

Auckland, New Zealand

Overview

Introduction

Auckland is New Zealand's largest, most culturally diverse and cosmopolitan city. Its European, Pacific and Asian influences make it a destination unlike any other. But its urban credentials—a flourishing cultural life and abundant commerce—are often upstaged by its breathtaking geography. Sprawled across an isthmus, the city envelops more than 40 extinct volcanoes, several of which stand in green, pastoral parks overlooking a broad harbor, gulf islands and a seemingly endless shoreline.



Auckland's residents appreciate the city's two-sided personality: They view nature as one of life's privileges rather than a barrier to development, and the city's population is dispersed into neighborhoods of manageable size. All in all, Auckland is a gateway to nature and outdoor adventure, with fine dining and culture there for the asking, too.

Highlights

Sights—Panoramic views of the city and harbor from the Auckland Harbour Bridge and SkyCity and Sky Tower; a ferry trip to Devonport, Rangitoto Island or Waiheke Island; a drive through the Waitakere Ranges to the vast, wild west-coast beaches of Piha and Muriwai.

Museums—Cultural and natural-history exhibits at the Auckland Museum; New Zealand and international art at the Auckland Art Gallery; maritime history exhibits at the Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum; Navy history and exhibits at the Navy Museum.

Memorable Meals—Savor meals with panoramic views at Orbit atop Sky Tower; quick bites at Federal Delicatessen below on Federal Street; fresh seafood at Sails Restaurant overlooking Westhaven Marina; fabulous food and fun at Libertine in the revitalized Victoria Park Market; Italian fare at Prego in Ponsonby.

Late Night—Dancing at Ink Bar; local rock bands and good beer at dive-y King's Arms; fantastic, interesting cocktails with a Japanese twist at Fukuko.

Walks—Visiting plant exhibits in the Auckland Domain Wintergardens or Auckland Botanic Gardens (Manurewa); strolling along Tamaki Drive or through Cornwall Park; hiking in the Waitakere Ranges; walking or cycling the Coast to Coast trail; wandering through historic Devonport, along beaches or on Rangitoto, Motutapu and Waiheke islands.

Especially for Kids—Kelly Tarlton's Antarctic Encounter and Underwater World; Rainbow's End; Butterfly Creek; SheepWorld; the Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT); interactive children's exhibits at Auckland Museum; Auckland Zoo; Crystal Mountain; Stardome Observatory and Planetarium.

Geography

Auckland is on New Zealand's North Island. The city spreads across an isthmus between two harbors and two very different coastlines. The east coast, along the Waitemata Harbour and Hauraki Gulf, is lined with golden sand and has translucent blue, calm waters. Manukau Harbour flows into the Tasman Sea on the west coast, beyond the forest-covered Waitakere Ranges, and is characterized by deep-blue water with unrelenting swells pounding stretches of black sand. Numerous dormant volcanoes dot the landscape and offer wonderful vistas.

The greater city of Auckland is really a sprawling set of neighborhoods and suburbs and was previously split into four cities: Manukau City (south), Waitakere City (west), North Shore City (north) and Auckland City (center). Auckland is a supercity, with one council and one mayor, but with regional representation.

The downtown area stretches uphill from the cruise-ship terminal area, which includes the Viaduct Basin, Princes Wharf, Queens Wharf (where the ferry terminal is located) and Wynyard Wharf. Queen Street is the main street in the CBD (Central Business District). Karangahape Road, called K' Road, connects Upper Queen Street to Ponsonby Road, the main street through Ponsonby, the neighborhood just west of the city center.

The east side is dominated by the Auckland Domain, a vast park, and the upscale neighborhoods of Parnell, just east of the park, and Remuera, still farther east. Two other inner-city neighborhoods are Newmarket (south of Parnell) and Newton-Kingsland (south of Ponsonby). The northern part of the metro area, the North Shore, is across the Harbour Bridge and includes the suburbs of Takapuna, Devonport and the northern suburbs called "the Bays."

The Mission Bay, Kohimarama and St. Heliers Bay waterfront is a popular place for tourists and locals alike. Visitors also gather at the North Shore beaches and in historic Devonport township.

History

The Maori, a Polynesian people, are recognized as being the first inhabitants of New Zealand. Evidence suggests that they arrived by canoe during the 13th century in a period when Polynesians did a lot of ocean voyaging. They began establishing strong communities on the North and South islands.

Easy access to the resources of the ocean and rich volcanic soil made the Auckland region highly desirable, which in turn made it the prize of conflict and war. Different Maori groups built fortified strongholds (*pa*) on the area's volcanoes: Mount Eden, Mount Victoria, One Tree Hill and Bastion Point.

In the early 1800s, the first British settlers began to arrive. Initially, they began establishing communities along the coastline through trading agreements with the Maori and then finally, in the 1860s, through armed conflict. The first governor general, William Hobson, "negotiated" the acquisition of 7,400 acres/3,000 hectares of land around the tallest volcano, Mount Eden. He declared Auckland the capital city in 1841 and set about making it the country's main trading port.

In 1865, Auckland lost its status as capital to Wellington. Nevertheless, greater Auckland became the largest city in New Zealand and home to a large population of Polynesian (mainly from Samoa, the Cook

Islands and Tonga) and, more recently, Asian immigrants. The city remains one of the three main ports of call for cargo, visitors and information.

Port Information

Location

Auckland has two terminals: Princes Wharf Cruise Ship terminal and Shed 10 terminal. The historic Shed 10 dates from 1910, when it was used as an import and export cargo, but the current split-level terminal caters to cruise ships carrying up to 3,000 passengers. Sitting alongside The Cloud events center in the heart of downtown, it allows easy access to all local transport facilities, restaurants, entertainment, the tourism office and attractions.

Potpourri

New Zealand has 38.5 million sheep, and about 288,000 of them graze in the Auckland region.

The Auckland isthmus is the narrowest strip of land in New Zealand.

New Zealand's first governor general named the harbor settlement to honor his patron back in England, Lord Auckland.

Auckland is called the Polynesian capital of the world. There are more Polynesian people living in South Auckland than in the Pacific Islands where they originated.

Visit Auckland Central Library to view New Zealand's only copy of *Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories & Tragedies*, a collection of 36 plays printed in 1623.

Karekare Beach in the Waitakere Ranges is where Jane Campion's movie *The Piano* was filmed.

The majority of Asian immigrants to New Zealand, predominantly from South Korea and China, live in Auckland, hence an abundance of Asian eateries and shops.

The pohutukawa tree (mainly found in coastal areas of the North Island) is often called the New Zealand Christmas tree because it flowers in December (summertime in the southern hemisphere). The trees become huge and are covered in clusters of bright red flowers.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Auckland's must-see sights invariably turn into must-do activities. The reason: The city's most striking landmarks are its natural monuments. Once you see them, you'll soon want to hike, bike, kayak or sail them. The main park, the Auckland Domain, is home to several interesting plant exhibits in the Wintergardens, as well as the magnificent Auckland Museum—and it's a great place simply to take a walk. Dormant volcanoes such as Mount Eden, One Tree Hill, Mount Victoria and North Head provide not only beautiful recreational parkland, but also panoramic views of the city, the harbor and the Hauraki Gulf.

The best man-made vantage point in Auckland is the Sky Tower. It dominates the skyline and anchors the downtown entertainment complex called SkyCity. Guided walks across the Harbour Bridge also offer

exhilarating views. For a more accessible vantage point, view the inner city from the external balcony of the Events Centre in the Wynyard Quarter.

The city center has plenty of cultural attractions, including the remodeled and expanded Auckland Art Gallery housing the country's largest collection of New Zealand and international art. Aotea Square, dominated by performing-arts and entertainment venue The Edge, sits midway up Queen Street (across from the historic town hall), and there is a diverse array of cafes and boutiques along Queen Street and adjacent High Street. West of the Ferry Building on Quay Street is Princes Wharf, the Viaduct Basin and Wynyard Quarter. Trendy Britomart's (east of the Ferry Building) train station is a bustling hub of city transportation, which makes the area surrounding a good spot for dining, shopping or leisurely watching the world go by.

New Zealand's sailing heritage is also documented in the Viaduct Basin at the Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum.

For eclectic and multicultural sights, wander K' Road between Queen Street and Ponsonby Road. For the upmarket, take a short bus ride to Parnell, a revamped colonial village with designer boutiques, several art galleries and the beautiful Rose Gardens with the tiny historic St. Stephens church and pioneer cemetery. The suburb of Ponsonby is the heart of Auckland's cafe, bar and restaurant scene.

Take a 10-minute ferry ride across the harbor to historic Devonport, the first Auckland settlement and home of the New Zealand Navy. See navy ships at their berths when coming across the harbor on the ferry, swim at the safe sheltered beach at Cheltenham, and walk up Mount Victoria or North Head for 360-degree views of the city and environs.

One of the biggest attractions is just outside the city center toward the eastern beaches on Tamaki Drive. At Kelly Tarlton's Antarctic Encounter and Underwater World, you can see a colony of penguins and walk through an underwater passage with stingrays and sharks swimming overhead. The scenery along Tamaki Drive is worthwhile in itself, and you can continue along the coast to such vibrant areas as Mission Bay and St. Heliers lined with restaurants and cafes.

Historic Sites

SkyCity and Sky Tower

Federal Street (at Victoria Street)
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-363-6000. Toll-free 0800-759-2489

<http://www.skywalk.co.nz>

This entertainment complex in the center of the city has restaurants, bars, live music, casinos, a theater and a luxury hotel. It also has the best views in town from Sky Tower, the tallest freestanding structure in the Southern Hemisphere (1,076 ft/328 m). Perhaps the best time to visit is late afternoon, to enjoy the daytime view and then watch the sun go down over the Waitakere Ranges and take in the nighttime panorama. Besides viewing the city from the observation decks, you can take part in Sky Jump, a cable-controlled 630-ft/192-m jump, or Vertigo, a guided climb to 885 ft/270 m (<http://www.skyjump.co.nz>).

Observation deck open daily from 8:30 am. NZ\$28 adults. Sky Jump NZ\$225 adults. Sky Walk NZ\$145 adults. Combination "Look n Leap" tickets are available for NZ\$290.

One Tree Hill

Greenlane Road (or Manukau Road)
Epsom, New Zealand

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/parksfacilities/premierparks/Pages/onetreehill.aspx>

Among the largest volcanoes in the area, One Tree Hill got its name from—you guessed it—having one tree on top. Unfortunately, the famous Monterey pine tree was destroyed by a protestor, but One Tree Hill and the surrounding Cornwall Park remain must-sees. Enter between the old stone gateway on Greenlane Road and drive or walk to the top, where there is a monument to the Maori people, an obelisk with the statue of a Maori chief. This is one of the best places in New Zealand to see the remains of defensive earthworks built by Maori in their fortified villages or *pa*. At its base is the grave of Sir John Logan Campbell, also called the father of Auckland, who bequeathed the whole area to the city. Auckland's Stardome Observatory and Planetarium is located in the One Tree Hill Domain.

Mount Eden

Entrance is on Mount Eden Road
Auckland, New Zealand

The volcano closest to the center of town, Mount Eden has panoramic views of the entire city, from the northern tip of the Whangaparaoa Peninsula and the Waitakere Ranges to the outlying Bombay Hills in the south. Its Maori name is Maungawhau, which means "hill of the Whau tree." The summit remains natural with cattle grazing the pasture, and it's an easy walk up—or you can drive to the summit.

Auckland Harbour Bridge

Westhaven Reserve, Curran Street Extension
Herne Bay, New Zealand

Phone: 09-360-7748. Toll-free 0800-462-8649

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/auckland-harbour-bridge>

Completed in 1959, this bridge resembling a coat hanger is Auckland's most functional landmark: It connects the city side of Auckland to the North Shore. The bridge is open for guided walks and bungee jumping established by New Zealand's legendary thrill seeker AJ Hackett. The 90-minute climb to the top gives spectacular 360-degree views of Auckland.

Daily 9 am-5 pm. NZ\$125 adults. Must be age 7 or older to climb. Climbers must weigh between 77-330 lb/35 kg-150 kg. Climbing suits are provided.

Museums

Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum

Quay and Hobson streets (at Quay Street, Viaduct Basin)
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-373-0800

<http://www.maritimemuseum.co.nz>

Fantastic installations highlight the maritime history and heritage of New Zealand, including full-size boats from many cultures. Explore the life and achievements of Sir Peter Blake in a stunning audiovisual permanent exhibition. His boat NZL 32 *Black Magic*, the 1995 America's Cup winner, is on show, hanging from the ceiling. The museum offers heritage harbor cruises daily except Monday on the traditional scow *Ted Ashby*. Daily 10 am-5 pm. NZ\$20 adults.

Museum of Transport and Technology

Great North Road (or Meola Road)
Western Springs, New Zealand

Phone: 09-815-5800. Toll-free 0800-668-2869

<http://www.motat.org.nz>

MOTAT was built in the early 1970s, born out of the international curiosity that resulted from the space race. Explore some of the 300,000 items on aviation, railroad, printing, steam, military technology and more, with displays of restored fighter planes. There's an interactive challenge zone, a tactile dome and a mirror maze, a Victorian village to roam, a real steam engine that circles the complex and free vintage tram rides. It's recommended for children of all ages.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. NZ\$19 adults.

Howick Historical Village

Lady Marie Drive (at Bells Road, 40 minutes from downtown Auckland)
Pakuranga, New Zealand

Phone: 09-576-9506

<http://www.fencible.org.nz>

Knowledgeable, costumed guides lead visitors through 30 original buildings from New Zealand's colonial period. You'll see the oldest school and courthouse in the country, as well as two Maori *whares* (dwellings). For modern-day convenience, a cafe and a shop are on-site.

Daily 10 am-4 pm. NZ\$16 adults.

Auckland Museum

Domain Drive (in the Auckland Domain)
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-306-7067 or 09-306-7048 for bookings

<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com>

Also called the Auckland War Memorial Museum, this is the city's history-filled storehouse. It exhibits a wide variety of contemporary and historic installations that focus on Pacific cultures. Be sure to visit the interactive centers, as well as one of the country's best collections of Maori artifacts. The second level also has displays that chronicle New Zealand's involvement in world wars. A cafe and an excellent gift shop are on-site.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. Guided tours daily (charges apply). Group tours can be arranged. Maori cultural performances and tour at 11 am and 1:30 pm (NZ\$40 adults). Performance only at noon and 2:30 pm in summer (NZ\$25 adult). Special exhibitions are held in the atrium and usually incur an extra charge.

Neighborhoods & Districts

Viaduct Harbour

Auckland, New Zealand

<http://www.viaduct.co.nz>

This former industrial wharf area along the downtown waterfront was redeveloped in the late 1990s for the America's Cup, which New Zealand hosted in 2000 and 2003. The Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum next to the tourist information office is world-class. Viaduct Harbour's vibrance now extends farther westward to an events center and the Wynyard Wharf, a popular entertainment quarter with cafes, restaurants, bars, shops and the Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum.

Parnell

Auckland, New Zealand

<http://www.parnell.net.nz>

Next to the Auckland Domain and just up the hill from downtown, Parnell is a great place to shop, visit art galleries and dine. Victorian-era wooden stores and houses have been restored in the area, giving a colonial touch to modern facilities.

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5 pm.

Eastern Bays

Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-623-1200

<http://www.missionbay.co.nz>

Heading east along the waterfront from the city center, Tamaki Drive is possibly the most scenic route in Auckland. The road is bordered by the cliffs on one side (watch out for the World War II defensive gun emplacements) and the blue inner harbor on the other. Along the way is Mission Bay, a beautiful cove with excellent cafes. Farther along the road is St. Heliers, a charming beach village with great views of the entire harbor from the point's lookout.

Devonport

Auckland, New Zealand

<http://www.devonport.co.nz>

Nestled at the end of the North Shore Peninsula, Devonport is one of the oldest districts in the city. The charming, well-maintained seaside village with historic Victorian wooden villas and beautiful pohutukawa trees offers great food and coffee, local history and navy museums, world-class studios and galleries, great beaches, guided or self-guided historical walks and a fantastic view of Auckland and the harbor—especially from atop Mount Victoria, where you can look toward North Head, with its maze of World War II defense tunnels. Or visit Fort Takapuna along Vauxhall Road, a historic reserve with information on military and navy history.

Ferries provide service to Devonport from the downtown ferry terminal every half-hour during the day and hourly after 7 pm. The information center is at the lower end of Victoria Road near the ferry. Devonport tours by Explorer minibus including ferry return trip NZ\$40 (or one-hour tours without ferry for NZ\$22). The bus is hop-on, hop-off if requested and goes up Mount Victoria. Tours with lunch (NZ\$65) or dinner (NZ\$80) can also be arranged (Phone 09-357-6366; <http://www.devonporttours.co.nz>).

Parks & Gardens

Parnell Rose Gardens

85 Gladstone Road
Parnell, New Zealand

Considered one of the best rose gardens in the Southern Hemisphere, the roses in Dove Myer Robinson Park attract thousands of locals and visitors each year. From the gardens, you can walk to Mechanic's Bay and the 1960s saltwater Parnell Baths.

Daily sunrise-sunset. Free.

Eden Gardens

24 Omana Ave.
Epsom, New Zealand

Phone: 09-638-8395

<http://www.edengarden.co.nz>

Since 1964, volunteers have created 5 acres/2 hectares of magnificent gardens from what was once an abandoned quarry on the slopes of Mount Eden. The mix of exotic and native plants includes one of the largest collections of camellias in the Southern Hemisphere. Tearooms offer homemade goodies.

Daily 9 am-4 pm, until 4:30 pm in summer. NZ\$8 adults.

Cornwall Park

Greenlane Road
Epsom, New Zealand

Phone: 9-630-8485

<http://www.cornwallpark.co.nz>

Parts of this spectacular park, which surrounds One Tree Hill, are reminiscent of England, with gently rolling green pastures, stone walls, grazing sheep and giant exotic and native trees. Spring (September and October) is a popular time to visit, with daffodils and cherry blossoms blooming. In addition to great walking, a playground, jogging trails and the Stardome Observatory & Planetarium, the park has an information center (open 10 am-4 pm), a restaurant (with a fabulous high tea) and a couple of historic houses open to the public.

Daily 7 am-dusk. Free.

Auckland Domain

Park Road (or Maunsell Road, off Parnell Road)
Grafton, Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-301-0101

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>

Situated around an extinct volcano cone, this is Auckland's main park. It offers stunning views and magnolia and oak groves. The park is also home to the Auckland Museum. Paths wind through centuries-old native trees, and duck ponds mark the upwelling of natural springs. Take in the self-guided walk among sculptures by leading New Zealand artists (brochure available at the Auckland Museum foyer). In the Wintergarden Pavilion itself, old Victorian greenhouses are filled with tropical and temperate plants.

The Domain is open 24 hours a day. Wintergardens open April-October 9 am-4:30 pm (extended hours in summer). Free.

Recreation

Auckland seems to have been designed with outdoor recreation in mind. The beauty of the natural setting is complemented by top-notch outfitters and the locals' infectious adventurous spirit. Waitemata Harbour and the Hauraki Gulf are wonderful playgrounds. Sailing in Auckland (dubbed the "City of Sails") is almost a birthright to an Aucklander. Visitors should take the time to get out on the water and to at least one of the Gulf's many islands, even if it's only on a ferry to Devonport or a half-day trip to the volcanic cone of Rangitoto Island.

A variety of terrain and microclimates adds to Auckland's recreational appeal. The Domain, the city's main park, is excellent for jogging, running or biking, as are all the waterfront areas and beaches. The Waitakere Ranges to the west are perfect areas for mountain biking and hiking—there are few places in the world where you can be so deep in the woods yet so close to a really good cup of coffee. Golf is also a popular pastime, and nearby courses offer not only a challenge but also scenic beauty. Swimming in white water through narrow canyons is one of the wilder recreational options, as is mountain biking or quadbiking through Riverhead's pine forests, surfing at Piha or Bethels beaches, heli-fishing or scuba diving in the Hauraki Gulf.

Beaches

West Coast Beaches

These locations offer an experience in wonder and wildness. The beaches have black sand, and the seas are always rolling in with spectacular surf. From the northern tip of the Manukau Harbour northward to the mouth of Kaipara Harbour, there are a number of fantastic beaches good for bush hiking and walking—of note are Karekare, Piha, Bethels and Muriwai. A large gannet colony at Muriwai is also worth a visit. There are coffee kiosks at Piha and Muriwai beaches. The waters on the west coast can be dangerous, with many riptides, so always swim between the flags. On a fine evening, Auckland's west coast beaches are the perfect place to watch the sun go down.

Pakiri Beach

This is one of the finest beaches in the area—pristine beauty, crystal-clear water, golden sand dunes and not a house in sight. The beach is popular with locals and surfers (when there's a Pacific swell) and horse riders. In summer, it's common for dolphins to swim near shore. It's well worth the 90-minute drive north up the coast past Warkworth.

North Shore Beaches

Numerous beaches on the North Shore are ideal for walking and safe swimming. The slope is gentle, and breaking waves are moderate. The closest beaches are those on the northern shore of the Devonport Peninsula (it's a 10-minute ferry trip from downtown Auckland). From the ferry docks, walk along King Edward Parade to Cheltenham Beach and Narrow Neck Beach. Farther north (10 minutes by car or bus) is Takapuna Beach, a popular spot with an excellent cafe right on the beach. North of Takapuna are small, secluded Thorne Bay and Minihaha beaches linked by a coastal walking path through to Milford Beach. Suburban bays farther along the coast have their own beaches, often with small playgrounds for children, picnic areas, coin-operated gas barbecue pits, washroom facilities and a boat ramp.

Bicycling

More and more cycle lanes are being constructed throughout Auckland to facilitate safe cycling. There is a 31-mi/50-km cycle route that takes in some of the sights throughout the city; maps are available from city information centers.

By law, helmets are to be worn at all times. Bikes can be taken on the ferry.

Boating & Sailing

There are several options for sightseeing on the water, including in a water taxi, launch or historic yacht from Viaduct Harbour. This once-rustic fishing boat dock was transformed in the 1990s to become the top-class base for the America's Cup yacht regattas in the early 2000s.

