

# South Coast New South Wales



Green, luscious and temperate, the New South Wales (NSW) south coast is as pretty a region as you'll find on the island continent. Now that they've stopped harpooning whales, heavy industry doesn't really get a look-in south of Wollongong, leaving the waters unpolluted and spectacularly clear. Dolphins, sensible creatures that they are, have set up shop in the bays, while whales once again visit in numbers on their annual vacations, now that they're less likely to end up with an unfortunate body piercing.

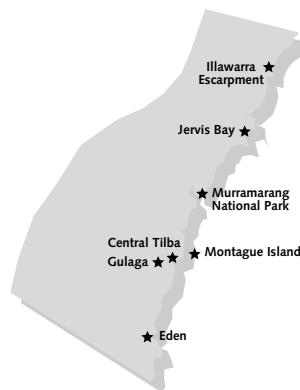
On the drier side of the shoreline vast tracts of national park have been established, ensuring that the remaining virgin coastline continues to look much as it did when Captain Cook cleared customs in 1770. The beachside living is so good in some places that even the kangaroos wander down to the shore for an evening stroll.

Nature doesn't hold all the trumps. Picturesque historic villages dot the hinterlands while Canberra is a textbook of 20th-century architecture and town planning writ life-size. The nation's capital isn't actually on the coast at all, so to compensate, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has nabbed arguably the best part of it, Jervis Bay, from NSW.

Part of the south coast's charm is simply a matter of access; where the north coast is on the main highway linking Queensland, NSW and Victoria, the south coast is served by the meandering Princes Hwy, the secondary road from Sydney to Melbourne. For people unwilling to share their coastal wanderings with battalions of trucks, this is a very good thing.

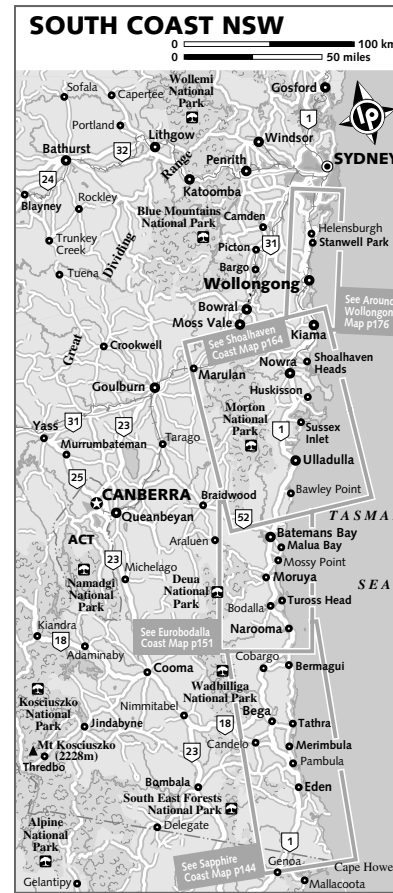
## HIGHLIGHTS

- Having kangaroos calling in at your camp site in **Murrumarang National Park** (p163)
- Leaving snowy white footprints on the brilliant sands of **Jervis Bay** (p166)
- Marvelling at the dramatic geology of the **Illawarra Escarpment** (p176)
- Watching **Eden's** whale-human reconciliation play itself out (p146)
- Experiencing village life with the 'quaint' quotient at max in **Central Tilba** (p150)
- Paying respect to the Mother of the Yuin people at sacred **Gulaga** (p152)
- Hanging out with the seals and penguins at **Montague Island** (p152)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 02

■ www.southcoast.com.au



## SAPPHIRE COAST

Not to be outdone by Queensland's Gold Coast, the southernmost part of NSW considers itself precious too. The moniker is apt, with the coast's pristine water revelling in every shade of blue. You won't see a lot of it from the Princes Hwy, but you can feel confident that taking just about any road east will yield a bit of mostly unblemished coast set in rugged surrounds. This is the start of the traditional lands of the Yuin people.

### NADGEE NATURE RESERVE

Continuing over the state border the **Nadgee Howe Wilderness** continues, but its name

changes from Croajingolong National Park (p139) to Nadgee Nature Reserve. Vehicle access is only allowed as far as the ranger station near the Merrica River in the reserve's northern section.

This is the NSW starting point for the 50km **Nadgee Howe Wilderness Walk**, a route suited to experienced hikers. Basic **camp sites** (per adult/child \$5/2) – without toilets or drinkable water – are spread along the track. Permits are required before commencing the walk; apply to the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) in Merimbula (p146).

At the north end of the reserve, the small settlement **Wonboyn**, on the lake, has a store selling petrol and basic supplies.

**Wonboyn Cabins & Caravan Park** (☎ 6496 9131; www.wonboyncabins.com.au; Wonboyn Rd; camp sites per 2 people \$25, cabins \$65-112; 🚰) is spacious and resonates with bellbird song.

### BEN BOYD NATIONAL PARK

The wilderness barely pauses for breath before starting again at 10,709-hectare **Ben Boyd National Park**. Boyd was an entrepreneur who failed spectacularly in his efforts to build an empire around Eden in 1850. This park protects some of his follies, along with a dramatic coastline peppered with isolated beaches. It's split into two sections, with Eden squeezed in between.

The southern section is accessed by mainly gravel roads (per vehicle \$7) leading off sealed Edrom Rd, which leaves the Princes Hwy 18km south of Eden. At its southern tip, the elegant 1883 **Green Cape Lightstation** (☎ 6495 5000; www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au; Green Cape Rd; cottage mid-week/weekend \$215/292) copes with its isolation by gazing out at awesome views. There are **trails** (adult/child \$7/5; 🕒 1pm & 3pm Thu-Mon) or if you want to share the seclusion, you can spend the night in a lavishly restored keepers' cottage (sleeps six).

Eleven kilometres along Edrom Rd there's a turn-off to the historic **Davidson Whaling Station** on Twofold Bay where you can have a picnic in the rustic gardens of **Loch Gairra Cottage** (1896). Not much whaling paraphernalia remains, but interpretive signs tell the story. It's hard to imagine that until 1929 the peace of this place was rent by the agonised groans of dying whales and the stench of boiling blubber.

Further along is the turn-off for **Boyd's Tower**, an impressive structure indulgently built in the late 1840s with sandstone shipped



from Sydney. It was intended to be a light-house but the government wouldn't give Boyd permission to operate it. The twisted red rock formations at its base are striking against the cobalt sea.

The 31km **Light to Light Walk** links Boyd's wannabe lighthouse to the real one at Green Cape. There are **camp sites** (☎ 6495 5000; adult/child

\$10/5) along the route at **Saltwater Creek** and **Bittangabee Bay**. Both have vehicle access.

The northern section of the park can be accessed from the Princes Hwy north of Eden. From Haycock Point, where there are good views, a walking trail leads to a headland overlooking the Pambula River. Another good walk is to the **Pinnacles**; this rock formation's white base and red top make it look like a giant jagged slab of coconut ice.

