Best places to visit in australia for first time-Edited

The Best Places To Visit In Australia

When you plan your trip, you must choose what you want to see and where you want to go. If you do have the time to drive around the continent spending a **year or so in a campervan**, you may be able to check off all the iconic places to see in Australia that cannot be missed.

It may be the world's smallest continent, but it's ranked number 6 in the world by country size. So take your time, enjoy the ride, and check out all the amazing things to see in Australia. From Dreamtime walks to the heavenly apostles, the landmarks of Australia are awe-inspiring.Edited

Queensland

1. Great Barrier Reef

It may be Australia's most famous attraction but with good reason! The Great Barrier Reef is one of the seven wonders of the natural world.

Stretching 3000 km across the coast of Queensland, **the Great Barrier Reef** is a diver's dream. Whether you are an **avid scuba diver**, casual snorkeller or first-time underwater newbie, there is something for everyone at this popular tourist destination.

You don't need to go scuba diving to enjoy the Great Barrier Reef. A scenic flight is a spectacular way to see the wonder of the world. You can go snorkeling or swimming on one of the platforms in the ocean and you can even take a discovery dive.

You can book a liveaboard dive boat vacation to go out to the most remote **dive sites** of the reef, take a helicopter tour over the impressive waters, or you can try your hand at diving with a helmet. One of our favourite experiences. Plan your trip to the **Great Barrier Reef with FlightCentre**

2. Daintree Rainforest

Located in **Queensland**, the **Daintree Rainforest** is one of Australia's natural wonders. At 180 million years old, it covers 1200 square km and visitors can take a Dreamtime walk with an Indigenous guide from the Kuku Yalanji Tribe.

Stay in the rainforest at Silky Oak Lodge and relax in your treehouse listening to the sounds of the ancient forest. You can also do some paddleboarding on the Mossman River. Don't worry, the local saltwater crocodiles don't come that far inland.

This rainforest is filled with beauty with waterfalls, plenty of hiking trails and outdoor activities.

- **Fun Fact**: Daintree Rainforest is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is twice as old as the **Amazon Rainforest**

3. Fraser Island

The Maheno Wreck on Fraser Island

Fraser Island is one of the coolest Australian places to visit in Australia because of its 75-mile long beach! It's one of the longest beaches in the world.

Rent a four-wheel drive truck in the town of Noosa and start your adventure to one of the wildest drives you'll ever have. It's an island with sand dunes, dingos, tidal pools, and shipwrecks.

Oh and one more thing, drivers share the beach with airplanes! Yes, there is an airport right on the sandy shores. The white sand beaches of this island will take your breath away as you drive its coastline. There are hotels and resorts that you can book on the island to spend more time exploring. **Read all about our trip at Fraser Island Tour – A 4X4 Adventure**

4. Whitsundays

The Whitsundays are a group of 75 islands off the coast of Queensland. When visiting the Great Barrier Reef, you must spend some time here. These islands are located right in the heart of it! Beautiful white sandy beaches, swirl effortlessly with the turquoise water.

There are luxury resorts, sailing and snorkeling. A must stop is the largest and most famous of all the islands, Whitehaven Beach with pristine white sands made of silica beads stretching for 7km. Because this sand is made up of silica, it doesn't get too hot making it the perfect beach for a walk.

5. Port Douglas

Port Douglas is a laid-back resort town in Queensland's Tropical North. It's the jumping off point for visiting the Great Barrier Reef and the Daintree Rainforest making it the perfect spot to spend a few days relaxing and exploring the beauty of Australia. Located along Australia's most scenic coast, a road trip to Port Douglas is a must. See our s**cenic flight from Port Douglas** over the Great Barrier Reef.

6. Cairns

Known as the gateway to Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Cairnes is located

about 1,700 kilometers north of Brisbane. Cairns enjoys a tropical climate and is nestled between the Coral Sea and the rainforests of the Wet Tropics, offering a unique blend of marine and terrestrial attractions.

As a destination, Cairns offers a multitude of reasons for tourists to visit. As well as its proximity to the Great Barrier Reef — a must-visit for snorkelers, divers, and marine life enthusiasts — Cairns also provides easy access to the Daintree Rainforest. You can take a scenic railway journey to the village of Kuranda, experience indigenous culture at the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, or simply enjoy Cairns' excellent restaurants, bustling markets, and lively nightlife. The city's Esplanade, with its saltwater swimming lagoon and waterfront boardwalk, is another major drawcard.

