Self Drive in Australia

While the distances between major cities in Australia may seem vast, a good system of roads and highways means that a drive-it-yourself holiday in Australia can be very rewarding. One of the best ways to see Australia is from behind the wheel of a car, four-wheel drive or campervan. Instead of relying on the scheduled services of bus, train or plane timetables, choose your own drive time, travel as you please, plan your own itinerary and explore as far as you want. Stay overnight at country pubs, motels or hotels or call into a camping ground. Australia has a good network of well-maintained roads and highways and, for the more intrepid, quite a few rugged, dusty tracks to take you into the Outback.

Hire a car for a few days and take in the sights around Australia’s major towns and cities. Most of the following scenic drives can be completed comfortably in a day, but as there are many interesting things to see and do, it is a good idea to stay overnight and explore the region which appeals to you. Accommodation is readily available and there is a wide variety from which to choose.
TRAVEL TIPS

Driving Laws
- Australians drive on the left hand side of the road.
- The maximum speed limit in cities and towns is 60km/h (35mph) and 100km/h (62mph) on country roads and highways, unless signs indicate otherwise.
- Strict drink-driving laws apply and Random Breath Testing is conducted in most Australian States.
- It is compulsory for drivers and all passengers to wear seatbelts at all times. Children under the age of 12 months must be in an approved child restraint such as a baby capsule or booster seat.
- It is compulsory for motor cyclists to wear a helmet.

Drivers Licence
Bona fide tourists may drive in Australia on a valid overseas drivers licence for the same class of vehicle. Licences must be carried when driving. If the licence is not in English, a translation must be carried with the permit. An international driver’s permit is not sufficient by itself and must be accompanied by a valid driver’s licence. For further information, contact the relevant road transport authority in each state on arrival.

Petrol (Gasoline)
Petrol comes in super leaded, unleaded regular and premium unleaded grades and costs approximately $0.70-90 per litre. (1 litre = 0.21 gallon) Unleaded petrol costs approximately 2 cents less then leaded petrol. LPG and diesel fuel is also available. Prices are usually slightly higher in country areas. Petrol stations are plentiful but trading hours vary. Most accept major international credit cards.

Drivers with Disabilities
A number of car hire companies in Australia provide vehicles suitable for travellers with disabilities. Inform the company in advance about the nature of the disability so that special arrangements can be made. Standard hire vehicles can be fitted with devices such as hand controls. The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Associations within each State can assist with either the fitting of controls, or they will direct you to an approved service.

Outback Travel
Many of Australia’s most spectacular places are located in remote areas. The Outback, – a vast expanse of sparsely populated, unique landscape – is immense and driving can be hazardous for drivers that are inexperienced in remote areas. Thorough preparation is essential and as conditions change from area to area and season to season, motorists must be properly equipped and armed with a little background knowledge.
- The best time for Outback travel is during the drier, cooler months between April and October.
- Plan your trip with the aid of a reputable map, stay on recognised routes and check facilities and road conditions before departure.
- Road conditions must be confirmed with local authorities and weather forecasts and fuel availability checked at every opportunity.
- Advise someone of your route, destination and arrival time and ask them to notify the police if you have not contacted them by an agreed time.
- The car should be in good condition. Two spare tyres are essential and all wheel-changing equipment should be checked.
- Refuel at every opportunity and keep the tank topped up.
- Ensure all essential supplies are on board: water, food, first aid kit, fuel, spare parts, detailed maps, one week’s extra supply of food and water, at least 20 litres (5-6 gallons) per person, in case of emergency. Drink water regularly even if you don’t feel thirsty.
- Stop and refresh yourself at regular intervals to prevent driver’s fatigue. Remember: Stop, Revive, Survive.
- Motorists must always remain with the vehicle if it breaks down.
- Motorists should always seek local advice before embarking on their journey.

Breakdowns – What do you do?
If driving a rental car, contact the car rental company to arrange road service to be sent to your location to repair the vehicle. Alternatively, most petrol stations will be able to assist or, at least, direct you to the nearest repair centre. Check also with your own motoring club regarding reciprocal membership facilities.

If travelling in remote areas the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) provides emergency services to outback travellers and from some bases the hiring of transceiver sets with emergency call buttons. For general information and a list of the RFDS Bases throughout Australia contact:

Australian Council of the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia
Level 5, 15-17 Young St
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel: + 61 2 9241 2411
Fax: + 61 2 9247 3351
Tourist Information Centres
Even in the smallest town you will find an outlet distributing tourist information. Look for the international “i” sign which may be displayed at an information centre, community hall or petrol station.

Purchasing a Vehicle
Vehicles can be purchased on arrival in Australia. Second-hand vehicles are advertised for sale in weekend newspapers, and saleyards are located in each capital city. For a mechanical check completed prior to purchase, contact the automobile association in each State as they offer this service at a reasonable cost. Change of ownership needs to be registered with the traffic authority in the State of purchase and a registration transfer fee paid. There are a small number of companies offering a buy-back option where the car is bought back at a certain price after your trip.

Vehicle Hire
Each major centre in Australia has a large number of vehicle rental companies. The major ones have branches throughout Australia, many offering special deals including one-way rentals, car and camping packages and accommodation packages. For a full listing of companies operating outside major centres, please contact the regional tourist information centres.

Make sure to discuss your travelling plans with the rental car hire company. Sometimes restrictions apply to the conditions of hire for certain routes and other journeys off main roads.

Automobile Associations
The Australian Automobile Association is affiliated to motoring organisations in most countries of the world. This entitles visitors to roadside emergency breakdown service, travel guides, route maps, accommodation listings including those suitable for people with disabilities, camping directories, travel bookings, special tours and touring information. For contact details refer to the state sections of this factsheet.

State Tourism Bureaux
State tourism travel centres provide information on attractions, accommodation, touring options, events, entertainment and many other aspects of travel within their states. They distribute publications specifically compiled for the self-drive traveller and some also provide a reservation service. For contact details refer to the state sections of this factsheet.

Recommended Reading
Reader’s Digest Off The Beaten Track, by Reader’s Digest, NSW, 1996. ISBN 086438999X
Motoring Guide to Australia, edited and designed by Reader’s Digest, Sydney, 1996. ISBN 0864389949
Discover Australia by 4WD, Ron & Viv Moon (editors), HEMA Maps Pty Ltd, Slacks Creek, QLD, 1996. ISBN 1875992219
4WD Adventures in Northern New South Wales, Craig Lewis, A Boiling Billy Production, Rozelle, NSW, 1996. ISBN 0646262343

City to City
Following are some self-drive itinerary suggestions to help you plan your trip between Australia’s major cities as well as some suggestions for more adventurous driving experiences.

Sydney to Brisbane (965km north)
Highway 1, or the Pacific Coast Touring Route showcases the very best of Australia. Visitors should take a few days to enjoy
the combination of magnificent coastline with spectacular hinterland. Drive along the scenic Central Coast then onto Newcastle, a maritime city. Make a sidetrip to Port Stephens offering white beaches, crystal clear waters and natural bushland. Continue on to Port Macquarie (383km/5 hours), a resort town and an ideal place to stay overnight. Head on to Coffs Harbour, in banana-growing country (159km/2.5 hours), then continue to Byron Bay, Australia’s most easterly point and enjoy the magnificent scenery from the lighthouse. Drive across the border to the Gold Coast, famous for its superb surfing beaches and continue on to Brisbane (423km/6 hours). Alternatively follow Highway 1 to Newcastle then turn inland on Highway 15, skirting the Hunter Region and passing through rural towns. Stay overnight at Tamworth (416km/6 hours), known as the country music capital. Continue on to Armidale, a university town (111km/2 hours), then across the border to Warwick (305km/5.5 hours), and on to Brisbane (158km/3 hours).

Brisbane to Cairns (1,716km north)
The Bruce Highway (Highway No 1) follows the Sunshine Coast passing the Glass House Mountains and through pineapple growing district. Turn off Highway 1 for Coolum Beach and Noosa Heads (130km/2 hours) with its beaches and national park. Back on the highway you pass rolling countryside around Maryborough, the ideal stepping-off point to Fraser Island; before Rockhampton (506km/7.5 hours). Spend a night in Mackay (334km/5 hours) or head out to the coastal towns of Airlie Beach or Shute Harbour – gateways to the magnificent Whitsundays (126km/2 hours). Spend a few days exploring the islands and the Great Barrier Reef aboard a sailing boat. Continue to tropical Townsville (272km/4 hours), then pass rainforest areas, Mission Beach and on to Cairns (346km/6 hours).

Sydney to Melbourne (1,126km south)
Leave Sydney on the M5 motorway that leads to Highway 31 through the Southern Highlands. Join Highway 25 for Canberra, the National Capital (286km/3 hours), then Cooma, gateway to the Snowy Mountains (118km/2.5 hours). Just past Cooma, follow Highway 18 to Bega, in dairy country, to join Highway 1 to Merimbula, a coastal resort (148km/2.5 hours). Highway 1 continues through the former whaling town of Eden in southern NSW, on to Victoria’s Gippsland district, then to Lakes Entrance (235km/3.5 hours). After Sale choose the coastal South Gippsland Highway to Melbourne (339km/4.5 hours). Alternatively follow the coast from Sydney on Highway One, passing through the Royal National Park and on to the regional city of Wollongong. The route continues through pretty seaside resorts such as Kiama, Ulladulla, Batemans Bay and Narooma to Bega where you can continue the itinerary as above.

Melbourne to Adelaide (945km north west)
Follow Highway 1 along Port Phillip Bay to Geelong. Take a side trip to Queenscliff, renowned for its grand Victorian architecture. Back on the highway continue south and join the Great Ocean Road that winds its way along the rugged coastline of the Shipwreck Coast, passing spectacular surf-battered cliffs and sandy beaches. Spend the night at Warrnambool, or Port Fairy, a pretty fishing village a little further on (300km/4.5 hours), then continue to Portland (68km/1 hour). From there take the coastal route through Lower Glenelg National Park to Mt Gambier, with its crater lakes (100km/1.5 hours). Alternatively, stay with Highway 1 from Portland to Mt Gambier. Drive through farming country to Millicent, then take the coast route and drive through Beachport, Robe and Kingston (180km/3 hours). Rejoin Highway 1, passing through Coorong National Park to Adelaide (297km/5 hours).

Adelaide to Perth (2,706km west)
Follow Route 1 to Port Augusta and on to Ceduna (777km/10 hours) or take alternative Route 1 (Lincoln and Flinders Highways) to Ceduna following the Eyre Peninsula. Stay overnight at Ceduna, then follow the highway passing tiny settlements. Enjoy the views of the coastline and stop at the Head of Bight where you can observe southern right whales in season (Jun-Oct). Travel through the vast expanse of the Nullarbor Plain and take time to view the interpretive facility at Border Village providing information on the flora, fauna and history of the region (482km/7 hours). Over the state border you’ll pass Eucla and Cocklebiddy known for its cave and the...
Eyre Bird Observatory, before arriving at Norseman (726km/10 hours). From there head north on Highway 94 to see the gold towns of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie (166km/2.5 hours), then continue on to Perth (555km/7 hours). Alternatively stay on Highway 1 to Esperance and follow the coastal route visiting national parks, farming and wine growing regions along the way to Perth.

Adelaide to Alice Springs (1,533km north west)

From Adelaide, take Highway 1 north through the Clare Valley wine country. Stay overnight and enjoy the superb food and wine, and continue on to Port Augusta (310km/3.5 hours). Join Route 87 (Stuart Highway) passing colourful landscapes on the way to the opal-mining town of Coober Pedy (540km/7 hours). Stay overnight in an underground hotel. Continue on to Erelunda (484km/6 hours), where the highway branches off to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. (262km/3 hours). Stay at Ayers Rock Resort offering a wide range of accommodation and touring options and spend a few days exploring Ayers Rock/Uluru and Mt Olga/Kata Tjuta. Rejoin the highway and continue to Alice Springs. Stopping or sidetrips are not allowed on the Mereenie Loop Road.

Alice Springs to Darwin (1489km north)

Follow Highway 87 to Barrow Creek, then on to the goldmining town of Tennant Creek (506km/6.5 hours). Continue through cattle country to Mataranka, with its thermal springs (568km/7 hours), then to Katherine, gateway to Katherine Gorge (Nitmiluk National Park). Cutta Cutta Caves, Edith Falls, Gregory National Park and Manyallaluk (112km/1.5 hour). Continue north on Highway 1 passing historic Pine Creek and the town of Adelaide River to Darwin (312km/4 hours).

Hobart to Launceston (198km north)

Depart Hobart on Brooker Hwy (A1) and drive through Glenorchy on the way to Granton. Once at Granton continue along the A1, the Heritage Highway. Stop in Brighton, and visit Bonorong Park Wildlife Centre, that features a wide variety of Tasmanian native animals in natural surrounds. Make the sidetrip to Richmond, which has mellow sandstone buildings housing quality arts, crafts and antiques shops and boasts three ‘oldests’ – Australia’s oldest jail, Catholic church, and bridge. Villages along the highway worth stopping at include Pontville, Kempton, Jericho and Oatlands. Ross further north is famous for its intricately-carved convict-built bridge and the Tasmanian Wool Centre. Explore little villages, which have been protected from the ravages of 20th century architecture – Campbell Town, on the Elizabeth River and Perth, established by Governor Macquarie. Divert to Evandale, a pretty Georgian-period township before arriving to Launceston.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

The more adventurous traveller may like to experience some of Australia’s famous but more remote routes. Please note some of these suggested drives require 4WD experience and careful preparation before you travel. Roads are not suitable for caravans and towing. Always check road conditions before travel and contact the motoring associations for detailed maps and advice.

Canning Stock Route (Western Australia, 1,750km, Halls Creek to Wiluna)

Best time June to August. Only for experienced drivers. This drive along an old cattle route through the Gibson and Great Sandy deserts should only be attempted during the winter months and thorough preparation is essential. What to see: desert landscapes, gorges, wildflowers, birds.

Cape York Peninsula (Queensland, 952km, Cairns to Cape York)

Best time June to November. Selection of maintained and
non-maintained dirt tracks and roads. Camping facilities are available. **What to see:** unique flora and fauna, especially birds, Aboriginal rock art, national parks.

The Oodnadatta Track *(South Australia, 617km, Marree to Marla)* Best time April to October. Maintained gravel road with sandy patches. This route follows the old Ghan railway line and the Overland Telegraph. **What to see:** Ghan rail sidings, mound springs and remains of rocket-tracking emplacements.

Tanami Track *(Northern Territory and Western Australia, 1,035km, Alice Springs to Halls Creek)* Best time April to October. Combination of sealed and graded dirt roads. Sections can become unpassable during the rainy season. **What to see:** Old goldmining areas, Wolfe Creek Meteorite Crater.

Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads *(Western Australia, Kimberley, Derby to Kununurra 700km, Derby to Kalumburu 673km)* Best time May to October. Graded road in poor to good condition depending on the time of the year. Caution required at river crossings. Beware of livestock and wildlife on the roads. Camping and homestead accommodation is available along both roads, however advance bookings are strongly recommended. **What to see:** Gorges, waterfalls, wildlife, Aboriginal culture. Fish in the rivers, go bushwalking, horse riding, enjoy scenic helicopter flights.

**STATE SELF DRIVES**

Following are some self-drive itinerary suggestions to help you plan your trip within Australia’s states and territories.

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Canberra.

**Embassies, Tidbinbilla, Lanyon, Namadgi National Park**

The round trip is 84km (52 miles) long. **Trip duration:** One day.

**On the road**

Starting from Parliament House on Capital Hill, head south along State Circle and take the left turn onto Adelaide Avenue into Canberra’s diplomatic district. Adelaide Avenue links up with Cotter Road, Paddy’s River Road, Tidbinbilla Road and Tharwa Drive, before joining the Monaro Highway and forming a loop that leads back into Canberra.

