

Hostelworld Guide for Sydney

Customised for Erwan Roblot



While it isn't the capital, Sydney is by far the largest and most extravagant of all of Australia's cities. It has a population of four million people, busy streets, and imposing skyscrapers. It also has one of the most spectacular harbours in the world where you will find two of Australia's most instantly recognisable landmarks. Just to make things even sweeter, within 20 minutes from the city centre you can sunbathe on one of the world's most famous beaches. And while it has all the characteristics of a brash American city such as busy streets and imposing skyscrapers, there is something very homely about Australia's largest city.

In this Guide...

Useful Information
After Dark
Places to Eat
Top Attractions
Budget Tips
Where to Shop



The Essentials

Exchange Rates

	AUS\$	US \$	STG £	EURO €	CA \$
1	0.91	0.46	0.62	0.90	
2	1.82	0.93	1.24	1.80	
3	2.73	1.39	1.86	2.71	
4	3.63	1.85	2.48	3.61	
5	4.54	2.31	3.10	4.51	
6	5.45	2.78	3.71	5.42	
7	6.36	3.24	4.33	6.32	
8	7.27	3.70	4.95	7.22	
9	8.12	4.17	5.57	8.13	
10	9.01	4.63	6.12	9.03	

Getting There

By plane: Sydney's international airport is just 8km from the city centre. Trains to Central Station depart from the airport's train station every 10 minutes and take 13 minutes. A one-way ticket costs AU\$14. Bus #300 also goes to the city centre between 5am-11pm. The journey costs AU\$7 one-way.

By train: All long-distance trains from other Australian destinations terminate in Central Station.

By bus: All buses travelling to Sydney stop at Eddy Avenue which is just outside Central Station.

Getting Around

On foot: Getting around Sydney's city centre on foot is totally achievable, and areas such as The Rocks, Pitt St, Circular Quay (Opera House and Harbour Bridge) and Darling Harbour are all within walking distance of each other.

By train: Sydney's 'CityRail' network is very efficient and easy to use. There are six train lines, although you will have to transfer to buses for some eastern, northern and western suburbs.

By bus: Buses are the only option when you want to get to certain places, like some eastern suburbs such as Bondi and Coogee.

Climate

Sydney's hottest months are December and January. During these months, temperatures usually rise above 25°C, and frequently climb to 30°C. February and March are also quite warm, with temperatures dropping in April. Winter arrives in July and August, although they are mild winters. In September the temperatures begin to steadily rise again, and do so until November. These 3 months are also the city's driest months. February to June are the wettest.

Average Monthly Stats

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
C	21	22	21	18	15	13	12	13	15	17	19	17
MM	117	112	147	119	89	130	53	89	61	79	102	81
☀	5	6	7	7	8	8	9	8	7	4	2	2

C: Average Temp Centigrade
MM: Average Rainfall
☀: Average Hrs Sunshine

Useful Information

Language: English
Currency: Australian Dollar
Electricity: 220-240 AC/50Hz. 3-pin plug, although different to those in the UK and Ireland so adaptors may be required.
Area Code: +61 (Aus) 02 (Sydney).
Emergency Codes: Ambulance/Fire/Police 000
Time Zone: 9 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (11 during daylight saving time)
Central Post Office: 1 Martin Place, Sydney
Main Tourist Office: Sydney Visitors Centre, 91 Georges St, The Rocks; also 33 Wheat Road, Darling Harbour

Embassies / Consulates

USA: +61 (0)2 9373 9200
UK: +61 (0)2 9247 7521
Canada: +61 (0)2 6270 4000*
South Africa: +61 (0)2 6273 2424*
Ireland: +61 (0)2 9231 6999
Germany: +61 (0)2 6270 1911*
Spain: +61 (0)2 9261 2433
Italy: +61 (0)2 9392 7939
New Zealand: +61 (0)2 8256 2000
France: +61 (0)2 9261 5779
*Number is for embassy in Canberra

Cheap Eats

Blackbird Café, Balcony Level, Cockle Bay Wharf If you fancy Darling Harbour dining at a fraction of the normal cost, then the Blackbird Café is just the ticket. Offering the ambience and the views of its pricier peers, the emphasis here is on high quality food at low cost. Prices start at just \$4 and all mains are under \$20. The stone oven pizzas are frightfully tasty. *Open daily from 8am till late.*