Golf

Waitemata Golf Club

Derby Street
Devonport, New Zealand

Phone: 09-445-8716

<http://www.waitematagolf.co.nz>

In the shadow of Mount Victoria in Devonport, the club offers an easily walkable 18-hole course set in well-established parklike surroundings. Make a day of it—spend a morning playing a round and then lunch in Devonport.

Daily from 7 am. Reservations required.

Titirangi Golf Club

Links Road
Titirangi, New Zealand

Phone: 09-827-5749 or 09-827-3967

<http://www.titirangigolf.co.nz>

One of New Zealand's premier golf courses, Titirangi has been host to the New Zealand Open. The 18-hole layout is very challenging. The course is private, and tee times are restricted, so call and book ahead. The course is located about 20 minutes from downtown Auckland.

Daily 7:30 am-dusk.

The Grange

Grange Road
Papatoetoe, New Zealand

Phone: 09-278-9777

<http://www.thegrangegolfclub.co.nz>

This championship-level course with tight fairways and fast greens is sure to test your abilities.

Daily 7:30 am-dusk.

Muriwai Golf Club

Coast Road
Muriwai, New Zealand

Phone: 09-411-8454

<http://www.muriwaigolfclub.co.nz>

A true links course, this layout is perched on the edge of Muriwai Beach. The links have stunning sea views and the occasional spray, depending on wind and ocean swells. It's a demanding design and well worth the hour-long drive. The club also has a restaurant, bar and pro shop.

Daily dawn-dusk.

Gulf Harbour Country Club

180 Gulf Harbour Drive
Hibiscus Coast, New Zealand

Phone: 09-428-1380

<http://www.gulfharcountryclub.co.nz>

Built on a beautiful peninsula, the course offers some of the best views and most dramatic golf near the city. The Club has tennis and squash courts, a swimming pool and gym, and pro shop. About a one-hour drive from Auckland.

Daily 8 am-dusk; members only Wednesday and Saturday until noon. Reservations recommended.

Chamberlain Park Golf Course

46A Linwood Ave.
Western Springs, New Zealand

Phone: 09-815-4999

<http://www.chamberlainpark.co.nz>

This great 18-hole course has an excellent pro shop and in-house professionals. Because it is a public course, tee times are first-come, first-served, so an early start is recommended.

Daily dawn-dusk.

Hiking & Walking

From city, beaches or bays to offshore islands, Auckland's choice of walks and hikes is nearly endless.

For information about city and regional parks and beach walks, call toll-free 0800-282-552, or visit <http://www.aucklandnz.com> or <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>.

For natural and historic habitats and bush walks administered by the National Department of Conservation, call 09-379-6476. <http://www.doc.govt.nz>.

Never walk alone if you're going off the beaten track; leave word about where you're going and when you expect to return. Take snacks, water and a cell phone if you have one. Wear appropriate footwear and clothing, as temperatures can change quickly.

Waitakere Ranges

Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-365-0500

<http://regionalparks.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/piha/track/Kitekite%20Track>

These mountains and a regional park are part of a rain forest just outside the city. Access the area via Scenic Drive, and stop off at the Arataki Visitor Centre for great views, more details and maps. It's laced with dozens of trails of different ability levels and durations, ranging from less than an hour to several hours. Some trails follow the coastline through forests, and others go into the deep bush of the surrounding mountains.

Check out the Kitekite track walk (1 mi/1.6 km), which starts from Glen Esk Road carpark at Piha and leads to a beautiful three-tiered waterfall. Another lovely walk is to the gannet colony at Muriwai Beach, a 15-minute coast walk along the beach from the carpark.

Eastern Bays

The stretch along Tamaki Drive is the best spot to run, jog, walk, skate or bicycle. It offers superb views of the harbor and the city. A wide footpath is available. If you get tired, hop on one of the many buses that head back to the city. Start from the Wynyard Wharf area and follow the footpath east.

Coast to Coast Walkway

Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-301-0101

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>

A 10-mi/16-km walkway from Viaduct harbor to Onehunga Bay Reserve offers the opportunity to explore Auckland's two coasts. The route is clearly marked and offers some scenic views. Walkway maps are available at the visitor information center.

Nightlife

Karangahape Road (K' Road to the locals) has an edgy nightlife scene for the twentysomething crowd. The downtown waterfront area around Britomart, Princes Wharf, the Viaduct Basin and Wynyard Wharf are also popular. The revamped Victoria Park Market offers a variety of venues to suit tastes across the board.

Other popular areas for bars and clubs include High Street, O'Connell Street, Vulcan Lane, Ponsonby Road and Parnell Road. Nuffield Street in Newmarket and Kingsland are also interesting locales. Clubs are generally open Thursday-Sunday. Most start getting lively around 11 pm or midnight, with closing times around 2 or 3 am.

Bars, Taverns & Pubs

The Whiskey

210 Ponsonby Road

Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-361-2666

<http://www.thewhiskey.co.nz>

This snug bar-cum-nightspot serves excellent cocktails with an emphasis on whiskey. Popular with thirtysomething professionals. Its decor pays homage to LA's famous Whisky A Go-Go on Sunset Strip. The music played is classic rock.

Daily 5 pm-3 am.

The Empire Tavern

137 Victoria St. W.
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-373-4389

<http://www.empire.co.nz>

This iconic tavern has three bars, including a cafe open from 7 am Monday-Friday.

Bar open from 11 am.

Occidental Belgian Beer Cafe

6-8 Vulcan Lane
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-300-6226

<http://www.occidentalbar.co.nz>

This hotel has survived many an era since it first opened in 1870. It is a wood-filled landmark, even though its original interior has been completely renovated. The fantastic range of Belgian beer at this bar has good pub food to go with it: Try the famous mussel pots.

Monday-Friday 7:30 am-late night, Saturday and Sunday 9 am-late night.

Live Music

There is a lot of musical talent on offer in Auckland but not one consistent place, every night. Musicians move around the circuit, and things change frequently. It's best to check out website listings for live gigs to find something that appeals to and is close to you.

The Town Hall, Civic Theatre, Powerstation and Vector Arena have big audience gigs, but for the up-close and casual event seeker, pubs have live music on Sunday afternoons or at least one night a week, usually a Thursday, Friday or Saturday.

For the latest performance schedules, check out <https://www.heartofthecity.co.nz>; or <http://www.viewauckland.co.nz>. For DJs, see <http://www.georgefm.co.nz/DJs.aspx>.

Performing Arts

Auckland's performing-arts community has great local talent and several good venues. Most performances take place at The Edge, in Aotea Centre and at Auckland Town Hall opposite, a historic landmark building that houses two performance venues. Its Great Hall is regarded as one of the most acoustically tuned concert halls in the world. Aotea Square hosts summertime street theater, concerts and festivals—as well as a weekly crafts market and outdoor exhibitions.

Check the weekend *New Zealand Herald*, *Herald On Sunday* or *Sunday Star Times* for entertainment details. Weekly newspapers give details of entertainment in the local suburbs. The national events website <http://www.eventfinda.co.nz> is comprehensive.

Music

Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra

301-303 Queen St. (midway up Queen Street)
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-623-1052

<http://www.apo.co.nz>

The Philharmonia performs most often at Aotea Centre and the Town Hall, usually with guest soloists and conductors.

The season runs mid-February to mid-December.

Opera

New Zealand Opera

100 Mayoral Drive
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-379-4020. Toll-free 0800-696-737

<http://www.nzopera.com>

New Zealand's opera company usually performs at Aotea Centre, Aotea Square.

The season runs April-October.

Ticket Brokers

Shows or performances advertised in the paper will tell you which broker to call for tickets.

Ticketek

Aotea Centre Box Office, Queen Street
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-307-5000

<http://www.ticketek.co.nz>

Tickets can be purchased by phone or online. There is a walk-up outlet at The Edge arts complex.

Shopping

Shopping in Auckland offers all the diversity and choice of any "high street" as well as the inevitable influences of being isolated from the main continents. Visitors are catered to on lower Queen Street, where souvenir stores abound, as well as in the stylish Parnell. Some interesting fashion-label shops are on High Street, which runs one block east of and parallel to Queen Street and in the adjoining Chancery Lane.

For serious fashion, jewelry and New Zealand art, head for Parnell and Newmarket. Ponsonby Road, though more famous for its restaurants and bars, is dotted with interesting stores. Devonport also has its share of art galleries, antiques shops, secondhand bookshops and a couple of fashion stores.

New Zealand is developing a name for itself in the world of fashion: Several small boutiques sell creations by local designers. New Zealand wines are also growing in popularity around the world—and they are nice gifts for folks back home.

Regular farmers markets are held in several suburban communities on Saturday or Sunday. Check local papers or find a schedule online. <http://www.aucklandnz.com>.

Shopping Hours: Stores are generally open Monday-Friday 9 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-4 pm. Some shops stay open late on Thursday or Friday. Most stores in major shopping areas or malls are also open Sunday.

Department Stores

Smith & Caugheys

253-261 Queen St.
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-377-4770

<https://www.smithandcaugheys.co.nz>

You'll find a range of high-quality goods in this traditional upscale department store with online and duty-free services and gift registry. There's another branch in Newmarket.

Monday-Thursday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Friday 9:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-5:30 pm.

Galleries

Pick up an Auckland Gallery Guide from galleries and information centers. Auckland has a good selection of both community and retail galleries. If you've nothing specific in mind, make your way to the Shortland-High-Kitchener-Lorne streets area in the central city. Alternatively, head up Parnell Road to Bath Street. There are several galleries along Jervois Road in Herne Bay, and a ferry ride to Devonport will land you in another cluster of retail galleries and artists' studios. Along the line, you're sure to find an exhibition of interest.

Artspace

Level 1, 300 Karangahape Road
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 303-4965

<http://www.artspace.org.nz>

This contemporary art gallery receives major funding from Creative New Zealand and features cutting-edge art.

Tuesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 11 am-4 pm. Free entry.

Markets

Victoria Park Market

210 Victoria St. W.
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-309-6911

<http://www.victoriaparkmarket.co.nz>

In a historic brick building opposite Victoria Park, this market has undergone a NZ\$20 million refurbishment and is now home to a broad range of retail stores, restaurants and bars.

Daily 10 am. The weekly outdoor markets are held Saturday and Sunday 10 am-4 pm.

Otara Flea Market

Newbury Street
Otara, New Zealand

Phone: 09-274-0830

<http://www.otarafleamarket.co.nz>

This famous landmark is more like a street festival than a market. You'll find a wide range of secondhand goods, music, art and food from the Polynesian islands there. The carpark is on Watford and Newbury streets.

Saturday 6 am-noon.

Specialty Stores

The Garden Party

130 Ponsonby Road
Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-378-7799

<http://www.thegardenparty.co.nz>

This Auckland institution sells predominantly New Zealand-designed art and craft items for the home and garden.

Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Pauanesia

35 High St.
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-366-7282

<http://www.pauanesia.co.nz>

There you'll find distinctive gift items and furnishings from New Zealand and around the South Pacific.

Monday-Thursday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Friday 9:30 am-7:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-4:30 pm.

Karen Walker

10 Northcroft St. (Takapuna)
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-489-6687

<http://www.karenwalker.com>

You'll find fashions by the leading New Zealand designer at this studio. There are other locations in Britomart, Ponsonby Road and Newmarket.

Caro's Wine Merchants

114 St. Georges Bay Road
Parnell, New Zealand

Phone: 9-377-9974

<http://www.caros.co.nz>

Consistently voted one of the best wine shops in Auckland, Caro's stocks an extensive range of wines from throughout New Zealand, as well as from overseas wineries.

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm.

Dining

Dining Overview

Dining out in Auckland is a passion fueled by fresh produce and culinary innovation. No one style can describe New Zealand's cuisine—it's a fusion of Pacific, Asian and European influences. Be sure to try locally caught fish, as well as New Zealand lamb. Kiwis are very proud of their wine industry, so you'll find lots of excellent local vintages to sample. There is also growing popularity in the Central American and Latin-style cuisines developing in the area.

The hot spots for good food and wine in Auckland include the downtown waterfront area. It's the place to head any night of the week for dinner or a late-night drink. Ponsonby Road's restaurants cater to every taste, and Parnell Road has its fair share of upscale places to eat (mixed in with expensive boutiques and galleries). Karangahape Road has some interesting ethnic-style eateries. Mission Bay, Remuera, Newmarket, Mount Eden, Herne Bay, Kingsland, Devonport and Takapuna on the North Shore also have a variety of restaurants.

Dining times are generally 7:30-11 am for breakfast, noon-2:30 pm for lunch and 6-10 pm for dinner. Sunday brunch is also an Auckland tradition: Cafes along Ponsonby and Jervois roads, in Parnell, Mission Bay and around the city waterfront are busy 9 am-3 pm.

Some restaurants or eateries, mainly in suburban areas, are not licensed and display a BYO sign (Bring Your Own wine or beer). Even some licensed restaurants will let you take your own bottle. They will charge a corkage fee, usually NZ\$5-\$10 a bottle or NZ\$4-\$5 per person.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a single dinner without tip or drinks: \$ = less than NZ\$30; \$\$ = NZ\$30-\$60; \$\$\$ = NZ\$61-\$100; \$\$\$\$ = more than NZ\$100.

Cuisines

Asian

Oh Calcutta

151 Parnell Road
Parnell, New Zealand

Phone: 09-377-9090

<http://www.ohcalcutta.co.nz>

This award-winning restaurant serves fine Indian cuisine with a good range of vegetarian options.

Monday 5:30-10:15 pm, Tuesday-Friday from noon, Saturday and Sunday 5:30-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Mai Thai Restaurant

Victoria Street
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-366-6258

<http://www.maithai.co.nz>

This is a popular place for business lunches and intimate dinners. Favorite dishes include green curry with chicken and the seafood basket.

Monday-Friday noon-10:30 pm, Saturday 6-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Bolliwood

110 Ponsonby Road
Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-376-6477

<http://www.bolliwood.co.nz>

From decor to waitstaff, tea-pouring to big-screen TVs, this place is big on entertainment. The menu features great spicy dishes from northern India. Other locations in Takapuna (phone 09-489-9911) and Browns Bay (phone 09-479-6039).

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

French

Antoine's Restaurant

333 Parnell Road
Parnell, New Zealand

Phone: 09-379-8756

<http://www.antoinesrestaurant.co.nz>

An institution in Auckland for more than 40 years, Antoine's serves perhaps the best French food in the country. This favorite among local Francophiles features fresh, homegrown New Zealand ingredients on

its menu, which changes regularly, although there is a nostalgia menu featuring some old favorites. If the weather is nice, ask to sit in the charming courtyard.

Wednesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Monday and Saturday for dinner only. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Fusion

Euro

Shed 22, Princes Wharf, Quay Street
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 9-309-9866

<http://www.eurobar.co.nz>

This restaurant has won international awards and is *the* place to be seen. It has crisp, white tablecloths, attentive service and a top wine list. The varied menu suits all tastes.

Daily noon-late. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Italian

Toto

53 Nelson St.
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-302-2665

<http://www.totorestaurant.co.nz>

At this pizzeria, you can order pizza by the meter. Settle into one of the leather booths and savor the famously fresh toppings. Toto Pizza is also available at Farina Restaurant, 244 Ponsonby Road.

Daily 11:30 am-9:30 pm. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Mexican

The Mexican Cafe

67 Victoria St. W. (upstairs)
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-373-2311

<http://www.mexicancafe.co.nz>

This lively cafe has been serving tasty Cal-Mex food and fun for 30 years now—and in large portions. There's a private function room that seats 45 people.

Daily noon-late. Reservations recommended for groups of eight or more. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Breakfast & Brunch

One 2 One Cafe

121 Ponsonby Road
Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-376-4954

<https://www.cafeone2one.nz>

The place Aucklanders frequent for breakfast, lunch or for coffee at any time of the day. Most ingredients are natural and healthy, and there are a few organic choices. Child-friendly with a sand pit in the courtyard and a singing cowboy Tuesday 9:30-10:30 am.

Monday-Wednesday 6:30 am-4 pm, Thursday and Friday 6:30 am-10:30 pm, Saturday 7 am-10 pm, Sunday 7 am-4 pm. \$. Most major credit cards.

Dizengoff

256 Ponsonby Road
Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-360-0108

<https://www.facebook.com/dizengoff.ponsonby>

This popular neighborhood brunch eatery has a Jewish-influenced menu. Try the salmon and eggs on toast or the breakfast muesli bowl. Excellent coffee.

Daily for breakfast and lunch. \$. Most major credit cards.

Cafes & Tearooms

Eden Gardens Tearooms

24 Omana Ave.
Epsom, New Zealand

Phone: 09-638-8385

<http://www.edengarden.co.nz>

The best kept secret in Auckland, set in the beautiful Eden Gardens, the tearooms serve such home-baked goodies as scones and finger cakes. Everything is served with tea.

Daily 9 am-4:30 pm. \$.

Continental

Orbit

Victoria Street at Federal Street
Auckland, New Zealand

Phone: 09-363-6000

<http://www.skycity.co.nz>

Slowly revolving atop Sky Tower, Orbit serves breathtaking views of the entire Auckland region. The food is mostly European, with occasional Asian and Indian influences.

Daily for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Sunday for high tea also. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$.
Most major credit cards.

Cibo

Axis Building, 91 St. Georges Bay Road
Parnell, New Zealand

Phone: 09-303-9660

<http://www.cibo.co.nz>

This haunt of advertising movers and shakers has a predominantly European menu. It's best known for fantastic lunches and an excellent selection of wines.

Monday-Friday noon-3 pm and 6-10:30 pm, Saturday 6-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$.
Most major credit cards.

Security

Etiquette

Generally, New Zealanders are open and friendly and do not stand on too much ceremony. Don't hesitate to ask if you are unsure about a social or business situation.

The Maori have unique cultural practices that are important in certain situations. Their form of greeting, called a *hongi*, consists of momentarily pressing noses together. If you're invited to a *marae* (the traditional, usually rural, meeting place), it is wise to ask instructions about protocol and procedures beforehand. Being invited to a *marae* is a special occasion and an honor. Be aware, however, that any ceremony there may be conducted entirely in the Maori language.

Maori customs are an integrated part of New Zealand society and should be respected. When traveling in the countryside, do not just wander onto a *marae* without an invitation. Even during cultural performances (or "tourist shows") laughing, making fun of the performers or trying to copy their actions can be seen as offensive. Sitting on a table or furniture that may be used for food is considered highly inappropriate in a Maori environment.

Personal Safety

Auckland is a relatively safe city for tourists, but take commonsense precautions and be aware of your surroundings at all times. Auckland has the usual petty crime that plagues most other big cities. You should always remove all valuables from your car and lock it properly. Do not park your car on a dark or deserted street overnight. As a pedestrian, you should also avoid unlit areas after dark.

The rule "never leave your bag or other personal items unattended" applies in Auckland as it does anywhere in the world. Purse-snatching and pickpocketing are not common, but take the same precautions you would anywhere.

Violent crimes, usually involving gangs and alcohol, occur mainly in suburban areas, particularly in South Auckland. Drunken youth incidents sometimes occur around central city clubs and cafes late at night, but private security patrols, cameras and an increased police presence are curtailing problems. A law bans the consumption of alcohol on city streets.

For more information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

New Zealand has the great fortune to be free of snakes, venomous spiders, plants poisonous to the touch, or dangerous wildlife. However, care should be taken to avoid sunburn, which can happen quickly in summer. Visitors susceptible to insect bites should use repellent, particularly in the evening at rural, bush and beach areas.

No vaccinations are required to enter New Zealand. Sanitation is very good in Auckland and the rest of the country. Tap water is safe to drink. The larger hotels will often have arrangements with local doctors to care for guests who may become ill.

The sun is fierce in New Zealand, and we recommend wearing a hat, especially in summer, and using sunscreen at all times—even when it's cloudy and especially when it's windy.

In an emergency, dial 111 to speak with the ambulance, fire or police service. The city's hospitals provide excellent care and have around-the-clock emergency services. Auckland City Hospital in Grafton, on the city fringe, is the country's largest public hospital.

For nonemergencies, phone 09-367-0000 to be directed to one of several centrally located hospitals. Nonurgent medical advice should be sought from a local GP (general practitioner) at any local clinic or at a pharmacy.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

City leaders have been proactive in making Auckland easily accessible for people with disabilities. All government and public buildings are equipped with ramps and elevators. By law, all restaurants are required to provide easy entry and wheelchair-accessible toilets, and most are happy to accommodate any special needs. On the other hand, Auckland is hilly and some parts are not easy for people in wheelchairs or those who require walking assistance. The Central Business District and expanding waterfront precincts are not too bad. Most buses have wheelchair lifts.

For more information on government services, contact the Health and Disability Commissioner. Phone 09-373-1060. Toll-free 0800-112-233. <http://www.hdc.org.nz>.

A number of taxi companies operate an accessible passenger service, including Auckland Co-op Taxis, Discount Taxis, North Harbour Taxis, North Shore Taxis and South Auckland Taxis. A full list can be found at <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/total-mobility-scheme/auckland.html>.

For more information on accessible places to stay and eat, sights and activities, and transport and services, visit <http://www.beaccessible.org.nz>.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do accept a drink if you are "shouted" a round by a friendly local. It is polite to buy a round back.

Don't smoke in public buildings, such as cinemas, libraries, restaurants or bars. It's considered rude to drop cigarette butts, as well.

Do look to your right when walking across the road—cars drive on the left in New Zealand.

Do swim between the red and yellow flags at the beach, as these areas are patrolled by lifeguards.

Don't light open fires in the forest if hiking, especially in summer when the fire risk is high.

Do learn and use the Maori greeting *Kia ora*.

Don't drink alcohol in public spaces: most have a liquor ban, sometimes even beaches and parks.

Don't rely on being able to use cell phones in rural areas, as coverage can be limited.

Do try the national dessert, the pavlova.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports but not visas. As of October 2019, visitors are also required to complete a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA) prior to arrival in the country. Payment of an International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) fee is also required.

Proof of sufficient funds and onward passage are required. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

New Zealand's economy is heavily reliant on horticulture and agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has very strict guidelines as to what cannot be brought into the country and zero tolerance for offenders. Anyone caught with fruit in a bag is subject to a fine of at least NZ\$200. Read and fill out your documentation on arrival carefully and honestly. Declaring something does not necessarily mean you will have it confiscated—just checked. You can view the customs form at <http://www.customs.govt.nz>.

