



Colours of
Australia

New South Wales

The Founding State

In 1770, Captain Cook took possession for the British of all Australian territories east of the 135th meridian of east longitude and named them New South Wales. Today, the founding state has shrunk somewhat and occupies just 10% of the continent. It is a state of contrasts, containing Australia's largest city, extremes of country ranging from sub-tropical to alpine and covering an area of 801,428 square kilometres.

Sydney's star attractions and hidden gems

The Harbour City, as its commonly called, is home to many of Australia's must-see attractions – such as the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge and Bondi Beach – but also abounds in sophisticated dining, secret harbour beaches and hole-in-the-wall coffee shops off the beaten path. Discover the hip inner-city neighbourhoods of Potts Point and Surry Hills, beach hop through exclusive Vaucluse and drink and dine in artsy Chippendale. You'll find cultural riches such as galleries, museums, theatre companies and alternative cinema, without ever being too far from those glistening million-dollar views.



Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains World Heritage Area has abundant natural beauty, and offers excellent hiking, spectacular scenery and quaint towns and villages, making it a popular getaway from the big smoke. Walk to the foot of the Three Sisters on the 998-step Giant Stairway, or glide between clifftops on the Scenic Skyway, 270 metres (886 feet) above ancient ravines. Stroll around picturesque villages Leura and Blackheath for antique stores, quirky cafés and top-notch restaurants, then spend the night in a luxury lodge or charming B&B. The Blue Mountains are only a 90 minute drive west of Sydney.



Chill out in Bryon Bay

Byron Bay is mainland Australia's easternmost town, world renowned for its beautiful beaches, lush rainforest and laid-back lifestyle. Domestic flights arrive at nearby Ballina Airport, and take about one hour 20 minutes from Sydney. In and around town you'll find a thriving food scene that celebrates local produce. Don't miss breakfast at Three Blue Ducks in Byron, set on a working farm. Walk the 3.7 kilometre (2.3 mile) Cape Byron track for breathtaking views across the ocean and hinterland, keeping your eyes peeled for humpback whales, which migrate along the coast between June and November. In Byron there's plenty to get your heart racing, from surfing to skydiving, but you'll be just as happy doing nothing at all.



Northern Territory

Outback Australia

Six times the size of Great Britain, with a population similar to that of Newcastle, New South Wales, and boasting the famous Red Centre and the worlds largest monolith, the Northern Territory abounds with staggering statistics.

From Kakadu to Uluru, in the Northern Territory there is always plenty to see and do. Experience the unique lifestyle of Australia's northern most Capital Darwin and visit world heritage listed Kakadu National Park in the Top End. See the spectacular Katherine Gorge with walls more than 70m high.

The Territory is Australian outback at it's most memorable. Climb Ayers Rock in the Red Centre shoot a roll at Devils Marbles or have a dance with the locals in a corroboree whilst enjoying a succulent witchety grub entree, the scope for adventure in this area is as limitless as the dreamtime.



Northern Territory & Darwin

- The Northern Territory is best known for its Aboriginal rock and cave art as well as legends of the dreamtime.
- Sights include Kakadu National Park, Ayers Rock at Yalara, the Olgas, the MacDonnell Ranges and the Katherine Gorge.
- The capital city, Darwin, was nearly destroyed in 1974 by Cyclone Tracy and has been rebuilt into a bigger and better city.
- Casual dress abounds throughout the territory and at Best Western's four properties.

Darwin

Darwin is the bustling tropical capital of the Northern Territory. The city clusters around the beaches of one of Australia's finest harbours Darwin Harbour, the playground of dolphins, sea snakes, turtles and cruising yachts.

Visitors to Darwin enjoy a relaxed, tropical lifestyle, with wonderful sunsets, city street shaded by palms, bamboo, mango trees and masses of flowering tropical shrubs like the fragrant frangipani and the iridescent blooms of the bougainvillea.

Alice Springs

Red Centre Resort

Located at the northern entrance to Alice Springs only five minutes drive from the town centre, Red Centre Resort is an oasis in the midst of the great Australian outback offering relaxed and comfortable surroundings. The Red Centre Resort is situated on 18 acres within a beautiful natural bush environment.

