

THE ULTIMATE AUSTRALIA'S SOUTH WEST ROAD TRIP

Point Picquet, Dunsborough

There's something for everyone in Australia's South West, a destination that's home to awe-inspiring natural attractions, ancient coastal and inland landscapes and premium food and drink experiences. Meet the very best of the South West on this 10- to 14-day road trip.

LEG ONE: NATURE'S ATELIER

Perth > 1hr30min/139km > Harvey > 35min/48km > Collie > 38min/52km > Ferguson Valley > 15min/15km > Bunbury

Rolling green hills, cow-dotted countryside and deep green forest set the scene for the first leg of this Ultimate Australia's South West Road Trip, which ventures through rich, agricultural lands, nature's own adventure playground and a number of manmade marvels that really wow.

ENROUTE

It takes approximately an-hour-and-a-half to drive from Perth to Harvey, via the Kwinana Freeway and South Western Highway.

Alternatively, travellers can head down the Freeway then turn left onto Forestry Road.

Those travelling down the South Western Highway will pass Logue Brook Dam just 15 minutes from town. This beautiful inland waterway is popular with water- skiers, kayakers, stand up paddle boarders and fishermen, as well as cyclists and hikers (The Munda Biddi Cycling Trail and Bibbulmun Track are nearby).

The 10m-high **Big Orange Tower** will appear next. For a gold coin donation, travellers can climb to the top of the tower and look out over the orange orchards. While there, try some wines at the adjoining **Harvey River Estate**.

Only minutes down the road, visit the hub of Aboriginal culture in Harvey at **Boola Bidi Dreaming Centre**, which boasts an extensive retail range of Aboriginal products.

Also located along the highway is **Harvey Cheese**, a must-stop for dairy lovers.

To get to Collie, continue along the Highway for five minutes then turn left onto Mornington Road, which twists and turns through rolling farmland then state forest before making its way to Collie.

For another option, travel 15 minutes down the Highway then turn left onto Coalfields Road, just after Roelands.

Black Diamond Lake and Stockton Lake are two former open-cut mines renowned for their bright, turquoise- blue waters. Travellers can explore Black Diamond Lake to Collie's west, and Stockton Lake to its east.

Collie is also a short drive away from Wellington National Park – a haven for outdoor adventure seekers and nature lovers alike.

Within the park travellers will find an abundance of flora, fauna, the world's largest dam mural, walking trails and mountain biking tracks.

The easiest places to access these trails are from the Wellington Dam kiosk, Potters Gorge and Honeymoon Pool. We love the Willman Bilya Walk Trail, which loops around the Wellington Dam.

The Ferguson Valley borders the south of Wellington National Park, and can be reached by following either River Road or Falcon Road to Pile Road.

Here travellers will find a handful of boutique wineries set in valleys or nestled between tree-lined hills, and a quirky bushland village filled to the brim with miniature gnomes.

After wandering through Gnomesville, travellers can make their way to the city of Bunbury via Ferguson Road and the town of Dardanup.



RECOMMENDED



SUGGESTED TRIP LENGTH
10 - 14 Days



TOTAL LEGS
11



NUMBER OF TOWNS
24

NEED-TO-KNOWS

- We recommend travellers spend two to three days enjoying each leg of this itinerary, which can also be experienced in reverse.
- The easiest way to travel to Australia's South West is by flying to either Perth Airport, the Busselton Margaret River Airport (Jetstar flights depart from Melbourne and Sydney to the Busselton Margaret River Airport each three times a week) or the Albany Airport (via Rex).
- For Perth Airport transfers, we recommend Australian Pinnacle Tours, Australian Transit Group (ATG) and South West Coachlines.
- Avis, Avraa Car Hire, Busselton & South West Rent A Car, Europcar and Hertz car hire options are available at the Busselton Margaret River Airport.
- For Albany Airport transfers, clients can hire a taxi or organise a charter with Busy Blue Bus.
- Clients interested in caravanning or camping can hire four-wheel-drive campers from Red Sands Campers and camper and caravan packages from Crikey Camper Hire.
- Tourists are advised to check for alerts and road/park closures before commencing their travel on www.emergency.wa.gov.au and alerts.dbca.wa.gov.au.
- Most of Western Australia's national parks have entry fees; we suggest buying a multi-park pass prior to travel.
- We have provided our top recommendations of trade-ready products and services below.



[Click here for Australia's South West's full trade-ready list.](#)

AUSTRALIA'S

SOUTH WEST
REGIONAL
TOURISM
ORGANISATION



Dolphin Discovery Centre, Bunbury

In Bunbury, guests should stop off at the **Bunbury Farmers Market** for a browse and a bite to eat, or head straight to Koombana Bay Foreshore where they can spot wild bottlenose dolphins playing in the bay.

The centre of town isn't far away, and we recommend getting dinner at **Market Eating House** or **Mojo's Kitchen**, then having a drink or two at some of the city's bars (**Lost Bills** and **Froth brewery** are our picks).

Overnight in the picturesque Ferguson Valley or by the sea in Bunbury.

MUST-DOS

Swim and/or interact with the wild dolphins of Koombana Bay during an eco-friendly swimming (between November and April) or cruise experience with **Dolphin Discovery Centre**, or learn about these inquisitive mammals and other sea creatures in the centre's interpretive centre, which features a number of aquariums and a touch pool.

