Explore Australia

Day Tours

Adelaide

Adelaide is a gracious, well-planned city set on a narrow coastal plain between the rolling hills of the Mt Lofty Ranges and the blue waters of St Vincent’s Gulf. A blend of old and new, surrounded by parkland, Adelaide combines the vitality of a large modern city with an easy-going Australian lifestyle.

Tours from Adelaide

One of Adelaide’s greatest assets is its close proximity to a number of fascinating regions. Vineyards and wineries, rolling hills and quaint villages, seaside resorts and beautiful wildlife reserves are all within an easy drive of South Australia’s capital.

Adelaide Hills and Hahndorf

The Adelaide Hills are only half an hour’s drive from the city. Stop on the way at Cleland Conservation Park where there are native birds and animals in the natural bush setting. Tragically part of this park was destroyed in the Ash Wednesday fires. The hills themselves are a blend of gently rolling mountains, market gardens and orchards with farm buildings nestled in valleys of winding roads.

Barossa Valley

A must for visitors to Adelaide is the Barossa Valley, Australia’s premier wine producing region. In this area to the north-east of Adelaide, there are more than 30 wineries and a multitude of historic buildings and galleries, with restaurants and cafes serving authentic German food. If you plan to take advantage of the tasting facilities at the wineries, make sure that whoever is driving you is happy to forgo this pleasure!

Birdwood Mill Museum

The Birdwood Mill Pioneer Museum has the largest motor cycle display in Australia. Tea rooms serve light refreshments. At Gumeracha, on Torrens Gorge Ring Route on route from Adelaide, is the “Toy Factory” which has the largest rocking horse in the world.

Drive back to Adelaide through Mt Torrens to the small town of Lobethal which was founded back in the 1840’s. The Archives and Historical Museum houses a most remarkable exhibit - the old Lobethal College, complete with shingled roof, which was built in 1845.

Brisbane

The best place from which to see and understand Brisbane’s layout is from the lookout on Mt Coot-tha, 8km south-west of the city centre and easily distinguished by its television towers. Brisbane sprawls over the series of small hills below, with the Brisbane River wandering lazily through the suburbs and city and out into Moreton Bay.

Tours from Brisbane

There is such a variety of things to see and do around Brisbane that many of these trips will overlap. Most can be done in one day, but some will be better enjoyed if you plan an overnight stop.

Gold Coast

About an hour’s drive south of Brisbane beings the huge holiday area of the Gold Coast, which comprises a strip along the coast from Southport to Coolangatta and includes the famous Surfers Paradise. Excellent surfing beaches and glorious weather have always been the major attractions of the Gold Coast, but a day trip, or several days, can be spent enjoying some of the incredible range of tourist attractions that have developed in this area.

O’Reilly’s Green Mountains

The thickly wooded Lamington National park is one of the wildest and finest in Queensland. On a plateau at the top is O’Reilly’s Green Mountains resort, and it is worth making this a full weekend’s trip, though advance booking should be made. There is plenty to see and do with a maze of walking tracks in the area, but if walking isn’t for you just sit in the sun and admire the superb mountain scenery or fee the birds.

Tamborine Mountain

Tamborine Mountain is a wonderful retreat from the bustle of Brisbane. Here palms, staghorns, elkhorns, ferns and orchids grow in profusion. Watch out for scrub turkeys, especially if you’re travelling in the area around dawn or dusk. there are many national parks in the area including the Joalah, Franklin and Palm Grove National Parks. Take comfortable shoes if you’re planning to walk through Palm Grove, on of the prettier parks.

Hobart

Hobart is an enchanting little city built around a beautiful yacht-studded harbour in the shadow of majestic Mt Wellington. A strong sea-faring flavour and sense of the past give Hobart an almost European air. This feeling is heightened in winter when Mt Wellington is snow-capped and temperatures drop to a crisp 5ºC. The rest of the year Hobart gets plenty of sparkling blue days but temperatures rarely exceed 25ºC.

Tours from Hobart

Hobart is within easy reach of a marvellous range of tourist attractions. To appreciate its superb natural setting it is worth going on a scenic flight over the city and its surroundings - taking in the beautiful Derwent estuary, the patchwork of fields of the Midlands, the Tasman Peninsula and the spectacular lakes and mountains of central and south-western Tasmania. Flight bookings are made at the Government Tourist Bureau, Hobart, which also arranges half and whole day coach tours in this most interesting area.

Cadbury’s Factory

Visits to this beautifully sited model factory - the biggest chocolate and cocoa factory in Australia - are another popular short tip. Coach tours leave the Tourist Bureau on Tuesdays and Thursdays and private car trips may be made on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, but these must be pre-paid and booked at the Bureau. The factory is usually closed from the end of December to mid-January.

Huonville

You can make a scenic trip, to Huonville - the centre of Tasmania’s picturesque apple-growing district - via the shoulder of Mt Wellington on the Huon Highway, returning via the coastal town of Cygnet and along the Channel Highway which commands spectacular vistas of the coastline and rugged Bruny Island.

Mt Wellington

The most popular short trip from Hobart is to the pinnacle of Mt Wellington, 1271 metres above the city, which commands panoramic views of the Derwent Valley to the north and the D’Entrecasteaux Channels to the south. A novel way to see the stunning views is the half-day tour “Mt Wellington Downhill” - a bus to the top and a bike ride down.

