

An aerial photograph of a vast, arid landscape in Australia. The terrain is characterized by deep red, cracked earth and scattered, low-lying green shrubs. A small figure of a person stands in the middle of the frame, providing a sense of scale to the immense, rugged environment. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the rocks and sand.

AUSTRALIA

2024'S DREAMIEST DESTINATION

There's no better time than now to
discover this enchanting country.

BY AMY ROBERTS

COME SAY G'DAY

Australia's eight different states are each wildly unique, offering their own incredible landscapes, culture, adventure, wildlife, cuisine, and exquisite accommodations. Yet despite their distinctive personalities and exceptional attributes, they are all connected by an invisible thread, creating an interwoven tapestry of kinship and belonging.

A land of collaborative contradictions – UNESCO World Heritage sites and world-class cities, desert outback and biodiverse rainforests, Aboriginal cultures and multi-national chefs, endless coastline and 175-year-old vines, the largest reef system on the planet and the most fascinating creatures on land – Australia is equal parts mellow and mesmerizing.

Regardless of where you visit, you're certain to hear a hearty "G'day, Mate," from a local. The greeting is much more than a "hello." It's an expression of intent, an authentic invitation wishing you to have a good day, and quite often, a desire to help make it happen. Whether you need directions, restaurant recommendations, or someone to take your picture as a kangaroo hops along in the background, Australians are famously happy to help. Given their next-level friendliness, don't be surprised if your amateur photographer turns the picture into a group selfie and invites you for dinner!

The country is brimming with high-quality accommodations and one-of-a-kind experiences, many of which don't cost a thing. And with a favorable conversion rate your dollar goes even further. Plus, there are several direct, overnight flights from the United States and Canada, allowing visitors to fall asleep in LA and wake up in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane, so there really is no better time to book an Australian vacation. But if you do need another little nudge, the country's enchanting beaches, stunning natural beauty, sublime weather, incredible wildlife, friendly locals, and the oldest continuing Indigenous cultures in the world, might just be the push needed to get your passport stamped.

Previous page: Gantheaume Point, Broome. Clockwise from top left: Enjoying a chartered sailing tour on Sydney Harbour; luxury lodging in Uluru; the Canberra Balloon Spectacular; learning about Aboriginal culture in Adelaide; connecting with local art at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra; exploring Shelley Beach Sea Cave in New South Wales.





ADELAIDE & SOUTH AUSTRALIA

South Australia promises an authentic Australian experience, delivered through its focus on WOW (Wildlife, Outback, and Wine) moments, all easily accessible from the vibrant boutique city of Adelaide (also referred to by its Indigenous name, Tarntanya).

THE ADVENTURIST. The koala population is abundant throughout in South Australia, and these adorable marsupials can be found across the state’s lush bushlands. Get up close and personal with koalas, as well as seals, sealions, and 'roos on the aptly named Kangaroo Island. Along the nearly 1,700-mile-long Murray River, you'll find dozens of bumble-gum pink lakes and salt pans against outback scenery. A bird’s-eye view from a scenic flight is a must for any photographer.

THE FOODIE. Steeped in history yet on the cutting edge of innovation, Adelaide is a culinary playground, home to fine dining restaurants, award-winning cafés, and bustling food markets. It’s also home base for visiting any of the 700-plus wineries throughout the state, which is one of the 11 Great Wine Capitals of the World.

SEA ME! An underwater adrenaline rush awaits in the turquoise waters off the Eyre Peninsula, the only place in Australia you can dive with great white sharks (in a cage, of course). Those needing a slightly tamer marine experience can swim alongside playful wild dolphins or curious sea lions. From June through September, Southern Right Whales put on quite a show along the coast. A purpose-built boardwalk allows visitors to spot newly born calves and observe as they learn to breach.

DID YOU KNOW? Adelaide’s South Australia Museum is home to the world's largest collection of Australian Aboriginal cultural material, with over 3,000 artifacts on display, including the culturally significant Yuendumu Doors.

ROOM KEY. Positioned in the heart of Adelaide, Sofitel Adelaide is just steps from the Adelaide Rundle Mall, Riverbank Precinct & Adelaide Central Market, and a short walk to the iconic Adelaide Oval and Convention & Exhibition Center.

Clockwise from top: Barrel-aged exploration in Adelaide's wine country; vineyard tour with vino in hand; up close with koalas.



FROM TOP: MARK WATSON, GREG ELM/VISIT VICTORIA



MELBOURNE & VICTORIA

Considered Australia’s cultural heartbeat, Melbourne (also known to by its Indigenous name, Narm) is often ranked as one of the most livable cities in the world. It’s easy to understand why, given its vibrant arts scene, cultural diversity, inviting beaches, thrilling sporting events, stunning Great Ocean Road, and natural rejuvenation. Add in the food scene, and you may never want to depart this enchanting area.

