



# East Coast Australia



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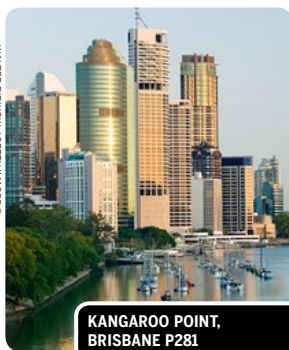
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SYDNEY HARBOUR  
BRIDGE P52

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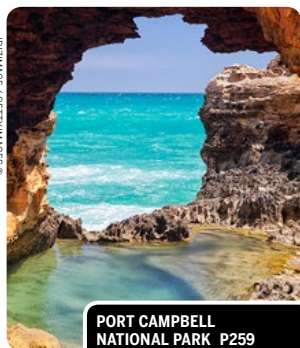
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# Itineraries



## 1 WEEK Sydney to Byron Bay

Mountains, cities, wine, beaches and quirky towns: this road trip is an Australian classic.

Kick-start your tour in **Sydney**, checking out the big-ticket sights, seeing Bondi Beach, bar hopping, shopping and shuffling between restaurants. Don't miss the seaside Bondi to Coogee Clifftop Walk. Dart inland to explore the **Blue Mountains**, with misty Katoomba's cache of art deco architecture and the amazing Three Sisters lookout. Alternatively, a couple of days shunting around the **Hawkesbury River** on a houseboat is a sure-fire stress remedy.

Next stop is the arts- and surf-loving city of **Newcastle**. Thirsty? Detour inland to the hedonistic vineyards of the **Hunter Valley** (super semillon). Back on the coast, explore the pristine beaches of **Myall Lakes National Park**.

Northern New South Wales (NSW) basks in subtropical glory. Surf the excellent breaks at **Crescent Head** and splash around in the sea at photogenic **South West Rocks**. At **Coffs Harbour**, the very kitsch Big Banana awaits your appreciation. Further north, **Byron Bay** is inescapable – a chilled-out beach town where surfers, hipsters and hippies share the sands. Meditating in Byron's verdant hinterland is the alt-stoner haven of **Nimbin** and affluent, laid-back **Bangalow** – both worthy day trips.



## Cairns to Cape Tribulation

Far North Queensland is like nowhere else on earth – a dizzying array of coral reefs, tropical atolls, rainforests and interesting towns.

Australia's reef-diving capital and gateway to the Daintree Rainforest, **Cairns** is an obligatory east-coast destination. Spend a few days pinballing between botanic gardens, hip restaurants and buzzy watering holes. A short hop offshore, reef-trimmed **Green Island** and **Fitzroy Island** have verdant vegetation and lovely beaches, without too many folks competing for patches of sand. Further afield, a snorkelling or dive trip to the **Great Barrier Reef** is an essential east-coast experience, or plan a few days on a live-aboard expedition to Cod Hole (Lizard Island), one of Australia's best dive spots.

Next up, head inland on a gondola cableway or scenic railway to **Kuranda** for rainforest walks and a wander around the town's famous markets. If you have your own wheels you can explore further: swing by the picturesque **Millaa Millaa Falls** and take a rainforest hike in spectacular **Wooroonooran National Park**.

Back at sea level, treat yourself to a night in a plush resort at **Palm Cove**, just north of Cairns. An hour further north is **Port Douglas**, an up-tempo holiday hub with fab eateries, bars and a beaut beach. It's also a popular base for boat trips to the outer reef. Next stop is **Mossman Gorge**, where lush lowland rainforest surrounds the photogenic Mossman River. Take a guided walk and cool off in a waterhole.

Further north is the **Daintree River**, where you can go on a crocodile-spotting cruise then stop for lunch at the low-key **Daintree Village**. Afterwards, cross by vehicle ferry to the northern side of the river. From here continue driving north (easy does it – this is cassowary country!) to the Daintree Discovery Centre – a great place to learn about this magnificent jungle wilderness. The beach at nearby (and rather agriculturally named) **Cow Bay** is perfect for a few hours of beachcombing among the seashells and driftwood.

