

FILL YOUR AUSSIE BUCKET LIST

Fly into the outback
Ride the rails
Explore natural wonders
Fish all the best spots

citro

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Welcome

Where have you always wanted to go in Australia but haven't quite made it yet? For me, that place was Bourke... yes, as in "out the back of". It's the kind of place you hear about all your life – a far-flung spot in the middle of nowhere that holds a certain mysterious charm. It always felt like a spot worth exploring, a town that could tell a different story about Australia.

Recently, I was lucky enough to tick Bourke off my bucket list, but my adventure didn't stop there. Travelling with Outback By Air, I ventured even further into the heart of Australia, all the way to 'Corner Country'—the remote point where the borders of New South Wales, South Australia, and Queensland meet. Along the way, we visited several of Australia's most isolated towns, each one home to some of the most connected, close-knit communities I've ever encountered.

The phrase "fill your cup" doesn't do justice to the outback experience – it's more like "fill your bucket".

I returned from that trip feeling inspired, rejuvenated, and completely in awe of Australia's unique landscapes and the incredible people who live in them. You'll find more on that journey later in this guide, but I can say it's one I'll never forget.

Whether you share my craving for Australia's open spaces or a courtside seat at the Aussie Open is more your

scene, this guide has got you covered. We'll show you familiar destinations through fresh eyes and introduce you to hidden gems you've probably never even heard of.

From riding a rail trail through stunning countryside, visiting an ethereal calcified forest, camping under the stars in Arnhem Land, fishing for legendary Murray Cod, tasting truffles in Tassie, or taking a Dreamtime walk that connects you with the oldest living culture on earth — Australia is full of life-changing experiences.

Use this guide to create your dream bucket list, then pick one or two adventures to tick off your list sooner rather than later. The world's biggest island is out there to discover, and there's no better time to start than now.

From all of us at Citro:
here's to exploring new paths
and following our own.

Bron



Bronwyn Mandile
Managing Editor, Citro

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TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

Air-tripping magic in Australia's Corner Country

If you've always wanted to visit the outback, but can't face the endless drives, it's time to take to the skies. As Citro's Bron Mandile discovered, those long, isolated roads look beautiful from the air – especially when they lead to extraordinary places.

Salt-loving halobacteria and algae often turn Lake Eyre a vibrant strawberry-milkshake pink. Image: Outback By Air

By Bronwyn Mandile

“Where are you going today?” asked the woman at the petrol pumps outside Tibooburra’s Corner Country Store. She was leaning against a dusty 4-wheel drive which had roof-racks stacked high with water bottles and hope. The back of the car was completely covered by an impenetrable red crust, but I could just make out the bumper sticker: “Adventure before dementia”.

“We’re flying to Innamincka for lunch and then onto Birdsville tonight, can’t wait!”

She looked at me, she looked at the 4-wheel drive, she looked back at me. “Take me with you!” she pleaded, only half joking. “I can’t do another day on that bloody road, I just can’t!”

I’d done enough outback road tripping in the past to feel her pain. The roads are even longer than the yarns spun by locals along the way. I pictured the country we’d flown over yesterday, from Bankstown to Bourke to

Tibooburra. It was unique and beautiful and so very, very vast – and I was grateful to have experienced every single bit of it from above in a Cessna Grand Caravan.

I was “air-tripping” with Outback By Air and, let me tell you, it beats outback road tripping by, oh, about 8 hours to 1. In just 5 days we covered the equivalent amount of Corner Country you’d ordinarily spend over a month travelling to see. Then again, we probably saw parts of Australia most will never get to see because it’s just too far away (sorry, Innamincka, but you are).

Which is a Simpson desert-sized shame because out-the-back of the outback is nothing short of magical.



Your chariot awaits in Oodnadatta, m'lady.

Day 1: Bankstown to Bourke to Tibooburra

It all started at the Bankstown Airport, which is an airport used by smaller aircraft smack right bang in the middle of the Sydney ‘burbs. Nothing says “I’m off on holiday” quite like taking off in the middle of everyday suburbia and flying directly over the morning rush hour.

Better still, as we were flying in a small private plane, there was no security, no baggage check-in and zero wait time. Instead, we had a cup of tea and a brief flight induction then we were all on board the comfy Cessna, ready for take-off within minutes.

There were 8 of us on the tour with pilots Phil Hines (founder and co-owner of Outback by Air) and Tariq Luqman taking our group number to 10. Along

for the ride was Glenn McGrath – ex-cricketer, founder of The McGrath Foundation, Citro ambassador and co-owner of Outback By Air.

Any trepidation I felt about being part of such a small tour group (would I like the people? Would they like me?) disappeared before we even left the airport. The group's age ranged from 53 to 75 years old and everyone seemed lovely.

Simon and Kylie were a couple from regional NSW in their 50s; Janet and Chris – both in their 70s – were Sydney friends who often travelled together; Suze had retired only the month before after a long career as a carer. “I promised during Covid that I’d treat myself to this trip as soon as I retired,” she said. “And here I am at last.”

And then there was Dave who was travelling solo. He was a repeat-flyer, who had made this exact same trip last year and loved it so much he was back for seconds. His experience was an early indication that Suze was right – we were all in for a treat.

First stop: Bourke, of course

“Out the back of Bourke” is such a familiar expression to most Aussies, that you rarely stop to think about what it means. Flying in the Cessna from Sydney to Bourke (roughly 2.5 hour) we crossed the Blue Mountains and then flew over farmland into... well, extraordinary vastness. For ages. Bourke is really far away and then, if you’re out the back of there (which we were about to be for days), you’re really, really, really far away (really).

The world-class Back ‘O Bourke Exhibition Centre does a fantastic job of showcasing the unique place this small town plays in Australia’s history and identity. It’s a world of bushrangers, drovers, cameleers and poets. Henry Lawson kicked around Bourke between 1892-1893 and wrote of his time there: “If you know Bourke, you know Australia...” Let’s just say, Australia has changed a fair bit since Henry’s time...

Take me with you to Tibooburra

The lady I met in Tibooburra had one thing right: take me with you! But take me to Tibooburra, not away from it. This charming little town (population 134) is a destination in its own right.



When you're sitting this close to the pilots you're practically flying the plane.

“I love it here” was a refrain I heard countless times during our overnight stay in town.



The unexpectedly fancy Two Storey pub in Tibooburra is the kind of place that makes you want to stop for a while.

We were met at the swanky airport terminal (basically a bus shelter) by Ethan, who has recently moved to town from Coffs Harbour to work for the local National Parks and Wildlife Office. When I remarked that Tibooburra was a long way from Coffs, Ethan simply said, “I love it here.”

“I love it here” was a refrain I heard countless times during our overnight stay in town.

The young Irish lass working the Tibooburra Hotel bar loves it here. The old fella who lives along Sturt Street loves it here. Amanda Wheeler, principal of Tibooburra Outback Public school (4 students), loves it here.

We spent the night at the historic Tibooburra Hotel, built in 1882 and always known by the locals as the “Two Storey” (it’s the only 2-story building for miles). The current publican is Tracy Hothcin, who grew up in the hotel when her grandfather owned it.

She bought it back in his memory, only to see the pub gutted by fire in 2021. In true outback spirit, Tracy didn’t let a bit of fire get in the way of her dream and today the beautifully refurbished and decorated hotel wouldn’t look out of place in the city.

After a hearty meal fit for our band of weary travellers (and presumably our horses, given the size of it) we headed off to bed. Tibooburra means ‘heaps of rocks’ in the local Aboriginal language and that night I slept like one. There’s no sleep quite like an outback sleep...

Tibooburra’s bustling airport terminal.



Day 2: To Birdsville via Innamincka

Next morning I was up with the farmers to watch the sunrise out the back of the hotel. A mob of kangaroos graciously decided to bound in front of the sun just as it started glowing red. Tibooburra, I thought, I love it here.

Breakfast was plentiful (I was starting to realise this “pub crawl” was more about food than drink). Then it was off to Tibooburra Outback Public school to watch Glenn get bowled out by a 9-year-old. “It’s the bat, I know, I’m so sorry,” school principal Amanda graciously called out. The kids looked sceptical.

Glenn could have spent the entire day playing cricket with the kids and

the flies, but the 55 minute flight to Innamincka beckoned us away. As we flew over the desolate dirt road that led out of town, I swore I could make out the water bottle-stacked 4-wheel drive of my new friend. She’s probably almost at Innamincka by now...

When a pub is a whole town

We flew into Innamincka on the edge of the Strzelecki Desert for lunch. Innamincka (population: 21) is... a pub. Sure, there’s also a general store, a tourist office and a couple of petrol pumps, but the Innamincka Hotel is this place’s beating heart and soul. Which is true of so many of the outback pubs we visited – these watering holes were built to service dusty travellers back in the day and nothing much has changed. Without these pub stopovers,

the road is too long, the bush too endless and the nights far too lonely.

Our oasis for this particular night, the famous Birdsville Hotel, was the perfect example. The pub was built in 1884 on the very edge of the Simpson Desert at the start of the Birdsville Track – a 517 kilometre dirt road between one town-slash-pub (Birdsville) and another (Marree).

The pub itself is every bit deserving of its legendary status – as is the Birdsville Bakery on the other side of the sportsfield, famous for serving camel pies.

Life-affirming sunsets (and tour guides)

That evening we were treated to a trip out to Big Red (Nappanerica) – the Simpson’s largest sand dune – with the Simpson’s most enthusiastic tour guide, Alex from Big Red Tours. Birdsville may be tiny (population 110), but 30 minutes later we were still within the town boundaries as Alex told a thoroughly entertaining tale at every point of interest.

We somehow made it to Big Red in time to kick back with a drink and a snack as the sun sank below the endless horizon – dazzlingly there one second, gone with a shimmer the next.

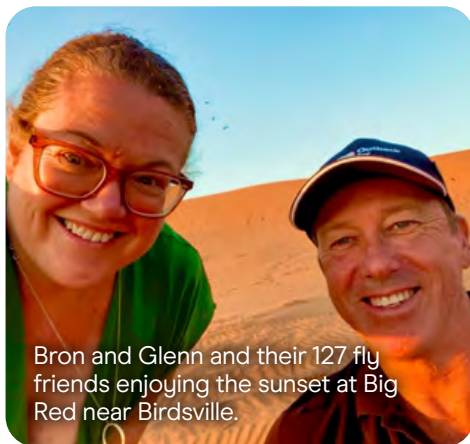
Twilight lingered behind with us, seeming just as reluctant to surrender the moment as we were. The drive back to town was a quiet one as each of us reflected on how a single sunset can somehow be life-changing.



The iconic Birdsville Hotel is a destination any time of year, but particularly comes alive during the Big Red Bash in July and the Birdsville Races in September.



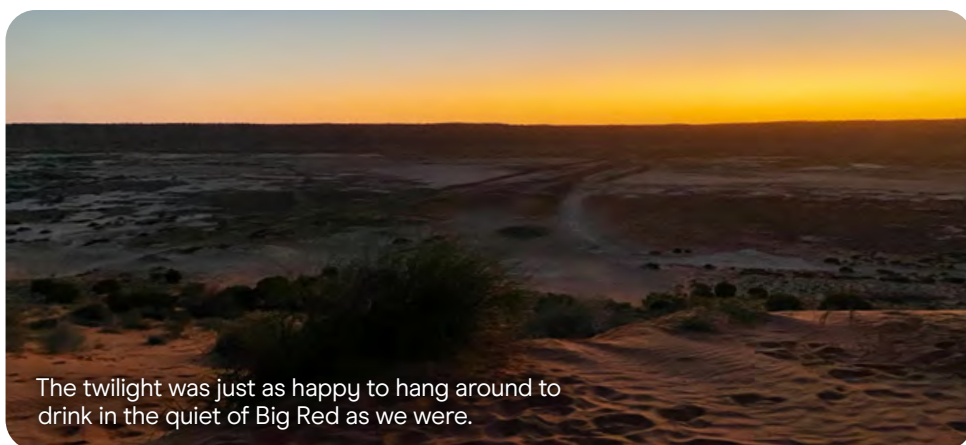
Glenn takes it easy on Amanda.



Bron and Glenn and their 127 fly friends enjoying the sunset at Big Red near Birdsville.



No chance.



The twilight was just as happy to hang around to drink in the quiet of Big Red as we were.



If there's a better way to enjoy a sundowner, I've yet to find it.

Day 3: To William Creek via Oodnadatta

Glenn told me that only 25% of people who live in Australia's major centres have been to the outback. Disclaimer: I couldn't actually substantiate this figure anywhere, but I believe him because he's Glenn McGrath, right? The point is, that means 75% of city people (allegedly) are well and truly missing out.

Take Oodnadatta, for example (population: 102, although Joe and his wife Jess have just moved to town with the kids to run the famous Pink

Roadhouse, so it might actually be 106 now). It's one of the towns that became isolated when they changed the route of The Great Northern Railway (which The Ghan ran on) in 1980 and these days it's really only visited by people 4-wheel driving the 600km Oodnadatta Track – and us.

The thing is, Oodnadatta is one of the friendliest places you'll probably ever find yourself in. It really embodied what Glenn had told me back in Birdsville was the essence of living in a country community: "It's unfussy, uncomplicated, non-judgemental... it's simple living – a good life," he said.

We got chatting with the locals out the front of the Transcontinental Hotel and Carmen told me how she tried to move to Coober Pedy (population: 1,566) but it was just too much for her. "People are busy," she said firmly. "Too many of them is no good."

Small, smaller, smallest

By the time we landed in William Creek that night (population: 6), I was starting to wonder how I could ever go back to living in Sydney (population: 5,450,496). It was a worry for another day, however, because the owner of the William Creek Hotel – Trevor Wright and his partner Di – were the kind of busy people who are just plain good.

