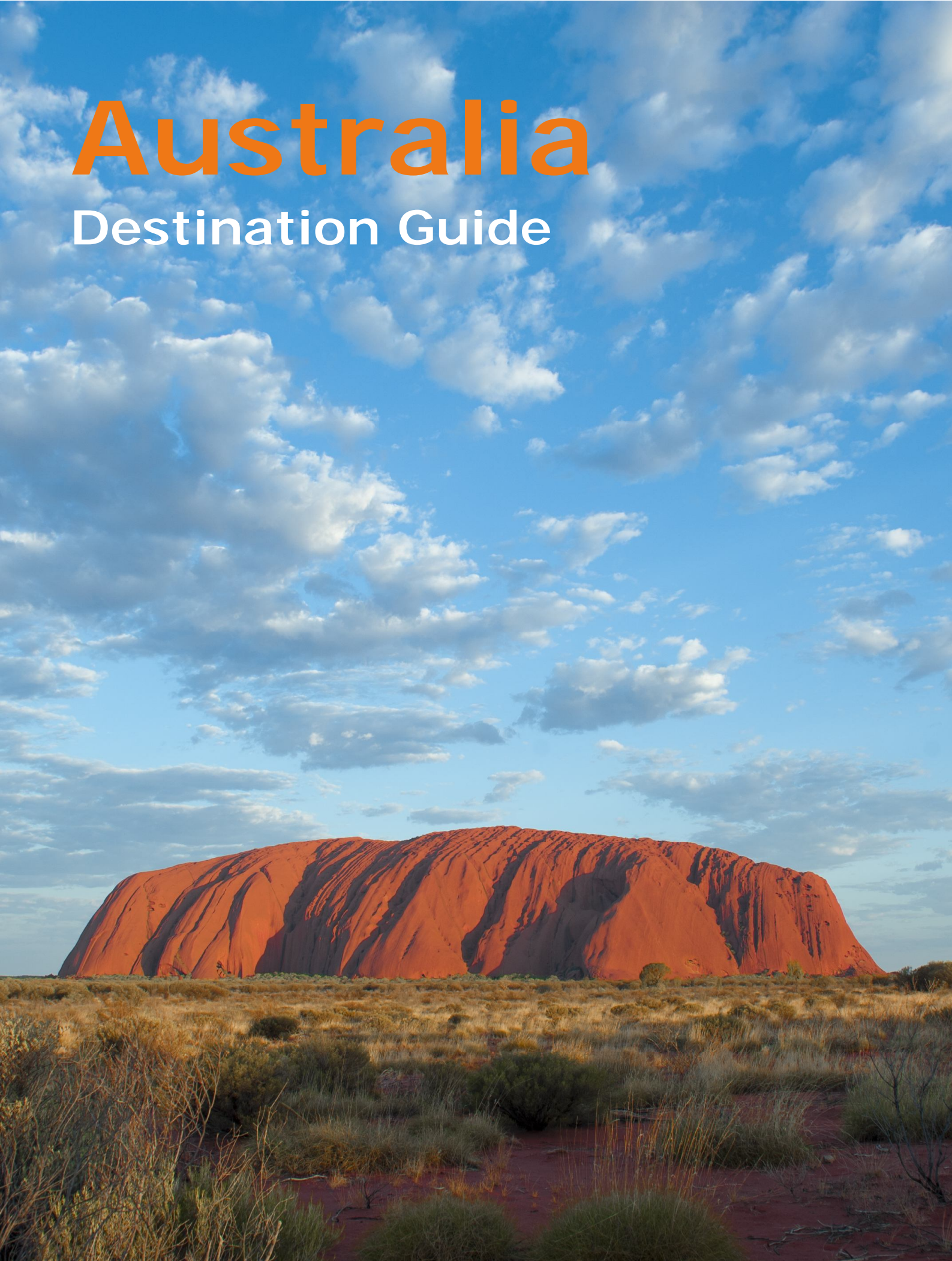


Australia

Destination Guide



Contents




With so much to see and explore, the best way to discover Australia's diversity is to travel by road. Auto Europe's Self Drive Guide will help you plan your next driving holiday in Australia. Packed full of information about car hire and the rules of the road, you'll also find great touring ideas and self drive suggestions. Taking a driving holiday by car or motorhome will give you the freedom to travel your preferred route at your own pace!

Contents

Page

Renting A Car In Australia	3
Rental Vehicle Insurance	4
Driving in Australia	5
Australian Driving Laws & Car Rental FAQs	6
Australian Regions	7
New South Wales & Sydney	8
Self Drive Tours: Hunter Valley & Blue Mountains	9
Self Drive Tours: North & South Coasts, NSW	10
Self Drive Tours: Country NSW	11
Victoria & Melbourne	12
Self Drive Tours: Great Ocean Road & Yarra Valley	13
Self Drive Tours: The Grampians & Gippsland	14
Queensland	15
Self Drive Tours: Airlie Beach - Townsville & Cairns - Port Douglas	16
South Australia	17
Self Drive Tours: Mount Gambia - Victor Harbour & Port Augusta - Nullarbor	18
Tasmania	19
Self Drive Tours: Hobart - Port Arthur & Launceston - Wineglass Bay	20
Western Australia	21
Self Drive Tours: Perth - Margaret River & The Pilbara Coast	22
Northern Territory	23
Self Drive Tours: Darwin - Kakadu & Alice Springs - Uluru	24
Auto Europe - How to Book	25

Renting a Car in Australia

Class	Fuel Capacity	Type	Transmission	Fuel/Air Cond.
M = Mini	0.8 - 1.0	B = 2 Door	M = Manual	R = Yes
E = Economy	1.0 - 1.4	D = 4 Door	A = Automatic	N = No
C = Compact	1.2 - 1.6	C = 2/4 door	N = Manual 4WD	D = Diesel Air
F = Full size	2.0 - 3.2	L = Limousine	C = Manual AWD	Q = Diesel No Air
P = Premium	2.0 - 4.2	S = Sports Car	B = Auto 4WD	H = Hybrid Air
L = Luxury	2.0 - 4.2	T = Convertible	D = Auto AWD	I = Hybrid No Air
X = Special	1.2 - 3.0	J = All Terrain	Examples: ECMN: E = Economy C = 2 or 4 door M = Manual N = No Aircon FDAR: F = Full Size D = 4 Door A = Automatic R = Aircon	E = Electric Air
	R = Recreational	F = 4 Wheel Drive		C = Electric No Air
	X = Special	K = Commercial Van/Truck		
	P = Ute			
	X = Special			
	E = Executive			

How do I figure out which car is right for me?

This depends on where you're travelling, how many people are travelling and the style of driving you intend to do. Cars range from small (economy, compact) to larger size cars (intermediate, full size), to 4WD's, convertibles and luxury vehicles. For short trips with fewer passengers opt for the smaller cars; for longer trips with the family then a larger car, van or SUV would suit. There are plenty of car rental options to choose from depending on your needs. You can use the ACRISS system detailed above to find the car that suits your needs. This is an internationally recognised code that will ensure that you get the same standard of vehicle wherever you rent.

Automatic and Manual Transmissions

Automatic and manual vehicles are available in Australia and are generally similar in price to rent, so choose the one you feel most comfortable driving.

Do I Need a Credit Card?

Yes. A credit card will be needed for a deposit when collecting your vehicle. The deposit is generally the insurance excess of the rental car which can vary between \$385 and \$3,500 (+tax) depending on the category of vehicle you have booked and the rate type.

Collecting at an Airport in Australia

At most Australian airports, rental companies will have a desk in the arrivals hall and vehicles will be located within walking distance. However, at smaller airports you may be required to collect your vehicle from a downtown depot. In this case, a courtesy transfer will usually be provided from the airport to the depot. Auto Europe offer all-inclusive prices which generally include any location/airport fees and charges that may otherwise apply. Remember to check at time of booking to ensure your rental will include all airport fees.

