Welcome to Australia ..... 6
Australia Map ......... 8
Australia’s Top 25 ..... 10
Need to Know .......... 22
What’s New .......... 24
If You Like .......... 25
Month by Month .... 29
Itineraries ........ 33
Your Reef Trip ..... 37
Your Outback Trip ... 43
Australia Outdoors .. 51
Regions at a Glance .. 58

SYDNEY & NEW SOUTH WALES ..... 62
Sydney .......... 70
Around Sydney .... 133
Hawkesbury River .. 134
Blue Mountains ... 136
Hunter Valley ... 143
Newcastle .... 149
Mid-North Coast ... 154
Port Macquarie ... 161
Dorrigo National Park .. 172
Coffs Harbour ... 173
North Coast .... 179
Byron Bay ... 184
Far North Coast
Hinterland ........ 193
Lismore .......... 193
Nimbin .......... 194
Murwillumbah ... 196
New England .... 197
Tamworth .. 197
Northwest .... 202
Central West .... 204
Bathurst .... 204
Orange ........ 206
Cowra .......... 209
Parkes .......... 211
Dubbo .......... 211
Snowy Mountains ... 215
Cooma .......... 215
Jindabyne .. 217
Kosciuszko National Park .... 218
Thredbo .... 219
Perisher Blue ... 220
Southwest & the Murray ... 222
Goulburn & Around ... 224
Yass & Around .. 224
Gundagai ... 224
Albury .......... 225
Wagga Wagga ... 227
Griffith ............. 229
Deniliquin & Around ... 230
Wentworth ... 231
Outback ........ 232
Mungo National Park ... 232
Broken Hill ... 233
Bourke ... 239
South Coast ... 240
Wollongong ... 240
Nowra ... 245
Jervis Bay ... 246
Batemans Bay ... 248
Bermagui ... 251
Canberra .......... 256
Around Canberra ... 258
Tidbinbilla & Namadgi ... 272
Queensland
THE GREAT BARRIER REEF ... 274
Brisbane .......... 282
Moreton Bay .... 311
North Stradbroke Island ... 312
Moreton Island ... 314
Bribie Island ... 316
Gold Coast ... 316
Southport & Main Beach ... 318
Surfers Paradise & Broadbeach ... 320
Burleigh Heads ... 324
Coolangatta ... 326
Gold Coast
Hinterland ........ 327
Noosa & the Sunshine Coast ... 329
Noosa ... 331
Glass House Mountains ... 336
Maroochy ................. 338
Darling Downs .......... 342
Fraser Island &
the Fraser Coast ....... 346
Fraser Island .......... 347
Hervey Bay ............ 354
Bundaberg .......... 360
Capricorn Coast ......... 362
Southern Reef Islands .. 362
Rockhampton .......... 366
Great Keppel Island ... 370
Outback ................. 372
Cloncurry ............ 373
Mt Isa ............... 374
Charleville ........... 378
The Channel Country .. 379
Whitsunday Coast ...... 381
Mackay ............... 381
Airlie Beach .......... 386
Whitsunday Islands .... 392
Townsville to
Mission Beach ........ 395
Townsville .......... 395
Magnetic Island ...... 401
Mission Beach ..... 408
Dunk Island ......... 411
Cairns & Around ..... 413
Cairns ............ 413
Islands off Cairns .... 433
Cairns’ Northern
Beaches .............. 435
Atherton Tableland... 437
Kuranda ............ 437
Atherton ............ 441
Crater Lakes National
Park & Around ...... 443
Port Douglas to
Cooktown ........ 446
Port Douglas .......... 446
Mossman .......... 451
Daintree Village .... 451
Cape Tribulation .... 456
Cooktown ............ 458
Lizard Island ......... 460
Gulf Savannah ....... 460
The Savannah Way .. 461
Cape York Peninsula .. 464
Thursday Island &
Torres Strait Islands ... 471

**MELBOURNE &
VICTORIA** ........ 473

Melbourne ............ 478
Queenscliff & the
Bellarine Peninsula .. 522
Queenscliff .......... 523
Point Lonsdale ....... 525
Barwon Heads ...... 526
The Yarra Valley ..... 526
Healesville .......... 527
Marysville &
Lake Mountain ...... 528
The Dandenongs .... 528
Mornington
Peninsula ........... 529
Sorrento & Portsea .... 530
Phillip Island ........ 531
Great Ocean Road .... 535
Geelong ............. 535
Torquay .......... 538
Anglesea .......... 540
Aireys Inlet .......... 541
Lorne .......... 541
Cumberland River ..... 542
Wye River .......... 542
Kennett River ...... 542
Apollo Bay .......... 542
Cape Otway .......... 544
Port Campbell
National Park ....... 545
Port Campbell .... 545
Warrnambool ...... 547
Port Fairy .......... 548
Portland ........... 550