Trevor's pub has a welcome warmer than William Creek in mid-January (45°C not uncommon). If you're looking for true "outback hospitality" get Outback By Air to fly you here immediately. I mean, you could drive, but it's anywhere from 10-31 hours drive from Australia's capital cities (don't attempt driving from Hobart) – and that's without stopping.

We had one of the best meals of the trip here (and that's saying something – the food in every pub was beautifully made and as generous as you'd expect). Their Rogan Josh goat curry is famous, but I enjoyed my chicken parma immensely. After dinner we were treated to Di's talk on the history of William Creek before Trevor took over to spin a few yarns.



Oodnadatta's Pink Roadhouse is indeed very pink – the colour choice started with the 1969 Dodge Phoenix parked out the front and escalated to include everything in sight.



Owner of the William Creek Hotel and spinner of intriguing yarns, Trevor Wright.



Downtown Marree during the lunchtime peak hour.

By the time we landed in William Creek that night (population: 6), I was starting to wonder how I could ever go back to living in Sydney (population: 5,450,496)

Day 4: To Broken Hill via Marree

After another soul-nourishing outback sleep, we had an amazing flight the next morning straight over the top of the famous Maree Man. It's truly a mystery how anyone managed to carve out such an enormous figure in the dust.

Maree Man from the air was almost as spectacular as our path over Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre, the lowest natural point in Australia and our largest salt water lake, covering 9,500 km² when full. It's an utterly mind-blowing sight when viewed from above, even at only partly full.

Powered by grit and backpackers

We stopped in at the beautiful Marree Hotel for lunch (population: 101) to spend some time in the Tom Cruse Museum – an exhibition that honours the long-time Birdsville Track mailman and his 1936 Leyland Badger truck.

Tom Cruse (yes, I'd spent the whole trip thinking any local who mentioned him was referring to the actor) was the remarkable outback legend who battled heat, dust, storms, floods and a series of battered trucks to 'get the mail' through between 1936-1963. It's a well-considered museum and learning the 'real' Tom Cruse story was one of the highlights of the trip.

In Marree I met another outback legend, 60+ year-old Irene. She's

lived in Marree all her life, but only got air-conditioning last year. “It made such a difference,” she said in that understated way I’d come to associate with people from ‘around here’.

There was so much to reflect on as we flew out of Maree and headed for the Big Smoke – Broken Hill (population: 17,624), our last stopover on this extraordinary outback odyssey.

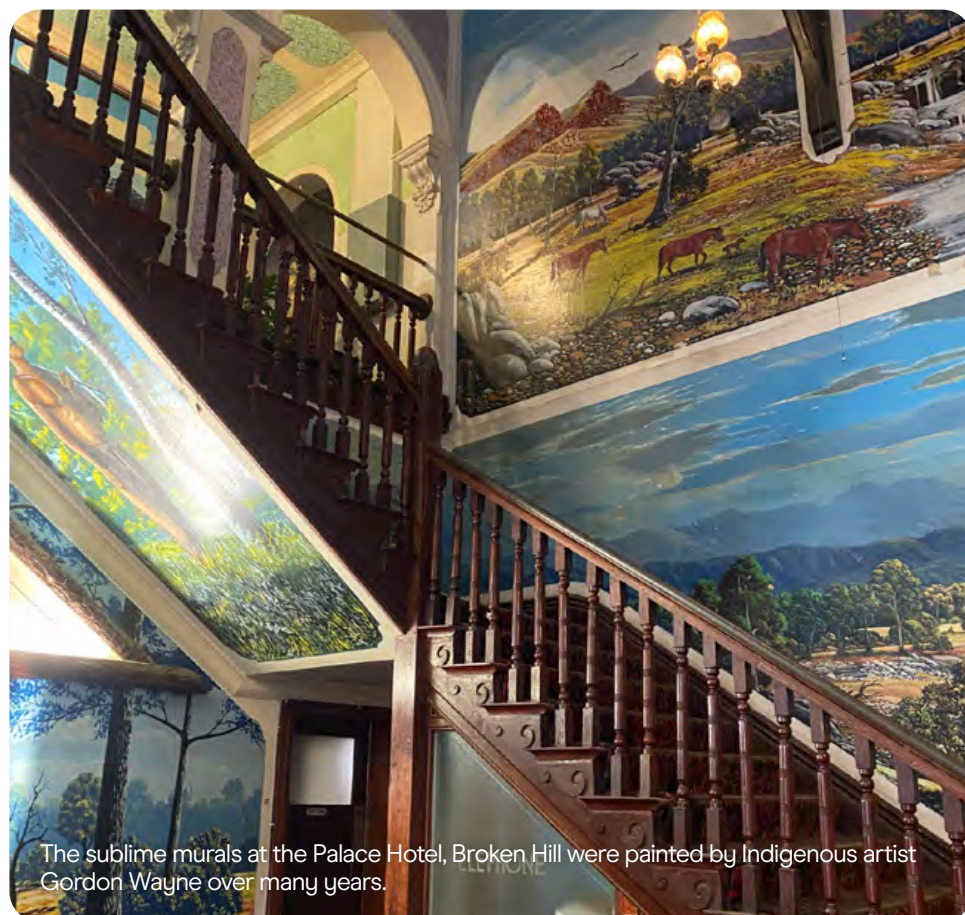
A gin-fuelled final night in Broken Hill

Okay, that headline is rather misleading – in this case, “gin-fuelled” means 2 glasses of the local Broken

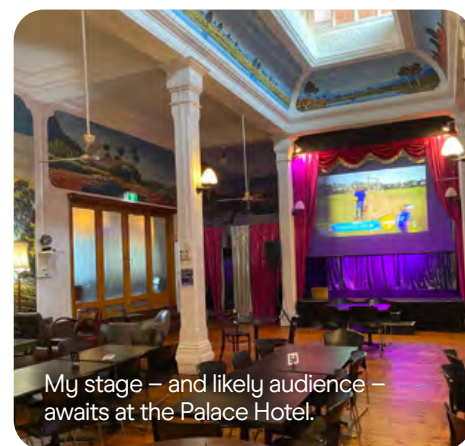
Hill Distillery gin (superb) and I was ready to perform on the Palace Hotel stage as Priscilla Queen of the Dessert (not a misspelling). My fellow travellers were grateful this did not actually happen.

Coming out of the bush, the historic town of Broken Hill felt like downtown Delhi (population: 33,807,400). There’s a chemist there and everything. Glenn had patiently been posing for pictures across Corner Country for the past 5 days, but in the Big Smoke he was run off his feet. “It’s weird when you get reminded your new friend is famous,” noted Suze.

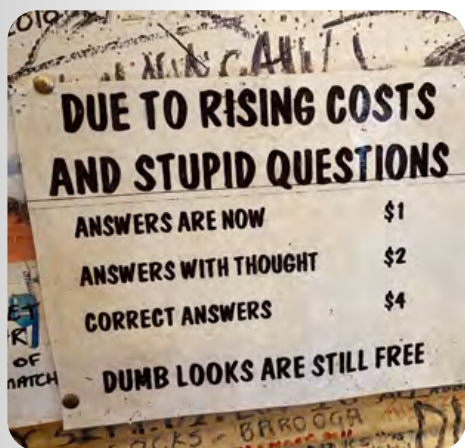
Coming out of the bush, the historic town of Broken Hill (population: 17,624) felt like downtown Delhi (population: 33,807,400).



The sublime murals at the Palace Hotel, Broken Hill were painted by Indigenous artist Gordon Wayne over many years.



My stage – and likely audience – awaits at the Palace Hotel.



One of the many signs on the spectacularly adorned Tilpa Pub walls: the humour out here is as dry as the land.



Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre from the air: At this time of year, the salt crust on the shallow lake creates art worthy of hanging in a gallery.

Day 5: Back home via Tilpa

I spent the early morning of our final outback day happily walking through town looking at the beautiful buildings – if you're a design lover like me, Broken Hill is a superb looking town.

After our last country-hospitality breakfast, a visit to the Royal Flying Doctor Service Outback Heritage Experience was on the agenda. This superb museum gave fresh insights into the lives of those living remotely in Australia and the essential role the RFDS plays in their health and wellbeing. When we talk about good ol' Aussie resilience and stoicism, I'm pretty sure we're referring to anyone who lives 1000 kilometres from the nearest hospital and gets crushed by a tractor...

After donating generously – the RFDS merch quality is second-to-none – we flew into another outlying pub-slash-town for lunch at the Tilpa Hotel (population: 46). Here we were served by the new backbone of the outback – European backpackers. Working in remote regions is a right of passage for many as they fulfil their working holiday visa requirements.

"It's a shame Aussie kids don't work out here as well," I remarked to Glenn. He agreed that a stint out the back would be a game-changer for any kid. "What I learned growing up in the regions built character in a way that suburban life just can't," he said. "The self-reliance, the resilience you need... the creativity – that ability to lean into community to get the job done. It's an invaluable experience."



A couple of Tilpa Hotel visitors, sporting the local uniform of boots and brightly coloured work shirt.

Twice-in-a-lifetime at least

It was tough to believe our time in the outback was nearing its end. Back in Broken Hill I had quizzed my fellow travellers about their thoughts on the trip. “No one wants to only hear from me!” I scoffed (2,923 words into this article).

For anyone wondering what it’s like to take 11 flights in 5 days to visit 11 legendary Aussie pubs, here’s Janet: “I’m not much of a drinker, but this is about so much more than having a beer at a pub. The food, the accommodation, the history, the scenery – it’s incredible to have experienced it all.”

For anyone worried about doing a trip like this on their own, here’s

Suze: “I was so nervous about coming by myself, but it’s a small group and everyone has been so wonderful.”

For anyone concerned about spending so much time with a group of strangers in isolated places, here’s Chris: “We left Bankstown as strangers, but we’re returning as family.”

And for anyone uncertain about doing the trip at all, here’s Dave – veteran 2-time back-to-back Outback Pub Crawl passenger (2023 and 2024): “Just do it, it’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience.” Make that twice-in-a-lifetime and we’ve got a solid finish, thanks Dave.



A new Outback By Air 'family' is born. From right: Outback By Air co-owner Phil Hines, writer Bron Mandile, Suze, Glenn McGrath, Dave, Kylie, Simon, Janet and Chris.

The Outback By Air story

Glenn McGrath and Phil Hines are both thoroughly good blokes and co-owners of Outback By Air. They met years ago at one of the annual Alan Border Medal nights and bonded over a shared love of flying (Glenn has his helicopter licence, Phil's been flying fixed-wing for more than half his life).

"Outback by Air was born from my passion for flying and my love for the breathtaking beauty of the Australian Outback," says Phil Hines, director and co-owner of Outback By Air. "In my early pilot career, I flew over this rugged landscape, witnessing its magnificence, [it] fuelled my desire to connect people with this extraordinary region."

"We both have a passion for flying and a passion for the outback," explained Glenn, sitting on the back deck of the

Tilpa Hotel, overlooking the Darling River. "I've always loved the country further west from where I grew up in Narromine – I just love it out here... It's just in me, it's just part of who I am."

Glenn talks a lot about the connection he feels to the country – the red earth, the animals, the landscape, the colours, the people.

"I come back to this part of the world to recharge my batteries and be around good people as well. They're just salt-of-the earth."

"I know my brother would drive 25, 30 miles down the road to help a neighbour without thinking twice. When you're out here in these remote areas, you rely on each other. They're just good, hard-working people."



Glenn in his happy place.
Image: Outback By Air

Through Outback By Air, Glenn and Phil want to introduce as many people as possible to locals across the country.

"We want to show Australians their own backyard, to inspire a sense of adventure and appreciation for natural wonders in our country," says Phil. "It's about creating unforgettable experiences that bring people closer to the heart of Australia."

Outback By Air tours mean people can experience more of Australia in a week than a road trip would show them in a month. From rainforest to desert to lakes, the vastness of Australia is made accessible for everyone through the wonder of air-tripping.

"What we have here in Australia is different to anywhere else in the world," says Glenn. "Every little town has a different character – a different reason for being there. They're all special, they're all unique, they're all incredible."



Good blokes Phil and Glenn prop up the bar at the Innamincka Hotel.



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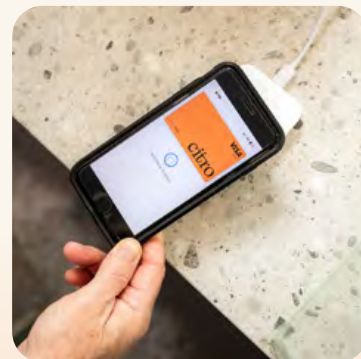
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Australia's natural wonders must be seen to be believed

Australia's beauty and magic come alive in ways you've never imagined.

Words by Alex Brooks

The Great Barrier Reef, Queensland

Let's start with Australia's most iconic natural wonder of all (although Uluru might have something to say about that). The Great Barrier Reef is made up of almost 3,000 individual reefs across 344,400 kilometres. So it's fair to say that during the average visit you'll only be exploring a tiny bit of what's on offer.

The Outer Reef – or the point where the complex coral system meets the wider ocean – is far less explored than

the Inner Reef, mostly because it takes a good 3 hours to sail out there from either Cairns or Airlie Beach.

Out here, the Reef grows from the ocean floor, not from a land base. This means the snorkelling and scuba diving are more varied, with an abundance of sea life and coral formations. Visibility is also higher because run-off from the mainland and islands is almost non-existent. This is a pristine UNESCO World Heritage Site worthy day out worth taking.

The Outer Great Barrier Reef is well worth the longer trip. Image: iStock/Maerie

Pink Lake Hutt Lagoon, Port Gregory, Western Australia

You can drive along or fly over the pink lake in Western Australia to see the weirdly wonderful waters.

Australia is well known for its sparkling blue images of beaches and harbours, but not as well known for its candy-pink lakes.

In South, and particularly Western Australia, you can find famous lakes that take their distinctive hue from high salinity and blooming algae.

Drive 6 hours from Perth along the Coral Coast Highway, and you'll reach the ultra-Instagrammable Hutt Lagoon. Its colours can change from striking pink to red and even purple — often all in one day.