**Must see**

In Deakin, on the corner of Adelaide Avenue and National Circuit, is the Prime Minister’s Lodge, the official residence of the Australian Prime Minister. It is also well worth driving around the nearby suburb of Yarralumla to see the many high commission and embassy buildings.

Follow Cotter Road to the Mt Stromlo Observatory and its interactive astronomy centre, the Stromlo Exploratory. Further along is Cotter Dam and Reserve with pleasant picnic and camping areas. Link up with Paddy’s River Road and travel south to the Canberra Deep Space Communications Complex in Tidbinbilla, a deep-space tracking station operated jointly by the Australian Department of Science and NASA. The Visitor Centre features spacecraft models and audio-visual presentations.

Nearby is Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve where emus, kangaroos, wallabies, koalas and other native flora and fauna can be seen in their natural habitat tucked in amongst the mountains. The Visitor Centre can supply maps and information on guided walks in the area. Further along on Corin Road is the Corin Forest Recreation Area with the longest alpine slide in the Southern Hemisphere, bushwalking and skiing in winter.

On the banks of the Murrumbidgee River at Tharwa, the historic Lanyon Homestead is a superb reminder of 19th century rural living and houses a collection of paintings by Australian artist Sidney Nolan. Further south along Naas Road and still on the banks of the river, is the historic Cuppacumbalong Craft Centre, located at the gateway to Namadgi National Park, with its fine arts and crafts, cottages, restaurant, heritage gardens,
picnic areas and river swimming.

The Visitor Centre for Namadgi National Park on Naas Road provides excellent information on the park with hands-on displays and audiovisuals. There are over 150km (118 miles) of marked walking tracks that lead through spectacular sub alpine territory.

**Gunning and Yass**
The round trip is 165km (103 miles) long.

**Trip duration:** One day

**On the road**
From the Visitor Information Centre on Northbourne Avenue, Dickson, drive 15km (9.3 miles) north on the Federal Highway towards Goulburn/Sydney and take the left exit to Gunning. This road links up with the Hume Highway at Gunning, from where you can return to Canberra via the Barton Highway turn-off, 5km (3 miles) before Yass.

**Must see**
This lush pastoral country has the reputation of producing some of Australia’s finest merino wool.

Follow the road to **Gunning** past the little village of Sutton to **Gundaroo**. Stroll along the main street to see historic buildings such as the Gundaroo Store, M&B Crowe Wine Bar (1872), the pub, police station and Anglican church.

Travel on to Gunning for more local history in the form of **Pye Cottage** and a slab-style pioneer cottage called **Caxton Cottage** built in 1850, the court house, and many other historic properties.

From Gunning, travel down the Hume Highway to **Yass** where several old buildings have been classified by the National Trust. Visit the grave of explorer Hamilton Hume, and **Cooma Cottage** built in 1830. On Comur Street, the **Hume Museum** contains many pioneer relics.

Return to Canberra via the Barton Highway stopping en route to visit some cool climate **wineries** around Murrumbateman. Closer to Canberra is **Gold Creek Village** with Federation Square and historic Ginninderra Village offering specialty shops and an old world atmosphere. **Cockington Green**, a miniature English village, and the National Dinosaur Museum are also nearby.

**Batemans Bay**
Batemans Bay is 160km (99 miles) east of Canberra.

**Trip duration:** Overnight or longer.

**On the road**
Travel from Canberra to Queanbeyan to join the Kings Highway. Continue to Bungendore through Braidwood to Batemans Bay.

**Must see**
This popular route passes Lake George, known to mysteriously empty periodically.

At **Bungendore** many of the buildings are carefully restored heritage sites. Enjoy fine dining at The Carrington of Bungendore or browse through the many antique and craft shops. Visit the **Bungendore Wood Works Gallery** that displays and sells the crafts of Australia’s best wood workers.

**Braidwood**, once the centre of the southern goldfields, retains many buildings from the mid 1800s. The town has been classified as an historic village by the National Trust. Local museums, mills and homesteads illustrate the history of the area. Further cast from Braidwood is **Budawang National Park**, a bushwalkers paradise.

Batemans Bay is a popular tourist resort on the beautiful Clyde River and close to a string of untouched beaches. Of particular interest are the penguins and other birds at **Tollgate Island Wildlife Reserve**. Take a cruise upriver, feed the kangaroos on **Pebble Beach**, explore the hinterland, fish from the beach, estuary or rocks. Whilst in the area, take time to explore the old gold mining towns of Mogo and Araluen.

The return drive from Canberra to Batemans Bay is a full day journey, and we would recommend you spend at least one night away to make the most from the trip. There is a wide range of accommodation available along the way.

**Contacts**
**Visitors Information Centre**
Northbourne Avenue
Dickson ACT 2602
Tel: +61 2 6205 0044
Fax: +61 2 6205 0776

**NRMA**
92 Northbourne Avenue
Braddon ACT 2601
Tel: 132-132 (within Australia)
Fax: +61 2 6243 8892

**NEW SOUTH WALES**
The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Sydney.

**South Coast**
Berry is 120km (75 miles) Batemans Bay is 279km (173 miles) Bega is 427km (265
miles) and Eden is 486km (302 miles) south of Sydney.

**Trip duration:** One day or overnight if returning to Sydney from Berry or Jervis Bay; if travelling to Batemans Bay and beyond, allow a minimum of two nights.

**On the road**
Take the Princes Highway south from Sydney. At the Royal National Park, just past the Sydney suburb of Sutherland, take a detour through the park and follow the spectacular coastal road to the outskirts of Wollongong. From here, link up again with the Princes Highway that continues south towards Melbourne.

**Must see**
At Kiama, visit the Blowhole where, in rough seas, a huge volume of spray bursts into the air like a brief, giant fountain soaring from 20 metres to 60 metres (65-196 feet). Nearby in Budderoo National Park is the Minnamurra Rainforest Centre where an elevated boardwalk takes you into the rainforest canopy.

A little inland and further south is Berry, the “town of the trees”, with antique shops, art and craft centres, an historical museum and many National Trust classified buildings. The town is set in a beautiful area of small farms, dairies and holiday houses. Visit the historic village of Coolangatta or enjoy wine tasting at one of the area’s boutique wineries.

Kangaroo Valley has the historic Hampden Bridge (1898), the oldest suspension bridge in Australia, Pioneer Settlement Museum, which includes a reconstruction of an 1880s dairy farm, Kangaroo Valley Fruit World, a 15,000 tree fruit orchard where you can pick your own fruit in season (Nov-Apr), Fudge House, Kangaroo Valley Country Club, Tallowa Dam and numerous craft shops.

At Nowra, the Shoalhaven area’s commercial centre, visit Nowra Animal Park, Hanging Rock Lookout for views across the Shoalhaven River, a museum, art and craft centres, 'Meroogal’ an historic home built in 1885; and the Australian Naval Aviation Museum at HMAS Albatross with its fine collection of military aircraft. The Shoalhaven River is great for fishing, water skiing, canoing and sailing.

Turn off the Princes Highway at Nowra and follow the road into Jervis Bay renowned for its clean water providing excellent fishing and scuba diving. The coastline is scalloped by white stretches of beach surrounded by untouched bushland, nature reserves and Botanic Gardens. At Huskisson, take a look through the Lady Denman Heritage Complex and Maritime Museum that includes an Aboriginal art and craft centre or enjoy a dolphin watch cruise.

Ulladulla is a holiday resort and fishing port with coastal lakes and lagoons with white sandy beaches. Visit Ulladulla Wildflower Reserve, or Funland, a large indoor family fun park, stroll past the fishing fleet or take a walk on one of the many marked walking tracks lookouts all with spectacular views. Lake Tabourie Museum has some interesting displays including Aboriginal artefacts and at nearby Pebbley Beach you can share the seaside with some friendly kangaroos.

The resort town of Batemans Bay is close to a string of untouched beaches. Cruise the sparkling waters, explore the hinterland, fish from the beach, estuary or rocks, or laze on the beach. Daily cruises sail upriver past historic Nelligen, an old steamer centre and houseboats are available for hire. Other attractions include Birdland Animal Park, Murramarang National Park, a coastal park noted for its mostly undisturbed coastline, Durras Lake for its swimming and fishing, Mogo Goldfields Park with its working gold mine and the Mogo Zoo.

Further south, Moruya is a prosperous dairying, timber and oyster-farming centre. Narooma, well known for its rock oysters, is popular for fishing and all watersports. A golf course runs along the cliff tops and Mystery Bay offers spectacular scenery.

Join a Heritage and Wildlife Tour to Montague Island where fur seals and penguins make their home. Nearby, the National Trust classified village of Tilba appears today as it did in 1904. Further inland, Cobargo is a working village where artisans can be found in their galleries and studios demonstrating their skills.

Set between the beach and the Kosciuszko ski fields, it is possible to surf and ski on the same day from Bega. The town is also famous for its top quality dairy products and the Bega Cheese Heritage Centre is open for inspection. Close by is the Grevillea Estate Winery and historic Candelo Village, as well as several national parks; beaches and lakes that cater to all watersports.

Further south is the popular holiday resort of Merimbula with excellent fishing and surfing. For a day of fun visit the Magic Mountain Family Recreation Park, or Merimbula Aquarium and Wharf. Merimbula’s sister village of Pambula is characterised by quaint buildings dating back to the 1850s.

The former whaling town of Eden skirts beautiful Twofold Bay. There is much to see and enjoy in the area such as the Eden Killer Whale Museum, Ben Boyd National Park – ideal for fishing, swimming, camping and bushwalking, the
convict-built Seahorse Inn at Boydtown and whale watching expeditions in season (Oct-Nov).

Where to stay
Each of the towns and villages mentioned above offer a limited number of inexpensive motel, guesthouse and bed and breakfast accommodation. Both Batemans Bay and Ulladulla have a full range of budget to moderate resort accommodation from quality motels to caravan parks. Camp at a designated site at Jervis Bay, Seven Mile Beach or Morton and Ben Boyd National Parks. During peak holiday times it is best to make reservations in advance.

Southern Highlands
Bowral, the main resort town of this area is 109 km (68 miles) south west of Sydney. Trip duration: One day or overnight.

On the road
From Sydney, travel south west on the South Western (M5) Motorway that becomes the Hume Highway. From Moss Vale, Kangaroo Valley Road winds toward the coast returning to Sydney via Berry and the south coast beaches of the Illawarra region.

Must see
This is a region full of surprises with colourful gardens, antiques, Australian history, rolling green hillsides, plunging waterfalls and marvellous bushwalks. The Academy Award winning film Babe was filmed in the area. Enjoy the variety of places to stay, fabulous food and superb country hospitality of this lush, rural area.

At Mittagong, visit Kennerton Green with its romantic gardens and Heathray Alpaca Stud, see Australia’s largest needlework display at Victoria House and enjoy a picnic at Lake Alexandra.

In Bowral, stroll through Corbett Gardens, the showpiece of the annual tulip festival (Sep-Oct). Visit the Bradman Museum and Oval and learn about Australia’s cricketing history. Mount Gibraltar Reserve gives one of the best panoramic views of the Highlands from some excellent bushwalking trails.

Berrima is a superbly preserved 1830s Australian town. Visit the convict built gaol and courthouse, Berrima Lavender Farm, Joadja Vineyard, browse through the many galleries and antique and craft shops or linger over tea and scones at a quaint tea house. Moss Vale is another pretty town with gardens that reach their peak in Spring (Sep-Nov).

Morton National Park is one of the largest national parks in NSW with bushwalks to spectacular lookouts and waterfalls, particularly Fitzroy Falls. Hire a bike in Bundanoon and visit Glow Worm Glen. Wombeyan Caves is renowned for spectacular formations of stalagmites and stalactites.

Where to stay
All of the villages mentioned offer motel, guesthouses, bed and breakfast accommodation and luxury resorts with country comforts such as fine food, garden and wilderness walks, golf and horse riding. During peak holiday times it is best to make reservations in advance.
the rugged red soil plains of Outback New South Wales. There are a wealth of things to do in and around. Visitors can stroll through the historic streetscape in Arthur Street, classified by the National Trust, visit the School of the Air (reservations essential) and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, or take an underground mine tour. Just outside Broken Hill is the spectacular sculptural site, Living Desert Reserve.

Broken Hill has a vibrant art community inspired by the brilliant light and desert landscapes, and the town boasts up to 24 art galleries including the Broken Hill City Art Gallery and the famous Pro Hart Gallery.

The nearby ghost town of Silverton, once a thriving silver mining centre, is a place of red earth, solitary stone churches, crimson sunsets and camel rides. It is a favourite with film makers and films such as Mad Max II, A Town Like Alice and Priscilla Queen of the Desert were all shot here.

At the opal mining town of White Cliffs, a place where history and technology exist side by side, visit Jock’s Place, a dug-out home and mining museum, as well as the many historic underground buildings and opal showrooms.

Menindee Lakes, on the Darling River 100km (62 miles) south east from Broken Hill, is the spot for water sports, fishing and camping. The tiny town of Menindee is where the ill-fated explorers, Burke and Wills, stayed in 1860 on their journey north. Surrounding Menindee, Kinchega National Park is an oasis for wildlife amidst the dry red sand plains of the surrounding semi-arid region and home to emus, red kangaroos and countless birdlife.

Mootwingee National Park, 130km (80 miles) north-east of Broken Hill, is a place of golden scorched sandstone, deep gorges and rock pools as well as a wealth of Aboriginal relics and rock art. Take a guided tour from the Visitor Centre with a local ranger.

Where to stay
Broken Hill has a good range of hotels, motels, caravan parks and camp sites and there are good camping facilities at Menindee Lakes. Orange, Dubbo, Nyngan, Cobar and Wilcannia also offer overnight accommodation.

Blue Mountains
Katoomba, the main town of the area, is 114km (71 miles) west of Sydney. Trip duration: One day or overnight.

On the road
From Sydney, head west on the M4 Motorway linking up with the Great Western Highway at the base of the Mountains. Return to Sydney via Bells Line of Road through Richmond and Windsor.

Must see
On the way to the Blue Mountains stop in at the Australian Wildlife Park housing a large collection of native Australian animals and adjacent to Australia’s Wonderland, a theme park.

Penrith is a burgeoning city on the Nepean River and the site for the 2000 Olympic Games rowing events. Enjoy good shopping and a cruise on the river.

The Norman Lindsay Gallery at Lindsay’s home at Faulconbridge, gives a fascinating look at this prominent Australian’s life and work as an artist, writer and sculptor. The studio remains as he left it and the museum includes many fine examples of his work.

Wentworth Falls allows you to catch the first glimpse of the grandeur of the mountains and English-style gardens which are spectacular during autumn (Mar-May) and spring (Sep-Nov).

Leura is a beautiful village well known for its pretty gardens, arts and craft shops, cafes and tearooms. Visit the Leura Gardens Festival held in early October. From Sublime Point Lookout, a superb cliff drive follows the escarpment.

Katoomba is famous for the Three Sisters rock formations at Echo Point which stand like sentinels at the edge of the Jamison Valley. On the Scenic Railway, take a ride into the Jamison Valley, or take the Scenic Skyway, a cable car ride, for a heart-stopping view of the Three Sisters. The Edge Maxvision Cinema provides a breathtaking journey through the Blue Mountains on a giant movie screen. In the surrounding Blue Mountains National Park there is a network of bushwalks such as the Six Foot Track which links Katoomba and Jenolan Caves.

From Blackheath, view the Grose Valley at Govett’s Leap Lookout or drive through rainforests to the Megalong Valley for horse riding. Mount Victoria is a
National Trust classified village with craft shops and a museum; nearby waterfalls and Pulpit Rock Reserve.

