

Leisure and entertainment

New South Wales (NSW) is a culturally sophisticated State where leisure pursuits can range from the active - sailing, swimming, bushwalking, surfing and more - to the cultural - enjoying live theatre and music, going to the movies, or dining out in top restaurants.

Cultural activities

Sydney is a dynamic cultural centre that has a rich year-round program of world-class performances, outdoor events and festivals that make the city's outdoor and cultural lifestyle unique.

The city is home to a range of internationally acclaimed arts organisations including:

- [Opera Australia](#)
- [The Australian Ballet](#)
- [Sydney Dance Company](#)
- [Sydney Theatre Company](#)
- [Sydney Symphony Orchestra](#)
- [Musica Viva](#)
- [Bangarra Dance theatre](#).

These are supported by a range of world-class performing and exhibition venues such as:

- [Sydney Opera House](#), which has theatres for music, opera and drama.
- [Angel Place Recital Hall](#)
- [Art Gallery of NSW](#)
- [Museum of Contemporary Art](#)

[CitySearch](#) has listings of events and shows in and around Sydney, as well as theatres, live music venues, nightclubs, movie theatres, art galleries and much more.

The [Festival of Sydney](#) is held every January and includes many free outdoor events.

A headline event for the international gay community is Sydney's annual [Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras](#), a festival of performances and parties that culminates in a massive parade.

Many of the music, food and wine festivals in country NSW have attracted an international following, such as the famous [Tamworth Country Music Festival](#).

Movie studios

Surrounded by Sydney's spectacular locations and with state-of the-art production facilities, Sydney's Fox Studios is in high demand as a centre for shooting and producing films. Mission Impossible II, the Star Wars prequels, Moulin Rouge and The Matrix were filmed here and many of the special effects in The Matrix, which received an Academy Award, were created in Sydney. See more by visiting [Fox Studios](#) online.

Dining out

Sydney is a centre for contemporary cuisine that offers an eclectic blend of the world's finest food created with the freshest ingredients.

Visitors constantly remark on the high quality of fresh food served in cafés and restaurants in Sydney and across NSW. Quality of dishes and value for money are often the first notable highlights picked out by first-time visitors in NSW. Most town centres have Thai, Indian, Italian and Chinese restaurants and you'll usually find somewhere that offers well cooked, freshly caught seafood.

[CitySearch](#) has comprehensive listings of restaurants throughout Sydney.

In regions like the Hunter Valley, two hours north of Sydney, the Riverina region in the south-west of the State, and the central western wine hubs of Orange, Mudgee and Cowra, you'll find world-class wines to rival the best produced in California's Napa Valley or Europe. For an overview of the Australian wine industry, with details of regions and wineries visit the [Winetitles](#) website.

For general information on entertainment and leisure in NSW see the [Visit NSW](#) website.

Sport

Australia is a leader in the Asia Pacific for access to quality sporting and recreational facilities.

There are many excellent local and indoor sporting facilities in every town and in most areas of NSW. You'll find general sporting club information at www.sportnet.com.au and information on the range of activities available in NSW at <http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating>

For information on golf courses in NSW visit www.ausgolf.com.au which has course reviews, rankings, listings and information on golf resorts and tours around the State.

The most popular spectator sports in NSW include [Rugby League](#), [Australian Football](#) (or *Aussie Rules*) and [Rugby Union](#).

Information on NSW soccer clubs is at [Soccer NSW](#). All football codes have amateur leagues and the playing season runs from February to September.

In the Australian summer, cricket and tennis are popular. For information on NSW cricket facilities and clubs go to the [Cricket NSW](#) site. The [Tennis NSW](#) site provides information on upcoming competitions and sporting news.

The most popular women's sport in Australia is netball – 1.2 million women participate in this

game during the winter months. For information go to www.netball.asn.au.

NSW is a bushwalker's paradise. The [Sydney Bushwalkers](#) website suggests where to go and what to take with you.

The Snowy Mountains offer excellent skiing for three months of the year. You can find more information at the [Snowy Mountains tourism](#) site.

Watersports

Water activities of every kind are very popular in NSW and the coastal areas of NSW have some of the best swimming and surfing beaches you'll find anywhere in the world with clean, sparkling blue water. NSW's coastal waters are warm enough to swim in from September to May. For detailed information visit [Coastalwatch](#) or [Surf It Australia](#).

There are many inland lakes and rivers for swimming, kayaking and waterskiing. Sailing is also popular and there are many yacht charter companies along the coast and on the State's waterways. The [Yachting Association of NSW](#) website has comprehensive information on clubs and organisations, sailing events and weather updates.

Travel and holidays

NSW encapsulates a wide range of holiday experiences within its borders; this is because the landscape across the State is dramatically varied. This variety of holiday experiences makes it easy to get away to somewhere interesting for a weekend.

Accommodation options are diverse enough to fit any budget – you can stay in luxurious resorts, child-friendly hotels, holiday apartments, private retreats, modest motels or just camp in the wilderness.

The most popular destinations in Sydney are:

- The Rocks
- Darling Harbour
- Bondi Beach
- Manly
- Glebe/Newtown
- Kings Cross
- Paddington

The most visited regions in NSW are:

- Blue Mountains
- Hunter Valley
- Central Coast
- Coffs Harbour
- Canberra
- Southern Highlands

The following sites show the diversity of NSW holiday destinations as well as all the attractions of Sydney.

- [Visit NSW](#)
- [City of Sydney](#)
- [National Roads & Motorists' Association](#)
- [Walkabout Australian Travel Guide](#)
- The [NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service](#) website lists national parks by region of NSW and tells you where to find bushwalking tracks and camping facilities, and what fees, if any, need to be paid.