7. Gold Coast

Home to the world-famous Surfer's Paradise, the Gold Coast of Australia offers an endless stretch beach with outstanding surf breaks. Highrise resorts and condos line the sand while beachgoers enjoy the many eateries and dining options.

You can enjoy surf lessons or you can simply rent a bike and ride to Currumbin Beach and Burleigh Head to watch the pro surfers catch a wave. For a great view, go to the Skypoint Observation Deck to take it all in from above.

Victoria

8. Twelve Apostles

The Great Ocean Road is one of the most popular day trips from Melbourne. A Drive to the coast takes you to the incredible **Twelve Apostles**.

For us, the Twelve Apostles were the most awe-inspiring of places to visit in

Australia. But to really experience this rugged coast, you must do the Great Ocean Walk. It takes you along the coastal route that is impossible to see from a car. If you can, make sure to take a helicopter ride over the Apostles to really take in its beauty.

9. Melbourne

Melbourne is quite possibly the **coolest city in Australia**. I know it was our favourite. It has been named the most livable city in the world and it's a great place for tourists too! Highlights include Queen Victoria Market, The Arcades and Secret Lanes, Eureka Square, Federation Skydeck and Graffiti Lane.

South Australia

10. Kangaroo Island

Kangaroo Island is located off the coast of **South Australia** and is an incredible place in Australia to tour for a few days. It is a spectacular **wildlife haven** for kangaroos, koalas, sea lions and seals, and pelicans. There is even a Birds of Prey rehabilitation center where you can watch a show and learn about birds that are indigenous to the continent.

The landscape is beautiful here and at sunset, you must see the Remarkables; granite boulders have been sculpted into unique formations over 500 million years. **Kangaroo Island** is also home to what is considered by many as the best beach in Australia.

11. Wilpena Pound

Wilpena Pound is a giant 80 Square kilometer amphitheater of rock that is simply astounding. Located in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia, it's a 450 km drive from Adelaide. A good place to stay is inside the National Park that is set within the backdrop of the mountains. Flinders Ranges is 100

million years old and a tour of the ancient landscape is truly fascinating.

It is also one of the best places in Australia to spy the endangered yellow-footed rock wallaby. Check out our visit to the **Flinders Ranges and Wilpena Pound**

12. Barossa Valley

Barossa Valley is home to Australia's most famous vineyards. Here you can visit wineries such as Wolf Blass, Lehmann and Penfolds just to name a few. A tour through the valley will take you through gorgeous countryside and it is best to hire a driver so you can truly experience all the wines of Barossa. Located an hour outside Adelaide, it is a beautiful region to spend a few days.

South Australia boasts many Australia's best wine regions outside of the Barossa Valley including, MaLaren Vale, Adelaide Hills and Clare Valley.

13. Burra Homestead

Made famous by Midnight Oil's record album cover Diesel and Dust, **the Burra Homestea**d has become an iconic stop for photographers in Australia. The homestead was abandoned by homesteaders years ago and still stands alone and empty by the side of the road. It's easy to miss and we made quite the detour just to see it. Being huge fans of music, we just had to see this with our own eyes.

14. Lake Gairdner

Lake Gairdner is a Salt Lake in the Gawler Ranges of South Australia. It feels as if you have stepped on another planet when you visit the lake. The lake itself is an impressive sprawl of white landscape but being surrounded by the red hills of the Gawler Ranges make for the picture-perfect spot.

New South Wales

15. Sydney Opera House

It's definitely Australia's most iconic building and seeing the Sydney Opera House dominate the Sydney Skyline does not disappoint. The Sydney Opera House opened in 1973 and has become Australia's top tourist attraction.

We never went inside the opera house when visiting Sydney, but walking around it and taking in the views from the waterfront will remind you why this is one of the most iconic landmarks in the world.

- **Side Note**: I hear they are fixing the acoustics of the Opera House, so perhaps when we are back in Sydney, we'll catch a concert.

16. Blue Mountains

Located just 50km (32 miles) from Sydney, the Blue Mountains are another famous view that attracts numerous visitors. The Three Sisters are the most iconic view of the Blue Mountains. Echo Point lookout offers an impressive view of the three sisters overlooking the Jamison Valley.