Driving Off-Road

In most cases, car rental suppliers will not permit travel on un-sealed roads or off-road unless it is reasonably unavoidable. This will also include driving through rivers, streams or beaches and in some cases above the snow line in the Australian ski fields. You will not be covered by insurance if you do drive in these conditions, so check with Auto Europe when you book to ensure exactly where you can drive.

Rental Vehicle Insurance

Australian law requires all vehicles to have Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance, although your car rental supplier should already have comprehensive insurance covering their cars. Any accident must be reported to the insurance provider immediately and an excess will be due.

Car rental companies in Australia will normally include:

- **Third Party Insurance and Compulsory Insurance:** This will be included in your car hire price. This covers you for other peoples' injury and vehicle damage.
- **Theft and Loss Cover:** This limits your financial liability for the loss or theft of the rented vehicle and is generally included in the prepaid car rental price.
- **Fire and Liability:** Limits your financial liability for bodily injury or death and is normally included in the pre-paid car hire price.
- **Personal Accident Insurance:** This covers the driver for personal injuries and is generally not included in your car rental rate. It is considered an optional extra that you can take out upon collection of the car.
- **Collision Damage Waiver (CDW):** This limits your financial liability for damage to the rented vehicle and is normally included in pre-paid car hire prices. Rentals are normally subject to liability excess, which can be reduced at the time you collect your rental car or by taking out **Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance**.

Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance

When renting a vehicle, the rental rates include basic insurance. However, in the event that the vehicle is stolen or accidentally damaged, there is usually an insurance excess amount which the driver is liable to pay to the rental company. To avoid any unexpected costs opt for Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance which will offer a reimbursement for the supplier's damage and theft excess to a maximum for AU\$5,000. Simply add this onto your car rental booking prior to departure and you could save thousands of dollars in case of an accident. To find out more, simply call Auto Europe on 1300 656 601 or visit the [Auto Europe website](#).

The Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance is managed by Accident & Health International Underwriting Pty Limited, ABN 26 053 335 952, AFSL 238261 and underwritten by CGU Insurance Limited, ABN 27 004 478 371, AFSL 238291.

Driving in Australia



Parking Laws

There are various types of free and paid parking options within Australia. In the larger cities parking can be costly and incur time limits. As signage, rates and time limits vary between states, it is important to check your options before planning to drive in one of the main cities.

Licence Requirements

When renting a vehicle in Australia, a driver will generally need to have held a full licence for a minimum of one year. Some suppliers may make exceptions, however fees may apply.

Min & Max Age Requirements

The minimum age for drivers renting a car in Australia does vary, though most suppliers require a minimum age of 21. It is important to check this information when booking rental car, as a young driver's surcharge may apply to those under the age of 24. This charge can range from AU\$20 - \$30 per day. Some suppliers do have a maximum age limit also, so drivers aged over 75 should enquire with Auto Europe when booking.

Wildlife

Diverse wildlife is found throughout Australia, including the outskirts of major cities. As such, extra caution should be taken when driving on rural roads. Take care in areas that aren't built up, particularly around dawn, dusk and night-time. Kangaroos, wombats and koalas frequently venture onto roads and can cause accidents.

Road Tolls and E-tags

Whilst the vast majority of roads in Australia feature no tolls or fees there are some – particularly on bridges, freeways and tunnels – which do charge drivers for their use. These roads are mainly found in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. You can pay with cash at some points, however many have switched to electronic tolling, where an electronic tag (also called an E-Tag) is attached to the vehicle and is picked up by sensors along the route. If you are planning to drive in major cities, please enquire about these tolls with the rental company before you set off.



Driving in Australia

Driving Laws In Australia

- A valid licence needs to be carried by the driver of a vehicle at all times. For foreign travellers with a driver's licence in another language, an English translation must be carried. Some rental companies will only rent to drivers who have an international driving permit, so be sure to check this information with Auto Europe when making your booking.
- Drive on the **left** hand side of the road in Australia and overtake in the right lane. Vehicles are right-hand drive.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times by both drivers and passengers.
- Children younger than 6 months must be secured in a rearward facing restraint. Children aged 6mths - 4yrs must be in a rear or forward facing restraint. Children aged 4yrs - 7yrs must be secured in a forward facing child restraint or booster seat.
- The legal limit blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is under 0.05. Provisional drivers must have a zero BAC.
- It is illegal to talk on your mobile phone whilst driving in Australia.
- Speed Limits: Unless signed otherwise, the limit is 50-60km/h on city and residential roads, 100 km/h on highways, 110km/h on freeways, and 40km/h in school zones during specific time frames.
- In the case of accidents in Australia, it is essential to exchange details with the other parties involved. If the other vehicle is unattended you must leave a note with your details. For serious accidents involving injuries and detrimental vehicle damage, notify the police by dialling 000.

Important Road Signs

Speed Limits: Usually a red or black circle with the speed limit in km/h in the centre.

Warning/Caution Signs: Usually yellow diamond shaped signs showing the possible threat ahead.

Touring Routes: Brown background with white writing, indicating popular tourist routes.

Australia Car Rental FAQs

Can I collect my rental car in one Australian city and drop it off in another?

One-way rentals are possible in Australia, however fees may apply. Check with Auto Europe when making your reservation.

What do I do if I want to extend my car rental once I have already collected it?

There are two options for handling an extension. First, you may contact Auto Europe to assist with your amendment. If the supplier permits the change, additional fees may apply and the daily car rental price may be different from the initial charges. Alternatively, contact the supplier directly to assist you. If the vehicle is available, you will be charged at the supplier's local rate.

Australian states

- Australian Capital Territory (ACT)
- New South Wales (NSW)
- Victoria (VIC)
- Queensland (QLD)
- South Australia (SA)
- Western Australia (WA)
- Northern Territory (NT)
- Tasmania (TAS)



Australian Capital Territory

The ACT is home to the purpose built capital city of Australia, Canberra, but also large areas of National Park and smaller, older settlements of the region.

New South Wales

Located on the East Coast of Australia and the country's most populous state. Major cities in New South Wales are Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. The East Coast is popular for people travelling through Australia, due to the number of smaller country towns and popular beach towns like Port Macquarie and Byron Bay dotted throughout. NSW is also home to Australia's ski fields, located near the New South Wales - Victoria border.

Victoria

The southernmost eastern state of Victoria is home to the cultural melting pot that is Australia's second largest city, Melbourne. Due to its small size, Victoria is the most densely populated state, with most people concentrated around Port Phillip Bay.

South Australia

Featuring a rugged coastline along the Great Australian Bight, the southern region of Australia is where great deserts meet the Southern Ocean. If you are planning a driving holiday in the south, try to spend some time exploring the Great Ocean Road and Kangaroo Island, the country's third largest island.

Northern Territory

Travel to the north of Australia for a real outback experience. The vast wilderness combines amazing wildlife and cultural heritage. On your road trip, experience the varied climates of tropical rainforests and barren deserts. Visit the townships of Alice Springs and Darwin, along with the natural wonders of Uluru and Kakadu National Park.

Western Australia

The West Coast is an expansive area with few cities and endless natural space. Explore the cities of Perth, Exmouth, Geraldton and Broome, driving along thousands of kilometres of unspoilt rugged coastline and some of Australia's best surf!

Tasmania

Australia's only island state, with most of the population concentrated in the south east and north coasts. Much of the island is dedicated to agriculture and national parks.



Sydney, New South Wales

The largest and oldest city in Australia, Sydney offers a laid-back, outdoor experience. Located on a stunning harbour, the city is surrounded by endless stretches of surf beaches and five national parks. Settled in 1788, visitors can discover a blend of colonial and contemporary architecture along with a wide range of cultural heritages in Sydney. This vibrant city offers diverse dining options and a temperate climate all year round.

Attractions

The Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House - Iconic landmarks of Sydney.

The Rocks - Sydney's historical area, featuring classic sandstone buildings and lots of old style pubs.

Sydney Aquarium - One of the largest aquariums in the world, home to over 6,000 fishes.

Darling Harbour and King St Wharf - Enjoy a great lunch with a magnificent view.