Last stop on your tropical tour is **Cape Tribulation**, a magnificent natural partnership between rainforest and reef. Spend a few nights taking in the splendour at one of the camping or backpacker places nooked into the rainforest.





Top: Fan Palms, Cape  
Tribulation (p472)  
Bottom: Helicopter  
flight over the Great  
Barrier Reef (p33)



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5  
DAYS

## South Queensland Coast

Check out Queensland's big smoke, and the sun-baked Gold and Sunshine Coasts to the south and north.

**Brisbane** delivers plenty of surprises. Don't miss the arty Gallery of Modern Art and Brisbane Powerhouse on the riverbanks. Check out raffish West End, ever-changing Fortitude Valley, and side-by-side Tenerife and Newstead with their emerging crop of hip eateries, breweries and live-music venues.

Just an hour to the south, the Gold Coast exhibits the flip side of Queensland's soul: beachy, brassy and boozy. The hub of the action here is **Surfers Paradise**, with its palpable after-dark sexiness and theme parks. More relaxed and surf-centric are **Burleigh Heads** just to the south, and **Coolangatta** on the NSW border.

If time is your *amigo*, tack on a few days roaming the beaches on **North Stradbroke Island** in Moreton Bay. Otherwise, truck north to the Sunshine Coast towns of up-and-coming **Caloundra** and unpretentious **Maroochydore**. Another half-hour north is **Noosa**, a classy resort town with sublime beaches, a lush national park and a string of top-flight restaurants.

12  
DAYS

## Hervey Bay to Cairns

Track north along the central section of Queensland's eastern seaboard, with plenty of islands to visit en route.

Two hours north of Noosa is amiable **Hervey Bay**, from where you can explore the huge dunes and crystalline lakes on **Fraser Island**. Not far north, sip Australia's favourite rum in **Bundaberg**.

Sample Queensland's coral wonders at **Lady Musgrave Island** or **Lady Elliot Island**, then don a big hat and devour a steak at 'beef city' **Rockhampton**. Offshore, unwind for a few days on the trails and beaches on **Great Keppel Island** – pure tropical-beach bliss.

Spot a platypus in **Eungella National Park** then wheel into buzzy **Airlie Beach**, gateway to the azure waters and powdery white-sand beaches of the **Whitsunday Islands**.

Vibrant **Townsville** is next. Don't miss hiking the Thorsborne Trail on magnificent **Hinchinbrook Island**. Recover at super-chilled **Mission Beach**, where the rainforest meets the sea. End your trip in touristy **Cairns** – with a trip to the Great Barrier Reef and a seafood feast.

3  
DAYS

## Melbourne & the Great Ocean Road

Dip into east-coast Australia's deep south, exploring hip Melbourne and the gorgeous Great Ocean Road.

**Melbourne** has enough to entertain for months – bars, galleries, live music, shopping, AFL football...but the Great Ocean Road: a classic Aussie road trip beckons.

Start in the surfing mecca of **Torquay** and check the swell at **Bells Beach**, then head to family-focused **Anglesea** for a surf lesson and a riverside picnic. **Aireys Inlet** is next: tour the lighthouse, then spend the night in the surprisingly cosmopolitan resort town of **Lorne**.

West of here, the Great Ocean Road gets wiggly and scenic, winding between the sea and the rainforest-clad Otway Ranges. Wind down in the artsy fishing town of **Apollo Bay**, then swing by **Cape Otway** to see some koalas and the lighthouse.

Next up is Port Campbell National Park and its famed **Twelve Apostles**. Count them from the cliff tops, then spend a night in **Port Campbell**. Scan for whales along the **Warrnambool** coast, then continue west to rather Irish-feeling **Port Fairy**. If there's time, visit tiny **Cape Bridgewater**.

10  
DAYS

## Melbourne to Sydney

This coastal run offers lots of wilderness, bookended by Australia's biggest cities.