On the edge of the park, near Pambula Lake, is **Monaroo Bobberr Gudu Aboriginal Cultural Centre** (☎ 6496 1922; Jigamy Farm, Princes Hwy). Call ahead to check whether they've got any tours or cultural activities running.

## EDEN

☎ 02 / pop 3006

The first town north of the Victorian border, Eden's a little sleepy place where the only bustle you're likely to find is down at the wharf when the fishing boats come in. Pretty beaches run either side of the town's knobby peninsula.

For possibly thousands of years this bay has been the site of extraordinary interactions between humans and whales (see p146). Migrating humpback and southern right whales pass so close to the coast that whale-watching experts consider this one of the best places in Australia to observe these magnificent creatures. Often they can be seen feeding or resting in Twofold Bay during their southern migration back to Antarctic waters.

## Information

**Library** (☎ 6496 1687; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) Internet access costs per hour \$6.

**Post office** (☎ 6496 1400; 140 Imlay St; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

**Visitors centre** (☎ 6496 1953; cnr Imlay & Mitchell Sts; ☎ 9am-5pm)

## Sights & Activities

The interesting **Killer Whale Museum** (☎ 6496 2094; www.killerwhalemuseum.com.au; 94 Imlay St; adult/child \$7.40/2; ☎ 9.15am-3.45pm Mon-Sat, 11.15am-3.45pm Sun) was established in 1931, mainly to preserve the skeleton of Old Tom (see p146).

**Cat-Balou Cruises** (☎ 0427 962 027; www.catbalou.com.au; Main Wharf, 253 Imlay St) operates 3½-hour whale-spotting voyages (per person \$60) in October and November. At other times of the year, dolphins and seals can usually be seen during the two-hour bay cruise (adult/child \$30/17).

A good **whale lookout** among the many options is at the base of Bass St. When whales are spotted the Killer Whale Museum sounds a siren.

## Festivals & Events

Eden comes alive in late October for the **Whale Festival**, with the typical carnival, street parade and stalls plus some innovative local events such as the Slimy Mackerel Throw.

## Sleeping

As you enter town from either direction, rows of run-of-the-mill motels and motor parks line the road to greet you.

**Eden Tourist Park** (☎ 6496 1139; www.edentouristpark.com.au; Aslings Beach Rd; camp sites per two people \$20, cabins \$60-135) Serenely situated on the spit separating Aslings Beach from Lake Curalato, this large well-kept park echoes with birdsong from its sheltering trees.

**Twofold Bay Motor Inn** (☎ 6496 3111; fax 6496 3058; 164-166 Imlay St; s/d \$92/110; ☎ wi-fi) Substantial rooms, some with water views, are the norm at this centrally located motel. There's also a tiny indoor pool.

**Gibsons by the Beach** (☎ 6496 1414; www.gibsonsbysbeach.com.au; 10 Bay St; s/d/tr/q \$125/155/190/225; ☎) The beach is a two-minute stroll from the patio door of this self-contained one-bedroom apartment, through lush bushland and the owner's garden.

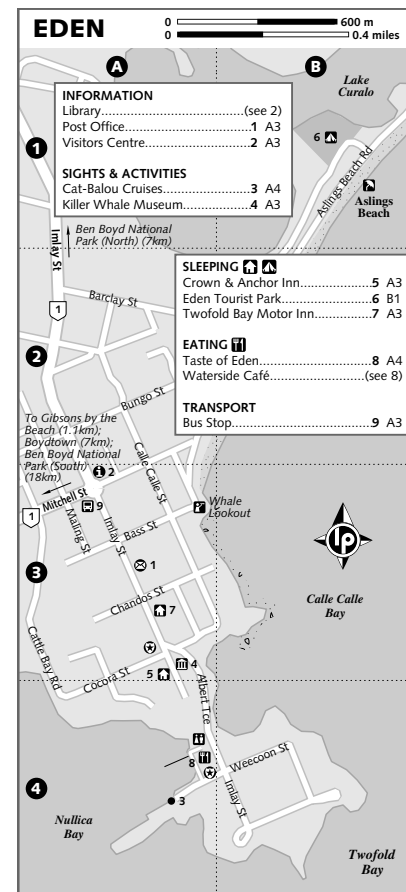
**our pick Crown & Anchor Inn** (☎ 6496 1017; www.crownandanchoreden.com.au; 239 Imlay St; s \$160-180, d \$180-200) Awesomely atmospheric, this historic house (1845) has been beautifully restored and furnished with the likes of four-poster beds and claw-foot baths. There's a lovely view over Twofold Bay from the back patio.

## Eating

The following eateries are clumped together on the Main Wharf (253 Imlay St) at the bottom of town.

**Waterside Café** (☎ 6496 1855; mains \$5-20; ☎ breakfast & lunch) Decent brekkies, strong coffees and harbourside tables make this a good place to start the day.

**Taste of Eden** (☎ 6496 1304; mains \$9-28; ☎ breakfast & lunch) With décor straight from Davy Jones' locker, this brightly painted café serves delicious local seafood (among other dishes) without any airs or graces. The menu's so fresh it has to be listed on a whiteboard.



## Getting There & Away

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premierms.com.au) has two daily buses to Sydney (\$66, 10 hours) and one to Melbourne (\$53, eight hours). **CountryLink** (☎ 13 22 32; www.countrylink.com.au) runs a daily bus to Canberra (\$35, 5¼ hours).

**Deanes Buses** (☎ 6495 6452; www.deanesbuses.com.au) has five buses, Monday to Saturday, to Bega (\$13.20, 1¼ hours) via Merimbula (\$8.80, 40 minutes).

## PAMBULA

☎ 02 / pop 1146

The beautiful drive north from Eden skirts Ben Boyd National Park before passing through the small town of Pambula. Its highway-hugging

## KILLER WHALES & WHALE KILLERS

Eden's original people, the Yuin, considered orcas (killer whales) to be ancestral beings. Pods of orcas would use Twofold Bay to herd and trap larger migrating whales in the shallows. Aboriginal elders would perform rites on the beach, begging the orcas for a share of the bounty. Amazingly, the orcas would oblige. After consuming the lips and tongue of their victim, they would leave the carcass behind.

After 1830, the relationship was taken up a notch. The Davidson whaling station (p143) employed many local Aboriginals, which was rare for the times. When the orca pod caught sight of a migrating whale, one of their number would head off to alert the whalers. The crew would then race out to the tired and harried victim and finish it off with a handheld harpoon. Keeping their half of the bargain, the whalers would anchor the dead whale and leave it overnight. By the next morning the orcas would have removed the tongue and lips and the contract was complete.