Beaches - Visit the world famous beaches of Bondi and Manly or take your pick of roughly 70 others around the city.

Take a ferry ride to Manly - Leave from Circular Quay and visit one of the world's best harbours.

Taronga Zoo - Visit Australia's favourite zoo, situated on the hills of Sydney Harbour.

Sydney Observatory - Take in the great views from Observatory Hill and see the thousands of stars at night through the massive telescopes.

Take the elevator up Sydney Tower - Walk along the Skywalk.

The Botanical Gardens - Discover hundreds of native species of plants and horticulture in a relaxing and peaceful garden.

Events

January

Sydney Festival - Three weeks of music concerts, dance, art and outdoor entertainment.

March

Sydney Mardi Gras - A parade of costumes and colour, the largest gay pride event in the world.

September

Sydney Running Festival - Choose from a number of courses to run - The Sydney Marathon, Half Marathon, Bridge Run (9km) and the Family Fun Run (4.0km)

October/November

Sculpture by the Sea - A large outdoor sculpture exhibition located on the coastal cliffs between Bondi and Bronte.

December

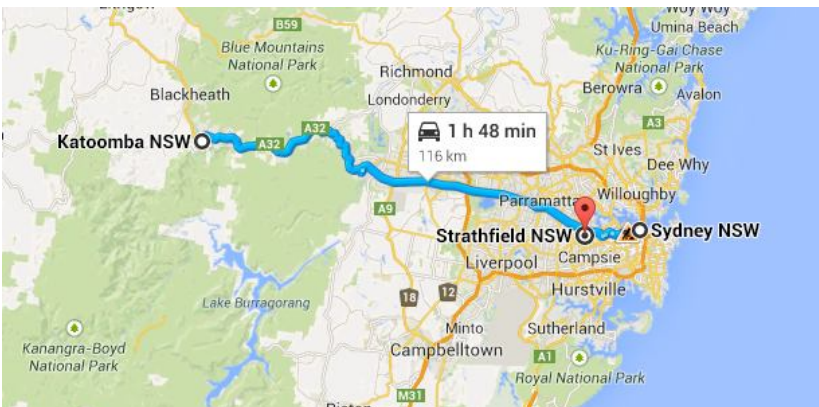
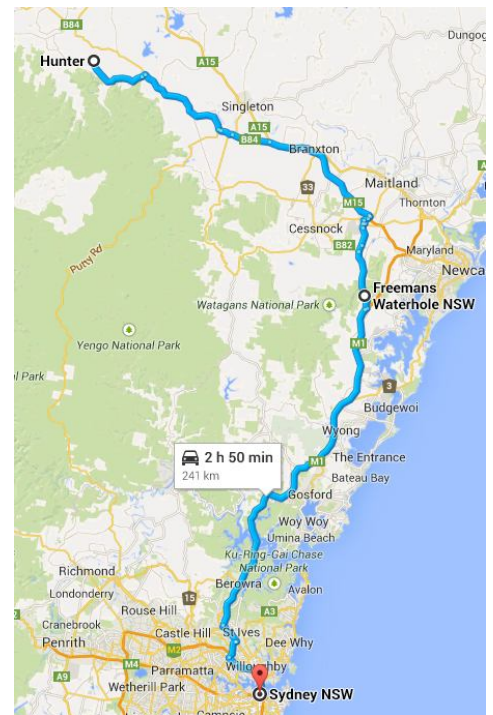
Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race - Departs from Sydney Harbour on Boxing Day.

New Years Eve - Spectacular firework display over Sydney harbour and around the City.

Self Drive Tours from Sydney

Hunter Valley

Just two hours north west of Sydney, the Hunter Valley is famous for its many fine wineries, beautiful national parks and quaint towns. Head north of Sydney on the freeway towards Newcastle, then take the exit near Freeman's Waterhole, which will lead you to the Hunter region. Here you will find over 120 wineries, fine dining, gardens and health spas. Paterson is a historic town in the region, only 18km north of Maitland, which also has the attractions of the old Maitland Gaol and the Regional Art Gallery.



The Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains inherited its name from the blue haze given off by the eucalyptus trees. Located just 50kms west of Sydney, enjoy stunning scenery and spectacular views of the magnificent Three Sisters rock formations. Be sure to visit the charming city of Katoomba, picturesque Leura and the Jenolan Caves. Take a bushwalk along the Six Foot Track, the Megalong Valley and Wentworth Falls. Visit the small art galleries that display the local artist's work or visit the Norman Lindsay Gallery in Falconbridge with its magnificent gardens. From the City, follow signs to Parramatta and join the M4 Motorway (Great Western Highway), which starts at Strathfield and takes you to the Blue Mountains. For a more scenic and longer drive, follow the Bells Line of Road, commencing at Richmond and passing over Mount Victoria.

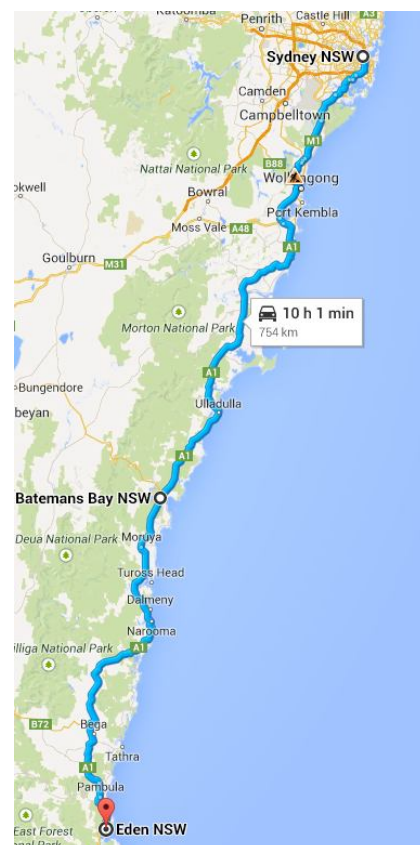
Self Drive Tours: NSW



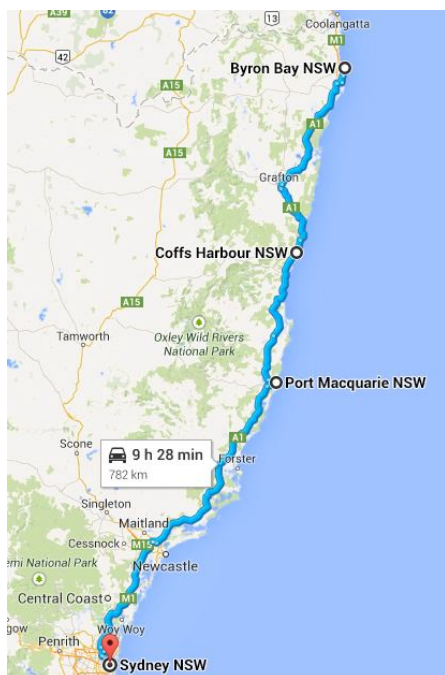
The NSW South Coast

There are some magnificent places to explore on the south coast of NSW. One option is to follow the Grand Pacific Drive, which begins in Stanwell Tops, just south of Sydney, and winds its way south along the coast through such towns as Wollongong, Kiama, Shellharbour and on to Nowra. You will be able to drive along a stretch of road which was recently built and transverses along the coastline, over the waters edge. Stop off at fantastic beaches, coastal towns and villages. Head inland from Kiama and experience the Illawarra Fly Tree Top Walk which offers outstanding views of the surrounding rainforests and the coastline.

Travel further south through Nowra along the Princes Highway and along the south coast of NSW. Visit the white sands of Jervis Bay, the fishing villages around Ulladulla and the picturesque seaside towns of the Sapphire Coast such as Batemans Bay, Merimbula and Eden.



The NSW North Coast



When planning a road trip in Australia, a popular route is to head up the coast from Sydney. There are many stunning beaches and towns to check out on the road to Brisbane. North of Newcastle, stop off at Nelson bay, located just over 2 hours away from Sydney. Here you will find a small seaside town, with popular activities such as dolphin watching and camel riding.