Doyle's Take Away, Watson's Bay The view to savour from the park bench outside Doyle's is unbeatable as this chip shop is located on Watson's Bay. As you wait for your chips to cool down you can gaze over Sydney's illustrious harbour. *Open daily from 11pm to 7pm; fish & chips cost \$9.30.*

Eating World Food Court, Factory Street, Chinatown There are foodcourts all over Sydney city centre, but this collection of restaurants in Chinatown is by far the best, in terms of both atmosphere and value. There are well over 20 'outlets', each with a wide range of meals to choose from. *Open 10am-9.30pm.*

Meat Pies - An Aussie Institution



Australia's most famous culinary delights are their famous pies. Made with pastry and filled with minced beef, they are as Australian as bouncing kangaroos, lazy koalas, and sticks that return after you throw them. You can get pies in convenient stores and supermarkets anywhere in the city and the most you should pay for one is \$3. The most famous place to get one is at **Harry's Café de Wheels** in Woolloomooloo.

bills, 433 Liverpool St, Darlinghurst Some say that breakfast in bills is the best in Darlinghurst. Others say it is the best in Sydney. Either way you can be guaranteed you'll thoroughly enjoy it. *Open Mon-Sat 7.30am-3pm (breakfast until 12.30pm).*

After Dark

Scubar, Corner of Rawson Place & Rawson Lane Over the last ten years Scubar has developed the reputation of 'Sydney's premier backpacker bar'. Each night there is something happening, and two nights which are particularly popular are 'Crab Racing' night on Mondays and 'Pool Comp' night on Wednesdays. Each night of the week you can get a pizza and a jug of beer/carafe of wine for \$11.90 before 9pm. *Open daily midday to 3am.*

Gay / Lesbian Sydney

Sydney is the gay capital of the southern hemisphere and has been for years. The centre of everything queer is the Oxford St area. **ARQ** (16 Flinders St, open Thurs-Sun) is the city's biggest gay club. **The Oxford Hotel** (134 Oxford St) and **Midnight Shift** (85 Oxford St) are two of Sydney's most popular gay bars, while the drag shows in **The Imperial Hotel** (35 Erskineville Road) are legendary.

Wednesdays in Bondi Wednesday night is backpacker night in Bondi when hundreds converge on two of the beach town's most popular spots. To join in the fun, start the night off in the **Beach Road Hotel** (known locally as the 'Regis') and when the bouncers turf you out after midnight, continue the night in the **Bondi Hotel** on Campell Parade. It gets fairly manic in both places on Sundays also, while 'the Bondi' is busy all weekend.

Pub crawl in The Rocks Sydney's oldest settlement is also home to many of the city's liveliest pubs. Always packed, **The Mercantile** is an Irish bar in every sense, while **The Observer Hotel** is another popular Irish bar in the area. Other bars worth frequenting for a schooner or two include the **Hero of Waterloo** and the **Fortune of War**, Sydney's oldest pub.

Home Nightclub, Cockle Bay Wharf, Darling Harbour 'Home' is the Mecca of all clubs in Sydney. Holding over 2,000 people, this super-club has many floors. There is also a chill out room and a balcony when you need a breather. Attracting some of the world's biggest DJs, queues here can get extremely long so arrive early. *Open Thurs-Sun 11pm-4am; admission \$25 Fri & Sat.*

The World Bar, 24 Bayswater Road, Kings Cross The World Bar is another of Sydney's best-known backpacker bars. Each night between 6 and 7 is happy hour, while every Thursday night all drinks are \$2.50. *Open 12 noon-4am/7am.*

Don't Miss

Sydney Harbour Bridge Known as the 'Coathanger', this is the world's largest steel arch bridge. Along with the Opera House, it is Sydney's most instantly recognisable landmark and your camera will never tire of taking pictures of it.

