

Holiday gems you need to know

NAROOMA, NSW

Located in the Eurobodalla region of the NSW South Coast, Narooma (a local Yuin word for 'clear blue waters') is evocative of beach holidays of old, with its decidedly laid-back approach to sun, sea and sand. Expect stunning beaches, plentiful seafood (it's on the Oyster Coast after all), and cute wildlife – visit Montague Island (Barunguba) for its fur seal colony.

Also head to Shoal Bay, Copacabana, Yamba, Potato Point

FITZROY ISLAND, QLD

An easy ferry ride from Cairns, Fitzroy Island (part of Gunggandji Country; pictured top right) is stunningly positioned in the waters of the Great Barrier Reef. A national park, the island is covered in pristine rainforest and ringed by unspoilt beaches, and offers up walking trails, snorkelling, diving, turtle rehabilitation tours or sybaritic relaxation.

Also head to Mooloolaba, Cape Hillsborough, Dingo Beach

PORT FAIRY, VIC

Its location at the end of the fabled Great Ocean Road means the pretty fishing village of Port Fairy (the traditional home of the Gunditjmarra) doesn't get the Melbourne day trippers who swarm to the likes of Lorne and Torquay during the summer months. Here you can learn to surf, eat your fill of fresh seafood and take in the thriving local arts scene in relative peace and quiet.

Also head to Wye River, Metung, Mallacoota, Queenscliff

COLES BAY, TAS

Sitting at the gateway to the breathtaking Freycinet National Park, and perched near the celebrated Wineglass Bay, there are few locations in the country as blessed as Coles Bay when it comes to location. The laid-back village is the perfect base for exploring the wonders of the landscape here, including hiking Mt Amos and the Hazards, eating freshly harvested oysters to your heart's content and enjoying the blissfully remote (and uncrowded) Friendly Beaches.

Also head to South Bruny, Tullab, Stanley

WALPOLE, WA

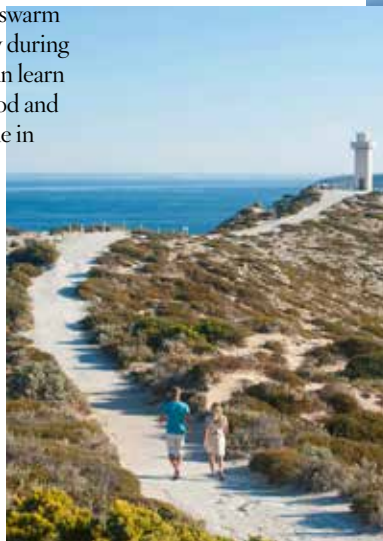
Situated on the delightfully named Rainbow Coast (along with Denmark and Albany) in the south-west of the state, the Walpole region (traditionally the Wagyil Kaip and Southern Noongar region; pictured bottom right) dazzles with its natural wonders, surrounded as it is by stunning beaches, ancient forests and a trio of national parks: Walpole-Nornalup, D'Entrecasteaux and Mount Frankland. The town itself sits at the edge of the expansive Walpole Inlet, where summer days are spent paddling, kayaking and fishing.

Also head to Dirk Hartog Island, Horrocks, Cape Leveque

MARION BAY, SA

Located on the Yorke Peninsula (the traditional home of the Narungga; pictured bottom left), a three-hour drive from Adelaide, Marion Bay spoils those who venture here with choice; the coastal town boasts a tranquil swimming beach, surf beach, ample fishing spots, as well as rugged coastal scenery (including its own shipwreck) and bushwalking at nearby Innes National Park. As for accommodation, there's camping (at Marion Bay Caravan Park), glamping (Bayside Glamping) and Hillocks Ocean Pods, luxe contemporary cabins with views out to Butler's Beach and Hillocks Point.

Also head to Rapid Bay, Myponga, Southend, the Coorong



PHOTOGRAPHY: SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION/ADAM BRUZZONE (MARION BAY); GREG SNELL/TOURISM WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WALPOLE, WA)