MUST-STAYS

Evedon Lakeside Retreat's cosy cabins and spacious two-storey apartments are nestled between jarrah forest on the banks of the idyllic Evedon Lake, in the Ferguson Valley.

Peppermint Lane Lodge's four, adults-only studios each have ensuite bathrooms and private balconies that look out over native bushland and country gardens.

In Bunbury, travellers looking for an affordable accommodation option can book a cabin, studio or caravan and camping site at **Discovery Parks - Bunbury Foreshore** - a holiday park opposite Koombana Bay.

Quest Bunbury's serviced, apartment-style hotel rooms can also be found across the road from Koombana Bay.

LEG TWO: APPLE AND WINE COUNTRY

*Bunbury > 32min/37km >
Donnybrook > 45min/59km >
Busselton*

After a slow start in Bunbury, travellers will venture through prime apple and wine country before heading back to the coast in leg two of this Ultimate South West Road Trip.

ENROUTE

Mornings in Bunbury should be spent feasting on hearty breakfasts with friends. We recommend dining at **The Townhouse** or **Benesse**.

After breakfast, visitors can wander through the city's streets either by foot or on a Beam e-scooter and spot colourful and vivid artworks painted on many-a-wall, or stretch their legs by walking to the top of Marlston Hill Lookout and/or down Bunbury's west coast to Wyalup-Rocky Point.

It's then on to Donnybrook via the South Western Highway. From the end of March through to early July, some orchards in the region open to the public and allow them to pick-their-own apples. For more details we suggest contacting the Donnybrook Visitor Centre or local fruit and vegetable store **Fruit Barn**.

In town, find one of the largest free playgrounds in the state, the Donnybrook Apple Fun Park. From giant twisting slides and trampolines, to swings and climbing frames, the Fun Park has something for everyone.

Travellers will find **Park Donnybrook** a short walk away. The café is a fantastic spot for a coffee and cake, or head to one of Donnybrook's small, family-run wineries for lunch and some wine.

After lunch it's an easy 45-minute-drive to Busselton via Goodwood Road and Bussell Highway. The city of Busselton is situated along the wide-stretching Geographe Bay, where visitors will find crystal clear waters that lap at miles and miles of white, sandy beach.



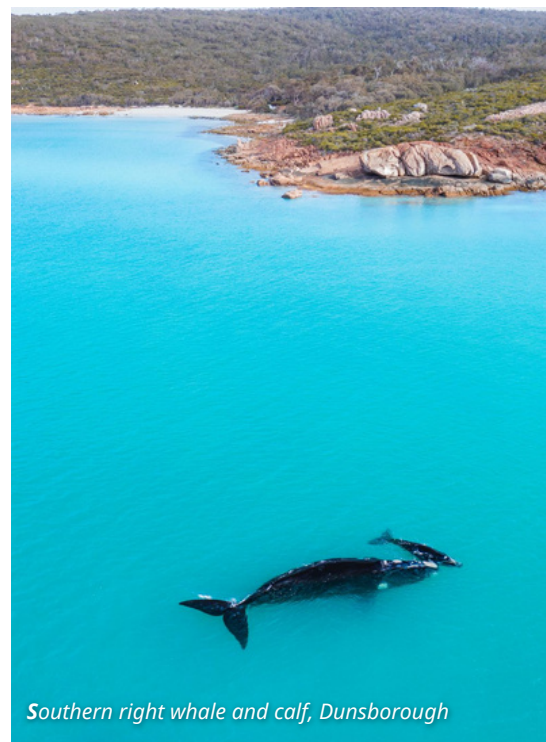
Saint Aidan Wines, Ferguson Valley



Wellington Dam Mural, near Collie



Busselton Jetty



Southern right whale and calf, Dunsborough

Flat terrain and coastal-hugging paths make this part of the coast easy to explore by foot or bike, and the calm, mostly waveless bay entices swimmers, kayakers and stand up paddle boarders into the water to play.

An incredibly family-friendly destination, Busselton also features a sprawling, grassy foreshore, multiple playgrounds and parks, and a nice mix of eateries to suit different budgets and tastes.

MUST-DOS

Adrenaline junkies can fly through the trees at **Forest Adventures** – a high rope adventure park located, mostly, in a canopy of trees within the Ludlow Tuart forest.

Sip on **Whicher Ridge's** small batch wine as you explore the winery's Wine Sensory Garden, which features fruit trees, herbs, flowers and seasonal vegetables that describe and match the flavours, textures and styles of Whicher's wines.

Elevate your South West journey with a **Scenic Helicopters'** flight along the Margaret River coast.

One of the most recognisable icons in Western Australia, the **Busselton Jetty** is a great attraction in which to explore by foot, train or sea. We suggest jumping on board the red jetty train, then finding out what rests 8 metres below the ocean's surface in the jetty's Underwater Observatory.

Soak in the sun, sea and laidback atmosphere of Busselton while enjoying a locally brewed beer and hearty pub food at **Shelter Brewing Co.**

MUST-STAYS

The Margaret River region's largest resort, **Abbey Beach Resort**, commands attention along the Geographe Bay foreshore, where its 185 spacious studio suites and multi-room apartments, conference centre, pools and restaurant are situated.