Grampians & the
Western Districts ..... 551
Grampians
National Park ........ 551
Horsham ........... 555
Mt Arapiles State Park ... 555
Little Desert
National Park ........ 556
Murray River .......... 557
Mildura ........... 557
Swan Hill ........ 562
Echuca ........... 563
Rutherglen ........ 567
Wodonga ........ 569
Goldfields .......... 569
Ballarat .......... 569
Bendigo .......... 574
Castlemaine ....... 579
Daylesford & Hepburn
Springs .......... 581
Goulburn Valley &
Hume Highway
Region .............. 584
Shepparton ........... 585
Nagambie ........ 585
Glenrowan ........ 586
Wangaratta ......... 586
High Country .......... 587
Lake Eildon
National Park ....... 587
Mansfield .......... 590
Mt Buller .......... 592
King Valley &
the Snow Road ... 593
Milawa Gourmet
Region .............. 594
Beechworth ........ 594
Mt Buffalo National
Park ................. 596
Bright .......... 597
Falls Creek .......... 600
Mt Hotham &
Dinner Plain ...... 601
Gippsland .......... 604
Wilson's Promontory National Park. 607
Gippsland Lakes. 610
East Gippsland & the Wilderness Coast. 613

**TASMANIA.** 618

Hobart. 626
Around Hobart. 644
Richmond. 644
Mt Field National Park. 645

**The Southeast.** 646
Bruny Island. 647
Hartz Mountains National Park. 651
Dover & Around. 652
Hastings Caves & Thermal Springs. 652
Cockle Creek. 652
Tasman Peninsula. 653
Port Arthur. 655

**The Midlands.** 657
East Coast. 659
Coles Bay & Freycinet National Park. 663
Bicheno. 665
St Marys. 666

**The Northeast.** 667
St Helens. 667
Bay of Fires. 668
Mt William National Park. 668

**Launceston.** 669
Around Launceston. 677
Tamar Valley. 677
Ben Lomond National Park. 680

**The North.** 680
Devonport. 681
Deloraine. 682
Walls of Jerusalem National Park. 684
King Island. 685

**The Northwest.** 688
Burnie. 688
Stanley. 693

**The West.** 695
Queenstown. 696
Strahan. 697
Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. 700
Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. 701
Flinders Island. 705

**The Southwest.** 708
Southwest National Park. 708
Lake Pedder & Strathgordon. 708

**ADELAIDE & SOUTH AUSTRALIA.** 710

Adelaide. 716
Adelaide Hills. 740
Hahndorf. 740
Fleurieu Peninsula. 744
McLaren Vale. 744
Victor Harbor. 748
Kangaroo Island. 752
Flinders Chase National Park. 760

**Limestone Coast.** 761
Coorong National Park. 761
Robe. 762
Beachport. 764
Mount Gambier. 764

Penola & the Coonawarra Wine Region. 766

**Naracoorte Caves National Park.** 767
Murray River. 768
Barossa Valley. 774
Clare Valley. 779
Yorke Peninsula. 783
Eyre Peninsula & the West Coast. 786

**Port Augusta.** 786
Port Lincoln. 788
Ceduna. 791

**Flinders Ranges.** 793
Mt Remarkable National Park. 794
Flinders Ranges National Park. 797

**Outback.** 800
Woomera. 801
Coober Pedy. 801
Oodnadatta Track. 805
Birdsville Track. 806
Strzelecki Track. 806

**DARWIN TO ULURU.** 807

Darwin. 813
Around Darwin. 833
Tiwi Islands. 833
Litchfield National Park. 838

Kakadu & Arnhem Land. 841
Kakadu National Park. 841
Arnhem Land. 855

Katherine to Alice Springs. 856
Katherine. 857
Tennant Creek. 867
The Tanami Road. 870
Alice Springs. 870

MacDonnell Ranges. 884

Red Centre Way (Mereenie Loop). 887
Kings Canyon & Watarrka National Park. 888

South of Alice Springs. 889
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. 891
Uluru (Ayers Rock). 895
Darwin & Kakadu NP
Town and country tropical wilds (p813 and p841)

Uluru-Kata Tjuta NP
Some seriously big red rocks (p891)

South Australian Wine Regions
Top drops down south (p774)

Melbourne
Arts, sports and kick-arse coffee (p478)

Great Ocean Road
World-class road trip (great surf!) (p535)

Cradle Mountain
Photogenic peak in Tasmania's wilds (p701)

MONA
Hobart's cool, confronting and classy gallery (p631)


Contributing Authors

Michael Cathcart  Michael teaches history at the Australian Centre, University of Melbourne. He is well known as a broadcaster on ABC Radio National and has presented history programs on ABC TV. Michael wrote the History chapter.

