirt tracks, and it can be tempting to take off too fast. I like to see the half way point as the starting line, i.e. the first half of the race is getting to the starting line as fresh as possible*
- *It is not a navigation exercise, but runners do get lost (not for good, luckily) every year and I would say this is part of the thrill. The Larapinta track is very well signed posted for walkers, but it requires attention as a runner. So download the map on your phone mapping apps, study it and if you get lost on the day then open the phone app and take stock of where you are before continuing on blindly. If you do take a wrong turn and have to backtrack, take it in your stride – there is no point getting frustrated.*
- *Don't be a sheep and follow the runner in front because he knows better. There are chances he does not know any better and feels comforted in their choice by the fact you are following them. Even a local made a error some years ago, covered many extra kilometres*
- *Take it all in. The landscape is truly magnificent, the colours are vibrant, the sense of space and calm is truly special. You have trained hard for this, enjoy every step*

When not running

- *Use your foam roller... or have a massage*
- *Eat! You burn a lot of calories when you're out there and now is not the time to try to lose weight. I tend to head towards the centre of town early afternoon for a big late lunch. The Asian noodle house, 38 Hartley St, next to Woolies, is a great place for simple cheap healthy meals, perfect to replenish your energy.*

As a conclusion, Larapinta is life condensed in 4 days. There will be curve balls, beautiful sunsets, blisters, some concrete pills to swallow, things you can control, things you have no control over, it will be a truly unique experience. Live every moment of it and you will return home a different person.

Laurent Rossignol

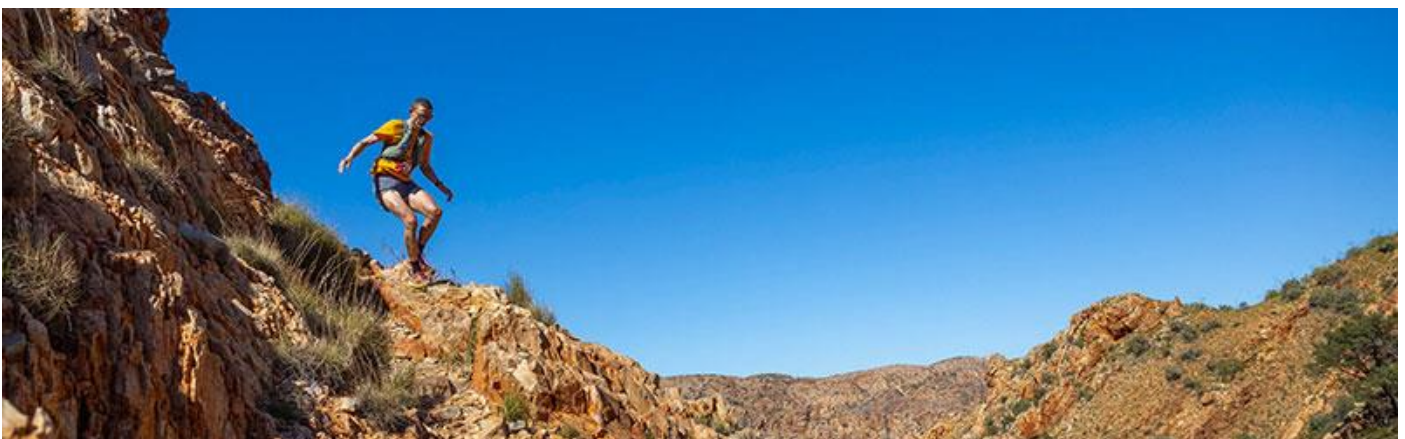
Ed Litton – Mastering Intensive Care Podcast on Run Larapinta

We are trying something different on Mastering Intensive Care Podcast. My friend and fellow intensivist Ed Litton has cajoled me into joining him at the Run Larapinta Stage Race in August 2023. In this episode, we commence a mini-series discussing our lead up to the event.

Ed and I have different backgrounds as amateur endurance event participants, and in this episode, you'll hear some of Ed's endurance accomplishments, what the Run Larapinta event involves, and what we are both pondering as we start ramping up our training.

If you are a runner, an endurance activity participant, a person who exercises regularly, or someone who enjoys hearing about other people's challenges, I hope you will enjoy listening in.

[Open Podcast Here >>](#)



Testimonials

"Having run the short course a couple of years ago I knew what was in store however the Malbunka was an unforgettable adventure. The trails were tough, rugged, raw, and incredibly rewarding once completed... winding through ancient gorges, red cliffs, and vast desert plains. The sense of achievement after each stage was immense, knowing i had pushed myself through tough terrain under the Aussie sun. But what made it truly special was the camaraderie — a group of runners from all walks of life, cheering each other on, sharing stories, and creating a real sense of community in the outback."

Tamara, 2025 participant

"Run Larapinta is more than a run (or run hike if you're me) it's a journey through country which touches the soul. A truly breath-taking experience which every runner should experience."

Kim, 2025 participant

"In one word EVERYTHING! I loved everything. Everything was so well planned and considered. It was such a well polished event which ran seamlessly. It was life changing. I will never forget it. It is left me wanting more and I have no doubt I'm going be back!"

Andrew (2023)

We can't wait

We hope this Welcome Pack has given you further insight and understanding for how to prepare for your Run Larapinta experience. This is a true bucket list event and we wanted to ensure that you're able to enjoy it as much as possible by being prepared when the time comes.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns then contact us at any time OR post your question on the [Run Larapinta FACEBOOK GROUP](#) and let the community of runners who've done this event help you out.

Prepare well and we'll see you in Australia's heart for an unforgettable experience.

Sam, John, Jeremy, Marcel, Ange and Adele = the Rapid Ascent team.

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