Jenolan Caves, 80km (50 miles) southwest of Katoomba, contain some of the most interesting and labyrinthine underground caves and above-ground arches in Australia. The region is surrounded by forests, moist valleys and rugged mountains and ravines.

The Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens is a special cool climate complex, complete with restaurant, bookshop and barbecue area, on the Bells Line of Road. It is situated along the northern ridge and the views are breathtaking. Nearby is the village of Mount Wilson where the mixture of volcanic soils and mild climate produces wonderful flora.

The Zig Zag Railway near Lithgow is a major engineering feat of the 1860s and visitors can experience the arduous stretch of track aboard the vintage steam locomotives still in operation.

Where to stay
The Blue Mountains region offers five star resorts, luxury guesthouses, bed and breakfast establishments, motels, hotels, cabins, caravan parks and camp sites.

Pacific Coast Touring Route
(Central Coast, Holiday Coast and North Coast Tropical NSW)
Gosford, the gateway to the Central Coast, is 77km (48 miles) north of Sydney. Coffs Harbour, the centre of the Holiday Coast, is 551 km (344 miles) north of Sydney.

Trip duration: Four days or longer.

On the road
From Sydney head north across the Harbour Bridge, driving north along the Pacific Highway and onto the Sydney-Newcastle (F3/F1) Freeway passing alongside Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and over the Hawkesbury River.

Must see
At Somersby, visit Old Sydney Town, a recreation of Sydney’s original settlement and the Australian Reptile Park and Wildlife Sanctuary with a large collection of reptiles and native wildlife. From the F1, turn-off at the Gosford exit to explore the small seaside townships and white sandy beaches along the Central Coast, such as McMahons, Avoca, Terrigal and Forrester.

The Fragrant Garden at Erina, has old fashioned fragrant plants and herb gardens to browse through and a fine selection of pot pourri and fragrant oils to purchase.

The Entrance is a major lakeside and ocean resort centre on Tuggerah Lake, great for fishing, boating and water sports. Feed the pelicans daily from Memorial Park.

From The Entrance head back to the Pacific Highway and onto Newcastle, stopping off on the shores of Lake Macquarie, Australia’s largest coastal lake.

The Pacific Highway continues north to the Queensland border. Almost halfway between Sydney and Brisbane is Coffs Harbour, where an adventure holiday can include white water rafting, sky diving, 4WD tours, game fishing, scuba diving, surfing and horse riding. Muttonbird Island on the harbour is a great vantage point to view the annual migration of humpback whales from May to December.

Further north Cape Byron at Byron Bay is the mostly easterly point on the Australian mainland. A haven for surfers and nature lovers, dolphins can be seen at Byron Bay year round and from the Cape Byron Lighthouse whales can be seen migrating between May and December.

Where to stay
All the seaside towns above have excellent accommodation. The regions are well serviced with motels, resorts, backpackers hostels, camping grounds and caravan parks.

Newcastle/Port Stephens
169km (105 miles) north of Sydney.

Trip duration: One day or longer.

On the road
From Sydney, follow the Sydney-Newcastle (F3) Freeway to the Newcastle turn off.

Must see
Newcastle is the second largest city in New South Wales and a busy industrial port. Newcastle’s harbour serves the area’s coal mining and steel industries and the city has a relaxed feel, with unpolluted surfing beaches including Nobby’s Beach, Newcastle Beach and Bar Beach within easy driving distance.
In Newcastle, visit Fort Scratchley with its stunning city and coastal views and the Maritime and Military Museum. Queens Wharf is the centrepoint of foreshore redevelopment with a replica of the first Australian-built steamship, restaurants and bars. The heritage walk through the city centre passes historical buildings, terrace houses and the Newcastle Regional Museum.

Take a cruise and explore Newcastle Harbour, or enjoy a full day tour along the Hunter River up to Morpeth. A scenic drive from the city centre winds along spectacular coastline, past the Bogey Hole, a historic rock pool chiselled into the rocks by the first convicts, through King Edward Park with its lookout point with stunning coastal views. Visit the Wetlands Centre which provides a sanctuary to migratory birds and wildlife on the edge of the city.

To reach Port Stephens, head north along the Pacific Highway turning off to Stockton and Nelson Bay, past Fighter World and the Williamtown Air Base. This blue water paradise offers numerous safe swimming beaches and a diverse range of water-based activities such as sailing and diving, as well as good fishing. The bay is home to dozens of bottlenose dolphins which can be observed up close by taking one of the dolphin watch cruises. The area also offers numerous bushwalks taking in the stunning coastal scenery and the chance to observe koalas in the wild.

Myall Lakes is further north and reached via the Pacific Highway. At Bulahdelah, turn off to Bombah Point for the Myall Lakes National Park where four huge lakes surrounded by bushland cover an area of 110 km² (42 m²).

Where to stay
The Newcastle area and Port Stephens offer a full range of accommodation from luxury resorts to caravan parks. Myall Lakes is a popular centre for houseboat holidays.

The Hunter Region
Cessnock, the gateway to the Hunter, is 183km (114 miles) north of Sydney.

Trip duration: One day or longer.

On the road
The Hunter Valley Wine Country is divided into the Lower and Upper Hunter wine regions.

Cessnock, the gateway to the Lower Hunter, is accessed via the Sydney-Newcastle (F3) Freeway, or take the Calga exit and travel via Wollombi.

Denman, the centre of the Upper Hunter wineries, is accessed by travelling north from Cessnock to the New England Highway and taking the Denman turnoff.

Must see
Vintage in the Hunter Valley Wine Country is held during February-March and is the period where the grapes of that year’s vintage are harvested.

Cessnock, in the Lower Hunter Valley, is the closest township to the wineries of the Pokolbin region. The area has the oldest commercial vineyards and produces fine red and white wines. Among the 40 plus local wineries are Drayton’s, Hungerford Hill, McWilliam’s Mount Pleasant, Lindemans, Oakvale, Rothbury, Tyrrell’s and Wyndham Estate. South from Cessnock, Wollombi is a picturesque village on the convict-built Great North Road and has fine century-old sandstone buildings.

Maitland, the commercial centre for the Hunter Valley, is a busy city with many historic buildings, including Maitland City Art Gallery. Discover the city on a self-guided heritage walk. An hour’s drive north-west are the beautiful foothills of the Barrington Tops. Just east of Maitland is Morpeth, a historic country town popular with visitors to its craft and antique markets.

The tiny town of Denman, at the heart of the Upper Hunter Valley, is a prime producer of white wines as well as some major red wine varieties. Major vineyards include Arrowfield, Cruickshank Callatoota Estate, Horseshoe Vineyard, Reynolds Yarraman, Rosemount Estate and Serenella Estate.

Branxton Inn Gallery was originally established as an inn in 1843 and is only 15 minutes drive from most vineyards. The gallery includes an enclosed garden, dining area, cocktail lounge and gallery with an array of artworks.

Where to stay
The Hunter Valley area has all types of accommodation including exclusive resorts, bed and breakfast inns, motels and cabins and some wineries offer accommodation on site.

Cooma and the Snowy Mountains
Cooma, the main town of this area, is 409 km (255 miles) south of Sydney.

Trip duration: Minimum of four days.

On the road
Take the South Western (M5) Motorway from Sydney to link-up with the Hume Highway. From Goulburn, the Federal Highway leads to Canberra and the alternative Queanbeyan by-pass onto the Monaro Highway to Cooma. An alternative to the “straight run” from Sydney, is an overnight stay in Canberra. From the nation’s capital, it is a comfortable 2.5
A two-hour drive to the Snowy Mountains region.

**Must see**
Cooma is a busy tourist centre, a good base for sightseeing and is the focus of commercial activity for the Snowy Mountains. From June to October, Cooma and the Snowy Mountains area experiences its winter season, when visitors can enjoy the New South Wales ski slopes. During these months it is compulsory for vehicles entering the Kosciuszko National Park to carry snow chains. In summer the area offers a wide range of outdoor activities including bushwalking, fishing and water sports.

Jindabyne is the primary off-snow ski centre, and is famous for fishing and other water sports on its beautiful lake. During the ski season in particular, it is a hub for nightlife with discos and restaurants.

Perisher Blue, within the Kosciuszko National Park, is Australia's largest ski resort incorporating Perisher, Smiggins, Blue Cow and Guthega. There is a variety of on-snow accommodation styles and runs to suit the beginner through to the advanced skier.

Thredbo, considered by many to be Australia's premier winter resort, is also gaining a reputation as a unique high country summer retreat ideal for bushwalking and wildflower displays. Year round, Thredbo is full of life and activity and chairlifts operate to get you up to the main mountain range.

Catch the Skitube from Bullock's Flat on the Alpine Way. The train ride through the mountains to Perisher Valley takes 10 minutes or continue on another 5 minutes to the Blue Cow Skitube terminal.

Kosciuszko National Park protects Australia's unique alpine flora and fauna and provides an endless array of experiences and sights. Try one of the numerous walks throughout the park including walks to Mt Kosciuszko, Australia's highest point. Entry fees into Kosciuszko National Park are $A12 per car, per day or an annual permit for all NSW national parks is $A60 and can be purchased at the park gates.

**Where to stay**
Each of the towns and resorts mentioned (excluding Blue Cow Mountain which is a day centre only) offer a full range of accommodation and a large number of resort style facilities.

**Contacts**
Sydney Visitor Centre
106 George St
The Rocks, Sydney  NSW  2000
Tel: + 61 2 9255 1788
Fax: + 61 2 9241 5010

**NORTHERN TERRITORY**

The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Darwin.

**Litchfield National Park**
Litchfield National Park is 129km (80 miles) south-west of Darwin.

**Trip duration:** One day, or overnight

**On the road**
Drive down the Stuart Highway, known locally as “The Track”, travelling via Batchelor.

**Must see**
Litchfield National Park is a protected area of rocky escarpments, clean running streams and tumbling waterfalls. It offers a true taste of the Top End with rainforests, winding roads and glimpses of local Aboriginal history and culture.

To reach Florence Falls, follow the Litchfield Park Road, a well-graded winding road, which leads through rocky hills to picnic grounds where the waterfalls cascade down steep escarpments to a deep rock pool.

Follow a one kilometre walk to Buley Rockhole. From here, drive to Tolmer Falls and on to Wangi Falls and the magnificent waterhole.

If you decide to return to Darwin via Berry Springs, visit the following attractions. Berry Springs, 58km (36 miles) from Darwin via the Stuart Highway, offers safe swimming in pleasantly warm water. The birdlife includes lorikeets, parrots and honeyeaters. Nearby Territory Wildlife Park comprises 400ha (988 acres) of bushland.
which is home to much of the Northern Territory’s native flora and fauna. All animals are presented within their natural surroundings. Wander along 6 kilometres of bush trails or ride the free shuttle trains which link all exhibits.

The Darwin Crocodile Farm, 40km (25 miles) from Darwin, is spread over grounds with natural billabongs and lakes housing thousands of crocodiles. Crocodile feeding takes place daily at 2pm, as well as 12noon on weekends. Onsite facilities include kiosk, souvenir shop, picnic area and wheelchair access.

**Where to stay**
If you wish to spend more time exploring the region, within Litchfield National Park itself, camping is the only option, Wangi Falls having excellent camping facilities. In Batchelor, three-star accommodation and on-site caravans are available.

**Kakadu National Park**
Kakadu National Park is 257km (159 miles) west of Darwin.

**Trip duration:** A minimum of two days.

**On the road**
Travel down the Stuart Highway for 34km (20 miles) on good bitumen roads. Turn left at the Arnhem Highway for the Kakadu National Park entry. The park entry is 150km (93 miles) from the Arnhem Highway turn-off. Alternatively you can travel via the Stuart Highway to Pine Creek 230km (143 miles) from Darwin. Turn left onto the Kakadu Highway and access via the southern entrance ranger station.

**Must see**
The remarkable Kakadu National Park is a World Heritage region stretching 200km (124 miles) north to south and 100km (62 miles) east to west. The park’s Aboriginal history dates back at least 25,000 years and is dramatically illustrated by natural galleries of unique rock art. Kakadu has one of the largest wild wetlands in the world, providing a living environment for all types of wildlife. Road conditions in the park vary and it is wise to use a four-wheel-drive vehicle. Sealed roads are usually open all year, but some roads are impassable in the tropical summer (Nov-Apr). Visitors more than 16 years of age are required to pay a ‘Park Use’ fee of $A15.

A copy of “What’s On” is available from the Entrance Station on the Arnhem Highway and the Bowali Visitor Centre on the Kakadu Highway. “What’s On” provides you with all the information you need, including a schedule of ranger guided tours and slide shows (May-Oct).

Fogg Dam is a wildlife reserve on the way to Kakadu where animal and birdlife abounds. The dam is a likely spot to see crocodiles, wallabies, pelicans and the jabiru, a native stork. Best viewing times are early morning or late afternoon.

At Adelaide River cruises are available and feature close sightings of crocodiles. Take a boat cruise along the South Alligator River catchment which flows through the middle of Kakadu to view crocodiles and extensive birdlife. At Point Farewell at the mouth of the river you can see many different species of mangroves.

Yellow Waters, one of the largest and most popular billabongs in Kakadu, is renowned for its abundant wildlife including the blue kingfisher and the jabiru. The wetlands are one of the most accessible places to see waterbirds and crocodiles – from the safety and comfort of a boat.

Ubirr is a gallery of Aboriginal rock paintings dating back at least 60,000 years. It depicts mythical and spiritual figures and an ancient way of life which, in some respects, endures to this day. During the tropical summer (Nov-Apr), Ubirr may be impassable due to flooded roads.

Manggarre monsoon forest walk is open May to December. The track is north of the East Alligator River Road and is an easy 1.5km (1 mile) circuit through rainforest along the river. Nourlangie Rock, 31km (19 miles) south of Bowali Visitor Centre, is an Aboriginal rock art site and bushwalking lookout. The road is sealed and accessible all year round.

At Jim Jim and Twin Falls majestic sandstone walls stand hundreds of metres above a placid rock pool. Jim Jim is a sparkling spectacle as the torrent drops 200 metres (656 feet). The falls may be cut
off in the wet season (Nov-Apr). Twin Falls lies deep within a gorge and you must swim or paddle over the crystal clear waters to view the permanent cascade.

Where to stay
Accommodation in the park includes Gagudju Lodge Cooinda, Gagudju Crocodile Hotel, Kakadu Holiday Village, Kakadu Lodge and Caravan Park, tent sites, powered caravan sites, with pool facilities, restaurants and stores. For eating out, there are licensed establishments with barbecue and poolside facilities, coffee lounges, taverns and bars.

Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park
Nitmiluk National Park is located 337km (209 miles) south of Darwin. Trip duration: A minimum of three days.

On the road
Travel south along the Stuart Highway to Katherine.

Must see
The town of Katherine, home to 10,500 people, is located on the southern side of the Katherine River and has good facilities, including parks and a golf course. The sides of Katherine Gorge (Nitmiluk) tower more than 60m (196 feet) over the slow-moving water in the dry season. Caves dot the ancient rock walls; Aboriginal paintings adorn the rock faces above the floodline and many species of reptiles and amphibians inhabit the area. The best way to see the gorge is on a flat-bottomed boat tour.

Springvale Homestead, 8km (5 miles) from Katherine, was built in 1879 and is the oldest remaining homestead in the Northern Territory. Swim, fish, canoe, enjoy a horse or trail bike ride, view an Aboriginal corroboree and take scenic tours of the homestead.

Edith Falls, 61km (38 miles) north-east of Katherine, is a perfect spot for a picnic, a swim or to camp overnight.

At Pine Creek, 92km (57 miles) north of Katherine, you can pan for gold at this old gold-mining township which dates back to the 1870s.