Cathy Craigie  Cathy is a Gamilaroi/Anaiwon woman from northern New South Wales. She is a freelance writer and cultural consultant and has extensive experience in Aboriginal Affairs. Cathy wrote the Aboriginal Australia chapter.

Tim Flannery  Tim is a scientist, explorer and writer. He has written several award-winning books including *The Future Eaters*, *Throwim Way Leg* (an account of his work as a biologist in New Guinea) and *The Weather Makers*. He lives in Sydney where he is a professor in the faculty of science at Macquarie University. Tim wrote the Environment chapter.
Jayne D’Arcy
Melbourne & Victoria Melbourne strikes a new pose every day and Jayne does her best to snap it in words and photos. A fan of cycling around the city, she’s learnt that you can’t look at anything in Melbourne at face value, you’ve got to look up (for the rooftop bars) down (for the graffiti) and along that grimy laneway (for the glitzy restaurant). Jayne’s lived on the Mornington Peninsula and Great Ocean Road but is now happier than ever in Melbourne.

Anthony Ham
Sydney & New South Wales Anthony was born in Melbourne, grew up in Sydney and spent much of his adult life travelling the world. He recently returned to Australia after 10 years living in Madrid. In NSW he found a perfect fit for his passion for wild landscapes – coastal rainforests, vast sweeps of sand and the endless outback horizon reminded him just how much he missed the land of his birth. He brings to the book the unique perspective of knowing the land intimately and yet seeing it anew as if through the eyes of an outsider.

Paul Harding
Melbourne & Victoria Growing up in Victorian goldrush town, Castlemaine, Paul was nicely placed to explore his home state, spending childhood summer holidays in the Gippsland Lakes, and later camping trips to the Murray River and winter skiing in the High Country. As a freelance travel writer he has since seen a good part of the world but now lives in Melbourne, where he’s again well placed to explore Victoria. Paul has contributed to more than 40 Lonely Planet guidebooks, including many Australian titles.

Shawn Low
Queensland & the Great Barrier Reef, Your Reef Trip Good things come to those who wait. So the cliché goes. After missing out on a chance to work on the previous edition of the Australia guide, Shawn filled in his time with research trips to Singapore, Korea and China instead. His patience was rewarded and aside from a wicked tan, Shawn’s now got a new bag load of travel stories to enthral (or bore) his mates with at the next pub session. Find out where he’s currently travelling via Twitter @shawnlow.

Virginia Maxwell
Sydney & New South Wales, Canberra & Around Despite being born, bred and based in Melbourne, Virginia knows Sydney well and loves it to bits. Having lived there in the past and visited frequently ever since, she has a good grasp of where to swim, sightsee, sleep and party. She resolutely refuses to engage in the age-old Sydney vs Melbourne rivalry – both are wonderful cities, especially now that Sydney has finally added a vibrant coffee culture to its many charms.

Tom Spurling
Queensland & the Great Barrier Reef Tom Spurling has written 10 guidebooks for Lonely Planet on five continents. He lives dangerously close to a trotting track in Perth, Western Australia. For this book he returned to Queensland with his wife and two children, driving 3000km of near-coastal highway and nonstop nursery rhymes. He escaped just days before mass floods. Tom also drove through the Outback with his dad who snored a lot but bought most of the beer.

Steve Waters
Perth & Western Australia From the corrugations of the Tanami to Nambung’s ghostly Pinnacles, Steve covered 15,000km in Ezy, his Subaru L-series. Driving-lights dropped off, shockers, tyres, drive-shafts all shattered and they both almost drowned entering Purnululu. It only caught fire once. Slept in, eaten on, buried in Dampier Peninsula pindan, covered in Pilbara dust, pulled over by Cervantes cops, Ezy kept going. Steve’s also co-authored previous editions of Australia, Indonesia and Great Adventures, and while not on the road, frequents LP’s Melbourne office.
As a likely lad, Charles suffered in shorts through Tasmanian winters, and in summer counted the days til he visited his grandparents in Adelaide. With desert-hot days, cool swimming pools, pasties with tomato sauce squirted into the middle and four TV stations, this flat South Australian city held paradisiacal status. Little did he know that southeast Queensland was just as alluring – a fact confirmed by more recent encounters with Brisbane’s bookshops, bars and band rooms. An underrated rock guitarist and proud father of daughters, Charles has penned 20-something guidebooks for Lonely Planet.

