



If you're thinking of cashing in your hard-earned annual leave to escape the hustle and bustle, why not hike, road trip, and camp your way through the great state of New South Wales?

Whether you're exploring your own backyard or travelling (safely) from interstate – we've rounded up the best adventures to do in NSW covering everything from hitting the slopes in the High Country to exploring the trails in the Blue Mountains, and road tripping along the Pacific Coast Drive – so you're spoiled for choice when it comes to sights and scenery. Only interested in certain types of adventures? Click on the links below to skip ahead. Otherwise, let's get going!

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Hiking & alpine adventures

Kosciuszko Main Range

If you're up for a bit more of a challenge, the [Kosciuszko Main Range](#) is the longer alpine track that will allow you to experience the High Country of NSW on foot.

This area is the traditional land of the Walgal and Ngarigo people and is in the Thredbo-Perisher region of the Kosciuszko National Park, with access via Kosciuszko Road near Jindabyne. You'll need a parks pass for your visit and being an alpine environment, you will need to carry out *all* your waste and rubbish!

Back country camping is permitted so long as you adhere to the old rule – *take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints!* Camping in the catchments of lakes on the Main Range is prohibited, so it's worth having a read of the [NSW Parks website](#) to get the low-down on do's and don'ts.

Summer is a good time to visit, as it is snowbound in winter from June to October. If you'd prefer to do a day trip, the Kosciuszko walk – Thredbo to Mount Kosciuszko will take you around 4-5 hours to reach the peak of Australia's highest point.



Hiking the Kosciuszko Main Range. Image: Chris Newman

Blue Mountains

Known for the view of world-renowned Three Sisters and surrounding Jamison Valley, the Blue Mountains can be reached in just 2 hours from Sydney by car.

The distinctive blue haze over the area is caused by the dense eucalyptus trees which produce droplets of oil that combine with dust and water to scatter the famous blue light over the mountains. The [Blue Mountains National Park](#) features six areas: Katoomba, Blackheath, Glenbrook, Lower Grose Valley, Mount Wilson, and the Southern Blue Mountains region, each with their own natural wonders to experience.

You'll need to purchase a parks pass for your visit which you can find [here](#) and [book your](#)



campsite in advance for health and safety reasons. To get the latest on the local alerts in the area, take a look through the New South Wales NPWS website [here](#).

The area also boasts a number of bushwalks such as the Prince Henry Cliff Walk, the Grand Canyon Track, and the Mount Banks Summit walk – so you'll have lots of trails to keep you busy. Bring along all your outdoor gear such as bikes, bathers and recovery kit so that you can ride, swim and hit the 4WD tracks while you're there.



The Blue Mountains is the perfect base to explore. Image: Walk My World

Snowy Mountains region

Every winter the Snowy Mountains come alive with activity – with locals and interstate visitors making the journey there to kick off the ski season.

This region is the traditional home of the Ngarigo and Djiringanj people and is the perfect place for an alpine adventure, whether it's to climb the summit in Kosciuszko National Park or head down the slopes of Thredbo and Perisher. This area is the hub for outdoor sports and with skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing and snow tubing all on offer, it's abundant with snow related activities. You can also get your adrenalin fix in the off-season with there being plenty of opportunities for 4WDing, climbing, mountain biking and caving once the snow has melted. For current health alerts and updates, have a read through the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service website [here](#) and to get information on the upcoming ski season and what safety measures are in place, head to the [Snowy Mountains website](#).



Hit the slopes in the Snowy Mountains. Image: Visit NSW

4WDing & road trips

Newnes

For a 4WDing getaway, Newnes is one of the most popular places to hit the tracks in NSW. It's around a 2 to 3 hour drive from Sydney depending on where you are located and is situated in the Wolgan Valley.

Stay at the Newnes Campground which is in Wollemi National Park and use it as a base to explore the tracks in the area such as Powerlines, The Lost City, and the Maiyingu Marragu Trail. Even though 4WDing is the most popular activity to do in this area, you can also ride your bike or hike to access some of the more remote parts.

The Glow Worm Tunnel walking track is also not far from here in Wollemi National Park, and you can explore the ruins of the Old Shale Mines close by if you're keen to gain a little insight into the local history during your stay.



Camp out at Newnes. Image: Ian Treseder

Pacific Coast Drive

If you just feel like jumping in the car and enjoying the open road, then the Pacific Coast



Drive is just the trip you need.