Where to stay
At Katherine, choose from holiday villages, motor inns, hotels, motels, lodges, an historic homestead and a number of caravan parks. At Mataranka you will find a restaurant and accommodation ranging from camping to motel and self-contained units.

For further information contact: Katherine Region Tourist Association PO Box 555 Cnr Stuart Hwy & Lindsay Avenue Katherine NT 0850 Tel: + 61 8 8972 2650 Fax: + 61 8 8972 2969

Katherine – Tennant Creek – Alice Springs
Tennant Creek is located 672km (418 miles) south of Katherine with Alice Springs a further 505km (313 miles) south. Trip duration: A minimum of two days.

On the road
Travel south along the Stuart Highway.

Must see
Along the road from Katherine to Tennant Creek you will find such attractions as John Flynn Memorial, Attack Creek Historical Reserve and historical townships like Newcastle Waters and Larimah.

Cutta Cutta Caves, 27km (17 miles) south of Katherine, are a series of labyrinthine limestone caverns connected by narrow passages which meander for about 700m (2,296 feet) beneath the surface.

Mataranka, 106km (66 miles) south east from Katherine, once part of a huge sheep station, is now a nature park with camping grounds. It is known for its thermal pool set in a tropical forest of tall palms and eucalypts.

Where to stay
Motel style accommodation is available at the Desert Sands Motel and the Eldorado Motor Lodge.

ALICE SPRINGS
A number of drives from Alice Springs lead through the grandeur of the Red Centre. The area has a sense of distance and space where dusty outback tracks meander through flat spinifex deserts and rocky mountain ranges. The following are a sample of popular drives from Alice Springs. These drives should be carefully planned and undertaken in a four-wheel drive vehicle where indicated.

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park is located 450km (280 miles) south of Alice Springs. Trip duration: Overnight or longer.

On the road
Take the Stuart Highway south from Alice Springs and turn onto the fully sealed Lasseter Highway near Erldunda. You can drive to Ayers Rock/Uluru and Mt
Olga/Kata Tjuta comfortably in about six hours.

**Must see**

*Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park* is of vital cultural and religious significance to the Anangu (the traditional owners) whose ancestors lived in the area for more than 10,000 years.

The best place to get all your information is to start at the *Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre*. Take a guided walk around the base of Ayers Rock/Uluru, the world's biggest monolith, with a ranger and learn about the history and way of life of the local Aboriginal people.

Anangu Tours offer you the exclusive opportunity of being hosted by local Aboriginal guides, gaining insight into Anangu history, skills and lifestyle. These small group tours allow the visitor to learn first hand from Anangu custodians the special cultural values of this World Heritage landscape. Tours depart from Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre.

Continue on 32km (20 miles) west to the spectacular domes of *Mt Olga/Kata Tjuta*, once thought to have been part of a monolith many times larger than Ayers Rock/Uluru. The Olgas/Kata Tjuta are a dramatic series of 36 head-like rock formations which stand up to 564m (1,850 feet) tall.

**Where to stay**

At the Ayers Rock Resort accommodation includes a range of luxury hotels, motels, hostel/lodge and camping facilities.

**West MacDonnell Ranges/Mereenie Loop**

The Mereenie Loop Road runs for 326km (202 miles) west of Alice Springs. **Trip duration**: one day to overnight.

**On the road**

The Mereenie Loop is the group of roads which link Alice Springs and Ayers Rock via the West MacDonnell Ranges and Kings Canyon. Take the Larapinta Drive west out of Alice Springs and join up with Namatjira Drive, head towards Kings Canyon on Ernest Giles Road and take Larapinta Drive back to Alice Springs.

4WD vehicle is recommended for the journey on the Mereenie Loop Road. A permit to travel through Aboriginal land is required, and can be obtained from Kings Canyon Lodge, Hermannsburg, or the Central Australian Visitor Information Centre in Alice Springs. Stopping or sidetrips are not allowed on the Mereenie Loop Road.

**Must see**

*Simpsons Gap National Park*, 20km (12.5 miles) from Alice Springs, offers wildlife viewing, barbecue facilities and a visitors centre. *Standley Chasm*, 32km (20 miles) further on, is a photographer’s delight when the overhead sun strikes the red rock walls. Continue on to *Ellery Creek Big Hole Nature Park*, with its high, red cliffs, large waterhole, shady gum trees and picnic facilities. Passing through *Serpentine Gorge Nature Park*, and the *Ochre Pits* head for *Ormiston Gorge*, one of the most colourful spots in the West MacDonnell Ranges. Here you will find good walking tracks, a camping ground, barbecue facilities and a visitor centre.

Just one kilometre further on, explore *Glen Helen Gorge Nature Park* and discover the scenic rock formations of the *Finke River Gorge*. Continue on to Tyler Pass and take the Mereenie Loop Road that leads into Watarrka National Park featuring *Kings Canyon*, one of the Red Centre’s most interesting and scenic areas which includes beauty spots such as *The Lost City* and *The Garden of Eden*. A climb to the rim of the Canyon provides spectacular views. There are good campsites and lodge accommodation available at Kings Canyon.

Leaving Kings Canyon, head back on to the Mereenie Loop Road, towards *Hermannsburg*, an Aboriginal settlement. From here the main access road into *Palm Valley* is easy to follow. The valley is a sudden contrast with its beautiful rock pools and ancient palm trees.

**Where to stay**

Kings Canyon is a modern resort situated in Watarrka National Park set in natural surroundings. Camping is available.

**Contacts**

For further information on any of the Northern Territory drives mentioned above, contact the regional travel centres listed, or the following:
Central Australian Tourism Industry
Association
Cnr Gregory Tce & Hartley St
Alice Springs NT 0870
Tel: + 61 8 8952 5800
Fax: + 61 8 8953 0295

Darwin Regional Tourism Association
Cnr Knuckley & Mitchell Sts
Darwin NT 0800
Tel: + 61 8 8981 4300
Fax: + 61 8 8981 7346

Automobile Association of the Northern Territory (AANT)
79-81 Smith Street
Darwin NT 0800
Tel: + 61 8 8981 3837
Fax: + 61 8 8941 2965

QUEENSLAND

The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Brisbane.

**Gold Coast**
Coolangatta is 105km (65 miles) south of Brisbane.

**Trip duration:** One day or longer.

**On the road**
Head south from Brisbane on the Pacific Highway and turn off onto the Gold Coast Highway past Oxenford.

**Must see**
The Gold Coast consists of 70km (43 miles) of coastline boasting 42km (26 miles) of golden beaches stretching from Southport in the north to Coolangatta in the south. To the west is the lush subtropical Gold Coast hinterland.

**Surfers Paradise,** with its towering skyline and beachfront esplanade, is the hub of Gold Coast high life. You will find nightlife, entertainment, sporting facilities, world class golf courses, shopping, restaurants and cafes. **Pacific Fair Shopping Resort** at Broadbeach is Queensland’s largest shopping complex. Try your luck at the nearby Conrad Jupiters Casino.

Further south at Currambin, feed the thousands of lorikeets (colourful parrots) that flock daily to the **Currimbum Wildlife Sanctuary.** Experience Australian fauna and flora in the 28ha (70 acres) of bushland and gardens where you can wander among tame kangaroos, wallabies and emus.

Heading north from Southport to Brisbane, **Sea World** on The Spit at Main Beach, is the largest marine park in the southern hemisphere with performances by dolphins and sea lions and a wide range of rides and attractions. Also on The Spit overlooking the Broadwater is **Fisherman’s Wharf,** a complex of specialty shops, outdoor cafes and restaurants.

At Oxenford, **Warner Bros Movie World** is ‘Hollywood on the Gold Coast’, a movie-based theme park with recreated movie sets and themed rides. Close by is **Wet ’n Wild Water Park,** Australia’s largest aquatic fun park with a giant wave pool, waterslide, adventure pool, poolside movies and white water adventures on tandem tube rafts.

**Dreamworld** has eleven themed areas with a variety of rides, shows and attractions to experience. At Tiger Island, tigers swim and play with their handlers and in Koala Country see native animals and cuddle a koala.

**Cable Sports World** is a water ski park comprising 5 fresh water lakes with floodlights for night time activities. Activities include water skiing, jet skiing, mini speed boats, windsurfing, bungy/sling shot, go karts and more.

**Where to stay**
The Gold Coast offers a full range of accommodation from caravan parks to five-star hotels and resorts.

**Gold Coast Hinterland**
Brisbane to Tamborine Mountain National Park 65km (40 miles); to Lamington National Park 107km (66 miles); to Springbrook National Park 138km (86 miles).

**Trip duration:** One day or longer.

**On the road**
The Gold Coast hinterland is best approached from Brisbane via the Pacific Highway or the Mount Lindesay Highway.

**Must see**
The hinterland is a subtropical hideaway with numerous national parks and reserves. At **Tamborine Mountain National Park** palms, staghorns, ferns and orchids grow in profusion in the clean mountain air. Places to visit include **Palm Grove** with its extensive walking tracks among the piccabeen palms; **Macrozamia Grove** where cycads, ancient palm-like plants, are thought to be 100 years old and **Witches Falls,** the oldest park in the state known for its flower growing and avocado farms. To
access Mt Tamborine, turn off the Pacific Highway at Oxenford and travel 20km (13 miles) west along the Oxenford-Tamborine Road.

Lamington National Park is the largest, most spectacular natural stand of subtropical rainforest in Australia and offers some 160km of walking tracks. Access from Brisbane is via Canungra and via Nerang from the Gold Coast. The region covers over 20,000ha (50,000 acres) of densely forested valleys cascading waterfalls and magnificent views over plunging gorges. Lamington lies on the southern side of the Scenic Rim and is part of the World Heritage listed Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves. The park has two main visitor areas – Binna Burra and Green Mountains.

Binna Burra has circuit walks suitable for everyone leading through the rainforest beauty. See many species of birds including crimson rosellas and satin bowerbirds, and native fauna such as possums, wallabies and bandicoots. There are picnic facilities and a campsite kiosk sells basic supplies. Binna Burra Mountain Lodge offers good standard accommodation.

At Green Mountains, a walking track system provides easy access to the park’s forests, creeks and waterfalls. Picnic in the fresh mountain air or take a cooling dip in one of the many swimming holes. Kamaran Lookout has a spectacular view over the Canungra Valley and a picnic area. O’Reilly’s Rainforest Guesthouse offers comfortable accommodation and there is a kiosk for day trippers.

Springbrook National Park has cool rainforests and eucalypt groves, panoramic lookout areas, picnic grounds and walking tracks. The national park covers an area from Mt Cougal in the east, to Natural Bridge in the Numinbah Valley to the west. Springbrook is 29km (18 miles) from Mudgeeraba on the Pacific Highway via the Merang-Murwillumbah Road.

The plateau is a remnant of the northern side of a once huge volcano that was centred on Mount Warning and, over time, abundant rainfall has created numerous creeks, spectacular waterfalls, deep gorges and rugged cliff lines in the volcanic rocks. In the Numinbah Valley on the southern Queensland border is the Natural Arch, a spectacular waterfall which plunges through a stone archway into a rockpool below.

Where to stay
The region has lodges, guesthouses and campsites. Backpack camping is permitted at specified sites within the parks, with some seasonal restrictions.

Toowoomba and the Golden West
Toowoomba is 91 km (56 miles) west of Brisbane.

Trip duration: One day or overnight

On the road
From Brisbane travel west along the Warrego Highway to Toowoomba. Return to Brisbane via the New England and Cunningham Highways.

Must see
Toowoomba, the “Garden City of Queensland” is situated on the crest of the Great Dividing Range. During Spring, (Sep-Nov) the city celebrates the “Carnival of Flowers” when visitors can tour the award winning private gardens and the 150 public parks. The Golden West comprises a vast expanse of rural Queensland, including the Darling Downs, one of the richest agricultural areas in the country.

The Blue Arrow Drive around the city is a must for visitors passing many fine examples of 1880s Classical Revival architecture. Vacy Hall, formerly a stately 1880s home now provides overnight accommodation in a heritage listed building, restored to its original grandeur. Australia’s finest collection of horse drawn vehicles is on display at the Cobb and Co. Museum.

The Jondaryan Woolshed on the Warrego Highway, is an Australian rural heritage park and a living museum of pioneering Australia. There are shearing and blacksmith demonstrations, an animal nursery and one of the largest collections of old farm machinery and tractors in Australia. The property also hosts sheep dog trials and country music quests.

Heading north from Toowoomba along the New England Highway, the beautiful Bunya Mountains National Park, part of the Great Dividing Range, provides a spectacular backdrop for this region. Wander through the towering Bunya pines, pass by cool waterfalls and streams where delicate orchids grow. The park is home to wildlife including wallabies, possums and many types of birdlife. The park features an extensive network of walking tracks and picnic areas.
Southern Downs
Warwick is 157km (97 miles) south west from Brisbane.
Trip duration: One day or overnight

On the road
Travel south west from Brisbane along the New England Highway.

Must see
Warwick, known as the “Rose and Rodeo City” is home to Australia’s most famous rodeo, held in October each year. A great way to spend a day or more is on a scenic mountain drive through the small town of Killarney and on to Queen Mary Falls National Park and the “land where rivers are born”. Here you will find a number of spectacular cascading waterfalls, lookouts, hanging moss gardens and bushwalks. Some of this country provides excellent four wheel driving routes, such as the awesome Condamine Gorge.

North east from Warwick on the Cunningham Highway, Cunningham’s Gap, part of Main Range National Park and the World Heritage listed Scenic Rim, stands as a gateway to the lush countryside of the Southern Downs. There are a number of rainforest walking circuits, picnic areas and camping grounds. From Fassifern Valley Lookout there is a fine view to the north and east.

Stanthorpe is in the heart of ‘The Granite Belt’, 58km (36 miles) south of Warwick on the New England Highway and a great base for exploring the national parks and wineries of the region. Travel up to Mount Markey Lookout for excellent views over the countryside and wineries.

Known as the ‘place of flowers’ Girraween National Park, on the Queensland/New South Wales border, is dominated by massive granite rocks and is the home of Bald Rock, Australia’s second largest rock and largest exposed granite rock. There are also spectacular wildflower displays, open forest and native birds in the park.

The Southern Downs is abundant in creeks, rivers and dams that support the popular pastimes of fishing, boating, swimming and water sports. The bigger dams, such as Leslie and Coolmunda Dams are stocked with fish and also provide picnic and camping sites.

Where to stay
Accommodation types range from motels, country pubs, caravan parks with on-site cabins and vans, to farm and home stays, cottages, guesthouses and bed and breakfast lodges.

The Bruce Highway
Noosa is 107km (67 miles); Maryborough 258km (160 miles); Bundaberg 370km (230 miles) north from Brisbane.
Trip duration: One day or longer.

On the road
Travel north from Brisbane along the Bruce Highway, which stretches along the east coast of Queensland from Brisbane to Cairns.

Must see
The Sunshine Coast stretches from Bribie Island, north to Rainbow Beach and Fraser Island. The region has golden beaches, scenic hinterland, lush rainforest, mountains, crystal-clear lakes and waterways.

The Glasshouse Mountains is a group of volcanic peaks that dominate the landscape of the Sunshine Coast hinterland and offer bushwalking, rock climbing and picnicking. Further north is the Australia Zoo where venomous snakes, lizards and native Australian animals can be seen. The Crocodile Environment Park has guided tours enabling visitors to see crocodiles and alligators in the natural surroundings.

When travelling from the south, The Blackall Ranges are reached by taking the Glasshouse Mountains Tourist Road and then at Landsborough taking Maleny Road. The tour offers outstanding views of the Sunshine Coast from the many lookouts. The towns of Mapleton, Flaxton, Montville and Maleny are renowned for their galleries, antique and craft shops. Blackall Range National Park features the 80 metre (262 feet) Kondalilla Falls which drop into a valley of rainforest.

