

The Lonely Planet logo, featuring the words "lonely planet" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with a white circle around the letter "o" in "planet".

lonely planet

A photograph of Uluru, a large red sandstone monolith, under a clear blue sky. The foreground is filled with dry, scrubby vegetation. The top of the image is framed by the branches of a tree with reddish-brown bark and green leaves.

# Discover Australia

Experience the best of Australia

- HIGHLIGHTS
- ITINERARIES
- LOCAL EXPERTS
- + PULL-OUT MAP

Discover

Contents



# Australia

Throughout this book, we use these icons to highlight special recommendations:



## The Best...

Lists for everything from bars to wildlife – to make sure you don't miss out



## Don't Miss

A must-see – don't go home until you've been there

## Local Knowledge

Local experts reveal their top picks and secret highlights



## Detour

Special places a little off the beaten track



## If you like...

Lesser-known alternatives to world-famous attractions

These icons help you quickly identify reviews in the text and on the map:



Sights



Eating



Drinking



Sleeping

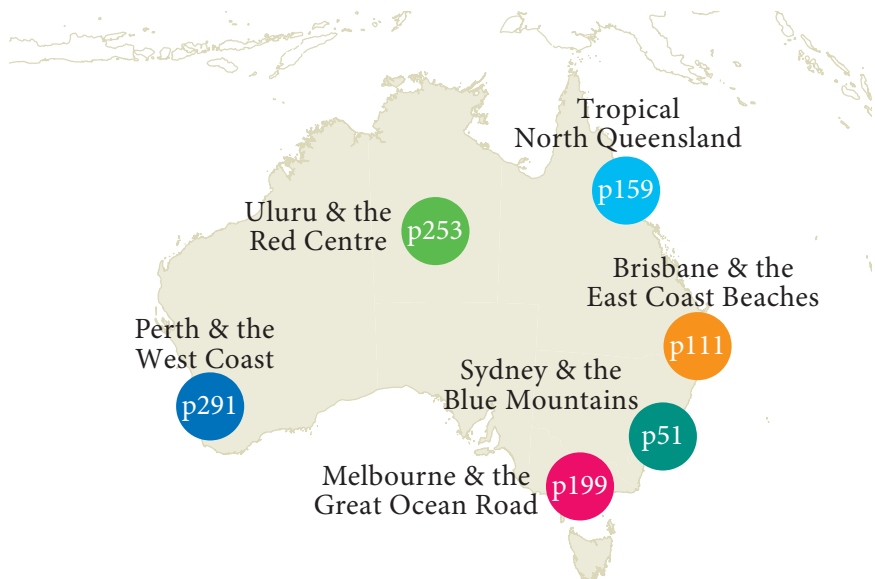


Information

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- Blue Mountains
- Sydney Opera House
- Beaches, Beaches, Beaches...
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# This is Australia

Island, country, continent...Australia is a big 'un whichever way you spin it. The essence of the place is diversity: deserts, coral reefs, tall forests, snow-cloaked mountains and multicultural melting-pot cities.

**Most Australians live along the coast, and most of these folks live in cities.** In fact, Australia is the 18th-most urbanised country in the world, with around 70% of Australians living in the 10 largest towns. It follows that cities here are a whole lotta fun! Sydney, the sun-kissed Harbour City, is a glamorous collusion of beaches, boutiques and bars. Melbourne is all arts, alleyways and Australian Rules football. Brisbane is a subtropical town on the way up; boomtown Perth breathes west-coast optimism. But whichever city you're wheeling into, you'll never go wanting for a decent coffee, a live band, art-gallery opening or music festival mosh-pit.

**Hungry?** Australia's multicultural chefs fuse together European techniques and fresh Pacific Rim ingredients. 'Mod Oz' (or Modern Australian) is what the locals call it. Seafood plays a starring role: from succulent Moreton Bay bugs to delicate King George whiting, there's a lot of variety in the ocean's bounty. And of course, beer in hand, you'll still find beef, lamb and chicken at traditional Aussie barbecues. Don't drink beer? From Barossa Valley Shiraz to Hunter Valley Semillon, Australian wines are world-beaters. Need a caffeine hit? These days there are coffee machines in pubs and petrol stations, and baristas stationed at downtown coffee carts – you're never far from a double-shot, day or night.

**There's a heckuva lot of tarmac across this wide brown land.** The temptation is to 'Get your motor runnin'...Head out on the highway...', as Steppenwolf cry in 'Born To Be Wild'. But remember that Australia is really big! An intrepid out-back road trip will require some serious planning. On the other hand, state capitals and regional centres are well connected by airlines: with a little groundwork you can cover a good chunk of the country in just a few weeks.

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”