Aqua Resorts beach houses exude understated luxury thanks to their seaside location (also along Geographe Bay), landscaped gardens and their own heated plunge pools.

Big4 Breeze Holiday Parks Busselton offers a wide range of family-friendly cabin, caravan and camping site accommodation options just 3.5km from the iconic Busselton Jetty.

A three-minute walk to Geographe Bay, **The Sebel Busselton** features incredibly spacious apartments with kitchen facilities, complimentary parking and access to the hotel's squash courts and indoor and outdoor swimming pools.

LEG THREE: OTHERWORLDLY ATTRACTIONS AND BEAUTIFUL BAYS

*Busselton > 25min/23.5km >
Dunsborough > 10min/11km >
Yallingup*

Travellers who wish to embrace a laidback, coastal lifestyle can do so in the seaside towns of Dunsborough and Yallingup – home to calm, picture-perfect beaches, granite rock enclaves and world-class surfing breaks.

ENROUTE

Busselton, Dunsborough and Yallingup are all in close proximity to one another, connected via Bussell Highway and Caves Road.

For the most direct route to Dunsborough, we suggest travelling down Caves Road, which leads right into town. Dunsborough's town centre is filled with clothing boutiques, homewares shops, cafes, bars and restaurants, and its Lions Park often plays host to a community market most Saturdays throughout the year.

An electric car charging station is located by the park, and a petrol station across the road.

Dunsborough is situated at the bottom of Cape Naturaliste, the northernmost point of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge.

Travellers can drive right to the point of the Cape via Cape Naturaliste Road, which also leads to a number of awe-inspiring beaches perfect for swimming, sunbathing (don't forget sunscreen and a hat) and/or whale watching, via Meelup Beach Road, Eagle Bay Road and Bunker Bay Road.

At the end of Cape Naturaliste Road stands the Cape Naturaliste Lighthouse, which visitors can explore on a guided tour, and the start of the Cape to Cape Track, a 135km-long walking trail that runs between Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin, the Margaret River region's southernmost point.

Further south of Cape Naturaliste lays the surfing town of Yallingup, just a short 10-minute-drive from Dunsborough via Caves Road then Yallingup Beach Road.

Travellers who drive down Yallingup Beach Road will be greeted with breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean and Yallingup surf breaks below and to their left, before the road curves around to reveal a mix of beach shacks and show-stopping, luxury holiday homes nestled in the Yallingup hillside.

Yallingup itself doesn't have a major town centre. Instead, find a small general store, the heritage-listed **Caves House Hotel** and **Yallingup Gugelhupf** (a blue, pink and white-coloured, German bakery) at the start of Yallingup Beach Road, and a coastal-inspired restaurant and kiosk at the end (by the Yallingup Beach carpark).

Keep heading south between the Capes and find Smiths Beach, another white, sandy beach frequented by many-a-local; and Canal Rocks, a series of natural rock canals that can be observed from a wooden bridge.



Koomal Dreaming, Yallingup

MUST-DOS

Roam down the back roads of the South West and get exclusive access to some of the region's farms and small producers during a Forage Safaris's food and farm tour.

Discover the best of the Cape to Cape Track on an eco-friendly hike with Cape to Cape Explorer Tours.

Taste native bushfood, discover bush medicine and experience a traditional fire lighting (in-season) on one of Koomal Dreaming's immersive cultural tours.

Venture into the depths of Ngilgi Cave to find stalactites, stalagmites, helictites and colourful shawls decorating its cavern.

Between May and November, join Naturaliste Charters aboard their luxury 20-metre catamaran and cruise between the Capes in search of Humpback, Southern Right, Blue and Minke whales. • For a cruise of a different, more luxurious kind, try a floating seafood degustation with South West Cruises.

MUST-STAYS

On the quiet beachfront of Bunker Bay lays Pullman Bunker Bay Resort, a 5-star resort comprising 150 bungalow-style luxury villas, a restaurant, outdoor pool and 35 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens.

For the best Smiths Beach views, stylish-yet-cosy living spaces and access to a pool, choose Smiths Beach Resort.

Lap up luxury at Cape Lodge, a country manor-style estate with 22 beautifully appointed rooms and suites, plus a coveted restaurant headed by one of the region's best chefs.

LEG FOUR: ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT-BUFFET

Yallingup > 30min/35km > Margaret River

From sand and surf, to food and wine – leg four of our Ultimate Australia's South West Road Trip is for the food- and wine-inclined.

ENROUTE

While many people are attracted to the Margaret River region for its surf and pristine beaches, others come to try its all-you-can-try smorgasbord of food, wine and brews.

This smorgasbord starts in the hills and valleys that surround Yallingup; down long winding roads lined by towering trees, bush and fields of grass and/or vines. One of the most iconic – Caves Road – is peppered with world-class wineries and restaurants.

Guests who veer off Caves Road and onto Metricup Road, Harmans Mill Road and Tom Cullity Drive, won't be upset with what they find: more award-winning wineries, eateries and producers of delicious treats including **Maison Lassaille's** artistic French desserts and the **Margaret River Nougat Company's** housemade nougat.