This all came to an end in 1900 when an orca beached itself on Aslings Beach during a hunt. With the rest of the pod looking on and as the whalers rushed to the orca's assistance, a vagrant walked up to the beached animal and killed it. After that, only a few of the older orcas, including Old Tom (p144), continued to hunt with the whaling crews. Shortly after this the last of the Yuin community left Eden for Wallaga Lake.

main street is pleasant enough, but the real delight is Pambula Beach (population 655), three kilometres east. Occupying the southern end of Merimbula Bay, it's got a laid-back vibe long gone from its glitzier northern neighbour.

Once a mere oyster kiosk, **Wheeler's** (☎ 6495 6330; Arthur Kaine Dr; takeaway \$5-10, mains \$22-29; ☺ lunch daily, dinner Mon-Sat) is now an upmarket tourist-oriented restaurant serving all manner of delicious local seafood. Those in the know opt for the takeaway counter and its myriad options. Long an oyster producer, Wheeler's offers **tours** (adult/child \$10/5.50, 11am Mon-Sat) of its farm.

## MERIMBULA

☎ 02 / pop 3850

Spread around the top end of a gorgeous long golden beach and an appealing inlet (which locals insist on calling a lake), Merimbula is in thrall to holidaymakers and retirees. Not big enough to be interesting and yet weighed down with development, it's hard to muster much enthusiasm for the town centre. As the numerous holiday apartments would suggest, this is one of the few places on the far south coast that really heaves during summer school holidays.

## Information

**DragNet** (☎ 1300 662 344; 11 Merimbula Dr; per hr \$6;

☺ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) Internet access.

**NPWS visitors centre** (☎ 6495 5000; cnr Merimbula & Sapphire Coast Drs; ☺ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri)

**Post office** (☎ 6497 5940; 5 Merimbula Dr)

**Visitors centre** (☎ 6495 1129; www.sapphirecoast.com.au; 2 Beach St; ☺ 9am-5pm)

## Sights

The small **Merimbula Aquarium** (☎ 6495 4446; www.merimbulawharf.com.au; Lake St; adult/child \$9.90/5.50; ☺ 10am-5pm) displays the sorts of fish you'll find in the bay. The **Old School Museum** (☎ 6495 2114; Main St; adult/child \$2/free; ☺ 2-4.30pm Tue, Thu & Sun) isn't dedicated to ageing rappers. It's one of those volunteer-run museums featuring knick-knackery and displays on local history.

A **nature boardwalk** follows the estuary southwest of the causeway. A plethora of birds and mammals are visible. Pick up the useful brochure at the tourist information centre.

## Activities

**Diving** is popular, with several wrecks in the area including the large **Empire Gladstone**, which sunk in 1950. **Merimbula Divers Lodge**

## COWS OR COAST?

From Pambula you've got the option of continuing on the Princes Hwy through Bega or heading to Merimbula and taking Sapphire Coast Drive. While the highway leads through some pretty farmland, the latter option alternates between spectacular beaches and national parks until it rejoins the highway near Tilba Tilba. And it's 5km shorter.

(☎ 1800 651 861; www.merimbuladiverslodge.com.au; 15 Park St) offers basic instruction and one shallow dive from \$99, including equipment. It also does snorkelling trips (\$40).

**True Blue** (☎ 6495 1686; Merimbula Marina; www.merimbulamarina.com; adult/child \$25/20) offers bargain-priced dolphin-watching cruises in the bay, along with whale-watching from mid-September to November.

**Top Lake Boat Hire** (☎ 6495 1987; Lakewood Dr), near the end of the boardwalk, rents out motor boats, pedal boats, kayaks, canoes and rowing boats. **Cycle'n'Surf** (☎ 6495 2171; 18 Marine Pde), south of the lake, hires out bikes (per hour \$7), boogie boards (half day \$10) and surfboards (per hour \$10) as well as carrying out bike repairs.

## Sleeping

The isthmus between the beach and the lake is completely overrun with motels and holiday apartments. Self-contained apartments are usually let on a weekly basis, particularly in summer. Letting agents for the area include **Fisk & Nagle** (☎ 6495 3222; www.getawaymerimbula.com.au; cnr Market & Beach Sts).

## BUDGET

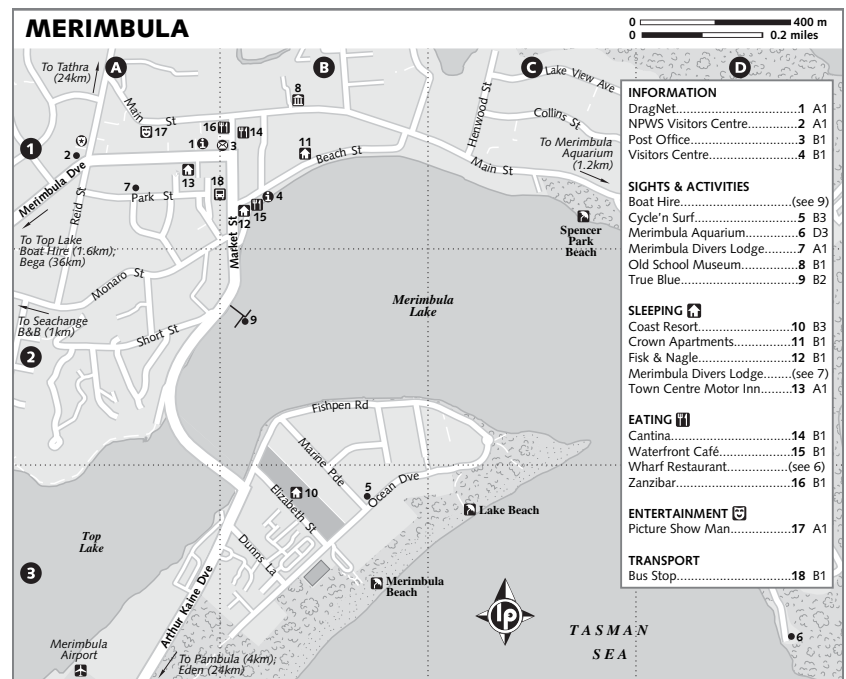
**Merimbula Divers Lodge** (☎ 6495 3611; www.merimbuladiverslodge.com.au; 15 Park St; dm \$20) No linen is included in the price (not even pillows), but this central place offers clean, bunk-style accommodation split into three separate self-contained apartments, each sleeping eight.

**Town Centre Motor Inn** (☎ 6495 1163; 8 Merimbula Dr; s/d \$75/80; ☺) A masterpiece of nouvelle retro without even trying, this three-level motel has carpet on the walls, a spew-on ceiling and fabulous 1970s couch fabric. Rooms are tidy but smallish.

## MIDRANGE & TOP END

**Our pick Seachange B&B** (☎ 6495 3133; www.sapphirecoast.com.au/seachange; 49 lmlay St; s/d \$129/149) Adorable hosts with a food and friendliness focus make this comfortable and modern B&B an absolute delight. It has fantastic lake views along with immaculately clean, elegantly furnished rooms with en suite.