This drive is 1000km long, starting out in Sydney and going all the way through to Brisbane with the option to stop in Newcastle, Port Stephens, Coffs Harbour, the Hunter Valley, Byron Bay and the Gold Coast along the way. It'll take you around 9 days to complete the whole stretch, but you can certainly shorten your trip to work with your schedule. Go back to basics and stay in caravan parks and campgrounds along the way, or choose from motels, Airbnb's and other accommodation at each pit stop.

For more details and suggestions on how to plan your itinerary, head to Tourism Australia's website [here](#).



Cruise along the Pacific Coast Drive. Image: Big4 Holiday Parks

Camping & sightseeing

Olney State Forest

Located near the Central Coast of NSW in the beautiful Watagan Mountains, this forest is a great location for a [family getaway](#) among the trees.

It'll take you around 1-2 hours to get there from Sydney, with a 2WD vehicle travelling all the way along the main roads. There are several camps available, including Casuarina, The Basin and Turpentine, and great news for pet lovers as dogs under supervision are allowed. Check in with the [NSW Forestry Corporation](#) for the latest updates on health and safety.

Right next to the Watagan Forest Road is Olney HQ which is a popular place for a picnic or BBQ, and for dirt bike riders to spend the night before setting off on their expedition. There are a number of trails in the area as well such as The Pines, Rock Lily, and Abbotts Falls walking tracks which you can do with the family, so you can spend as much time as you like exploring the picturesque surroundings.



The cool, dense forest will create a scenic atmosphere for your stay. Image: Ian Treseder

Warrambungle National park

[Warrambungle National Park](#) is located approximately two hours north of Dubbo and is a 6.5 hour drive from Sydney. While it does take a bit of time to get there, it is well worth a visit for those wanting to explore this deeply spiritual place for the Gamilaroi, the Wiradjuri and Weilwan land custodians.

It's the only [Dark Sky Park](#) in Australia so if you're an amateur astronomist or stargazer, the clear night skies and high altitude will allow you to immerse yourself and feel like you're closer to a galaxy far far away.

Pitch your tent at one of the three main camping areas [Camp Blackman](#), [Camp Wambelong](#), or [Camp Pincham](#) and then explore the park's many walking trails such as Burbie Canyon Walking Track, Beloungery Split Rock Walking Track, Mount Exmouth Walking Track, and the Breadknife or Grand High Tops walk. It's also possible to spot one of the many native animals that inhabit the park such as peregrine falcons, wedge-tailed eagles, turquoise parrots, red-necked wallabies and koalas. You can also check out the [Sliding Springs](#)



Observatory located at the edge of the park.

Book your campsite in advance and an entry fee to the park for each day and vehicle is charged. It's also advised that you get the latest health and safety updates before your trip.



Hike, camp and stargaze at Warrambungle NP. Image: Sabrina Blaas

Hill End Historic Site

Hill End Historic Site located in the central west of NSW, invites you step back in time to the gold rush era of the 1870s, and provides a chance to delve into the history of the Wiradjuri people. Access is on sealed roads via Mudgee from the north, or Bathurst from the south and it's the ideal location for a few days of laid-back exploration.

Check out the local pub The Royal for a meal and a drink, the General Store for a delicious award-winning pie, or self-cater by bringing your own food from home. With a choice of cosy cottages and B&Bs, and two campgrounds – Village or Glendora – you're sure to find accommodation to suit your needs. There is a self-guided Village Walking Track which provides a wealth of information on the history of the site, or there's the Bald Hill walking track and the Golden Gully walking track.

If a 4WD adventure is more your speed, head a couple of hours away to the Turon River on the challenging Bridle Track. Take a picnic lunch with you and eat on the river bank, or bring along your fishing gear and drop in a line.



Hill End is a relaxed and quiet holiday destination. Image: Emma McPherson

Murramarang National Park

At only a 3 hour drive south of Sydney, Murramarang National Park is close to the small town of Durras and can be accessed by a 2WD vehicle. Great for a little family getaway, it's not too far from the city and is also near Bateman's Bay, so you can pop over for some fishing and discover the lively seaside town.

Enjoy the beach with it's picturesque scenery, go birdwatching or if it's not too cold, bring your bodyboards along and catch some waves. Alternatively, if stretching the legs is more your thing, there are ample opportunities to go for a wander along Dark Beach walking track, Durras Lake Discovery Trail or Depot Beach rainforest walk, all of which are within the park. You can camp at the Northhead, Depot Beach campground, Pebbly Beach, or Pretty Beach Campground, but if you'd prefer to stay in a cabin or resort, those are also available and you can book online here. It's also wise to do some research about the health and safety alerts and closures that might be in place here.



Murramarang is a picturesque getaway. Image: Ian Treseder

Header image: Jacques Bopp

What's on your bucket list for exploring in NSW?