Once bellies are well and truly full, travellers can head to the town of Margaret River, which is nestled between lush bushland and along the Margaret River.

Legs can be stretched along peaceful bush walks through the Wooditjup National Park and the Margaret River Rotary Park, which also has barbecue, picnic and toilet facilities plus a playground for the kids.

The town's main street is flanked with a mix of artisan shops, cafes, pubs, restaurants and galleries that visitors can browse at their leisure, before they check-in to their accommodation.



Cape To Cape Track



Coasteering with Margaret River Adventure Co.



Jewel Cave, Augusta

MUST-DOS

Walk parts of the Cape to Cape Track on a **Walk Into Luxury** tour, which also includes a luxurious lunch at a Margaret River winery, a dip in a secluded bay and a night's stay at a lavish beachside resort.

Meet more than 40 different species of reptiles, amphibians, arachnids and birds at interactive reptile centre **Discovery Deadly**.

Watch chocolate being made then eat it at **The Margaret River Chocolate Company**. Taste small-batch vodka, whisky, rum, gin, liqueurs and more in **The Grove's** distillery, while head distiller James Reed shares his craft philosophy, spirits insights and stories that inspired The Grove's award-winning brews.

Make your own lip balm or perfume at **Vasse Virgin** – a skincare and soap factory that only uses natural ingredients, including olive oil, to make its products.

Swing into **Swings and Roundabouts** for their Swings Backyard Stories cellar door experience, which allows guests to explore the winery's vineyard before enjoying a shared grazing feast while swinging on the venue's insta-worthy swing seats.

Go behind-the-scenes and through the vines on an intimate vineyard tour at **Fraser Gallop Estate**, **Clairault Streicker** and/or **Windows Estate**.

For a true paddock-to-plate foodie experience, dine at **de'sendent's** boutique winery and restaurant.

MUST-STAYS

For a unique lakeside glamping experience, stay in one of **Olio Bello Glamping's** 16 safari-style bungalows nestled around the lake of the business's 320-acre, organic olive farm. Even if they don't plan on staying, we highly recommend clients have a moreish lunch at Olio Bello's café.

Eight Willows Retreat is home to 25 self-contained luxury chalets, set across 30 hectares of native bushland on Metricup Road.

Margaret's In Town Apartments offers guests modern, self-contained studios or apartments located right in the heart of the Margaret River township.

LEG FIVE: COASTAL HAMLETS AND HIDDEN NATURAL GEMS

Margaret River > 30min/36km > Hamelin Bay > 13min/16km > Augusta > 30min/45km > Margaret River

Magical karri forest, an ancient underground cave system and a windswept coast characterise the southern parts of the Margaret River region and this leg of our South West journey.

ENROUTE

Travellers need to be well fuelled for this leg of the trip, which sees them exploring the sights and scenes in between and including Margaret River and Cape Leeuwin.

Breakfast fuel can be found at the **Margaret River Bakery** (their savoury breakfast croissants are to die for) or, if visiting on a Saturday, the artisan **Margaret River Farmers Market**.

It's then time to drive along our favourite stretch of Caves Road, the part between Margaret River and Hamelin Bay. It's here travellers will find Boranup Forest and its giant jarrah, karri and marri trees, which grow on either side of the road like silent forest sentinels.

Wildflowers bloom in spring (September-November), adding an injection of colour to the already stunning forest floor. Underground, **Jewel, Lake** and **Mammoth Caves** lay waiting to be explored.



Stingray, Hamelin Bay

Caves Road eventually passes the quiet coastal town of Hamelin Bay and its beach, which is home to friendly rays that come right up to the shallows. If visitors plan to catch a snap with these wild sea creatures, we recommend visiting the bay in the early morning or late afternoon.

Hamelin Bay is 13 minutes away from Augusta, another seaside hamlet where the Blackwood River meets the Southern Ocean.

Pass through the town and all the way down Leeuwin Road, which runs along the coast, and visitors will find (and can climb) the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse – Australia's tallest mainland lighthouse.

There are plenty of prime fishing spots along this road, as well as whale watching lookouts.

On the way back to Augusta, turn onto Davies Road to find popular natural swimming pool Granny's Pool, or head down Albany Terrace to the sheltered Flinders Bay, a great spot for fishing, paddling and picnicking (fish and chips from **The Colour Patch** is a local must-do).

Head back to Margaret River via Bussell Highway for the night.



Cycling in Nannup

MUST-DOS

Climb to the top of the 40m-high **Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse**, which presents views of both the Indian and Southern Oceans.

Discover the region's caves and lighthouses all in one go, on a guided **Ultimate Caves and Lighthouse tour with Margaret River Exposed**.

Visit three of Australia's Ultimate Wineries – **Leeuwin Estate**, **Vasse Felix** and **Voyager Estate** – and indulge in a premium wine tasting or tour that goes beyond the cellar door.

Embark on **Margaret River Discovery Tours's** Sunset Canoe Tour and experience the beautiful Margaret River from the water.

MUST-STAYS

Looking for apartment-style accommodation by the sea? **Margaret's Beach Resort's** studio and multi-room apartments are just a 5-minute-walk to Gnarabup Beach.