Heavitree Gap Outback Resort

Nestled among eucalypts at the base of the MacDonnell Ranges is Heavitree Gap Outback Resort. At the southern entrance to Alice Springs it is only a 5 minute drive from the town centre. Every evening, native Australian Black Footed Rock Wallabies descend the MacDonnell ranges surrounding Heavitree Gap Outback Resort.

The Territory Inn

The Territory Inn, the most centrally located hotel in Alice Springs is situated on the bustling Todd Mall in the middle of Alice's best shopping and restaurant precinct.

Designed around a tranquil courtyard setting, The Territory Inn has 108 guest rooms to choose from ranging from standard to deluxe

Katherine Region

The saying 'Never Never' comes from the local belief that those who live in and love this country can 'never never' leave it. It was immortalised in the book "We of the Never Never" by Jeannie Gunn. The Katherine Gorge is one of the most spectacular areas in the country, winding 12 km with walls more than 70m high.

Tennant Creek Region

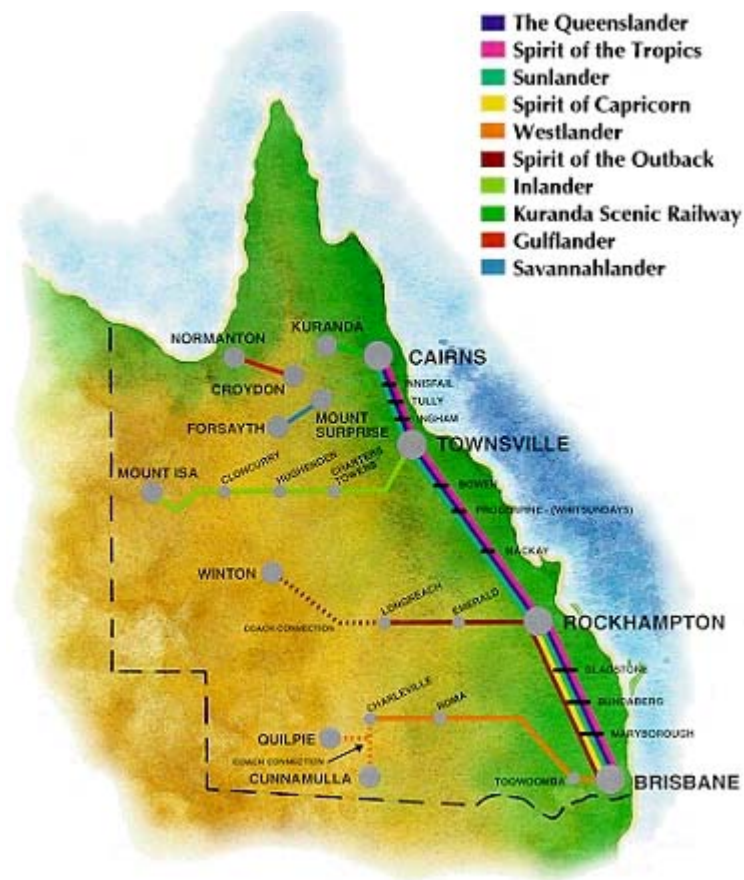
Tennant Creek, the regional centre for the Barkly Tablelands, is a comfortable day's drive from Alice Springs, Katherine or Mount Isa. Situated in the third-richest goldfield of Australia, with a population of 3,500, the town has modern amenities and services. 100km to the south lie the mythical Devils Marbles.

For more information see <http://www.nttc.com.au>.

Queensland

The Sunshine State

To visitors from other states, as well as many Queenslanders, the Sunshine State is holiday country, evoking dreams of long golden days, tropical islands set in jewel blue seas and the chance to get “a really good tan”. The first settlers in the tropical north, however, were there for grimly practical reasons.



Queensland, home of the Great Barrier Reef and commonly referred to as the "Sunshine State", is Australia's ultimate outdoor playground. Hike through tranquil rainforests, relax on an island or go diving on the Great Barrier Reef. From the fun of the Gold Coast to the adventure of the Cape you will know you have found a special kind of paradise in Queensland.

On the South Coast, Brisbane, the capital of Queensland is neighboured to the east by Australia's tourism capital, the Gold Coast with golden beaches and exciting nightlife. North is the natural beauty and more relaxed atmosphere of the Sunshine Coast.

