

lonely planet

PULL-OUT
MAP



Discover
Australia

Experience the best of Australia

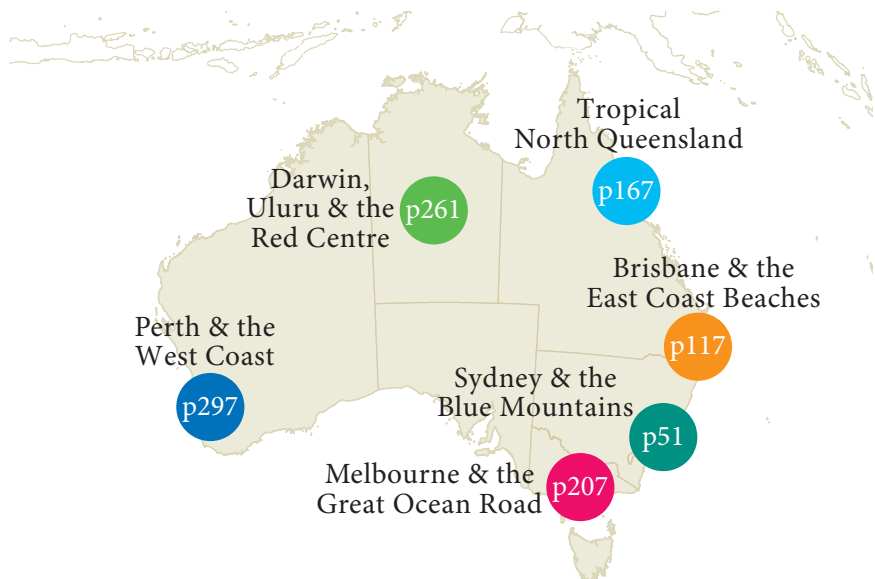


Discover
Australia

**Experience the best
of Australia**

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Sydney & the Blue Mountains

Highlights 54

- Sydney Opera House
- Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Sydney Harbour
- Blue Mountains
- Bondi Beach

Brisbane & the East Coast Beaches

Highlights 120

- Byron Bay
- Noosa
- Brisbane
- Fraser Island
- Gold Coast

Tropical North Queensland

Highlights 170

- Great Barrier Reef
- Whitsunday Islands
- Daintree Rainforest
- Cairns & Northern Reef Islands
- Southern Reef Islands

Darwin, Uluru & the Red Centre

Highlights 264

- Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park
- Kakadu National Park
- Mindil Beach Sunset Market
- Litchfield National Park
- Alice Springs Desert Park

Perth & the West Coast

Highlights 300

- Perth
- Fremantle
- Margaret River
- Valley of the Giants
- Monkey Mia

Contents

Plan Your Trip

Discover Australia

| | |
|--|----|
| This Is Australia | 6 |
| Australia Map | 8 |
| Australia's Top 25 Highlights | 10 |
| Australia's Top Itineraries | 32 |
| Month by Month | 42 |
| What's New | 46 |
| Get Inspired | 47 |
| Need to Know | 48 |

Sydney & the Blue Mountains 51

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Highlights | 54 |
| Best... | 56 |
| Walking Tour | 58 |
| Sydney | 60 |

Around Sydney 104

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Royal National Park | 104 |
| Hawkesbury River | 105 |
| Hunter Valley | 105 |

Blue Mountains 107

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Glenbrook to Blackheath | 108 |
| Mt Victoria & Hartley | 109 |
| Jenolan Caves | 113 |
| Bells Line of Road | 115 |

Brisbane & the East Coast Beaches 117

Highlights 120

Best... 122

Itineraries 124

Byron Bay 126

Far North Coast Hinterland 131

| | |
|----------|-----|
| Bangalow | 131 |
| Nimbin | 131 |

Gold Coast 132

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Surfers Paradise & Broadbeach | 132 |
| Burleigh Heads | 135 |
| Springbrook National Park | 137 |
| Coolangatta | 137 |

Melbourne & the Great Ocean Road

Highlights 210

- Federation Square
 - Queen Victoria Market
 - Great Ocean Road
 - Melbourne Street Art
 - Eating & Drinking in Melbourne
-