RAC Margaret River Nature Park is located close to the Margaret River township, on the edge of the Wooditjup National Park, and offers guests a range of cabins, glamping tents and caravan and camping sites surrounded by leafy trees.

Stay Margaret River is a hotel that features spacious guest rooms with a verandah, many of which overlook a tranquil garden setting, an outdoor swimming pool, mini golf and a children's playground.

LEG SIX: RIVER SONGS

*Margaret River > 50min/72km >
Nannup > 35min/50km > Balingup*

Leg six takes travellers from the Margaret River to the Blackwood River – the largest river in Australia's South West – and through the quaint little country towns that can be found along its banks.

ENROUTE

The route from Margaret River to Nannup is fairly straight forward: head down Rosa Brook Road and then Mowen Road and turn right when it ends. Visitors will see the Blackwood River running between old trees and grassy knolls as they cross the bridge into town.

Nannup has a charming, village-like atmosphere thanks to its weatherboard shop fronts and colourful tulip-filled flower boxes that bloom throughout August and September. Browse the many jars of colourful soaps at the **Nannup Soap Factory**, then heading next door for a beer at the **Nannup Brewery**.

Nannup is also known for its green hills and farmland, akin to the English countryside, and for its many forest and river walking and cycling trails (try the 5km Blackwood River Trail which commences at the Old Railway Bridge).

Another picturesque town connected to the Blackwood River, Balingup is just 35 minutes from Nannup via Balingup-Nannup Road or Cundinup-Nannup Road, both of which wind through state forest and wide, open pastures.

Balingup's town centre is small but bursting full of colour. Visitors will know they've reached town when they see the quirky, mismatched scarecrows that line the main street.

A little down the way travellers can wander through the 60-hectare Golden Valley Tree Park – a large arboretum full of trees that turn the most wonderful and vibrant shades of oranges, reds and yellows in autumn/early winter – then soak in the region's stunning country and forest scenery on a charming country drive to neighbouring towns like Bridgetown or Donnybrook.

MUST-DOS

Learn about and pick (April-May) chestnuts at **Chestnut Brae**, a working chestnut and pig farm 15 minutes south of Nannup.

MUST-STAYS

The English manor-style **Holberry House** is a 7-room guesthouse perched atop a wooded hill that overlooks 4.5 acres of landscaped country garden

Located 17km south of Nannup, **Jarrah Glen Cabins'** fully self-contained Canadian-style, cedar loft cabins and cottages are surrounded by jarrah and marri trees and friendly farm animals.

Feel on top of the world at **Balingup Heights Hilltop Forest Cottages**, a 46-acre property with 6 cosy bush cottages that overlooking breathtaking, misty hills and valleys curtained by trees.



Nannup Main Street



Blackwood River, Bridgetown

LEG SEVEN: SMALL COUNTRY TOWNS

*Balingup > 17min/26km > Bridgetown
> 25min/36km > Manjimup >
23min/32km > Pemberton*

Fall in love with Australia's South West's Southern Forests and Valleys, which comprise small country towns teeming with fresh produce, old heritage buildings and tall karri trees.

ENROUTE

The heritage-listed town of Bridgetown is located 17 minutes southeast of Balingup, along the South Western Highway. With its steep hills, deep valleys and the Blackwood River running through its backyard, Bridgetown presents ample opportunity for outdoor adventure.

Travellers can immerse themselves in Bridgetown's beautiful scenery along one of the many walking, riding or horse trails in and around town, or by canoeing down the Blackwood River.

An art, food and cider hotspot, Bridgetown is filled with dynamic artworks that reflect the community and natural environment. Visitors can explore these works along the 4km-long Bridgetown Art Trail.

For more trails in the Southern Forests and Valleys, visit totaltrails.com.au.

Those seeking a delicious treat, head to **The Cidery**, which produces premium boutique ciders, or travel 25 minutes to Western Australia's "food bowl" – Manjimup. Surrounded by karri trees and fruit orchards, Manjimup is the main commercial centre for the Southern Forests and Valleys region.

It's here where a lot of the state's fruit and vegetables are grown; Manjimup is regarded as the birthplace of the Pink Lady and Bravo apples, and is one of the largest producers of the Black Périgord truffle.

Browse fruit and vegetable stalls at the front of farm gates located around town, or head to Manjimup's fresh food shops and/or

farmers market (held at Manjin Park most Saturdays) to stock up on top-quality, locally grown produce.

Clients travelling with kids can pop into the Manjimup Heritage Park, which features a playground with a huge, 17m-high viewing platform and slide, walking trails and museums about the history of electricity and timber in Western Australia.

Have lunch at Tall Timbers or Park Manjimup, then hit the road for Pemberton.

Pemberton is a quiet, timber-cottage town. Its cool, Mediterranean climate produces the perfect conditions for grape-growing, resulting in small-scale wineries that specialise in top-notch Pinot and Bordeaux-style wines.

An abundance of streams, rivers and dams make is a prime place to fish for trout and marron. As such, expect to feast on the finest of food at the town's wineries, restaurants, bars and cafes (we recommend **Hidden River Estate, Jaspers Pemberton** and the **Lavender & Berry Farm**).

