

Australia - Perth



Australia, a continent in its own right, is home to some of the world's most amazing natural landscapes. From the beautiful waters of the Great Barrier Reef to the vast Red Desert of the Australian Outback, memories of this magnificent country will stay with you forever. Isabelle Bending visited Perth in Australia in April 2008 and left feeling enthralled by the sheer natural beauty of the country, the friendliness of the locals and the diverse and exciting range of activities available. Read her report to find out more or call her on 0121 250 2211 or 01543 412768 to book your holiday to Perth in Australia.

Flight

My flight to Australia departed from Heathrow airport. Once I had checked in I was invited up to the Emirates lounge which was of Executive standard with an abundant choice of food and drink. For the first leg of the journey I flew to Dubai in economy class where the seats were comfortable and the food was excellent with a choice of drinks. ICE – (Information Communication Entertainment) is available to all passengers so you can watch and listen to a wide variety of movies, TV programmes, radio stations and CDs.

For the second leg of my journey I travelled in Executive class which had flat bed seats – perfect for those wishing to rest during the flight.



Perth

Perth is situated on the West coast of Australia and is one of Australia's most modern and vibrant cities; it is also rated as one of the world's most beautiful cities. Its main international airport is situated just 5 miles to the East of the city.

For the first 3 nights of my trip I stayed in the four star Mantra Bay hotel which is situated in the heart of the city. A swimming pool, sauna, cocktail bar and restaurant are just a few of the features within the hotel and it also has 144 single and two bedroom ensuite apartments each with air conditioning, lounge kitchen with balcony and laundry room with washer-dryer.

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Whilst in Perth I also visited a selection of other hotels:



Rydges Hotel

This four star hotel is 20 minutes from Perth airport and comprises 245 tastefully furnished rooms. There are 45 king rooms and 6 river view spa rooms.

From this hotel you can walk to Kings Park; this 1000 acre parkland comprises a spectacular display of wild flowers, botanic gardens and native bush land. From the Rydges Hotel the Swan River, shopping malls and the railway station are also conveniently located close to hand.

The Hyatt Regency

This five star hotel is situated on the Swan River in the heart of town, and offers complimentary leisure facilities including tennis courts, gym and swimming pool. The seven types of room are all beautifully finished.

Sheraton Hotel

This hotel overlooks the Swan River and the tree lined parks and comprises 486 guest rooms and suites, each with a subtle elegance about them. Facilities within the hotel include 24 hour gymnasium, steam room, outdoor heated pool and massage room.

There are many excursions available from Perth:



Full day Pinnacles tour

245km North of Perth on the way to Geraldton lies the Nambung National Park. This feature-rich landscape includes the breathtaking Pinnacles which is an enormous area of limestone rock formations, and is just one of Australia's most amazing natural spectacles. *Please be aware that walking on the sand of Nambung National Park could be difficult for the less mobile.* My next stop was Caversham Wildlife Park where there is one of the largest collections of fauna in Western Australia including kangaroos, koalas and wombats which you can touch, making it a great place for the family.

I then headed on to the sand dunes where I tried out the 4 wheel drive experience – this adventure is perfect for those who enjoy an adrenaline rush; I also had a go at sand-boarding which was quite exhilarating.

Swan River trip

Back in Perth I took a day trip along the Swan River by boat. This gentle river runs through the heart of Perth and is used by local fishermen as well as luxurious motor cruisers. Whilst on the river I headed up to the busy port of Fremantle which is awash with both cruise liners and container ships, helping to further remind you that Perth is a thriving economic community and a popular tourist destination.

Wild Dolphin Swim

For my Wild Dolphin Swim excursion I took the boat out of Rockingham which is just 45 minutes from Perth. Once on board I donned my wetsuit and waited until the dolphins were spotted; I had four dives and was lucky enough to spot a mother and baby! On board the boat tea, coffee and soft drinks were available all day and once the dive was finished I enjoyed lunch before heading back to the Marina.

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Seashells apartments - Scarborough

Right on the doorstep of Australia's Sunset Coast and only 15 minutes drive from Perth lie these delightful seaside apartments which are very clean and simply furnished. This is an ideal spot for relaxing and working off jetlag before you start your holiday. There are two and three bedroom apartments, all of which overlook the beach.

Seashells - Mandurah

Just 45 minutes South of Perth is the seaside resort of SeaShells situated on the beach at Comet Bay. The resort comprises restaurants, shops and a theatre and there are sports facilities nearby. You have a choice of one, two and three bedroom self-contained apartments, penthouses and luxury beach villas, all with their own balconies. The property is fabulous, the décor is upmarket and being right on the beach it is a perfect place to relax and unwind.



Quay West – Bunker Bay

Bunker Bay is 3 hours away from Perth, in an area which is great for relaxing and doing a spot of wine tasting. The rooms here are lavishly furnished and you have a choice of studios or one and two bedroom properties. There is a very good restaurant and wine tours can also be booked here so you don't have to drive.



Abbey Beach resort - Busselton

This property sits on the beachfront of Geographic Bay amidst landscaped gardens and lakes. There are 2 outdoor swimming pools and 1 indoor pool as well as tennis and squash. The resort offers a cafeteria and an a la carte restaurant with lots of facilities for families; despite this you can quite often find a quiet corner!

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Fremantle

Known by the locals as Freo, this vibrant multi-cultural port city boasts world heritage buildings, cafés and restaurants as well as art galleries and designer clothes shops.

Here I stayed at the Esplanade which is in a wonderful position right in the town across the road from the park, and just beyond that the harbour which is bristling with restaurants and bars.

The rooms here at the Esplanade are spacious and nicely furnished with large bathrooms (they accommodate for up to 4 people). The restaurant is the hub of the hotel situated right in the middle of the lobby with buffet-style food available.



I took the ferry from the harbour for the 35 minute journey to Rottneet Island. This island is surrounded by turquoise waters and coral reefs, making it ideal for snorkelling or fishing, and it also boasts 63 sheltered beaches to choose from. The views from the island are incredible and you can often see wildlife, including osprey nests, quokkas and marine life if you keep your eyes open.

With no cars allowed on the island the only way to travel is by coach, bicycle or on foot so it is perfectly safe for children. Attractions include guided tours, scenic flights and a family Fun Park and there is also a restaurant and shops, so it is ideal for a family day out.



Summary

All too soon my trip to Perth was over and the coach collected me at 3am in the morning for my flight back to Dubai. My experience in Australia was one of amazement and delight. Perth offers a varied selection of hotels making it ideal for the individual back packer or for a family holiday. All in all, a super trip!