Fringed by forest and dunes on remote Middle Island, Lake Hillier also blushes with rosy hues. You can only see this lake from the air or by sea, but a flight over the island promises spectacular views and vibrant photos.

Glow in the dark fungi, Far North and Southern Queensland

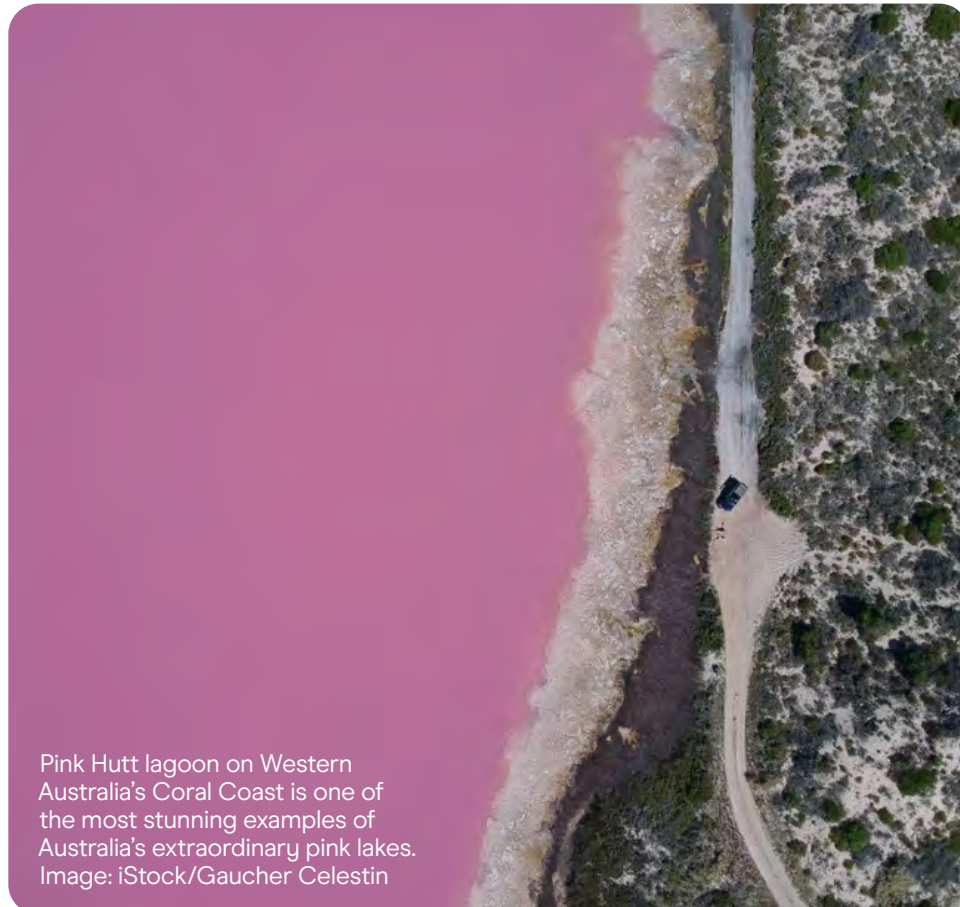
Australia's stunning Daintree Rainforest is a UNESCO World-heritage site and the oldest surviving tropical rainforest in the world. What makes this place especially wonderful is its biodiversity, which includes fungus that glows-in-the-dark (a phenomenon also known as bioluminescence).

Queensland's rainforests host bioluminescent fungi — also known to many as ghost mushrooms due to the soft ghostly glow they emit through the darkness. The light seeping through the cell walls of these mushrooms is often green.

Professor Celeste Linde from ANU Research School of Biology says there are about 110 known species of mushroom that are bioluminescent, and quite a few are found in Australia.

They create their own light through a chemical reaction, in a similar way to fireflies.

"It's a compound that the organism has, called luciferin, and that interacts with an enzyme called luciferase," Professor Linde explains.



65% of Australia's bat and butterfly species, and 35% of its frog, marsupial and reptile species are found in the peaceful Daintree. Image: iStock/AustralianCamera

These amazing rainforest plants that glow in the dark are said to have inspired James Cameron's Avatar movies.

Lamington National Park, further south in Queensland, also offers glowing fungi experiences.

Aurora Australis, Victoria and Tasmania

You don't need to go to Iceland or Scandinavia to fulfil your aurora-chasing northern lights dreams.

Every year, the Aurora Australis, also known as the Southern Lights, electrifies the skies above southern Australia.

Charged solar particles collide with different gases in the atmosphere to create auroras' dazzling greens, yellows, purples and blues. Good news: As the sun approaches its solar maximum over the next 2 years, scientists forecast that this display will appear even stronger and more frequently.

The Spring equinox and Winter are the best times to see the Aurora Australis, according to Tourism Australia, but it's possible to catch a glimpse on any clear night during the year. The best vantage points have low light pollution and a broad view of the southern horizon, like Bruny Island and Cradle Mountain in Tasmania or the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria.

Rocky geological wonders worth a visit

Go beyond Uluru-Ayers Rock and explore other earthly delights and rock formations in Australia. This country has an abundance of rocky delights to entertain geologically curious travellers. Most of us know the gorgeous colours of Uluru are inspiring at sunrise and sunset but take a look at these other jaw-dropping rock formations to see if they are worth putting on your bucket list.

Wave Rock, Western Australia

It looks like a surf wave captured at a moment in time and is around 14m high and 110m long.

This granite inselberg (which means isolated hill that rises above a flat plain)



Aurora Australis dancing in the sky over Cape Schanck Lighthouse at the southernmost tip of the Mornington Peninsula. Image: iStock/Gavin Guan.



It's estimated that Wave Rock is about 2,700 million years old. Image: iStock/bennymarty

is 2.63 billion years old with coloured stripes created by the rain washing chemical deposits, carbonates and iron hydroxide down the face of the rock.

The wave-like shape was formed by the gradual erosion of the softer rock beneath the upper edge over many millions of years.

Visitors to Wave Rock can wander along the barrel of the wave or follow a walking trail that leads to the crest. To the Noongar people, the traditional custodians of the region, this was a dancing ground.

Around 300km from Perth, the rocky stunner of Wave Rock is not far from Hippo's Yawn, another quirky rock feature that looks like a hippopotamus is opening his large jaws.

If you visit in springtime, you'll be rewarded with vistas of native wildflowers.

Termite mounds, Northern Territory and Queensland

OK, so these aren't your average rock formation. These are more like dirt mounds held together with termite spit and dung to create rocky formations that jut to more than 5m in height.

Littered across Australia's Top End, these mounds are carefully crafted on a north-south axis for maximum solar absorption, warmth and humidity to keep the critters moist in the hot, dry climate. That's why these mounds are sometimes called "magnetic termite mounds" (though it's unlikely you can stick a fridge magnet to them).

To create the mounds, the termites chew grass stalks and store them around the outer chambers of the mound, foraging from underground and displacing the sediment on the ground. As the mound begins to grow, the termites fill the outer chambers with soil.

The Litchfield National Park in the Northern Territory has some of the best examples, where you can also take in ancient waterfalls and impressive rock ruins called The Lost City.



The stark and desolate beauty of the Calcified Forest on King Island in Tasmania. Image: Andrew Bain for Citro.



This giant termite mound is found in Litchfield National Park in the Northern Territory. Image: iStock/swissmediavision



Natural weathering and erosion formed the distinctive Admiral's Arch, which is accessible via a scenic boardwalk around the cliff face. Image: iStock/macca236

Admirals Arch, Kangaroo Island, South Australia

With a New Zealand fur seal colony below Admirals Arch at Cape du Couedic, tourists can catch a dose of cute wildlife to add extra awe to seeing this sea cave rock formation.

The dark brown seals rest and breed on land (and tend to smell very fishy!). Summer is the primary breeding season, and the rock pools underneath the arch are a popular place for seal pups to play.

Another unique thing about the arch is the stalactites which dangle from the rocky ceiling of this former cave.

The more famous Remarkable Rocks are also nearby, where you can witness stark granite boulders shaped by centuries of wild winds.

Calcified Forest, King Island, Tasmania

What happens when land that was once forest faces rising sea levels? You get a calcified forest revealing stony remnants of trees long made extinct.

Found on Tasmania's King Island, these formations happened after calcium carbonate formed around the roots of trees which later all died, with the surrounding sand eroded by wind around 7,000 years ago to reveal the root casts.

Stop to ponder the geological history and the strangely desolate shapes on this half-hour walk, which is one of Tasmania's 60 great short walks.



The Pinnacles in Nambung National Park formed approximately 25,000 to 30,000 years ago after the sea receded and left deposits of sea shells. Image: iStock/Ken Griffiths

Pinnacles, Turquoise Coast, Western Australia

Just a 3-hour drive from Perth is this lunar landscape that's reminiscent of the calcified forest on King Island in Tasmania.

The Pinnacles formed from limestone-rich sand, ancient sea shells crushed into powder by the ocean and swept inland by wind and waves. Every time it rained, the water would cause some of the calcium carbonate to seep into the ground, hardening and slowly forming the Pinnacles. Bushfires and erosion caused the surrounding loose sand to blow away.

The Pinnacle Desert is located in the Nambung National Park in Western Australia, around 2 hours drive from Perth.

Bay of Fires, Tasmania

The bright lichen-covered granite boulders on Tasmania's east coast (and nearby islands) are particularly stunning when seen at sunrise or sunset.

It's the vast sandy beaches and crystal blue waters that set off the fiery sight, which dazzles across the Bay of Fires coastline for 50 kms from Binalong Bay in the south to Eddystone Point in the north.

Lichens are a combination of algae and fungus that live together in a symbiotic relationship. The algae provides food by photosynthesis, while the fungus provides a protected environment for the algae.

The area has a rich Indigenous history, too.



The lichen-painted granite rocks in Bay of Fires near Binalong of Tasmania glow bright at sunrise. Image: iStock/zetter

Forget the Wineglass, Tasmania has other stunning beaches worth a visit



While Tasmania isn't exactly known for its sunny beach weather, it has an abundance of natural beauty and a rugged coastline. Adventurer and Tassie local, Andrew Bain reveals the lesser known beaches to visit on the Apple Isle.

Words by Andrew Bain

In Tasmania, it can sometimes be hard to see the beaches for the Wineglass. With its perfect curve, Wineglass Bay overshadows all other strands around the island state, but in reality Tasmania is a natural artwork framed by a multitude of beautiful beaches.

There are white-sand wonders along the east coast, sandy shores of power in the west, and even beaches set into mountains. And while Tasmania isn't exactly famed for her perfect beach weather, that's kind of the point. Most of the time you'll be wandering these pristine shores with only your thoughts for company.

Next visit, put your Wineglass down and discover one of these exceptional spots instead.

Boat Harbour Beach

Black and white has never looked so good. Set at the foot of Table Cape on the Bass Strait coast, this local favourite is a gleaming white strip of sand split by tongues of black volcanic rock. It's perfectly positioned between two picturesque rocky headlands, making it somehow feel rugged and adventurous, despite being one of the calmest sheltered beaches you'll ever have the pleasure to swim at.

When the sun shines, so do the shallows, creating a dazzling palette of colours, and the beachside Seekers Bar and Cafe, inside the surf club, is just the spot in which to absorb it all.

Trousers Point

Imagine kunanyi/Mt Wellington rising from the shores of the Bay of Fires and you pretty much have the picture of this stunner along the southern edge of Flinders Island.

There's a long, soft beach arcing out from the point, but its greatest beauty is the 782-metre high Strzelecki Peaks – the highest mountain on the island – rising almost directly off the beach.

As for Trouser Beach's unusual name, there are a couple of stories that do the rounds. One mild version is that a box of trousers once washed up on shore, the other, more exciting tale, involves a gentleman's trouser-less escape from a shipwreck. Choose your favourite!

Coningham Beach

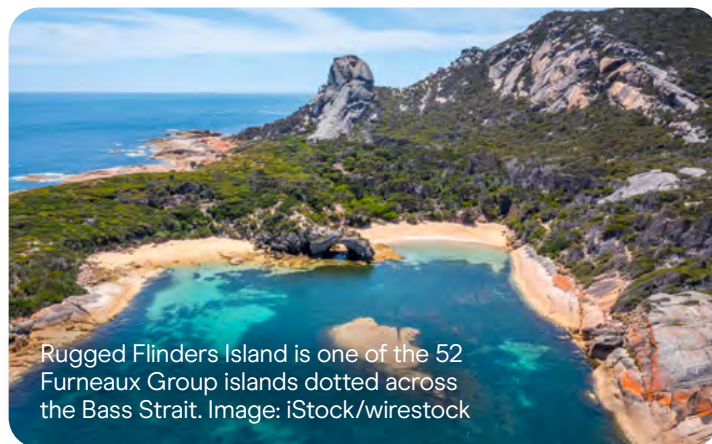
How does a beach this fine, this close to a capital city, remain so unremarked?

Just a half-hour drive from Hobart, Coningham is bookended by colourful boat sheds and sandstone cliffs vaguely reminiscent of Maria Island's Painted Cliffs. The north-facing beach is protected from most weather, creating calm swimming conditions in full view of kunanyi/Mt Wellington.

While you're there, don't miss the Coningham Beach Clifftop Walk, an easy 1.5 hour return walk that offers spectacular views across North West Bay to Mt Wellington, Tinderbox and Bruny Island.



Coningham's pocket beaches are fringed with white sand and lined with colourful boat houses. Image: iStock/Juan Gomez



Rugged Flinders Island is one of the 52 Furneaux Group islands dotted across the Bass Strait. Image: iStock/wirestock



Can you picture a more tranquil camping spot? Image: Andrew Bain for Citro

Crescent Bay

It takes work to enjoy Crescent Bay – it's about a 90-minute walk in from Remarkable Cave, near Port Arthur – but the rewards are manifold.