**Crown Apartments** (☎ 6495 2400; www.crownapartments.com.au; 23 Beach St; apt 1-bedroom/2-bedroom \$135/165; ☺) Eschewing the grim dark brick of so many holiday units, Crown has an airy



design. Units come with kitchens, balconies and views.

**Coast Resort** (☎ 6495 4930; www.coastresort.com.au; 1 Elizabeth St; apt 1-bedroom \$265, 2-bedroom \$275-360, 3-bedroom \$375-470; 🏠 🚿) You could describe the décor of this huge upmarket apartment-style complex as ultramodern, although stark might be more apt. Still, comfort's not a problem and the two pools, tennis court and proximity to the beach are all very appealing.

## Eating & Drinking

**Waterfront Café** (☎ 6495 2211; Beach St; breakfast \$5-17, lunch \$18-23; 🕒 8am-5pm) Try this place for an excellent coffee or a snack while looking out over the sea, ahem, lake.

**Wharf Restaurant** (☎ 6495 4446; Lake St; mains \$17-30; 🕒 lunch daily, dinner Wed-Sun) With views to make you swoon into your soup, Wharf doesn't drop its informal café vibe until after dark. The aquarium downstairs means you can admire the fish before having their cousins delivered to your plate.

**Cantina** (☎ 6495 1085; 56 Market St; tapas \$10-16, mains \$18-30; 🕒 lunch & dinner) The changing menu features imaginative Spanish and Mediterranean dishes. Order some tapas and join the throngs outside. There's live music on Friday nights.

**Zanzibar** (☎ 6495 4038; cnr Main & Market Sts; mains \$25-33; 🕒 dinner Tue-Sat) As swanky as dining gets in Merimbula, Zanzibar features a short but varied menu of Mod Oz cuisine that leans towards the sea. See and be seen behind the huge plate-glass windows or out on the patio.

## Entertainment

**Picture Show Man** (☎ 6495 3744; www.pictureshowman.com.au; 80 Main St; tickets \$8.50-11) Screens a busy program of mainly art-house movies.

## Getting There & Around

**AIR**  
**Merimbula airport** (MIM; ☎ 6495 4211; Arthur Kaine Dr) is 1km out of town on the road to Pambula. There are flights to Melbourne (\$170, 90 minutes, two daily), Moruya (\$83, 30 minutes, two daily) and Sydney (from \$131, 1½ hours, three daily) with **Regional Express Airlines** (Rex; ☎ 13 17 13; www.rex.com.au).

## BUS

Buses stop outside the Commonwealth Bank on Market St. **Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premiers.com.au) has two daily buses to Sydney (\$64, 9½ hours) via Narooma (\$21,

two hours) and one to Melbourne (\$53, 9¼ hours) via Lakes Entrance (\$26, 3½ hours). **CountryLink** (☎ 13 22 32; www.countrylink.com.au) runs a daily bus to Canberra (\$33, 4¼ hours).

**Deanes Buses** (☎ 6495 6452; www.deanesbuses.com.au) provides the local bus service (Monday to Saturday only) that includes Bega (\$10, one hour, six daily) and Eden (\$8.80, 40 minutes, five daily). **Tathra Bus Service** (☎ 6492 1991; www.tathrabus.com.au) has two buses to/from Tathra (\$8.40, 25 minutes) on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

## BOURDA NATIONAL PARK

Taking in most of the coast from Merimbula north to Tathra, **Bournda National Park** (admission per car \$7) is a 2590-hectare park with beautiful empty surf beaches, rugged headlands and walking trails through heath, eucalyptus forests and tea-tree. Both fresh- and saltwater lakes support an abundance of bird life, including the threatened Little Tern and Pied Oystercatcher. Camping is permitted at **Hobart Beach** (☎ 6495 5000; camping per adult/child \$10/5), on the southern shore of peaceful **Wallagoot Lake**.

## TATHRA

☎ 02 / pop 1630

Once of the sweetest little beach towns on the South Coast, Tathra has a long and lovely beach with the Bega River forming a dreamy, undeveloped lagoon at its north end. The main township, with its rough-edged pub (complete with mechanical whale), is perched on the headland at the south end, with expansive views up and down the coast. Beachside, the vibe's mellow.

Dating from 1862, **Tathra Wharf** is the last remaining coastal steamship wharf in the state and a popular place for fishing. It houses a small **Maritime Museum** (☎ 6494 4062; adult/child \$2/1; 🕒 10am-4pm).

## Sleeping

**Elders Tathra** (☎ 6494 1087; www.elderstathra.com.au; 34 Bega St) is one of several local agents that handle holiday letting.

**Big4 Seabreeze Holiday Park** (☎ 6494 1350; www.seabreezethatthra.com.au; 41 Andy Poole Dr; sites per 2 people \$29-45, cabins \$85-170; 🏠 🚿) Get tropical beneath the palm trees or in the Polynesian cabins at this excellent, friendly park across from the beach.

**Sapphire Court** (☎ 6494 1980; info@sapphirecourt-holidayunit.com.au; 33 Edna St; apt \$110; 🏠) These fully

self-contained two-bedroom apartments are terrific value, sleeping six at a squeeze.

**Ourpick Tathra Beach House** (☎ 6499 9900; www.tathrabeachhouse.com.au; 57 Andy Poole Dr; apt \$125-231; 🏠 🚿) Well designed and lavishly landscaped, this beachside property offers smart apartments, two pools and ocean views.

## Eating

**Tathra Beach Pickle Factory** (☎ 6494 4232; 35 Andy Poole Dr; snacks \$3-8; 🕒 8.30am-6pm) Tathra's best breakfast option is this grab-and-run deli-café, with disposable cups and limited seating. The coffee's excellent and the home-baking irresistible.

**Fat Tony's Bar & Grill** (☎ 6494 4550; 15 Bega St; lunch \$14-28, dinner \$22-30; 🕒 lunch Thu-Sat, dinner Tue-Sat) Although it sounds like a greasy steak joint, this bistro is actually quite upmarket. Given that all the floor staff seem impressively fit, we can only guess that they hide Tony in the kitchen.

## Getting There & Away

**Tathra Bus Service** (☎ 6492 1991; www.tathrabus.com.au) has three buses to/from Bega (\$8.40, 30 minutes) on weekdays and two buses to/from Merimbula (\$8.40, 25 minutes) on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

## BEGA

☎ 02 / pop 4540

More of a rest stop than a destination in itself, Bega's cheesy delights are an acquired taste. Synonymous in Australia with cheese, it's the service town for the farmers of the rich surrounding dairy country. It may get more interesting when a permaculturally designed ecovillage (complete with composting toilets) opens in the middle of town, but we're not holding our breath.