Gold Coast

Queensland's Gold Coast is a region of contrasts - from the sun-drenched beaches and ocean boulevards to the lush sub-tropical mountains and valleys of the hinterland.

A sweeping 70km coastline offers a spectacular stretch of patrolled surf beaches that are amongst the best in the world. This glittering coastal strip also has a wide choice of accommodation, sensational shopping, delicious dining and live entertainment.

The Gold Coast is Australia's theme park capital with family fun awaiting at award-winning Dreamworld, Warner Bros Movie World, Sea World and Wet'n'Wild Water Park.

Come face to face with 'Aussie mates' like koalas, kangaroos, emus, wallabies and wombats at a host of enchanting nature parks such as Currumbin Sanctuary, Fleay's Wildlife Park and Pioneer Plantation.

Just a 30-minute drive from Australia's favorite beachfront playground, the Hinterland offers bushwalking, abseiling, 4WD tours and mountain biking in more than 24 national parks and nature reserves.

Sub-tropical climate, (Av. summer temp. 34C or 90F - Av. winter temp 18C or 65F), surfing beaches, 27 international golf courses, theme parks, international and duty free shopping, casinos, nightlife, tropical rainforests and fishing are just a few of the attractions and activities available to visitors in this holiday wonderland

Further north on the East Coast are the world famous Whitsunday Islands. Here you can charter a yacht to explore these magic islands, or simply book a stay on one of the many resort islands and be pampered to your hearts content. The World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef spans 2 000km from the tip of Cape York to Gladstone in the south. A scuba divers paradise with 2 900 individual reefs, 71 coral islands, 10,000 species of sponge, 350 different species of coral, 4 000 species of molluscs, 350 species of echinoderms and over 1 500 species of fish.

Far North Queensland or the Tropical North is home to the World Heritage Listed Daintree Rainforest, crocodiles, fantastic barramundi fishing and the anglers dream - the Black Marlin.

The State's 1.7 million square kilometres makes it Australia's second largest state. Its diversified landscape, ranging from modern cities to sandy beaches to a rugged outback, is home to 3.5 million people.

Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, is a modern, sophisticated city of 1.5 million people. It is Queensland's major government, business, commercial, retail and manufacturing centre and is the focus for most of the State's cultural and sporting activities.

A safe and friendly lifestyle attracts migration from both within Australia and overseas, boosting the State's remarkable growth rate.

Look no further than Queensland.

Tropical North Qld

Tropical North Queensland is a vast region stretching from reefs and islands, through to beach and coastal wetlands to mountains, tablelands and Gulf Savannah grassland. The major centre is Cairns, a tropical town with irresistible markets and shopping arcades. North of Cairns are the beaches such as Palm Cove, Trinity Beach, Kewarra Beach and Ellis Beach where palm trees hang lazily over the sandy beaches. Further north is the resort town of Port Douglas and continuing on you find the spectacular Mossman Gorge, World Heritage listed Daintree Rainforest and Cape Tribulation. North of Cape Tribulation is the area Cape York and the Gulf Savannah renowned for its rugged coastline and wild and sparsely populated wilderness.



Dazzling blue skies, long white beaches, coral reefs, vibrant green vegetation, and warm perfumed air are the common ingredients of a holiday in Cairns and the surrounding Tropical North region. The stunning array of things to do and see mean that there is something for everybody. Explore deserted ghost towns and small isolated communities that serve the mining, pastoral and fishing industries. Whatever a holiday means to you, from luxury island resorts to camping, from champagne cruising to white-water rafting, you'll find it in Queensland's Tropical North.

The Queensland economy is in excellent shape. Prolonged growth in gross state product (GSP) throughout the last decade was enhanced by low interest rates and low inflation.

The State's economic growth averaged 4.3 per cent over the last decade, more than a full percentage point faster than the rest of Australia. Queensland's growth over the next five years is projected to outperform other Australian States by an average of 2 per cent.

Over the past 10 years Queensland generated 36 per cent of the one million new jobs created in Australia. Queensland's working population is increasing at an average annual rate of 2.5 per cent, which represents almost a triple of the national average. At the same time, per capita income in Queensland is growing faster than in the rest of Australia.