The perfectly curved beach – where Dick Smith once proposed building a resort – peers across the water to Tasman Island and Australia's tallest sea cliffs wrapped around Cape Pillar. Amazing, yes, but the best of the beach is actually its back wall: the spectacular dunes that tower up from the sands. Generations of Tasmanian kids have used these dunes for sandboarding thrills and it would be remiss not to have a go yourself while there. A boogie board makes a great sled, if you're wondering...

Ocean Beach

Tasmania's longest beach is impressive for its power alone – this is no swimming beach.

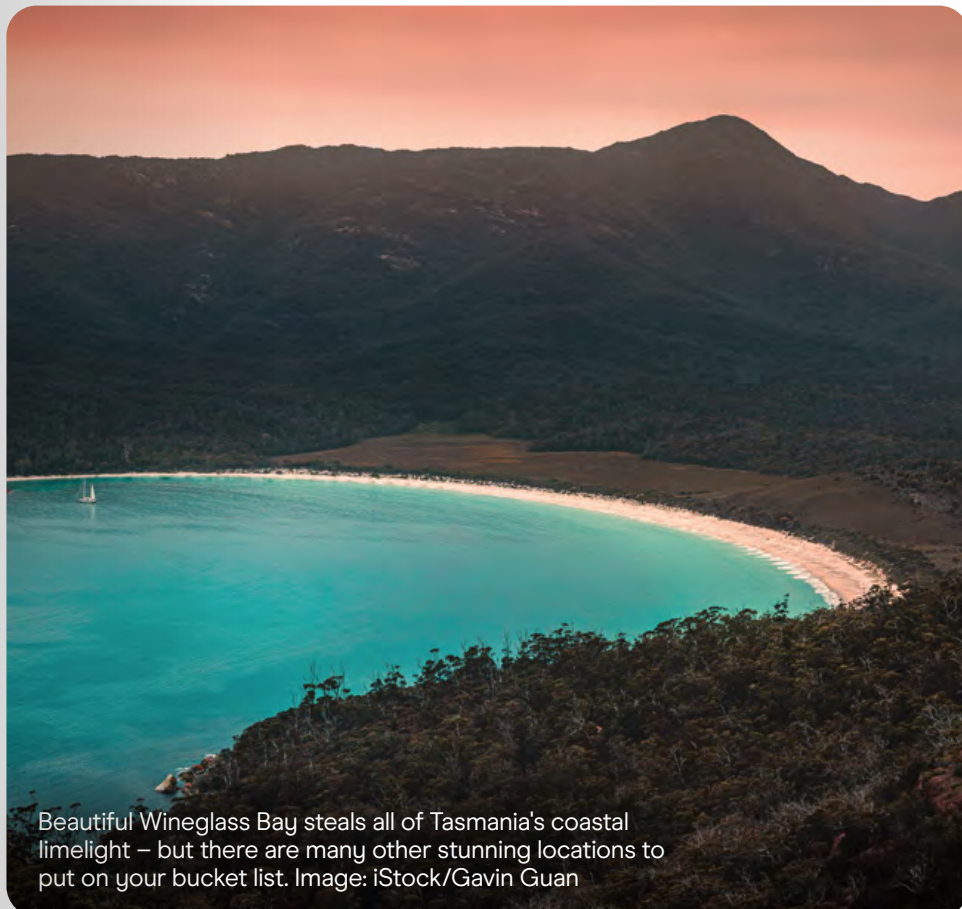
Stretching more than 30 kilometres north from Macquarie Heads near Strahan, the hard-packed, hard-pounded beach is the quintessential place to watch the Southern Ocean roar ashore – the largest wave ever recorded in Australia (18.4 metres) thundered into Tasmania near the beach's southern end in 2010. The beach is just a few minutes' drive from Strahan, or you can walk in through the expansive Henty Dunes for the full sand experience.

Lake Rhona

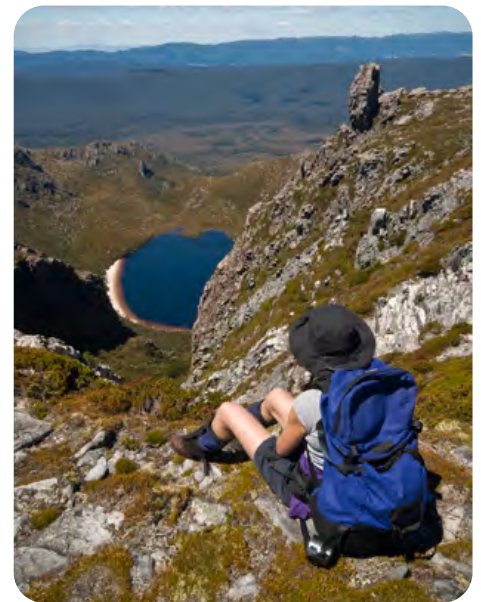
Not all of Tasmania's best beaches are found on the coast.

Lake Pedder's famous pink-sand beach may be long drowned, but tucked into the slopes of the Denison Range in the remote Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area is this incredible alpine beach, with its white sands in striking contrast to the lake's dark-coloured waters.

The only way into Lake Rhona is on foot, and it's a full day of walking, so you'll just have to camp the night on the beach when you get here—what a shame! With its pristine surroundings and serenity, the reward is well worth the effort.



Beautiful Wineglass Bay steals all of Tasmania's coastal limelight – but there are many other stunning locations to put on your bucket list. Image: iStock/Gavin Guan



With its unique pale pink sandy inland beach, Lake Rhona is one of the jewels in the crown of Tasmania's pristine wilderness. Image: iStock/Redzaal

DISCOVERY

Finding Hobart's hidden treasures

A spell was cast on Alana House during her 4-night escape to Tasmania's capital city.

Words by Alana House

You know it's been a great getaway when you start Googling properties for sale at your holiday destination.

I have been staring longingly at listings ever since flying home from a 4-night escape to Hobart.

The Tasmanian capital punches well above its weight for a city with only

250,000 residents. It offers a great mix of bars and restaurants in close proximity to natural wonders.

Getting to the Point

Historic Battery Point is located 10 minutes and a world away from Hobart's central business district. The 19th-century sandstone and weatherboard homes and buildings are both quaint and covetable. It's hard to imagine anyone visiting Battery

Point and not immediately picturing themselves living here.

Must-see market

We hit the ground running on our first day, heading to Salamanca Market, which runs each Saturday from 8.30am to 3pm, in historic Salamanca Place. The market is filled with more than 300 stallholders selling everything from fresh produce to handmade gifts.

Mountain views

Then we drove up Mount Wellington, which towers impressively over the city. The landscape at the top is otherworldly and alpine-like, and often whipped by icy winds, but it is well worth braving them for the fantastic views of Hobart and much of southern Tasmania.

Brewery visits

On our way back into town we spotted a red hop-on hop-off bus ahead of us and decided to follow it. It was a genius move as it led us to the picturesque Cascade Brewery, where we sipped a couple of pots of cider in the late afternoon sun.

Our other favourite bars during our trip were The Still and Rude Boy.





Housed in the old Mercury Print room, The Still is a stylish venue that serves more than 150 local spirits by the measure. Rude Boy has a laid-back vibe, with friendly staff and gorgeous tropical décor.

The mighty Mona

On our second day in town we headed to Mona, the Museum of Old and New Art. Even if you're not a huge art fan, it's a must-do experience.

It has been designed to be approached from the water, with visitors disembarking from the ferry and climbing a long staircase, in the manner of the ancient Greeks ascending to their temples.

Day tripping

While there are plenty of adventures to be had within Hobart itself we also enjoyed taking day trips further afield.

Port Arthur is situated in a stunningly beautiful corner of Tasmania. We travelled there via Dunalley for a seafood feast at The Cannery, overlooking Boomer Bay.

After lunch, we drove to the former penal colony, where we roamed around the grounds reading plaques

detailing fascinating – and often harrowing – tales of prison life as we explored the ruins.

Wilderness cruising

We also took a Pennicotts Tasman Island Cruise, a three-hour wilderness cruise along the spectacular coastline between Port Arthur and Eaglehawk Neck.

It was absolutely stunning, filled with dramatic scenery and wildlife encounters.

Another great destination for a day trip is Bruny Island. It's especially satisfying for food-lovers as the oysters, cheese and chocolates are world-class.

Foodie heaven

Speaking of food lovers, we also enjoyed a long lunch at the Agrarian Kitchen in New Norfolk during our stay. Based about 35 minutes out of Hobart, the famed restaurant is located in the town's former mental asylum. The vast space features large windows and high ceilings lined with the original pressed metal, while the old exercise yard has been converted to a kitchen garden.



Our set menu featured endless courses of luscious morsels sourced from the garden and nearby producers, including the most delicious brussels sprouts I've ever tasted.

We are eager to return to Hobart soon – there are so many more great restaurants we want to try and natural wonders to discover. It's a city that feels like home, with the added bonus of an undiscovered backyard that beckons you to explore.

An aerial photograph taken from the wing of a small aircraft, looking out over a vast, arid landscape. In the distance, the iconic red rock formation of Uluru (Ayers Rock) stands prominently against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The foreground shows the wing and tail of the plane, and the ground below is a mix of dry grass and sparse vegetation.

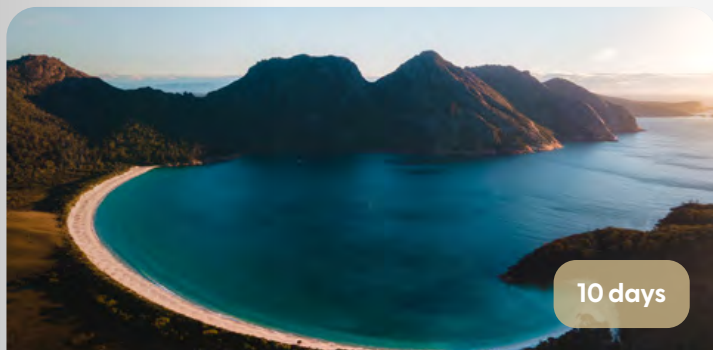
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Top destinations



10 days

Tasmanian Experience 2025

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Route Launceston, Freycinet National Park, Hobart, Strahan, King Island, Flinders Island



5 days

Classic Outback Pub Crawl

Journey through the stunning landscapes of NSW, SA, and QLD as you explore 11 iconic pubs. Sip cold beers with friendly locals, savour delicious regional cuisine, and soak in the rich culture and vibrant community spirit of the Australian Outback.

Route Bourke, Tibooburra, Innamincka, Birdsville, Oodnadatta, William Creek, Lake Eyre, Broken Hill and Tilpa



15 days

Ultimate Outback Crusade

This unforgettable air tour takes you on a breathtaking journey through the heart of the Australian Outback, exploring stunning landscapes and iconic destinations. Experience the thrill of flying over majestic landmarks, enjoy immersive cultural encounters, and indulge in delicious local cuisine.

Route Experience the spirit of the Outback as you travel through NSW, QLD, NT, WA and SA



13 days

Cape York Adventure

This tour combines luxury relaxation, history, adventure and cultural experiences, capturing the spirit of Australia's North.

This is the ultimate trip of a lifetime.

Route Cape York, Lizard Island, Longreach, Thursday Island, and the world-heritage listed Great Barrier Reef

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TIPS & TRICKS

How to holiday solo (and enjoy every minute)

Whether you're a seasoned solo traveller or you're new to adventuring alone, there's a lot to love about travelling solo.

Words by Carolyn Tate

Solo travel is on the rise, especially for women. There are good reasons for that. For a start, you don't have to consult anyone else about what you want to do or where you want to go.

Want to sleep in and take it easy? Do it. Want to walk all day and explore the night life all night long? It's all up to you.

Next, age seems to be no barrier

to adventuring alone, with Austrade research reporting that almost a quarter (24%) of solo travellers in Australia are aged 60 or above. Little wonder as travelling alone can help build confidence and allows people to experience the world on their own terms.

It really can be the ultimate in freedom and adventure, but of course it's important to ensure you're taking care of your safety along the way –

travelling solo can leave you feeling vulnerable, especially if you're new to a destination or unsure of the social norms or protocols.

Here's how to venture out on your own and have a wonderful time doing it.

Decide what sort of holiday you want

Think about the sort of holiday you find most enjoyable. This is all about you, after all! Do you want to go somewhere off the beaten track, or somewhere known for its tourism? There are benefits and drawbacks to both – a quieter destination can be exciting, but it may not be as accommodating when it comes to speaking English, or if you need help with transport or accommodation, for example.

It's also helpful to think about whether you want to be active and join in lots of activities, or to relax in a hammock under a palm tree.

If you're new to solo travel, you might want to start with a local destination, and work your way up to something overseas.



An organised tour can provide balance

Joining a set group tour on your own is the perfect way to get the best of both worlds. You've got the security of travelling with others, but you're under no obligation to entertain or even talk to any of them. Of course, you'll probably end up making lifelong friends, no matter how determined you are to stick to yourself.

Check the fine-print before you book, though. Many operators expect people to come in pairs so you'll likely be slapped with a 'single supplement' unless you want to share lodgings with a stranger. Alternatively, look for operators who cater especially for single travellers, or at the very least don't charge extra if you're on your own.

Travelling on your own in Australia

Companies like Outback By Air offer tours that specialise in over 50s travel and are popular with singles, so you're sure to make friends along the way.

If you prefer train travel, JourneyBeyond offers packages on The Ghan and the Indian Pacific, including luxury single cabins, with the added bonus that the restaurant will seat solo travellers together at dinner so they can mingle.

Solo women travellers might prefer WildWomen Journeys, which offer active adventures like road-tripping through the Kimberley or doing yoga at Uluru – they also venture overseas to destinations such as Nepal, Indonesia and India.