Travelling north, stop off at Port Macquarie for a variety of water activities and take advantage of the network of rivers, canals, lakes and beaches. At Coffs Harbour, you can enjoy scuba diving and white-water rafting. Don't forget to visit the Big Banana - one of the oldest "big things" in Australia! The kids will enjoy the toboggan rides, banana-splits, ice-skating and the wild waterslide. Heading north towards the border to find the laid-back beachside towns of Ballina and Byron Bay. Discover stretches of stunning surf beaches, rolling hinterland and natural wilderness.

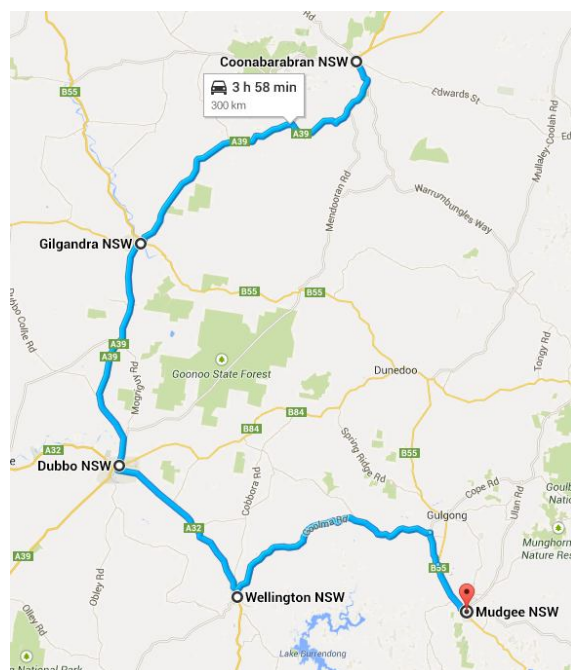
Self Drive Tours: Country NSW



The Best of Country NSW

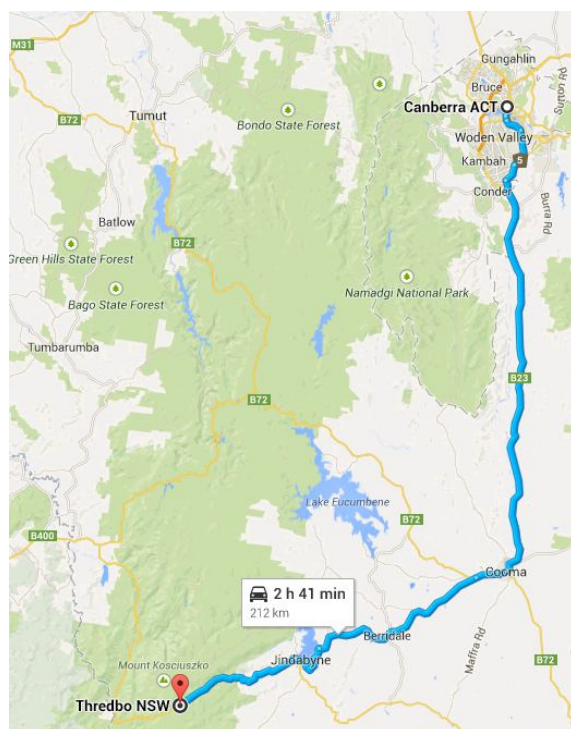
This route takes in some of the best country towns in NSW. Commence at the town of Coonabarrabran, which you can use as a base to explore the spectacular Warrumbungle National Park or visit one of the observatories at night to see millions of stars in the country sky. Drive through the Biddon State Forest to Gilgandra on the Castlereagh River where you can explore museums and learn of the local indigenous Wiradjuri people who first inhabited this region. Head south on the Newell Highway to Dubbo, spending a day at the Dubbo Western Plains Zoo and Old Dubbo Gaol.

Follow the Mitchell Highway south to Wellington, where you can enjoy the extensive town gardens, unwind or fish at the massive Lake Burrendong or explore the Wellington Caves just outside of town. Drive east to historic Gulgong which was famous in the gold rush era and was once home to the poet Henry Lawson. From here, drive south east through one of NSW's best food and wine producing regions to the town of Mudgee. This region is full of Australian history and beautiful vineyards, creating world class wines and produce.



The Snowy Mountains

A three hour drive from Canberra will take you to the Alpine National Parks - a playground of adventure activities. During wintertime, visit the ski resorts of Thredbo and Perisher, home to a vast network of ski runs and lifts. Activities in the summertime include mountain climbing, bushwalking and mountain biking. For a scenic hike, climb Mt Kosciuszko from Charlotte Pass to enjoying stunning scenery and wildlife.





Melbourne, Victoria

The second largest city in Australia, Melbourne is bustling with cafes, bars, musicians and artists. Melbourne's first settlers arrived in 1835, and today it has evolved into a world class city filled with people from a vast array of backgrounds. Rich in fine dining options, a thriving fashion industry and a great list of attractions, Melbourne is an exciting city to explore. Notable suburbs to visit include St Kilda, a arty backpacker haven, and Collingwood, which boasts great shopping and live music venues.

Attractions

Bourke St Mall – For high class shopping, buskers and street entertainers

Queen Victoria Market – The largest outdoor markets in Australia, popular with locals and tourists alike

Shopping - Melbourne has some of the best shopping in Australia, from major department stores and brand names, to funky fashion stores and independent designers

Federation Square – The cultural centre of Melbourne, complete with art galleries, exhibition spaces, bars and restaurants

Phillip Island – Home to the famous Penguin Parade, where you can see hundreds of penguins emerge from the sea and cross the beach each night

The Mornington Peninsula - Visit some of the most beautiful beaches and towns in Victoria, just a short drive south of Melbourne

St Kilda - Melbourne's beachside and nightlife hot spot. Walk along the pier and picnic in the Botanical Gardens

Events

January

The Australian Open - World Class Tennis Tournament

March

Australian F1 Grand Prix – Formula 1 Racing - 4 days

March to September

Watch an AFL match in the home of the game

April

Melbourne International Comedy Festival – The third largest 3 week comedy festival

October

Melbourne International Arts Festival – Over two weeks of music, dance, art and theatre

November

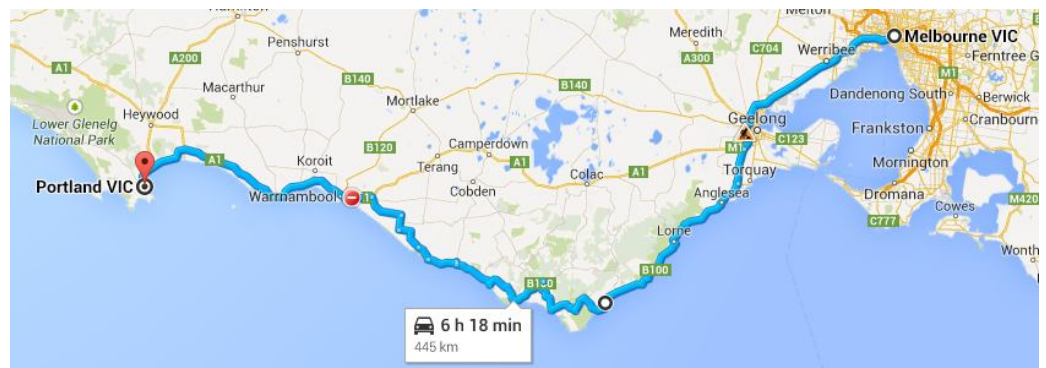
Melbourne Cup – The biggest horse race in the Southern Hemisphere