At Aussie World on the Bruce Highway, there are a variety of rides and attractions, as well as a wide range of shopping. At the end of the day, visit the famous Ettamogah Pub and enjoy music with an Australian meal. A new Aboriginal Cultural Centre displays Aboriginal arts and crafts and holds demonstrations of Aboriginal culture such as didgeridoo playing, boomerang throwing and song and movement.

In the picturesque town of Buderim, link up with an historic and scenic drive near the main shopping area. Turn onto Lindsay Road where Burnett and Main Streets meet. Follow the scenic drive signs past many points of interest and enjoy the sweeping views from the mountain-top. The route concludes in Ballinger Crescent, near your starting point.

At Mooloolaba visit UnderWater World, one of the largest tropical oceanariums in
the Southern Hemisphere, displaying a diverse range of aquatic life.

The Big Pineapple at Nambour is a sub-tropical fruit plantation specialising in pineapples and other tropical fruits, macadamia nuts, spices and sugar cane. Further north at Yandina, The Ginger Factory is Australia's only ginger factory with a Gingertown Train Tour and factory inspection. Also housed within the grounds is Bunya Park, a wildlife sanctuary of Australian flora and fauna, including one of the largest koala breeding colonies in Australia.

Noosa is the hub of the Sunshine Coast. Noosa National Park, on the headland of Laguna Bay, contains a network of walking tracks that wind through rainforests and offer spectacular ocean views. There is an animal sanctuary and coastal lakes inhabited by swans, pelicans and ducks.

The coloured sands in the Cooloola section of Great Sandy National Park rise in multi-coloured cliffs to over 200 metres (656 feet). Catch a barge at Tewantin and head up the beach to see the beautiful coloured sands, bubbling springs and the wreck of the Cherry Venture. At Lake Freshwater detour to Rainbow Beach – suitable for a 4WD only.

World Heritage listed Fraser Island is the world’s largest sand island stretching up the coast from south of Maryborough to north of Bundaberg. There are no sealed roads on Fraser, but the island is well covered by four wheel drive vehicle and walking tracks. Hervey Bay is Fraser Island’s best access point and boasts one of the best vantage points to see humpback whales between August and October. Vehicular barges operate daily from Hervey Bay and from Inskip Point to the island.

Maryborough is the ‘Heritage City’ with historical buildings, colonial houses and a heritage walk and drive tour. The Heritage Walk takes in 28 key historic buildings in the central business district and the driving tour covers up to 80 sites. At Natureworld, natural surroundings provide the setting for Australian wildlife and attract a wide variety of visiting birdlife.

In the Bundaberg and Coral Isles region, there are over 140km (87 miles) of unspoilt beaches stretching from Woodgate to the Town of 1770, the site of Captain James Cook’s first Queensland landing. The world’s largest living marine formation, the Great Barrier Reef, begins off the coast of Bundaberg and stretches some 2000km (1242 miles) north.

Discover the real flavour of Queensland at the Bundaberg Rum Distillery in East Bundaberg where tours operate throughout the year. Sugar cane fires can also be seen in the area from July to November. Fairymead House Sugar Museum depicts the history of the sugar industry in the Bundaberg area.

Mon Repos Beach, 14km (9 miles) east of Bundaberg, is Australia’s largest and most accessible turtle rookery. The area is an Environmental Park and boasts a modern visitor centre providing visitors with an understanding and appreciation of turtle biology, behaviour and management through displays and audio visuals. Access to Mon Repos beach is limited during the turtle season, with rangers conducting guided walks each night.

Inland from Bundaberg on the Burnett Highway, Cania Gorge National Park features prominent sandstone cliffs up to 70 metres (230 feet) high, cave formations, rainforest on sheltered slopes, open eucalypt forest and is an important wildlife habitat.

Where to stay
There are five-star hotels and resorts, superbly appointed beach and river-front holiday apartments, inexpensive motels, caravan parks and camping areas.

Capricorn Coast
Rockhampton is 637km (398 miles) north from Brisbane.
Trip duration: 3 days to a week
On the road
Travel north from Brisbane via the coastal Bruce Highway or inland via the Burnett Highway.

Must see
The Dreamtime Cultural Centre in Rockhampton is Australia’s largest centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. At the Koorana Crocodile Farm, a breeding farm, you can touch and hold a specially trained crocodile.

Olsen’s Capricorn Caverns, 23km (14 miles) north of the city, are 16 limestone caves, with the highlight being Cathedral Cave. Guided tours, adventure and night tours are available by arrangement. During December when the sun is directly over the Tropic of Capricorn, a beam of blinding sunlight is projected through a vertical shaft at midday.

Mount Morgan, 38km (24 miles) south-west of Rockhampton on the Burnett Highway, was once a thriving commercial centre but today is a living museum of a vital period in Australia’s history.

To the west of Rockhampton, along the Capricorn Highway, travel through some of Central Queensland’s richest agricultural and mining areas to the Central Highlands and Gemfields. Emerald is the hub of this rich area, neighbouring the towns of Anakie, Rubyvale and Sapphire – all located on the largest sapphire bearing gemfields in the southern hemisphere. Try your luck at finding your own gemstone, browse through exclusive jewellery boutiques or experience an underground mine tour.

From Emerald head south along the Gregory and Dawson Highways to the magnificent Carnarvon National Park. The Carnarvon Gorge section of this park features spectacular white vertical sandstone cliffs and is a popular destination for campers. Formed walking tracks lead through forests of eucalypt, she-oaks, tall cabbage palms and relic macrozamia palms. Two major Aboriginal art sites, the Art Gallery and Cathedral Cave, contain impressive rock paintings.

Heading further north along the Bruce Highway and turning inland at Mackay, Eungella National Park is Queensland’s largest rainforest national park. The walking trails offer breathtaking rainforest and mountain views, waterfalls and crystal clear streams and natural rock pools.

Townsville
Townsville is 1,430km (888 miles) north of Brisbane, Cairns is a further 374km (232 miles) north of Townsville. 
Trip duration: Minimum of four days from Brisbane, or one day from Cairns.

On the road
Follow the Bruce Highway south from Cairns, passing through the towns of Tully, Cardwell and Ingham. From Brisbane travel north along the Bruce Highway.

Must see
Townsville is the largest tropical city in Australia and the commercial centre of north Queensland, a region which extends 750km (465 miles), from Mission Beach in the north, Bowen in the south, Charters Towers in the west and east to the islands of the Great Barrier Reef. Cruise ferries and yachts depart regularly for the islands. The town has many fine buildings including art galleries and museums. Townsville is a major gateway to some of the best parts of the Great Barrier Reef and world heritage listed rainforests.

Many of the shops and stores in Flinders Mall are housed within historic buildings. Nearby the Sheraton Breakwater Casino overlooks the marina and Magnetic Island and has extensive gaming facilities and entertainment. At the Great Barrier Reef Wonderland, walk underwater in the world’s largest coral reef aquarium, watch a show at the Omnimax Theatre or stroll through the Museum of Tropical Queensland. This is the terminal for ferries to Magnetic Island and the Great Barrier Reef. For a panoramic view of the city and islands be sure to visit Townsville’s Castle Hill Lookout.

Just south of town is Billabong Sanctuary, a wildlife reserve where you can feed koalas and kangaroos, together with wetlands, rainforests and environmental parks.

To the north, Mission Beach is 14km (8.6 miles) of white sand beach and is fringed with lush green tropical rainforest. Mission Beach shelters beneath the shadow of the Bellenden Ker Ranges where Queensland’s highest peak, Mount Bartle Frere is heavily clad in mist-capped jungle. There are about 20 islands to visit just off the Mission Beach coast. At Tully River, North and South Johnstone River, experience the thrill of rafting down the wild rapids.

Travel inland from Townsville to the gold rush towns of Charters Towers and Ravenswood.

Where to stay
A full range of accommodation is available; choose from luxurious resorts and hotels, historic pubs, family hotels and motels, caravan parks, backpacker hostels and camping sites and farmstays.
**Tropical North Queensland**

Cairns is 1,807km (1,122 miles) north of Brisbane.

**Trip duration:** A minimum of seven days if travelling from Brisbane to Cairns.

**On the road**
The long stretch of the Bruce Highway leads north from Brisbane.

**Must see**
Cairns is the capital of Tropical North Queensland and gateway to the wilderness areas of Cape York, the magnificent Daintree Rainforest, the hills of the Atherton Tableland and the islands and reefs of Great Barrier Reef. The Tropical North region includes three World Heritage Areas – the Great Barrier Reef, Wet Tropics Rainforests and the Riversleigh Fossil Fields.

A 40 minute drive north of Cairns along the picturesque coastal Captain Cook Highway brings you to Port Douglas, a relaxing resort village in a tropical tree covered mountain setting. The Rainforest Habitat offers an enjoyable and educational experience viewing rainforest wildlife close up. An enclosed canopy houses 80 species of birds and 15 species of butterflies in a natural setting. Crocodiles, koalas and wallabies are also on display.

Just north of Port Douglas is the sugar town of Mossman. Nearby, Mossman River Gorge has spectacular walks through pristine rainforest with crystal-clear swimming holes.

Nestled in a bend of the majestic Daintree River, the picturesque township of Daintree has developed a character all its own and is the departure point for a number of river cruises through the rainforest area.

Historic Cooktown, 158km (98 miles) north of Cairns on the banks of the Endeavour River, served as a port for the nearby goldfields in the 1870s. Rare native flora flourish in the area. Nearby, the Endeavour National Park has excellent examples of Aboriginal rock art.

Cape York Peninsula is the most northerly point on the mainland and one of the wildest, least populated areas of Australia. Access is by 4WD over the Peninsula Development Road, a rugged road crossed by several rivers. The best time to travel is in the drier months from June to September.

Kuranda is 28km (17 miles) west of Cairns via the Kennedy Highway. At this rainforest village you will find attractions of singular beauty and diversity. Ride the scenic rail, see the mighty Barron Falls and venture into the rainforest. Visit the markets on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Sunday for arts and crafts, Aboriginal artefacts, home-grown produce and gems direct from the mines. Visit the Australian Butterfly Sanctuary and view more than 35 species as you wander by miniforests and fern-fringed pools. Birdworld is home to many birds of the world, where pathways take you to a simulated rainforest.

Rainforestation is another spectacular attraction in Kuranda, set in World Heritage Rainforest. Rainforestation operates trips into the depths of the rainforest in an army duck amphibious vehicle to see ancient palms and tree ferns and many species of rainforest wildlife. Take a step back in time on the Dreamtime Walk, throw a boomerang and witness the dynamic performance of the Pamaquirr Aboriginal Dancers.

Kuranda Scenic Railway from Cairns is a picturesque tourist train which includes a running commentary. It provides spectacular views of tropical scenery from lovely old carriages. Alternatively take Skyrail, a gondola cableway departing Smithfield, that takes you over the canopy of world heritage listed rainforest and so offers a different view of the area. There are two stations in the rainforest with boardwalks and an interpretive centre.

Formerly at Kuranda and now located adjacent to the Skyrail Station at Smithfield, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park features high tech theatre productions, a cultural village for visitors to interact with members of the Aboriginal community and is home to the famous Tjapukai Aboriginal Dance Theatre that provides an insight into Aboriginal culture.

The Australian Woolshed Cairns, also at Smithfield, is an authentic Australian theme park with ram shows featuring trained sheep, sheep shearing, wool-spinning, working sheepdogs, cow milking, tame kangaroos and koalas and souvenir photos.

The Atherton Tablelands is a beautiful green stretch of country known as the cool tropics, 67km (42 miles) west of Cairns via the Kennedy, Gillies or Palmerston Highways. Rolling hills, rainforest, pasture lands and volcanic crater lakes make up this region behind the Cairns ranges. This wilderness of cascading falls, fast-flowing rivers and dense pockets of rainforest is easily reached on good touring roads.

At the Mareeba Stampede catch non-stop rodeo action performed by Australian
champion cowboys and cowgirls including a bull ride, bucking broncos, steer wrestling, team roping, breakaway roping and barrel racing.

Lake Barrine is a volcanic crater lake with wildlife cruises, century-old twin Kauri trees and a 6km (4 mile) path around the edge of the lake. Another volcanic crater lake, Lake Eacham, has picnic facilities and a 4km (2.5 mile) path around the lake’s edge.

Near Millaa Millaa is Falls Circuit, where the Millaa Millaa, Zillie, Mungali and Elinjaa waterfalls are sited amid a magnificent panorama of rainforest mountains and plains.

Outback Chillagoe is the home of the famous limestone caves with daily tours by National Park Rangers. Visit the museum, marble mine and old smelters.

At Undara, the lava tubes are giant tunnels formed by the lava flow snaking underground in secret passageways beneath peaceful grazing land. Tour the lava tubes and visit the Tallaroo hot springs.

Lawn Hill National Park, in the Gulf Savannah plains on the Queensland/Northern Territory border is home to the World Heritage listed Riversleigh Fossil Fields, the palaeontologic find of the century and one of the four most significant fossil sites in the world. Savannah Guides offer a range of tours from a total of 8 guide stations and provide professional advice and authentic information on the important natural, historical and archaeological areas of which they are custodians, including Lawn Hill National Park, Cobbold Gorge and Tallaroo’s hot mineral springs.

Where to stay
There are world-renowned resorts, wilderness lodges, affordable apartments, backpacker hostels and caravan parks.

The Matilda Highway Outback Queensland
Cunnamulla, the highway starting point, is 119km (74 miles) from the New South Wales border. The trip from Cunnamulla to Karumba, the northernmost point, is 1,700km (1,067 miles) including major excursions.

Trip duration: The entire trip can take more than two weeks to complete. There are 12 Highway stages, none of which is longer than 375km (233 miles), and it is possible to enjoy just one stage or more of this long journey.

On the road
From Cunnamulla the trip begins on the Mitchell Highway, which becomes the Landsborough Highway at Augathella. Towns along the way include historic Blackall, Barcaldine, Longreach, Winton and Cloncurry. Further north, the route becomes the Burke Development Road which leads to Normanton and the highway’s northernmost point, the Gulf of Carpentaria port town of Karumba. The entire highway is sealed and mostly two lanes. Other major highways and sealed roads link up with the Matilda Highway at various points along its length and these are all suited to a standard family car. For access to the more remote parts of the Outback and Gulf Savannah a four-wheel drive is recommended.

Stage by stage
Outback Queensland covers an enormous 832,000 square kilometres (321,235 square miles) north from the New South Wales/Queensland border to Burke and Wills Junction and west from Mitchell, Barcaldine and Torrens Creek to the Northern Territory border. Many tourists travel the Matilda Highway in search of the real Australian outback and find some of the old bush pubs, national parks and limestone caves. They discover dinosaur footprints, view Aboriginal rock art, sample some of the most exciting events including the Birdsville Races or try fossicking for precious stones.

Cunnamulla to Charleville (199km/123 miles). Cunnamulla developed as the intersection of two major stock routes and Cobb & Co coaches began running in the area in 1867. The Cunnamulla-Eulo Festival of Opals is held here in August.

Charleville to Blackall (301km/187 miles). Charleville has strong links with aviation history through Qantas and the pioneering Smith brothers. The town is a base for both the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the School of Distance Education. Take a guided tour of the night skies through the telescopes of the Outback Queensland Skywatch.

Blackall to Barcaldine (107km/66 miles). Blackall, on the Barcoo River, is the major town in a thriving pastoral region. Visit the Historical Woolscour which is a link with Australia’s pioneer heritage and the site of the original fossilised Black Stump.
Barcaldine to Longreach (108km/67 miles). The 'Garden City of the West', Barcaldine holds an important place in Australian history, being the site of the revolutionary 1891 Shearers’ Strike. There is the famous tree of knowledge, a folk museum, Australian Workers Heritage Centre and many historic buildings.