Population: 1,482,000.

Languages: English, Maori.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic).

Time Zone: 12 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+12 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in September to the first Sunday in April.

Voltage Requirements: 230/240 volts.

Telephone Codes: 64, country code; 9,city code;

Money

Taxes

New Zealand has a 15% sales tax (called GST) on all goods and services. It is usually included in the displayed price of retail goods and services.

Tipping

Tourists to New Zealand are often told that tipping is offensive to the locals, but this is simply not the case. It's more that tips are not expected as they are in Europe and the U.S., but if you receive excellent service and decide to leave extra, it will be appreciated. There are no hard-and-fast rules about how much to leave: It should be relative to the service provided.

Weather

Situated on an isthmus and near the tropical weather patterns of the Pacific islands, Auckland experiences every type of weather—sometimes all in the same day. Winter (June-September) is a mixed bag of seasons: Warm westerly winds often make some winter days mild, but other days can be cold and very rainy. It never gets cold enough to snow (even frosts are rare). Average winter temperatures are around 58 F/13 C, though they can vary greatly.

Spring months are also unpredictable—either wonderfully calm and sunny or a tumultuous jumble of rain, cold and heat. Summer months (December-March) offer the most consistent weather. Average temperatures rise to 75 F/24 C, sometimes with high humidity levels. Rain showers are less frequent but still common.

What to Wear

Dressing for Auckland is a little tricky because the climate fluctuates between temperate and subtropical—the weather in winter and spring varies the most, so think layers. Even in summer you will probably be more comfortable at night with a warmer extra layer. In summer, when the sun can be fierce, hats, sunglasses, long-sleeved shirts and lots of sunscreen are essential. Rain gear is also recommended because showers can be frequent and unpredictable. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants at night and in bush areas to guard against mosquitoes and sand flies. Take insect repellent with you if you visit in the spring or summer.

If you intend to spend any time hiking or walking in the nature reserves, you'll need a layer of thermal wear or wool in winter, a warm jacket and good-quality hiking boots. Even in summer, carry a sweater or light jacket; the weather can change in no time at all. In winter, an extra layer (either a sweater or jacket) is usually necessary.

Style-wise, for business occasions, suits are the norm, but for leisure New Zealanders have a reasonably relaxed style, so travelers needn't feel compelled to have formal attire. Combinations that you can dress up or down and layers to accommodate temperature fluctuations work well—be it a barbecue or the theater you're off to.

Transportation

Auckland's downtown area is easily explored on foot. Ponsonby, Parnell and other inner-city neighborhoods are within reasonable walking distance, but bus service is also available if you'd rather not hoof it. We especially like the Link bus: Its route takes in many of the city's sights and attractions. Getting around town by car is also fairly easy, but parking can be a problem in the inner city. To travel to the western suburbs or to the Waitakere Ranges, take a commuter train from the downtown train station Britomart on lower Queen Street, a local bus, or one of the tour companies' minivan services if you have limited time in Auckland. Ferry service is available to Devonport, Bayswater, Birkenhead, Northcote Point, Waiheke, Rangitoto and several small nearby islands.

Auckland's road system has been put under pressure by continual work on upgrading interchanges and the increase in cars on the roads, so expect delays, especially during rush hours (7-9:30 am and 4-7 pm). However, buses now have their own lanes along most major routes and have become the faster mode of traveling.

Bus

Many bus companies operate within New Zealand, and Auckland is a major hub of their operations. There are several terminals for different local and regional services. There are also dozens of companies running cheap shuttle services to and from designated centers. <http://www.tourism.net.nz/transport>.

Car

In New Zealand you must be at least 16 years old to apply for a driving license. Policies on the minimum age to rent a car vary between companies, but generally, overseas visitors must be age 21 or older and hold a full, valid driver's license from their own country to rent a vehicle. If it is not in English, an international driving permit or translation is required and must be carried with you. Some companies also require the license to have been held for a minimum of one year. All drivers must be listed on the contract, and drivers younger than age 25 may incur a surcharge. Check the fine print.

Drivers are legally banned from using a mobile phone while driving, unless it is secured in a fixed mount and a hands-free kit is used.

For a preparatory overview of the New Zealand road rules, visit <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/index.html>.

Traffic within Auckland can be congested, and it is difficult to find a parking space on the street, especially during rush hour. Most street parking spaces are metered and require NZ\$1 and NZ\$2 coins or credit card. *Note:* Traffic wardens are vigilant and uncompromising with fines. It's best to find one of the many parking garages when in the city, but check prices as you enter.

Cars are right-hand drive, and driving is on the left side of the road. There's a strong emphasis on road safety: Speed limits and speed changes are heavily signposted and therefore strongly enforced with large fines. (New Zealand uses cameras to take photos of speeding cars.) The laws that govern alcohol limits for drivers are also strict. Seat belts must be worn by all occupants of a vehicle. New Zealand roads are often windy and narrow, and concentration and caution are required at all times.

Ferry

Fullers Ferries provides daily passenger service to and from the suburbs of Devonport, Bayswater, Birkenhead, Northcote Point and Stanley Bay, as well as Waiheke and other islands within the inner

Hauraki Gulf. Check details on the signposts for the right harbor crossing or island ferry at the old brick ferry building. Queens Wharf, Quay Street West, Auckland. Phone 09-367-9111. <http://www.fullers.co.nz>.

Explore Group also operates a Waiheke ferry service, as well as ferries to Rangitoto and Motutapu islands. Toll-free 0800-000-469. <http://www.explorewaiheke.co.nz>.

Public Transportation

A HOP card is a one-ticket pass for rides on buses, trains (within the city boundaries) and the cross-harbor Fullers ferries. There's an information kiosk in the Britomart Transport Centre, Lower Queen Street. Phone 09-366-6400. <http://www.at.govt.nz>.

A HOP Day Pass for NZ\$18 will allow you to travel aboard buses, trains and inner harbor ferries. You'll need to buy a HOP card from a ticket office or HOP retailer and load the day pass onto the card. If you already have a HOP card, day passes can also be bought at HOP top-up machines.

Bus—The inner-city area is well-served by buses, however coverage to the outlying suburbs during off-peak times is more limited. Signs at bus stops are small and can be overlooked easily: Look for white signs with red lettering, attached to lampposts. Most bus stops have a bus shelter, which is the best giveaway. Keep an eye out for your approaching bus and signal the drivers that you wish to board by waving; otherwise, they may not stop.

A red city LINK bus runs a circuit through the CBD for just NZ\$0.50 (or free with a HOP card) and leaves Britomart every 7-8 minutes 6:25 am-11:25 pm (Sunday 7 am-11:20 pm). The green inner Link bus makes a circuit in both directions around the inner-city neighborhoods of K' Road, Ponsonby, Parnell and Newmarket for a maximum of NZ\$2.50 every 10-15 minutes (Monday-Friday 6:30 am-11 pm, less frequently on weekends). It's an easy way to get a good look at the city and get oriented. Phone 09-355-3553 or check the timetables on <http://www.at.govt.nz>.

Train—Auckland Transport has a limited but improving commuter train service running from Britomart west to Waitakere via Henderson. Trains go south as far as Papakura or Pukekohe in South Auckland via Newmarket or Glen Innes. Train fare starts from NZ\$2 for one stage and the AT HOP card offers concessions. The main station is Britomart, which is located on lower Queen Street between Quay and Customs streets. Phone 09-366-6400. <http://www.at.govt.nz>.

Ship

During the summer, Auckland is visited by a number of international cruise ships. These ships dock at the downtown piers, Princes Wharf and Queens Wharf, Quay Street, adjacent to the Ferry Building.

Taxi

Several safe and reliable taxi companies operate in the Auckland area. It's always best to call and book a cab, especially for rides after 9 pm. Try Corporate Cabs (phone 09-377-0773) or Auckland Co-op Taxis (phone 09-300-3000). Taxi stands (ranks) are also easy to find downtown and around major hotels. It's sometimes possible to hail a cab, but the practice is not common.

Train

Tranz Rail

New Zealand's only national train network offers a limited tourist service to Auckland by way of the *Northern Explorer* between Auckland and Wellington. The 12-hour journey takes you through rolling

farmland, volcanic landscapes, gorges and coast. The train departs Britomart Station each Monday, Thursday and Saturday at 7:50 am. One-way fares from NZ\$159 adults. Special deals are often available. . Auckland, New Zealand. Toll-free 0800-872-467. <http://www.kiwirailscenic.co.nz>.

For More Information

Tourist Offices

Visitors should pick up *Auckland A-Z*, which lists everything you want to know or do in Auckland, from any Information Centre (i-SITE). Offices are in the domestic and international air terminals, Viaduct Basin on Princes Wharf, at SkyCity, in Devonport and on Waiheke Island. The guide has many maps and contains discount coupons for restaurants and shops. <http://www.aucklandtourism.co.nz>.

Department of Conservation

This office distributes visitor information, particularly for nature areas and trails. Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm, and in summer Saturday and Sunday 10 am-4 pm. 137 Quay St. (corner of Princes Wharf).Auckland, New Zealand. Phone 09-379-6476. <http://www.doc.govt.nz>.

Tauranga, New Zealand

Overview

Introduction

The most populous and fastest growing city in the Bay of Plenty region, Tauranga is a popular tourist area and is a hot spot for business and trade. Outdoor activities, including hiking, mountain biking and water rafting, are popular among locals and visitors. The waterfront area, called The Strand, has experienced a revitalization in recent years and is home to many of the city's hippest restaurants and bars.



Port Information

Location

Cruise ships dock at the Port of Tauranga, which is actually in the town of Mount Maunganui. There is a visitor information center close to the dock. Some cruise lines offer shuttle buses to nearby Tauranga, which is 20 minutes away, or it is possible to take a public bus.

Rotorua is 31 mi/50 km (about an hour) away from the port. To get to Rotorua, hire a taxi, sign up for a shore excursion through your cruise line or join one of the tour operators available at the port gates. It is not possible to squeeze exploring Tauranga, Mount Maunganui and Rotorua into one day.

Wellington, New Zealand

Overview

Introduction

Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, is located at the southern tip of the North Island. Known as Windy Wellington, it is less-visited than Auckland—410 mi/660 km to the north—and it's a pity that those who do go seldom stay more than a day.

Wellington's waterfront is a true gem and a great starting point for immersing yourself in its arts and culture. It's easy to pass a day strolling the harbor's edge, ducking into museums and admiring the sculptures along the way.

Lord of The Rings fans should pay a visit to Weta Workshop and Weta Cave; tours offer behind-the-scenes insight into the making of Peter Jackson's famous films. Wellington also happens to be a base for various Middle-earth tours, although the scenery on these may not be on the same scale as their South Island counterparts.

Weather in Wellington is famously finicky, but luckily the city buzzes with outstanding bars, cafes and restaurants. Cuba Street and Courtenay Place are the main hubs of entertainment.



Port Information

Location

Larger cruise ships dock at the Aotea Quay Terminal. The dock is a little more than five minutes from the city center via taxi or shuttle. Walking is not recommended, because it is along a busy road. The port is about 0.5 mi/0.8 km from the train station.

Smaller cruise ships dock in the city center at Queens Wharf.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Wellington has outstanding architecture, and we suggest simply walking the area in search of it. If you've rented a car, drive along breathtaking Marine Drive (allow several hours). Views of the city and harbor are best from Mount Victoria and Tinakori Hill.

Wellington's museums are unparalleled, with Te Papa (the national museum of New Zealand) offering a world-class experience encompassing history, nature and art. See where laws are made at the Parliament buildings, and visit historic landmarks such as the childhood home of local author Katherine Mansfield and the Cathedral of St. Paul.

Shopping

Shop for *paua*-shell jewelry, Maori items (wood and bone carvings, music and handicrafts), sheepskin rugs, merino-wool sweaters and other wool clothing, possum-skin accessories, high-quality outdoor clothing and equipment (especially fleece jackets), greenstone jewelry and ornaments (greenstone, or jade, is called *pounamu* in Maori), and items carved from native woods. The locally grown produce is fantastic, so look for things such as jams, *manuka* honey, cheeses, and local avocado and olive oils. New Zealand is home to hundreds of "boutique" vineyards, so wine is also a good buy.

Glass vases and art galleries are forever popular with tourists visiting New Zealand (including former U.S. President Bill Clinton, who always buys a glass vase for wife Hillary when he visits). New Zealand artwork has also become highly sought-after.

The local weekend produce markets are a fun way to meet New Zealanders. Another tip: As you drive around, be sure to look for little signs along the road identifying artists' studios and workshops for potters, glassblowers and woodworkers. We've found that it's very rewarding to stop in at some of these places.

Shopping Hours: Generally, Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm and Saturday 10 am-4 pm. Some shops, most malls and many outdoor produce markets are open Sunday.

Dining

Dining Overview

New Zealand's cuisine has come into its own. Excellent restaurants have popped up all across the country, serving homegrown fare with a strong Pacific flavor as well as a wide variety of international cuisine, particularly Asian—or Asian fusion, which gives a unique Kiwi twist to the genre.

The local foods to try include venison, fresh fish (the salmon is especially good), shellfish (New Zealand is famous for mussels and oysters) and fruits such as kiwifruit, passion fruit and tamarillos (tree tomatoes). Make sure you sample a specialty meat pie—a tasty throwback of British influence but updated with a variety of unique ingredients. Steak-and-cheese pies are especially popular, but are definitely an acquired taste.

Lamb and *hogget* (1-year-old lamb) is delicious and very different from much of the lamb served in North America—it is milder and similar to high-quality beef or pork. For dessert, the country's specialty is pavlova, an incredibly sweet baked meringue usually topped with cream and fresh passion fruit, kiwifruit or strawberries.

Outdoor dining is now commonplace, and it ranges from sidewalk tables spilling out from quiet lanes to corner cafes and waterfront restaurants. Seafood is without a doubt the biggest draw when eating out; species not found in North American supermarkets include John Dory, New Zealand snapper, kingfish and North Island trevally.

When in season (late September and early October), look for whitebait fritters—delicate inch-long fish held together with egg—to appear on menus. Green-lip mussels are featured on most coastal menus; these are large and rather chewy, and usually served steamed in pots. Abalone, called *paua* in New Zealand, is often served minced in fritters.

In winter months, Bluff Oysters come into season. Fished from the cold waters of the South Island's southernmost coast, these large, firm oysters have a strong flavor and are best eaten raw with just a drizzle of lemon juice. Bought in pots by the dozen, prices are high—especially in Auckland restaurants.

Note: Be aware that the waitstaff will not bring your bill until you ask for it. Tipping is not expected but appreciated when you find the service good.

Security

Personal Safety

Unprovoked violent crime is minimal, but as you would anywhere, take commonsense precautions.

A good rule of thumb is to not be lulled into a false sense of security by the generally laid-back attitude that New Zealand is known for. Visitors who hire cars and recreational vehicles can be an obvious target, so never leave valuables in your car, especially if parking at the head of a walking track or tourist spot. Be aware that kea, the large native alpine parrots with curved, sharp beaks, like to chew on windshield wipers and tires. Their attacks can seriously damage vehicles. Car parks usually have a sign notifying if kea are a problem.

There is always an element of late-night rowdiness on weekends, as many young Kiwi men, and some of the women too, can become aggressive after drinking. This can be avoided by staying away from the main gathering spots.

Keep in mind that New Zealand has strict laws concerning drinking and driving: Police checkpoints are common, and the penalties are harsh.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

Excellent health standards prevail across the country, and good medical facilities are available. No special food or water precautions are necessary, although mountain lakes and streams—even those that look pristine—often carry the protozoa *giardia*. Be sure to treat water taken from these sources while hiking or sightseeing.

The sun is a big health concern, so be sure to apply plenty of sunscreen. In some parts of the country you might encounter sand flies and mosquitoes, so take along insect repellent (the Kiwi version of Dettol, mixed with baby oil, is often the most effective against sand flies). Apart from the rare katipo spider, the country is lucky not to have any poisonous insects or animals.

The current health-care service is a government-subsidized system. Hospitals provide a variety of publicly funded health and disability services such as medical, surgical, maternity, diagnostic and emergency services. The range of services offered by an individual hospital is affected both by the size of the local population and the services offered by other hospitals in the region. Treatment is relatively inexpensive by global standards, but visitors should always have some form of travel insurance.

For nonemergency health concerns, it is better to consult a local general practitioner rather than going to a large hospital, which may have lengthy waiting times. A list of general practitioners can be found in any local directory, and nearly every neighborhood has at least one clinic.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Don't underestimate the strength of ultraviolet light on sunny or overcast days. Most Kiwis wear sunhats and total sunblock; some even apply it to their animals.

Do be considerate about taking pictures of people, particularly Polynesians and Maoris.

Don't spit in public.

Don't drop litter anywhere—land or sea. A long-standing slogan is "Be A Tidy Kiwi: Keep New Zealand Clean."

Don't forget to take a bottle of wine or a six-pack if you are invited to a Kiwi barbecue.

Do be considerate when smoking, even outdoors in public places: New Zealand has a strong anti-smoking element.

Don't underestimate the weather when hiking. Even a short day hike can turn into a life-threatening situation when New Zealand's unpredictable weather takes a turn for the worse.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports but not visas. As of October 2019, visitors are also required to complete a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA) prior to arrival in the country. Payment of an International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) fee is also required.

Proof of sufficient funds and onward passage are required. A departure tax is included in most airline ticket prices. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

Population: 348,400.

Languages: English, Maori.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian).

Time Zone: 12 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+12 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in September to the first Sunday in April.

Telephone Codes: 64, country code; 4, city code for Wellington;

Money

Taxes

There is a compulsory 15% government sales tax on all consumer items, including restaurant meals, drinks and hotel rooms. There is no specific bed-tax.

Tipping

Gratuities are not expected, but are appreciated when service is good.

Weather

New Zealand's seasons are opposite those in the Northern Hemisphere: July-September is the coldest period, and December-March is the warmest. Overall, the climate is fairly mild with few extremes of temperatures. The average temperature ranges from 60 F/15 C in the upper regions of the North Island to 50 F/10 C near the bottom of the South Island. The west coast is generally wet, while the east coast suffers regular droughts.

The best months to visit are February and March, when summer is in full swing but New Zealand school holidays are over. Spring—mid-October through November—can be damp but very beautiful, with flowers and trees in bloom. During New Zealand's winter, expect rain, with snow at higher altitudes. Take a sweater and an umbrella no matter what time of year you visit. Bear in mind that this is a long, narrow country in the middle of the Southern Ocean, with nothing to shelter it from regular storms.

What to Wear

New Zealand is such a diverse country in terms of climate, it is often recommended to pack for four seasons in one day. For men and women, shorts are favored for hiking trips but can be a problem if sand flies are present. Pants that can be zipped off at the knees are one solution. Kiwis often wear shorts over long underwear. For tops, layering is popular and advised: Consider a lightweight merino-wool top next to skin, a fleece pullover, then a waterproof jacket.

Rainwear is essential in the spring and fall and advisable in the summer. A multiuse jacket for some cold and windy nights will come in handy—even in summer. Good footwear is a must. Flip-flops, or "jandals" as they're known locally, are the summer footwear of choice in towns and on beaches. Bathing suits ("togs," as the Kiwis call them) are always worth packing.

Most business meetings are conducted in business suits, shirt and tie, with women dressed in attractive yet functional dresses or suit-type jackets and skirts. Summer "office" wear for men may include shorts with knee-length socks and smart, lace-up shoes, though this is a somewhat dated look and has become less common. Some of the world's top designers are from New Zealand, so it is not surprising to find very chic, one-off creations in the bigger cities and hip towns such as Nelson. A good rule of thumb in rural locations is to dress to fit with the surroundings.

Transportation

Air New Zealand and Jetstar offer domestic flights. Airfares booked well in advance can be a good value and are often the cheapest way of traveling any distance within the country.

Rail travel is possible for selected routes, most notably the *TranzCoastal*, which runs between Picton and Christchurch; the line follows the coast for much of the journey, so sit on the left side southbound for sea views. The *TranzAlpine* crosses the island from Christchurch to Greymouth, with an open-air viewing carriage to maximize the incredible scenery. Travel passes are available for buses, trains, planes and ferries, and some allow you to combine several modes of travel.

Escorted and hosted coach tours, rental cars, campers, motorcycles and bicycles are popular ways to tour the country. But be prepared to take your time. Driving can be fairly slow because most roads have only two lanes, and the terrain can be rugged. Also remember that driving is on the left side of the road.

Many roads in rural New Zealand can be a challenge for overseas drivers to navigate. Roads are often very narrow, sometimes one lane, and many are still unsealed gravel. Caution is a must—even if driving at low speed. Rental cars can be a cheap, convenient option that allows for greater freedom. Dozens of small budget operators rent small, slightly older-model cars. If you are traveling with a group and splitting the fees, this can be very cost-effective. All companies charge for insurance, but many have a discounted rate for longer rental terms. Prices vary among rental companies, and some include mileage while others add this to the daily fee.

Akaroa, New Zealand

Overview

Introduction

Akaroa is a historic village with French and British roots, established around an ancient volcano. The town is only 53 mi/85 km from Christchurch.

Port Information

Location

Cruise ships anchor in the bay and tender passengers to shore at one of two locations: near the treaty grounds at Waitangi or near Piahia. Each tender drop-off point has a tourist information center. From Piahia, catch a bus into the town center or take a ferry to nearby Russell.



Buses depart from Akaroa for Christchurch at 9:30 and 10:30 am daily and return by 4:30 pm.

Dunedin, New Zealand

Overview

Introduction

Distinctly Scottish in feel with stone buildings and Victorian houses, Dunedin, New Zealand, lies on the southeast coast of the South Island about 225 mi/360 km southwest of Christchurch. This university city claims New Zealand's only castle—Larnach Castle, which overlooks Port Chalmers and the harbor. You'll also find many fine museums and galleries.

Other diversions include guided tours through the Speights Brewery, the Cadbury Chocolate factory, the 130-year-old Botanical Gardens, and the Olveston House (the original home of a wealthy merchant at the turn of the 20th century). Be sure to check out the railway station: Built in 1908 from basalt, it's one of the most photographed rail terminals in the world.