Self Drive Tours from Melbourne



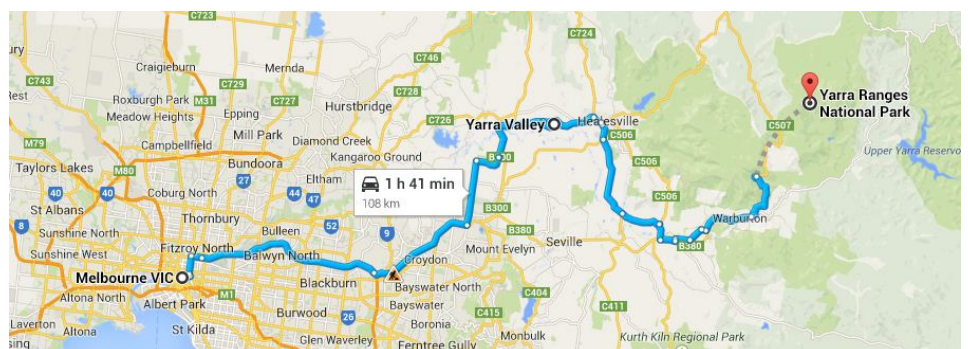
The Great Ocean Road

Covering a distance of 243km, the Great Ocean Road is regarded as one of the most scenic drives in Australia. Head west of Melbourne and travel through stunning scenery along the way. Stop at charming towns such as Apollo Bay, Lorne and Warrnambool. Visit Bells Beach, one of the most famous surfing beaches in the country. As you make your journey along the coast, marvel the 12 Apostles, limestone cliffs that line the Great Ocean road, making this drive one of the most illustrious in the country.



The Yarra Valley

Located a short distance east of the city, the Yarra Valley is a popular destination for daytrips and short breaks from Melbourne. Visitors come here to enjoy the scenery and the great outdoors, as well as the many wineries and farms located here. Explore the region by car, sampling great local produce along the way. Stop off at the charming towns of Yarra Glen, Warburton, Badger Creek and Milgrove, or head into the Yarra Ranges National Park and explore the lush forests that it contains.

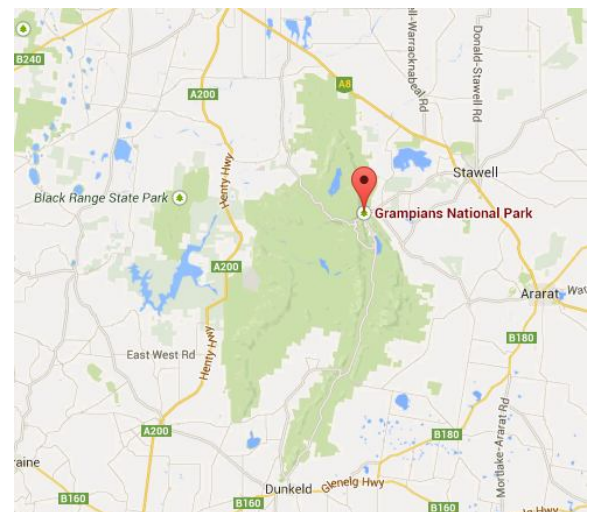


Self Drive Tours: Victoria

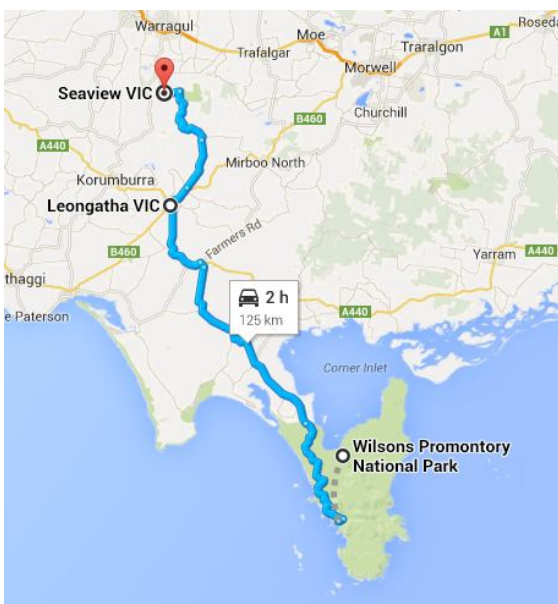


Explore the Grampians

Located 235km, roughly three hours northwest of Melbourne, Grampians National Park is a popular destination for visitors keen to unwind and enjoy the scenery. Small towns can be found throughout the area and while touring here you will discover waterfalls, lakes, untouched forests and rugged mountain landscapes, which create a tranquil region. The Grampians National Park is one of the richest indigenous rock art areas in south eastern Australia.



Grand Ridge Road, Gippsland



This drive will take you from Latrobe Valley to the southernmost tip of mainland Australia near Wilsons Promontory. Take a drive along the Strzelecki Mountains for 130km, passing through charming towns and villages, impressive farms and gardens. Take time to stop off and enjoy breathtaking views and explore some of the national parks along the way. Mirboo North is the only major town along this route and is approximately half way through this drive. If you're not the designated driver, sample the Gippsland's finest beers at the Grand Ridge Brewery. Views range from the open farmland to dense forests along the route.



Queensland

Perfect for holidays, Queensland is a favourite among both Australian and international travellers alike. With vast World Heritage listed areas, miles of stunning beaches, great weather and hundreds of attractions, it's easy to see why! Travel by car or motorhome and experience the freedom to stop when and where you choose to explore the lush tropical rainforests and unspoilt beaches of this state.

Attractions

Cairns - Tropical weather, rainforest and reef tours, stunning resorts, restaurants and bars, all just minutes from the city. Be sure to make the drive north to Port Douglas, along one of the most picturesque coastlines drives in Australia, watching out for crocodiles!

Brisbane - The capital and also the largest city in Queensland, Brisbane is located in the southeast corner of the state. While here, you can visit great nearby destinations like Surfers Paradise and Coolangatta. If you're travelling with the kids, head over to one of the great theme parks in the area.

The Great Barrier Reef - The largest reef system in the world and a must for any visitor to Queensland. Take a boat trip out from Cairns, Townsville, Port Douglas, Mackay or Airlie Beach. Alternatively, spend a few nights on one of the many island resorts.

The Sunshine Coast - Only a short drive north of Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast runs from Caloundra to Rainbow Beach, with Noosa and Maroochydore among favourite towns for visitors, and plenty of beachside villages along the way. The hinterland includes lush rainforest and beautiful countryside, especially the magnificent Glasshouse Mountains.

Events

January

Magic Millions, Gold Coast - Horse Racing Carnival

May

Port Douglas Carnivale – An art, music, food and culture event, held in a tropical paradise

June

Wintersun, Coolangatta – A rock & roll and retro nostalgia event, including music, cars and fashion from the 1950s and 60s

July

Gold Coast Marathon – A grand running race attracting over 20,000 competitors

August / September

Cairns Festival – An art, drama and culture festival with a tropical theme

August

Broadbeach Jazz Festival, Broadbeach – A completely free, annual jazz music festival

November

Schoolies Week – Annual pilgrimage for students who have finished high school often held in the Gold Coast

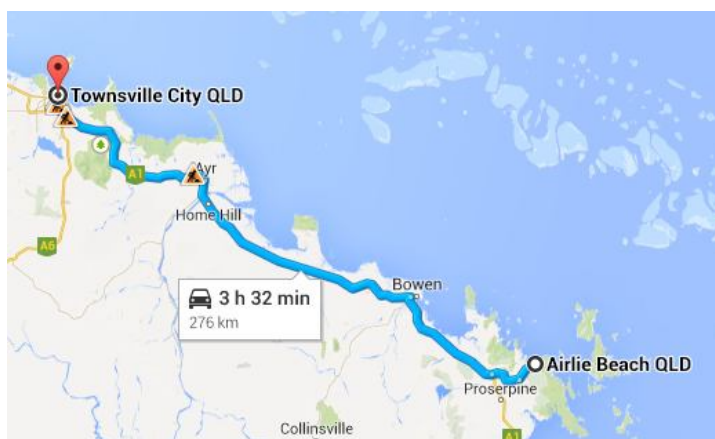
Self Drive Tours: Queensland



Airlie Beach to Townsville

Starting off in Airlie Beach, gateway to the Whitsunday Islands. This drive will take you through areas of amazing scenery and intriguing history, while enjoying the great weather for which this region is famous. The first part of the trip will take you to the town of Bowen. home to a thriving mango industry where the forest meets the sea.