Longreach to Winton (173km/107 miles). The central west’s largest town and pastoral centre, Longreach has an important link with the remarkable Qantas story, and is home to the outback pioneer tourist attraction, the Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre, a pioneer museum devoted to rural Australia’s exploration, settlement and development.

Winton to Cloncurry (348km/216 miles). The birthplace of Australia’s alternative national anthem, Waltzing Matilda, and the airline Qantas, Winton is also the town closest to Lark Quarry (a two-hour drive) where hundreds of dinosaur footprints can be seen.

Cloncurry to Normanton (374km/232 miles). A riverside town and copper mining centre, Cloncurry was the birthplace of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and John Flynn Place is a complex devoted to the history of the service.

Before travelling north to Normanton, detour further inland along the Barkly Highway to Mount Isa, the largest settlement in Outback Queensland and the world’s largest city in area. The Mount Isa mine is Australia’s largest underground mine and the world’s biggest single producer of silver and lead and a leading source of copper and zinc. Visitors can take part in unique underground mine tours (reservations essential) or visit the Riversleigh Interpretive Centre explaining the World Heritage Listed Riversleigh Fossil Field.

Normanton to Karumba (72km/45 miles). Normanton is one of Outback Queensland’s most friendly and interesting towns with much to see in the region. Normanton Railway Station (circa 1891) and The Gulflander rail journey, have become major tourist attractions.

Karumba, the final destination, is Queensland’s only port on the Gulf of Carpentaria. It’s a major fishing centre, particularly for barramundi and prawns, where visitors come to fish and to sample excellent seafood. A road from here leads to historic Burketown the centre of rich beef country.

Where to stay
Accommodation is generally of good standard, with choices ranging from motels and local town or bush hotels, through to simple cabins, caravan parks and campsites. An enjoyable accommodation option is to experience outback life at local stations (huge cattle and sheep properties). There are many such establishments on the journey.

Contacts
Queensland Government Travel Centre
Corner Edward and Adelaide Sts
Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: + 61 7 3874 2800
Fax: + 61 7 3221 5320

Royal Automobile Club of Queensland (RACQ)
300 St Pauls Tce
Fortitude Valley QLD 4006
Tel: + 61 7 3361 2444
Fax: + 61 7 3252 3587

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Adelaide.

Adelaide Hills and Torrens Gorge
Hahndorf is 28km (17 miles) south-east of Adelaide. The round trip is approximately 110km (68 miles).
Trip duration: One day or overnight

On the road
Along the Adelaide Plain’s eastern and south-eastern extremities lie the Adelaide Hills, a place of rural beauty, leafy lanes and tiny villages. You have the option of taking the South-Eastern Freeway (No 1), or a more leisurely drive on one of the many alternate routes through the hills.

Must see
Just 20 minutes from the city, drive through tree-covered valleys, steep hills, villages, wildlife sanctuaries, wineries,
apple and pear orchards and stop for coffee or lunch at one of the many tea houses. Wine tasting at one of the cool-climate wineries is another option.

Mount Lofty Botanical Gardens and Summit Lookout give breathtaking views of Adelaide by day and night.

Stop at Cleland Wildlife Park, a native wildlife zone which features kangaroos, wallabies and emus in their natural habitat. There are lakes for waterbirds and you can walk through aviaries and several enclosures for smaller native animals.

Warrawong Sanctuary, at Mylor is a major botanical and zoological reserve with a bird garden, tearooms and plant nursery. The sanctuary offers dawn, sunset and nocturnal guided walks.

A major highlight is Hahndorf, an historic town which retains the atmosphere of its German settlers. Shady old trees line the main street and many of the original buildings still stand. Sample German cakes and relax in one of the many restaurants. Visit the Hahndorf Academy featuring an art gallery, museum and working studios. The gallery has changing exhibitions and works by South Australian artists including Sir Hans Heysen. The studios involve artists and craftworkers in jewellery, leadlight, papermaking, leatherwork and contemporary and traditional painting. The German Migration Museum is also housed here.

Beerenberg Strawberry Farm is the internationally acclaimed home of pure fruit jams, pickled onions and sauces, available for purchase at the farm. Explore the old farmstead, and from November to May pick your own strawberries.

From Hahndorf take the road to Oakbank, a small town known for the biggest picnic race meeting in Australia held at Easter each year.

At Woodside there is Heritage Park that includes Melbas Chocolate Factory manufacturing and selling chocolates and confectionery. Guided tours are available daily. Also located in the park are pottery outlets, coffee shop and specialty timber shop.

The National Motor Museum at Birdwood, via the North-East Road, is set on eight hectares and houses a fine collection of veteran, vintage and classic motor vehicles and motor cycles. It is also the starting point for the biennial Bay to Birdwood vintage car race, a premier historic event.

At Gumeracha climb the biggest rocking horse in the world, 18 metres high (equal to six storeys), for spectacular views of the Gumeracha Valley.

Return to Adelaide along the scenic Torrens Gorge Road.

Fleurieu Peninsula – Victor Harbor

Victor Harbor is 83km (51 miles) south from Adelaide.

Trip duration: minimum of two days.

On the road

Follow the South Road to the Fleurieu Peninsula, South Australia’s holiday playground.

Must see

Down the length of the west coast there are many unspoiled sandy beaches, some in sheltered coves, others with excellent surf. Cast a fishing line for salmon, snapper, mulloway or snook, taste award winning McLaren Vale wines or walk through one of the many conservation parks.

McLaren Vale is a region synonymous with wine with over 45 cellar doors, and a line up of events celebrating fine food and wine.

Myponga is the gateway to southern Fleurieu and home to Willsmores Begonia Farm.

Victor Harbor is one of the state’s most popular coastal resort towns. Take the old horse tram to Granite Island with its colony of wallabies and fairy penguins and visit the Penguin Interpretive Centre. Meet a cuddly koala and a Tasmanian Devil at Urimbirra Wildlife Park, or speed down the hill at Greenhills Adventure Park on a giant waterslide. View the South Australian Whale Centre featuring three floors of extensive interpretive displays and exhibits on whaling history and heritage.

Further east is Goolwa, an old river port at the mouth of the Murray. Discover the traditions of the river at Signal Point Interpretive Centre, or travel by the Cockle steam train to Victor Harbor and return. Enjoy a day or half-day cruise on board of the PS Mundoo paddlesteamer.

At the tip of the Fleurieu Peninsula is
Cape Jervis, the departure point for ferries to Kangaroo Island. The Heysen Trail commences at the Cape. This long-distance walking trail passes through Deep Creek Conservation Park and ends 1500km (932 miles) later at Parachilna Gorge in the Flinders Ranges.

The Fleurieu’s only holiday resort Paradise Wirrina Cove offers a range of accommodation styles, restaurants and many sporting facilities including 36 holes of golf, archery and horse trail rides.

**Barossa Valley**

Tanunda, the main town of this region is 70km (44 miles) north east of Adelaide. 

**Trip duration:** One day or overnight

**On the road**

Travel up Main North Road, via Gawler to the Barossa Valley Highway. Alternatively, travel through the Adelaide Hills visiting the pretty towns of Woodside, Mount Pleasant and Springton, Eden Valley to Angaston or Torrens Gorge, Inglewood, Chain of Ponds, Gumeracha and Birdwood.

**Must see**

Wine is a special part of the South Australian lifestyle and for the lover of fine wine, the Barossa Valley offers enormous variety ranging from giant corporate winemakers to small family-owned vineyards. Some of the Barossa’s most famous wineries include Wolf Blass, Orlando, Yalumba, Penfolds and Seppelts. The last few years have seen some dramatic changes in the Barossa with boutique wineries such as Rockford and Elderton, excellent art galleries, fine restaurants, a variety of accommodation and ‘soft adventure’ experiences such as champagne balloon flights attracting visitors to the region. Exploring the valley is easy, with plenty of well signposted tourist drives. Places to visit include Lyndoch, Tanunda, Seppeltsfield, Nuriootpa, Bethany and Rowland’s Flat.

**Murray River**

Blanchetown, gateway to the Murray, is 133km (83 miles) north east of Adelaide. 

**Trip duration:** One to three days.

**On the road**

Follow the Sturt Highway north-east to the start of South Australia’s Big River Country.

**Must see**

The region runs along the edge of the Murray through irrigated orchards, riverside towns and wineries. Boating and water-skiing facilities are excellent and a visit to the region wouldn’t be complete without fishing for Murray cod, perch or bream.

First stop is Blanchetown, a century-old town that retains its quiet charm as the first of the Murray River’s six South Australian locks.

Taste apricots, oranges, peaches and many other fruits in season at Waikerie. Visit The Orange Tree and Sunlands Pumping Station for lovely views and spot the wildlife at Maize Island Conservation Park.

Three of the furthest towns east in the region are Barmera, Berri and Renmark. At Barmera, Lake Bonney’s beautiful beaches are used for water sports including sailing and swimming. At Berri, taste wines in one of the many Riverland wineries. Complexes such as the Berri Estate produce around seven million litres of wine each year. Renmark, 260km (161 miles) north-west along the Sturt Highway, is the major town of the Riverland, the heart of the oldest irrigation area. Stroll through orchards, vineyards and gardens.

Some other ‘must see’ towns include Murray Bridge, a favoured haunt of water skiers; Mannum, for paddlewheeler river cruises; Purnong with its scenic drive along Younghusband Road; Swan Reach for watersports and houseboat hire; the busy river port of Morgan; and Tailem Bend for historic buildings and serene views over the river.

**Where to stay**

There are many riverside caravan parks, guesthouses and motels. Houseboat holidays and river cruises are available from Murray Bridge, Swan Reach, Renmark and Blanchetown.

**Kangaroo Island**

Half an hour by air, 2 1/2 hours by road and ferry from Adelaide. 

**Trip duration:** One day (by air); a minimum of three days by car and ferry.

**On the road**

The Sealink ferry takes up to 200 passengers and 30 cars, and the MV Valerie Jane takes up to 44 passengers (no cars). Both depart from Cape Jervis to the
Kangaroo Island ferry terminal at Penneshaw. The Sealink services run three times daily and take one hour; the MV Valerie Jane leaves twice daily. Alternatively, take a 30 minute flight from Adelaide to one of the island's airports. Car hire is available on the island however early reservation is recommended, especially during holiday times.

**Must see**

Step into one of the world's few truly unspoiled places. The scenery is spectacular, the climate mild, and wildlife thrives in this away-from-it-all environment. Exploring Kangaroo Island is a real adventure, so take the time to enjoy the many attractions. Bear in mind that most of the island's roads are unsealed, so driving times can vary.

**Kingscote** was the first settlement of the colony and is now the largest town and the main commercial centre of the island. Situated on the shore of beautiful Nepean Bay, the town offers panoramic views.

The calm waters of **American River** on the edge of Eastern Cove will leave a lasting impression. Gum and She-oak covered hills slope to the water’s edge and the local catch includes whiting, salmon, snook, garfish, crabs and squid.

The little village of **Penneshaw** with its sheltered cove is a haven for small boats. See fairy penguins at night, and during the day fish from Hog Bay jetty, visit the folk museum, or go swimming. Further south, at Cape Willoughby, visit **Devils Kitchen** below the lighthouse.

**Vivonne Bay**, on the South Coast, is the base for the crayfish fleet and game fishing boats. The long beach is perfect for picnics, beachcombing and fishing expeditions. At Seal Bay, take a guided walk along the beach where sea lions rest between trips to the sea and learn about their life and habits at the Interpretive Centre. Not far off the road at Seal Bay is Little Sahara, an area of spectacular white sand dunes.

**Kelly Hill Conservation Park** is an area of undulating limestone ridges. Walking trails wind through the bushland to the coast, where sinkholes and caverns lead to caves open to the public.

Take the unusual walk from **Stokes Bay** through a cliff of great limestone boulders to the white sandy beach, safe for swimming.

At Flinders Chase National Park on the South West Coast, see kangaroos, Cape Barren geese, ospreys, platypus, the rare glossy black cockatoo, koalas, Tamar wallabies and, after dark, brushtail possums. **The Remarkable Rocks** are amazing hollowed rock formations, and **Admiral’s Arch**, which has been eroded away by the sea, is a playground for New Zealand fur seals.

**Where to stay**

Motels, self-contained flats, cottages, farms, bed and breakfast, cabins and camping grounds are available at the towns of Kingscote, American River and Penneshaw.

**Mount Gambier**

463km (288 miles) south east of Adelaide.

**Trip duration:** Two or more days

**On the road**

Travel along the South Eastern Freeway towards Mount Barker and on to Tailem Bend. Turn right, follow the coastal Princess Highway and discover the Coorong, an area famous for its flora and fauna. Continue south to Kingston diverting left to Mount Gambier. Alternatively travel via Keith on the Dukes Highway, where the surrounding rural area, once an infertile part of the desert, is now valuable farming land. Whichever route you take, the drive takes around five hours.

**Must see**

A tour of the volcanic south-east region will reveal an immense diversity. It is renowned for its spectacular rugged coastline and wide sandy beaches, wetlands, extinct volcanoes, lakes, forests and vineyards. The city of **Mount Gambier**, built on the slopes of an extinct volcano, has many white stone buildings and fine parks and gardens. Visit the **Blue Lake**, which changes colour each November from winter grey to intense metallic blue. Further south you can experience the exhilarating climb to the rim of Mount Schank, an extinct volcano. A short drive from here is Port MacDonnell a quiet fishing town, and a base for the local lobster fleet.

**Tantanoola Caves**, 33km (20 miles) from Mount Gambier, is an ancient marine cliff. Take a guided tour of the highly decorated single chamber and a spectacular walk.
Flinders Ranges
Quorn, the gateway to the Flinders is 334km (208 miles) north of Adelaide.

Trip duration: Two or three days.

On the road
Head north from Adelaide along the Princess Highway to Port Augusta and turn right to Quorn. Continue on highway No 47 through Hawker to Wilpena. Alternatively you can drive from Adelaide to Gawler, through the Clare Valley to Wilmington and Quorn.

Road conditions
The roads to Wilpena Pound and Lyndhurst are sealed as are town roads but many roads to the Flinders Ranges are unssealed and conditions can change dramatically after rain. Always seek local advice before planning a journey off the beaten track.

Must see
Rising at Crystal Brook and curving northwards to Marree, the Flinders Ranges stretch for 430km (267 miles) forming a desert range with the contrasts of dry, stony land, and craggy rocks with red gums and native pines. Ancient Aboriginal rock carvings and paintings reflect the area’s cultural importance.

Mount Remarkable National Park, in the southern Flinders, features dramatic scenery and provides naturalists and bushwalkers with an interesting and exciting area to explore.

Quorn, a railway town in the southern Flinders Ranges, was established in 1878. A section of the Great Northern Railway passing through Pichi Richi has been restored as a tourist railway.

Hawker, a typical outback town and the hub of the Flinders Ranges, provides all essential services to tourists. Visit Jarvis Hill Lookout, Kanyaka Ruins, Teague’s Museum and Yourambulla Caves.

The Flinders Ranges National Park includes the huge, natural amphitheatre, Wilpena Pound. After you have made the long journey (six hours) to the Ranges, leave the main roads and experience the beauty of the gorges and the history of the ruins. The park incorporates a large proportion of the central Flinders Ranges with rugged mountain scenery, tree-lined gorges, wildlife, seasonal wildflowers, and Aboriginal sites. The region is suited to hiking, bushwalking, photography, art and camping.

Gammon Ranges National Park in the northern Flinders Ranges has rugged ranges, deep gorges and mountains that sparkle with exposed formations of quartz. The park is also a sanctuary for wildlife.

Lyndhurst is an historic old railway town and the starting point for the famous Strzelecki Track and home to “Talc Alf” a talc stone artist and his unique art gallery.