Meg Worby
Coordinating Author, Queensland & the Great Barrier Reef, Adelaide & South Australia
Meg’s first foray into Queensland introduced her to a green turtle, face-to-face underwater. Twenty-eight years and six trips later, Queensland’s inhabitants are still as naturally charming and a shell-load more cosmopolitan. Meanwhile, writing about South Australia was an honour as always. A former member of Lonely Planet’s languages, editorial and publishing teams, this is Meg’s seventh Australian guidebook for Lonely Planet.

Brett Atkinson
Tasmania, Perth & Western Australia
Brett’s previous visits to Western Australia involved museum- and bar-hopping in Fremantle, and taking on the mighty Nullarbor Plain. This time he expanded his WA horizons by immersing himself in Perth’s restaurants and cafes, ‘researching’ craft breweries in the Swan Valley, and jumping from beach to forest and back to beach throughout Margaret River and the southwest. Brett’s covered more than 45 countries as a guidebook author and travel and food writer. See www.brett-atkinson.net for where he’s travelling to next.

Lindsay Brown
Darwin to Uluru, Your Outback Trip
A former conservation biologist and publishing manager of outdoor activity guides at Lonely Planet, Lindsay enjoys nothing more than heading into the outback in his trusty old 4WD to explore and photograph Australia’s heartland. As a Lonely Planet author, Lindsay has contributed to several titles including Australia, Central Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland & the Great Barrier Reef, East Coast Australia, Sydney & New South Wales and Walking in Australia.
Hugging the east coast between Sydney and Cairns for 2864km, this is the most well-trodden path in Australia. You could do it in two weeks, but why not take four and really chill out.

Start with a few days immersed in the bright lights and glitz of Sydney, then meander north along the Pacific Hwy through central and northern New South Wales (NSW). Hang out in the Hunter Valley for some fine vino-quaffing, and stop to splash in the sea at family-friendly Port Stephens and Coffs Harbour, home of the iconic/kitsch ‘Big Banana’). Skip up to Byron Bay for New Age awakenings and superb beaches, then head over the Queensland border to the party-prone, surf-addled Gold Coast. Pause in hip Brisbane then amble up to affluent Noosa on the glorious Sunshine Coast.

The Bruce Hwy traces the stunning coast into Far North Queensland. Spot some passing whales off the coast of Hervey Bay and track further north to the blissful Whitsunday Islands, the coral charms of the Great Barrier Reef and the scuba-diving nexus of Cairns.
Bid a fond au revoir to the bright lights, bars and boutiques of Sydney and hop on a flight to Alice Springs in central Australia. Check out the outstanding Alice Springs Desert Park, then take a tour south to the astonishing Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Uluru gets all the press, but the big boulders at Kata Tjuta are actually higher.

Back in Alice, pick up a hire car and scoot north along the Stuart Hwy to emerging, rough-and-ready Darwin. En route you can go canoeing or take a cruise at gorgeous Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park, and check out some crocodiles and ancient Aboriginal rock-art galleries at Kakadu National Park.

From Darwin, hop on a flight to Perth – a confident city that sets its own agenda – and the soulful old port town of Fremantle, not far down the road. Continuing south, wine away some hours around Margaret River until you’re ready to tackle the flat immensity of the Nullarbor Plain – if you’re not up for the epic drive to festival-frenzied Adelaide, the Indian Pacific train ride is unforgettable.

Check out the world-class wine regions around Adelaide (the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale are both just an hour away), or traverse the impossibly scenic Great Ocean Road to sports-mad Melbourne. Don’t miss a game of Australian Rules football or cricket at the cauldron-like Melbourne Cricket Ground.

If you have a few extra days, take the car ferry across to Tasmania – as ‘English’ as Australia gets. Australia’s divine island state preserves some of the country’s oldest forests and World Heritage–listed mountain ranges: Cradle Mountain–Lake St Clair National Park is accessible and absolutely beautiful.