Kick off in savvy **Melbourne** before exploring **Phillip Island**, where penguins, seals and surfers frolic. Next stop is **Wilsons Promontory** with its fab bushwalks and beaches. Truck northeast through the the Gippsland Lakes district to **Mallacoota**, a low-key Victorian seaside town.

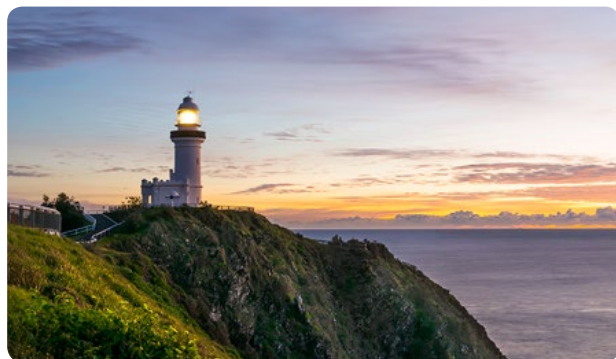
Entering warmer south-coast NSW, sleepy **Eden** is famed for whale watching. Don't miss historic, picture-perfect **Central Tilba**. Continue to **Narooma**, with its pretty beaches and solid surf. From here, ferry out to **Montague Island**. Tracking north, detour inland to Australian capital **Canberra** to see Parliament House.

Back on the coast, **Jervis Bay** offers white-sand beaches, dolphins and national parks. Heading north, zip through **Kiama**, then **Wollongong** to the elevated Grand Pacific Drive. South of Sydney are the dramatic cliffs of **Royal National Park**.

Welcome to **Sydney**. Tour the Sydney Opera House, catch a harbour ferry and dunk yourself in Bondi Beach waves. Leave time for the awe-inspiring **Blue Mountains**.



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Top: The Gold Coast  
(p321)Bottom: Cape Byron  
Lighthouse (p157)

# 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

- Body surfing
- 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
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- 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

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

**Paul Harding**

**Port Douglas & the Daintree** As a writer and photographer, Paul has been travelling the globe for the best part of two decades, with an interest in remote and offbeat places, islands and cultures. He's an author and contributor to more than 50 Lonely Planet guides to countries and regions as diverse as India, Iceland, Belize, Vanuatu, Iran, Indonesia, New Zealand, Finland, Philippines and – his home patch – Australia.

**Trent Holden**

**Victoria** A Geelong-based writer, located just outside Melbourne, Trent has worked for Lonely Planet since 2005. He's covered 30 plus guidebooks across Asia, Africa and Australia. With a penchant for megacities, Trent's in his element when assigned to cover a nation's capital – the more chaotic the better – to unearth cool bars, art, street food and underground subculture. On the flipside he also writes books to idyllic tropical islands across Asia, in between going on safari to national parks in

Africa and the subcontinent. When not travelling, Trent works as a freelance editor and reviewer, and spends all his money catching live gigs.

**Kate Morgan**

**Melbourne** Having worked for Lonely Planet for over a decade now, Kate has been fortunate enough to cover plenty of ground working as a travel writer on destinations such as Shanghai, Japan, India, Zimbabwe, the Philippines and Phuket. She has done stints living in London, Paris and Osaka but these days is based in one of her favourite regions in the world – Victoria, Australia. In between travelling the world and writing, Kate enjoys spending time at home working as a freelance editor.

**Charles Rawlings-Way**

**Plan Your Trip, Understand** Charles Rawlings-Way is a veteran travel writer who has penned 30-something titles for Lonely Planet – including guides to Singapore, Toronto, Sydney, Tasmania, New Zealand, the South Pacific and Australia – and numerous articles. After dabbling in the dark arts of architecture, cartography, project management and busking for some years, Charles hit the road for LP in 2005 and hasn't stopped travelling since.