Where to stay
The resort at Wilpena has accommodation ranging from camping to a modern motel. Good camp and caravan sites are also available throughout the region.

Contacts
South Australian Travel Centre
Ground Floor, 1 King William St
Adelaide  SA  5000
Tel: + 61 8 8212 1505
Fax: + 61 8 8303 2231

Australia.com
TASMANIA

The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Hobart.

Tasman Peninsula

The Tasman Peninsula is located 100km (62 miles) south-east of Hobart.

*Trip duration: One day or overnight.

On the road

Depart Hobart via Highway A3 and travel to Sorell where you join Highway A9 to Port Arthur.

*Must see

Step back into history as you explore the Tasman Peninsula, home to the Port Arthur Historic Site. On the way to Port Arthur, take time to view the spectacular natural attractions of Tasman Arch, Tasman Blow Hole and Devil’s Kitchen.

Guided tours of the Port Arthur Historic Site operate at regular intervals throughout the day. Take a cruise to the Isle of the Dead which has almost 2000 historic graves with 76 headstones still remaining. Visit the restored cottages and museums at your leisure. At night, join the Ghost Tour by lantern light around the old buildings. More examples of the convict history of the area can be found at Saltwater River settlement. Established in 1841 as a farm to supply Port Arthur, Saltwater River is now largely in ruins.

Spectacular coastal scenery, restored cottages, historic sites and beautiful beaches are a few of the many attractions of this region. A short distance from Port Arthur is Remarkable Cave which has been worn away by the awesome power of the ocean. Nearby, Palmer’s Lookout offers panoramic views of the settlement and other landmarks.

Other attractions include the small fishing village of Dunalley where fresh crayfish can be bought at the roadside in season; the unusual rock formations known as the Tessellated Pavements at Eaglehawk Neck; the Tasmanian Devil Park and Wildlife Rescue Centre at Taranna; and Bush Mill, a reconstructed, steam-driven timber mill. Take a ride along a 4km (2.5 mile) bushland track on the miniature steam-driven train.

Hudson Valley and Channel Region

The Huon Valley and Channel Region is a 140km (87 mile) circuit south of Hobart.

*Trip duration: One day or overnight.

On the road

Depart Hobart via Taroona on the Channel Highway, travelling through Kingston. Follow the B68 to Huonville via Kettering and Cygnet, then head either south on the A6 to Southport or north back to Hobart.

*Must see

Depart via the southern suburb of Tarooma (with its historic Shot Tower and the Tudor Court Model Village), and enjoy the picturesque scenery.

The Huon Valley is the centre of Tasmania’s apple growing industry and is a region of great beauty and contrast richly endowed with lush agricultural land. Travelling inland the road meets rainforest and the Hartz Mountains National Park. On the coastal side, the road winds through fishing villages dotted along the D’Entrecasteaux Channel. In spring, the valley is ablaze with blossoming trees.

Places to visit include Bruny Island, accessible via vehicular ferry from Kettering to Robert’s Point. Visit the Bligh Museum for information on visits to the island by early Dutch, British and French explorers. The isthmus between the north and south of the island is an ideal spot for seeing fairy penguins and shearwaters, returning to their burrows at dusk during the nesting season (Nov-Mar).

Further south on the mainland are the small towns of Flowerpot and Cygnet, home to the Talune Wildlife Park and The Deepings Woodturner where you can see a craftsman at work and fine woodturning on display.

The centre of Tasmania’s apple industry is Huonville, location of the Huon Valley Apple & Heritage Museum. On the banks of the Huon River join the Huon Jet for a scenic ride to the upper reaches of this beautiful river.

A short distance from Huonville is the Esperance Forest and Heritage Centre and turn off to the Hartz Mountains National Park and the Tahune Forest Reserve.

Continue on to Hastings Caves where Newdegate Cave, a dolomite limestone cave discovered by timber workers in 1917, is open daily.

Richmond and Brighton

Richmond and Brighton is a 64km (40 mile) round trip east of Hobart.

*Trip duration: One day.
On the road
Depart Hobart on the Tasman Highway, turn left at Cambridge on to the B31 Highway and continue to Richmond. Follow the 322 to Brighton, then the H1 back to Hobart.

Must see
Step back into the past at the historic village of Richmond where much of the character and Georgian architecture of colonial days has been preserved including Australia’s oldest freestone bridge and Roman Catholic church. Continue on to Brighton and the Bonorong Park Wildlife Centre and see wombats and Tasmanian Devils. Many of the animals roam freely and may be hand-fed.

In the wine-growing region around Berriedale, Moorilla Estate provides an opportunity to taste the wines, enjoy Tasmanian food, and take a guided tour around the vineyard.

Hobart – West Coast and Cradle Mountain – Devonport
Hobart to Hamilton is 74km (46 miles); Queenstown 256km (159 miles); Strahan 290km (184 miles); Cradle Mountain 396km (246 miles); and Devonport is 482km (300 miles).
Trip duration: A minimum of two nights if travelling to Cradle Mountain.

On the road
Take the Brooker Highway (A1) from Hobart and drive through Glenorchy on the way to Granton. Once at Granton travel west along the Lyell Highway (A10).

Must see
Mount Field National Park is 20km (12 miles) on the B61 west off the Lyell Highway. Features of the park include beautiful rainforest alpine moors and cascading waterfalls. Walks range from an easy 15 minutes to Russell Falls to overnight and extended treks into the mountains.

At Hamilton on the Clyde River visit many of the town’s historic colonial houses. Glen Clyde House was built by convicts and now serves as one of Tasmania’s largest crafts galleries. Close by is the popular Meadowbank Lake, a great place for picnics and watersports.

Derwent Bridge is a small picturesque town close to the geographic centre of Tasmania and at the southern end of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. The town has excellent fishing in its nearby lakes and rivers.

The mining town of Queenstown has grown up around the Mount Lyell copper mine, and a tour of the company’s present day operation is among the principal attractions. Queenstown is also the gateway to the south-west World Heritage listed wilderness area.

Further west, Strahan on Macquarie Harbour, is the principal port of the west coast. Visitors can cruise on the Gordon River through beautiful wilderness country and past the ruins of the remote convict settlement on Sarah Island. Take a scenic flight aboard a seaplane over many of the south-west’s world heritage region, and visit Strahan Wharf Centre, an interpretative centre for Tasmania’s south-west.

Covering some of Tasmania’s highest country is Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. The mountain offers a variety of fine bushwalks, including one of Australia’s best known walking routes, the 85km Overland Track. There is a visitor’s centre near the entrance to the park and a nature walk into the nearby rainforest incorporates a suspended walkway. At the end of the park lies Lake St Clair from which daily cruises operate and is the starting point for the Mt Ossa six day trek. The area provides a habitat for an array of wildlife, some unique to Tasmania.

Continue on to Devonport, the home port of the Spirit of Tasmania ferry. Visit Tiagarra Tasmanian Aboriginal Cultural and Art Centre, the Maritime Museum, and the National Trust-classified Home Hill.

Where to stay
Each of the towns mentioned offer accommodation in hotels, guesthouses, wilderness lodges, or quaint colonial cottages at competitive rates. Stay in designated camp and caravan sites at Strahan and Queenstown. There is also Cradle Mountain Lodge which lies on the northern boundary of the national park.

The Heritage Highway (Hobart – Launceston)
Hobart to Launceston is 202km (125 miles).
Trip duration: A minimum of one day or overnight.
On the road
Take the Brooker Highway (A1) from Hobart and drive through Glenorchy on the way to Granton. Once at Granton continue along the A1, the Heritage Highway, which will take you through Campbell Town on your way to Launceston.

Must see
Located on the Midland Highway, Brighton has always been an important military post, first established in 1826. Nearby Bonorong Park Wildlife Centre, off Briggs Road, features a wide variety of Tasmanian native animals in natural surrounds.

Oatlands, on the shores of Lake Duverton, attracts lovers of history, as it features many historic buildings constructed in the 1830s. The small town of Ross represents one of the great treasures of Australia’s colonial architectural heritage. Here you see one of the oldest and most beautiful bridges in Australia, built by convicts in 1836. The area around Ross is famous for its superfine wool.

Visit Evandale, 20km (12 miles) south of Launceston, a charming little town that has retained its village atmosphere with beautifully proportioned buildings and a streetscape that remained virtually unchanged since last century. The town is famous for its annual Evandale Village Fair and National Penny Farthing Championship each February, a colourful event, with craft and food stalls and street entertainment.

Launceston, Tasmania’s second largest city, is situated at the confluence of the South and North Esk Rivers, which becomes the Tamar River, flowing away to Bass Strait. Launceston is sometimes known as the Garden City because of its beautiful gardens and parks. Nestled in wide valleys formed by the river system, Launceston is surrounded by high and rugged mountains. Try your luck or play golf at the Launceston Country Club Casino. Head along the Tamar River to taste excellent cool climate Tasmanian wine and sample the local fare at vineyard restaurants. Cataract George features a lovely park with lawns, European trees, peacocks, swimming pools, restaurant and kiosk. Ride across the gorge by scenic chairlift or walk over the suspension bridge.

Where to stay
Accommodation is available in hotels, motels and guesthouses in Launceston and the various towns along the way.

Hobart – Eastcoast – Launceston
From Hobart to Orford is 77km (48 miles); Swansea 145km (90 miles); Bicheno 189km (117 miles); St Helens 259km (161 miles); Launceston is 420km (261 miles). Trip duration: Travelling return from Hobart to Freycinet National Park can be a day drive. If travelling on to Launceston, a minimum one night should be allowed.

On the road
Depart Hobart on the Tasman Highway, following the A3 to Orford, along the coast through to Launceston.

Must see
The coastal beach town of Orford is a great place for river and sea fishing. Views are dominated by Maria Island National Park, 20km (12 miles) offshore.

Swansea is located on Great Oyster Bay in the centre of Tasmania’s east coast. In the surrounding area of Swansea there are a variety of safe swimming beaches, fishing and walking tracks and many historical buildings.

Freycinet National Park features fine beaches, abundant wildlife, rocky headlands, granite peaks and small caves, with windswept eucalypt forests on its slopes and excellent short and long walking tracks. Near the park is Coles Bay, a fishing and swimming resort town with delightful coastal scenery.

Bicheno is a popular fishing port and holiday destination, offering scuba diving, and beach, rock, sea and estuary fishing. Little (fairy) Penguin Rookery is located 6km (3.7 miles) north, guided nightly tours are available in season. Many lookouts

and abalone industries. On the Esplanade is Bicentennial Park with picnic and barbecue areas. The ferry to Maria Island National Park (a former penal settlement) departs from Louisville Point, 7km (4 miles) south of Triabunna. Catch the Spring Bay Crayfish Derby every January.

Triabunna, is a centre for the scallop
provide splendid views of the surrounding area. Visit the East Coast Bird Life and Animal Park which exhibits Tasmanian devils and other native fauna.

St Helens on the shores of Georges Bay is renowned for its crayfish and scalefish. The surrounding areas of St Helens offer bay beaches ideal for swimming and coastal beaches for surfing. Drive out to either Binalong Bay and the Bay of Fires or to St Helens Point State Recreation Area for excellent coastal views and remarkable sand dunes.

Inland en route to Launceston is Scottsdale, featuring some of the richest agricultural and forestry country on the island.

Where to stay
There is a luxury lodge and several designated camping areas within Freycinet National Park or stay in one of the many bed and breakfast properties, hotels and motels along the way. Most coastal towns feature caravan and camping facilities.

Contacts
Tasmanian Travel and Information Centre
20 Davey St
Hobart TAS 7000
Tel: + 61 3 6230 8233
Fax: + 61 3 6224 0289

Royal Automobile Club of Tasmania (RACT)
Cnr Patrick & Murray Streets
Hobart TAS 7000
Tel: + 61 3 6232 6300
Fax: + 61 3 6234 8784

VICTORIA

The following are the main touring routes in Victoria.

The Capital and Country Touring Route
Albury Wodonga, the largest city on the Murray River, is 306km (190 miles) north east from Melbourne.

Trip duration: Four days or longer

On the road
Leave Sydney on the Hume Highway to Goulburn then take the Federal Highway to Canberra. Rejoin the Hume Highway and drive on to Albury Wodonga. Follow the Murray Valley Highway to Echuca Moama, then Northern and Midland Highways to Bendigo. Take the Calder Highway to Melbourne.

Must see
Between Australia’s two largest cities, Sydney and Melbourne, there is a wonderful overland travel experience that caters for all tastes.

Canberra, Australia’s capital, is a charming and sophisticated city. Attractions to see include Parliament House, the nearly 70 diplomatic missions, National Gallery of Australia, the High Court, Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre, the National Library of Australia, the Australian War Memorial, Telstra Tower, Old Parliament House, the Australian Institute of Sport, the National Film and Archive Exhibition, National Museum of Australia, and the Royal Australian Mint.

Albury Wodonga further south is a thriving regional centre and ideal for another stop-over. Explore Lake Hume, the Regional Art Centre, Botanical Gardens, Inverness Park Cashmere Farm, Ettamogah Pub and Haberfields Cheese Factory.

The wineries of the Rutherford area further west along the Murray are a must to visit.

The restored port of Echuca includes the historic wharf and many attractions. Paddlesteamers offer day and overnight trips. One hour cruises operate several times daily. Nearby attractions include the Barmah Forest, a river red gum forest and wetlands teeming with wildlife. Take a cruise in a flat-bottom boat on the Murray River. The Dharnya Aboriginal Centre illustrates the traditions of the area’s Aborigines; and the fauna park at Kyabram, a 30 minutes drive from Echuca features native animals in a lakeside setting.

Visit the famous goldmining town of Bendigo that offers much to see including the town’s Chinese heritage. A visit to the Golden Dragon Museum is highly recommended as well as the Central Deborah Goldmine, Talking Tram, Sandhurst Town and the Bendigo Pottery Tourist Complex. From Bendigo head for Melbourne but for a taste of history and a chance to browse in antique and craft shops, visit the 19th century mining town of Maldon and Castlemaine with its market museum and botanic gardens.
**High Country**

Mt Buller is 246km (153 miles); Bright 312km (194 miles); and Falls Creek is 375km (233 miles) north east from Melbourne.

**Trip duration:** Two days or longer

**On the road**

Leave Melbourne on Maroondah Highway to Wangaratta and then follow the Ovens and Omeo highways, returning to Melbourne via Bairnsdale and Sale on the Princes Highway.

**Must see**

The **High Country** offers many options and is especially popular for outdoor sports including mountain bike riding, white water rafting, paragliding, abseiling and in winter, skiing.

**Mansfield** is gateway to Mt Buller and the site of the filming of the “**Man from Snowy River**”.

The **Glenrowan/Beechworth** district is steeped in Australian history, particularly the story of bushranger Ned Kelly, whose life is retold at the Ned Kelly Centre in Glenrowan. The pretty town of Beechworth itself is of great historic interest and is classified by the National Trust.

This former bushranger country is now a major **winegrowing** region, producing not only high quality table wines but world famous fortified wines such as muscat and tokay. Many wineries open their doors to visitors seeking tasting and sales. The Milawa Gourmet Region is very popular with those with a taste for the finer things in life. Hand made cheese, mustards, bread and a variety of fruits and berries along with other local products make this area a gourmet focal point.

Make sure you don’t miss the stunning all year round charm of **Bright**, especially during its autumn splendour. Bright is also the gateway to the ski resort towns of **Mt Hotham** and **Falls Creek** in the Victorian Alps.

**Mt Buffalo**, the ‘island in the sky’ situated on a high mountain-top plateau, provides stunning views over the valleys below and offers numerous outdoor activity options.