Great Barrier Reef

Built by tiny animals and plants, the Great Barrier Reef is the largest living thing in the world. Sunlight filters down to reveal a wondrous garden of coral with brilliant colours and fascinating shapes, brightly coloured fish, some tiny and elusive, others large and bold gliding close by.

The combination of colours, and the varied shapes makes a magical underwater landscape. There are more species of fish on a coral reef than in any other place in the sea.

Snorkelling over the reef you will see an unbelievable variety of shapes and colours, like the angel, butterfly, and parrot fish, also starfish, shellfish, sponges, anemones, urchins, crabs, squid, octopus, manta rays and the giant clam. Each species seems to be trying to outdo the others with more vivid colour, more elegance or a more bizarre design.

Scuba divers find diving in the crystal-clear waters of the outer reefs, exhilarating. And anglers find "fisherman's heaven", with many taking photographs home as proof of their "tall stories".

Pure Pleasure Cruises leaves Picnic Bay for Kelso Reef on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday returning passengers to the island in the late afternoon. Charter boats are also available for hire. Tour receptionist or booking agent will be happy to provide more details.

The Great Barrier Reef is the World's largest Marine Park and rates World Heritage listing - it is truly a unique place and a trip not to be missed.

Outback Queensland

Queensland has a wide variety of scenery, from the traditional outback to stunning beaches, tropical rainforests and the incomparable Great Barrier Reef.

Peter and I, with our visitor Lisa, started our tour around Queensland by heading west from Brisbane on the Warrego Highway. It passes through the lovely old city of Toowoomba which sits perched on the edge of the Darling Downs with fantastic views to the east. Toowoomba has always been an educational centre where the farming and grazing families sent their children to boarding schools and it is now home to the University of Southern Queensland.



Travelling west on the black soil plain of the Darling Downs we reached Jondaryan where there is a tourist complex of historic buildings. There are demonstrations of blacksmithing and also of sheep shearing in the enormous 1859 Jondaryan woolshed.

South Australia

The Festival State

The biennial Arts Festival, the Barossa Valley Vintage, Hahndorf, the Kensington Highland Games, the Greek Glendi Festival, the Cornish Kernewek Lowender - from the number of variety of festivities held every year, it seems clear that South Australians enjoy making the most of life. For the visitor, these festivals provide an excellent chance to discover a community at its liveliest.

Sophisticated, cultured, neat-casual – the self-image Adelaide projects is a nod to the days of free colonisation. Adelaidians may remind you of their convict-free status – and of the Kurna Aboriginal heritage of this land – but the stuffy, affluent origins of the 'City of Churches' did more to inhibit development than promote it.



McLaren Vale

Flanked by the wheat-coloured Willunga Scarp and striated with vines, McLaren Vale is just 40 minutes south of Adelaide. Servicing the famed McLaren Vale Wine Region, it's a businesslike, utilitarian town strung along an endless main street – but it has some terrific cafes and eateries, both centrally and in the back blocks, and a few handy places to stay. But more critically, the town offers easy access to some truly excellent winery cellar doors.



Adelaide Hills

When the Adelaide plains are desert-hot in the summer months, the Adelaide Hills (technically the Mt Lofty Ranges – the traditional lands of the Peramangk people) are always a few degrees cooler, with crisp air, woodland shade and labyrinthine valleys. Early colonists built stately summer houses around Stirling and Aldgate, and German settlers escaping religious persecution also arrived, infusing towns like Hahndorf and Lobethal with European values and architecture.



Kangaroo Island

From Cape Jervis, car ferries chug across the swells of the Backstairs Passage to Kangaroo Island (KI). Uninhabited when Brit explorer Matthew Flinders named the island in 1802 and long devoid of tourist trappings, KI is today a booming destination for wilderness and wildlife fans. It's a veritable zoo of seals, birds, dolphins, echidnas and (of course) kangaroos. Still, the island remains rurally paced and underdeveloped – the kind of place where kids ride bikes to school and farmers advertise for wives on noticeboards. Island wine and produce is a highlight.



Victoria

The Garden State

Victoria is an ideal state for the motoring tourist. It is quite easy, during one day's drive, to explore mountain country, pastoral landscape, spectacular coastline, yet still arrive at your destination in time to watch the sunset.