There are a number of watering holes in Pemberton worthy of a visit. Big Brook Dam is one of the best spots in the region for a barbecue, picnic, walk, fish and/or swim, as is Pemberton Pool, and we also love paddling Lake Beedelup, which is located approximately half an hour out of town.

Travellers will understand why Pemberton is coined "Karri Country" when they meander through the national parks, like the Warren National Park, which also features an incredibly scenic Warren River Loop Trail that makes for a great day hike.

Approximately 20 minutes from Pemberton is the D'Entrecasteaux National Park, an important conservation area that's home to the Southern Hemisphere's largest land-locked dune system, the Yeagarup Dunes, towering karri forests, white beaches and rugged coastal cliffs.

Most of the roads in these national parks are unsealed; clients who are travelling in a hire car should check the conditions of their rental before travel. Those planning to visit these parks will also need to buy a National Park pass from the Pemberton Visitor Centre (or online) first.

MUST-DOS

Gourmet food lover? A truffle hunt at **Truffle Hill** in Manjimup is a must.

Four-wheel-drive through the D'Entrecasteaux National Park and the Yeagarup Dunes on a Beach and Forest Eco Adventure with **Pemberton Discovery Tours**.

MUST-STAYS

Wake up to beautiful forest and vine views from one of Amersands Estates's newly renovated, luxury country cottages.

The family-friendly RAC Karri Valley Resort has a range of chalets, cabins and rooms nestled between tall karri trees and/or overlooking a tranquil lake that leads to Beedelup Falls.

Clients who love camping will love WA Wilderness Camping, who provide full camping setups at the best campsites in Warren National Park.



Pemberton Discovery Tours



Aerial Adventure, Pemberton

LEG EIGHT: TALL TIMBERS

*Pemberton > 23min/30km >
Northcliffe > 1hr5min/97km >
Walpole > 48min/65km > Denmark*

Tall timbers continue to tower above peaceful towns that also hug Western Australia's southern coastline, in leg eight of our Australia's South West journey.

ENROUTE

Start the morning practising shinrin-yoku – the art of forest bathing – with a walk through one of Pemberton's national parks, before travelling down the winding Pemberton-Northcliffe Road and on to Northcliffe.

Hugged by national park and state forest, Northcliffe is steeped in nature. See art and forest meld effortlessly together at Northcliffe's **Understory Art and Nature Trail**, an outdoor sculpture exhibition found in the centre of town.

South of Northcliffe is the popular Windy Harbour, a holiday settlement to the south of D'Entrecasteaux National Park and one of the only places in the national park that's accessible by sealed road. Famous for its jagged limestone cliffs, basalt rock formations and fishing, Windy Harbour is best experienced by foot or four-wheel drive.

Walpole is just over an hour away from Northcliffe via Middleton Road and South Coast Highway. The highway is fringed on either side by native trees and shrubs of the Shannan State Forest and Mount Frankland National Park.

The highway then rolls through Walpole, which is positioned by the serene Nornalup Inlet. Clients can soak in spectacular views of the inlet and Coalmine Beach from Hilltop Lookout, which continues on to the Giant Tingle Tree.

This huge, hollow, red tingle tree is something visitors can walk through – before heading back through the Walpole-Nornalup National Park and to the South Coast Highway.

The **Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk**, which can be reached by turning left onto Valley of the Giants Road, is a must-visit. This sky-high attraction, set in a forest of towering tingle trees, lets visitors walk through the canopy of trees via a 40m-high suspension bridge.

Continue along the Valley of the Giants Road for a lovely scenic drive past the tingle forest and pleasant farmland, then turn left onto South Coast Highway and follow it all the way to Denmark, which will take about 30 minutes.

By the Wilson Inlet and Denmark River and not far from the sea is where travellers will find Denmark. This laidback, tree-and-sea town is distinguished by its beautiful forests, undulating hills, vine-lined valleys and beautiful bays.

To truly appreciate this diverse country, clients should take their time meandering up and down the Scotsdale and Mount Shadforth Scenic Drives, which feature panoramic views of the ocean, forest and the Porongurup and Stirling Ranges in the distance, with plenty of boutique food shops and award-winning, cool-climate wineries, too.

There are also plenty of scenic walking trails in and around town. We recommend Monkey Rock for elevated views over William Bay National Park and Ratcliffe Bay, and the Harewood Forest Walk, which rambles through forest found in the Scotsdale area of Denmark.

Coastal lovers will enjoy a paddle at Greens Pool and Elephant Rocks, popular destinations known for their white, sandy beaches, clear green-blue water and large, elephant-like boulders. Visitors can find these two natural attractions about 15 minutes west of Denmark, in the William Bay National Park.

Travellers can stop off at **The Dam Denmark** for housemade, cannabis botanical beverages, and stock up on chocolate at the **Denmark Chocolate Company** on the road back to Denmark's township, before making their way to their accommodation for the night.

MUST-DOS

Soar through the karri and marri canopy on the new **Aerial Adventure Pemberton** zipline, featuring four exhilarating high-rope courses..