Nature lovers will enjoy the nearby Otago Peninsula, home to the magnificent southern royal albatross (viewing season is late November-late August) and shy yellow-eyed penguins (the world's second-rarest penguin species). The Little Blue Penguin is a common sight on the beaches there, usually at night.

Melbourne, Australia

Overview

Introduction

Melbourne, Australia, offers a wonderful mix of Victorian architecture with world cultures. From its favored site on the banks of the Yarra River, Melbourne offers travelers some of the best shopping and theater in Australia, a varied arts scene, top-notch food and wine with restaurants to fit any taste and budget, and excellent hotels.

Melbourne also has a thriving fashion industry, sporting and leisure activities, a greenbelt of parks and boulevards with a distinctly European feel, and an unrivaled festival calendar. Its dynamic and varied lifestyle, cafe culture, affordable cost of living and low crime rate make it one of the world's most livable cities.



Highlights

Sights—The views from Eureka Tower; Old Melbourne Gaol; Queen Victoria Market; Chinatown; Federation Square; Fitzroy Gardens.

Museums—The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art; the Ian Potter Centre at Federation Square; the Heide Museum of Modern Art; Australian Centre for the Moving Image; National Gallery of Victoria; the Immigration Museum; State Library of Victoria.

Memorable Meals—The Flower Drum, for its Cantonese take on local ingredients; supreme pizza at Ladro; degustation delights at Vue de Monde.

Late Night—A bite to eat and a bottle from the vast wine list at The Melbourne Supper Club; absinthe on the rooftop at Transit bar; a live music show at The Toff in Town.

Walks—Strolling around Albert Park Lake; exploring the Yarra Trail; a walk along St Kilda Beach; wandering through the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Especially for Kids—Scienceworks and its interactive exhibits; observing the sharks at Melbourne Aquarium; riding the roller coaster at Luna Park; milking cows at the Collingwood Children's Farm; Roar 'n' Snore at Melbourne Zoo; watching films on the world's third-largest IMAX screen at the Melbourne Museum; riding Puffing Billy, Australia's oldest steam train, through the Dandenong Ranges.

Geography

Melbourne's city center sits on the banks of the Yarra River, about 4 mi/6 km upriver from Port Philip Bay. The portion on the north bank is known as the Central Business District (CBD), and the portion south of the river is called Southbank. The ambitious 495-acre/200-hectare Docklands project is extending the western border of the city.

The sprawling metropolitan area is made up of suburbs. Surrounding the city center are the communities of West, North, East and South Melbourne. To the south are Albert Park, South Yarra and, along the bay, St Kilda; Williamstown is on the western side of the bay. To the northeast are Collingwood and Fitzroy. The suburb of Carlton lies to the north, Footscray to the west, and Abbotsford and Richmond are to the east. All of these suburbs are nearly as old as the city center and are known as "inner suburbs." You can reach them from the CBD by foot, train or a short tram ride. To reach the "outer suburbs" (truly on the fringe of the urban area), you'll need a car or a longer train ride.

No matter what suburb you're in, Melbourne is relatively flat. In contrast to this flatness is a chain of hills to the east of the city. The Dandenong Ranges, 40 minutes by car from the city center, are a cool getaway as is a trip to the wineries of the Yarra Valley. To the southeast of the city, a string of golden beaches stretches more than 30 mi/50 km down the Mornington Peninsula to the head of Port Philip Bay.

History

Melbourne was home for the indigenous Koori people for 50,000 years before the arrival of Europeans in the 1800s. The newcomers established a town, but it remained a small settlement until the middle of the century, when a gold rush in central Victoria saw Melbourne grow to become Australia's financial capital and most glamorous city. The boom gave the town its magnificent public architecture, gracious parks, tree-lined boulevards, opulent mansions and the nickname "Marvelous Melbourne." The city developed so

successfully that it was the original capital of the Australian Federation. (Melbourne relinquished this role to Canberra in 1927.)

Though it was no longer the capital, Melbourne continued to be one of Australia's leading cities. It took the next step—to world-class city—when it hosted the Olympic Games in 1956. Melbourne has since attracted large numbers of immigrants from China, India, Sri Lanka, North Africa, Lebanon, Vietnam, Italy, Malta and Greece (Melbourne has one of the largest Maltese populations in the world and the largest population of Greek origin in the world outside of Greece). Annual festivals such as the Italian Lygon Street Festa, the Greek Antipodes Festival and the Chinese New Year celebrate the cultural diversity of modern-day residents.

Melbourne has become a vital international business location, with world-renowned research universities and local companies developing groundbreaking technology in biological sciences, information technology, security and communications. The Port of Melbourne is considered a world-class hub for shipping and cargo.

Potpourri

For a short time in the early 1800s, the city was known as Batmania, after John Batman, one of its founders. Later it was briefly known as Bearbrass before finally settling on Melbourne.

Melbourne has its own hard-rock lane. ACDC Lane is a block and a half off Swanston Street near Flinders Lane. (Swanston Street was also the setting for the Aussie band's video for "Long Way to the Top.")

The bionic ear and the black-box flight recorder were invented in Melbourne.

The first ever frozen-embryo baby, a girl, was born in Melbourne in March 1984.

The world's first polymer (plastic) banknotes were developed and printed in Melbourne in 1988.

Melbourne's tram system is the fourth largest in the world and is the largest outside of Europe. It has 152 mi/244 km of track and 450 trams.

The National Gallery of Victoria features the world's largest stained-glass ceiling. It measures 167 ft/ 52 m long by 49 ft/15 m wide.

The world's first feature film, *The Story of the Ned Kelly Gang*, was made in Melbourne in 1906.

Melbourne has the world's second largest Greek population, behind Athens.

See & Do

Sightseeing

It's not difficult to see something memorable in Melbourne. You can hardly walk two blocks without running into a quirky piece of street sculpture or stencil art, a group of buskers or an unusual take on a familiar scene.

Nevertheless, there are some areas and grand attractions that you shouldn't miss. The Melbourne Aquarium is a good first stop, especially for shark lovers. From there, you can cross the Yarra River and

walk east along the riverside promenade making sure you take in the view from the Eureka Tower, Melbourne's tallest building.

Eventually you'll reach Princes Bridge, which leads back across the river to Federation Square. There you can rest at a cafe and take in the stunning contemporary architecture or visit the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, a unique museum devoted to film and video.

The Ian Potter Centre is also on Fed Square, home to the city's best collection of Australian art. (If you enjoy the pieces there, consider visiting the Heide Museum of Modern Art, which has more works by Australian artists.)

Stroll along the Paris end of Collins—named for the exclusive shopping and grand Victorian buildings—and visit historic points along the self-guided Golden Mile walking tour. Check out the bustle of Chinatown with its shops and restaurants over numerous city blocks.

Just north of the city center is the Melbourne Museum, which is a great place to learn about Australia's natural history and Aboriginal culture. Botanists should check out the Royal Botanic Gardens, and history buffs should visit Old Melbourne Gaol, the former prison that once housed Australia's worst criminals.

Wandering through one of Melbourne's colorful markets is a great way to spend the morning. Day trips to the wineries of the Yarra Valley or Mornington Peninsula, or the beaches of Philip Island are other options.

Historic Sites

Old Melbourne Gaol

377 Russell St. (between Victoria and La Trobe streets), Central Business District
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-8663-7228

<http://www.oldmelbournegaol.com.au>

Built in the mid-1800s, Old Melbourne Gaol housed some of Victoria's most notorious criminals, including Australia's most famous bushranger (outlaw), Ned Kelly, who was hanged there on 11 November 1880. The Gaol closed in 1929, but it reopened briefly during World War II as a military detention center. Today, visitors can get a view of the grisly life behind bars for prisoners—from the time they entered the prison to their last moments before the noose was placed around their necks. Death masks (plaster casts of faces made shortly after death) of executed criminals, including that of Ned Kelly, are on display as well.

Daily 9:30 am-5 pm. There are a number of guided tours, including the Hangman's Night Tour, four nights a week and the monthly Ghosts... What Ghosts?!; both can be booked online. A\$28 adults.

Museums

Scienceworks

2 Booker St., Spotswood
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9392-4800

<http://www.museumvictoria.com.au/scienceworks>

Melbourne's award-winning interactive science and technology museum sits along the banks of the Yarra River. The complex includes the Melbourne Planetarium, as well as exhibition galleries, a historic pumping station and outdoor areas.

Daily 10 am-4:30 pm. A\$10 adults, free for children. Additional charge for Melbourne Planetarium A\$6 adults, A\$4.50 children.

National Gallery of Victoria: International

180 St.Kilda Road, Southbank
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-8620-2222

<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au>

The NGV is Australia's oldest public gallery and boasts one of the best permanent collections of old masters outside of Europe, including Picasso's *Weeping Woman*.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. General entry is free, with variable admission prices for touring exhibitions.

National Gallery of Victoria: Ian Potter Centre

Federation Square (corner of Swanston and Flinders streets), Central Business District
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-8620-2222

<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au>

Australian art has a popular home in this dramatic gallery at Federation Square. Part of the National Gallery of Victoria, the Ian Potter Centre has more than 20,000 Australian pieces in its permanent collection, with about 800 on display at any one time. Works by such national icons as Frederick McCubbin, Tom Roberts, Brett Whiteley and John Brack adorn the walls, along with creations by Aboriginal and contemporary artists.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-5 pm. General entry is free, with variable admission prices for touring exhibitions.

Melbourne Museum

11 Nicholson St., Carlton
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-131-102 or 3-8341-7777

<http://www.museumvictoria.com.au/melbournemuseum>

The modern-looking Melbourne Museum houses six levels of exhibits on Australia's flora, fauna and Aboriginal culture. Highlights include Bunjilaka, a cultural center for the Aboriginal Koori community; the Forest Gallery, with more than 8,000 trees and plants; the Science and Life Gallery, which explores digital technology and biodiversity; the Australia Gallery, which houses the remains of Phar Lap, a Depression-era racehorse; and the Children's Museum, which has activities and exhibits on natural history. The complex also houses an IMAX cinema with the world's largest 3D screen.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. A\$15 adults.

Immigration Museum

Old Customs House 400 Flinders Street, Central Business District
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9927-2700

<http://www.museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum>

Australia is a country of immigrants, and this museum, which occupies the grand 19th-century Old Customs House, tells the stories of those who arrived in the country during the past 200 years.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. A\$15 adults.

Heide Museum of Modern Art

7 Templestowe Road, Bulleen
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9850-1500

<http://www.heide.com.au>

This museum explores Australian modernism through the private collection of the Heide's founders, John and Sunday Reed. The museum has works by artists such as Sidney Nolan—most famous for his Ned Kelly series—and Albert Tucker, as well as traveling exhibitions and a relaxing sculpture garden. The on-site Cafe Vue at Heide serves breakfast and lunch (phone 9852-2346).

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-5 pm. A\$16 adults, free for children younger than age 12 for the main gallery; additional fees apply for special galleries and exhibitions. Gardens and sculpture park free.

Australian Centre for the Moving Image

Federation Square (corner of Swanston and Flinders streets), Central Business District
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-8663-2200

<http://www.acmi.net.au>

One of the highlights of Federation Square, the ACMI is a museum dedicated to film, television, video games, digital art and moving pictures. It features an enormous screen gallery with regularly changing exhibitions, as well as several intimate viewing lounges, two first-run movie theaters and educational seminars.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. Free admission.

Parks & Gardens

Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9252-2300. For recorded information, call 3-9252-2364

<http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au>

Established in 1846, the Royal Botanic Gardens are Australia's finest and arguably one of the best botanic gardens in the world. Situated along the Yarra River, the gardens boast an outstanding collection (more than 12,000 species) of both indigenous and imported plants and trees set among more than 90 acres/36 hectares of lakes and superbly landscaped lawns. Highlights include the Tennyson Lawn with its

125-year-old English elm trees, the fully restored original 1876 reservoir known as Guilfoyle's Volcano, a fern gully, camellia gardens, an herb garden, rain forests and tranquil ponds with well-fed ducks and graceful black swans.

Surrounded by some of Melbourne's most desirable real estate, the gardens are a magnet for locals who go to walk or run the 2.5-mi/4-km circular track that surrounds the park ("The Tan"), picnic on the lush lawns, breakfast at the Observatory Cafe or enjoy afternoon tea and scones at The Terrace Cafe on the edge of the Ornamental Lake. In summer, grab a blanket and take in a film under the stars at the popular Moonlight Cinema or catch a performance of Shakespeare in the Park, held in January and February.

Open daily 7:30 am-sunset. Free admission. A range of guided tours and experiences is also available; costs vary.

Recreation

There are plenty of places to stretch your legs in and around Melbourne. The banks of the Yarra River offer barbecue and picnic facilities, fishing platforms and jetties. In addition, there are miles/kilometers of trails and paths for cyclists, walkers and joggers. Swimming and sailing are right on the city's doorstep, too. Take a dip in the Middle Brighton Baths. Walk or in-line skate the seaside walkway stretching from the city to Brighton Beach. Albert Park, just 1 mi/3 km from the Central Business District and home to the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix, is another terrific place to walk, run, sail, play a round of golf or feed families of black swans.

The premier spot is St Kilda Beach—everyone goes there. A colorful beach promenade makes for great people-watching, and the Esplanade Sunday Market, held every Sunday morning, is a good place to pick up quality art and secondhand goods. There's also a huge Moroccan-style boutique and restaurant complex, which houses the St Kilda Baths—Melbourne's only heated, indoor saltwater swimming pool.

Bicycling

Cycling in Melbourne is a joy. The city is relatively flat, and there are more than 125 mi/200 km of bike paths linking major suburbs and generally following the most scenic routes. One great loop is around Port Philip Bay (with a dedicated bicycle ferry across the Yarra River) to the fashionable waterfront suburb of Williamstown. Once there, you can catch Melbourne River Cruises' hourly ferry service back to the city center (you can take your bike on that ferry, too). Cyclists should note that it is compulsory to wear a bike helmet in Australia.

Another memorable trek is along the Yarra Trail heading to Studley Park in nearby Kew. The trail winds along the river through parks, reserves and wetlands. The Yarra Trail is not consistently signposted, so you may want to pick up a trail map at the visitors center.

Albert Park and St Kilda have bicycle-rental facilities that are open daily.

Golf

Many of Australia's top courses are in the southeastern suburbs of Melbourne.

Yarra Bend

Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9481-3729

<http://yarrabendgolf.com>

This 18-hole public course is on the banks of the Yarra River, just 2 mi/3 km from the Central Business District. There is an on-site pro shop and a driving range.

Golf course open daily dawn-dusk; driving range open Monday 10 am-10 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 7 am-10 pm, Sunday 7 am-8 pm.

Royal Melbourne Golf Club

Cheltenham Road, Black Rock
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9599-0500

<http://www.royalmelbourne.com.au>

This club is regularly rated as one of the best in the world, with two 18-hole courses that date from 1926. It is a private club, but there is limited access to overseas visitors who have a letter of introduction from recognized golf clubs. Requires one month's notice

Albert Park Golf Course

55 Queens Road, Albert Park
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9510-5588

<http://www.albertparkgolf.com.au>

This 18-hole public course is just 1 mi/2 km from Melbourne's Central Business District. There is also an on-site driving range.

Open daily 6 am-7 pm in summer; 7 am-5:30 pm in winter.

Hiking & Walking

The finest places to walk or jog in the city are around Albert Park Lake, through the Royal Botanic Gardens (which includes a popular 2.6-mi/4.2-km running track known as "The Tan"), along the Bay Trail (from Port Melbourne to St Kilda) and along the Yarra Trail (from Southbank toward the headwaters of the Yarra).

Shopping

Shoppers will find plenty of opportunities to spend their Aussie dollars in Melbourne. Head to Southbank (along the south side of the Yarra River) to the Southgate Arts and Leisure Precinct, where you'll find a nice combination of specialty shops and restaurants on three levels. For top-end designer brands, try the "Paris end" (eastern end) of Collins Street in the Central Business District or the Crown Towers complex. For the latest in Australian fashion, try Toorak Road, Chapel Street and Greville Street in South Yarra and Prahran. St Kilda has a large selection of independent music and bookstores.

Other hot shopping districts include High Street in Armadale for high-quality antiques; Swan Street and Bridge Road in Richmond for factory-outlet items; Coventry Street in South Melbourne for chic housewares; and Brunswick and Johnson streets in Fitzroy for retro and recycled fashions, arty housewares and handmade jewelry. For the latest in male fashion, head to Little Collins Street near Russell. For accessories and shoes, try Flinders Lane. Melbourne Central, spanning almost two city blocks, is home to 300 stores.

Shopping Hours: Shopping hours are generally Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, with slightly shorter hours on Sunday. All the big department stores, suburban shopping centers and many street shopping areas are open until 9 pm on Thursday.

Antique Stores

Chapel Street Bazaar

217-223 Chapel St., Prahran
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

This huge emporium contains more than 60 dealers in a single complex. Vendors sell antiques, collectibles, 19th-century memorabilia, vintage and retro clothing, jewelry and furniture.

Daily 10 am-6 pm.

Factory Outlets

Country Road Warehouse

Richmond Plaza, Richmond
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9427-7077

<http://www.countryroad.com.au>

One of Australia's more well-known labels, Country Road sells heavily discounted merchandise at this factory outlet. You'll find men's, women's and children's fashions and housewares—all at bargain prices.

Open Monday-Thursday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Friday 9:30 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm.

Galleries

Outre Gallery

249 Elizabeth St.
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9642-5455

<http://www.outregallery.com>

Specializing in pop and lowbrow art, this gallery also features a wide range of original animation cells.

Monday-Thursday 10:30 am-5:30 pm, Friday 10:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-4 pm.

Alcaston Gallery

11 Brunswick St., Fitzroy
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9418-6444

<http://www.alcastongallery.com.au>

One of the best commercial galleries in Australia representing Aboriginal artists from around the country.

Tuesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 11 am-5 pm.

Markets

Queen Victoria Market

Queen, Elizabeth and Victoria streets
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9320-5822

<http://www.qvm.com.au>

Australia's oldest produce market offers some of the finest and freshest fruit and vegetables, fish and deli goods in the country. Cooking classes and tours—including a Foodies Tour that incorporates much sampling—are offered Tuesday and Thursday-Saturday mornings (reservations recommended).

Tuesday and Thursday 6 am-2 pm, Friday 6 am-5 pm, Saturday 6 am-3 pm, Sunday 9 am-4 pm.

Shopping Areas

The Jam Factory

500 Chapel St., South Yarra
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9860-8500

<http://www.thejamfactory.com.au>

The old IXL jam factory, a giant warehouse-style structure, has been converted into an upmarket shopping center in fashionable South Yarra. A giant cinema complex, a Borders bookstore, boutiques and restaurants are some of the attractions.

Most shops are open daily 9 am-6 pm, Friday 9 am-9 pm; the center closes at 11.

Chadstone Shopping Center

1341 Dandenong Road, Chadstone
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9563-3355

<http://www.chadstone.com.au>

Chadstone is one of the largest shopping malls in the Southern Hemisphere. It has more than 500 stores, including department stores David Jones and Myer, as well as a vast number of shops selling men's and women's fashions, including such luxury brands as Louis Vuitton, Prada, Gucci, Tiffany & Co., Miu Miu and Chanel.

Most shops are open Monday-Wednesday 9 am-5:30 pm, Thursday and Friday 9 am-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Bridge Road

Bridge Road, Richmond
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

<http://www.bridgerd.com.au>

Australia's best shopping street for factory outlets and designer-label fashions is in Richmond. Many cafes and an eclectic collection of restaurants leaven the suburban shopping-spree mania.

Most stores are open daily 9 or 9:30 am-5:30 or 6 pm.

Specialty Stores

RM Williams

Melbourne Central, Shop 229, Level 2
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9663-7126

<http://www.rmwilliams.com.au>

The best place to find all the distinctive Australian apparel is RM Williams, the original outback outfitter. This place specializes in Australian outdoor wear from Akubra hats to oilskin coats.

Monday-Thursday and Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Friday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Dining

Dining Overview

In no other Australian city can you be more certain of being served an outstanding meal. In fact, Melbourne consistently rates as one of the world's top cities for food and wine.

Food fashions are continually changing in Melbourne. The most popular genre of cuisine falls under the heading Modern Australian. It's strongly influenced by European, Asian and Mediterranean cooking, with such flavorings as lemongrass and chilies, as well as the increasing use of Australian-produced olive oil. Regional specialties featured on menus throughout the city include Sydney rock oysters, Illabo lamb and luscious cheeses from King Island, Tasmania.

In addition to the local fare, you'd be hard-pressed to find a country not represented by an ethnic restaurant—Afghan, Argentinean, Ethiopian, Mexican and even Tibetan food outlets jostle for space with other vendors. For Italian food, head to Lygon Street (Carlton); for Jewish fare, it's Balaclava; for Vietnamese specialties, try Victoria Street (Richmond); for Chinese food, set sail for—where else?—Chinatown (Central Business District); and those hungry for Indian or Middle Eastern food should check out Sydney Road (Brunswick).

Restaurants are typically open noon-3 pm for lunch and 6 pm-late for dinner. Reservations are recommended for most evenings and are essential on Friday and Saturday nights.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one (appetizer and main course), excluding tip or drinks: \$ = less than A\$25; \$\$ = A\$25-\$40; \$\$\$ = A\$41-\$60; \$\$\$\$ = more than A\$60.

Cuisines

Asian

Supper Inn

15 Celestial Ave.
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Sensational Chinese cuisine is served fast and furiously. Try the spicy quail, seafood congee, the garlic pepper squid or sweet and sour pork.

Daily for dinner. Reservations only accepted for tables of three or more; otherwise, expect a wait—particularly on weekends. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Flower Drum

17 Market Lane
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9662-3655

<http://flowerdrum.melbourne>

For more than 20 years, the Flower Drum has been garnering international accolades and local awards. Impeccable service and a melding of fresh ingredients with Cantonese cooking techniques are what make this place noteworthy. Outstanding Peking duck and steamed Murray River cod are among the best on the menu.