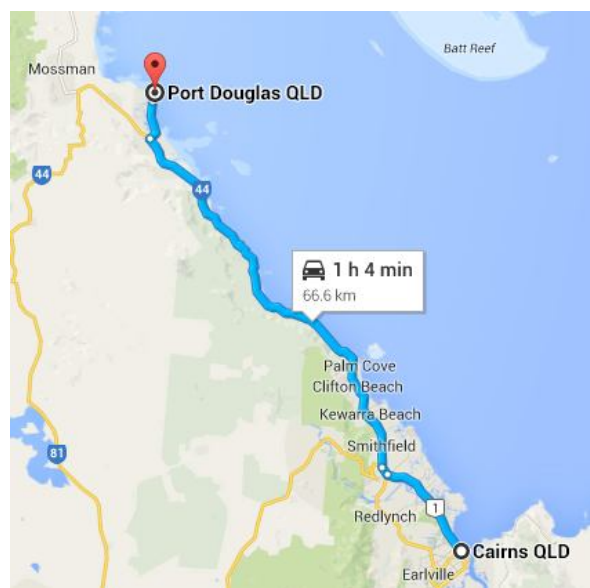
Further along your journey, you will pass through vast sugar cane fields, fruit farms and the towns of Home Hill and Ayr. While here, be sure to head up to either Mount Inkerman or Mount Kelly, both of which will give you spectacular views of the area. Once you have reached Townsville, you will find even more great options to explore.



Cairns to Port Douglas

Covering a 70km stretch of coastline, the Captain Cook Highway connects Cairns to Port Douglas and is one of the most scenic drives in the country. The inviting waters of the Coral Sea are just metres away from most of the coast road, along with spectacular lookouts points, such as Yule Point and Rex's Lookout.

To the north lay lush rainforests and to the west is the beginning of the Queensland outback. Eastwards, discover more spectacular beaches and reefs.





South Australia

South Australia offers long hot summers, perfect for self drive holidays. A state renowned for its wine, there are 16 regions to explore and over 200 cellar doors. Explore the state's diverse landscapes and wildlife, including a trip to Kangaroo Island, The Flinders Ranges and the Limestone coast. Voted among the most liveable cities in the world, Adelaide is a friendly, laidback place with hundreds of restaurants, cafes and pubs waiting to be discovered.

Attractions

Adelaide - The capital city of South Australia, Adelaide is a unique alternative to the larger cities. It has a friendly atmosphere at a relaxed pace. Adelaide is a city with a thriving food, art and music loving culture, as well as great beaches and charming architecture.

Kangaroo Island - Located just a short ferry ride from the mainland, Kangaroo Island was the first place in the state that was settled as a colony. Due to its isolation, Kangaroo Island has become a huge sanctuary for wildlife, with koalas, penguins, wallabies, Australian Sea Lions, New Zealand Fur Seals, and kangaroos all living in safety with no introduced predators.

Coober Pedy - Known as "The Opal Capital of the World", Coober Pedy is a desert town not only famous for gemstones, but also for unique underground homes where locals live to escape the summer heat. When in Coober Pedy, take a tour of mines and visit underground homes and churches. Take the opportunity to do some opal shopping or enjoy a round of golf on the course without grass!

Barossa - The Barossa is one of Australia's most famous wine regions, spoken in the same breath as Bordeaux, Napa and Tuscany. It's not only about the wine, though - here you'll find a flourishing food culture, historic villages and picturesque valleys.

Events

January

Santos Tour Down Under – A cycling race attracting some of the biggest names in the world.

April/May

Tasting Australia – A major event showcasing Australian food and drink

June

Adelaide Cabaret Festival - Showcasing the best local, national and international artists in the cabaret genre

August

Barossa Gourmet Weekend - Fine wine, sensational food and the best of South Australia's live entertainment

October

World Solar Challenge – A solar powered vehicle race between Adelaide and Darwin

Kangaroo Island Art Feast - an annual celebration of the island's art, food and wine. Held at multiple venues across the island

November

Credit Union Christmas Pageant – A huge Christmas parade held in the streets of Adelaide

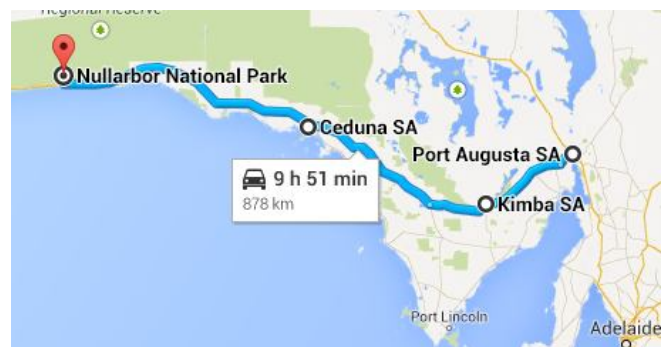
December

Lights of Lobethal – Huge lighting show put on by homes in the town of Lobethal



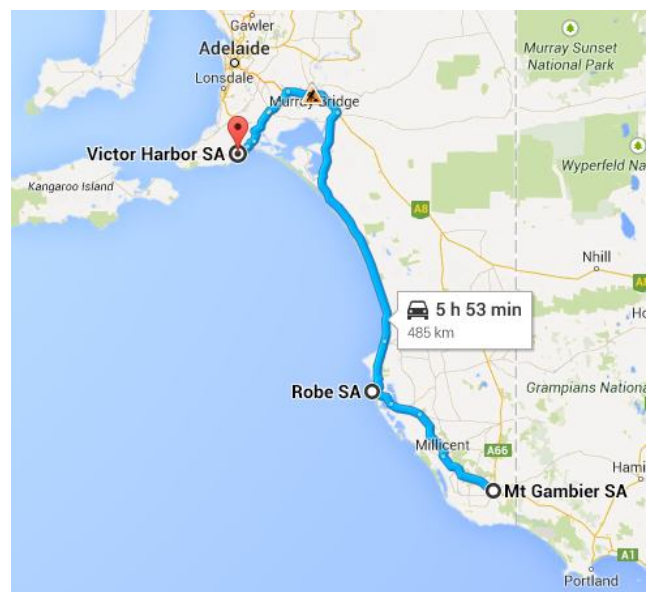
Port Augusta to the Nullarbor Plain

This drive is not to be taken lightly! It is an epic journey that will lead you through seemingly endless deserts and some of the most isolated parts of Australia. Thorough preparation is a must before setting off but, if well planned, this trip will be one to remember. You'll pass through remote towns such as Kimba, Wudona and Streaky Bay, while experiencing some amazing scenery along the way. The Nullarbor Plain, a Latin name meaning *no trees*, begins at Ceduna and spans all the way to Western Australia. The landscape is indeed very flat with few trees, making it a real road trip of a lifetime!



Mount Gambier to Victor Harbour

Starting off in Mount Gambier in the south east corner of the state, this drive will take you along a stunning coastline passing several charming towns along the way. Start off by visiting the most famous attraction of Mt Gambier - an impressive Blue Lake, located in a volcanic crater next to the city. Take the scenic coastal route as opposed to the highway to encounter picturesque sights such as Lake George and Lake Ekza. Stop off at the tiny fishing town of Robe as well as Kingston - home to the Giant Lobster. The final destination, Victor Harbor, is a favourite holiday spot for travellers and locals alike from nearby Adelaide, who come to enjoy the sandy beaches and whale watching.



Tasmania



The southernmost state of Australia, Tasmania is a nature lover's paradise offering visitors huge areas of amazing wilderness to explore, while also having its own unique history. Truly perfect for touring in a rental car, Tasmania features excellent roads connecting the different parts of the island, little traffic and breathtaking scenery.