Bondi Beach Some people don't see the big attraction with Australia's best-known beach, but no visit to Sydney is complete without visiting it. On the hottest days, over 60,000 people have been known to wipe sand off their feet after a day on the beach. *To get there take bus #380 from Circular Quay or from Bondi Junction train station.*

One of the World's Modern Wonders



Sydney Opera House, Circular Quay Built between 1959 and 1973, the Sydney Opera House is one of the most iconic buildings of the 20th century. Designed by Danish architect Jern Utzon, it is extremely unique due to its 'roof shells'. *Guided tours start every 30 minutes between 9-5.30pm and cost \$29.*

Darling Harbour Transformed from a derelict dockyard area to a vibrant harbour in the 1980s, Darling Harbour is one of Sydney's premier tourist attractions. Packed with restaurants, bars, and museums, there is something for everyone here. It is also where you will find the city's IMAX Theatre. The harbour itself is perfect for relaxing around, as is the Chinese Garden of Friendship which is also here.

Blue Mountains National Park, Katoomba, NSW The Blue Mountains National Park gets its name from the blue haze the eucalyptus trees generate. The most famous attraction in the park is the 'Three Sisters', while other attractions include the world's steepest incline railway and numerous bush walks. *Organised day tours to the Blue Mountains can be booked at www.hostelworld.com/tours.*

Mark Your Calendar

January - Sydney Festival The annual Sydney Festival is the biggest arts festival of the year. Along with performances in the Opera House and the State Theatre, there is loads of free outdoor entertainment also.

January - Australia Day Commemorating the day Captain Arthur Phillip took formal possession of the colony of New South Wales, the Aussies' national holiday falls on January 26th and there is something happening everywhere.

March - Mardi Gras While the southern hemisphere's biggest Mardi Gras festival begins in February each year, the highlight of the festival is the outlandish parade which marches down Oxford St at the beginning of March.

March - Darling Harbour Hoopla Held over three days, this annual acrobatic and street theatre festival in Darling Harbour is one of the best free festivals in the year and showcases some of the world's best circus and acrobatic acts.

May - Sydney Half Marathon This annual race is a favourite with athletes and spectators alike. The best place to be is at the finish line in The Rocks.

June - Darling Harbour Jazz Festival On the weekend of the Queen's Birthday is when Sydney holds its premier jazz festival every year which attracts approximately 300,000 people.

August - Sydney City to Surf Run With over 50,000 people entering every year, this race is one of the city's stranger races as participants begin at Hyde Park and end up in the sea at Bondi Beach!

September - Manly Arts Festival Since it started in 1994, this festival has since grown into one of Sydney's leading community based arts festivals.

October - Manly International Jazz Festival Beginning on the first Saturday of every October, the northern suburb's jazz festival attracts artists from all over the world.

November - Sculpture by the Sea Sculpture by the Sea is Australia's largest annual outdoor free to the public exhibition of contemporary sculpture.

December - New Year's Eve Celebrations Sydney is one of the world's best cities to ring in the New Year. The best place to catch the fireworks display is at Circular Quay or The Rocks.

Get Connected

Backpackers World, 234 Sussex Street Backpackers World have a total of 5 centres all around Sydney's city centre and surrounding suburbs. Along with offering backpackers internet access, BW also works in conjunction with Worldwide Workers to help get backpackers employed. *Open daily from 9am-6pm, 9am-5pm Sat; \$3 per hour.*



Global Gossip, 111 Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross Kings Cross is regarded as Sydney's backpacker hub so this Global Gossip store (there are 6 in total) is always full of them, making it a great place to meet people. *Open Mon-Fri 8am-midnight; Sat & Sun 9am-11pm; \$3 per hour.*

Phone.net.café, 73-75 Hall Street, Bondi Beach Just like the suburb it is situated in, Phone.net.café is one of Sydney's most laid back cybercafés. Situated at the top of Bondi's Hall Street, it is the most relaxing place to either email or browse the web with chill-out tunes playing from open till close. *Open daily from 9am-7pm.*

digi.kaf, 174 St Johns Rd, Glebe This cybercafé in Sydney's eclectic area of Glebe offers fantastic food, 'blistering net access', plus much more. As they say, 'be surprised!' *Open Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat & Sun 9am-4pm; \$2.50 per 15 mins.*

The Chat Site, 192 Coogee Bay Road, Coogee 'The Chat Site' has friendly staff and a very speedy connection. *Open daily from 9am-10pm; \$1.40 for 15 mins; \$3 for 30 mins; \$4.50 per hour.*

www.

www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
www.sydneypubguide.net
www.threedworld.com.au
www.smh.com.au

Retail Therapy

George Street/Pitt Street These two streets which run parallel to each other in Sydney's CBD are home to all the usual high street brands such as Diesel and Levis. They also have an abundance of surf shops when you can pluck up the courage to buy one of those bright floral shirts you see everywhere.