Monday-Saturday noon-3 pm and 6-11 pm, Sunday 6-10:30 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Italian

Grossi Florentino

80 Bourke St.
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9662-1811

<http://www.florentino.com.au>

Florentino's has been a Melbourne institution for more than 70 years. Set in one of the most luxurious and ornate dining rooms in the city, it serves rich, traditional Italian food. Expect truffles, pheasant, pigeon, pasta, scallops and elk. Everything about the place is big, including the bill. The main restaurant is formal and elegant. The Grill and Cellar Bar both serve food that is equally delicious but somewhat simpler and a little more affordable.

Monday-Friday from noon, Saturday from 6 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Da Noi

95 Toorak Road, South Yarra
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9866-5975

<http://danoi.com.au>

This place is like no other restaurant in Melbourne. It's like visiting your favorite uncle's country house—if your uncle comes from Sardinia and knows his way around the kitchen. There is no menu to speak of, as chef-owner Pietro Porcu simply takes the freshest and most interesting seasonal produce and combines it with the rustic, earthy flavors of the old country to deliver a feast of several courses. The fixed-price, four-course chef's menu (about A\$93) is the best way to taste it all.

Monday-Sunday 12 pm-10:30 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$.

Becco

11-25 Crossley St.
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9663-3000

<http://www.becco.com.au>

This is where the beautiful people go for a feast of innovative modern Italian food in a setting that reminds us of central Milan. Whether it is the crumbed veal cutlet, the roasted chicken Maryland or barramundi fillet, the food is served with impeccable efficiency.

Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday dinner only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Mediterranean

Cicciolina

130 Acland St., St Kilda
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 3-9525-3333

<http://www.cicciolinastkilda.com.au>

Located in a timber-heavy bistro, Cicciolina is a St Kilda institution serving unpretentious, creative and fresh Mediterranean food. The daily specials are your best bet, but everything comes with good service and an affordable price.

Monday-Saturday noon-11 pm, Sunday noon-10 pm. Reservations accepted for lunch but not dinner. Reservations available. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Vegetarian

The Vegie Bar

380 Brunswick St., Fitzroy
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9417-6935

<http://www.vegiebar.com.au>

This restaurant prepares vegetarian food with real style and flair. Portions are huge and satisfying, and the flavor combinations are delicious. For something different, try the specialty raw food such as the raw pad Thai or raw taco.

Sunday-Thursday 11 am-9:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 11 am-10 pm. \$. Most major credit cards.

Shakahari

201-203 Faraday St., Carlton
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9347-3848

<http://www.shakahari.com.au>

One of the few vegetarian restaurants to go beyond the usual veggie burgers and stir-fries, Shakahari has been serving tasty Asian-influenced meals for more than 20 years. The beautifully presented food is capable of satisfying even the most ardent meat lover. Try any of the excellent curries.

Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for dinner only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Coffeehouses

Melburnians take their coffee very seriously—the dual influence of the city's Greek and Italian migrant population, and its hipster culture's quest for stylish perfection. It's common to see friends catching up over a latte, colleagues planning their meetings around a caffeine fix, and self-employed creative types tapping away on their laptops in the corners of coffeehouses (called cafes locally) throughout the city.

There are some classic European-style cafes where it's worth taking a seat to watch the world go by, and a handful of classy, on-trend joints that roast and brew their own beans and will happily educate you on the finer points of coffee, if you ask. Customers can drink coffee in-house, buy beans to take away and attend courses in coffee making.

Continental

Circa, The Prince

2 Acland St. (in The Prince hotel), St Kilda
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9536-1122

<http://www.circa.com.au>

Circa is the place for a cool, contemporary dinner. Modern European in its origin, the menu features an array of game, fish and meat accompanied by complex sauces. With one of the city's longest wine lists, this is a Melbourne dining experience not to be missed.

Daily from 7 am. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Seafood

Donovans

40 Jacka Blvd., St Kilda
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Phone: 9534-8221

<http://www.donovanshouse.com.au>

This is the best waterfront restaurant in the city. A big fireplace, cushion-strewn lounges and decor reminiscent of a family beach house make it the perfect place to spend an afternoon watching the world go by. The menu is mostly seafood prepared with an Italian bent.

Daily lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Security

Etiquette

Australians view their country as a land of equals, and they dislike pretense. Business interactions tend to be more successful when they tread the fine line between being direct and being overly assertive.

Appointments—Schedule meetings as far in advance as you can, but Australians will often agree to a meeting on relatively short notice. Unannounced visits are not welcome, however. You may find that there are relatively few barriers to meeting officers at the higher levels of a company. Punctuality is expected.

Personal Introductions—A firm handshake is the norm. "Hello" and "How are you?" are appropriate greetings. Use titles and last names until invited to do otherwise. Don't expect Australian English to sound like North American English or even the Queen's English.

Negotiating—Some small talk is expected, but business generally comes to the fore quickly. Be brief and to the point and try to avoid overselling your position. Modesty and self-deprecation tend to get better results than brash behavior. In fact, high-pressure tactics can kill a deal in short order.

Business Entertaining—Follow your host's lead regarding whether to talk about business during social occasions. If you visit a pub, don't miss your turn to buy a round of drinks.

Body Language—Physical gestures and posture should be kept conservative. Personal space is important, and touching is reserved for close acquaintances.

Gift Giving—When going to the home of an acquaintance, take a small gift such as flowers, wine or chocolates. Gift giving in business is not necessary or expected, but it will be appreciated.

Conversation—Social discussions can often turn into informal debates. Don't be afraid to express yourself, but be diplomatic. It's usually best to ask questions rather than to state opinions during your first encounters. The treatment of Aborigines and refugees in Australia is a sensitive subject and one you should avoid, especially in initial conversations.

Other Information—Australians become informal quickly—a trait they share with people from the U.S.

Personal Safety

Melbourne ranks as one of the safest cities in Australia, and tourists are not a particular target of crime. It's generally not a problem to walk most places, day or night, although commonsense precautions—avoiding dark alleys, for instance—should always be taken. You may encounter panhandlers in the city center, particularly around Flinders Street Station, along Swanston Street Walk, and near the corner of Bourke and Russell streets. Travelers should avoid walking alone at night in suburbs such as Footscray, St Kilda, Collingwood, Sunshine and Dandenong. Crime is rare, but pickpocketing is not unheard of, especially on crowded trams such as the popular city circle tram.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

No vaccinations are required to enter Australia. Melbourne's tap water is safe to consume, as is the food. General sanitation in Melbourne and across the country is excellent. The major health concerns are sunburn and sunstroke. It's a good idea to wear a hat whenever you're outdoors and to use a strong (SPF 30 or higher) sunscreen. You are unlikely to encounter any dangerous plants or wildlife within or near the city.

In an emergency, Melbourne's best and most accessible hospitals are: the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Grattan St., Parkville (phone 9342-7000), or the Alfred Hospital, 55 Commercial Road, Prahran (phone 9076-2000).

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

Major hotels and public transport are required by law to provide facilities for disabled travelers, and most major attractions are wheelchair-accessible. Parking spaces generally have disabled bays, pedestrian crossings feature sound cues, and trains and newer trams can accommodate wheelchairs. Throughout the Central Business District, smooth sidewalks and well-maintained paths ensure good disabled access, and most buildings have ramp access for wheelchairs.

A useful source of information and support is the Travellers' Aid Service, located at two points in the city: Flinders Street Station, at the corner of Flinders and Swanston streets (between platforms 9 and 10, phone 9610-2030) and Southern Cross Station at 99 Spencer St., Docklands (opposite the luggage hall, phone 9670-2072). Both locations are open daily. <http://www.travellersaid.org.au>.

There is also plenty of information on disabled access and amenities including bars, restaurants, entertainment venues and public toilets under the Community Services-Disability Services menu on the City of Melbourne website. <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au>.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do explore the Melbourne Central Business District on foot; its alleyways, bars, shops, galleries and cafes are what give this city its soul.

Don't be offended if someone calls you "Mate." Take it as a compliment.

Do say "No worries" instead of "You're welcome." You can also say "ta" instead of "thanks."

Don't even think about drinking and driving; laws are very strict and enforced regularly.

Do wear thongs (flip-flops) and sunscreen in summer.

Don't ever proclaim Sydney to be a superior city. But by all means do proclaim Melbourne to be a superior city.

Do visit BYO restaurants and take your favorite beer or wine with you.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports and an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA), which substitutes for a visa. There is no cost for the visa itself, but there is a A\$20 service charge. The ETA is usually granted within 24 hours of applying. Contact the nearest Australian Embassy for more information or visit the Australian Immigration website at <http://www.immi.gov.au>. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

Population: 3,999,982.

Time Zone: 10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+10 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in October to the last Sunday in March.

Voltage Requirements: 220 volts.

Telephone Codes: 61, country code; 3, area code;

Money

Taxes

A goods-and-services tax of 10% is applied to most items except fresh food. It's included in the price displayed. Visitors may obtain a tax refund upon departure from Melbourne Airport. To receive a refund, you must have purchased more than A\$300 worth of goods in a single store during a single visit. Be sure to keep sales vouchers and receipts—as well as the item(s)—available so that airport personnel can review them.

Tipping

General tipping is not a widespread custom in Australia, but it is increasingly the norm to tip about 10% of the bill in restaurants when you receive superior service. For taxi drivers, you might round up your fare to the nearest dollar. A small tip is also appreciated in cafes and bars.

Weather

The climate in Melbourne is temperate, with a warm summer and moderate rainfall. Seasons are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere, and they usually start very late: The "official" first day of summer is 21 December, but it doesn't feel like summer until mid-January or later.

Spring is cool and extremely variable—often windy and rainy. Summer is warm to hot, with temperatures sometimes topping 100 F/40 C in late January and February. Autumn is usually balmy and mild, and it can last well into June. Winter—not the best time to visit—varies from mild to cold and rainy. Average temperatures range about 82 F/28 C in January to 68 F/20 C in April and October to 57 F/14 C in July.

What to Wear

Melbourne has a fashion-conscious populace (lots of stylish black outfits), but as with the rest of Australia, it's not big on formality. Melbournians are very open minded when it comes to self-expression, so do not be surprised to see odd hair styles and colors, piercings and tattoos as you walk down the streets. Suits are not necessary for most upscale restaurants—classy casual clothes will suffice. For business meetings, suits for men and smart business outfits for women are the norm.

Note that Melbourne's weather is highly changeable. The locals love to say that you can experience all four seasons in one day, and it's true. It can easily be 100 F/40 C one day and 60 F/15 C the next. Accordingly, it's wise to take a wide range of clothes that can be layered.

Transportation

Melbourne's road network is extensive, but you don't really need a car to get around. The city has an effective public transport system, with trams, trains and buses. It's also relatively flat, with a good network of sidewalks, so walking and bicycling are the best ways to cover short distances.

Car

Driving in Australia is on the left side of the road, and car speedometers are marked in kilometers rather than miles. A valid driver's license from your home country or an International Driver's License is required. The main freeways to know are the Tullamarine Freeway (from Melbourne Airport to the city, which requires the purchase of a CityLink toll pass); the M1, which runs from the southeast where it is the main feeder route to the Mornington Peninsula and Phillip Island, through the city and southwest to Geelong; and the M80 Western Ring Road, which makes a giant arc around the west and north of Melbourne.

Do not exceed the speed limit. There are hidden speed cameras everywhere, and you will be heavily fined for as little as 4 km per hour over the posted limit.

Curbside metered parking is fiercely policed. Alternatively, paid parking lots can be found throughout the city.

You must be age 18 or older to drive a car in Australia. Rental car companies do not generally rent cars to drivers younger than age 21.

Do not use your mobile phone while driving unless you are using a hands-free device. Using your phone while driving is a quick way to be stopped by police, and ignorance of the law is not tolerated. Having your phone in your hand or in your lap in the driver's seat is considered a violation of the law, even if you are not using it. To avoid any problems, only hold or use your phone in the driver's seat while your car is parked and not running.

Public Transportation

Melbourne has a good public transport system including a whole network of buses, trains and trams.

Most bus and train routes service the outlying areas of the city, so it's not likely you'll need to ride them. The exception to that is the City Loop underground train line. It's the fastest way to get across the city.

Trams, though somewhat slow, are much more useful: The network radiates out from the city center, with more than 15 major lines. There's also a free City Circle route, Route 35, that goes around the city center. The route goes both clockwise and counterclockwise.

All travelers must have a prepaid Myki Card to ride trams or trains. These can be purchased online or bought for immediate use at metropolitan train stations, 7-Elevens, from a Myki machine at all train stations, and from some tram stops and bus interchanges. A Myki card costs A\$6, and each passenger must have their own card. Phone 800-800-007. <http://ptv.vic.gov.au>.

There are two major fare zones. To pay for your trip be sure to tap on and tap off with your prepaid Myki Card when using the trams and trains. There are bright-green Myki card readers on trams and at train stations that will tell you that you have successfully touched on or off and how much money you have left on your card. Once you have touched on, your trip is valid for two hours. Your Myki card will automatically be charged the lowest fare for your trip. You can check your Myki card balance and add money at any Myki machine. When adding money to your card, you can choose between Myki money and a Myki pass. Myki money allows you to pay as you go, and a Myki pass allows unlimited daily or weekly travel. Fares range from A\$3.58 for a Zone One two-hour trip to A\$35.80 for a Zone One weekly pass. Most tourist attractions are in Zone One, but if you plan to visit the beach at St Kilda or any surrounding suburbs you will travel into Zone Two.

Taxi

A crackdown on inefficient operators and the introduction of stringent training requirements have led to a huge improvement in taxi service. Fares are metered, with a surcharge in effect midnight-6 am. There is also an extra charge if you travel on the CityLink toll road. Credit cards are accepted by drivers, but you'll pay an extra 5% for the convenience. Most companies operate 24 hours. Cabs can be hailed on the street, picked up at designated taxi ranks, or ordered by phone or online. Some taxi companies now require prepayment of fares midnight-5 am.

The market is dominated by 13CABS. Phone 132-227. <http://www.13cabs.com.au>.

Train

Melbourne's suburban train system is run by Metro. <http://www.metrotrains.com.au>.

Southern Cross Station

Catch intrastate and interstate trains there, including the Melbourne-Sydney express line. Southern Cross also serves as the main coach station in Melbourne Spencer Street, between Bourke and Collins streets. Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. <http://www.southerncrossstation.net.au>.

Flinders Street Station

Serves suburban lines and the underground City Loop, plus a number of trains to eastern Victoria. Flinders and Swanston streets. Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. <http://ptv.vic.gov.au>.

Sydney, Australia

Overview

Introduction

Sydney, Australia, is a grand host that welcomes the world to its stage. In fact, the city thrives on the opportunity to show the world what it is: a vibrant, cosmopolitan area with trendsetting international cuisine, stellar architecture—think of the Sydney Opera House—and a spectacular harbor setting.

Sydney is the cultural and financial heart of the Australian continent. Nearly one-fifth of the residents of Australia live there, and Sydneysiders are always on the go—many of them back and forth over the spectacular Sydney Harbour Bridge. They sail, surf, swim and ferry across the water—or look out at the bay from one of many waterfront cafes.



Highlights

Sights—The architecturally stunning Sydney Opera House; the historic Rocks district; the view of the skyline from the top of Sydney Harbour Bridge or Sydney Tower; the peaceful Royal Botanic Gardens; the view from North Head, Manly.

Museums—Early Australian, contemporary and Aboriginal art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales; contemporary pieces at the Museum of Contemporary Art; natural and cultural history at the Australian Museum; the temporary exhibitions at the State Library of New South Wales; the city's history at the Museum of Sydney; the early days at the Rocks Discovery Museum.

Memorable Meals—A plate of fresh oysters at Sydney Cove Oyster Bar; Chinese food in Chinatown; the sheer artistry of food presentation at the highly acclaimed Tetsuya's; the city's best burger at Mary's in inner-city Newtown; modern Australian cuisine at the award-winning Quay overlooking Sydney Harbour at the Overseas Passenger Terminal in The Rocks.

Nightlife—A night of opera at Sydney Opera House; live jazz at The Basement in Circular Quay; enjoying the view and libations at Cargo Bar & Lounge on King Street Wharf; dancing at the super-hip Hemmesphere; the Friday-night buzz around the more casual pubs of Taylor Square in Darlinghurst; drinks overlooking Coogee Beach at the rooftop Coogee Pavilion.

Walks—A walk through the Royal Botanic Gardens; a breezy stroll across the Sydney Harbour Bridge (preferably from the north to the south side at sunset); a saunter down Oxford Street, from Paddington to Darlinghurst; the Manly Scenic Walk; the Bondi to Coogee coastal walk; the two-night luxury Zoo2Q walking adventure from Taronga Zoo to the historic Quarantine Station.

Especially for Kids—Taronga Zoo; the Shark Reef Snorkel at SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium; the interactive exhibits at Manly SEA LIFE Sanctuary; interactive science and design exhibits at the Powerhouse Museum; cuddle a koala at Featherdale Wildlife Park; the fair and rides at Luna Park.

Geography

Located on an inlet on the southeastern coast of Australia, Sydney is a sprawling, low-rise city. Visitors will likely spend most of their time in Sydney's center in the downtown area, which generally includes the Central Business District, The Rocks and Darling Harbour.

The best place to start getting acquainted with the city's layout is Circular Quay, the city's transportation hub. As you face the Sydney Harbour Bridge, to your right is the famous Sydney Opera House with the Royal Botanic Gardens beyond it. To the left, beneath the bridge, is The Rocks, which curves around the bay to Darling Harbour, where you'll find the city's oldest pubs, the Sydney Observatory and other attractions. The tall buildings bordered by Circular Quay, Darling Harbour and Hyde Park make up the Central Business District (also known as the CBD).

A 20-minute walk or a short taxi ride southeast takes you to Kings Cross, with its restaurants and nightclubs, as well as some of Sydney's most hip neighborhoods. Paddington is lined with fine-art galleries, trendy clothing stores and pretty Victorian houses. Darlinghurst is known for its trendy cafes and nightclubs. Oxford Street is Sydney's—and Australia's—gay mecca and site of the famous Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in February. To the south is Surry Hills, a hipster hot spot full of great dining options.

North of the bridge and easily accessible by ferry from Circular Quay lies Sydney's second most popular beachside area for tourists, Manly and its famous beach. Manly is only the first of a string of northern coastal beach suburbs such as Freshwater, Newport, Avalon and Palm Beach—all spectacular and most never explored by tourists. To the west are a host of grungy inner-city suburbs, including artsy Glebe and Newtown. Southwest is the Italian enclave Leichhardt. To the east are the iconic harborside suburbs with unbeatable views of Sydney's waterfront: Rushcutters Bay, Rose Bay, Double Bay and Vaucluse, as well as the wealthy eastern suburbs of Woollahra. Beyond that lie Sydney's most iconic beach, Bondi, and the trendy eastern beach suburbs of Bondi, Bronte, Coogee and Clovelly.

History

The Aborigines inhabited the Sydney area for tens of thousands of years before the first European settlers landed there on 26 January 1788. British Capt. Arthur Phillip raised the Union Jack and named the city in honor of Lord Sydney, who was then the British home secretary. Phillip's mission was to establish a penal colony at Sydney Cove (today known as Circular Quay) for the boatloads of convicts and troops he'd taken with him.

The reluctant colonists (known as "First Fleeters") were ill-prepared to settle the continent, but after much hardship, the city began taking shape in the area now called The Rocks. Over the next century, Sydney's secure harbor spurred the city's emergence as the country's economic hub.

Sydney didn't shed its reputation as bland and provincial until the mid-1950s, when enlightened leadership led to the construction of such landmarks as the Sydney Opera House. Explosive growth, coupled with a booming economy, helped turn Sydney into one of the world's most attractive, cosmopolitan and multicultural cities.

Port Information

Location

Most cruise ships arriving in Sydney dock at the Overseas Passenger Terminal, West Circular Quay. This overlooks the Circular Quay wharfs and Sydney Opera House. It is also adjacent to Sydney's major historic area, called The Rocks.

Taxis are available immediately outside the terminal, and trains, buses and ferries to other parts of Sydney all depart from the wharf area of Circular Quay. The Central Business District is a 10- to 15-minute walk or short taxi ride away.

Within the terminal is Cruise Bar and a selection of restaurants, including one of Sydney's best, aptly named Quay. Both have spectacular views. ATMs can be found nearby, as can free Internet access and tourist information at Sydney Visitors Centre, located on the corner of Argyle and Playfair streets in The Rocks.

Potpourri

Australian Mary Donaldson, now Crown Princess of Denmark, met Crown Prince Frederick at the Slip Inn in Sydney during the 2000 Olympic Games.

The highest temperature ever recorded in Sydney was 114.4 F/45.8 C, and the lowest temperature ever recorded was 25 F/-4 C.

There are 200 different ethnic cultures in Sydney, which translates to its eclectic mix of traditions, styles, architecture and, most noticeably, food. Immigrants make up 75% of the city's annual population growth.

Sydney's first currency was rum and led to a rum rebellion.

The Sydney Opera House was estimated to cost A\$7 million to build, but ended up costing A\$102 million.

Famous Australian comedian and actor Paul Hogan used to work as a rigger on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Sydney's indigenous funnel-web spider is rated the world's deadliest arachnid.

The seaside suburb of Manly was named after Sydney founder British Capt. Arthur Phillip's admiration of the "manly" build of the Aborigines.

The penthouse at the recently reinvented Star (a casino, entertainment and dining hub) was designed for Leonardo DiCaprio while he was in Sydney filming *The Great Gatsby*. It became his home during his Sydney sojourn.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Many of Sydney's attractions are within easy walking distance of one another. In theory you could attempt to see many of them in a single day—though you wouldn't stand still for long. We suggest taking a more leisurely approach by beginning your visit at Circular Quay (pronounced *key*), where you can catch a morning cruise of the city's harbor. When you get back, head for the Sydney Opera House. Its prominence on the waterfront and its distinctive white, sail-style roof have made it the city's (and Australia's) most famous landmark.

You can stroll along the bay from the Opera House to the Royal Botanic Gardens, which we consider a must-see. The park's gardens and ponds are lovely, and the views of the harbor are spectacular—particularly from Mrs. Macquarie's Chair (actually a rock favored by the wife of an early governor of New South Wales). In addition, you can visit the ornate Government House, take in the artwork at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, or find out what life was like for the city's first felons at nearby Hyde Park Barracks.