**The Great Southern Touring Route**

**Warrnambool**, the largest city on the Great Ocean Road, is 262km (163 miles) west of Melbourne.

**Trip duration:** Two days or longer.

**On the road**

Leave Melbourne via the Princes Highway to Geelong, then follow the Surfcoast Highway to Torquay. At Torquay, turn right and continue your journey on the Great Ocean Road. From Portland drive along the Henty Highway to the Grampians.

**Must see**

On the way to Geelong stop at Werribee to visit **Werribee Park**, a 19th century Italianate mansion surrounded by magnificent gardens and adjoining zoo.

Continue on to Geelong, the City by the Bay and learn about Australia’s wool industry at the fascinating National Wool Museum.

From Geelong, drive to **Torquay**, renowned for its surfing beaches, including Bells and Jan Juc which attract surfers from all over the world. Visit Surfworld, a great surfing museum and check out some of the world famous surfwear companies such as ‘Ripcurl’ and ‘Quiksilver’.

Depart Torquay and travel down the magnificent Great Ocean Road to **Lorne**, a charming seaside village.

From here the journey continues through Apollo Bay and **Otway National Park** with its rainforest bushwalks and wide variety of flora and fauna, to coastal highlights such as the famous Twelve Apostles, Loch Ard Gorge and The London Bridge Island Arch. These wind eroded sandstone formations stand in the waters of the Southern Ocean just off the coast, and form part of the **Port Campbell National Park**.

At **Warrnambool** visit the Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum featuring the area’s colourful maritime history. From May to October you might be lucky to spot Southern Right Whales that migrate to these waters.

This area is also known as the **Shipwreck Coast** and stretches past the historic fishing village of Port Fairy and through to Portland, site of Victoria’s first permanent settlement.

From Portland you either continue on to Adelaide or follow the Henty Highway to the Grampians. The Grampians National Park is made up of mountains which rise starkly from the flat plains. The area is
noted for its abundant wildlife, unique rock formations, crystal clear waterfalls, spectacular wildflowers and Aboriginal paintings, being rich in the history of the local Koori Aborigines. Places to visit include the Brambuk Living Cultural Centre at Halls Gap, scenic MacKenzie Falls and Zumsteins picnic ground, where wild kangaroos can be hand fed. Activities include rowing and sailing on Lake Bellfield, bushwalking and rock climbing and there is trout fishing in Fyans Creek.

Islands and Bays Touring Route
Portsea, at the end of the Mornington Peninsula, is 97km (60 miles) from Melbourne; Cowes, the main town on Phillip Island, is 137km (85 miles) south of Melbourne.

Trip duration: Two days or longer.

On the road
Depart Melbourne via South Gippsland Highway then take the Bass Highway to Phillip Island.

Must see
On the way south visit Warrook Cattle Farm featuring sheep shearing, milking exhibition and working sheepdog display; and the Wildlife Wonderland, a nature park with interpretative displays.

Phillip Island, joined by bridge to the mainland, is a popular seaside resort with some of the best surf beaches in the State. Phillip Island Wildlife Park is the place to handfeed wallabies while you can observe Australia’s largest colony of fur seals at the Seal Rocks Sea Life Centre. Phillip Island is best known for the nightly pilgrimage of the little (fairy) penguins up the beach to their nests. This takes place at dusk each day and attracts visitors from around the world. The Visitor Centre has a theatrette and educational displays.

On the way back to Melbourne turn left after Tooradin and explore the Mornington Peninsula, a seaside playground with safe, bayside swimming and excellent surf beaches. The area contains many excellent wineries, some of Victoria’s finest historic homes and properties, as well as art galleries, craft shops, restaurants and the Point Nepean National Park. The peninsula is also well known for its world class golf courses.

Visit Ashcombe Maze at Shoreham, pick your own fruit at Sunnyridge Strawberry Farm, enjoy the delightful Red Hill Community Markets held on the first Saturday of every month between September and May. Take the chairlift and glide through the treetops to the summit of Arthurs Seat, for spectacular views over the bay. Other places to visit include Somers, Baxter, Balmarring and Mt Martha. A car ferry departs regularly from the town of Sorrento to the Bellarine Peninsula and the quaint town of Queenscliff. Experience the atmosphere of this seaside town, its lighthouse, the old fort, stay at one of the magnificently restored hotels, and take the leisurely drive along Port Phillip Bay back to Melbourne.

Yarra Valley, Dandenongs and The Ranges
Healesville, the centre of this region, is 39km (24 miles) north east of Melbourne. Trip duration: One day

On the road
Depart Melbourne via Maroondah Highway

Must see
The Dandenongs, the hills of Melbourne, are a short drive from the city and provide breathtaking views of Melbourne. Due to heavy rainfall and rich soil, the hills and gullies are filled with tree ferns, creepers and mountain ash. The area is dotted with pretty townships, craft shops, art galleries,
tearooms, and picturesque picnic and barbecue spots.

Other features of the area include the vintage Puffing Billy Steam Train that operates through the Dandenongs from Belgrave to Emerald; and the Healesville Sanctuary at Healesville which features native wildlife roaming in 32 hectares (79 acres) of natural bushland.

The Yarra Valley wine-producing district lies beyond the Dandenongs to the north-east via the Warburton and Maroondah Highways. The valley’s numerous wineries are located in a compact area and provide wine-tasting, winery tours and, at certain times, talks on the local wines. Of particular interest is Domaine Chandon. This complex is a stunningly modern operation which offers guided tours through the plant, and the chance to sit and sip sparkling wines looking out over acres of vines, landscaped watercourses and gardens. Other wineries that also offer excellent meals and worth including in your itinerary are Fergusson’s, Kellybrook, De Bortoli’s and Eyton on Yarra.

Greater Gippsland Tour
Morwell, the gateway to this region, is 150km (93 miles) south east of Melbourne.
Trip duration: Two days

On the road

Leave Melbourne via the Princes Highway through the Dandenongs

Must see
Head for the Lakes, Australia’s largest inland waterways system, in East Gippsland. The area is popular for boating, sightseeing cruises, fishing and all watersports. This region of rainforest-covered mountain slopes is surrounded by state forests including national parks and wilderness areas.

Within easy reach is the alpine high country and some fascinating little townships such as Walhalla, Omeo, Briagolong and Dargo. Also nearby are Buchan Caves, north-east of Bairnsdale. Set in a pretty valley, these limestone caves were formed by underground rivers.

Lakes Entrance, at the eastern end of the Gippsland Lakes, is a main resort town and close to the amazing stretch of Ninety Mile beach which separates the lakes from the ocean.

At the state’s eastern tip stands Croajingolong National Park, one of Victoria’s most scenic reserves and an ideal site for walking, canoeing and fishing.

The South Gippsland region includes the southernmost point on the mainland Wilsons Promontory and Tarra Bulga National Park, both reached by taking the South Gippsland Highway.

Return to Melbourne via the Bass Highway and pay a visit to Phillip Island.

Where to stay
Lakes Entrance, Metung and Bairnsdale offer a wide range of accommodation.

Contacts
Victoria Visitor Information Centre
Melbourne Town Hall
Cnr Little Collins & Swanston Sts
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: + 61 3 9658 9955
Fax: + 61 3 9650 6168

Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV)
550 Princes Hwy
Noble Park VIC 3174
Tel: + 61 3 9790 2211
Fax: + 61 3 9790 2628

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The following are a selection of popular self drive options from Perth.

Yanchep National Park and Caves
51km (31 miles) north from Perth.
Trip duration: One day

On the road
From Perth, follow the Wanneroo Road north to the town of Yanchep and the National Park. Alternatively, depart Perth on the West Coast Highway and stop at the Reabold Hill Lookout for panoramic views over the Indian Ocean to Rottnest Island. Follow the West Coast Highway where turn-offs lead to popular beaches such as Scarborough, North Beach, Watermans and Sorrento. Join Wanneroo Road after Sorrento.

Must see
Visit Hilary’s Boat Harbour and Underwater World at Sorrento Quay.

One of Perth’s most popular recreation areas, the 2799ha (6916 acres) Yanchep National Park contains two spectacular limestone caves to explore, many nature walks, abundant wildlife and the beautiful...
Loch McNess where cruise boats ply tranquil waters. In springtime, the park’s stunning wildflowers are in full bloom. Yanchep Beach, 6km (3.5 miles) west, is a safe ocean beach protected by reefs. The wreck Alkimos, north of Yanchep at Wreck Point, is said to be guarded by a ghost. At the town of Two Rocks, Waugul monoliths, giant limestone sculptures depicting figures from Aboriginal mythology, can be seen.

Avon Valley
Toodyay is 85 km (53 miles) north east from Perth.
Trip duration: One day or overnight

On the road
Depart Perth via the Great Eastern Highway, passing through historic Guildford, before linking with the Great Northern Highway at Midland. Continue along this major road, then divert onto Toodyay Road which will take you to the historic farmland town of Toodyay. Rejoin the Great Eastern Highway to Northam and York and return to Perth.

Must see
This 150km (93 miles) long fertile valley with its gentle rolling countryside and wheat growing farms, is rich with the heritage of the state. Dine out in intimate cafes and tearooms or try traditional counter meals at an Aussie pub. Fine dining is available in some of the district's hotels and restaurants.

Toodyay, the gateway to the Avon Valley, dates back to 1836 and is a fine example of colonial architecture. It is surrounded by farming country and bushland.

Northam, an attractive rural town at the junction of the Avon and Mortlock Rivers, is the starting point for the annual 133km (82.5 miles) whitewater rafting classic, The Avon Descent.

South of Northam, the town of York has many carefully preserved historic buildings. Drive to Mount Brown for panoramic views of the town and nearby valley and visit the vintage car museum.

Another pretty town in the Avon Valley, Beverley is known for its aeronautical museum which contains old biplanes and wonderful stories of the state's aviation history.

Where to stay
Many fine colonial guesthouses are available for an overnight stay in the region. Hotels and motels offer high-quality accommodation to suit most budgets.

The South West
Margaret River, the main tourist town of this region, is 277km (172 miles) south from Perth.
Trip duration: Three days or longer

On the road
Depart Perth via the South-Western Highway, passing through Armadale, a pioneer town in Pinjarra and Harvey. Alternatively, take Highway 1 to Bunbury via the coastal towns of Mandurah and Rockingham, passing turn-offs to many of the state's finest beaches. From Bunbury, take the Bussell Highway, stopping at the resort town of Busselton. You can continue your drive along the coast road via Cape Naturaliste and Yallingup, or head down the highway to Margaret River and on to Augusta.

Must see
With a population of over 25,000 people, Bunbury is the capital of the south-west. Use this modern centre as a base for touring the many attractions the south has to offer but don't miss the local dolphin cruise and visiting the Dolphin Discovery Centre.

Since its settlement in 1832, the town of Busselton has grown into one of the state's most popular holiday destinations. The sheltered waters of Geographe Bay are an ideal setting for all forms of water sports and the area's fishing grounds yield crayfish and salmon.

The south-west corner is noted for its wineries and surf beaches. Along the coast there are beautiful bays, and inland majestic towering karri and jarrah forests.
The Yallingup area is known for its dramatic coastline and scenic forests. Fishing is popular and the surf beaches are said to be some of Australia’s best.

Surrounding the town of Margaret River is a rich farming region with some of the state’s finest vineyards and wineries where you can try top-quality wines. Margaret River beaches are renowned for their excellent surf and safe swimming conditions.

The Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park extends along the rugged south west coast. The park is home to rare birds and combines a scenic coast with wildflowers and jarrah forests. There are spectacular cave formations to be explored such as Jewel, Mammoth and Lake caves.

Caveworks Interpretive Centre is also well worth a visit.

Set on the slopes of Hardy Inlet and overlooking the entrance to Blackwood River, Augusta is one of the oldest settlements in Western Australia. Visitors come here to enjoy swimming, surfing and fishing.

Where to stay
There is a wide variety of accommodation available in the region including self-contained chalets, guesthouses and luxury hotel/motels. For dining out, choose from a wide range of eateries. Light meals are also available at many of the local wineries. The local seafood is delicious.

Bunbury – Pemberton
Pemberton, the centre of the tall timber country, is 129 km (80 miles) south east of Bunbury.

Trip duration: Two days or longer

On the road
Head south from Bunbury along the South-Western Highway via Donnybrook, Bridgetown and Manjimup. Drive on to Pemberton then north to the timber town of Nannup. Head towards Balingup through some of the state’s most beautiful forests. From Balingup return via the main highway to Bunbury and return to Perth on the Old Coast Road.

Must see
Donnybrook was first settled in 1842 by the Irish and is now the centre of the oldest apple-growing area in the state. Old Goldfields orchard offers apple cider tastings, picnic grounds and the opportunity to wander amongst the apple trees.

Bridgetown is situated on the beautiful Blackwood River, where rolling hills and forests make this a delight for artists and photographers. The river is well-stocked with marron (large local freshwater crayfish) and trout.

Manjimup is known as the Hardwood Capital of Australia and is at the centre of a region best known for karri forests. These trees are hundreds of years old and reach 75m (200 ft) in height. Four giant karri trees, known as the Four Aces, are 300-400 years old.

Pemberton is surrounded by towering karri forests with some of the world’s tallest hardwood trees. You can climb the 15 storey high Gloucester Tree, the highest fire lookout in the world. Visit the trout and marron hatchery and browse through galleries and craft shops containing high-quality local woodcraft.

Since settlement by graziers in the 1850s, Nannup has grown into an important town for the district’s many farming and fruit-growing activities. Visit the Bunnings Timber Mill, Old Templemore Tearooms and Antiques and go canoeing or fishing on the Blackwood River. During late spring, the area bursts into bloom with wildflowers.

Around Balingup are fruit orchards,
dairy and sheep farms, while the township is developing into an arts and crafts centre.

Where to stay
You will find quaint guesthouses, lodges, farmstays and resorts, as well as self-contained units and chalets. Dining out options range from tearooms in a forest setting to an upmarket resort restaurant serving local produce. Try marron (freshwater crayfish), the local delicacy.

Perth – Albany
Albany, the state’s oldest town on the south coast, is 410km (254 miles) from Perth.
Trip duration: Three days or longer.

On the road
Head south along the South Western Highway, then onto the South Coast Highway via Walpole and Denmark and on to Albany. Return to Perth via the Albany Highway.

Must see
The drive takes you through magnificent forests and undulating farming areas. Explore the quiet towns of Donnybrook, Bridgetown, Manjimup and Pemberton along the way.

Enjoy the picturesque Walpole/Normalup area with quiet, tranquil waterways and magnificent forests of karri and tingle trees. Visit the Valley of the Giants, famous for its walk among tingle trees. Discover life in the canopy along the tree top walk, a steel ramp which rises slowly whilst the terrain below falls away to a deep valley.

Situated on the banks of the Denmark River, Denmark offers a variety of water related activities and attractions. Nearby, the William Bay National Park features superb coastal scenery.

Albany is one of the state’s leading holiday centres. A resort town and former whaling port, it is located on picturesque Princess Royal Harbour. The harbours, rivers and estuaries provide excellent fishing, while the spectacular coastal scenery, beaches and nearby National Parks provide a wide variety of activities for visitors. The Natural Bridge – a huge granite suspension – is an awe-inspiring sight in heavy swells. Visitors are advised to take care when viewing. Take a guided tour through Albany Whaleworld, Princess Royal Fortress and the Old Gaol. West Cape Howe National Park, west of Albany offers spectacular scenery.

Brilliant wildflowers during spring are a feature of Porongorup National Park further north of Albany.

Mount Barker stretches across a vast area of rolling hills and broad valleys and is known for its excellent wines.

Surrounded by a flat sandy plain, the Stirling Ranges rise abruptly to over 1,000 metres. The national park of the same name is home to rare plant species – some like the mountain bells, are unique to the area.

Where to stay
There is a wide variety of accommodation available in the region including hotels and motels, bed and breakfast establishments and self contained chalets.

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