



Hill End village is nestled in the central west of NSW and accessed by sealed roads via Mudgee from the north, or Bathurst from the south.

Managed by the [NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service](#) as a historic site, it is a perfect three day or weekend stopover.

The best time to visit is autumn, but spring is a highlight with many blooms in the cottage gardens full of heritage plantings.



Autumn is the perfect time of the year to check out Hill End.

The End Festival in April and recently added [Taste the Past Picnic](#) event in October are peak visitor times, so booking ahead is recommended.

The pace in Hill End is slow. If you hope to tour the quaint homesteads and cottages contact the historic site office on 02 6337 8206 for an up to date open days' schedule. Phone and internet services are unreliable in the township, so it's a good idea to call before you arrive.



Hill end is a great weekend away.

Comfort food

Once crowded with more than 30 pubs, now there's just one, [The Royal](#). A must visit for food, drink and some rich local tales from the regulars.

The General Store is also a bakery with takeaway or sit-down daytime menus. But be warned, you may miss their award-winning pies if you stroll in for a late lunch. We were beaten to the counter by a car club, and motorbike group.

Supplies are limited in the town, so self-catering is an easy option. There are few dining opportunities, and many accommodation providers offer a kitchen or kitchenette as standard.



If you're looking for a place to eat, check out the Royal.

A place to lay your head

Accommodation is mixed and plentiful ranging from more than adequate rooms at the pub, the shared facilities backpackers at Hosies, to numerous cottages and cosy B&Bs. There are also two campgrounds.

[The Village](#) is the most convenient option and an easy stroll to town. Bookings can be made online or on arrival at a cash-only self-help kiosk at the park entrance. There are powered and non-powered sites, firepits (BYO firewood) and good amenities, even a microwave in the laundry.



If you're camping, The Village is in an easy walking distance from town.

The light is right

The light in Hill End is a joy to artists and photographers alike and is best in the depths of winter. Falling leaves of orange and yellow are preferable to the risk of an overnight snowfall when you are in a camper, so I like autumn best. Rewarded by a wander in the soft light of crisp misty mornings or observing the setting sun as it brings the Clarke Road buildings to



life.

Kangaroos are prolific. Expect to see many, many grazing mobs. They have no fear of humans and recognise no boundaries. Keep an eye out for them on the road, and in the campsite. If you're wandering around at night, take a torch.



You'll see many kangaroos on your visit.

Exploring Hill End

The self-guided Village Walking Track features information boards about buildings still standing and those long gone.

There are limited footpaths, but all the roads are sealed. It is not called Hill End for fun, there are some hills and inclines so if you are concerned, take the car. All day parking is available on every street.



On the Village Walking Track, there are information boards about buildings still standing and those long gone.

Please observe the private property notices and other notices. Some buildings are open daily and worth a look in. You may even catch the audio-visual display of images from the historic Holtermann collection on the interior walls of the Great Northern General Store up by the police station.

A relatively new heritage centre, opposite the pub, offers state-of-the-art interactive museum displays and access to images selected from the State Library of NSW and Hill End memorabilia recovered from the site or from private collections.



Learn more about Hill End by visiting the Heritage Centre.

Golden Art history

In the 1950s Hill End became a haven for some of Australia's greatest artists. It's easy to see why, and you'll recognise features from many well-known paintings of the surrounding landscape and village properties. A strong artistic community remains today.

The Hill End Artist in Residence Program coordinated by the Bathurst Regional Art Gallery is one of the most sought after on offer around the country. It's common to see artists at work or benefit from resulting exhibitions.

There are three scenic lookouts with very different views and no more than 3kms from town. I recommend you drive. The partial dirt road access is good and 2WD friendly. Each has a large bench to make them perfect for a BYO toast to sunset. Pop your camera on one of the panorama poles to capture spectacular wide vistas or use the compass point guides to identify various landmarks.



While you're wandering around, you might recognise a few locations from famous paintings.



A trip down memory lane

An adventurous 4x4 driver can drive a couple of hours down to the Turon River on the challenging Bridle track (if weather permits). It's a good spot to drop in a line, or cool off by the water with lunch on the shady river bank.

At the time of writing, the track is not open all the way to Bathurst as it is being repaired after major rockslides and a bridge wash away. The [Bathurst Council Facebook page](#) and office have regular updates on the roadworks.

If you need to keep your four wheels on the road, or something a little less daring, there are many short trips to enjoy.



If you're in a 4WD, cruise down to the Bridle track nearby.

History Hill Museum

The nearby [History Hill Museum](#) is well set up for visitors of all ages. Spend half a day surrounded by interesting collections of relics and vehicles. The walk-through underground shaft and stamper are a bonus experience.

Bald Hill Walking trip and Bald Hill Mine

On the edge of Hill End, quite near the Village campground, is the start of the Bald Hill Walking Track. Guidebooks recommend you take [binoculars](#) to spot the various birds, native animals and wildflowers on the easy trail. The man-made track is uneven in parts so walking shoes are also recommended.

Tours of the [Bald Hill Mine](#) can be arranged and demonstrations of tap mining and other colonial techniques are provided. The mine is open most weekends. Mid-week tours may be possible, ask at Northey's Store on Clarke St for details.



If you want to see the mine up close, you can arrange a tour.

Golden Gully

A trip to [Golden Gully](#) along the wattle filled creek bank offers insight to goldmine design. The once hidden intricate hive of underground shafts and tunnels, now revealed by erosion, are accessed easily on a flat signposted track from the carpark. If you are sure of foot, you may like to wander further into the complex to discover the caves and arches about the area.

Tambaroora

The [Cornish quartz roasting pits in Tambaroora](#) are also well worth a visit. A short drive from Hill End they span Fighting Ground Creek. There is a pair of kilns and the remnants of a battery building and workers' houses.



There are few street lights and no footpaths, so using your phone or another torch is



recommended.

Last, but not least

When visiting Hill End it is important to note the advice from NSW Parks that particular care should be taken around the area. There are few street lights so using your phone or another torch is recommended.

Look where you are walking day and night as uncovered mine shafts exist throughout the region.

Despite these warnings, it is a beautiful place to visit and I'm sure, like me, you'll be keen to return.

What's your favourite historic spot that you've visited in Australia?