On another day, tour the Australian Museum and then cut through Hyde Park to the Sydney Tower, in the heart of downtown, for views of the Pacific to the east and the Blue Mountains to the west. You can hop on the Metro Monorail to Darling Harbour and visit the shark tanks at the Sydney Aquarium or take advantage of the huge selection of restaurants and cafes. A water taxi or a ferry will return you to Circular Quay. From there it's an easy walk to The Rocks, the city's most historic area. (If you are taking the BridgeClimb tour, you'll depart from The Rocks. If you're not, consider walking across the Sydney Harbour Bridge—the views are almost as good.)

Reserve an afternoon for a visit to the Taronga Zoo, which is on the north side of the harbor. (It's best reached by ferry from Circular Quay.) You could easily spend another day browsing the shops in Paddington, Darlinghurst and Kings Cross. Glebe is wrapped in hippie culture and packed with cafes and new-age bookstores—it's an interesting stop if you have some extra time, as is Newtown, filled with colorful backstreet pubs, artists of all stripes and bohemian vibes. Beach lovers will want to plan a day at

either Manly or Bondi beach—better if you make time for both. More than likely, you'll run out of time before you'll run out of things to see and do in Sydney.

Historic Sites

Sydney Tower

100 Market St. (downtown)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9333-9222. Toll-free 800-258-693

<http://www.sydneytowereye.com.au>

Australia's tallest building soars 1,014 ft/309 m, with the turret of the needle-shaped structure offering fascinating views of the city and beyond. Included in the tower admission fee is the 4D Cinema Experience. There is a revolving restaurant on top and a shopping complex at the base. High-powered binoculars are provided on the observation deck.

Daily 9 am-9 pm. A\$29 adults.

Sydney Skywalk

100 Market St. (downtown, within Sydney Tower)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9333-9222. Toll-free 800-258-693

<http://www.sydneytower.com.au>

Sydney Skywalk takes visitors to the roof of the Sydney Tower Eye, strapped to a revolving-glass viewing platform, for a 360-degree view of Sydney's landmarks and the Blue Mountains beyond, all at 879 ft/268 m in the air.

Tours run every 45 minutes daily 10 am-8 pm (spring and summer) and 10 am-7 pm (autumn and winter), subject to demand and weather conditions. A\$70 adults.

Sydney Opera House

Bennelong Point, Circular Quay
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9250-7250

<http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com>

With a white-tiled roof that rises like billowing sails against the backdrop of the harbor, the opera house is one of the architectural wonders of the world. Completed in 1973 from a design by Danish architect Joern Utzon, the building houses a world-class concert hall and opera house, as well as theaters for ballet, drama and dance. The complex includes several restaurants and gift shops, too. Tours offer a peek inside the performance halls, as well as plenty of interesting trivia along the way: Learn why the architect left without ever seeing his design take shape and why it took 14 years to complete.

Tours depart daily every 30 minutes 9 am-5 pm. Prices start from A\$29.60 adults. Backstage tours available daily at 7 am for A\$165.

Sydney Harbour Bridge

3 Cumberland St., The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8274-7777 for the ticket information line; 9240-1100 for the pylon lookout

<http://www.bridgeclimb.com.au>

The Coathanger, as it's affectionately known, was completed in 1932, connecting the north and south shores of the harbor. It's worth walking or cycling across for the views, especially just before sunset (start on the north side and walk toward the city). You also can climb the 200 steps to the lookout atop the pylon near The Rocks to learn about the bridge's history and construction—and to enjoy its wonderful views (<http://www.pylonlookout.com.au>). Then there's BridgeClimb, a three-and-a-half-hour tour that takes you up ladders and across catwalks and arches to the top of the bridge for a panoramic view of Sydney Harbour. Safety instructions (you're tethered to the bridge as you climb), climbing suits and a photograph of you at the top are included. Cameras are not permitted.

BridgeClimb tours depart daily every 10 minutes. Twilight and night climbs also available (dawn climbs first Saturday of the month). The pylon lookout is open 10 am-5 pm; closed Christmas Day. Reservations recommended. Bridge climb A\$148-\$348 adults, A\$118-\$228 children ages 10-15, depending on the day and time. Pylon lookout A\$13 adults.

State Library of New South Wales

Macquarie Street
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9273-1414

<http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au>

Historic Australian books, photographs and manuscripts are displayed in changing exhibits on the second floor. Stroll through the historic Mitchell Wing, which has stained-glass windows and a mosaic and terrazzo vestibule. The library's bookstore has an excellent selection of Australian titles and other gift items, and two cafes are on-site.

Hours vary by department; see website for details.

Quarantine Station

North Head Scenic Drive
Manly, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9466-1500 or 9466-1551 for tour reservations

<http://www.qstation.com.au/experience/tours.php>

Intrepid visitors can take the nighttime ghost tour of this place where convicts, immigrants and settlers with infectious diseases were isolated (and regularly mistreated). The last to be sent there were Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s.

A variety of day and evening tours operate throughout the year. See website for tour calendar information. Prices begin at A\$15. Ghost tours including dinner are A\$99 Wednesday-Sunday starting at 8 pm. Not recommended for children younger than 12. Adults-only ghost tour sleepovers cost A\$155 and are held on the third Friday of every month at 9:45 pm.

Hyde Park Barracks Museum

Queen's Square, Macquarie Street (near Hyde Park)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8239-2311

<http://www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/hyde-park-barracks-museum>

Convicts slept in hammocks in this elegant Georgian building designed by prisoner-architect Francis Greenway. Built in 1819, the barracks depict the daily life of convicts through exhibitions, an innovative soundscape and a rich archaeological collection.

Daily 10 am-5 pm; closed Good Friday and Christmas Day. A\$12 adults.

Fort Denison

110 George St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9253-0888

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au>

Once nicknamed "Pinchgut" because of the sparse rations served, this fort covers most of a rocky island where some of the colony's most incorrigible convicts were exiled. (The abundance of sharks in the harbor made escape from this tiny Devil's Island nearly impossible.) The fort, built in the 1850s to protect the city from an invasion that never occurred, is a popular tourist destination offering stunning city views. Tours include ferry crossings and time to explore the island, including Martello Tower with its cannons.

Monday and Tuesday at 12:15 and 2:30 pm, Wednesday-Sunday at 10:45 am and 12:15 and 2:30 pm. Online bookings available. Reservations required. A\$34.50 adults.

Elizabeth Bay House

7 Onslow Ave. (near Kings Cross)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9356-3022

<http://www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/elizabeth-bay-house>

This elegant residence, built in 1835, was once known as the finest house in the colony. Designed around a spiraling staircase, the house is furnished in the style of the period and commands spectacular views.

Friday-Sunday 11 am-4 pm. A\$8 adults.

Cadman's Cottage

110 George St., The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9253-0888

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/contact/SydneyHarbourCadmansCottage.htm>

Built in 1816, the cottage is one of the city's oldest surviving residential buildings. These days it functions more as an information center for Sydney Harbour National Park than as an attraction in its own right. It does have a small exhibit on the history of Sydney Cove. Stop by or call to book tours to the harbor islands. Free.

Museums

Sydney Observatory

Watson Road, Observatory Hill, The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9921-3485

<http://www.sydneyobservatory.com.au>

Built in 1858 as a center for timekeeping and astronomical study, the observatory is now a museum of astronomy and offers a regular program of exhibitions, films and talks. Daytime tours include a film at the 3-D Space Theatre and a look through the telescopes. Night tours include a talk, tour, film and a look at the heavens through modern and historic telescopes.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. Times of night shows vary by season. Admission to museum and garden is free. Day tours cost A\$10 adults, A\$8 children; Monday-Saturday night tours cost A\$18 adults, A\$12 children.

Sydney Jewish Museum

148 Darlinghurst Road
Darlinghurst, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9360-7999

<http://www.sydneyjewishmuseum.com.au>

This museum tells the story of Jewish Australians from the First Fleet to today. Some of the volunteer guides are Holocaust survivors.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-4 pm, Friday 10 am-2 pm. A\$10 adults, A\$6 children.

Rocks Discovery Museum

Kendall Lane, The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9240-8680

<http://www.therocks.com/things-to-do/the-rocks-discovery-museum>

In a sandstone warehouse building dating from the 1850s, the history of The Rocks comes alive and travels from early settlement to present-day mass tourism. Archaeological finds and interactive gadgetry add substance.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. Free admission.

Powerhouse Museum

500 Harris St., Ultimo (near Darling Harbor)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9217-0111

<http://www.powerhousemuseum.com>

This museum was created within the enormous shell of a derelict power station adjacent to Darling Harbour. Exhibits depict human achievements, science and technology, decorative arts and artifacts from the everyday lives of Australians, including the NASA space station, 1930s cinema, a gas-filled plasma ball, fashion through the decades, computers and interactive exhibitions. Daily 10 am-5 pm. A\$15 adults, A\$8 children ages 4-15.

Museum of Sydney

Bridge and Philip streets (Circular Quay)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9251-5988

<http://www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/museum-of-sydney>

Built on the site of the first Government House (1788), this museum portrays Australian history from its colonial past to present day. You'll see archaeological artifacts from convicts, settlers and merchants. (Some items are displayed underneath glass inserts in the floor.) The Focus Gallery exhibits sepia photographs, ink illustrations and possessions ranging from furniture to wedding invitations. In the Places of Memory room, you can unwind in an armchair (surrounded by walls that are plastered with old magazine clippings) and watch continuous home movies of Sydney taken during the past 60 years. Cafe, gift shop and free Wi-Fi.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. A\$12 adults.

Museum of Contemporary Art

140 George St., The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9245-2400

<http://www.mca.com.au>

In an art-deco-style sandstone building dating from 1949, set on the landing place of the First Fleet in 1788, this museum is known among contemporary art lovers for its cutting-edge art. The museum also hosts touring exhibitions. There is a great restaurant on the ground floor, a good book and gift shop on the first floor, and the MCA Cafe on the fourth floor with panoramic views of the harbor. This renovated museum now has a modern building to complement the historic art-deco one.

Monday-Wednesday 10 am-5 pm, Thursday 10 am-9 pm, Friday-Sunday 10 am-5 pm. Free except for major exhibitions.

Justice and Police Museum

Albert and Phillip streets (Circular Quay)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9252-1144

<http://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/justice-police-museum>

A courthouse and a station for Sydney's busy water police that dates from the 1850s, the museum features a magistrate court, a mug-shot gallery of early criminals, and gory exhibits of forensic evidence from notorious crimes.

Saturday and Sunday 10 am-5 pm. A\$10 adults, A\$5 children.

Australian National Maritime Museum

2 Murray St.
Darling Harbour, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9298-3777

<https://www.sea.museum>

Designed to resemble a ship, this museum features exhibits on whaling, exploration, shipwrecks, merchant ships, cruise liners and naval warfare. Some exhibits are interactive. Sea-themed movies play daily. The museum's collection of vessels includes the HMAS *Vampire*, a decommissioned Australian navy destroyer built in 1956 that gives some idea of the cramped conditions endured by sailors; a submarine; the HMAS *Onslow*; and a lugger used in the pearl-shell industry.

Daily 9:30 am-5 pm (till 6 pm in January). A\$7 adults, A\$3.50 children; combo ticket for vessels, Kids Deck and temporary exhibitions A\$27 adults, A\$16 children.

Australian Museum

1 William St. (near Hyde Park)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9320-6000

<https://australianmuseum.net.au>

Changing exhibits trace the rich culture and environment of Australia from thousands of years ago to the present. Permanent exhibits include Aboriginal collections, mammals, birds, insects, fossils, dinosaurs and more. A children's program includes torchlit tours.

Daily 9:30 am-5 pm. A\$15 adults.

Art Gallery of New South Wales

Art Gallery Road, the Domain (adjacent to the Royal Botanic Gardens)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9225-1878. Toll-free 800-679-278

<http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au>

Under the airy, barrel-vaulted glass ceiling are some of the finest works of art in Australia, including a special presentation of Aboriginal art. Be sure to see works by 19th-century painters Tom Roberts and Arthur Streeton—their representations of Australian landscapes are exceptional. The gallery also has European, Asian and contemporary art, as well as photography and changing international exhibitions. It also houses a restaurant, Chiswick at the Gallery, run by celebrity chef Matt Moran.

Daily 10 am-5 pm, Wednesday till 10 pm. Free except for special exhibitions.

Neighborhoods & Districts

The Rocks

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9240-8500

<http://www.therocks.com>

With its historic buildings, cobblestoned lanes and rich cultural heritage, The Rocks is the place to go for a glimpse of the city's colorful past. It's a good area in which to shop for quality gifts, souvenirs and the best of the nation's crafts. (The main shopping area is on George Street.) Quaint pubs and great restaurants mean it's also worth spending an evening there, particularly in summer when you can drink and dine in view of Sydney Harbour Bridge and the waterfront.

Kings Cross

Known locally as "the Cross," this is part red-light district and part bohemian enclave, with plenty of nightclubs, strip shows, good restaurants, fast-food joints and youth hostels for the backpacking crowd. This is the part of town to visit for Internet service—competition is fierce, so prices are low.

Darling Harbour

66 Harrington St. The Rocks, Level 6
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2

<http://www.darlingharbour.com>

You'd be hard-pressed not to discover something to keep you occupied in Darling Harbour. On the eastern side, you'll find the Sydney Aquarium and Sydney Wildlife World, the sidewalk cafes and restaurants of Cockle Bay Wharf, and another stretch of great eateries along King Street Wharf (also the departure point for a number of harbor cruises). To the west is Harbourside, a shopping complex with myriad souvenir shops and fast-food restaurants.

Circular Quay

Since British Capt. Arthur Phillip sailed into Sydney Cove in 1788, this area has been the transportation hub of the city. Ferries and tour boats depart from the waterfront. Bus and rail stops are a few steps away. Along the scenic waterfront promenade, you'll encounter Sydneysiders hurrying to get to work (or having coffee, depending on the time of day), visitors admiring the harbor, and assorted street entertainers vying for attention and change. As you head toward The Rocks you'll notice the Writers Walk, where comments about Australia by famous writers (from Mark Twain to Patrick White) are recorded on gold medallions embedded in the sidewalk.

Parks & Gardens

Royal Botanic Gardens

Mrs. Macquarie's Road (east of downtown)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9231-8111

<http://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au>

These gardens were established in 1816 on the site of the first cultivated land in Australia. This 75-acre/30-hectare botanical masterpiece next to Sydney Harbour is kept lush with tons of "zoo poo" brought across the bay from Taronga Zoo to fertilize the otherwise sandy soil. The gardens are popular with lunching city workers, Japanese bridal parties and schoolchildren on field trips. The Sydney Tropical Centre showcases Venus flytraps and other tropical specimens within pyramidal greenhouses. Don't miss the herb garden, with its aromatic plantings. At the tip of the park is Mrs. Macquarie's Chair (actually a rock), which offers wonderful harbor views. Throughout the park, look closely into the trees—hundreds of bats cling to their branches. In January, the gardens host the Open-Air Cinema, when you can watch films on a three-story screen with the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge as backdrops.

Gardens are open daily 7 am-sunset. Excellent free guided walks are offered year-round daily at 10:30 am and also March-November Monday-Friday at 1 pm. Walks depart from the information booth outside the garden shop at the Palm Grove Centre. Free admission; small charge for tropical house.

Hyde Park/The Domain

St. Marys Road
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

This green space, with its overarching fig trees, once marked the outskirts of the city. At the southern end of Hyde Park there's a war memorial with exhibits from the Boer to Vietnam wars; the northern end attracts city workers for lunch. Food and wine fairs are held in the park throughout the year. The classical Archibald Fountain, built in 1932, is a favored subject of tourist-photographers. For safety's sake, walk around the park's perimeter—not through it—after dark. In the adjacent Domain, there is jazz, opera and symphony in the park on January weekends as part of the Sydney Festival, as well as the (in)famous Speakers' Corner, where oddballs, subcultures and earnest intellectuals of all stripes gather to spout off about anything under the sun.

Chinese Garden of Friendship

Darling Harbour (near Chinatown)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9240-8888

<http://www.darlingharbour.com/things-to-do/chinese-garden-of-friendship>

If you'd like a rest from the bustle of Darling Harbour, the pavilions of the Chinese Garden offer a pleasant respite. Paths meander around pagodas and past pools where orange carp swim and waterfalls trickle over rocks. The garden was presented to Sydney as a bicentennial gift from sister-city Guangzhou, in Guangdong province, China. From the balcony tables at the two-story Tea House, you can look down at the peaceful greenery and sip Chinese tea.

Daily 9:30 am-5 pm (till 5:30 pm during daylight saving time). A\$6 adults, A\$3 children.

Centennial Park

Oxford Street, Paddington
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9339-6699

<http://www.centennialparklands.com.au>

This 467-acre/189-hectare park was once home to the Gadi Aboriginal people, but by 1888 it had been dedicated as a public open space for the people of New South Wales to enjoy. Today it is popular with joggers, in-line skaters, picnickers, cyclists and young families. The leafy main road through the park's interior is traversed by narrower roads taking visitors to sporting fields, lakes, a Victorian garden, equestrian facilities, picnic areas and a special bicycle track for children learning how to ride. During summer (late November to mid-February), locals take along blankets, wine, bread and pate to watch classic and art-house movies in an old amphitheater.

Open daily 6 am till dusk.

Recreation

Nearby beaches and numerous urban parks mean there are plenty of recreation choices in Sydney. The beaches of Bondi and Manly are close enough for an afternoon of swimming or surfing before a night on the town. Both beaches also offer scenic walks along the ocean.

Watersports such as boating, sailing and scuba diving can easily be arranged. Golf is popular, too, with more than 90 courses in the metropolitan area.

Beaches

Many Sydneysiders view the Labor Day weekend in early October as the start of summer weather and only stop sunbathing, swimming and surfing when it begins to get too cold, usually March or April. The city's best-known stretch of sand, Bondi Beach, east of downtown, is crowded and lively in summer. You'll find all ages there sunbathing, swimming, snacking at one of the funky cafes, or walking along the promenade.

Manly Beach, northeast of Sydney, attracts a mixed-age group. A half-hour from downtown Sydney by ferry, it has a flat promenade with shade from Norfolk pines. A slew of beachfront cafes overlook the ocean. The short walk from Manly Beach to Shelly Beach is a must-do.

Well north of Manly is Palm Beach, an elite neighborhood, as well as Whale Beach and Avalon—all have spectacular surf beaches away from the crowds. In the east Coogee, Cronulla and Maroubra are other tried-and-true options. Note that the surf at Sydney's surf beaches can be rough at times.

Families favor Clovelly Beach and Bronte Beach, with their sweeping grassy areas and ocean pools, as well as the refined bay beaches of Neilsen Park (Vaucluse), Camp Cove (Watson's Bay) and Balmoral Beach, which have shark nets. A selection of Sydney's beaches are netted 0.5 mi/1 km offshore.

Boating & Sailing

Sydney Harbour is full of boats of all sizes and shapes, making it a good place to sail, motor or paddle.

Sydney by Sail

2 Murray St. (at the National Maritime Museum.)
Darling Harbour, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9280-1110

<http://www.sydneybysail.com.au>

Try this outfit for three-hour sailing tours under the Bridge and past all the main sights or for overnight trips, as well as learn to sail courses, coastal sailing trips and treasure hunts.

Daily cruise A\$165 adults, A\$85 children younger than 14.

Eastsail

D'Albora Marinas, 1-B New Beach Road
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9327-1166

<http://www.eastsail.com.au>

This company offers a variety of yacht charters, boat rentals and sailing school lessons, as well as a morning adventure sail, sunset and overnight romantic cruises.

Daily 9 am-5:30 pm.

Golf

For a listing of Sydney golf courses, visit <http://www.ausgolf.com.au>.

Moore Park Golf Club

Cleveland Street and Anzac Parade
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9663-1064

<http://www.mooreparkgolf.com.au>

This 18-hole championship course is quite popular. Advance reservations recommended, especially in summer.

Daily 6 am-8 pm in summer, 6 am-5 pm in winter.

Bondi Beach Golf Club

5 Military Road
North Bondi, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9130-3170

<http://www.bondigolf.com.au>

As well as teeing off, you can admire the historical Aboriginal rock carvings there.

NULL.

Hiking & Walking

The Gap to South Head

Start at The Gap at Watsons Bay for this picturesque harborside walk. It winds through Vaucluse and Watsons Bay to the lighthouse at South Head. From there you can see the entrance to Sydney Harbour, North and Middle Heads and the harbor channel all the way back to the city. Along the way, you'll pass some of the prettiest tiny beaches around.

Manly Scenic Walk

This walk is one of Sydney's most diverse. It cuts through subtropical rain forest and bushland, passing Aboriginal sites, harborside suburbs, rugged cliffs and secluded bays. Pick up a trail guide at the Manly visitors center at Manly Wharf. Begin at the wharf and follow the shoreline paths to North Harbour. Strike out along the cliffs, through Sydney Harbour National Park, for views of the headlands. This walk has steep inclines and lots of steps, but there are plenty of beaches for ocean dips. Be sure to take snacks and water. If you walk the entire length (6 mi/10 km), you can catch Bus 143 or 144 back to Manly from the far side of Spit Bridge. (You also can take a bus to the Spit Bridge and walk back to Manly.)

Bondi to Coogee Walk

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

<http://bonditocoogeewalk.com.au>

A scenic 4-mi/6-km path takes you south from the Bondi Beach promenade, around rocky Mackenzie's Point and all the way to Coogee Beach. You can stop along the way to swim and relax at one of the small cafes along Bronte Beach. For two weeks each year in early November, the area from Bondi to Tamarama beaches is transformed into an outdoor sculpture gallery, courtesy of the *Sculpture by the Sea* exhibition. The event is free and draws large crowds. From Coogee you can catch a bus back to Bondi.

Scuba & Snorkeling

Sydney Harbour has some great diving spots, where there are frequent sightings of weedy sea dragons, giant cuttlefish, rays and huge wrasse.

ProDive

169 Pittwater Road

Manly, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9977-5966

<http://www.prodive.com.au>

Learn-to-dive courses are available starting at A\$199, along with shore dives, weekend boat dives and seasonal excursions. There is a second location in Coogee.

Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 8 am-6 pm, Sunday 10 am-4 pm.

