



TOURISM WESTERN AUSTRALIA – The W'A' List

Perth and beyond

Australia's sunniest capital city, Perth, is a unique blend of natural and urban experiences. Nestled between Kings Park and Botanic Garden and the sparkling Swan River, Perth has experienced incredible growth in recent years, with new bars, dining, retail, entertainment, cultural and public spaces popping up in all corners of the city. Here's our W 'A' list of Perth's experiences:

- **New precincts to explore.** 2016 marked the official opening of Perth's \$440 million development waterfront project Elizabeth Quay, which has reconnected the Swan River to the city, and given locals and visitors a new destination in Perth to explore. In its first three weeks of opening, the precinct attracted more than 800,000 visitors, and hosted events from the *Perth International Arts Festival* and *Fringe World*. Home to a number of relaxed riverside wining and dining options, pedestrian and cyclists' bridge, promenades, public art, island playground, event spaces and the Barrack Street Jetty, Elizabeth Quay will also see the return of the Ritz Carlton brand to Australia, with a 204-room hotel under construction. In the coming years, Perth will also see the opening of major public spaces such as Yagan Square, Perth City Link and a major sporting arena, Perth Stadium.
- **Wining and dining boom!** Perth city and its urban villages of Northbridge, Mount Lawley, Leederville, Maylands, North Perth, Cottesloe, Claremont, Subiaco and Victoria Park are brimming with new dining options. Sample WA fresh produce and wines at one of the many new small bars, cafes, and restaurants such as Long Chim, Wildflower, The Shorehouse, Odyssey and Strange Company, to name a few. On the weekend check-out what the locals are up to at local farmers markets, and in summer make a bee-line for twilight hawkers markets, al fresco cafes and beachside dining. Visitors can see the city with a local by joining an organised walking tour that showcases the wining and dining scene – operators include Two Feet and A Heartbeat and FoodLoose Tours.
- **Kings Park and Botanic Garden.** At 400 hectares and larger than New York's Central Park, Kings Park and Botanic Garden is one of the largest inner city parks in the world. A short walk or free bus ride from the city centre, check out the impressive views of the Swan River and city skyline, pack a picnic, see an outdoor movie or live performance in summer, and the wildflowers in spring, or learn more about the park on an Indigenous walking tour.
- **Shop local and luxury.** Designer brands meet local labels along King, Queen, Hay and Murray Streets in the city. Outside the city head to Claremont Quarter, Garden City, Fremantle, Mount Lawley, Leederville or Subiaco for your retail fix. Other rich pickings include designer jewellery crafted from Western Australian gold, Argyle diamonds and Broome's famous South Sea pearls. If vintage, hip and quirky is more your style, make quick for the boutiques of William Street in Northbridge or Fremantle.

- **Indian Ocean sunsets.** Home to 19 pristine metropolitan beaches, it's easy to find your own slice of white sand to relax and enjoy one WA's famous sunsets. Surfers head to Scarborough and Trigg, while swimmers and stand-up paddle boarders cool off at Cottesloe or Mettam's Pool between Sorrento Beach and Trigg. The Scarborough foreshore is undergoing revitalisation and has welcomed new restaurants and bars, next to the recently refurbished Rendezvous Grand. City Beach has also received a boost with the opening of a number of eateries including Odyssey, a new amphitheatre and surf club. Cottesloe Beach continues to attract the crowds, with its Norfolk Pine trees, long stretches of white sand, a grassy embankment, plenty of restaurants and cafes, and each March, a must see is the free outdoor exhibition *Sculpture by the Sea*.
- **Cultural feast.** Start at Perth's Cultural Centre in Northbridge - home to the Art Gallery of WA, the WA Museum, State Library, the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts and the State Theatre, including the Heath Ledger Theatre. Buildings, laneways and other public spaces around Perth and Northbridge have become works of art, as local, interstate and international artists were commissioned by local arts organisation FORM to paint external walls with works of art. From November to May, enjoy Perth's bevy of outdoor cinemas, live performances and festivals. *Fringe Festival* and *Perth International Arts Festival* are crowd pleasers in February and March.
- **Fremantle.** The best preserved example of a 19th century port streetscape in the world, Fremantle is a little bit bohemian and a little bit hipster. Learn about the city's maritime and convict history on a walking tour, browse the shops, galleries and weekend markets, or dine at one of the many cafes, bars, restaurants or microbreweries. New bar, dining retail and hotels are also emerging, as the revitalisation of Fremantle takes off. Nearly \$1 billion of private and public investment will see additional commercial, retail and public spaces established and restored throughout the city. It's no surprise that Lonely Planet named it as one of the top cities to visit in 2016 in its *Best in Travel* publication.
- **Island in the sun.** Home to 63 beaches and bays, Rottnest Island is a short ferry ride from Perth, Fremantle or Hillarys. There are no cars on the island so pedal power is king. Enjoy lunch at one of the cafes and restaurants, most offering spectacular ocean views, swim, snorkel or dive, or take an eco-cruise and discover the local wildlife, including the world-famous, and highly regarded as the happiest animal on earth – the quokka. In the late afternoon make a beeline for Hotel Rottnest - overlooking Thompson Bay it is the perfect spot to unwind as the sun sets. New accommodation offerings, including high end eco tents, are currently in development.
- **Among the vines.** WA's oldest wine region (it's been a wine producing region for 180 years), the Swan Valley is an easy 25-minute drive from Perth city. Here you can meet the maker at some of the small family wineries or sample some of the wines from vineyards that sell their wines internationally. There's also fresh produce, microbreweries and galleries galore on the Swan Valley Food and Wine Trail. Continue your food and wine foraging in the Perth Hills and Avon Valley.
- **Experience Perth's unique attractions.** Travelling around Perth city is free so hop on a CAT bus and tour Perth's city sights. Ring one of the world's largest musical instruments – the Swan Bells at the Bell Tower; watch a live gold pour and see the world's largest collection of gold bars at the Perth Mint; catch a ferry across the Swan River to Perth Zoo - home to over 1,500 animals; or, head out to Caversham Wildlife Park where you can meet Koalas, Wombats, Kangaroos and many other native wildlife.
- **Swim with the dolphins.** From the shores of the spectacular Shoalwater Islands Marine Park, Rockingham Wild Encounters runs small group swimming with dolphin tours, sea kayak tours of Penguin Island, and boat cruises to get up close and personal with the local dolphins, sea lions and little penguins. A little further south, you'll often find dolphins playing in the tranquil waters off the Mandurah foreshore -delighting diners at the waterfront eateries.