From Melbourne, continue along the Victorian coast to the penguins and koalas on Phillip Island and white-sand seclusion of Wilsons Promontory National Park. Spend a couple of days somewhere along Ninety Mile Beach then cruise up the southern NSW coast to idyllic Jervis Bay (spot any whales?). Back in Sydney, there are so many beaches you’re sure to find a patch of sand with your name on it.
Adelaide to Darwin

This classic 3000km dash up the Stuart Hwy takes you into Australia’s desert heart.

From the eat-streets and old stone pubs of Adelaide, head north to the Barossa Valley for world-class red wines. Next stop is rust-coloured Flinders Ranges National Park, with Ikara (Wilpena Pound) jagging up from the semidesert.

Just off the Stuart Hwy are the opal-tinted dugouts of Coober Pedy. Continuing north into the Simpson Desert, the Lasseter Hwy delivers you to iconic Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. The desert chasm of Watarrka (Kings Canyon) National Park is 300km further north.

Overnight in the desert oasis of Alice Springs, then continue north to the waterfalls and swimming holes of Litchfield National Park and the wetlands and rock-scapes of World Heritage–listed Kakadu National Park.

Gone are the days when Darwin was just a redneck frontier town: now the city is multicultural, as a visit to the Mindil Beach Sunset Market will confirm. Don’t miss the Deckchair Cinema and Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

Perth, the Pilbara & the Kimberley

Feeling adventurous? Purge your urban urges in progressive Perth, then steer your 4WD north into Western Australia’s remote Pilbara and Kimberley regions.

First stop is the otherworldly Nambung National Park, followed by Kalbarri with its gorges and seaciffs. Meet dolphins at Monkey Mia, then hug the coast for superb snorkelling on Ningaloo Reef.

Inland are the red-iron hues of the Pilbara. Cool-off at Millstream-Chichester National Park then down a beer at Marble Bar, Australia’s hottest town, before watching turtles at Eighty Mile Beach.

The Big Empty stretches north to Broome, a multicultural town with ritzy resorts along Cable Beach. Nearby Dampier Peninsula beckons with pristine beaches and laid-back camping. From here, veer east into the rough heart of the Kimberley and tackle the legendary Gibb River Road.

Restock in Kununurra before tracking south to the sandstone domes of Purnululu National Park. Take the exquisitely lonely Duncan Road into the Northern Territory: once you hit the asphalt, party-town Darwin isn’t far away.
**Sydney to Melbourne**

Most people fly into Sydney, Australia’s biggest city, but just under 1000km south is Melbourne, Sydney’s arty rival.

Check out **Sydney** from its sparkling harbour: the gorgeous Sydney Opera House and colossal Sydney Harbour Bridge are unmissable. For a bird’s-eye view, tackle the Bridge Climb over the great grey arch. Feel like a swim? The backpackers, beach breaks and bikinis make Bondi Beach a quintessential Australian experience.

Heading south, zip along the elevated **Grand Pacific Drive**, through **Wollongong** to the lovely coastal town of **Kiama**. Nearby, the Illawarra Fly Tree Top Walk jags through the rainforest canopy.

Continuing south, meander through **Ulladulla, Narooma** and the aptly named **Eden** near the Victorian border. The road from here to Melbourne is low-key: spice things up with bushwalks and beaches at **Wilsons Promontory National Park**.

**Melbourne** is a burgeoning bayside city famous for the arts, Australian Rules football and coffee. Wander the laneways, mooch around the galleries, grab a pub dinner and catch a live band.

---

**Brisbane to Byron Bay**

Strap a surfboard to the roof rack and cruise into your very own *Endless Summer*: this stretch of Australia’s east coast is famous for its surf.

Once a sleepy river town, **Brisbane** is booming, growing so fast that it can be difficult to navigate. Its urban charms (great restaurants, arts scene, coffee and bars) meld seamlessly with the natural environment (cliffs, parklands and the serpentine Brisbane River).

Heading south to the Gold Coast, the cityscape of **Surfers Paradise** appears on the horizon. There are as many apartment towers here as shades of fake tan: check it out if you like casinos, theme parks and boozy backpackers. More low-key are the surfie town of **Burleigh Heads** and the surf life-saving mecca **Coolangatta**.

Despite big summer crowds and big development money, **Byron Bay** in northern NSW remains a happy hippie town with great pubs, restaurants, beaches and the famous Pass point break. Don’t miss inland day-trips to pretty **Bangalow** and Australia’s almost mythical alternative-lifestyle hangout, **Nimbin**.