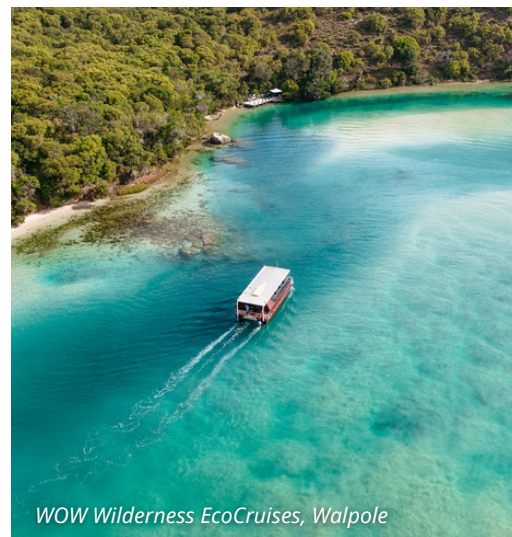
Savour a seated wine tasting and two-course lakeside lunch at **The Lake House Denmark**.

Cruise the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets on a **WOW Wilderness EcoCruise**, uncovering pristine beaches and ancient forests with expert local guides.

MUST-STAYS

Indulge in one of **Chimes Spa Retreat's** refined 4-star suites, exclusive sanctuaries enveloped by lush gardens and the tranquil ambience of Denmark's premier wellness haven.

For a sustainable yet stylish stay with sweeping views of the Wilson Inlet, retreat to **Heyscape Tiny Cabins'** thoughtfully designed spaces, where modern simplicity meets the calm of nature.



WOW Wilderness EcoCruises, Walpole



Prawn Rock Channel, Ocean Beach, Denmark

LEG NINE: A HISTORICAL PORT CITY

Denmark > 42min/54km > Albany

While Albany's amazing coast attracts many away from other towns, its role in Western Australia's history is what sets it apart.

Western Australia's first European settlement, the port city of Albany also played an important part in World War I as the final departure point for the first convoy of Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) troops before they reached the battlefields of the First World War.

It is also the site of Australia's first ANZAC Day Dawn Service, which was held more than 100 years ago atop Mount Clarence.

ENROUTE

Start the morning with breakfast at the homely **Mrs Jones Café**, then a walk along Denmark's main street and/or the Denmark River. From Denmark, it's an easy, 42-minute-drive past tree-dotted fields to Albany.

Albany's city centre is situated on a gently sloping hill that rolls down to Princess Royal Harbour and King George Sound.

Heritage-listed buildings, shops, cafes and business fronts line the main street, York Street, and the adjoining Princess Royal Harbour-facing Stirling Terrace.

The historically significant Mount Clarence is linked to Albany's city centre via Marine Drive, which wraps around the hill and up to its peak, where the **National ANZAC Centre**, heritage-listed Princess Royal Fortress and must-dine restaurant and bar **Garrison** are located.

Middleton Beach and Ellen Cove can be found on the other side of Mount Clarence, via Marine Drive. The family-friendly Middleton Beach is lined by pine trees and grass, making it a great spot for a picnic in the sun.

The Ellen Cove Boardwalk, which can be accessed on the south side of the beach, is a lovely walk that winds up the southern side of Mount Clarence and a must-do for amazing views of the cove and King George Sound below.

For a beer and a bite to eat, head across the road from Middleton Beach to **Hybla Tavern**. Back in town, we suggest feasting on French-Vietnamese cuisine at the bohemian-style **Liberte Albany**, or for a fine dining option, try **Majuba**.

MUST-DOS

For a history lesson that's actually interesting, go on an interpretive, personalised adventure through the **National Anzac Centre**. Learn about the lives of ANZAC servicepeople during World War I, and whether or not they survived.

MUST-STAYS

Hosted accommodation never looked as cosy and sweet as the **Beach House at Bayside**.

Big 4 Middleton Beach Holiday Park offers great, family-friendly accommodation options, including beachfront cabins and caravan and camping sites, right on the shores of Middleton Beach.

Dog Rock Motel is nicely situated close to the start of York Street. This simple, spacious motel accommodation offers rooms with free wifi, satellite TV and ensuite bathrooms.



Elephant Rocks, William Bay National Park



National Anzac Centre, Albany



The Gap & Natural Bridge, Torndirrup National Park, Albany



Albany's Historic Whaling Station, Torndirrup National Park, Albany

LEG TEN: EXPLORING THE GREAT SOUTHERN

Albany > 16min/17km > Torndirrup National Park
Albany > 53min/77km > Stirling Range National Park
Albany > 2hr/180km > Bremer Bay

With a rugged coastline at its feet, tranquil bays and nature trails at its side and otherworldly attractions above its head, Albany affords an endless sense of adventure to its guests.

The port city makes for a great base in which to explore some of Western Australia's most unique natural attractions, including granite coastal rock formations, an ancient mountain range and an orca feeding ground.

Due to the distance from Albany, and the time needed to fully appreciate the Great Southern's wild attractions, we recommend guests dedicate a day to each of the sections covered in this leg of the journey.

ENROUTE

Albany's Torndirrup National Park is located on the Torndirrup Peninsula, about 16 minutes from Albany's town centre.

On the way to the national park, clients will pass **Limeburners** – an award-winning whisky and spirits distillery that we highly recommend paying a visit.