Travelling solo overseas

It's relatively easy to find out how welcoming a destination is for solo travellers. Whether you search online, ask people who have been there, or talk to a travel agent, you'll find the

Extra precautions for solo travellers

No matter how safe your destination, it's always wise to be extra careful when you're travelling alone:

- If you're unsure or think you'd feel better with some support, find a tour group to join. It will give you an extra feeling of safety, and someone else will be arranging all of your activities.
- Check in with your mental health – if you're feeling anxious it may help to talk about it in advance of your trip to work through any fears or concerns.
- Are there any scams to be aware of? Try Googling "scam" and your destination to see what others are reporting in the area. (If you're heading overseas, knowing where to get a SIM card and what taxis to use is a great start.)
- Ensure you share your itinerary and travel contact details with a loved one, and have a regular check-in time with them

so someone is keeping tabs on where you are and what you're doing. This is especially important if you're planning on hiking or heading off the beaten track.

- Leave your expensive jewellery at home and try not to carry too much cash with you (you can use credit or debit cards in most places).
- Don't drink too much if you're somewhere unfamiliar or with people you don't know, and stay aware of your surroundings.

Have an emergency plan just in case anything goes wrong – know how to contact emergency services, where the nearest doctor and/or hospital is, and, if travelling overseas, how to contact your nearest Australian embassy or consulate.

information you're looking for. You might also like to check social media platforms (such as Instagram and Pinterest) for travel tips in the areas you're visiting.

As well as the standard travel questions (visas, language barriers, accessibility, etc) some extra questions to ask (or Google) include:

- Is your destination safe for solo travellers?
- Are there areas to avoid?
- Will dining alone be accommodated in restaurants?
- Are there cultural considerations to be aware of, such as how to dress or places you should avoid?

- Are there any festivals or cultural events that can coincide with my visit (or that I should avoid if I want a quieter visit)?
- What accommodation is available (and should I book ahead)?
- How can I safely get to my hotel?
- How can I get around, and are there tours I can join (and do they cater to solo travellers specifically)?

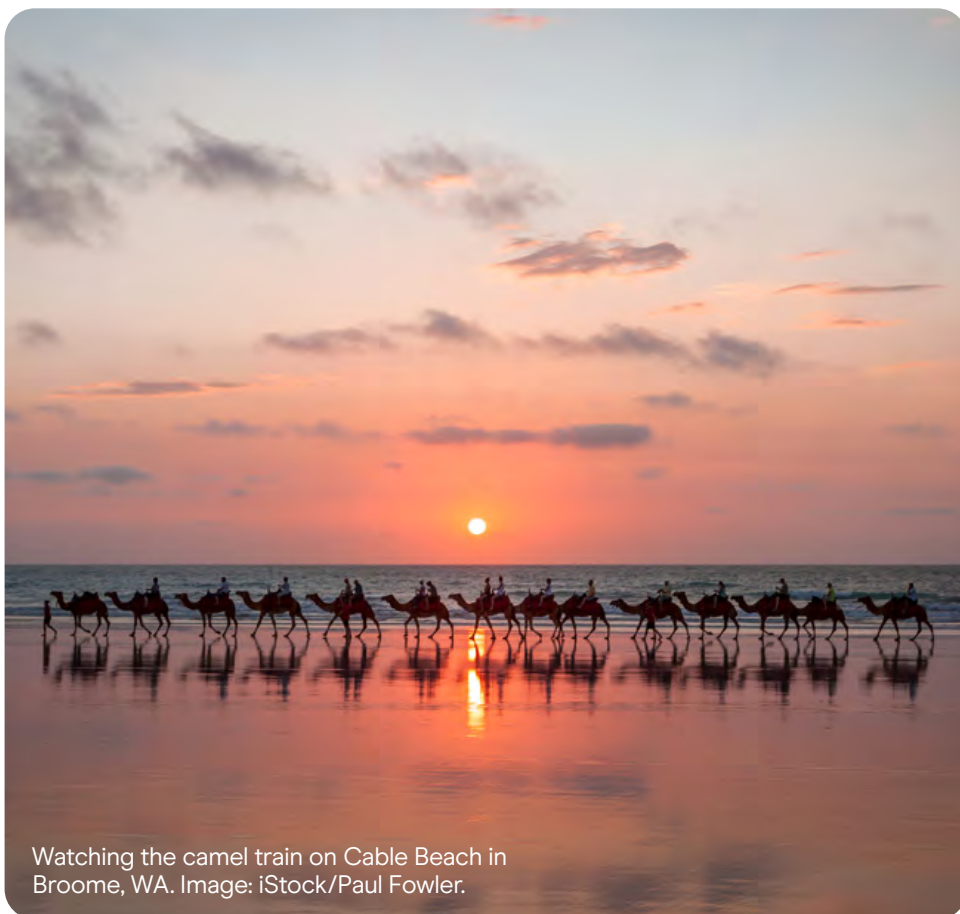
If you'd like to join a tour that offers safe overseas adventures, you might like to join Intrepid Travel on their small-group tours all over the world, or G Adventures, which partners with National Geographic Journeys.

TRAVEL

Australia's best coastal campsites for beach escapes

Pristine beaches? Tick! Quiet and calming? Double tick! Carolyn Tate has travelled all over the country to find the 10 beachside camping spots you need to add to your bucket list.





Watching the camel train on Cable Beach in Broome, WA. Image: iStock/Paul Fowler.

Words by Carolyn Tate

Camping along the Australian coastline is nothing short of magical. There's something special about falling asleep to the soothing sound of waves crashing on the shore, waking up to breathtaking ocean views, and having the beach right at your doorstep (if, in fact, you have a door).

If you're looking for serene and rejuvenating beach getaways where you can live the simple camping life and get away from it all, don't miss these incredible spots to visit.

Cable Beach, Western Australia

Cable Beach is renowned for its stunning sunsets, long stretches of soft white sand, and crystal-clear waters. It's the ideal spot for beachcombing, swimming, and camel rides at sunset (which, of course, happens over the water in the west). Both camping and caravans are

welcome here, and there are multiple options to choose from. Cable Beach Caravan Park is just a short walk to Cable Beach, or for a quieter option, try Tarangau Caravan Park. For absolute beach frontage, head 10 minutes south to Discovery Holiday Parks, Broome.

Cape Range National Park, Western Australia

Located along WA's Coral Coast, Cape Range National Park is part of the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage area. Campsites here are nestled among limestone ranges with direct access to pristine beaches and vibrant coral reefs for snorkelling and diving. There is also an abundance of wildlife, with kangaroos, echidnas, emus, black-flanked rock wallabies, and plenty to see for birdwatchers. Caravan access is limited here, but there are plenty of camping spots to enjoy.

Bittangabee Campground, New South Wales

Nestled within Beowa National Park (formerly known as Ben Boyd National Park), near the town of Eden, Bittangabee Campground boasts stunning coastal views, as well as fishing, snorkelling, swimming, diving, and bushwalking. Superb lyrebirds are often spotted here, and you can also visit the historic ruins of the Green Cape Lightstation. This site is exclusively for camping – no caravans allowed.

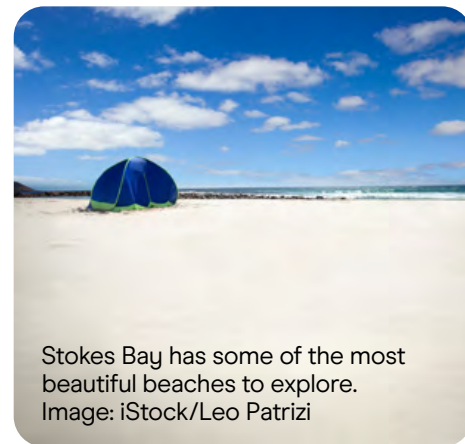
Mimosa Rocks National Park, New South Wales

Mimosa Rocks National Park, near Bega, offers a peaceful and secluded coastal retreat, with absolute beachfront camping among towering eucalyptus trees. With show-stopping headland views, beaches and pure lagoons, you can explore historic sites, hike through the rainforest, or go fishing, surfing, snorkelling and birdwatching.

The park's headland is a perfect spot for whale watching in winter (make sure you bring your thermals!), and be sure to set your alarm at least one morning so you can experience the unforgettable sunrise from Bunga Head. This site is exclusively for camping – no caravans allowed.

Coles Bay, Tasmania

Coles Bay, in Freycinet National Park, offers a unique coastal camping experience with breathtaking views of the Hazards mountain range and access to the stunning Wineglass Bay. Coles Bay sits beneath sheer pink granite mountains overlooking the crystal waters of Oyster Bay, and there is plenty to do, including swimming, boating, kayaking and fishing – not to mention partaking in the legendary local oysters and seafood. There are several sites to choose from, depending on your level of adventure, and there are both camping and caravans permitted.



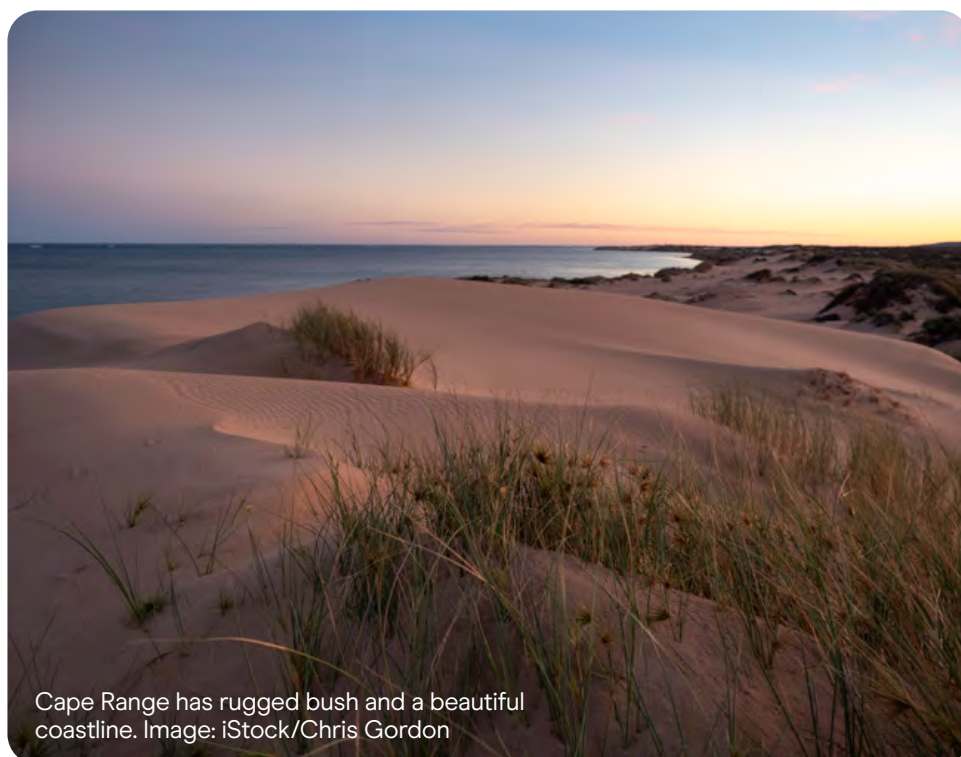
Stokes Bay has some of the most beautiful beaches to explore.
Image: iStock/Leo Patrizi

Stokes Bay Campground, South Australia

Stokes Bay Campground on the north coast of Kangaroo Island provides a tranquil coastal camping experience, with the beach protected from the pounding surf by a giant natural rock pool. It could be easy to miss if you were driving by, but make no mistake, this is no ordinary beach campground: the beautiful Stokes Bay Beach was named Australia's best beach in 2023. Add to that, the Rock Pool Café, where you can get fish and chips, ice creams, or just a great cup of coffee. Kangaroo Island is only accessible by plane or ferry, but it's worth the effort to come and experience life on Australia's third-largest island, with untouched landscapes, abundant wildlife, and wholesome local produce. Both camping and caravans are welcome here.

Inskip Peninsula Recreation Area, Queensland

Inskip Peninsula Recreation Area, located near beautiful Rainbow Beach, offers a unique coastal camping experience where you can camp right on the shoreline. The campsites enjoy the shade of beach she-oaks, cypress pines and other coastal trees and shrubs, making it naturally cool and relaxing, even in warm weather. Inskip Point is an ideal spot for fishing, beachcombing, and enjoying the serene waters of the Great Sandy Strait. Both camping and caravans are permitted.



Cape Range has rugged bush and a beautiful coastline. Image: iStock/Chris Gordon

Dicky Beach Holiday Park, Queensland

Dicky Beach Holiday Park is a family-friendly caravan and camping site located in Caloundra on the iconic Sunshine Coast, and it's a great option for those who want an affordable holiday by the beach but still have access to great facilities. With direct access to Dicky Beach (patrolled all year round), this spot is perfect for swimming, surfing, and picnicking by the shore. The holiday park also has a swimming pool and tennis court, barbecues, laundry facilities, a recreation room and free wifi. This site is primarily for caravans, but they also offer unpowered tent sites.

Garig Gunak Barlu National Park, Northern Territory

Access to this stunning remote national park is via Arnhem Land, and it's definitely worth the journey. This campsite boasts a secluded coastal experience with pristine white sandy beaches, excellent fishing, and opportunities for birdwatching and wildlife spotting.

If you're lucky you might even see a dugong or saltwater crocodile in the crystal clear ocean. For fascinating Aboriginal, Macassan and European history of the area visit the Black Point Cultural Centre, and don't miss the Victorian Settlement ruins (accessible only by boat). Camping is available, but caravan access is limited.



Garig Gunak Barlu National Park offers rugged, remote camping. Image: Flickr/CC-0/kiwinz



Beowa National Park's ancient sea-carved landscape contrasts folded red clay against natural sandstone. Image: iStock/Alfio Mancigli



Sunset at Mimosa Rocks National Park, a beautiful part of the south coast of NSW. Image: iStock/shells1

Spida's top 5 fishing spots in Australia

The Great Australian Doorstep host Peter “Spida” Everitt shares the most picturesque spots across Australia to catch and release barra, tuna and red snappa.