**Tamara Sheward**

**Cairns & Around** After years of freelance travel writing, rock'n'roll journalism and insalubrious authorism, Tamara joined the Lonely Planet ranks in 2009. Since then, she's worked on guides to an incongruous jumble of countries including Montenegro, Australia, Serbia, Russia, the Samoas, Bulgaria and Fiji. She's written a miscellany of travel articles for the BBC, the *Independent*, *Sydney Morning Herald* et al; she's also fronted the camera as a documentary presenter for Lonely Planet TV, Nat

Geo and Al-Jazeera. Tamara's based in far northern Australia, but you're more likely to find her roaming elsewhere, tattered notebook in one hand, the world's best-travelled toddler in the other.

**Tom Spurling**

**Coastal Queensland** Tom is an Australian LP guidebook author and high school teacher currently based in Hong Kong in search of the long-lost expatriate package. He has worked on 13 LP titles, including Japan, China, Central America, Turkey, India, South Africa and Australia. When not chasing his tail, Tom enjoys tucking it under his crossed legs for minutes on end.

**Donna Wheeler**

**Gold Coast, Northern NSW** Donna has written guidebooks for Lonely Planet for 10 years, including the Italy, Norway, Belgium, Africa, Tunisia, Algeria, France, Austria and Melbourne titles. She is the author of *Paris Precincts*, a curated photographic guide to the city's best bars, restaurants and shops and is reporter for Italian contemporary art publisher My Art Guides. Donna's work on contemporary art, architecture and design, food, wine, wilderness areas and cultural history also can be found in a variety

of other publications.

Read more about Donna at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/profiles/donnawheeler](http://lonelyplanet.com/profiles/donnawheeler)





## 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, Dublin, 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



### Andy Symington

**Curator, Sydney & the Central Coast, South Coast NSW** Andy has written or worked on more than a hundred books and other updates for Lonely Planet (especially in Europe and Latin America) and has published articles on numerous subjects for a variety of newspapers, magazines, and websites. He part-owns and operates a rock bar, has written a novel and is currently working on several fiction and non-fiction writing projects. Andy, from Australia, moved to Northern Spain many years ago.

When he's not off with a backpack in some far-flung corner of the world, he can be found watching the tragically poor local football side or tasting local wines after a long walk in the mountains.

Read more about Andy at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/profiles/andy\\_symington](http://lonelyplanet.com/profiles/andy_symington)



### Kate Armstrong

**Victoria** Kate Armstrong has spent much of her adult life travelling and living around the world. A full-time freelance travel journalist, she has contributed to around 40 Lonely Planet guides and trade publications and is regularly published in Australian and worldwide publications. She is the author of several books and children's educational titles. Over the years, Kate has worked in Mozambique, picked grapes in France and danced in a Bolivian folkloric troupe. A keen photographer, greedy gourmand and frenetic festival goer, she enjoys exploring off-the-beaten track locations, restaurants and theatres.

Read more about Kate at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/profiles/kate\\_armstrong](http://lonelyplanet.com/profiles/kate_armstrong)



### Cristian Bonetto

**Brisbane, Noosa & the Sunshine Coast, Melbourne** Cristian has contributed to more than 30 Lonely Planet guides to date, including *New York City, Italy, Venice & the Veneto, Naples & the Amalfi Coast, Denmark, Copenhagen, Sweden and Singapore*. Lonely Planet work aside, his musings on travel, food, culture and design appear in numerous publications around the world, including the *Telegraph* (UK) and *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* (Italy). When not on the road, you'll find the reformed playwright and TV scriptwriter slurping espresso in his beloved hometown, Melbourne.



### Peter Dragicevich

**Canberra, Melbourne** After a successful career in niche newspaper and magazine publishing, both in his native New Zealand and in Australia, Peter finally gave in to Kiwi wanderlust, giving up staff jobs to chase his diverse roots around much of Europe. Over the last decade he's written literally dozens of guidebooks for Lonely Planet on an oddly disparate collection of countries, all of which he's come to love. He once again calls Auckland, New Zealand his home – although his current nomadic existence means he's often elsewhere.

## OVER MORE PAGE WRITERS

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