Public Art

Musicians. Explore the history and creativity hidden in the laneways and byways on one of the city's arts walks or tours.

City circles

Take the free City Circle Tram or walk through city streets, laneways and along the Yarra River to experience the city's countless public artworks up close. Allow plenty of time to wander among the works dotted through the parks, promenades and architecture of the Docklands.

On the city's freeways, keep an eye out for roadside art, from the Melbourne Gateway 'cheese sticks' marking the city entrance on the Tullamarine Freeway to the fourteen impressive works lining Eastlink between Donvale and Frankston.

Street art

Wander the city's laneways to see an ever-changing outdoor gallery of urban art. Check out the murals, stencils, paste-ups and installations in the laneways off Flinders Lane between Russell Street and Swanston Street; join a tour of Hosier Lane for the inside word.



Union Lane, off the Bourke Street Mall, is usually freshly painted, as is Blender Lane, off Franklin Street. Beyond the CBD, keep an eye out for eye-catching art on the walls

in Fitzroy and Collingwood. The Gertrude Street Projection Festival is an annual highlight.

Trail blazing

Follow one of the sign-posted trails to various locations where artists have worked on well-known paintings. Stand on the site where inspiration struck and read accompanying interpretative signs that explain the artists' work and resulting individual paintings inspired by those locations.

Behind the curtain

Go behind the scenes and join a guided tour of a local art workshop or city theatre venues. Be part of Australia's most loved and iconic world-class event, the Melbourne Cup Carnival.

Melbourne Cup

Experience this incredible event that combines sport, entertainment, fashion and food – all in one place, the stunning Flemington Racecourse. Glamorous, refined and full of history, the Melbourne Cup Carnival is a must-do event for Melburnians and visitors alike.

With four big race days and a range of ticketing options, there is so many different ways to experience the Carnival - attend one or all of the race days knowing you will have an amazing time at the most anticipated event on the calendar.



Wineries

Pristine beaches and gloriously green hinterland – this much-loved holiday favourite is just an hour's drive from Melbourne, and home to more than 50 boutique cellar doors and the region's renowned pinot noir.

Meet the peninsula vintners, who'll tell you about the famed pinot noir and celebrated chardonnay, and let you in on the secrets of the newer regional varietals, including pinot grigio, pinot gris and shiraz.

Taste different styles on a tour around this compact and diverse region. Climate, topography, land and soil structure create distinct micro-climates around the hinterland villages of Red Hill, Main Ridge and Moorooduc, and Merricks, Balnarring and Dromana on the coast.

Follow up an afternoon of wine tasting with a meal to remember at one of the region's celebrated restaurants, such as Ten Minutes By Tractor, Port Phillip Estate, Montalto or Paringa Estate.



Try something a little different. Ride through the heart of the region's wine country on a horseback tour, visiting wineries and farms along the way for tastings.

Cruise down the peninsula in June over the Queen's Birthday break to join in the fun of the Winter Wine Weekend. Pop into local cellar doors in and around Red Hill and taste more than 200 premium wines from some 50 wineries.

Tasmania

The Holiday Island

Tasmania has certainly won many more hearts than it can claim square kilometres. It has only 68,000 of the latter, but it crams into them its rugged west, a central plateau broken by steep mountains and narrow river valleys, and an eastern coastal region offering a soft “English” pastoral beauty. Its diverse charms have made it a popular tourist attraction for Australians from “the mainland” for many years.

Kunanyi/Mt. Wellington

Kunanyi / Mt Wellington is a wilderness experience just a 20-minute drive from Hobart and is much loved by locals. The 21-km drive to the summit passes through temperate rainforest to sub-alpine flora and glacial rock formations, ending in panoramic views of Hobart, Bruny Island, South Arm and the Tasman Peninsula.



No other city in Australia has a vista like this one. The interpretation centre at the top protects you from the blustering winds while an open viewing platform on the western side of the car park looks out to the World Heritage Wilderness Area beyond.

There are barbecues, picnic facilities and bushwalking trails for all fitness levels. Mountain activities also include trail biking and abseiling.

Port Arthur Historic Site

The Port Arthur Historic Site is Australia's most intact and evocative convict site and one of Australia's great tourist attractions.