THE FOODIE. Melbourne alone boasts over 3,500 restaurants, and you’ll find cuisine from more than 70 countries throughout the city. The expansive offerings are best appreciated via a guided tour of the city with a local, where you'll learn about foodie trails and the best places to eat and drink through an interactive tasting experiences. Many tours touch on the fascinating immigration experience. Immigrants are to thank for the city’s keen focus on coffee, too. After WWII, Italians brought espresso coffee with them, and decades later cafés and coffee shops still keep the city caffeinated (for an extra jolt, try a cup of Melbourne Magic). The state of Victoria is also home to the Yarra Valley, a premier wine growing region producing both wine and some of the world's finest gin.

HOLISTIC WELLNESS. The Mornington Peninsula is a relaxed version of the Hamptons where you can indulge in wine, wellness, and wildlife activities or golf Australia's greatest courses. National Geographic named the state one of the most exciting to visit in 2024 because of its hot springs. Here you'll find dozens of natural geothermal mineral springs and pools that harmoniously dot the natural landscape and are filled with water straight from the earth’s core, over 2,000 feet below the surface. Several area spas are built around this natural healing environment. The recently opened Alba Thermal Springs & Spa offers restorative healing treatments in each of its 31 pools. Pampering self-care is the goal at the Peninsula Hot Springs. Try the Moroccan hammam, a detoxifying experience for mind and body.

From top: The 12 Apostles rock along Victoria's rugged coastline; Melbourne's vibrant cityscape; Brighton bathing boxes in Melbourne.

CONNECTION & CREATIVITY. Learn the history behind Melbourne’s famous graffitied laneways during a street art masterclass led by one of the city’s most authentic street artists. Plan your visit to coincide with the Formula 1 Grand Prix or the Australia Open. Or connect with the city and its artists during the annual Rising festival, where visual art, installations, live performances, unique food, and bold ideas are celebrated day and night.





CANBERRA & AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Equivalent to America's Washington D.C., the Australian Capital Territory is home to the country's capital city, Canberra. Discover federal government institutions, national monuments, and important museums. But surprisingly, you'll also find a wealth of natural beauty, recreation, and cultural attractions that tell 65,000 years of First Nations history.

WALK ON THE WILD SIDE. Named for the Aboriginal word for mountain ranges, Namadgi National Park is the only national park in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Offering over 262 thousand acres, the park encompasses 46 percent of the ACT. Explore nearly 100 miles of bushwalking trails that wind through the Australian Alps, the country's tallest mountain range. Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve borders the national park, offering even more opportunity for bushwalks and wildlife viewing. Chances are good for spotting a koala in the Eucalypt Forest, or pop over to The Sanctuary, a large wetland area where the odd, beloved, and endangered platypus can be found.

IMMERSIVE CULTURE. Learn more about Indigenous culture and art at the National Gallery, which houses the country's most valuable collection of art — over 155,000 works of art created by more than 15,000 artists — including the world's largest collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. Or learn about the inner workings of the Australian government during a guided tour of the Australian Parliament House.

THE FOODIE. With more restaurants per 100,000 people than any other Australian city, it's safe to say you'll be well fed in the ACT. The state is internationally known for its food, wine, and coffee culture. For foodies who like to forage, join a truffle hunt at The Truffle Farm.

From top: The Australian War Memorial; farm-to-table decadence at the Truffle Farm; Parliament of Australia.



SYDNEY & NEW SOUTH WALES

Considered by many to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world, Sydney (also recognized by its Indigenous name, Warrane) is home to iconic architectural landmarks like the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House. While Bondi Beach might be the most famous, the city is home to more than 100 beaches, and the state boasts over 1,000 miles of picture-perfect coastline.

LIFE AQUATIC: Sydney is a water lover's paradise, so getting wet is nearly mandatory. Hundreds of species of fish can be spotted by snorkelers and scuba divers, while deep-sea fishing is found just beyond the harbour. Discover idyllic harbor bays and inlets by yacht, or go stand-up paddleboarding or kayaking. Did we mention the world-class surf beaches throughout New South Wales?

DID YOU KNOW? There are over one million tiles on the Sydney Opera House roof (all self-cleaning), because rainwater washes away dirt so manual cleaning isn't required.

NOT TO MISS: Heading south from Sydney, the NSW South Coast is home to Jervis Bay, Kangaroo Valley, and the Sapphire Coast, which stretches from Bermagui to Wonboyn. Endless curves of sand and sparkling waters beckon. The NSW North Coast is filled with national parks, lush wilderness, and pristine beaches. The coastal towns of Byron Bay, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, and Port Stephens all boast decadent food scenes and are swathed in enviable coastal vibes. Just an hour from Sydney, the Hawkesbury River and Central Coast regions offer delightful encounters with wildlife and authentic experiences such as shucking your own fresh oysters.