Surfing

Surfers abound at most Sydney beaches. Urban surfers favor Bondi and Tamarama because of their proximity to the city. But the surf is often better at Maroubra and Cronulla beaches in the southern suburbs and at Curl Curl, Long Reef and Bungan Head in the northern suburbs. Manly Beach also is a popular place to surf.

If you want to learn to surf, most beaches have surf shops that rent boards and offer lessons.

Manly Surf School

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9932-7000

<http://www.manlysurfschool.com>

The best-known and largest surf instruction operation is the Manly Surf School. It offers group lessons, private lessons, stand-up paddle lessons and day tours at Manly, Collaroy, Long Reef Beach, Palm Beach, Balmoral Beach and Narrabeen Lakes. Prices begin at A\$70 for two hours. Boards and wetsuits supplied.

Let's Go Surfing

128 Ramsgate Ave.

Bondi Beach, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9365-1800

<http://www.letsgosurfing.com.au>

Take two-hour surfing or paddle-boarding lessons from A\$99. Private lessons also available.

Nightlife

Sydney enjoys a lively nightlife, from the trendy bars and clubs along Darling Harbour and Circular Quay to the historic pubs (often called hotels) in The Rocks. You'll also find plenty of live music. If you enjoy late-night clubbing, you can find plenty of options around the Central Business District, but the favored hangouts are increasingly in the Darlinghurst neighborhood (also a popular dining area). By comparison, Kings Cross is seedier, but it has a lot of late-night activity. Cover charges and drink prices are usually lower there.

Sydney now has 1:30 am lockout and 3 am last drinks laws at hotels, clubs, nightclubs and licensed karaoke bars throughout parts of Surry Hills and Darlinghurst to The Rocks, and from Kings Cross to Cockle Bay. Venues that are licensed to stay open after 3 am can do so without alcohol service. You're best off starting your night a little earlier, then making sure you've found a nook by 1:30 am.

Bars, Taverns & Pubs

The Lord Dudley

236 Jersey Road
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9327-5399

<http://www.lorddudley.com.au>

Many locals retreat to this very English, wood-paneled pub for a quiet drink or a bistro dinner. It's warm, cozy and friendly—chairs surrounding the roaring fireplace fill up fast on winter nights. There are 18 beers on tap. On the second floor, people sometimes play backgammon.

Monday-Wednesday 11 am-11 pm, Thursday-Saturday 11 am-midnight, Sunday 6-10 pm. No cover.

The Argyle

12-18 Argyle St., The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9247-5500

<http://www.theargylerocks.com>

Set in one of Australia's oldest surviving commercial buildings (which is pictured on the A\$20 note) this cavernous venue with its five bars and a cobblestoned courtyard is perfect for casual encounters. Although the building's old-world feel is maintained by the use of exposed timber beams, subtle lighting and hand-blown glass urns, the mustard booths, carved sandstone bar and secluded VIP areas give it an ultramodern twist.

Daily 11 am-midnight.

North Bondi RSL

118-120 Ramsgate Ave.
North Bondi, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9130-3152

<http://www.northbondirsl.com.au>

A casual, unpretentious drinking den with good food and unbeatable views. Floor-to-ceiling windows look out over the entire sweep of Bondi Beach. It's perfect for people-watching but far enough away from the often-maddening crowds that ply central Bondi for you to drink in relative peace.

Monday-Friday noon-10:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-11 pm.

Green Park Hotel

360 Victoria St.
Darlinghurst, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9380-5311

<http://www.greenparkhotel.com.au>

Gays, straights and everyone else bop on into this cavernous pub, with its nooks and crannies, jukebox, outdoor area and pervading sense of good-natured decadence.

Monday-Wednesday 11 am-midnight, Thursday-Saturday 11 am-2 am, Sunday noon-midnight.

Establishment Bar

Ivy 320-330 George St., Level 2
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9240-3000

<http://merivale.com.au/establishmentbar>

Follow the buzz of happy chatter on George Street and you'll find a palatial marble bar with Greek-style columns and an outdoor garden for lounging. This is definitely an in-crowd hangout.

Open Monday-Friday 11 am till late, Saturday noon till late, Sunday noon-10 pm. No cover.

Cargo Bar & Lounge

52-60 The Promenade, King Street Wharf
Darling Harbour, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8070-2424

<http://www.cargobar.com.au>

This bar's great location provides views across Darling Harbour from the upstairs lounge, and the downstairs bar opens out onto the harbor promenade.

Daily 11 am-midnight.

Dance & Nightclubs

Universal

85-91 Oxford St.
Darlinghurst, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9358-3848

<http://www.themidnightshift.com.au>

Popular with the gay and lesbian crowd, this bar has undergone extensive renovations and now boasts a new dining area and downstairs bar. It also has an upstairs Lounge Bar and club. On Friday night, the club hosts Homo, a new gay night, as well as Cash4Queens drag talent competition on Thursday night and Iconic on Sunday night, which features entertainment themed around gay icons.

Thursday-Sunday 4 pm till late. Cover charge varies.

Hemmesphere

252 George St. (Establishment Hotel, Level 4)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9240-3100

<http://www.merivale.com>

This sumptuous bar with its Moroccan-inspired interiors, huge ottomans and low-slung leather divans is synonymous with glamour and style. Located on the fourth level of the Establishment Hotel, Sydney's rich and beautiful flock there each weekend to cut loose at this wickedly exclusive members' bar. Although members are given priority, the club's gilt-edged doors are open to appropriately dressed nonmembers.

Monday-Friday noon-late, Saturday 6 pm-late.

Chinese Laundry

111 Sussex St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8295-9950

<https://chineselaundry.club>

This Sydney institution deserves its reputation, consistently bringing it to the people with breaks on Friday and dirty electro-hip-hop mashups on Saturday. Music includes house, electro, tech, hip-hop and dubstep, with rotating and visiting DJs.

Friday 10 pm till late, Saturday 9 pm till late. Tickets are available at.

Arq

16 Flinders St. Taylor Square
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9380-8700

<http://www.arqsydney.com.au>

Filled with polished steel and plush accessories, this club caters to a mixed but predominantly gay and lesbian crowd. Stay on the ground level for more upbeat "handbag" music or head upstairs for harder trance sounds.

Open Thursday-Sunday 9 pm-late. Cover varies depending on the night.

Live Music

The Basement

29 Reiby Place
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9251-2797

<http://www.thebasement.com.au>

The low ceilings and subdued lighting lend an intimate feel to this venue—even though it's large enough to attract well-known jazz bands and international acts. Renowned for jazz, the club also offers everything from blues to country, depending on the night. The live music happens downstairs, while upstairs there's a lounge and wine bar.

Upstairs open daily 11 am till late. Downstairs open from 6:30 pm during live music performances. Cover charges vary.

Sandringham Hotel

387 King St.
Newtown, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9557-1254

<http://www.sando.com.au>

Features live acts most days—everything from acoustic to pop to rock. The Sando is a bit of a Newtown legend; popular Sydney band The Whitlams even wrote a tribute in the form of their 1997 song, "God Drinks at the Sando."

Open daily, hours vary.

Opera Bar

Lower Concourse, Sydney Opera House
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9247-1666

<http://www.operabar.com.au>

This iconic bar, which spills out onto the promenade underneath the Opera House, has recently reopened following a refurbishment by top Sydney chef Matt Moran. Expect fabulous food and great cocktails, to be sipped day or night as you watch the ferries come and go on Sydney Harbour.

Daily 11:30 am-midnight. Regular live music; check website for listings.

Annandale Hotel

17 Parramatta Road
Annandale, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9550-1078

<http://www.annandalehotel.com>

Go there for live rock of all stripes: metal, punk and indie.

Monday-Wednesday 10 am-midnight, Thursday and Friday 10 am-1 am, Saturday 8 am-1 am, Sunday 8 am-midnight.

Performing Arts

The city has a thriving cultural scene. The famous Sydney Opera House is worth a visit for its unusual architecture alone, but there's also plenty going on inside. And watch for free performances outside on the opera house's steps.

Among the worthy performing-arts companies are the Bangarra Dance Theatre (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancers) and the Sydney Theatre Company (staging everything from premieres of Australian plays to Shakespeare).

Dance

Sydney Dance Company

385 Wattle St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9221-4811

<http://www.sydneydancecompany.com>

This is Australia's leading contemporary dance troupe. Performances are usually at the Capitol Theatre. Open classes, offering lessons in many different styles of dance, are held daily at the company's studios.

Bangarra Dance Theatre

Pier 4/5, Hickson Road, Walsh Bay
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9251-5333

<http://www.bangarra.com.au>

World-class contemporary dance theatre from Australia's leading indigenous performing-arts group. Performances by these professionally trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancers are a must-see for lovers of dance. Check the website for performance schedule, as the group often goes on tour.

Australian Ballet

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9253-5300

<http://www.australianballet.com.au>

This talented team dances throughout Australia and around the globe. When the troupe performs in Sydney, it's usually at the Sydney Opera House or Sydney Theatre at Walsh Bay. The season runs February, April, May, November and December.

Box office Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm. Tickets cost A\$32-\$190, but prices can vary considerably. .

Music

Sydney Symphony

Bennelong Point
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8215-4600

<http://www.sydneyssymphony.com>

Principal conductor David Robertson leads the symphony, which performs at a number of local venues, including the Sydney Opera House.

Box office Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm. Tickets A\$35-\$125.

Australian Chamber Orchestra

2 E. Circular Quay
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8274-3800. Toll-free 800-444-444

<http://www.aco.com.au>

Concerts are held in the Sydney Opera House concert hall and at City Recital Hall Angel Place.

Box office Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm. Tickets start at A\$40.

Opera

Opera Australia

480 Elizabeth St.
Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9699-1099 (information) or 9318-8200 (tickets)

<http://www.opera.org.au>

The opera season runs January-March and June-August, and a musical runs September-November. Performances take place at the Sydney Opera House and other city venues. Handa Opera on Sydney harbor is a truly special event that has become iconic in Sydney. It runs late March-late April.

Tickets start at around A\$69 and vary according to performances and seasons.

Theater

Sydney Theatre Company

Pier 4, Hickson Road
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9250-1777

<http://www.sydneytheatre.com.au>

Its season encompasses everything from Shakespeare to contemporary plays from abroad. Several Australian plays premiere there each year. Highly recommended. Performances are held at the Wharf Theatre, Sydney Theatre and the Sydney Opera House.

Box office Monday 9 am-7:30 pm, Tuesday-Friday 9 am-8:30 pm, Saturday 11 am-8:30 pm. Ticket prices vary, but many productions are around A\$80.

Belvoir Street Theatre

25 Belvoir St.
Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9699-3444

<http://www.belvoir.com.au>

This adventurous fringe theater stages modern performances and occasionally a classic or Aboriginal play.

Box office Monday-Friday 9:30 am-5 pm. Tickets from A\$35.

Ticket Brokers

Ticketmaster

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

<http://www.ticketmaster.com.au>

This agency sells tickets to a variety of shows and events. It is best accessed online.

Ticketek

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 132-849

<http://www.ticketek.com.au>

This is the major booking agency for entertainment and sports tickets.

Open Monday-Friday 9 am-7 pm, Saturday 9 am-4 pm. A small booking fee is added to the ticket price. See website for addresses of booking agencies in Sydney. .

Venues

State Theatre

49 Market St.

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9373-6655 or 9373-6862 for tour information

<http://www.statetheatre.com.au>

This gorgeous and grand heritage-listed theater was built in 1929. It hosts the Sydney Film Festival, plus concerts and other events throughout the year.

For tickets, use Ticketmaster online or visit the box office at the theater Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm.

Spectator Sports

Cricket and rugby are wildly popular in Sydney. From October to March, cricket is played in two forms—the traditional, five-day variety and one-day World Series Cricket matches—and the enormous Sydney Cricket Ground holds international and local matches. The rugby league teams play March-September, but the State of Origin games (May and June) are the most popular. Rugby Union Super 12 games are more popular than club-level matches. The New South Wales Waratahs compete in Super 12 February-May. All rugby matches are played at the Allianz Stadium or the ANZ Stadium. Phone 8765-2000.

<http://www.anzstadium.com.au>.

But there's more to Sydney's sporting life than cricket and rugby. The Sydney Kings, Sydney's National Basketball League (NBL) team, play home games April-November at the Sydney Entertainment Centre in Haymarket. Four National Soccer League teams also are based in Sydney, and their season runs October-May. The Sydney Swans, a local Australian football team, play home games March-August at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Phone 9360-6601. <http://www.sydneycricketground.com.au>.

Tickets to major sporting events are available from Ticketek. <http://www.ticketek.com.au>.

Shopping

A mix of small distinctive shops, large department stores and elegant arcades combine to make shopping an experience that should be part of any visit to Sydney. If you're looking for Australia's signature items—Aboriginal art, opals, marble-sized pearls, leather goods or sheepskin coats—you'll find them in abundance throughout the city. There are plenty of cutting-edge boutiques, as well, if you're looking for Australian-style high fashion.

Some of the city's best shopping is downtown in the Central Business District. Between Town Hall and Martin Place, in the area bounded by George and Elizabeth streets, are several shopping centers such as the Queen Victoria Building. A pedestrian-only shopping area known as Pitt Street Mall includes the Federation-era Strand Arcade and the spectacular Westfield Sydney (which is a redevelopment of the former Centrepunkt, Skygarden and Imperial Centre). Don't overlook museum shops—we found them stocked with wonderful and unusual gifts. The bookstore at the State Library of New South Wales, for example, may have the city's largest collection of Australian novels, guidebooks and coffee-table tomes.

For a more intimate shopping experience, you might enjoy browsing farther afield. The Woollahra area is the place to go for antiques (Queen Street, between Oxford and Moncur streets, has more than 15 antiques shops to browse). The markets scattered around the city are the best places to shop for bargain-priced costume jewelry, clothing and handmade crafts.

Shopping Hours: Shopping hours are generally 9 am-5 pm, with slightly shorter hours on weekends and late shopping on Thursday till 9 pm.

Department Stores

Myer

Westfield Sydney Central Plaza, 436 George St. (downtown)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9238-9111

<http://www.myer.com.au>

This bright, airy store offers all the merchandise customers expect from a department store, spread over seven floors. Additional locations.

Monday-Wednesday and Saturday 9:30 am-7 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-9 pm, Friday 9:30 am-8 pm, Sunday 10 am-7 pm.

David Jones

65-77 Market St. (downtown, parking via Castlereagh Street)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9266-5544

<https://www.davidjones.com>

This upscale department store carries a variety of goods, from scarves and flowers on the first floor to haute couture on the seventh. A gourmet food hall (chocolate-dipped strawberries, fresh breads, delicatessen items and an oyster bar) is on the bottom floor. Additional locations.

Monday-Wednesday and Sunday 9:30 am-7 pm, Thursday and Friday 9:30 am-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-7 pm.

Galleries

Brett Whiteley Studio

2 Raper St.
Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: Toll-free 800-679-278

<http://www.brettwhiteley.org>

Famous Sydney artist Brett Whiteley was the anti-Ken Done: heroin-addicted, tortured and dark. Learn about his life and times at this shrine to his art (actually Whiteley's former studio), with paintings, tours, performances and music on occasion.

Daily 10 am-5 pm.

Australian Centre for Photography

257 Oxford St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9332-0555

<http://www.acp.org.au>

This gallery exhibits contemporary Australian and international photography, as well as photo-based art and installations.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-5 pm. Admission to the gallery is free.

Markets

The Rocks Market

George Street, The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9240-8500

<http://www.therocksmarket.com.au>

This lively weekend craft market is always colorful. Beneath the market's tan canopies you'll find Aboriginal artifacts, hand-painted glassware, watercolors of Sydney scenes, antique photographs, new-age essential oils and hand-turned wooden bowls. Sample chili-chocolate truffles or home-style lemon butter. It's a great place to pick up souvenirs and gifts.

Saturday and Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Sydney Fish Market

Pymont Bridge Road (at Bank Street)
Pymont, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9004-1100

<http://www.sydneyfishmarket.com.au>

Auctioning 100 species of fish daily and 15,400 tons/14,000 metric tons annually, this is among the world's largest seafood markets. There's also a seafood-cooking school (called the Sydney Seafood School) and the requisite seafood restaurants and cafes.

Daily from 7 am.

Paddington Markets

395 Oxford St. (on the grounds of Eastside Parish Uniting Church and Paddington Public School)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9331-2923

<http://www.paddingtonmarkets.com.au>

This has become something of a Sydney institution, with both locals and visitors gathering to see Australian handicrafts being made. Paddington is known for its quirky atmosphere, eccentric traders, eclectic products and the high quality of its art, craft, design and fashion. (The markets are renowned as a major launchpad for the Australian fashion industry.) You also can sample gourmet goodies while you shop, get a shiatsu massage or just people-watch.

Saturday 10 am-4 pm.

Glebe Markets

Glebe Public School, Glebe Point Road (at Derby Place)
Glebe, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 0419-291-449

<http://www.glebemarkets.com.au>

Funky Glebe puts on a good show with clothing, books, leather products and that patented bohemian vibe.

Saturday 10 am-4 pm.

Bondi Markets

Campbell Parade
Bondi Beach, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9315-7011

<http://www.bondimarkets.com.au>

Bric-a-brac, vintage clothing, retro items and beautiful people (this *is* Bondi) can be found at this market held at the Bondi Beach Public School.

Sunday 10 am-4 pm.

Shopping Areas

The Rocks

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9240-8500

<http://www.therocks.com>

The area is a treasure chest of "made in Australia" items and souvenirs—the brilliant (some say tacky) colors of Ken Done, opals galore and designer shops. The leafy courtyard cafes are perfect for resting your feet.

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5 pm. .

Strand Arcade

412 George St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9265-6800

<http://www.strandarcade.com.au>

This Victorian-style arcade is a few years older than the Queen Victoria Building—and is just as lovely. The upper levels of the building, which was constructed in 1892, have beautiful iron lacework and stained glass. Inside are specialty antiques, clothing, shoe and jewelry shops—the most interesting of which are upstairs.

Monday-Wednesday and Friday 9 am-5:30 pm, Thursday 9 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-4 pm, Sunday 11 am-4 pm.

Queen Victoria Building

455 George St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9265-6800

<http://www.qvb.com.au>

Stained-glass windows, wrought-iron balconies, elaborately tiled floors and a majestic Grand Centre Dome make a visit to the Queen Victoria Building more than a shopping experience. Built in the late 1890s as a tribute to England's long-reigning monarch, the arcade has been restored to its original style. It's packed with fashion boutiques, art galleries and duty-free stores. Good-quality Australian souvenirs are located on the top floor.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm (Thursday till 9 pm), Sunday 11 am-5 pm.

Oxford Street

This shopping drag stretches some 3 mi/4 km from Darlinghurst through Paddington to the top of Woollahra. Its most interesting shops start north of the Crown Street intersection in Darlinghurst. There are art galleries, antiques stores, cafes and restaurants, as well as several shops selling Australian fashions, including Sass & Bide and Ellery.

Most shops are open daily, but their hours vary.

Harbourside Shopping Centre

Darling Harbour
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 8204-1888

<http://www.harbourside.com.au>

A mixture of tourist shops, cheap fashions and artworks, plus a food court with generous portions at low prices, and a range of international cuisines at the restaurants.

Daily 10 am-9 pm.

Specialty Stores

The National Opal Collection

60 Pitt St. (near Centrepoint Tower)
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9247-6344

<http://www.nationalopal.com>

This mining, cutting and jewelry company sells a mind-boggling array of opals, from souvenir key rings to A\$1 million black opal rings. The most popular are the rare black opals that are found north of Sydney in Lightning Ridge.

Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-4 pm.

Paspaley Pearls

2 Martin Place
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9232-7633

<http://www.paspaley.com>

This shop sells stunning pearl jewelry ranging from a simple pair of A\$300 stud earrings to a strand of marble-sized pearls worth A\$500,000. The company harvests its own South Sea pearls off Broome on the West Australian coast and designs its own pieces. There's also an in-house jeweler for alterations and custom design.

Monday-Wednesday and Friday 10 am-5:30 pm, Thursday 10 am-7:30 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-4 pm, Sunday 11 am-3 pm.

Dining

Dining Overview

Today you're more likely to find Aussies dining on Thai, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Turkish, Lebanese or Italian food than on the more traditional fare borrowed from the British. Darling Harbour and Circular Quay are awash with trendy restaurants serving everything from modern Australian to grilled seafood. The neighborhoods of Darlinghurst and Newtown have a concentration of vegetarian and Asian restaurants.

Italian places are found all over, but Leichhardt is particularly renowned: The Italian forum off Norton Street, where dozens of restaurants are lined around a courtyard, has an authentic Italian feel. Other good spots for Italian include Paddington, Woollahra and Darlinghurst. Great dim sum can be had in Chinatown and Chatswood. Manly has a strip of cafes along the beachfront serving meze plates, seafood and modern Australian dishes.

The combination of fresh Australian produce, Asian stir-fry techniques and such flavorings as lemongrass and chilies is catching on in the city. Local seafood, from calamari and smoked trout to rock oysters, Tasmanian salmon and the much-respected but pricey barramundi, is served just about everywhere.

Be sure to try some of Australia's native specialties (called "bush tucker"): *warrigal* (a spinachlike green), kangaroo (tastes like venison but contains less fat) and emu. For sweet desserts, try wattle-seed ice cream; *lamington*, a sheet cake coated with a chocolate spread and dipped in coconut; or pavlova, a soft-crusted meringue served with kiwi, passion fruit and strawberries and topped with whipped cream.

Australians have embraced coffee culture. Espresso drinks, including macchiatos, cappuccinos and other variations, are very popular. If you prefer the kind of filtered coffee that's common in North America, visit McDonald's or Starbucks. Otherwise, you will only find it at a hotel buffet breakfast.

Australia's wines are winning international gold medals, and samples of the country's renowned vintages are widely available. Excellent beers and liquors are served at most dining establishments, too. Some restaurants allow you to take your own alcohol, which can be found at bottle shops (liquor stores), often located next to pubs and hotels. A corkage fee of about A\$2 is usually charged. Establishments that are classified as "fully licensed" serve alcohol.

General dining hours are 6:30-10 am for breakfast, noon-2:30 pm for lunch and 7-10 pm for dinner.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax or tip: \$ = less than A\$30; \$\$ = A\$30-\$50; \$\$\$ = A\$51-\$75; and \$\$\$\$ = more than A\$75.

