

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL



*Your South Pacific Travel Specialists*

# AUSTRALIA

2024-2025 GUIDED HOLIDAYS



**FIRST CHOICE** 5-21 day Fully Curated Experiences **From page 26**

**BEST BUYS** 3-15 day Flexible Guided Holidays **From page 58**

# South Western Escape

## Highlights

### ✂ Flexible Holidays

Quite possibly Australia's happiest critters, quokkas await across the sandy coves of Rottnest Island; the beaches are just as pretty in Albany, and come wrapped in history.

### 📍 Iconic Sites

From the powdery coves of Esperance to the vine-laced groves of the Margaret River region, we've got the colours of Australia covered.

### 🌿 Sustainable Travel

Taking in the forest from the Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk is not only spectacular, but it's contributing to the sustainability of this pocket of WA.

### 🌊 Natural Wonders

Surf's up at Wave Rock, a 110-metre granite swell resembling a wave about to crash to shore. If you think that's impressive, just wait till you hear it's three million years old.



11 DAYS  
13 Included Experiences

## Departure Dates

2023	2024
May 19	Sep 01, 08 <sup>^</sup> , 15 <sup>^</sup> , 22 <sup>^</sup> , 29
Jun 02	Oct 06, 13, 20
Aug 04, 18, 25	

Definite Departures highlighted in red.

<sup>^</sup> Expected wildflower season departure.

For prices, latest deals and year-round offers including past guest offers, group booking discounts for 9+ guests, multi-trip savings and additional definite departure dates visit [aatkings.com/wppp](https://aatkings.com/wppp) or contact your local travel agent.

A limited number of single rooms are also available.

## Dining

10 Full breakfasts B      7 Dinners D  
1 Lunch L

## Flight Information

Day 1 – flights to arrive prior to 12 noon into Perth Airport

Day 11 – flights to depart anytime from Perth Airport

Flights are not included in the holiday price.

## Upgrade

Extend your tour to include Monkey Mia. See Western Wonderland on page 64.

Valley of the Giants

### 1 Welcome to Perth

Western Australia's capital and largest city, Perth is remarkably green. The snaking Swan River cuts through town, its banks lined with leafy promenades – not to mention glorious Kings Park, a floral wonderland home to more than 3,000 plant species in the Botanic Gardens. Enjoy a stroll with your Travel Director to ease into your WA adventure, and later join your fellow travellers for a Welcome Dinner. **Hotel: Holiday Inn West Perth. D**

### 2 Perth – Wave Rock

Say hello to Wave Rock, a 110-metre, rainbow-hued granite swell formed more than three million years ago. It's in the ballpark of another imaginatively named rock formation: Hippo's Yawn. You can actually climb through the hippo's 'neck' to grab a happy snap. Fun fact: the visitor centre here has the world's largest collection of toy soldiers. Wave Rock local Sheenagh knows a thing or two about life on the land. She's passionate about her farm, and proudly shows off the outback while you explore the wide open spaces that characterise the WA countryside. You'll get to glimpse her collection of vintage cars – who knew folks in this part of the world were such avid collectors? **Hotel: Wave Rock Motel. B D**

### 3 Wave Rock – Kalgoorlie

Today is deep – quite literally. Your journey through classic WA outback lands you in Kalgoorlie – get your bearings on a town tour, pausing to take in vistas over the staggering 'Super Pit' open-cut gold mine. Put life into perspective standing next to monstrous loaders and haul trucks at Hannans North Mine. It's a shimmering opportunity to experience gold rush history and discover the Golden Mile. **Hotel: Rydges. B D**

### 4 Kalgoorlie – Esperance

Nature humbles at Cape Le Grand National Park, a staggering 31,000 hectares of sweeping heathlands, rugged coastal peaks and powdery beaches. It's so pretty that kangaroos come here for a little sunbaking on the sand – at Lucky Bay, you'll see Australia's national emblem dozing beside the water. And then there's Thistle Cove, replete with sun, sand, sea and sculpted rock formations that 'whistle' with the sounds of the wind and waves. **Hotel: Comfort Inn Bay of Isles. B D**

### 5 Esperance – Albany

Bring your stamina for a day of unparalleled wilderness encounters. Well, until tomorrow, and the next day. Fitzgerald River National Park is one of the most ecologically important pockets of WA, home to 20 per cent of the state's flora. Small wonder it's a designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Journey on through the Stirling Range National Park, blanketed with more than 1,500 species of wildflowers, some of which are found nowhere else on Earth. Get some perspective from the Bluff Knoll Lookout, one of WA's highest peaks. **Hotel: Dog Rock Motel, 2 nights. B D**

### 6 Albany Free Time

Albany turns on pretty much every charm, whether you're ready for more nature, are a history buff, or feel like it's time for food and wine. You have a day at leisure to go in whichever direction you please. Perhaps opt for a tour that relives the town's heritage as the last port of call for ANZAC troopships departing Australia in WWI. Maybe explore Torndirrup National Park, where steep cliffs give way to dramatic rock formations and whales are a common sight during migration. Or get a taste for the region on a culinary excursion. **B**

### 7 Albany – Margaret River

Think big when you visit the Valley of the Giants, where the Tree Top Walk gives you a bird's-eye view of the soaring tangle trees that stand large all around; you're suspended 40 metres above the forest floor. More lofty attractions await at the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse, the tallest of its kind in Australia, set at the tip of a peninsula where the Indian and Southern Oceans meet. Being amid nature makes you thirsty. It's a good thing the Margaret River wine region is on the horizon. **Hotel: Stay Margaret River, 2 nights. B D**

### 8 Margaret River

There aren't many places in the world where grape vines grow metres from the sand – the Margaret River region is one. Here, 200 vineyards sit beside talented makers, bakers and purveyors. All you need to know is that today is one of indulgences, beginning at Vasse Virgin to savour olive oil that's good enough to drink. But maybe try it on bread instead. Lunch is leisurely, at a vineyard with plenty of time to sip and savour local drops. If you still have room for dinner, ask us for recommendations. **B L**

### 9 Margaret River – Fremantle

You've seen the bucolic vine-laced countryside; now experience the region's coast as you journey north to Busselton. Yet another record-breaking attraction awaits: the longest wooden jetty in the Southern Hemisphere. Tip your cap to those who built this 1.8-kilometre structure out into Geographe Bay. The afternoon is all yours in Freo. **Hotel: Esplanade Fremantle by Rydges, 2 nights. B D**

### 10 Fremantle Free Time

Freo sits at the mouth of the Swan River, its port the gateway to all manner of watery expeditions. One that will surely make you smile is the ferry ride to Rottnest Island, where Australia's happiest (and friendliest) critters await. Bring your swimsuit to cool off between cycling expeditions. If you're ready for some downtime, follow the lead of locals to Little Creatures Brewery for an icy ale. Or explore the town in the company of an in-the-know local. Today is yours to create, but we always have a few ideas in our little black book. **B**

### 11 Farewell from Fremantle

Eleven days. Too many beaches to count. Wildlife galore. A few wine bottles and a few thousand memories... this trip is one for the record books. **B**

