Australia

THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY
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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 through the Glasshouse Mountains and hippie Eumundi to affluent Noosa on the 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 Whitsundays archipelago, 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 take an internal flight to *Alice Springs* in desert-hot central Australia. Check out the outstanding Alice Springs Desert Park, then tour south to the astonishing *Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park*. Uluru gets all the press, but Kata Tjuta’s boulders are actually higher.

Back in Alice, hire a car and scoot north along the Stuart Hwy to emerging, rough-and-ready *Darwin*. En route, paddle a canoe 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 another flight to *Perth* – a confident city that sets its own agenda – and the soulful old port town of *Fremantle* nearby. 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 an hour away), or head east along 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*. 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.
Feeling adventurous? Steer your 4WD north from Perth...all the way to Darwin!

First stop is otherworldly Nambung National Park, followed by Kalbarri with its soaring sea cliffs and incredible gorges. Commune with dolphins at Shark Bay’s Monkey Mia, then hug the coast for superb snorkelling at Ningaloo Reef.

Inland are the ironstone hues of the Pilbara. Cool-off at tranquil Millstream-Chichester National Park then plunge into the gorges at Karijini National Park. Down a beer at Marble Bar, Australia’s hottest town, before spying turtles at Eighty Mile Beach.

The Big Empty stretches northeast to Broome: watch the camels on Cable Beach at sunset. Nearby Dampier Peninsula beckons with pristine beaches and camping in Indigenous communities. From here, veer east into the Kimberley along legendary Gibb River Road.

Restock in Kununurra before heading to the sandstone domes of Purnululu National Park. Take the exquisitely lonely Duncan Road into the NT: once you’re on the asphalt, Darwin isn’t far away.
Strap a surfboard to the roof rack and cruise into your very own Endless Sum-mer: 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 rises 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 (and Easter) crowds and big development money, Byron Bay in northern NSW remains a hippie haven with great pubs, restaurants, beaches and the famous Pass point break. Don’t miss inland day-trips to pretty Bangalow and Australia’s near-mythical alternative-lifestyle hangout, Nimbin.
### Map Legend

#### Sights
- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

#### Activities, Courses & Tours
- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

#### Sleeping
- Sleeping
- Camping

#### Eating
- Eating

#### Drinking & Nightlife
- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

#### Entertainment
- Entertainment

#### Shopping
- Shopping

#### Information
- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

#### Geographic
- Beach
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

#### Population
- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

#### Transport
- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

#### Routes
- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

#### Boundaries
- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

#### Hydrography
- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

#### Areas
- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

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*Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book*
Miriam Raphael  
**NSW Central Coast, Byron Bay & Northern NSW**  
Miriam has authored over a dozen books for Lonely Planet, racking up thousands of kilometres driving across Australia’s wide brown lands in pursuit of the greatest hidden beaches, outback pub meals and curious characters. She regularly enthuses on all things travel for a range of Australian and international publications, while blogging about intrepid journeys with kids at SevenSuitcases.com. After many years living in Australia’s extraordinary Northern Territory she has recently returned to her hometown of Sydney.

Benedict Walker  
**Cairns & the Daintree Rainforest, Cape York Peninsula**  
Currently hanging by the beach near his Mum, in hometown Newcastle, Ben’s plan of ‘livin’ the dream’, spending his days between his three great loves, Australia, North America and Japan, seems to be coming to fruition: it’s not greedy – it’s just sharing the love! Ben has also co-written LP’s *Japan*, *Canada*, and *Florida* guidebooks, written and directed a play, toured Australia managing travel for rockstars and is an avid photographer toying with his original craft of film-making. He’s an advocate of following your dreams – they can come true. For updates, see www.wordsandjourneys.com.

Steve Waters  
**Coral Coast & the Pilbara, The Kimberley**  
This was Steve’s sixth trip to the north of WA and while some things hadn’t changed (huge distances, heat, blowing a tyre on the Kalumburu Rd), others were totally different (Cape Range NP after the floods, volunteering for the Mornington Bird Census, trying to find the same restaurant in Exmouth). Then there was the added novelty of coming to grips with social media :) Steve’s written online articles on WA and co-authored previous editions of *Australia, Indonesia, Great Adventures* and *Best in Travel* and come the next Dry, will probably be heading north once again.
Carolyn Bain  
**Central & Outback NSW**  
Every summer of her childhood, Carolyn’s family whizzed through regional NSW (twice) on the 3500km return journey from their home near Melbourne to the beaches of the Gold Coast. On this research trip Carolyn had considerably more time to explore, and covered 6500km of glorious NSW scenery under big blue skies, from the scorching sands of Mungo to the vineyards of Mudgee. The outback’s 40°C temps made a change from her usual travel-writing stomping grounds of Iceland and Denmark. Read more at carolynbain.com.au.

Celeste Brash  
**Fraser Island & the Fraser Coast, Capricorn Coast & the Southern Reef Islands, Whitsunday Coast, Townsville & Mission Beach**  
Celeste has the great fortune to specialize in destinations involving islands, beaches and coral cays so the Queensland Coast was a match made in heaven. She’s contributed to around 50 Lonely Planet guidebooks and her award winning writing has appeared in publications from BBC Travel to National Geographic’s Intelligent Traveller. After 15 years in the South Pacific she now lives with her husband and two children in Portland, Oregon.