Once in the national park, visitors can watch waves crashing into the base of a 40m-high cliff at The Gap, which features a see-through platform that juts 10m out from the rockface. On particularly wild days, the waves can reach the top of the platform (and sometimes even the carpark). As such, travellers are advised to heed warning signs or road blocks in and around the area.

A beautiful coastal walk along The Albany Wind Farm, which overlooks the spectacular Sand Patch Beach and the occasional migrating whale, can be accessed from the Albany Wind Farm carpark.

The paths and boardwalks stretch past a number of the giant wind turbines, which visitors can hear whooping in the wind.

On the other side of the peninsula, travellers will find Tourism Australia's Best Beach of 2022, Misery Beach – a secluded and sheltered bay that's walled on one side by a giant granite hill. They can also explore several walking trails along the Vancouver and Flinders Peninsulas, which stretch out on the north and east sides of the Torndirrup Peninsula.

Located approximately an hour's drive from Albany via Chester Pass Road, the Stirling Range National Park is home to the rugged peaks of the Stirling Ranges, including one of the highest in WA (Bluff Knoll).

This area is home to magical cloud formations, rare wildflowers and endless hiking and walking trails to suit all endurance levels.

Due to the remote nature of the ranges, limited phone reception and unpredictable weather conditions, we recommend visitors be appropriately prepared and/or join a guided tour for a safe and stress-free experience.

Further northeast lays the quiet seaside town of Bremer Bay, which is home not only to friendly locals, but one of the largest congregations of orcas (killer whales) in the Southern Hemisphere.

These pods can be spotted on a whale watching expedition out to the Bremer Canyon – a known, killer whale feeding ground – between late December and April every year.

MUST-DOS

Located by Frenchman Bay and next to the Torndirrup National Park, **Albany's Historic Whaling Station** offers an insight into Albany's whaling history through interactive exhibits, a full-size replica ship and a giant sperm whale skeleton.

For a superb, insightful and entertaining tour of the Torndirrup National Park and/or Stirling Range National Park, choose one of **Busy Blue Bus's** day trip experiences.

Travel to Bremer Bay (approximately 2 hours northeast of Albany) then hop on board one of **Whale Watch WA** or **Naturaliste Charters's** voyages out to the Bremer Canyon to spot pods of orcas.

MUST-STAYS

Albany Motel & Apartments sits in the heart of Albany's town centre, offering modern, comfortable studios and family suites within walking distance of local cafés and attractions. **Quality Apartments Banksia Gardens**, located along Albany Highway, provides spacious, self-contained accommodation ideal for longer stays.

For a refined coastal escape, **Latitude 35.5** is a contemporary, architect-designed residence offering sweeping ocean views and sophisticated design touches that embody understated luxury.

The Sapphire Collection features beautifully appointed residences in Albany's town centre, blending elegant interiors with convenience and comfort for a premium stay close to dining and attractions.

Overlooking Albany's Princess Harbour, the **Hilton Garden Inn Albany** is a popular choice for travellers seeking stylish, comfortable accommodation in a superb location close to the best things to see and do in Albany.



Mountain Peaks and Canola fields, Stirling Range National Park

LEG ELEVEN: A COUNTRY GOODBYE

*Albany > 37min/48km > Porongurup >
1hr40min/144km > Katanning >
1hr15min/118km > Williams >
2hr5min/169km > Perth*

A trip to the South West wouldn't be complete without a green and yellow goodbye, which is exactly what travellers will get when they traverse the last leg of this grand journey.

ENROUTE

After saying sayonara to the south coast, travellers can head northeast along Chester Pass Road to the Porongurup Range – another awe-inspiring, ancient mountain range known for its giant granite boulders.

A hike up to Castle Rock and the adjoining Granite Skywalk will leave visitors breathless, thanks to a challenging climb and subsequent views of the Porongurup National Park, undulating farmland and the many peaks of the Stirling Ranges.

Travellers who prefer to wine and dine can drive down Porongurup Road, where they'll find a number of boutique wineries and vineyards that boast mountain backdrops and fine, cool-climate drops.

To get to Katanning from Porongurup, we suggest clients cut across to Albany Highway via Porongurup Road (which passes through Mount Barker), turn right onto Great Southern Highway when they get to Cranbrook, then follow the highway past Cranbrook's Pink Lakes and through towns renowned for their wheat, sheep and rare wildflowers.

Full of history, old country charm and a melting pot of different cultures, Katanning is a great place to visit enroute to Perth.

With giant slides, seesaws and flying foxes, as well as a toddler playground and nature play spaces, Katanning's All Ages Playground is great stop for big, little, young and old kids.



Castle Rock Estate, Porongurup

Delve into Katanning's rich agricultural roots at **Katanning's Sheep Saleyards**, the biggest undercover saleyards in the Southern Hemisphere; or by spending some time on a farm tour.

Then, on the road back to Perth, discover a landscape full of contrasts – from salmon-coloured gum trees and pastel-pink lakes, to blankets of yellow canola and carpets of green grass.

Note: It takes three and a half hours to drive from Katanning to Perth. To break up the trip, we recommend clients make a pitstop at the **Williams Woodshed** in Williams.



Pink Lakes, Cranbrook



Granite Skywalk, Porongurup National Park