At the **Bega Cheese Factory & Heritage Centre** (☎ 6492 7762; www.bega-cheese.com.au; Lagoon St; admission free; 🕒 9am-5pm), north of the river, you can overload on both free tastings and from treats at the café. It also houses the **visitors centre** (☎ 6491 7645; 🕒 9am-5pm), where you can pick up a pamphlet for the self-guided **Bega Heritage Walk**.

The **Bega Pioneers' Museum** (☎ 6492 1453; 87 Bega St; adult/child \$5/1; 🕒 10am-4pm Mon-Sat) focuses on local heritage, with particular emphasis on farming and cow-related machinery.

If you're not lactose intolerant and want to explore Bega further, the friendly **Pickled Pear** (☎ 6492 1393; www.thepickledpear.com.au; 60 Carp

St; s/tw \$105-120, d \$140-170; 🏠 🚿; wi-fi) has comfortable rooms in a lovely 1870s house near the centre of town.

## MIMOSA ROCKS NATIONAL PARK

After leaving Tathra, the road cuts through Mimosa Rocks (5802 hectares), a wonderful coastal park with dense and varied bush, sea caves, lagoons and 20km of beautiful coastline. Unsealed roads lead to **camp sites** (☎ 4476 2888; per adult/child \$10/5) at Gillards Beach, Middle Beach, Picnic Point and Aragunnu Beach. The drive to Middle Beach is especially lovely, passing under a canopy of tall eucalypts and palms to the deserted surf beach.

**Sapphire Coast Ecotours** (☎ 6494 0283; www.sapphirecoastecotours.com.au; tours \$30-60) runs highly regarded walks exploring the park's varied ecosystems and may include an Aboriginal guide.

After leaving the park, the road continues through bush and farmland until reaching the coast at **Cuttagee** – like Tathra but with even fewer houses. South of the main beach, Kullaroo St leads to secluded, bush-lined **Armands Bay**, the only clothing-optional beach on the Sapphire Coast.

## BERMAGUI

☎ 02 / pop 1300

There's a nice vibe to Bermagui, probably due to the eclectic mix of fisherfolk, surfers, alternative lifestyles and indigenous Australians who call it home. In typical Aussie parlance it's invariably referred to as Bermie (not Berma, or Myanmar).

The Bermagui Community Centre houses the **visitors centre** (☎ 6493 3054; info@bigfoot.com.au; Bunga Rd; 🕒 10am-4pm) and has internet access.

## Sights & Activities

You could toss a mullet from the shops and hit **Shelly Beach**, a child-friendly swimming spot. A kilometre's wander around the point will bring you to the **Blue Pool**, a dramatic ocean pool built into the base of the cliffs.

You can wander 6km north along the coast to **Camel Rock** (the camel requires a bit of squinting) and a further 2km around to beautiful **Wallaga Lake**. The route follows **Haywards Beach**, a good surfing spot.

Many of the Yuin people ended up in the reserve on Wallaga Lake's shores after being pushed off their traditional lands. This

community runs the excellent **Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre** (☎ 4473 7232; www.umbarra.com.au; 246 Bermagui Rd; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun), which has interesting historical displays and authentic art for sale. Tours of the lake and cultural sites are offered. It pays to call ahead as family or spiritual *business* takes precedence over tourist operations.

### Sleeping

Letting agents for holiday houses include **Fisk & Nagle** (☎ 6493 4255; www.fisknagle.com.au; 14 Lamont St).

**Bermagui Motor Inn** (☎ 6493 4311; www.acr.net.au/~bmi/; 38 Lamont St; s/d \$79/89; ☎) Right in town, this motel may be a classic but it's got new carpets, comfy beds and very friendly owners.

**Harbourview Motel** (☎ 6493 5213; 56 Lamont St; s \$105-110, d \$120-130; ☎) Fastidiously tidy, the spacious rooms enjoy private courtyards with their own barbecues. The more expensive ones have sea views.

**Bimbimbi House** (☎ 6493 4456; bimbimbihouse@bigfoot.com.au; Nutleys Creek Rd; s \$100, d \$140-185) Choose between a garden room, a two-bedroom unit or a self-contained cottage on this quiet property, set amid lush gardens. It overlooks the river, 2km from town.

### Eating

**Cool-O-Cream Gelati** (☎ 6493 3555; 1/6 Bunga St; cones \$3; ☎ 11am-6pm) It's worth taking the coastal route just for this wonderful homemade gelato shop that experiments with barfly-friendly flavours such as 'chocolate grappa' and 'lemon, lime and bitters'.

**Cream Patisserie** (☎ 6493 5445; 28 Lamont St; items \$4-8; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat) A smooth café-style place serving delicious gourmet pies, focaccia and cakes.

**River Rock Café** (☎ 6493 3156; Wallaga Lake Rd; mains \$7-15; ☎ 9am-4pm) Nouvelle hippies gravitate to this café just north of the bridge. There are sandwiches, burgers, wraps, *pide* and salads served during the day. Every second Monday it hosts *Spicy Mamas*, an open mic jam night accompanied by an Indian vegetarian feast (\$13).

**Saltwater** (☎ 6493 4328; Lamont St; lunch \$16-19, dinner \$22-27; ☎ lunch & dinner Wed-Sun, takeaway 11.30am-8pm) Overlooking the marina, the clean lines of Saltwater's interior complement a changing menu of fresh catches. The platter for two is amazing value for \$38; or you can get takeaway fish-and-chips for \$8.50.

### Getting There & Away

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premierms.com.au) stops here once a day on the run between Sydney (\$55, 8½ hours) and Eden (\$21, 1¾ hours) via Narooma (\$9, 40 minutes) and Merimbula (\$21, 80 minutes).

## EUROBODALLA COAST

Meaning 'Land of Many Waters' this section of coast continues the Sapphire Coast's celebration of all things blue. A fair bit of green gets a look in too, with segments of the disjointed **Eurobodalla National Park** spreading much of its length.

It's an area of sweet little townships, lakes, bays and inlets backed by spotted-gum forests and home to much native wildlife. Part of the Yuin homelands, it includes their sacred mountain, Gulaga (p152).

### TILBA TILBA & CENTRAL TILBA

☎ 02 / pop 500

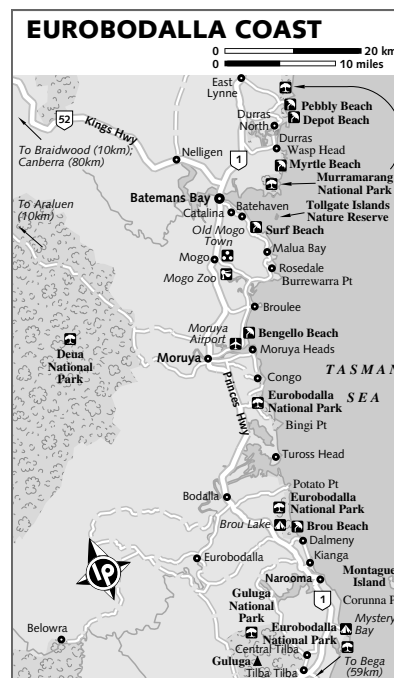
The coastal road from Bermagui rejoins the Princes Hwy just before the loop road leading to these outrageously cute National Trust villages in the shadow of Gulaga (p152).

