

# Directory

## CONTENTS

Accommodation	1017
Activities	1020
Business Hours	1023
Children	1024
Climate	1024
Courses	1026
Customs & Quarantine	1026
Dangers & Annoyances	1027
Discount Cards	1029
Embassies & Consulates	1029
Festivals & Events	1030
Food	1031
Gay & Lesbian Travellers	1031
Holidays	1032
Insurance	1032
Internet Access	1033
Legal Matters	1033
Maps	1034
Money	1034
Photography & Video	1035
Post	1036
Shopping	1036
Telephone	1037
Time	1038
Tipping	1038
Toilets	1038
Tourist Information	1038
Travellers with Disabilities	1039
Visas	1040
Women Travellers	1041
Work	1041

## ACCOMMODATION

It's easy to get a good night's sleep in Australia, as it offers everything from the tent-pegged confines of camping grounds and the communal space of hostels to gourmet breakfasts in guesthouses, chaperoned farm stays and everything-at-your-fingertips resorts, plus the gamut of hotel and motel lodgings.

The accommodation listings in this book are organised into budget, midrange and top-end sections. These listings are in order of budget, and are selected based on a mixture of atmosphere, cleanliness, facilities, location and authorial mood of the day. Places that

primarily offer tent and campervan sites (eg camping grounds and holiday parks) appear at the tail of the accommodation section.

We generally treat any place that charges up to \$90 per double as budget accommodation. Midrange facilities are usually in the range of \$90 to \$180 per double, although B&Bs (considered midrange) often go for as much as \$200 for a double. The top-end tag is mostly applied to places charging more than \$180 per double. In more expensive areas, however, such as Far North Queensland, Kangaroo Island, metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne, and the tourist towns surrounding these cities, budget can mean paying up to \$110 per double, and midrange places can charge up to \$200 for a double.

In most areas you'll find seasonal price variations. During the high season over summer (December to February) and at other peak times, particularly school and public holidays, prices are usually at their highest, whereas outside these times you will find useful discounts and lower walk-in rates. An exception is the Top End, where the wet season (roughly October to March) is the low season, and prices can drop substantially. Another exception is the ski resorts whose high season is winter.

Low- or normal-season prices (as opposed to high-season prices) are quoted in this guidebook unless otherwise indicated. High season generally encompasses Christmas to New Year and school holidays (see p1032). The weekend escape is a notion that figures prominently in the Australian psyche, meaning accommodation from Friday night through to Sunday can be in greater demand (and pricier) in major holiday areas.

### BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodation reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out the online booking service at [www.lonelyplanet.com/hotels](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/hotels). You'll find the true, insider low-down on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

## B&Bs

The local 'bed and breakfast' (guest house) industry is thriving. Options include everything from restored miners' cottages, converted barns, rambling old houses, upmarket country manors and beachside bungalows to a simple bedroom in a family home. In areas that tend to attract weekenders – quaint historic towns, wine regions, accessible forest regions such as the Blue Mountains in New South Wales (NSW) and the Dandenongs in Victoria – B&Bs are often upmarket and will charge a small fortune for stays between Friday and Sunday in high season. Tariffs are typically in the \$100 to \$200 (per double) bracket, but can be higher.

Local tourist offices can usually provide a list of places.

Online resources:

**australianbandb.com.au** ([www.australianbandb.com.au](http://www.australianbandb.com.au))

**babs.com.au** ([www.babs.com.au](http://www.babs.com.au))

**OZBedandBreakfast.com** ([www.ozbedandbreakfast.com](http://www.ozbedandbreakfast.com))

## Camping & Caravanning

The cheapest accommodation lies outdoors, where the nightly cost of camping for two people is usually between \$15 and \$30, slightly more for a powered site. Whether you're packing a tent, driving a campervan or towing a caravan ('trailer' in North American-speak), camping in the bush is a highlight of travelling in Australia. In the outback and northern Australia, you often won't even need a tent, and nights spent around a camp fire under the stars are unforgettable. Staying at designated sites in national parks normally costs between \$6 and \$11 per person. Note that most city

camping grounds lie at least several kilometres from the town centre, so they're a more convenient option if you have wheels.

Almost all caravan or holiday parks are equipped with hot showers, flushing toilets and laundry facilities, and frequently a pool. Some still have old on-site caravans for rent, and most have on-site cabins. Cabin sizes and facilities vary, but expect to pay \$70 to \$80 for a small cabin with a kitchenette and up to \$150 for a two-bedroom cabin with a fully-equipped kitchen, lounge room, TV and stereo, verandah, and beds for up to six people. Regardless of the vintage or style of cabin, they're generally excellent value if you're on the road for a while, are travelling in a group, or have a family in tow. They allow you to be completely self-sufficient and often provide more space than a motel or hotel room.

Caravan parks, which encompass tent sites, caravan sites and cabins, are popular along coastal areas. In summer months and school holidays they're often booked out well in advance. Well-touristed areas (other than cities) have the greatest number of parks.

If you intend on doing a lot of caravanning/camping, consider joining one of the major chains, such as **Big 4** ([www.big4.com.au](http://www.big4.com.au)), which offer discounts at member parks.

It's also useful to get your hands on **Camps Australia Wide** ([www.campsaustraliawide.com](http://www.campsaustraliawide.com)) a handy publication containing maps and information about campsites and rest stops that are either free, or have a capped rate for the 12 months following publication.

Western Australia (WA) has roadside overnight stops (designated by a '24' symbol) for

### PRACTICALITIES

- Leaf through the daily *Sydney Morning Herald*, Melbourne's *Age* or the national *Australian* broadsheets.
- Tune in to ABC on the radio – pick a program and frequency from [www.abc.net.au/radio](http://www.abc.net.au/radio).
- On the box watch the ad-free ABC, the government-sponsored and multicultural SBS, or one of three commercial TV stations; Seven, Nine and Ten.
- DVDs sold in Australia can be watched on players accepting region 4 DVDs (the same as Mexico, South America, Central America, New Zealand, the Pacific and the Caribbean). The USA and Canada are region 1 countries, and Europe and Japan are region 2.
- Use a three-pin adaptor (different to British three-pin adaptors) to plug into the electricity supply (240V AC, 50Hz).
- For weights and measures, use the metric system.