Attractions

Hobart - The capital city of Tasmania, Hobart is also one of the oldest cities in Australia, having started off as a convict settlement in 1803. The city has avoided mass development, and with a great blend of historical buildings and modern architecture, Hobart has a charm all of its own. While in Hobart you can visit famous Salamanca Markets, the Cadbury Chocolate Factory and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Launceston - The second oldest and largest city in the state, Launceston is set in the Tamar Valley towards the north of the island and is an excellent base for exploring the many attractions in the area. While in Launceston, check out the picturesque Cataract Gorge, take a tour of The Boags Brewery, or go on a short drive north to Brady's Lookout, from where you'll get a great view of the Tamar River and Valley.

Cradle Mountain - One of the most visited places in Tasmania, Cradle Mountain is a must for anyone touring the island with a rental car. This location is breathtaking and possibly the best example of the unspoilt scenery for which Tasmania is famous.

Events

December/January

Taste of Tasmania, Hobart - Weeklong festival showcasing Tassie's local food and beverage

February

Australian Wooden Boat Festival, Hobart - Fantastic festival held on Hobart's waterfront celebrating Australia's maritime culture and heritage

April/May

Targa Tasmania – A world class rally event which runs across many parts of the island over 5 days

June

Antarctic Midwinter Festival - Festival that celebrates Tasmania's link with the Antarctic

November

Tasmanian Beerfest - Join over 10,000 others sampling boutique beers from Tasmania and around the world

December

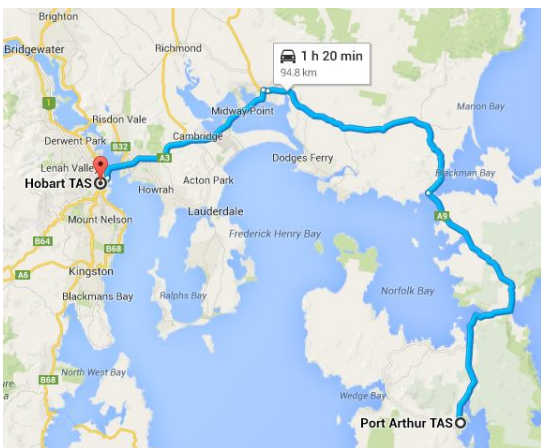
Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race - Hobart turns into one big party celebrating the finish line of the famous yacht race

Falls Festival - A New Year's Eve festival of bands and DJs which runs for 2 days

Self Drive Tours: Tasmania



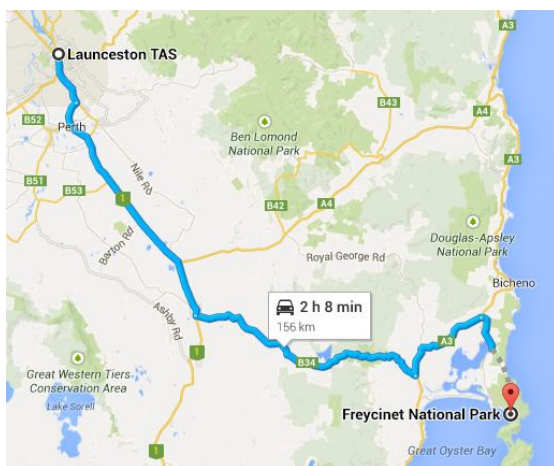
Hobart to Port Arthur



Starting off in Hobart, head east from the city, crossing the Derwent River, passing through Mornington and Hobart Airport. The drive gets particularly scenic from here on. First, cross the Sorell Causeway and McGee's Bridge for amazing views of the water on either side, then pass through rolling green hills and farmland. The rest of the journey is equally incredible, if not even more so, as you cruise along untouched coastline and through protected forests.

When you reach your destination of Port Arthur, it will seem almost like a time capsule. The town has amazingly well preserved and restored buildings, making it easy to imagine life here two centuries ago.

Launceston to Wineglass Bay



Heading south east from Launceston and cutting across the vast countryside, this route will take you to one of the most picturesque scenes in Tasmania: Wineglass Bay in Freycinet National Park. The drive will take you roughly 2.5 hours as you pass through the classical Tasmanian landscape.

Upon arrival, hike to the lookout where you will get to see Wineglass Bay, a beach many believe to be among the most stunning beaches in the world. Complete with picture-perfect shape, sand and beautifully coloured water, it's easy to see why this location is so highly regarded. If you're travelling during warmer months, a swim may just be too tempting to resist!



Western Australia

The largest state of Australia, Western Australia, covers 2.5 million square kilometres and offers visitors seemingly endless opportunities to explore remote, untouched locations. From beautiful coastline to deserts, and ancient forests to canyons, Western Australia is filled with unique attractions unlike anywhere else in the world. With thousands of kilometres between major towns and cities, not to mention the distance from cities in other states, the remoteness and isolation of Western Australia is a major attraction for visitors, keen to explore a unique part of the country.

Attractions

Perth - The capital of the state and home to over 70% of the population, Perth is usually first stop for most visitors to WA. With stunning beaches and natural attractions, as well as loads of fine dining, shopping and nightlife, Perth has everything a traveller could desire.

Exmouth - Located on the coast of Western Australia's North West Cape, Exmouth is a small town surrounded by stunning natural attractions. You can dive with whale sharks in nearby Ningaloo Reef, or take a whale watching tour in the bay. A short drive from Exmouth you can also visit Cape Range National Park, which features amazing canyons, bird sanctuaries and beaches that serve as breeding grounds for turtles. 120km south is Coral Bay, a beautiful settlement in which to spend your days fishing, swimming and snorkelling.

Margaret River Region - A renowned wine growing region with many bays and beaches popular for surfing by locals as well as international surfers. The most south western tip of Australia is Cape Leeuwin and where the Indian and Southern Oceans meet.

Events

January

Hopman Cup – A world class tennis tournament which runs for one week

March

Sculptures by the Sea – Perth's Cottesloe Beach is turned into an outdoor gallery for almost three weeks

April

Fremantle Street Arts Festival – Buskers and performers take to the streets to entertain over 100,000 people

August

Gascoyne Food Festival—A three day event celebrating the cuisine of the outback in Carnarvon

October

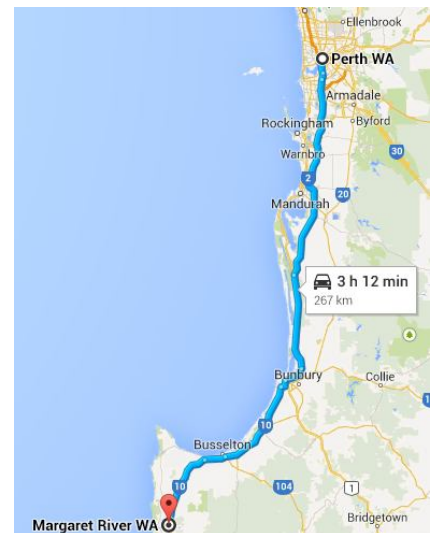
Perth International—A golf tournament in conjunction with the European Tour and the PGA Tour of Australasia



Perth to Margaret River

Drive 270km south of Perth to the town of Margaret River and the surrounding area, celebrated for its award winning wine production. There are over 130 wineries here, producing one fifth of Australia's wine. The drive will take you along the impressive south stretch of WA's east coast, passing through the towns of Mandurah, Bunbury and Busselton.

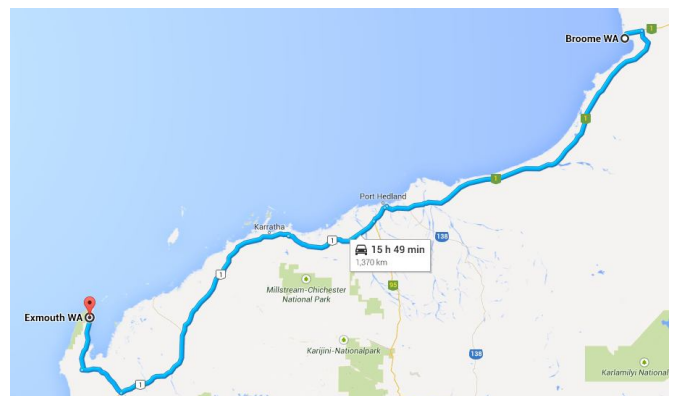
When in the Margaret River region, there are smaller towns and resorts which offer hidden surprises for travellers. You can get up close with sting rays in the still waters of Hamelin Bay, just don't pat them! Head up the coast and you will find a hot spot in Dunsborough, where the population swells with relaxed holidaymakers in the summer months. It is easy to cruise around different wineries, breweries and artisan producers without a guide. There are plenty of attractions for the driver too, from sweeping scenic views and delectable local dishes to live entertainment and outdoor games!