Oxford Street Posers; trendsetters; young professionals; surfers - they all descend on to Oxford Street when they want to fill out their wardrobe as this is where Sydney's trendiest shops can be found. It is also home to some of the city's best record shops while it is peppered with good restaurants also.

Grace Bros/David Jones department stores Grace Bros and David Jones' are Australia's flagship department stores, sort of like Australia's answer to Macy's or Bloomingdales. Each one is huge and caters for everybody. Both chains have their main branches in the city centre.

A Great Reason to go Shopping



Queen Victoria Building, 455 George St

Completed in 1898, the QVB is one of the most beautiful buildings in Sydney. Whether you need to shop or not, pay it a visit. Over its five floors you will find men and women's clothes, shoes, accessories, mobile phones and more. *Open Mon-Sat 9am-6pm (9pm Thurs), Sun 11am-5pm.*

Paddy's Markets, Haymarket Paddy's Markets are one of the city's best known markets. Located in Haymarket in the city centre, here you can pick up everything from fruit and vegetables to flowers, and from sunglasses to jewellery. It's a tired cliché, but there really is something for everybody. *Open Thursday-Sunday; 9am-5pm.*

Budget Tips

Get the ferry to Manly The most enjoyable way to see Sydney's celebrated harbour is by getting one of the ferries from Circular Quay. Sydney Ferries operate special day and night ferries around the harbour, but save yourself a few bucks by getting a ferry to Manly for the day, returning that night to see the harbour lit up in all its glory. *Ferries leave Wharf No 3 and cost \$6.40 each way.*

Bring your own alcohol when eating out A host of Sydney's restaurants are 'BYO' restaurants. This stands for 'Bring Your Own', meaning you can bring your own alcohol. As casks of wine in Oz cost approximately \$15, get a gang together and eating out once a week is totally affordable.

Walk Across the Bridge For Free



Since 1998, you can climb to the top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge for amazing views of the city. The only problem is that it costs over \$100 to do so. Take the train to Milson's Point north of the harbour and you can walk back across the bridge into the city for free.

Save money when using phone cards When making international phone calls from a phone box using a phone card, put in 40c and call the 1300 number instead of using the freefone 1800 number. This way your phone card will last a lot longer.

Go to the movies on a Tuesday Cinema tickets on Super Tuesdays are 50% cheaper than any other day of the week. While there are cinemas all over the city, the best place to catch a movie is in one of the cinemas on Georges Street.

Learn more about Sydney's culture for free NSW Art Gallery on Art Gallery Road has excellent art exhibitions, as does the Customs House on Alfred St. Both museums are free.

A Day in Sydney...



Get the ferry to Manly from Wharf #3 at Circular Quay. The beach here is the northern suburbs' best known.



Get the ferry back to Circular Quay and take the obligatory photos of the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge. Chill out on the steps of the Opera House for a while.



Walk into the city and grab your lunch in one of Sydney's numerous food courts. Choose from Mexican, Indian, Thai food and more.



Explore the CBD. Stroll down Pitt St and George St, relax in Martin Place and check out Darling Harbour, a big tourist attraction.



Go to the top of Oxford Street and catch bus #380 to Bondi. The journey takes about 20 minutes. Keep your eyes peeled for your first glimpse of the beach - it's priceless.



Chill out in Bondi! Catch a few rays on the beach, watch the surfers, or go for a stroll along the promenade. If you're feeling energetic, walk to Bronte and back.



Grab a quick bite to eat. Bondi is full of nice restaurants. If you're on a tight budget though, get fish and chips from the take away on Campbell Parade.



Get the #380 from Bondi all the way back into Circular Quay. Make your way up to The Rocks and go on a pub crawl.



Finish the night off in style and party on until the early hours! Check out Scubar or The World Bar in Kings Cross.