Local & Regional

Rockpool Bar & Grill

66 Hunter St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 8078-1900

<http://www.rockpool.com/rockpoolbarandgrillsydney>

After the success of its Melbourne sibling, Neil Perry's Rockpool Bar & Grill opened in the heart of Sydney's CBD in the charmingly art-deco City Mutual building. In keeping with its glam exterior, the high-ceilinged dining room is an inspired, elegant space accented with rich dark woods and gleaming marble. The menu too impresses with its wide range of carnivorous offerings, such as David Blackmore's full blood Wagyu hamburger and minute steak with red-wine butter, complemented by a slew of simple side dishes, including macaroni and cheese and creamed corn.

Monday-Friday noon-11 pm, Saturday 5:30-11 pm, Sunday 5:30-10 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Quay

Overseas Passenger Terminal, The Rocks
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9251-5600

<http://www.quay.com.au>

Executive chef Peter Gilmore conjures up such exquisite seasonal dishes as gentle braise of black-lipped abalone, and to finish, the Quay eight-texture chocolate cake. Fabulous eight-plate tasting menu.

Friday-Sunday noon-1:30 pm and 6-9 pm, Monday-Thursday 6-9 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

O Bar and Dining

264 George St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9247-9777

<http://www.obardining.com.au>

This revolving downtown restaurant boasts space-age decor, as well as magnificent, changing views of Sydney. A complete revolution takes about an hour and 45 minutes. The menu offers a wide selection of mostly modern Australian dishes featuring native produce—think lots of grains, nuts and seeds, raw foods, leafy greens and seafood.

Saturday-Thursday from 5 pm, Friday from noon. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Icebergs Dining Room & Bar

1 Notts Ave., Bondi Beach
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9356-9000

<http://www.idrb.com>

Along with the panoramic views overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Bondi Beach, the food is amazing at this popular, light-filled restaurant. Try the seasonal cured meats from one of Australia's best butchers, Victor Churchill, and the sustainable fish selection. Owner Maurice Terzini's Italian heritage influences Monty Koludrovic's food, but there's something for everyone in this eatery.

Open Tuesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

360 Dining Room & Bar

F4 Castlereagh St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 8223-3883

<https://www.360dining.com.au>

This three-level, revolving fine-dining restaurant in Sydney Tower boasts a Michael McCann design and an award-winning chef. Expect great things such as crispy skin pork belly or pan-fried barramundi with roasted fennel, cherry tomato, Boston bay mussels and cannellini beans. Set menus available.

Daily noon-11 pm. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Cuisines

Asian

Spice Temple

10 Bligh St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-8078-1888

<http://www.spicetemple.com.au>

Leading Sydney chef Neil Perry has reignited his passion for Asian flavors with this fabulous Chinese restaurant. From the dark alder tables and dim, low-hanging chrome lights to the ambient music arranged by renowned music supervisor Anton Monsted, every detail of the restaurant has been meticulously planned. Perry's menu explodes with contrasting tastes, textures and fiery flavors of lesser-known Chinese provinces, which until now remained largely unexplored by the city's chefs.

Monday-Wednesday noon-10:30 pm, Thursday and Friday noon-11 pm, Saturday 5:30-11 pm, Sunday 6-10 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Chinta Kechil

342 New South Head Road
Darling Harbour, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9327-8888

<http://www.chintaria.com>

The sister restaurant to the now-defunct Chinta Ria in Cockle Bay, Chinta Kechil in Sydney's moneyed Double Bay offers the wonderful Malaysian food that made Chinta Ria famous, but on a much smaller scale (*kechil* translates to small), with just 16 seats around benches and tiny tables. There's a definite night-market vibe to the decor. Whether you want a light and tasty bite or a spicy feast, this is a fun place to head with a group that's totally do-it-yourself: Pay upfront, and help yourself to water and chili sauce.

Monday-Saturday noon-2:30 pm, 6-11 pm; Sunday 6-10 pm. Reservations can be made online. \$. Most major credit cards.

Billy Kwong

28 Macleay St.
Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9332-3300

<http://www.billykwong.com.au>

After 14 years at her much-loved Crown Street property, celebrity chef Kylie Kwong has packed up and moved across town to a much larger space in Potts Point. The menu uses Australian native produce in classical Cantonese cooking, including such favorites as home-style fried eggs with XO sauce and steamed fish with ginger and spring onions. There's also a fantastic wine list filled with artisanal, natural wines from around the world.

Monday-Thursday 5:30-10 pm, Friday and Saturday 5:30-11 pm, Sunday noon-9 pm. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

French

Bistro Moncur

116 Queen St.
Woollahra, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9327-9713

<https://www.bistromoncur.com.au>

This bright and breezy restaurant is complemented by contemporary French flair and fare. We recommend the classic grilled sirloin *cafe de Paris* and the pan-fried *saikou* salmon fillet with artichokes, butternut pumpkin and shiitake mushrooms.

Sunday-Thursday noon-9 pm, Friday and Saturday noon-10 pm. Limited reservations available. Reservations not accepted. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Fusion

Longrain

85 Commonwealth St.
Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9280-2888

<http://www.longrain.com>

People swear by the Thai-Asian fusion food there, and why not? It's that perfect mix of professionalism swaddled in touches of genius that is so hard to re-create. Savor it while you're in town, particularly the dry red kingfish curry with pork crackling—a mouthful in every sense of the word. Housed within a lovely old warehouse shell, Longrain also houses Bunker Bar downstairs, an aching hip bar serving some of Sydney's finest cocktails.

Monday-Thursday from 6 pm, Friday from noon, Saturday and Sunday from 5:30 pm. Reservations available for groups of six or more. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Italian

Lucio's

47 Windsor St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9380-5996

<http://www.lucios.com.au>

A typical Victorian two-story home with a wrought-iron terrace has been extended several times to house this popular and well-regarded trattoria. Locals and celebrity VIPs are regulars in this warmly decorated, intimate place. Local artist (and Lucio's fan) John Olsen redesigned the menu, which includes roast duck with poached pear and cauliflower puree.

Tuesday-Saturday 12:30-10:15 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Middle Eastern

Kazbah

10 Darling Drive
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9555-7067

<http://www.kazbah.com.au>

Great tastes from Arabia in a nice location on the waterfront. Mezze dishes, delicious tagines and salads. A belly dancer performs Saturday at 8 pm. Additional locations.

Daily 11 am till late. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Spanish

Capitan Torres

73 Liverpool St.
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 2-9264-5574

<http://www.capitantorres.com.au>

Dine in a fabulous atmosphere at this long-established restaurant in the Spanish quarter of Sydney. A speciality is *paella valenciana* along with a wonderful tapas menu and sangria.

Open daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations available online. Reservations available. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Late Night

Harry's Cafe de Wheels

Cowper Wharf Roadway at Dowling Street
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9357-3074

<http://www.harryscafedewheels.com.au>

This amusing pie cart (actually a small cafe on wheels) attracts nightclubbers craving a late-night snack before heading home. A Sydney institution since 1945, Harry's serves tasty meat pies and chili dogs to an assortment of characters—from models in slip dresses to bikers clad in leather, with the odd celebrity thrown in. Several additional locations.

Monday and Tuesday 8 am-9 pm, Wednesday and Friday 8-2:30 am, Thursday 8 am-11 pm, Saturday 9-3:30 am, Sunday 9-12:30 am. \$. No credit cards.

Seafood

Sydney Cove Oyster Bar

1 E. Circular Quay
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9247-2937

<http://www.sydneycoveoysterbar.com>

In addition to a seat with a stunning view of the Harbor Bridge and Circular Quay, you'll find a selection of Sydney rock oysters in a choice of styles, or a relaxed meze or cheese platter and a bottle of wine. Eat and watch the ferries ply back and forth.

Daily from 11 am. Reservations available. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Flying Fish

Level G, Harbourside, The Star, 80 Pyrmont St.
Pyrmont, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9518-6677

<https://www.star.com.au/sydney/eat-and-drink/signature-dining/flying-fish>

At this waterfront dining experience, you can sit in the raw bar and sip a Bison Grass vodka martini (featuring a blue-cheese-stuffed olive) while you peruse the menu. If choices are too bewildering, try the degustation menu or the *humpty doo barramundi*. The dessert tasting plate for two is to die for.

Monday-Thursday noon-10 pm, Friday and Saturday noon-10:30 pm, Sunday noon-2:30. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Bottom of the Harbour

21 The Esplanade
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Phone: 9969-7911

<https://www.bottomoftheharbour.com.au>

This is where locals go for fresh, takeaway seafood. You can get the standard fish-and-chips (so light you might forget about the grease it was fried in) or opt for healthier grilled fish and a salad. This is perfect picnic food: Grab sustenance there and then head to Balmoral Beach with a blanket.

Daily 9 am-8 pm. \$. Most major credit cards.

Security

Etiquette

Australians view their country as a land of equality, and they dislike pretense. Business interactions tend to be most successful when participants tread the fine line between being direct and being overly assertive.

Appointments—It's best to schedule meetings as far in advance as you can, but Australians will often agree to meet on relatively short notice. Unannounced visits are not welcome, however. You may find that there are few barriers to meeting the higher-level executives of a company. Punctuality is expected.

Personal Introductions—A firm handshake is the norm. Women typically do not shake hands, but it's not unheard of—wait to see if she offers her hand. If you are a woman visiting the country, use your own prerogative about handshakes. "Hi" and "How are you?" are appropriate greetings. Use titles and last names until it is indicated that the use of first names is acceptable: You can expect Australians to become informal quickly. Don't expect Australian English to sound like North American English or even the Queen's English.

Negotiating—Some small talk is expected, but business generally comes to the fore quickly. Be brief and to the point and try to avoid overselling your position. Modesty tends to get better results than brashness. In fact, pushy or high-pressure tactics can quickly kill a deal.

Business Entertaining—Follow your host's lead regarding whether to talk about business during social occasions. If you visit a pub, don't miss your turn to buy a round of drinks.

Body Language—Physical gestures and posture should be kept conservative. Personal space is important, and touching is reserved for close acquaintances.

Gift Giving—When going to the home of an acquaintance, take a small gift such as flowers, a bottle of wine or chocolates. Gift-giving in business is not necessary or expected, but it will be appreciated.

Conversation—Social discussions can often turn into informal debates. Don't be afraid to express yourself, but be diplomatic. It's usually best to ask questions rather than to state opinions during initial encounters. The treatment of Aborigines in Australia is a sensitive subject and one you might do best to avoid.

Personal Safety

Crime is not a major concern in Sydney, though you should still take the same commonsense precautions that you would in any urban area. Tourists are rarely the target of crime.

The possession of firearms is not common in Australian society and is subject to strict controls (including the storage of weapons in a disassembled state), although there have been shootings in Sydney's southwestern suburbs. There are occasional cases of "bashings" (muggings) in the Central Business District. Stay alert when visiting Kings Cross, which has adult theaters and all-night discos, with attendant prostitution and drug activity. There has been a recent bout of drug and alcohol-fueled violence in this area, although the government has enforced laws relating to hours of operation of bars and clubs and the sale of alcohol in order to reign this in. The western suburb of Cabramatta has the most problems related to drug activity. Also take extra care in Redfern (particularly avoid Eveleigh Street), a poorer, inner-city suburb.

Ask your hotel's concierge or front-desk staff about the safety of any other specific area you wish to visit.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

The biggest health risk in Sydney is the extremely strong sun. Be sure to wear a high-SPF sunscreen and a hat. Take along a bottle of water when walking and sightseeing, especially if you're visiting November-February, and stay well hydrated so you don't get heat stroke. Bottled water and soft drinks are widely available at kiosks throughout the city.

Also keep in mind that insects abound—particularly outside the city in the bush. Take insect repellent to keep flies and mosquitoes at bay. In the rare event of a snake bite, seek emergency help immediately (call 000). Some ticks can cause paralysis; if any unusual symptoms develop after a tick bite, seek medical advice.

Should you require medical assistance, most hotels have a physician on call. Sydney has numerous hospitals, including the Royal Prince Alfred in Missenden Road near the University of Sydney (phone 9515-6111; <http://www.cs.nsw.gov.au/rpa>) and St. Vincent's in Darlinghurst, which offers 24-hour emergency care (phone 8382-1111; <http://wwwsvh.stvincents.com.au>). Manly Hospital in suburban Sydney also has a 24-hour emergency department (phone 9976-9611; <http://www.nscchahs.health.nsw.gov.au>).

For emergency assistance, call 000.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

Sydney is very wheelchair-friendly. The main attractions all have designated disabled parking zones, hearing loops, aids for the visually impaired and wheelchair ramps. All new buildings are required to supply wheelchair access, but older buildings may or may not. Parking spots for the disabled are plentiful, and pedestrian crossings are sound-enabled.

CBD and Circular Quay access maps, which detail accessible parking, phones, toilets and ATMs, can be downloaded at <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au>.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do remember that there's a longstanding rivalry between Sydney and its southern competitor, Melbourne.

Do praise the weather, the beaches and the beautiful locals: Sydneysiders love to brag about their city's charms.

Don't forget that Australians use sarcasm as their main form of humor, and poke fun of themselves and others regularly. It's never meant to offend.

Do try to get a few "Strine" slang phrases under your belt before you head to the Land Down Under. "Barbie" for barbecue, "arvo" for afternoon and "moszie" for mosquito should get you started.

Don't waste money and taste buds on chain-store fast food. Eat quick and cheap sushi, kebabs, burgers, pizza, Thai food and Korean barbecue from local establishments.

Don't drive without a decent map: Sydney is one giant rabbit warren, with a confusing system of one-way streets and San Francisco-style hills to negotiate.

Do be aware that if you attend a charity or fund-raising event that asks for a "gold coin donation," you are expected to donate at least a one- or two-dollar coin.

Do smile and say "g'day" back to friendly locals. Australians are generally very open and approachable, and are likely to start up a conversation with you if they detect an accent.

Don't swim outside the red and yellow flags found on surf beaches, which indicate safe areas without rips or strong currents. Also keep an eye out for warning signs and announcements about sharks or blue bottles.

Don't be surprised if you're asked to "BYO" (bring your own) meat or alcohol to a local's barbecue. These are generally very casual affairs for no particular occasion, where everyone takes care of themselves.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports and an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA), which substitutes for a visa. The ETA is free and available through travel agents and airlines. (Most people get them on the inbound flight.) Contact the nearest Australian embassy for more information. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

Population: 4,475,196.

Languages: English.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic).

Time Zone: 10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+10 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the first Sunday in October to the first Sunday in April.

Voltage Requirements: 240 volts, 50 cycles AC. Appliances that do not include converters will require a transformer. Those with converters will require an adapter with a three-pronged plug.

Telephone Codes: 61, country code; 2 city code;

Money

Taxes

A 10% goods and services tax is applied to most consumer items (with the exception of unprocessed foods), and it's almost always included in the stated price.

A Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS) allows for a tax refund on items carried in hand luggage that have a value of A\$300 or more. The items must be purchased from a single store no more than 30 days before departure, and you must present the original tax invoice. The refund applies only to goods that you wear or carry as hand luggage (unless prohibited by current security regulations). There are TRS booths at the Sydney airport on the departures level after customs.

Tipping

Tipping has become more common in Sydney, but it's still not expected. Tip 10% in restaurants, depending upon the bill and level of service. For taxi drivers, most people round up the fare to the nearest dollar; otherwise, tip about 10%.

Weather

Expect warm, humid summers and mild winters. The hottest months are December-February, when temperatures can reach into the 100s F/40s C. Evening temperatures are cooler—usually in the 70s F/20s C. Rainfall is heaviest February-June, with March and June being the wettest months. During the winter months (June-August) expect temperatures in the 50s-60s F/10s-20s C. September-November (spring) are the driest months.

What to Wear

When sightseeing, it is recommended that you wear a hat and apply a strong sunscreen to avoid sun exposure. Light, natural fibers are the most comfortable.

Sydney's mild yet unpredictable climate demands clothing that can be layered—winter days can be warm; summer nights can be gusty. Take a sweater no matter when you're going. If showers are forecast, be aware that in Australia this can mean a torrential downpour.

Despite Australia's casual image, Sydney is a fashion-conscious city. If you are visiting on business, be aware that office attire is fairly traditional, with suits worn by both men and women.

Transportation

The best way to see Sydney is on foot, but the city also has an excellent public transportation system that allows visitors to travel between most attractions by bus, light rail, rail or ferry—sometimes all four. Taxis are plentiful but relatively expensive. Uber is also available in Sydney, which may be cheaper than catching a taxi.

Air

Kingsford-Smith International Airport (SYD) is located 5 mi/8 km south of the city. T1 is the international terminal; T2 and T3 are the domestic terminals. The terminals are located in close proximity to each other. Free connecting coaches are available for passengers transferring between international and domestic flights. By car, the trip from the airport into the Central Business District takes about 20 minutes. Phone 9667-9111. <http://www.sydneyairport.com.au>.

Connecting Transportation

Best way:

Taxis are the best way to get to the city. Expect to pay A\$27-\$35, depending on the destination, for one to four passengers. There is now an A\$3 surcharge on all taxis entering and departing the airport. Airport Express buses (phone 131-500; <http://www.sydneybuses.info>) and AirportLink trains (phone 8337-8417; <http://www.airportlink.com.au>), both part of the city's public transportation system, provide efficient service to both terminals, but neither can accommodate much luggage. Buses leave on the half-hour from the airport to most city-center hotels. Trains run every 10 minutes between the airport and most stations.

Kingsford Smith Transport (phone 9666-9988; <http://www.kst.com.au>) runs shuttle buses between the airport and hotels in the city center.

Most major car rental agencies have offices at the airport.

Car

We don't recommend renting a car in Sydney unless you are planning to travel outside the city. Parking is expensive (A\$10-\$30 for two hours in a station), and space is limited downtown. Although street signs are clear and plentiful, traffic is heavy and moves quickly, particularly during morning and evening rush hours (7:30-9:30 am and 4-6:30 pm).

If you decide to rent a car, agencies are located throughout the city and at the airport. The legal driving age in New South Wales is 17; however you must be 21 to rent a car. Most companies apply a per-day surcharge for drivers ages 21-25.

Driving is on the left. Roundabouts (traffic circles) are common at some intersections and can be confusing to the uninitiated. Just remember that if you feel it's unsafe to exit, stay on the roundabout for another go-round, and you'll have another chance. There's no right turn on red, but left turn on red is permitted where signs indicate. Police take speeding and driving while intoxicated seriously—stiff fines and loss of licenses are common.

It is also illegal to hold a mobile phone while driving—this applies to phone calls and texting. Use your phone's speaker capability or risk heavy fines.

Public Transportation

The city's public transportation system is so efficient that Sydneysiders are increasingly leaving their cars behind to commute via the State Transit Authority's trains, buses, ferries and catamarans. Stops within the city center and around the metro area are convenient to most attractions, making it easy to hop on and off when you're in a hurry or when your feet need a rest.

MyMulti day pass tickets (A\$22) are available for unlimited travel in metropolitan Sydney on buses, ferries and trains (not valid on Sightseeing buses or Manly JetCat). Booths at railway stations, ferry docks and near bus stops provide information to visitors and dispense tickets. You'll also find easy-to-use ticket machines that give change for both coins and notes.

Sightseeing Buses

These buses provide transportation specifically for visitors, circling the city and nearby beach suburbs daily and stopping at most major attractions every 15-20 minutes. By purchasing a day pass, you can get on and off as many times as you like. Daily 8:30 am-7:30 pm. Day passes are A\$35 adults. Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. <http://www.city-sightseeing.com/tours/australia/sydney.htm>.

Ferries

A scenic treat in almost any weather, ferries connect Sydney with places that can be reached more efficiently by water. A JetCat, for example, can speed you between Circular Quay and Manly Beach in 15 minutes. A\$5.80, depending on your destination. . Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Phone 131-500. <http://www.sydneyferries.info>.

CityRail Trains

CityRail stops are located near most of the city's major attractions. The trains also travel regularly between the city and the suburbs. You can connect from a city train to a long-distance train at the Central Railway Station. (The yellow Emu Plains line takes you to the Blue Mountains range, and the red Berowra line continues on to the North Shore, and then to the Central Coast beaches and the vineyards of Hunter Valley.) Within the city, trains run approximately every 10 minutes during the peak weekday commuter times (7:30-9:30 am and 4-6:30 pm) but less frequently during off-peak hours, on weekends and on public holidays. Fares for travel within the city start at A\$3.60 one way. . Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Phone 131-500. <http://www.cityrail.info>.

Buses

Regular city buses stop just about everywhere in Sydney, and they connect efficiently with trains and ferries throughout the metropolitan area. Buses run every 10-15 minutes between most destinations. You can buy single tickets from the drivers, who are usually friendly and helpful. They even make change. About A\$2.50 for short journeys. Some buses require prepaid tickets only; these are clearly marked and usually run during peak times. It is recommended to purchase a Travel 10 weekly unlimited travel ticket or Opal public transport card from a newsagent when you arrive. . Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Phone 131-500. <http://www.sydneybuses.info>.

Taxi

Taxis can be hailed on the street (if the light on top of the roof is lit up) or caught at taxi stands in front of most hotels. You also can reserve a taxi by phone. Maximum fares are set by the government. The fare is about A\$3.50 to start the meter (add A\$2.40 if you booked by phone), plus A\$2.14 per kilometer. There's a waiting fee of approximately A\$53 per hour or A\$0.88 per minute, as well as a 20% fare increase 10 pm-6 am and on public holidays. If you share a taxi with friends to several destinations, you can split the cost, but if you pick up a taxi from a stand with strangers, you each have to pay 75% of the full fare. When hiring a taxi for a long period, negotiate the rate inclusive of all tolls (and tip) prior to departure.

Uber now operates in Australia, and may be cheaper than catching a taxi.
<http://www.uber.com/cities/sydney>.

Yellow Water Taxis

Sydney's largest fleet of water taxis will take you anywhere on the harbor, any time. Fares vary but are never cheap. An instant quote is available online. Taxis depart from King Street Wharf (Pontoon 9) or Circular Quay (eastern pontoon). 50B The Promenade King St. Wharf.Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Phone 2-9299-0199. <http://www.yellowwatertaxis.com.au>.