17. Sydney Harbour Bridge

Next, to the Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Harbour Bridge is another of the city's iconic landmarks. It connects the CBD to the North Shore and is the biggest steel bridge in the world.

If you really want a thrill, you should do the Sydney Harbour Bridge Climb. We ended up doing the **Harbour Bridge Climb in Brisbane** which was awesome, but I wish we mustered up enough energy to include Sydney's Bridge too!

18. Bondi Beach

No visit to Australia would be complete without a stop at Bondi Beach.

Located just 7km from Sydney's central business district, it is one of Australia's most iconic and celebrated beaches.

The beach itself, with its golden sands and turquoise waters, is an irresistible attraction. Known for its reliable surf, Bondi Beach draws surfers from around the globe, while the wide sandy stretch also provides ample space for sunbathing, beach volleyball, or simply enjoying the ocean view. The Bondi Icebergs Pool, a stunning ocean pool at the southern end of the beach, offers a unique swimming experience, with the waves of the Pacific Ocean crashing over its sides.

Bondi Beach isn't just about sand and surf; it's also a hub for dining and shopping. Campbell Parade, the main street running parallel to the beach, is lined with trendy cafes, award-winning restaurants, and boutique stores. The beach is also the starting point for the scenic Bondi to Coogee coastal walk, which takes in some of Sydney's most stunning ocean views.

19. Byron Bay

Nestled on the northeastern coast of New South Wales, Byron Bay artfully combines natural beauty with its laid-back culture. The town's location, just about 800 kilometers north of Sydney and 170 kilometers south of Brisbane, Byron Bay is easily accessible from the major city centers. Framed by pristine, golden-sand beaches and the sparkling Pacific Ocean, Byron Bay's geography is spectacular.

Byron Bay isn't just renowned for its captivating landscapes, if you're an outdoor lover you can surf the world-class breaks, kayak with dolphins, or embark on a trek to the iconic Cape Byron Lighthouse for a panoramic view of the bay.

The Outback

20. South, West, North, and East Australia

The Outback covers a huge expanse of Australia touching nearly every state of the country. When visiting Australia, you cannot miss a trip to the Outback. We took a multi-day journey in South Australia with **Gawler Ranges Wilderness Safaris** and had the chance to truly experience all the wonders of Australia's famous Outback.

From salt lakes to red sands and rock formations, you truly feel like a pioneer. While it is dry and arid, people do live on the Outback and there are homesteaders raising sheep among the kangaroos and emus.

Northern Territory

21. Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks

One of the most famous sites of the Outback is Uluru (also known as Ayers Rock) near Alice Springs. A UNESCO World Heritage site, Uluru is sacred to the indigenous people of the area. Standing 348 metres high it makes for an imposing site in contrast to the flat desert landscape. Spanning 3 1/2 km long and nearly 2 km wide, it is a popular stop on overland tours.

22. Kata Tjuta

The massive sandstone domes of Kata Tjuta (The Olgas) are particularly striking, rising majestically from the flat desert landscape and changing hues with the passing of the day. The park offers numerous walking trails, ranging from leisurely walks to challenging hikes, that give visitors the opportunity to explore these wonders up close and experience the area's rich biodiversity.

The cultural tours led by the Anangu guides provide deep insights into the

ancient traditions, stories, and customs associated with these sacred sites, making a visit to the park a truly enriching experience.

23. Kakadu National Park

Kakadu National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage site, located in the Top End region of the Northern Territory. Roughly 170 kilometers southeast of Darwin, the park covers an impressive area of around 20,000 square kilometers, making it the largest national park in Australia and about half the size of Switzerland.

The park is known for its diverse landscapes that range from wetlands and floodplains, to rugged escarpments and arid regions, creating a haven for a wide variety of wildlife. It's home to over 280 bird species, numerous reptiles, and a large variety of fish.

Kakadu is also rich in Aboriginal culture, with rock art sites dating back thousands of years. Ubirr and Nourlangie are among the most visited rock art sites, where visitors can learn about the ancient indigenous culture and the spiritual connection to the land.

There are numerous guided tours available to explore the park and many walking trails that range from easy strolls to challenging hikes. One can also take a scenic flight over the park or a river cruise to witness its grandeur from different perspectives.