Words by Peter Everitt

1. Finniss River, Northern Territory

Finniss River is my favourite location to hunt for barramundi. Jump on a charter and have them take you to the best salt and freshwater estuaries in the Northern Territory. No matter what the conditions or time of year, there are plenty of options and plenty of fish. Great local accommodation options are available, with plenty of characters to match.



Red snapper are one of the most coveted fish in all of Australia. Image: iStock/Shane Kato.



Image: iStock/markgaler

2. Whyalla, South Australia

Catching The Big Red or Snapper in the Spencer Gulf of South Australia is full of adrenaline. As soon as the season opened people used to flock to all coastal towns that surround the Gulf. There are restrictions and **bans in place until 2026** to bring the fishing stocks back to healthy numbers, which is a great thing. It will be an extra special place when the area opens up again.



Lake Mulwala is one of Spida and his Kiwi wife Sheree's favourite places to fish. Image: iStock/Chris Gordon

5. Lake Mulwala, New South Wales

Lake Mulwala in NSW is fed from the mighty Murray River. It's where you can chase the elusive Murray Cod – challenging, but that's fishing! You versus Fish. Murray Cod are a fantastic local fish that can eat anything from

golf balls to buggies. To catch cod in the lake, cast at the underwater timber in the lake with spinner baits and hardbody lures. The lake is full of structures, so you need to be patient and hit at the right time but it's as exciting as catching a Barramundi in the north.

3. Gold Coast, Queensland

You would be hard pressed to get a better location than the Gold Coast. There is great fishing all year round and there is fishing outside the seaways for all your live bait. There's plenty of big fish, too, including marlin, dolphin fish or dew but on the more unpleasant days you can have just as much fun trawling lures for flathead. For the flickers you can flick lures or try with a bit of bait. Trawling for me has always been successful.

4. Carnarvon, Western Australia

Carnarvon in Western Australia is amazing for all marine life. I'm not a huge diver, but if you like diving then head out for some great crayfish. If you're into fishing, this is a place that is pretty much untouched. If you're travelling this far, you need to be there for a week and in that time you can target different fish each day with a different style. Again local knowledge is best so a charter is the best option. Fish such as Pink Snapper, Red Emperor, Coral Trout, Spanish Mackerel all out just off the coast at Dorre and Bernier Islands.

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EDITORIAL

Australia's 10 best food & wine festivals

Unleash your inner epicurean and plan your travel around Australia based on some of our best foodie events.





Words by Carolyn Tate

Are there any better bedfellows than travel, food, and wine?

If you love to sample the latest wares from local artisans, try cellar door tastings, and learn about where your food comes from – all with a healthy helping of entertainment and masterclasses – there are food and wine festivals dotted across our fair nation (and across the calendar) to keep you happy and well-fed all year.

You may not have to travel, of course. If you're lucky, you might find one on your doorstep. Here are 10 of our favourites from around the country.

1. Good Food and Wine Show, Sydney, New South Wales

Australia's longest running food and wine show is a fan favourite for a reason. With over 300 exhibitors serving up the best of our country's foodie scene, you'll find everything from handcrafted treats to top-notch wines and spirits. A day out here is simply a dream come true for food lovers and wine buffs.

Sip, snack, and shop your way through the stalls, meet the passionate producers, and hear the cool stories behind some very tasty bites. Watch celebrity chefs work their magic in live demos, giving you pro tips to up your cooking game.

And if you're hungry for more, jump into the hands-on masterclasses to fine-tune your palate and take your love of food to new heights.

When: June

Where: ICC Sydney

More info: [Good Food and Wine Show](#)

2. Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, Victoria

We all know that Melbourne is one of Australia's culinary capitals, and there is no bigger event on the foodie calendar here than the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival. The festival features all that is best about trends and new products, but the flagship event is the World's Longest Lunch, which hosts up to 1,800 guests at the King's Domain for a 3-course lunch prepared by a range of legendary local chefs.

When: March

Where: Federation Square is the hub, but activities happen all over Melbourne

More info: [Melbourne Food & Wine Festival](#)



An abundance of seafood washes over Mallacoota at the festival each year.

3. Wild Harvest Seafood Festival, Mallacoota, Victoria

Join the locals and loyal visitors among Croajingolong National Park for succulent seafood feasts, oyster and champagne cruises, a lively seafood market, bush food walks, and fishing workshops. The vibe is decidedly laid-back, with nautical-themed events, and a wide range of seafood to try and learn new tricks with. Mallacoota was devastated by bushfires in 2019/20, and the Seafood Festival is one way the town comes together to celebrate its recovery and community spirit. Be sure to book a few extra nights to show your support and take in the pristine beaches and national park.

When: April

Where: Various sites around Mallacoota

More info: [Wild Harvest Seafood Festival](#)

4. Canberra Beer and Cider Festival, Australian Capital Territory

If beer and cider are more your thing, you can't go past this opportunity to sample from up to 250 craft beers, ciders, spirits and wine (pro tip: don't try them all!). You'll also find live entertainment, gourmet food stalls and trucks, and fun games and giveaways.

When: March

Where: Batman St, Gooreen St, and the carpark of the Mercure Hotel

More info: [Canberra Beer and Cider Festival](#)

5. The Curated Plate, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

Take 10 delicious days to celebrate the Sunshine Coast's local producers, restaurants, experiences, chefs, and unique natural assets from the sea to the hinterland – or choose the events that appeal to you. The calendar always includes plenty of opportunity to immerse yourself in the flavours of the region and connect with growers, producers and chefs through a range of memorable experiences.

When: July/August

Where: Various sites along the Sunshine Coast

More info: [The Curated Plate](#)

6. Feast of the Senses, Innisfail, Queensland

North Queensland's premier tropical food experience, Feast of the Senses showcases the Cassowary Coast's impressive variety of rare and exotic fruits, along with a range of local produce including meat, seafoods, herbs, spices and wine. This is truly a unique food festival experience, which goes beyond just the food – it's also a celebration of this vibrant and multicultural community, and the home of the Guinness World Record-certified world's longest banana split.

When: March

Where: Edith St

More info: [Feast of the Senses](#)

7. Karrimanjbekkan An-me Kakadu (Taste of Kakadu), Northern Territory

This cultural food festival likes to say it's been 65,000 years in the making, and it provides a sensational program of events that invite you to immerse yourself in a stimulating journey of the senses. Set within World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park, Taste of Kakadu offers a bush food experience that is second to none, as well as a range of concerts, demonstrations, cultural activities and workshops, where you can learn traditional cooking techniques, spear making, painting, dancing.

When: May

Where: Kakadu National Park

More info: [Parks Australia](#)

8. Mid-Winter Festival, Huon Valley, Tasmania

If you like your food festivals with a medieval touch, head to Huon Valley for Morris dancing, pot and pan banging, and a ceremonial Burning Man. The Mid-Winter Festival is a celebration of the region's rich apple picking history, and at its core (pun intended) is the wassail: the ages-old tradition of scaring evil spirits from the orchard to encourage a bumper crop. You'll also see Tassie's best folk-funk bands, a pagan costume competition, and some of the best storytellers around.

When: July

Where: Willie's Apple Shed, 2064 Huon Highway

More info: [Huon Valley Tas](#)

9. Taste of Summer, Hobart, Tasmania

Tasmania is no slouch when it comes to top quality produce, and Taste of Summer is a great opportunity to experience it all in one place. Think Tasmanian Oyster Co, Bruny Island Cheese and Beer Co, Gillespie's ginger beer, Plenty Cider, Shambles Brewery, and Fork It Farm – and that's just the beginning. You can also enjoy meals from some of the Apple Isle's favourite restaurateurs and enjoy live entertainment – all along the stunning Hobart waterfront.

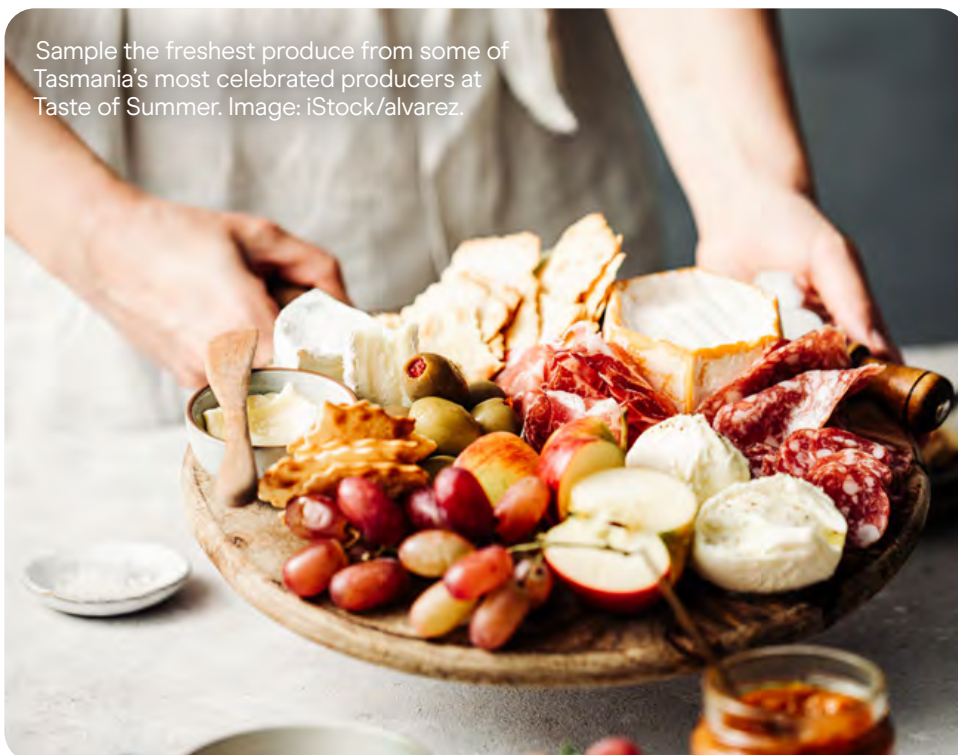
When: December/January

Where: Salamanca waterfront

More info: [Taste of Summer](#)



The popular World's Longest Lunch has been an annual event at the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival since 1994. Image: Tourism Victoria, CC BY 2.0



Sample the freshest produce from some of Tasmania's most celebrated producers at Taste of Summer. Image: iStock/alvarez.

10. Manjimup Truffle and Wine Festival, Western Australia

We love it when a festival niches down, and what better niche than truffles? This new kid on the festival block just started in 2023, but it promises to become a fast favourite on the scene. Come along to experience the magic of truffles, while tasting some of the finest truffle cuisine in the world – paired with the best local wines, naturally. This festival brings together the best truffle producers, winemakers and chefs for a weekend of delicious food and wine, including degustation dinners, truffles by twilight, and cellar door tastings.

When: June

Where: Manjimup, Pemberton, Northcliffe, Nannup and surrounding areas

More info: [Manjimup Truffle and Wine Festival](#)



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8 awe-inspiring First Nations travel experiences

Unearthing Australia's Indigenous roots is not only awe-inspiring but makes for a great travel experience too.

Words by Carolyn Tate

We're lucky in Australia, because we get to experience one of the world's oldest living cultures, right here at home. Our First Nations people are custodians of a world of history, culture, knowledge and stories, and there is an enormous range of Indigenous owned and operated tourism experiences you can enjoy around our country.

Whether you want to learn about bush tucker, ecology, living off the land, or Dreamtime, there is an experience for you.

Kuku Yalanji Cultural Habitat Tours, Port Douglas, Queensland

Just a 15-minute drive north of Port Douglas, Cooya Beach (Kuyu Kuyu) is a special place: the traditional fishing grounds of the Kuku Yalanji people and home to **Kuku Yalanji Cultural Habitat Tours**.

Brothers Linc and Brandon Walker follow the traditions of their ancestors by educating visitors about their traditional country on the far north-east coast of Australia. This unique coastal place has 3 diverse ecosystems – beach, mangroves and coastal reef – that are connected to each other by the ever-changing mudflats and tidal lagoons.

Join them on one of their tours, and the brothers will teach you how to throw a spear, hunt while stalking and observing wildlife, and how to find plants used for food and medicine. They'll also introduce you to some of their family members and share some of their extensive knowledge of this special area and how they care for their country.

Flames of the Forest, Port Douglas, Queensland

Originating from the Daintree Rainforest, the Kuku Yalanji people have been living in harmony with their rainforest and reef environment for over 50,000 years. Rainforest – or “bama” – is an integral part of the belief system of the Kuku Yalanji people, with a focus on nature and intimate knowledge of Mother Nature's cycles.

Every Thursday night, guests can journey into Dreamtime legend and discover the magic of local Indigenous culture. **The Flames of the Forest Cultural Experience** sees two Kuku Yalanji brothers sharing their culture with you during the evening. The performance features a cultural background story, traditional Dreamtime storytelling, didgeridoo playing, and song – all set against the stunning rainforest backdrop.

Dreamtime Walks, Mossman Gorge, Queensland

The Ngadiku **Dreamtime Walks** are known as a ‘must-do’ if you’re visiting Mossman Gorge in Far North Queensland (and stunning Mossman Gorge is a must-do if you’re visiting Far North Queensland!). Ngadiku (Nar-di-gul) means stories and legends from a long time ago in the local Kuku Yalanji language. This Mossman Gorge tour takes you on a guided walk along private, gentle tracks, visiting special places and culturally significant sites, past traditional bark shelters and over meandering cool rainforest streams.

Your Dreamtime Walk begins with a traditional smoking ceremony to cleanse and ward off bad spirits. Next, your experienced Indigenous guide will lead you through the lush rainforest, observing traditional huts or humpies along the way. The guide will also demonstrate traditional plant use, show you how to identify bush food sources, and provide an enchanting narrative of the rainforest and the Kuku Yalanji people’s special relationship with this unique tropical environment. You’ll also discover traditions like

Cooya Beach is the traditional fishing grounds of the Kuku Yalanji people. Image: Kuku Yalanji Cultural Habitat Tours



making bush soaps and ochre painting. And at the end of the tour, enjoy traditional bush tea and damper.