Contents

Discover Australia

| | | | | | |
|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|
| Brisbane | 139 | <i>Lizard Island</i> | 204 | Itineraries | 268 |
| Moreton Bay | 153 | Daintree Village | 204 | Darwin | 270 |
| North Stradbroke Island | 153 | Cape Tribulation | 205 | <i>Litchfield National Park</i> | 280 |
| Moreton Island | 154 | Melbourne & the Great Ocean Road | 207 | Around Darwin | 281 |
| Noosa & the Sunshine Coast | 155 | Highlights | 210 | Kakadu National Park | 281 |
| Noosa | 157 | Best... | 212 | Ubirr & Around | 283 |
| <i>Eumundi</i> | 158 | Itineraries | 214 | Jabiru | 283 |
| Glass House Mountains | 159 | Melbourne | 216 | Nourlangie | 283 |
| Fraser Island & the Fraser Coast | 159 | <i>Yarra Valley Wineries</i> | 246 | <i>Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park</i> | 284 |
| Fraser Island | 159 | Phillip Island | 247 | Jim Jim Falls & Twin Falls | 284 |
| Rainbow Beach | 163 | Great Ocean Road | 249 | Cooinda & Yellow Water | 285 |
| Hervey Bay | 164 | Torquay | 250 | Alice Springs | 286 |
| Tropical North Queensland | 167 | Torquay to Anglesea | 252 | Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park | 290 |
| Highlights | 170 | Anglesea | 253 | <i>Kata Tjuta (The Olgas)</i> | 291 |
| Best... | 172 | Lorne | 253 | Uluru (Ayers Rock) | 292 |
| Itineraries | 174 | Apollo Bay | 255 | Yulara (Ayers Rock Resort) | 293 |
| Great Barrier Reef | 176 | <i>Port Fairy</i> | 256 | Perth & the West Coast | 297 |
| Southern Reef Islands | 176 | Cape Otway | 256 | Highlights | 300 |
| Agnes Water & Town of 1770 | 177 | Port Campbell National Park | 256 | Best... | 302 |
| Whitsunday Islands | 179 | Port Campbell | 257 | Itineraries | 304 |
| Mission Beach | 185 | Port Campbell to Warrnambool | 258 | Perth | 306 |
| Cairns | 188 | Gippsland | 258 | <i>Ningaloo Marine Park</i> | 317 |
| Islands off Cairns | 196 | Wilsons Promontory National Park | 258 | Fremantle | 319 |
| Daintree Rainforest | 197 | Darwin, Uluru & the Red Centre | 261 | Around Perth | 326 |
| Atherton Tableland | 197 | Highlights | 264 | Rottneet Island (Wadjemup) | 326 |
| <i>Chillagoe</i> | 200 | Best... | 266 | | |
| Port Douglas | 200 | | | | |
| <i>Mossman</i> | 203 | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| The Southwest | 328 | Australia Today | 356 | Directory | 384 |
| Margaret River | | History | 358 | Accommodation | 384 |
| Wine Region | 328 | Family Travel | 366 | Customs | |
| <i>Cape Naturaliste</i> | 330 | Aboriginal Australia | 368 | Regulations | 385 |
| South Coast | 331 | Environment | 372 | Climate | 385 |
| Walpole & Nornalup | 331 | Food & Wine | 374 | Discount Cards | 385 |
| Denmark | 332 | Sport | 377 | Electricity | 386 |
| <i>Walpole-Nornalup National Park</i> | 333 | Australia Outdoors | 379 | Food | 386 |
| <i>Karri Forest Explorer</i> | 334 | | | Gay & Lesbian Travellers | 386 |
| Albany | 334 | | | Health | 386 |
| Around Albany | 336 | | | Insurance | 388 |
| Esperance | 336 | | | Internet Access | 388 |
| <i>Monkey Mia</i> | 338 | | | Legal Matters | 389 |
| Shark Bay | 339 | | | Money | 390 |
| Denham | 339 | | | Opening Hours | 391 |
| <i>François Péron National Park</i> | 340 | | | Public Holidays | 391 |
| | | | | Safe Travel | 392 |
| | | | | Telephone | 393 |
| | | | | Time | 394 |
| | | | | Tourist Information | 394 |
| | | | | Travellers with Disabilities | 394 |
| | | | | Visas | 395 |
| | | | | Women Travellers | 396 |
| | | | | Transport | 396 |
| | | | | Getting There & Away | 396 |
| | | | | Getting Around | 396 |
| | | | | Behind the Scenes | 403 |
| | | | | Index | 404 |
| | | | | How to Use This Book | 414 |
| | | | | Our Writers | 416 |
| Best of the Rest | 341 | | | | |
| Canberra | 342 | | | | |
| Adelaide, Kangaroo Island & the Barossa Valley | 344 | | | | |
| Adelaide | 344 | | | | |
| Kangaroo Island | 345 | | | | |
| <i>Flinders Chase National Park</i> | 346 | | | | |
| Barossa Valley | 347 | | | | |
| Tasmania & Port Arthur | 349 | | | | |
| Hobart | 349 | | | | |
| <i>Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park</i> | 352 | | | | |
| Port Arthur | 352 | | | | |



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 its 10 largest towns. It follows that the 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 Aussie Rules football; Brisbane is a subtropical patchwork of urban villages on the way up. Whichever city you're wheeling into, you'll never go wanting for an offbeat theatre production, a rockin' live band, lofty art gallery opening or sweaty music festival mosh pit.

Hungry? Australia's celebrated chefs fuse together European techniques and fresh Pacific Rim ingredients. 'Mod Oz' (or Modern Australian) is what the locals call it, and 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 sizzling on traditional Aussie barbecues. Not into beer? From Barossa Valley shiraz to Hunter Valley semillon, Australian wines are world-beaters. Need a caffeine hit? These days there are espresso 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 heck of a lot of tarmac across this wide brown land. The temptation is to hit the open road and explore, but remember that Australia is *really* big! An outback road trip will require some serious planning and the luxury of time. Alternatively, state capitals and regional centres are well connected by airlines: with a little ground work you can cover a good chunk of the country in just a few weeks.

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