Located on the Tasman Peninsula, the site has more than 30 buildings, ruins and restored period homes dating from the prison's establishment in 1830 until its closure in 1877. During this time around 12,500 convicts served sentences and for many it was a living hell.

Today, the site sits in 40 hectares of landscaped grounds and you'll need plenty of time to fully experience all that it has to offer.



Entry is valid for two consecutive days and includes a guided walking tour, harbour cruise, entry to the museum, the Convict Study Centre and Interpretation Gallery, and the site of the dockyard.

For a small additional fee you can also cruise to the Isle of the Dead and join a guided tour of Port Arthur's island burial ground. The tour offers an insight into the lives of those who were part of the penal settlement including convicts, soldiers, civilians and their families.

Or instead, you can take a trip to Point Puer Boys Prison. This was the first reformatory in the British Empire built exclusively for juvenile male convicts. Point Puer was renowned for its regime of stern discipline and harsh punishment.

Cataract Gorge

Cataract Gorge Reserve, known locally as the Gorge, is a unique natural formation within a two-minute drive of central Launceston - a rare natural phenomenon in any city. In an easy 15 minutes, you can walk from central Launceston along the banks of the Tamar River into the Gorge. From there, follow a pathway originally built in the 1890s along the cliff face looking down onto the South Esk River.

The First Basin on the southern side has a cafe and a swimming pool surrounded by bushland, known to locals as Launceston's beach.

In contrast, the shady northern side, named the Cliff Grounds, is a Victorian garden with ferns and exotic plants. The beautiful Kings Bridge over the Gorge was floated into place in 1867.

With a kiosk, restaurant and swimming pool, rolling lawns and a rotunda, a footbridge and a chairlift across the river, as well as peacocks and wallabies at dusk, this may be Australia's most alluring urban reserve. And entrance is free.

Western Australia

The Wildflower State

Even a casual glance at a map of Australia will quickly reveal that a motor touring holiday in Western Australia requires much thinking about and advance planning. The south west region is relatively easily and pleasantly covered by car, but much of the unique north and north east presents a marathon trip, even for an experienced western driver.

Karijini National Park

Experience diverse and dramatic landscapes like no others on Earth right here in Western Australia. Landscapes like Karijini National Park, home to some of the oldest rock formations dating back two billion years, and Ningaloo Reef, the world's largest fringing reef.



Two billion years in the making, Karijini National Park is one of Western Australia's most spectacular natural attractions offering amazing hiking trails through ancient gorges. With massive gorges, crystal clear rock pools and waterfalls, Karijini National Park is a must for anyone with a thirst for adventure.

Explore tunnels of marbled rock, clamber over boulders, squeeze through narrow tunnels, paddle through waterways and descend deep into ancient chasms.

There's also easy access to stunning lookouts and walk trails of varying levels so everyone can experience this awesome landscape. Permanent water pools means there's always the chance for a refreshing swim. There are excellent picnic areas as well as allocated camping sites within the park.

Karijini National Park is located about two hours drive from the town of Newman. It's best accessed by joining a four-wheel drive tour. There are a number of tour operators taking visitors from Perth to Karijini and the surrounding region.

Kimberly Waterfalls

Heading to the rugged Kimberley in the north west region of Western Australia? Be sure to add these spectacular waterfalls to your list and experience barefoot luxury in this breathtakingly peaceful destination. Don't forget to pack yourself a picnic so you can take your time and relax.



Horizontal Waterfalls

There are two horizontal waterfalls in Western Australia and both can be found in Talbot Bay in the Buccaneer Archipelago in Australia's North West.

The white waters are thrilling to ride by boat and awe-inspiring to view from the air. Join a scenic flight or sea safari to the Horizontal Waterfalls from Kooljaman in Cape Leveque, Broome or Derby to see and experience it for yourself.