Richmond

Tasmania’s oldest and most famous historic village, Richmond has the oldest bridge in Australia and a wealth of mellow old colonial buildings including Tasmania’s oldest goal, two historic churches and Prospect House, built in 1830, now a licensed restaurant open daily, except Monday.

Melbourne

At the head of Port Phillip Bay and centred on the north bank of the Yarra River, Melbourne’s population of over three million lives in the flat surrounding suburbs which stretch in all directions - particularly round the east coast of the bay right out to the blue hills of the Dandenongs.

Tours from Melbourne

Many interesting trips can be taken in a day from Melbourne. For some of the outings mentioned, it is recommended that you plan an overnight stop to enjoy fully the areas surrounding the destination in a leisurely fashion.

Ballarat and Sovereign Hill

It is well worth making an overnight stop in Ballarat to do justice to this extremely interesting city. Ballarat is one of Victoria’s most attractive old cities and nearby Sovereign Hill is a brilliant recreation of a typical mining village of the 1850’s, with a working model mine to inspect, period shops to explore and a good variety of meals and refreshments available. Other attractions in Ballarat are the Begonia Festival and gardens and the Eureka Stockade.

Dandenong Ranges

One of the most popular tourist attractions in Victoria, these lushly forested ranges are interlace with a network of attractive roads and a number of charming townships. The Dandenongs provide an ideal outing for nature lovers, garden enthusiasts or those who like simply to browse through a variety of unique shops, craft shops or galleries. Many of the restaurants tucked away in these hills offer meals. Barbecue and picnic areas are scattered throughout the Dandenongs.

Healesville Sanctuary

Just outside the peaceful old township of Healesville, on Badger Creek Road, is the Healesville Sanctuary which houses one of the best collections of native wildlife in Australia. Many of the animals roam freely in their natural environment; there are walk through aviaries, excellent nocturnal displays and at certain times, the amazing duck-billed platypus can be viewed. Open daily from 9am to 5pm.

Phillip Island

This large island in Westernport bay offers the attractions of excellent surf and swimming beaches, koalas and the unique nightly parade at dusk of fairy penguins up to their burrows at Summerland Beach. Churchill Island, in Westernport Bay is now open to tourists.

Port Phillip Bay Cruises

The Spirit of Victoria makes four and six hour trips around the Bay and the bayside resort towns of Queenscliffe, Sorrento and Portarlington from Wednesday to Sunday.

Perth

Everybody loves easy-going Perth, the capital of Western Australia. The people are friendly, the benches beautiful, and the climate near perfect. Perth is Australia’s sunniest capital with an average of 7.8 hours of sunshine a day.

Tours from Perth

With the sparkling Indian Ocean surf beaches beckoning from the west, the peaceful Darling Ranges on the east and the Swan River meandering through Perth’s attractive suburbs from Fremantle to the Swan Valley vineyards, there are many enjoyable trips within easy reach of Perth.

Cohunu Wildlife Sanctuary

Here you can see wildlife in a natural bushland setting and a miniature railway that operates at weekends.

Fremantle

A visit to this fascinating old port can make an interesting round trip if you return via the opposite side of the river. With the old world charm of colonial buildings contrasting with the modern marina facilities, completed for the America’s Cup, it is worth setting aside a day for this tour.

John Forrest National Park

This huge unspoiled bushland park in the Darling Ranges is very popular with tourists. Walking trails, streams, waterfalls and a safe swimming pool for children are among its many attractions. At weekends you could round off the outing with a Devonshire tea at the Old Mahogany Inn, built in 1837 and now an attractive pioneer museum with some rooms furnished in Victorian style.

Pioneer World

A reconstruction of the days of the gold rush when every town boasted a blacksmith and a coachhouse. Elizabethan Village has 16th century-style buildings and a superb collection of early English oak furniture dating from 1300 to 1690.

Wanneroo Lion Park

You can watch families of free-ranging lions here at weekends, school and public holidays. Feeding times are at 11am and 3:30pm.

Sydney

Sydney, withy its population of over 3.5 million, is Australia’s largest city, and was the first site of settlement on the Australian continent.

Tours from Sydney

Sydney’s range of available days out and about is almost unrivalled for its variety of scenery, sites and recreation areas.

In the frantic rush to get out of the city, however, it is easy to overlook two of Sydney’s greatest assets, Royal National Park, little more than an hour’s drive from the GPO, and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, 40km north of the city.

Australia’s Wonderland

This large amusement park boasts a giant wooden roller coaster, a shoot‑the‑rapids rafting ride and performing pirates. Open from 10am to 8pm every day during school holidays and on weekends and public holidays between August and May.

Harbour Cruises From Circular Quay

An ideal way to view Sydney and its harbour is by boat. Several cruises are available. The Urban Transit Authority runs a two and a half hour cruise at 1:30pm on Wednesdays and all school holidays, and at 2:30pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

Hunter Valley Vineyards

Although it is possible to do this trip in a day it certainly wouldn’t do the area justice - and it is definitely not a good idea if you plan to do any wine tasting!

The best time to visit the Hunter Valley is at vintage time when you can see the grapes being fermented in great open vats. Picking starts any time from the end of January, but this can vary considerably, and sometimes doesn’t start until well into February.

Taronga Zoo

Australia’s largest zoo, Taronga is set in 30 hectares of harbour-side bushland which give it a magnificent and unique setting. Of particular interest are the displays of Australian native animals and the nocturnal house. Children will enjoy patting the young, tame animals at the Friendship Farm.