And just two hours from Sydney, the Hunter Valley is one of Australia's pre-eminent wine destinations and Australia's oldest wine region, with over 150 cellar doors. The World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains, only 90 minutes from Sydney, are justifiably famous, and the easy Three Sisters trail walk in Katoomba delivers magical valley views. A two-hour flight from Sydney is untouched Lord Howe Island. This World Heritage-listed island is home to just 382 permanent residents and offers unlimited options for adventure — hiking, fishing, snorkeling, and bird watching, along with local gourmet produce, luxury resorts and spas.



FROM TOP: TOURISM AUSTRALIA; ROHAN THOMSON, PEW PEW STUDIO; TOURISM AUSTRALIA
MADE DESTINATION NSW

Vivid Sydney, Australia's biggest and brightest festival



ULURU & THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Formerly known as Ayers Rock, Uluru is one of Australia’s most revered attractions. Rising dramatically from the desert floor, the massive red rock is estimated to be about half a billion years old. This national treasure, combined with the state’s historical artifacts and Aboriginal cultural experiences, is just one reason the Northern Territory lives up to its slogan, “Different in every sense.”

INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES. The celebration of Aboriginal culture is an intrinsic part of the Northern Territory’s identity. From traditional ceremonial practices to world-class contemporary arts, the story of Aboriginal culture resonates globally.

The Northern Territory offers a wealth of ways to experience the world’s oldest living culture. Peruse Aboriginal art galleries in the quirky outback town of Alice Springs, or marvel at ancient rock art and historical artifacts. Connect with the oldest living culture areas on earth at Kakadu National Park, home to the largest concentrations of rock art sites. Some paintings are up to 20,000 years old, which makes the artwork one of the longest historical records of any group of people. The paintings provide a fascinating record of Aboriginal life over thousands of years, and show the close personal relationship Bininj/Mungguy share with their land and spiritual heritage.

ALL ABOUT ADVENTURE. Observe one of the world’s largest monoliths from every angle on a walk with a Traditional Owner, or atop a camel’s back. While Uluru-Kata Tjuta is the state’s most popular national park, there are countless others to explore, including Tjoritja West MacDonnell National Park, where you can take a dip in the cold waters of one the park’s permanent waterholes. A hot-air balloon ride in Alice Springs provides an aerial opportunity to spot kangaroos, wild camels, dingoes, or even an elusive bandicoot as they make their way across the Red Centre. When visiting the lush and tropical Top End, amazing wildlife experiences are found in Darwin’s Kakadu and Nitmiluk National Parks.

From top: Exploring The Northern Territory; aerial views of Longitude 131° and Uluru.



IMAGES: TOURISM NT
IMAGE: TOURISM AUSTRALIA



PERTH & WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Western Australia is the nation’s largest state and features the country’s longest stretch of coastline. And with eight hours of sunshine every single day of the year, it’s always summer here. Western Australia also boasts more rock and Aboriginal art than anywhere else in the country, and is home to natural wonders, supernatural contrasts, and rare experiences. If that’s not reason enough to visit, it’s also the only place in the world you can see a quokka – the happiest animal in the world.

SEA ME! Halfway between Perth (Boorloo) and Broome (Rubibi) lies the Ningaloo Reef, the largest fringing reef in the world. Despite resting just a short swim from the shore, the reef is virtually untouched, leading to its remarkable biodiversity. It’s home to over 300 varieties of coral and 500 species of fish, including the largest of them all – whale sharks.

In fact, the Ningaloo Reef is one of the few places in the world swimming with whale sharks is possible. In Talbot Bay, witness what Sir David Attenborough calls “one of the greatest natural wonders of the world.” Formed by large, powerful tidal movements, the swirling waters of the Horizontal Falls are a natural phenomenon.

SUN, SAND, AND SMILES. The beaches in Western Australian are regularly voted among the best in the world and it’s not hard to understand why. Over 7,500 miles of picturesque coastline stretch along the state, totaling some 3,500 beaches, including Lucky Bay, where kangaroos are known to bask on the sparkling white sand. Just offshore from the city of Perth, you’ll find Rottnest Island, a protected nature reserve and the only place in the world you can see the quokka, a small wallaby-like marsupial known for its constant smile.

DID YOU KNOW? Western Australia makes for the ultimate road trip. Head to the resort town of Kalbarri or cruise along the gorgeous Western Australian coast.

ROOM KEY. Crown Towers Perth is prestigious without being pretentious. Discover some of the best views and fine dining in the area from your luxury basecamp. 

 **Enchanting Australia.** Discover even more of this incredible country by calling, emailing, or visiting the website found on the back cover and entering **OFFER M26460** for insider access.

Kayaking in Roebuck Bay, Broome.