**Tilba Tilba** is half the size of its singularly named neighbour, 2km down the road. Gardening freaks will love **Foxglove Spires** (☎ 4473 7375; www.foxglovespires.com.au; Corkhill Dr; admission \$7.50; ☎ 10am-4pm), a magical 3½-acre private garden with lots of hidden avenues and bowers.

**Central Tilba** sits in a nook of a valley that has remained virtually unchanged since the 19th century – except now the main street is jammed with visitors' cars on weekends. Strolling along Bate St, you'll find a string of shops selling the sort of things you'd expect to find in National Trust villages: fudge, boiled lollies, cheese, speciality teas, ice cream, crafts and cafés. Behind the pub, there's a short walk up to a water tower where boulders provide terrific views of Gulaga.

There's information, including a handy town guide, at the **Bates Emporium** (☎ 4473 7290; ☎ 8am-5pm), which also serves as the petrol station, internet café and post office.

The streets are blocked off for the **Tilba Easter Festival** (www.tilba.com.au/tilbafestival.htm), which has lots of music, entertainment and several thousand visitors. The other big event is the acclaimed **Cobargo Folk Festival** (www.cobargofolk



festival.com), held in historic town Cobargo, 20km towards Bega.

A short drive takes you to gorgeously undeveloped **Mystery Bay** and the first pocket of Eurobodalla National Park. At the south end of the main surf beach, a rock formation forms an idyllic natural swimming pool. There's a council-run **camp site** (☎ 0428-622 357; www.mysterybaycampground.com; sites per 2 adults & 2 children \$13) under the trees near the beach.

### SLEEPING & EATING

**Dromedary Hotel** (☎ 4473 7223; fax 4473 7238; 5 Bate St, Central Tilba; s/d \$55/60) There's clean, basic accommodation upstairs in this nice old pub. The walls downstairs are lined with old photos and pictures of prize pumpkins. The bistro (mains \$8 to \$18) is a rare after-dark eating option.

**our pick** **Two Story B&B** (☎ 4473 7290; www.tilbatwo-story.com; Bate St, Central Tilba; s/d \$105/120) This atmospheric 1894 former postmaster's residence has plenty of charm and a cosy log fire in winter. Some rooms have en suites.

**Green Gables** (☎ 4473 7435; www.greengables.com.au; 269 Corkhill Dr, Tilba Tilba; r \$140; ☎) Try to resist the word 'delightful' when describing this gay-

friendly B&B. The 1879 cottage offers three attractive rooms with either en suites or private bathrooms and views over the fields.

**Rose & Sparrow Café** (☎ 4473 7229; 3 Bate St; mains \$5-15; ☎ breakfast & lunch) Serves generous portions of healthy food, including delicious lentil burgers with homemade hot mango chutney.

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premierms.com.au) buses serve the Tilbas daily on the route between Sydney (\$54, eight hours) and Eden (\$22, 2¼ hours) via Narooma (\$3, 20 minutes) and Merimbula (\$19, 1¾ hours).

### NAROOMA

☎ 02 / pop 3100

Sitting at the mouth of a large, tree-lined inlet and flanked by surf beaches, Narooma is exceedingly pretty. While the commercial centre on the hill is nothing special, the ocean views more than compensate. The locals are a friendly bunch, but with all that pristine water to relax them, why shouldn't they be?

### Information

**Library** (☎ 4476 1164; Field St; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-2pm Sat) Free internet access.

**NPWS information office** (☎ 4476 2888; Burrawang St; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri)

**Post office** (☎ 4476 2049; 106 Wagonga St)

**Visitors centre** (☎ 4476 2881; Princes Hwy; ☎ 9am-5pm) Has a small museum.

### Sights & Activities

The water surrounding Narooma is so exceptionally clear that it's a constant struggle to resist leaping in. The best place for a sheltered swim is over the bridge in the **netted swimming area** at the south end of **Bar Beach**, below the breakwall. There's a surf club at **Narooma Beach**, but the breaks are better at Bar Beach when a southeasterly blows.

If you fancy a stroll, there's a nice walk from Riverside Dr along the inlet to the ocean, and excellent views from **Bar Rock Lookout**. Just below the lookout is **Australia Rock**, a boulder with a bloody great hole in it that vaguely resembles the country (minus Tasmania, of course).

The **Wagonga Princess** (☎ 4476 2665; Riverside Dr; adult/child \$33/22) takes a three-hour cruise up the inlet, which includes a stop for a bushwalk and billy tea.

## THE MOTHER'S STORY

In Yuin tradition, Gulaga (Mt Dromedary, 806m) is the mother and Barunguba (Montague Island) and Najanuga (Little Dromedary) are her two sons. The sons wanted to head out exploring, but Gulaga thought that Najanuga was too young and kept him at her feet. Barunguba went out alone and was eventually cut off by the water.

The fascinating thing about this story is that it gives an insight into the extraordinarily long and continuous occupation of the area by the Yuin. The mother and her sons were once part of a large volcano, which has long eroded away, leaving only the hardened cores of its three main vents. When sea levels were lower, Montague Island was linked to the mainland. The mother story suggests that the Yuin witnessed its transformation into an island.

These places are highly sacred; holy sites are still visited on Gulaga for *women's business* (secret rituals) and on Barunguba for *men's business*. The arrival of Europeans brought logging and koala-hunting to Gulaga, and the Yuin were horrified. Their continued protests resulted in the mountain being designated the first Area of Aboriginal Significance in Australia and in 2006 it was with great joy that they celebrated the return of their mother, when they were confirmed as the land's legal owners.

The mountain now forms **Gulaga National Park** (4,768 hectares) and is jointly managed by the indigenous community and NPWS. Its walking tracks are open to all people who treat the mountain with respect. Beginning at Pam's Store in Tilba Tilba you can follow an old **pack-horse trail**. The 11km return walk takes about five hours, but don't miss the loop walk at the summit. There's often rain and mist on the mountain, so come prepared. She's a woman's mountain and local lore has it that it's scornful men that get lost or return with grazes and sprained ankles.

Umbarra (p150) runs four-hour **4WD tours** (minimum four people; \$60 per person) to sites on the mountain.

If you'd rather set your own pace, **Narooma Marine** (☎ 4476 2126; 31 Riverside Dr) hires kayaks and canoes (per hour \$15), pedal boats (per hour \$25), tinnies (per two hours \$50) and even a 'BBQ boat' (per hour \$45).

A good rainy-day option is **Narooma Cinema** (☎ 4476 2352; 94 Campbell St; tickets \$9.50-11.50), a picture palace that began showing flicks in 1926 and hasn't changed much since.