Broome to Exmouth - The Pilbara Coast

This is a drive that should be taken over at least a couple of days, as it is almost 1400km in total, however this will cover some of the best parts of Australia's west coast. Begin in Broome, where you will see the dazzling white sand and aqua waters of Cable Beach, visit Roebuck Bay to see how pearls are formed and harvested.

Follow the Great Northern Highway south along the coast on Eighty Mile Beach to Port Hedland, where iron ore mining is the predominant industry, then onto Karratha. From here you can explore the heritage town of Cossack and the magnificent Millstream-Chichester National Park while you learn of the local aboriginal rock art and culture. Drive along the Northwest Coastal Highway until you reach the turnoff to Exmouth on Burkett Road. Exmouth is the gateway to the magical Ningaloo Reef, where visitors can swim with whale sharks or snorkel in aquamarine waters with tropical fish.





Nothern Territory

Covering the central northern part of the country, the Northern Territory can be described as remote, wild, breathtaking and untouched. With amazing natural attractions and landscapes appearing just as they would have millions of years ago, the Northern Territory is the place where travellers can truly enjoy the vastness of the Australian outback.

Attractions

Darwin - Darwin is by far the largest city in the state, and also the only one found on the coastline. One of the most cosmopolitan cities in Australia, over 50 different nationalities are represented in Darwin. Be sure to visit the Mindil, Nightcliff and Parap markets.

The Red Centre & Uluru— Rich in aboriginal culture, visit the natural monuments of Ayers Rock (Uluru), Mount Olga, the Macdonald Ranges and Kings Canyon. Alice Springs, one of the most remote communities in the country, was settled around a waterhole in the middle of vast deserts and makes a great centre to base exploration of this region.

Kakadu & Litchfield National Parks - Experience amazing scenery and rich wildlife, as well as deep rooted Aboriginal culture. Take a boat trip on the Yellow Water, a billabong teeming with wildlife, and witness Aboriginal rock art dating back 40,000 years.

Events

May

Ingkerreke Commercial Mountain Bike Enduro – A five day mountain bike race held on the MacDonnell Ranges

June

V8 Supercars– SKYCITY Triple Crown – Darwin's very own round of supercar racing, held at Hidden Valley Raceway

Tattersall's Finke Desert Race – A two day race across roughly 230km of desert

July

Territory Day – A day of celebrations also known as Fireworks Day

August

Darwin Beer Can Regatta – A boat race held on Mindil beach, where a race is held between craft made out of beer cans

Henley-On-Todd Regatta – A race involving bottomless boats powered by people running through a dry riverbed in Alice Springs

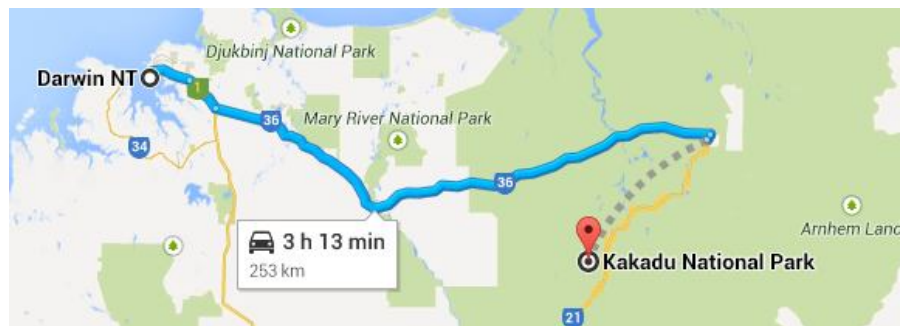
October

World Solar Challenge – A solar powered vehicle race. from Darwin and race the 3,000km to Adelaide



Darwin to Kakadu National Park

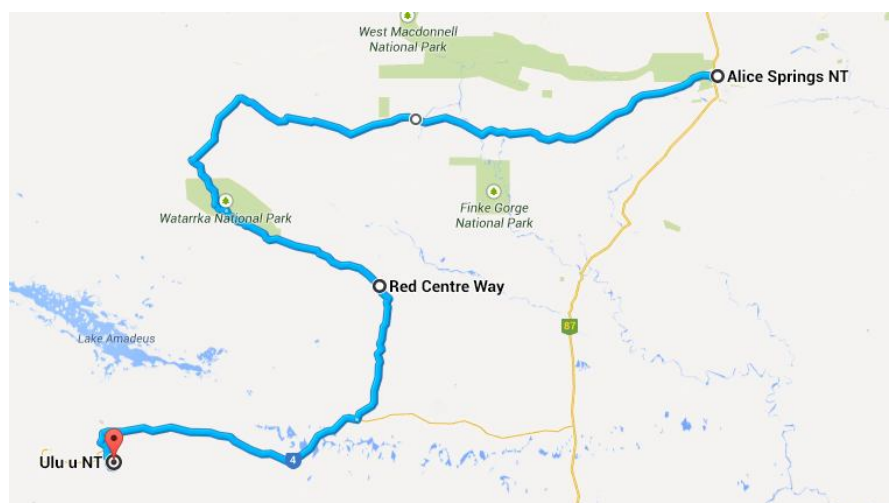
From Darwin, take the Stuart Highway out of the city and connect to the Arnhem Highway heading east. The drive to Kakadu National Park is roughly 250km and can be done in three and a half hours, however heading out in a leisurely pace and stopping off along the way to see the sights is definitely recommended. The historic town of Humpty Doo, just a short distance from Darwin, and Fogg Dam Conservation Reserve are both worth a visit.



Once you reach Kakadu, you will have the chance to see amazing scenery and wildlife unlike anywhere else in the world. The largest National Park in Australia, Kakadu covers a huge area, offering endless opportunities to explore. From wetlands and rugged coastlines to huge valleys and gorges, kakadu has it all!

Alice Springs to Kings Canyon and Uluru

Although not a short drive, the trip from Alice Springs to Kings Canyon and Uluru winds through some outback areas with remarkable scenery. Heading southwest from Alice Springs, it will take about four hours to reach Kings Canyon in Watarrka National Park, where you'll find spectacular views and great walking trails leading to ancient rock paintings. Once you have explored the canyon, you can either spend the night at a nearby camping ground or resort, or



continue on to Uluru, which is roughly another four hours from here. Uluru itself is a breathtaking site, standing at almost 350m tall and often appearing to change colour. For the best viewing times, aim to be here around sunrise or sunset when the colours of the rock are most vivid.



Auto Europe Australia

Drive the World with Auto Europe!

Auto Europe are Australia's leaders in self drive holidays. Established over 60 years ago, we offer more than 60 self drive suppliers at over 10,000 global locations. We boast an extensive choice of worldwide car hire, luxury and budget motorhome rentals and Peugeot leasing in Europe. Our expertise brings you highly competitive prices alongside outstanding customer service and efficiency. Plan your next self drive adventure with Auto Europe. Enjoy the freedom of having your own rental car and discover the world at your own pace.

Booking is easy!

Once you have planned your self drive itinerary and are ready to book, simply visit www.autoeurope.com.au

Alternatively, call our dedicated reservations team on **1300 656 601**.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Auto Europe hopes that you find the information in this guide helpful for your self drive holiday in Australia. The touring information has been created to be used as a guide only. All information shown is correct at the time of publication.

© Auto Europe - all rights reserved.

Updated: July 2014