

City Centre & Haymarket

MACQUARIE ST | THE DOMAIN | HYDE PARK | CITY CENTRE | HAYMARKET



Neighbourhood Top Five

- ❶ Being transported into colonial vistas, Victorian parlours, Buddhist temples, postwar streets, the heart of the outback and the imaginations of generations of artists at the **Art Gallery of NSW** (p87).
- ❷ Shopping and eating your way through the vibrant streets of **Chinatown** (p94).
- ❸ Promenading through the green tunnel at the heart of elegant **Hyde Park** (p89).
- ❹ Enjoying a right royal shopping spree within the grand confines of the **Queen Victoria Building** (p94).
- ❺ Admiring the grand bastions of commerce lining **Martin Place** (p90).

For more detail of this area, see Map p245 and p246 →

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

If jetlag or other lifestyle choices leave you with the midnight munchies, Haymarket is the best place in the city to be. Restaurants, even some of the very best ones, stay open late here (Chat Thai's open until 2am, for example) and on Chinatown's Dixon St you can find noodles to slurp at any time of night. Just don't expect service with a smile at 5am.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tetsuya's (p96)
- ➔ Rockpool (p96)
- ➔ Mr Wong (p95)
- ➔ Mamak (p97)
- ➔ Ippudo Sydney (p96)

For reviews, see p95 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Baxter Inn (p97)
- ➔ Frankie's Pizza (p97)
- ➔ Grandma's (p97)
- ➔ Marble Bar (p97)
- ➔ O Bar (p97)

For reviews, see p97 ➔

Best Shopping

- ➔ Strand Arcade (p99)
- ➔ Queen Victoria Building (p99)
- ➔ Westfield Sydney (p99)
- ➔ Paddy's Markets (p101)
- ➔ David Jones (p100)

For reviews, see p99 ➔

Explore: City Centre & Haymarket

Before suburban sprawl started in earnest in the mid-19th century, this area (along with the Rocks) *was* Sydney. Today it's a towering Central Business District (CBD) with skyscrapers shadowing sandstone buildings and churches.

Clinging to the CBD fringes are museums, gracious colonial buildings and leafy retreats. The strip of greenery from Hyde Park through the Domain to the Royal Botanic Garden counterpoints the clash and throb of Sydney's commerce. Allocate at least a day to explore it properly, and a night to hit some of the ritzy restaurants and hidden bars. Shopaholics might need longer.

Wedged into the Haymarket district, Sydney's Chinatown is a tight nest of restaurants, shops and aroma-filled alleyways, centred on Dixon St. No longer just Chinese, the area is truly pan-Asian. Head here for cheap eats any time of the day or night.

Chinatown now extends towards Central station, an area that's become the epicentre of backpacker mega-hostels, with their attendant bars, internet cafes and international buzz. It's not the prettiest part of town, but it is indeed central.

Local Life

- ➔ **Weekday lunch** On sunny days, office workers swarm out of their climate-controlled, strip-lit cells and into the parks. Fitness freaks with showers in their tower jog straight to the Domain to work up a sweat.
- ➔ **Yum cha** Despite the larger restaurants seating hundreds of dumpling devotees, there always seems to be queues in Chinatown on weekend mornings.
- ➔ **Pitt Street Mall** Serious suburban shoppers descend on Sydney's retail ground zero on weekends.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Train** The best option for getting here by far, with City Circle stations at Central, Town Hall, Wynyard, St James and Museum. Additionally, the Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra line stops at Martin Place.
- ➔ **Bus** Numerous routes head to/from the Rocks and Circular Quay. Routes to the North Shore operate from Wynyard Park. Railway Sq is a major bus hub.
- ➔ **Light rail** City stops include Central, Capitol Square and Paddy's Market, a handy option if you're coming from Glebe or Pyrmont.
- ➔ **Parking** Street parking is almost nonexistent, but the city council operates a large underground car park on Goulburn St (corner Elizabeth St; per hour/day \$9/49, \$10 on Saturdays and Sundays and after 5pm).