## MONTAGUE ISLAND (BARANGUBA)

Nine kilometres offshore from Narooma, this small, pest-free island is a spectacular nature reserve, home to many seabirds (shearwaters, sea eagles, peregrine falcons) and hundreds of fur seals. Little penguins nest here and although some remain year-round, there are more than 10,000 at their peak between September and February.

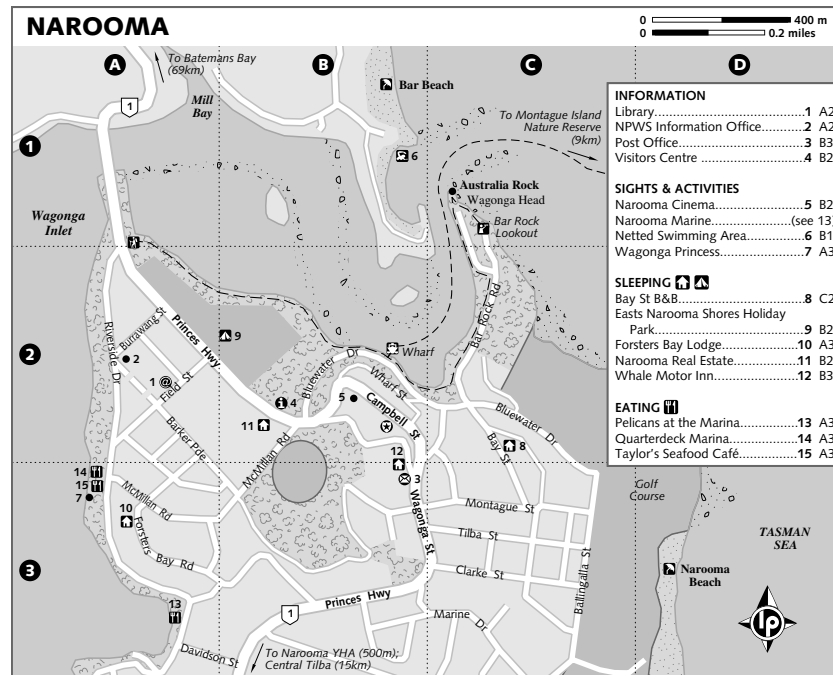
Baranguba, its Aboriginal name, translates as Big Brother (see above), predating both the TV franchise and Orwell by around 8000 years. Sacred sites remain on the island, which only the local Yuin people may access.

The only way to see the island is via extremely interesting three-hour **guided tours** (☎ 4476 2881; www.montagueisland.com.au; adult/child \$110/88) conducted by NPWS rangers, which

include climbing up the granite **lighthouse** (1881). Trips are dependent on numbers and weather conditions, so book ahead through the visitors centre. The boat voyage takes about 30 minutes and circumnavigates the island if the water's not too choppy. Take the afternoon tour for a better chance of seeing penguins.

NPWS offers the unforgettable opportunity to stay in the solar-powered **lighthouse keepers' cottages** (☎ 03-5330 2600; www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/volunteer/montague.htm; overnight s/d \$475-830, 2 nights s/d \$670/1100) on the proviso that you take part in conservation work while you're there. That might entail counting and weighing penguins, weeding or planting trees. The cottages are beautifully renovated and very comfortable. Meals are included, but you'll be expected to help with the preparation. Book well ahead.

The clear waters around the island are good for **diving**, especially from February to June. **Island Charters Narooma** (☎ 4476 1047; www.islandchartersnarooma.com) offers diving (double dive \$80), snorkelling (\$70), whale-watching (\$70) and other tours. Attractions in the area include grey nurse sharks, seals and the wreck of the SS *Lady Darling*.



## Festivals & Events

Narooma has a shucking good time during its **Oyster Festival** in mid-May. Grease up your quiff for the **Great Southern Blues & Rockabilly Festival** (www.bluesfestival.tv) on the last weekend of October.

## Sleeping

**Narooma Real Estate** (☎ 4476 3887; www.narooma.holidays.com.au; 78 Princes Hwy) deals in the myriad private holiday accommodation options.

**our pick** **Narooma YHA** (☎ 4476 4440; www.yha.com.au/hostels; 243 Princes Hwy; dm/s/tw \$29/61/72, d \$68-72; ☎) Although it was obviously once an old-style motel, this super-friendly establishment makes a great hostel. Each room has an en suite for starters. Free bikes and boogie boards are the icing on the stripper-sized cake.

**East's Narooma Shores Holiday Park** (☎ 4476 2046; www.easts.com.au; Princes Hwy; sites per 2 people \$33-46, cabin \$80-230; ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) More than 260 camp sites and 43 cabins occupy this lovely spot by the inlet. The friendly managers look after the place well and there's a big pool under the palm trees.

**Forsters Bay Lodge** (☎ 4476 2319; forstba@acr.net.au; 55 Forsters Bay Rd; d/tr/q \$90/100/110) In a quiet spot above pretty Wagonga Inlet, Forsters has six old-fashioned but comfortable self-contained units, scrupulously maintained by an elegant mature hostess.

**Whale Motor Inn** (☎ 4476 2411; www.whalemotorinn.com; 104 Wagonga St; r \$120-190; ☎ ☎) Spot whales from your balcony at this upmarket motel with terrific views and nicely renovated rooms (feel that linen). You can even make like a whale in the spa suites.

**Bay St B&B** (☎ 4476 3336; 5 Bay St; d \$160-180) Up on the hill, this central Narooma home on a quiet street has modern rooms and wide sunny verandas.

## Eating

The most evocative eating options are on the marinas of Riverside Dr. They all have heart-melting views over the still, clear waters of the inlet – particularly romantic at sunset.

**Quarterdeck Marina** (☎ 4476 2723; 13 Riverside Dr; breakfast \$4-13, lunch \$14-19; ☎) breakfast & lunch Thu-Mon) The only place on the inlet where the décor is even more captivating than the views. Enjoy the

### LIVING LA VIDA ECOLOGISTA

Annette Turner wasn't born on the south coast; she chose to move here. But unlike others in her position, she isn't a refugee from the big smoke. She came from Avoca on the Central Coast, seeking a place more like the Avoca she was raised in before it was swallowed by suburbia.

'We grew up on the beaches,' she remembers fondly. 'The surf lifesaving club was central to life. Every weekend orientated around a (surf) carnival.'

So what is it that drew her down here?

'I love the diversity of the people. There's a wonderful music community, artistic community, and also an alternative lifestyle community, along with fishermen and dairy farmers. Then there's the wonderful backdrop of national parks,' she adds, 'and beaches where you can go on Christmas Day and not find anyone. It'll never get built up like Avoca.'