Jellurgal Walkabout, Gold Coast, Queensland

Immerse yourself in First Nations culture at the Dreaming mountain, Jellurgal. This magical walk will see you journey to a land where time stood still – where white fingers of sand stretched into the mangroves and the Dreamtime giant, Jabreen, stood guard over Burleigh. The **Jellurgal Aboriginal Cultural Centre** offers various tours, but we recommend the 2-hour Walkabout. You’ll hear the Dreaming stories associated with the creation of Jellurgal, discover facts about traditional life, bush tucker, fishing and hunting, and learn about the important ecological practices and connection to the land displayed by the Yugambeh speaking people for thousands of years.

Bonus: bring your swimmers for a dip in the beautiful nearby Tallebudgera Creek after your tour.

Currie Country Cultural Immersion Experience, Tweed Valley, New South Wales

Currie Country offers a range of cultural immersion experiences in education, environmental expertise, traditional food, and more. It’s run by women from one of the largest Traditional Owner families within the Aboriginal Yugambeh Bundjalung nations of the area.

You can join a cultural cruise along the Tweed River – a time to connect and reflect, eat delicious food made with fresh local native ingredients, and followed by a riverbank moon ceremony at Fingal Head boat jetty.

Or join a native food foraging and farm tour, where you’ll be treated to a day of exploration, demonstration and tastings. A must for any foodie!

Budj Bim, Victoria

Experience World Heritage-listed Budj Bim Cultural Landscape in south-west Victoria, a permanent place of human society with a thriving aquaculture history over the past 30,000 years. The Gunditjmara people share their culture and landscape with visitors at their aquaculture centre and café, and with a variety of tours like the Kooyana Yana full-day tour that explores the history of the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape from creation and ancient aquaculture systems, to present day. The tour covers Budj Bim National Park, Kurtonitj IPA, and a guided walk of the Tae Rak (Lake Condah) wetlands.

Karrke, Petermann, Northern Territory

Karrke Aboriginal Cultural Experience and Tours is a one-of-a-kind authentic Aboriginal cultural experience. Your one-hour tour is a short walk and talk on areas of importance in local cultural knowledge on bush tucker and bush medicines used for spiritual and healing and a lot more, as used by the Luritja and Pertame (Southern Aranda) people.

You'll learn about:

- Seasonal bush tucker food, including the witchetty grub
- Mai (meaning food in the Luritja language) edible tree seeds and



Budj Bim is home to one of the oldest aquaculture systems in the world. Image: Budj Bim Cultural Landscape

grass seeds and the important grinding stones

- Aboriginal dot painting
- Locally made wooden Aboriginal artefacts
- Bush medicine plants and their uses.

wukalina Walk, Bay of Fires, Tasmania

For the more intrepid, take a 4-day/3-night wukalina Walk with this Palawa-owned and operated experience in north-east Lutruwita (Tasmania). Guides share their knowledge and perspectives along the way of this award-winning walk as they lead you through beautiful bushland and along the coastline of Wukalina (Mt William National Park) and Larapuna (Bay of Fires). Your small group, of up to 10 people will be led on foot by First Nations guides to learn about land and sea country.

Experiencing a wukalina Walk promises to deepen your appreciation for Palawa culture and their strong community in Lutruwita. Image: Wukalina Walk



Our favourite rail trails to hike or cycle around Australia



If you love a bit of exploring, you're probably already familiar with Australia's great network of rail trails. If not, this is the sign you've been waiting for to choose your first adventure.

Words by Carolyn Tate

Rail trails are pretty much what their name suggests: routes that follow former railways, which you can hike or cycle – or even ride a horse along. Some are a short jaunt that will take you an hour or two, while others are multi-day adventures. You can experience the longer trails in small bits over time, or set off on a grand adventure and traverse the whole thing in one go.

As you'd expect from railways, rail trails cut through hills, travel over embankments, and cross gullies and creeks. They might be sealed roads, or they might be gravel or dirt – which could affect the type of transport you'll want to use.

Ready to set off on your first adventure? Try one of our favourite trails to get you started.



Morning view over the Grandchester area of Ipswich.

Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, Queensland

Let's start with a big one.

The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail is Australia's longest rail trail. It's mostly a gently undulating trail, although it does have some steeper sections and bushland in the north. Along the way you'll see heritage-listed sites like Lockyer Creek Bridge and Yimbun Tunnel.

There are food outlets and accommodation along the way, and if you decide to go out for a few days, there are tours and shuttles that can assist you to get to your accommodation. These shuttles are prepped to take you (and your bike) to your accommodation for the night.

The subtropical Brisbane climate means this trail is great to try all year round (although you'll want to avoid the sun in the middle of the day in summer).

Where: Wulkuraka (Ipswich – 46 km southwest of Brisbane) to Yarraman

Length: 161 km

Surface: A combination of coarse gravel, compacted earth, fine gravel, sealed

More info: [Brisbane Valley Rail Trail](#)



The red dirt contrasted against the green crop fields around Kingaroy.

Kilkivan-Kingaroy Rail Trail, Queensland

The Kilkivan-Kingaroy Rail Trail offers a diverse journey through farmland and bushland in south-east Queensland, with several towns along the route. The trail surface varies significantly between sections, the Kilkivan to Murgon segment is built to a basic standard, which can feel a little bumpy for first-timers. However the Murgon to Kingaroy section, known as the South Burnett Rail Trail, has a much more comfortable sealed surface.

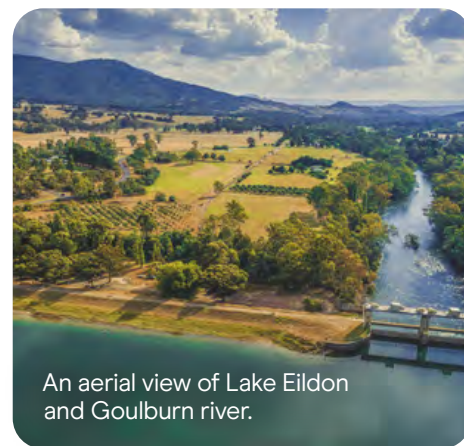
This trail is suitable for multi-day tours, and there are fully supported tours and shuttle services for you to join if you would prefer someone else to do the planning. Along the way, you'll experience scenic rural countryside and railway history and heritage, and plenty of food and accommodation options along the way.

Where: Kilkivan (225 km northwest of Brisbane) to Kingaroy

Length: 89 km

Surface: A combination of coarse gravel, fine gravel, sealed

More info: [Kilkivan – Kingaroy Rail Trail](#)



An aerial view of Lake Eildon and Goulburn river.

Great Victorian Rail Trail, Victoria

Stretching from Tallarook to Mansfield and Alexandra, the Great Victorian Rail Trail is Victoria's longest rail trail.

The trail runs through the farmlands of the Goulburn River region, all the way to the picturesque High Country at Mansfield. The trail's fine gravel and compacted earth surface make it a comfortable ride, with nearly 5 kilometres of bridges offering wonderful views.

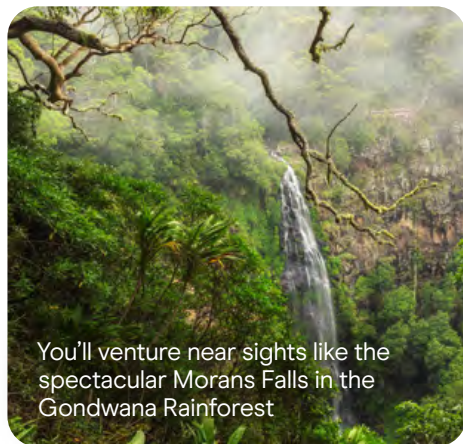
The trail passes through several charming towns, and along the way you can also see the only tunnel on a Victorian rail trail, and the picturesque 385-metre bridge spanning Lake Eildon at Bonnie Doon. Nature lovers can explore the [Yea Wetlands](#) and [Mullum Wetlands](#) in Mansfield, while railway enthusiasts might prefer a detour to the [Kerrisdale Mountain Railway](#) between Trawool and Homewood.

Where: Tallarook (90 km north of Melbourne) to Mansfield/Alexandra

Length: 134 km

Surface: Compacted earth, fine gravel

More info: [Great Victorian Rail Trail](#)



You'll venture near sights like the spectacular Morans Falls in the Gondwana Rainforest

Northern Rivers Rail Trail, New South Wales

In the far northeast of New South Wales, you'll find this gem that takes you on a journey through the World Heritage-listed **Gondwana Rainforest**. Starting at the heritage-listed **Murwillumbah Railway Station**, the trail's initial 24-kilometre stretch travels along compact gravel and sealed surfaces through lush scenery and charming villages.

Murwillumbah is home to the **Tweed Regional Gallery** and **Margaret Olley Art Centre**, the state's largest regional art gallery. The trail's highlights include impressive infrastructure, with 26 bridges and two tunnels, and incredible views of the iconic **Wollumbin (Mount Warning)**.

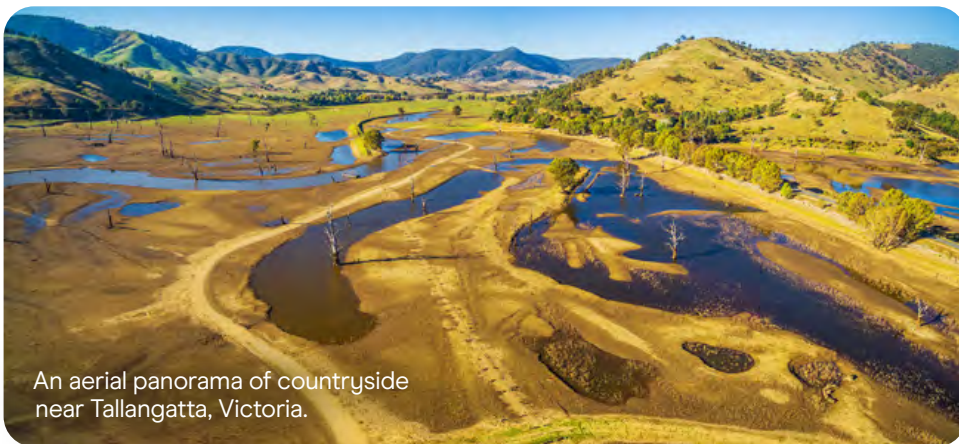
In early 2024, a second 13-kilometre stage between Casino and Bentley opened. The trail starts at the Heritage-listed **Old Casino Station** offers views of rolling farmland, close encounters with a colony of Bent-winged bats, finishing at Bentley Bridge.

Where: Murwillumbah (130 km south of Brisbane) to Crabbes Creek / Casino (220 km south of Brisbane) to Bentley

Length: 38km (24km Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek, 14km Casino to Bentley)

Surface: Crushed granite, Sealed

More info: **Northern Rivers Rail Trail**



An aerial panorama of countryside near Tallangatta, Victoria.

High Country Rail Trail, Victoria

The High Country Rail Trail is an 80-kilometre journey from Wodonga to Shelley, in north-east Victoria. This scenic route showcases the diverse beauty of the region, winding around **Lake Hume**, one of Australia's largest reservoirs, and climbing into the foothills of the High Country.

The trail's fine gravel and sealed surface provides a comfortable adventure – whether you're on foot or on wheels, and you'll experience a variety of terrains, from farmland near Lake Hume's shores to the forested areas around Shelley, which was once home to Victoria's highest railway station.

Another of the trail's most impressive features is the 600-metre **Sandy Creek Bridge**, a landmark that offers incredible views of the surrounding landscape.

The journey begins in Wodonga and if you travel the entire trail, you'll

eventually arrive at Corryong in Victoria's high country. Along the way, you'll see high timber bridges and experience changing scenery as you climb to higher elevations. It's worth noting that the trail becomes more challenging beyond Old Tallangatta, with varying surface quality and some moderate gradients.

The section from Bullioh to Shelley is a continuous uphill climb at the steepest gradient trains could manage. If you're up for it, you'll be rewarded with some spectacular views.

The trail is a great way to get to the twin cities of Albury/Wodonga with their **Murray River frontage**, and the **Bonegilla Migrant Museum**. History buffs will be intrigued by **Old Tallangatta**, known as 'the town that moved' to make way for the expansion of Lake Hume. Nature enthusiasts can explore the many national and state parks, with endless lookouts and mountaintops offering stunning views, including the **Main Range of Kosciuszko National Park**.

Where: Wodonga (300 km north-east of Melbourne) to Shelley

Length: 80km

Surface: Fine gravel, sealed

More info: **High Country Rail Trail**



Murray River on the beautiful Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.

Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Victoria

One of Australia's premier rail trails, this fully sealed pathway connects a string of charming and well-known towns, including Wangaratta, Myrtleford, Bright, Beechworth, and Yackandandah, as well as Rutherglen and Wahgunyah along the Murray River.

Known for its accessibility and scenic beauty, the Murray to Mountains trail is great for cyclists and hikers, and it offers a wonderful taste of north-east Victoria's diverse landscapes.

If you like your food and wine, you'll love the Milawa gourmet region, and you'll also skirt around the famous Rutherglen wine district.

If nature is more your thing, Lake Buffalo and the alpine scenery of Mt Buffalo is not to be missed, while history buffs might enjoy a detour to the gold rush town of Eldorado. And if you're travelling in autumn, don't miss Bright and Beechworth's spectacular trees as they change colours and shed their leaves.