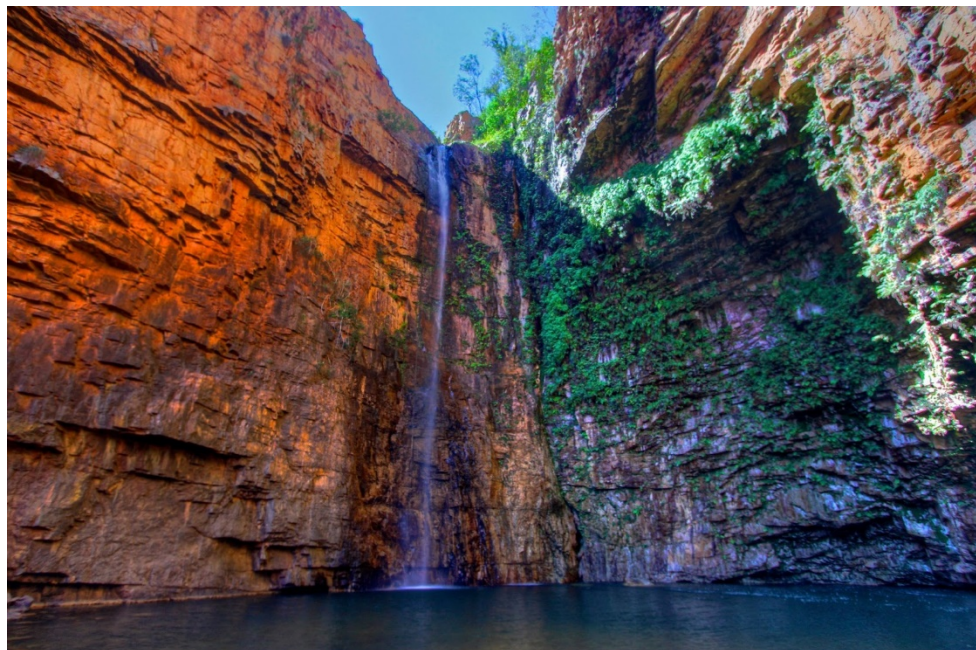
So, what makes the water fall sideways? These incredible natural wonders are the work of some of the largest tidal movements in the world. As the tide ebbs and flows, a huge volume of water is forced through two narrow cliff passages, creating a variation in ocean level of up to four metres and a unique waterfall effect.

You'll need to base yourself in the Kimberley towns of Broome or Derby, both of which offer a good range of accommodation options and a choice of sedate or adrenalin-fuelled Horizontal Waterfalls tours.

Emma Gorge

Emma Gorge is one of the Kimberley's most spectacular and accessible gorges, set in the one-million-acre wilderness of El Questro. Enjoy the cool shade and dramatic beauty of its sheer 65-metre cliffs as you take a refreshing dip under the graceful droplet waterfall.

To reach Emma Gorge, it's just a 50-minute drive from Kununurra via the epic Gibb River Road – one of Australia's most unique four wheel drive adventures. Access is between May and September (dry season) and transfers are available from Kununurra if you don't have a four wheel drive.



Join local guides or take a self-guided hike on the Emma Gorge Walk Trail into the rugged red Cockburn Ranges. Within one hour you'll find yourself beside the tranquil pool of Emma Gorge. Fed by a droplet waterfall and a thermal spring, it's impossible to resist a swim in the crystal clear water.

Other El Questro highlights include four wheel drive safaris to the spectacular Cockburn Ranges, afternoon cruises along Chamberlain Gorge, a relaxing dip in Zebedee Thermal Springs and a chance to chase the mighty barramundi.

Choose from safari-style tented cabins, luxury accommodation at the homestead, or budget options at the station township and riverside camping areas.

Ningaloo Reef

The World Heritage listed Ningaloo Reef is internationally recognised as one of the planet's last great ocean paradises. Located in Western Australia's Gascoyne region and fronting the gateway townships of Exmouth and Coral Bay, the 300 kilometre long Ningaloo Reef is the largest fringing coral reef in the world.

The Ningaloo Reef can be accessed just footsteps from the beach – something very few coral reefs offer. Enjoy the clearest turquoise water imaginable in the Ningaloo Reef Lagoon and pristine coral gardens at the do-it-yourself snorkelling sites of Exmouth's Cape Range National Park or Coral Bay where you will swim with hundreds of colourful tropical reef fish species.

From March to August the Ningaloo Reef plays host to the world's largest aggregation of the world's biggest fish; the majestic whale shark tours to swim with whale sharks are available out of both Exmouth and Coral Bay, as well as many other eco-adventure tours to view a huge variety of marine wildlife including sea turtles, humpback whales, orcas (killer whales) dugong, manta rays, reef sharks and much more!