Peter Dragicevich  
**Sydney & Around**  
After a decade of frequent flights between his native New Zealand and Sydney, the lure of the bright lights and endless beach days drew Peter across the Tasman on a more permanent basis. For the best part of the next decade he would call Sydney’s inner suburbs home, while serving as general manager for various newspaper and magazine titles. More recently he’s co-authored dozens of titles for Lonely Planet, including the East Coast Australia and Sydney guidebooks.

Read more about Peter at: [http://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/peterdragicevich](http://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/peterdragicevich)

Anthony Ham  
**Melbourne & Around, Great Ocean Road, Gippsland & Wilsons Promontory, Grampians & the Goldfields, Victorian High Country, Northwest Victoria, North & Western Tasmania**  
Anthony (anthonyham.com) was born in Melbourne, grew up in Sydney and spent much of his adult life travelling the world. He recently returned to Australia after ten years living in Madrid and brings to this guide more than fifteen years’ experience as a travel writer. As a recently returned expat, Anthony is loving the opportunity to rediscover his country and indulge his passion for wilderness. 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  
**Outback Queensland & Gulf Savannah**  
Though born and raised down south in Victoria, Paul has an enduring passion for the great Australian outback – and for a great road trip – so it was an easy decision to take on the vast Queensland Outback and Gulf Savannah for this edition. After clocking up almost 6000km, two dozen outback pubs, countless cattle, a variety of roaming wildlife, a few fossils and some great Aussie characters, he’s very glad he did. A travel writer and photographer, and backpacker at heart, Paul has contributed to almost 40 Lonely Planet guides, including numerous Australia titles. He still lives in Melbourne.

Alan Murphy  
**Darwin & Around, Uluru & Outback NT**  
Alan has travelled extensively across Australia and worked on several Australian guidebook titles for Lonely Planet. The Northern Territory, with its ancient landscapes, outback characters and Indigenous culture holds a special place in his heart. For this update he criss-crossed the enormous expanse of the Territory and loved discovering new places. Alan has also written several online articles on the NT’s Indigenous Australians and feels privileged to have had the opportunity of learning more about their culture on this trip.
OUR STORY
A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that’s all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, Across Asia on the Cheap. Within a week they’d sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born. Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony’s belief that ‘a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse’.

OUR WRITERS

Charles Rawlings-Way
Brisbane & Around, Hobart & Southeast Tasmania, Launceston & Eastern Tasmania, Adelaide & Around, Barossa Valley & Southeastern SA, Yorke Peninsula & Western SA, Flinders Ranges & Outback SA

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 and four TV stations, this flat city held paradisical status. Little did he know that Brisbane was just as alluring – a fact confirmed by more recent encounters with the city’s bookshops, bars and band rooms. Returning to Tasmania, he was thrilled to discover that Hobart has good coffee now, and there’s still snow on the mountain. Charles has penned 20-something Lonely Planet guidebooks. Charles also wrote the Australia Today, Food & Drink, Sport, Planning and Survival Guide chapters.

Meg Worby
Brisbane & Around, Hobart & Southeast Tasmania, Launceston & Eastern Tasmania, Adelaide & Around, Barossa Valley & Southeastern SA, Yorke Peninsula & Western SA, Flinders Ranges & Outback SA

Let’s do this by the numbers: this was Meg’s fourth trip to ever-beautiful Tasmania, her seventh trip to temperate Queensland and her 780th re-entry into her most habitable home state of South Australia. She is a former member of Lonely Planet’s languages, editorial, web and publishing teams in Melbourne and London. This is her eighth Lonely Planet guidebook as an author. Meg also wrote the Australia Today, Food & Drink, Sport, Planning and Survival Guide chapters.

Kate Armstrong
Surfers Paradise & the Gold Coast, Noosa & the Sunshine Coast, Broome

Kate is a Victorian, but for years has enjoyed migrating northwards for the warmth and laid back attitudes of sunny Queensland. Having recently ditched her surfboard, for this edition, she bodysurfed at 6am daily. She also loved hitting the regions’ foodie scenes and was thrilled to visit the Dampier Peninsula for the first time. With over 30 overseas LP titles to her name, Kate also finally enjoyed getting her car dirty in her own backyard. See more adventures at www.katearmstrong.com.au and @nomaditis.

Brett Atkinson
Canberra & NSW South Coast, Southern NSW, Perth & Fremantle, Around Perth, Margaret River & the Southwest Coast, Southern WA, Monkey Mia & the Central West

For this edition, Brett flew across the gorges of WA’s Karijini National Park, explored the galleries, museums and emerging urban vibe of Canberra, and uncovered even more excellent Australian craft breweries on both the west and east coasts of the country. Brett is based in Auckland, New Zealand and has covered around 50 countries as a guidebook author and travel and food writer. See www.brett-atkinson.net for his most recent work and upcoming travels.

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