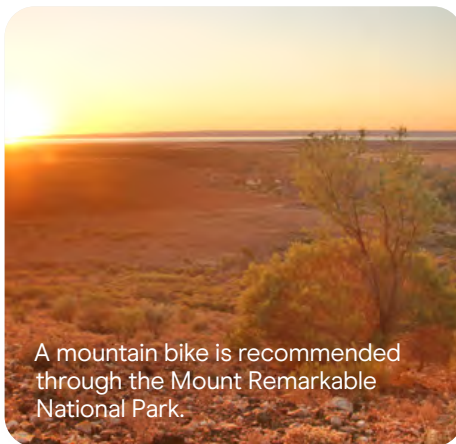
Where: Wangaratta, Rutherglen (250 km northeast of Melbourne) to Bright/Yackandandah, Wahgunyah, Oxley

Length: 128 km

Surface: Sealed

More info:

[Murray to Mountains Rail Trail](#)



A mountain bike is recommended through the Mount Remarkable National Park.

Southern Flinders Rail Trail, South Australia

This trail is more rustic than some of the others, blending into the rugged Aussie landscape, with both fine and coarse gravel surfaces. The journey is as much about the surrounding scenery as it is about the ride or walk itself. Mount Remarkable, Alligator Gorge, and the Wirrabara Forest are your backdrop, as the trail occasionally challenges you with rough sections and stony creek crossings – a lot of fun for the thrill seekers on mountain bikes!

If the trail isn't enough of a challenge for you, feel free to add a climb up Mount Remarkable, or explore the narrow passages of Alligator Gorge. If you like trains, be sure to ride the historic Pichi Richi Railway, and if you'd like to extend your stay, the towns of Melrose, Booleroo Centre, Wirrabara, and Laura have caravan parks and campgrounds set in natural surroundings, giving you the perfect base to relax and stay a while.

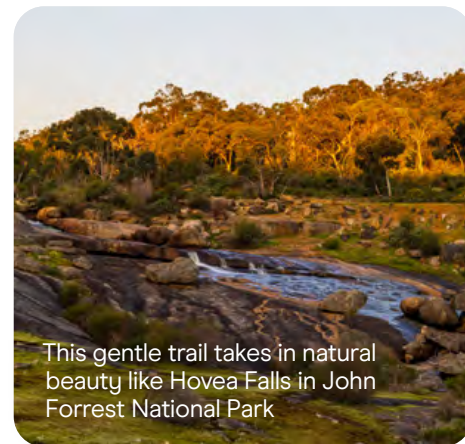
Where: Laura (207 km north of Adelaide) to Wilmington, Flinders Ranges

Length: 80km

Surface: Coarse gravel, Fine gravel

More info:

[Southern Flinders Rail Trail](#)



This gentle trail takes in natural beauty like Hovea Falls in John Forrest National Park

Railway Reserves Heritage Trail, Western Australia

Recognised as a Trails WA 'Top Trail', this trail retraces the path of the old Eastern Railway that connected Fremantle to York in the late 1880s. One of the trail's key advantages is its accessibility – it's just a 40-minute drive from Perth, making it easily reachable for day trips or longer explorations.

Stretching from Bellevue to Wooroloo, it passes through the Darling Range and John Forrest National Park, as well as through quaint hills communities like Darlington, Parkerville, and Mundaring, each adding its own charm to the journey.

Where: Bellevue to Wooroloo, 19 km East of Perth

Length: 59 km

Surface: Coarse gravel, Compacted earth, Fine gravel

More info:

[Railway Reserves Heritage Trail](#)

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EDITORIAL

Add these iconic Australian events to your bucket list

Want to be one of those people who are just magically in the know about exciting local events? From sports, music, culture, festivals, food and wine, here's the best place to start for events in Australia.



Sydney Opera House during Vivid Sydney, New South Wales
Image: iStock/zetter

Words by Carolyn Tate

There's never a dull moment in Australia. Known for our vibrant cultural scene and world-class events, it can be easy to let these iconic moments pass us by when they're happening so close to us. But is it time you started ticking some of these big events off your bucket list?

Whether you're a sports enthusiast, a music lover, or a fan of the arts, there's something for everyone. Here are some iconic Australian events that you might want to add to your bucket list.

Australian Open Tennis, Melbourne, Victoria

One of the biggest sporting events in the world, the Aussie Open attracts top tennis players from across the globe. Held in Melbourne, this Grand Slam tournament offers thrilling matches and a festive atmosphere that is just as fun outside the arena as it is inside. Whether you're watching the intense competition on the court or soaking up the lively ambiance around Melbourne Park, the Australian Open is a must-see.

When: January

More info: [AusOpen](#)



Australian Open Tennis, Melbourne, Victoria.
Image: iStock/ GordonBellPhotography



'the Boy & the Ball' by Stephen Noonan,
Adelaide Fringe Festival. Image: Andy
Rasheed EyeFood photography

Adelaide Fringe Festival, South Australia

The Adelaide Fringe Festival is Australia's largest arts festival, featuring a diverse range of performances, including theatre, comedy, music, and dance. The city comes alive with street performances, pop-up venues, and an electric atmosphere that captivates visitors. It's the perfect place to experience cutting-edge art and entertainment, and plenty of surprises along the way.

When: February to March
More info: [Adelaide Fringe](#)

WOMADelaide, South Australia

WOMADelaide is a world music and dance festival held in Adelaide's Botanic Park. This four-day event showcases artists from around the globe, offering a unique cultural experience. With a focus on diversity and creativity, WOMADelaide is a celebration of music, dance, and the arts in a beautiful outdoor setting.

When: March
More info: [WOMADelaide](#)

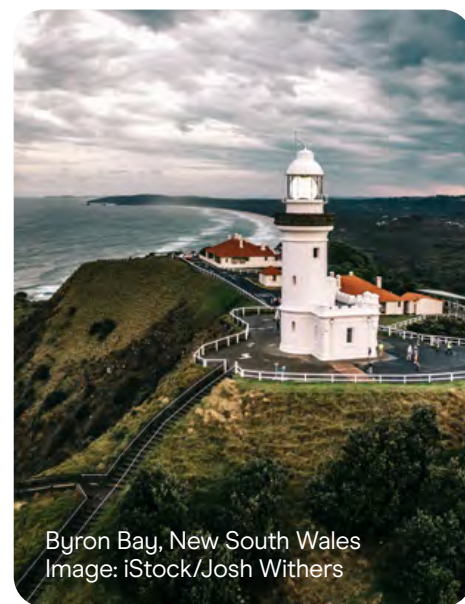
Bluesfest, Byron Bay, New South Wales

Speaking of music, Bluesfest is one of Australia's premier music festivals, attracting big names in blues, roots, and rock music. Held over the Easter long weekend, this festival offers an incredible lineup of performances in the picturesque setting of Byron Bay, and the demographic is a fair bit older and more relaxed than at some other music festivals. It's a perfect blend of great music, relaxed vibes, and stunning scenery. And if music is your thing, check out our round-up of some of the [best music festivals for those who want to rock on](#).

When: March/April
More info: [Bluesfest](#)



WOMADelaide, South Australia
Image: Michael Coghlán



Byron Bay, New South Wales
Image: iStock/Josh Withers

Vivid Sydney, New South Wales

Vivid Sydney is a festival of light, music, and ideas that transforms the city into a vibrant canvas of light installations and projections. Held annually, this event features stunning light displays, concerts, and thought-provoking talks. It's a visual and sensory feast that you won't want to miss.

When: May to June

More info: [Vivid Sydney](#)



Sydney New Years Eve
Image: iStock/JamersonG

Desert Harmony Festival, Tennant Creek, Northern Territory

The Desert Harmony Festival is a celebration of the Barkly region's diverse cultures and communities. The festival features music, dance, art, and cultural performances, providing a unique insight into life in Australia's remote interior. It's an opportunity to experience the rich Indigenous culture of the area.

When: Early August

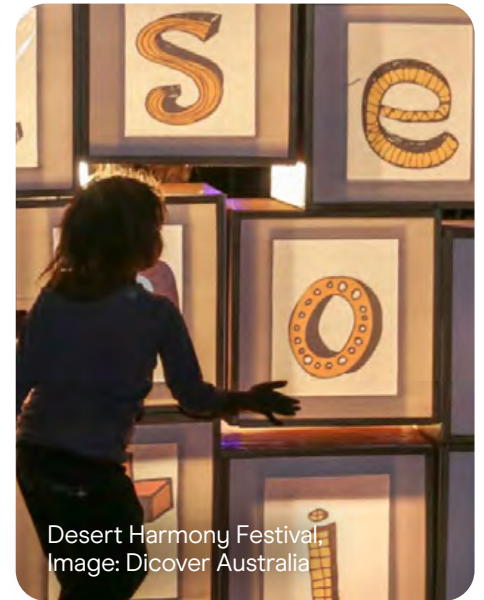
More info: [Desert Harmony Festival](#)

AFL Grand Final, Melbourne, Victoria

The AFL Grand Final is the pinnacle of Australian Rules Football, held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. This event is a massive spectacle, featuring the two best teams of the season battling it out for the premiership, plus a whole lot of entertainment and fanfare surrounding it. The atmosphere is electric, with passionate fans creating an unforgettable experience – whether you understand the holding the ball rule or not. Tickets sell out fast, but it's worth it.

When: Last Saturday in September

More info: [AFL](#)



Desert Harmony Festival,
Image: Discover Australia

Boxing Day Test, Melbourne, Victoria

The Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) is a stalwart of the Australian summer calendar and is as Aussie as cold seafood on Christmas Day. Cricket fans from all over the world gather to watch the Australian cricket team take on an international opponent in this iconic Test match. The atmosphere at the MCG is electric, making it an unmissable event for any sports fan. The tradition of watching cricket on Boxing Day is deeply ingrained in Australian culture, and attending this event is a quintessential Aussie experience you must have at least once.

When: 26 to 30 December

More info: [MCG](#)

Sydney New Year's Eve, New South Wales

Sydney New Year's Eve is renowned for its spectacular fireworks display over Sydney Harbour. It's one of the most iconic New Year celebrations in the world, attracting visitors from all corners of the globe. Watching the sky light up over the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge is a truly magical way to ring in the new year. Sure, you can watch it on TV, but being there in person is something else.

When: 31 December

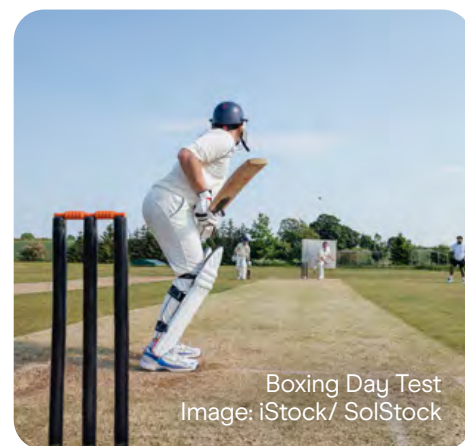
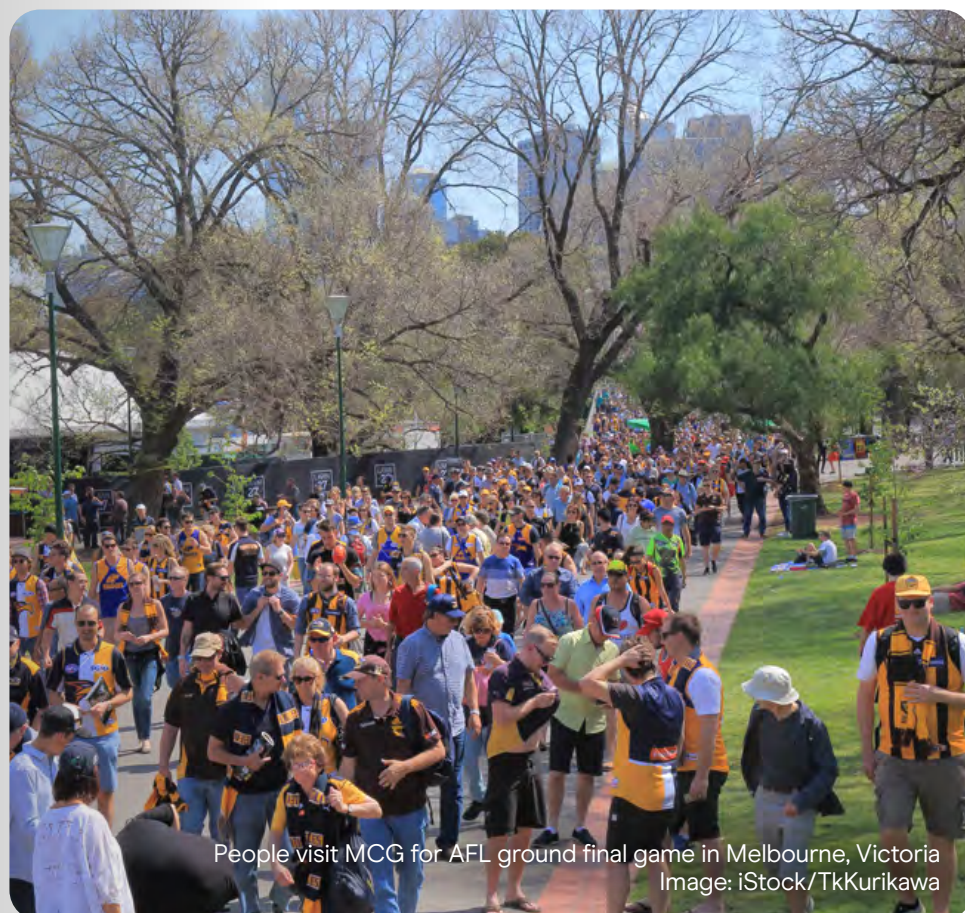
More info: [Sydney New Years Eve](#)

Taste of Summer, Tasmania

The Taste of Tasmania is the state's largest food and wine festival, held in Hobart. This event celebrates Tasmania's world-renowned produce, featuring food stalls, cooking demonstrations, and live entertainment. It's the perfect place to indulge in gourmet delights and enjoy the festive atmosphere on the waterfront. If you're a foodie and you want to plan some more delicious travel experiences, check out our [collection of food and wine festivals not to be missed](#).

When: Late December to / early January

More info: [Taste of Summer](#)



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