24. Darwin

Perched at the top end of Australia's Northern Territory, Darwin is a captivating blend of modernity and untamed wilderness. This cosmopolitan city, strategically located on the Timor Sea offers the chance to immerse in indigenous culture and heritage. Nature lovers will be drawn to the city's proximity to world-renowned national parks like Kakadu and Litchfield, which are brimming with diverse wildlife, stunning waterfalls, and dramatic

landscapes.

For those in search of adventure, there's an array of activities including cruising along the Mary River wetlands to spot saltwater crocodiles. And history buffs will be interested in diving into the city's turbulent history at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

Western Australia

25. Hamelin Bay Stingrays

Photo courtesy of **Mr. and Mrs. Bucketlist,**

According to **Mr. and Mrs. Bucketlist,** there is no better place to see stingrays than in Hamelin Bay. Located in the Margaret River Region, local stingrays frequent these waters to feed off local fishermen. The stingrays are so friendly, you can snorkel with them.

Plus, Hamelin Bay is picture perfect, so it's a beautiful place to spend some time. Read about all the wildlife encounters you can have in **Western Australia here** by Mr. and Mrs. Bucketlist

26. Pinnacles

If you are into unique landscapes, a visit to the Pinnacles of Nambung National Park is in order. Located about 200km from Western Australia's capital, Perth, the Pinnacles are another one of those fascinating places to see in Australia.

The formations range to from heights of short stumps to pillars reaching 3 metres high, the Pinnacles are ancient formations formed when the landscape was underwater.

27. Cable Beach

Cable Beach is that place where you've seen all those images of camels walking in a silhouette at sunset, but probably never knew where it was. It isn't Australia's longest beach, but at 22km in length, it is nothing to sneeze at.

There are many tour companies that offer camel rides along the beach at sunset. Camels arrived in Australia from India in the 1800s to transport gear overland. The harsh Australian landscape proved to be a better environment for camels than horses and they helped shape the history of the continent.

28. Kimberly Region

The Kimberley region is one of Australia's hidden treasures, located in the remote northern part of Western Australia. This vast, rugged wilderness area spans over 420,000 square kilometers, stretching from Broome in the west to Kununurra and Lake Argyle in the east, and from the Timor Sea in the north to the Great Sandy and Tanami deserts in the south.

The Kimberley is an adventurer's dream, offering a wealth of unique and exhilarating experiences. It's known for its breathtaking landscapes, ranging from dramatic gorges and waterfalls to ancient rock formations and lush rainforests. One of the region's most iconic destinations is the Bungle Bungle Range in Purnululu National Park is known for its striking beehive-shaped towers. For those seeking aquatic adventures, there's the opportunity to cruise the stunning Horizontal Falls or explore the bucolic waterways of the Ord River. The Kimberley is also steeped in indigenous history, with numerous sacred Aboriginal sites and some of the oldest rock art in the world.

29. Rottnest Island

Rottnest Island, affectionately known as "Rotto", is a small island located just off the coast of Western Australia, about 19 kilometers west of Fremantle. It is easily accessible by a short ferry ride from Perth, the state's capital, and

serves as a popular holiday destination for locals and international tourists alike.

The island is renowned for its beautiful beaches and secluded coves, perfect for swimming, snorkeling, and surfing. With its vehicle-free policy, cycling is a popular way to explore the island's scenic paths and trails. One of the island's most famous residents is the quokka, a small marsupial found only in Western Australia. These adorable creatures are known for their friendly demeanor and photogenic smiles.

Tasmania

30. Wine Glass Bay

Wineglass Bay, Freycinet National Park, Tasmania, Australia

We haven't been to Tasmania yet, but you cannot include an Australia Guide without mentioning Tasmania. We nearly went once two years ago and did a lot of research of top places to see in Tasmania. From Cradle Mountain to Hastings Caves and a chance to spy the Tasmanian Devil, it seems like the perfect off the beaten path destination.

We've had so many friends share their favourite places on Instagram, and the one place the stands out to us is Wine Glass Bay. We're suckers for beautiful beaches.

31. Maria Island

Photo courtesy of **Mapping Megan**

Mapping Megan wrote an article for us about **Maria Island** located off of Tasmania. Her photo of these Wave Rocks caught our attention.

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