



# Ningaloo Coast & the Pilbara

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Whalers Restaurant (p192)
- ➔ Karijini Eco Retreat Restaurant (p203)
- ➔ Short Order Local (p191)
- ➔ Esplanade Hotel (p200)
- ➔ Empire 6714 (p198)
- ➔ Fin's Cafe (p187)

## Best Places to Swim

- ➔ Turquoise Bay (p196)
- ➔ Coral Bay (p186)
- ➔ Hamersley Gorge (p201)
- ➔ Fern Pool (p202)
- ➔ Deep Reach Pool (p203)

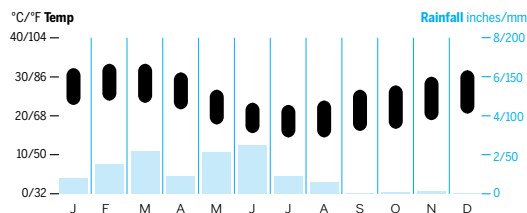
## Why Go?

Lapping languidly on the edge of the Indian Ocean, the shallow, turquoise waters of the Ningaloo Coast nurture a marine paradise. Lonely bays, deserted beaches and crystal-clear lagoons offer superb snorkelling and diving among myriad forms of sea life, including humpback whales, manta rays and loggerhead turtles. World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Reef is one of the very few places where you can swim with the world's largest fish, the gentle whale shark. Development is low-key, towns few and far between, and seafood and sunsets legendary.

Inland, miners swarm like ants over the high, eroded ranges of the Pilbara, while ore trains snake down to a string of busy ports stretching from Dampier to Port Hedland. But hidden away here are ancient rock-art sites and two beautiful gems – Karijini and Millstream Chichester National Parks, home to spectacular gorges, remote peaks, deep tranquil pools and abundant wildlife.

## When to Go

### Exmouth



**Apr–Jul** Whale shark season – don't miss the swim of a lifetime.

**Sep & Oct** Karijini's gorges warm up and wildflowers blanket the ranges.

**Nov–Mar** Ningaloo is full of turtle love, eggs and hatchlings. Beware of high temperatures and cyclones.



## Ningaloo Coast & the Pilbara Highlights

**1** Swimming with 'gentle giant' whale sharks, manta rays, sea turtles or even humpbacks in **Ningaloo Marine Park** (p195).

**2** Snorkelling over marine life at **Turquoise Bay** (p196).

**3** Descending into the 'centre of the earth' on an adventure tour through the

gorges of **Karijini National Park** (p202).

**4** Scuba diving off the **Navy Pier** (p193) at Point Murat, one of the world's finest shore dives.