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West Coast Australia



Charles Rawlings-Way,
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PLAN YOUR TRIP

ON THE ROAD

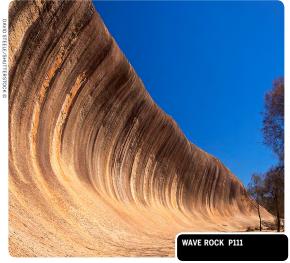
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Itineraries





A Southwest Short Circuit

Pressed for time? This itinerary offers a taste of the best of the state – city life, colonial history, beaches, wildlife, wine, forests and lonesome rural roads.

Base yourself in **Perth**, either in the city centre or Fremantle, and spend three days exploring: don't miss Fremantle Prison, Cottesloe Beach and Kings Park. Is the New Museum for Western Australia open yet? Ferry out for a day on **Rottnest Island**, then hire a car and head south, stopping first at **Bunbury** for a visit to the Dolphin Discovery Centre. Continue on to **Bunbury Geographe**, basing yourself in either **Busselton** or **Dunsborough**, and spend the rest of the day at the beach. Pick up a map of the **Margaret River Wine Region** and spend day six checking out the wineries, surf beaches and caves, all of which are close by. Sleep in the Margaret River township that night. The next morning, head to **Augusta** via Caves Rd and take the scenic detour through the karri forest along unsealed **Boranup Drive**. Visit **Cape Leeuwin**, where the Indian and Southern Oceans collide, before heading back to Bunbury on a picturesque rural drive through **Nannup** and **Balingup**. From here it's a two-hour drive back to Perth.





Western Australia's southwest is a magical corner of the continent. This itinerary checks off the main highlights over three weeks – give it a month to really relax into it.

Spend three days in **Perth** and **Fremantle** – the WA Shipwrecks Museum is a must – then beach yourself for a day on **Rottnest Island** or hit the wineries in the underrated **Perth Hills**. Truck south to Geographe Bay – stopping at Rockingham to wade out to **Shoalwater Islands Marine Park** – before overnighting in **Busselton**. After a morning walk along the town's epic jetty, continue for two nights in **Margaret River** township, exploring the local breweries, wineries, surf beaches and caves.

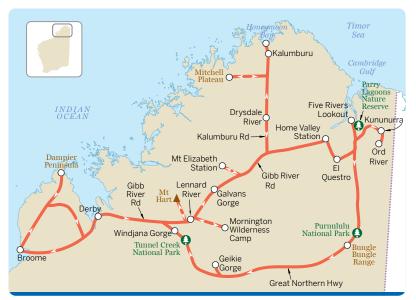
The following morning head to **Augusta** via Caves Rd, detouring along scenic **Boranup Drive** with its karri trees. At **Cape Leeuwin**, pinpoint the exact spot where the Indian and Southern Oceans meet, then continue to sleepy **Pemberton**. Don't miss the Karri Forest Explorer scenic drive. The next day, visit the extraordinary **Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk** near Walpole and overnight in hippie-meets-city **Denmark**. Assess the beaches, wineries, breweries and restaurants here, before two days in historyrich **Albany**.

Head north for more Great Southern wineries at **Mt Barker** before tracking east to **Porongurup National Park**. Spend the next day (or two) tackling the mountainous tracks either here or at **Stirling Range National Park**.

Continue to the South Coast Hwy and at Ravensthorpe hop down to **Hopetoun** – it's a three-hour drive from the Stirling Range (spend the afternoon at the beach). The following day, head back to the South Coast Hwy and continue east around 2½ hours for two days in **Esperance** and **Cape Le Grand National Park**.

Back on the South Coast Hwy, turn north just past Ravensthorpe for **Hyden** and the curvilicious granite of **Wave Rock** – around four hours.

The following day, head west to the Avon Valley and classically colonial **York**. On your final day back to Perth, stop at the **Swan Valley** for craft beer and wineries.





This is the biggest adventure in the west, leaving Broome during the dry season and traversing the rugged heart of Kimberley by 4WD.

From **Broome**, the first stop is the **Dampier Peninsula**, with its Aboriginal communities, beautiful beaches and mud crabs. It's also your last saltwater swim. Take the back road to **Derby** and its boabs, then roll onto the **Gibb River Road**. **Lennard River** is the first of many inviting gorges here. Explore wildlife and more gorges at **Mt Hart** and remote **Mornington Wilderness Camp**, and look for examples of Wandjina art at **Galvans Gorge** and **Mt Elizabeth Station**. Turn off onto the **Kalumburu Road**, check the road conditions at **Drysdale River** and drive on to the **Mitchell Plateau**, with its forests of *livistona* and astonishing waterfalls. Discover the area's ancient rock art before hitting the northern coast for some top-flight fishing at **Honeymoon Bay**, just beyond the mission community of **Kalumburu**.

Retrace your route back to the Gibb, then turn left for wonderful **Home Valley Station**, where soft beds make a happy change from camping. Nearby **El Questro** has gorges aplenty, none more beautiful than Emma Gorge near the resort. Soon you're back on asphalt, but not for long as you take in the amazing birdlife of **Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve**. Let **Wyndham's Five Rivers Lookout** blow your mind, before heading for the civility of **Kumunurra**, with its excellent eateries. Canoe down the mighty **Ord River**, or jump back behind the wheel for the wonders of **Purnululu National Park** and the orange-domed **Bungle Bungle Range**.

Darwin and the Northern Territory are beckoning, or you can follow the Great Northern Hwy back to Broome, stopping in at beautiful **Geikie Gorge** for a relaxing boat cruise: any freshwater crocs? There are plenty at nearby **Windjana Gorge**, sunning themselves on the riverbanks. En route, grab your torch and wade through the icy waters of **Tunnel Creek National Park**, with its bats and rock art. From Windjana, plant the pedal back to Broome, where the price of beer probably won't bother you as much as it did a month ago.







Beautiful beaches, spectacular sunsets and diverse wildlife are your constant companions on this coastal cruise.

Take Indian Ocean Dr north from **Perth** to Cervantes for a cravfish dinner and sunset over the otherwordly Pinnacles Desert. Assess the native blooms at Lesueur National Park, take your 4WD to the Stockvard Gully Caves, then hit the cafes and museums of **Geraldton**. Try kitesurfing on for size, then move on to the wonderful **Kalbarri** coastline. Paddle a canoe in the gorges before the long drive to World Heritage-listed **Shark Bay**. Spy some dolphins and dugongs at Monkey Mia, and sign up for an Indigenous cultural tour. Check out the stromatolites of Hamelin Pool before hitting Carnaryon. Drop into **Gnaraloo** for world-class waves before arriving at tiny **Coral Bay** and **Exmouth.** where whale sharks, humpback whales, manta rays and turtles inhabit the exquisite Ningaloo Marine Park. Fly out of Exmouth, drive back to Perth, or push on to the gorgeous gorges of Karijini.



You'll camp most of the way on this missing link between Ningaloo and Broome, with long empty beaches, shady pools and some surprisingly good food.

From **Exmouth**, take Burkett Rd back to the highway and head north, turning off at Nanutarra for the long, scenic haul up to **Tom Price**. After stocking up, spend the next few days camped in Karijini National Park, exploring sublime gorges and engaging in a spot of peak-bagging among the state's highest mountains. Don't miss a swim at Hamersley Gorge en route to the relaxing, shady pools in Millstream Chichester National Park. Check out the mesas and breakaways of the Chichester Range before dropping down to the coast, assessing the petroglyphs at Murujuga, then on to lovely **Point Samson** for snorkelling. Take the North West Coastal Hwy directly to **Port Hedland** and indulge in some urban eats before camping at remote **Eighty Mile Beach**, where you might spot nesting turtles. Your last leg is a long stretch of nothingness (how amazing!) as you skirt the **Great Sandy Desert** to arrive in tropical **Broome**.

Off the Beaten Track - West Coast Australia





Behind the Scenes

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THIS BOOK

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Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Ŏ lain
- lewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- ø Shinto Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities. Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kavaking
- 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 (II) 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)
- Citv/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- ++ € ++ Cable car/Funicular
- −Si − Cycling
- -@- Ferry
- Metro station
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway station
- Taxi
- → Train station/Railway
- -@- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

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

Routes

Tollway Freeway

Secondary Tertiary

Primary

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



Tasmin Waby

Margaret River & the Southwest A London-born writer with Kiwi whānau who grew up in Australia, Tasmin loves cartography, starry night skies, and getting off the beaten track. When not on the road for Lonely Planet she lives in a narrowboat and is planning her next adventure with her two school-aged kids. Her love affair with Western Australia is off the charts.



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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



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Charles hit the road for Lonely Planet in 2005 and hasn't stopped travelling since. He's also the author of a bestselling rock biography on Glasgow band Del Amitri, *These Are Such Perfect Days*. Follow Charles on the socials @crawlingsway and www.facebook.com/chasrwmusic. Charles also wrote the Plan. Understand and Survival Guide chapters.



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