Nowadays she gets to see more of those natural delights than most, guiding tours to Montague Island as a part-time Discovery Ranger for NPWS. Juggling that with work as a teacher's aide and preschool teacher, she also lives and volunteers at *The Crossing* in Bermagui, a camp where young people are introduced to practical conservation work.

It seems that the south coast is pretty good place to live out, as Annette puts it, 'a personal passion about the environment'.

*As related to Peter Dragicevich*

excellent breakfasts and seafood lunches under the gaze of dozens of tikis, Chairman Maos and autographed photos of 1950s TV stars.

**Taylor's Seafood Café** (☎ 4476 2127; 12B Riverside Dr; meals \$7-14; ☎ lunch & dinner) The takeaways are a little cheaper, but why miss out on the chance to consume the grilled fish and nongreasy chunky chips while gazing at paradise.

**Pelicans at the Marina** (☎ 4476 2403; 31 Riverside Dr; breakfast \$5-15, lunch \$15-25, dinner \$22-29; ☎ breakfast & lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Fri & Sat) The simple, elegant interior yields enticing views of the harbour. The menu is also simple and elegant; understandably seafood-focussed with Mod Oz flair.

### Getting There & Away

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premierms.com.au) buses stop in Narooma on the run between Sydney (\$53, 7½ hours) and Melbourne (\$62, 11 hours) via Moruya (\$10, 35 minutes) and Merimbula (\$21, two hours). **Murrays** (☎ 13 22 51; www.murrays.com.au) buses head to Canberra (\$37, 4½ hours).

### NAROOMA TO MORUYA

From Narooma the highway heads inland to avoid a series of saltwater lakes (inlets, lagoons...call them what you will), leaving a long stretch of little-visited coast clad in sections of **Eurobodalla National Park**. Once again, nearly any right-hand turn can be rewarding, especially if you're a surfer.

The council operates **Dalmeny camp site** (☎ 0428 635 641; sites per two adults & 2 children \$17),

close to **Brou Beach**. There's a free, basic **camp site** within the park at **Brou Lake**. **Potato Point** has a decent surf break.

One of the highlights of the national park is the incredible rock formations at **Bingi Point**. It's here that the **Bingi Dreaming Track** commences, a 7½km walk following a spiritually significant Aboriginal route (pick up a brochure from NPWS in Narooma). Keep an eye out for kangaroos, wallabies, bandicoots and goannas. The path finishes at **Congo**, a pretty and peaceful spot, where there's a **camp site** (☎ 4476 2888; per adult/child \$10/5) between the estuary and the surf beach

From Congo a dirt road heads through beautiful forest to **Moruya Heads**, where there's a good surf beach and views from Toray Point. From here it's a 7km drive west along the river to Moruya.

### MORUYA

☎ 02 / pop 2430

Its name means black swan but this town is no ugly ducking, with a pleasant collection of Victorian buildings gathered around a broad river. There's a popular weekly **market** (☎ 4474 4106; ☎ 9am-noon Sat) on the south side of Moruya Bridge. **Moruya Library** (☎ 4474 1333; Vulcan St) is also a visitors centre and has free internet access.

The best place to stay is **Post & Telegraph B&B** (☎ 4474 5745; www.southcoast.com.au/postandtel; cnr Page & Campbell Sts; s/d from \$100/135), the beautifully restored old post office, which features polished floorboards, iron beds and verandas

overlooking gardens. Of the three rooms only one has an en suite.

**River** (☎ 4474 5505; 16B Church St; mains \$26-32; ☎ lunch Wed-Sun, dinner Wed-Sat; ☎) is right on the...you guessed it. The food is proof that rural doesn't mean bumpkin: Mod Oz mixes liberally with international flavours on the ever-changing menu.

**Moruya Airport** (☎ 4474 2095; George Bass Dr) is 7km from town, near North Head. **Rex** (☎ 13 17 13; www.rex.com.au) flies here from Merimbula (\$83, 30 minutes, two daily) and Sydney (from \$125, 50 minutes, daily).

**Murrays** (☎ 13 22 51; www.murrays.com.au) buses head to Canberra (\$29, 3¼ hours). **Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premierms.com.au) stop on the run between Sydney (\$45, seven hours) and Melbourne (\$64, 11½ hours) via Narooma (\$10, 35 minutes) and Batemans Bay (\$8, 30 minutes).

As an alternative to the Princes Hwy, you can turn right after the bridge and follow the coastal George Bass Dr to Batemans Bay.

### MOGO

☎ 02 / pop 260

Mogo is a historic strip of wooden shops and houses almost entirely devoted to Devonshire teas, crafts and antiques.

Just off the highway is **Old Mogo Town** (☎ 4474 2123; www.oldmogotown.com.au; James St; adult/child \$15/8; ☎ 10am-5pm), a rambling re-creation of a pioneer village, complete with free gold-panning. You can stay in smart **cabins** (dm/s/d/tw/tr/q \$25/100/115/155/135/150, ste \$110-150; ☎) inside the complex, giving you a good opportunity to play pioneer after dark.

**Mogo Zoo** (☎ 4474 4930; 222 Tomakin Rd; adult/child \$20/10; ☎ 9am-5pm), 2km east off the highway, is a small but interesting zoo where you can get terrifyingly close to the big cats. The stars of the show are the playful and rare white lions.

**Suzanne's Coffee House** (☎ 4474 3238; 15 Sydney St; meals \$9-15; ☎ brunch & lunch) is also a sourdough bakery and organic grocery, so the focus is on delicious sandwiches stuffed full with salad and deli ingredients.

### BATEMANS BAY

☎ 02 / pop 10,850

Although Canberra's 150km away, Batemans Bay is effectively its beach, which explains why it's one of the south coast's largest holiday centres. The suburban sprawl along the beaches south of the dreary town centre has

rendered it charmless in comparison to the beautiful coast surrounding it.

### Information

**Bay Bookshop** (☎ 4472 6338; Blandford Centre, Orient St; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) Independent store with good selection of local titles.

**Post office** (☎ 4475 3620; 7 Orient St; ☎ 9am-5pm) **Visitors centre** (☎ 4472 6900; cnr Beach Rd & Princes Hwy; ☎ 9am-5pm) Has internet access (\$2 per 15 minutes).

### Sights & Activities

The **Old Courthouse Museum** (☎ 4472 8993; Museum Place; adult/child \$5/1; ☎ midday-3pm Tue & Thu, 8am-noon most Sun), just off Orient St, has displays relating to local history. Just behind the museum is the small **Water Garden Town Park** and a **boardwalk** through wetlands.

**Merinda Cruises** (☎ 4472 4052; Boatshed, Clyde St; adult/child \$27/14) takes a three-hour trip up the Clyde River to Nelligen. **Bluefin Adventures** (☎ 0427 220 238; Main Wharf; adult/child \$55/29) heads out to sea where you might see dolphins and penguins at the **Tollgate Islands Nature Reserve** in the bay and, in season, whales.

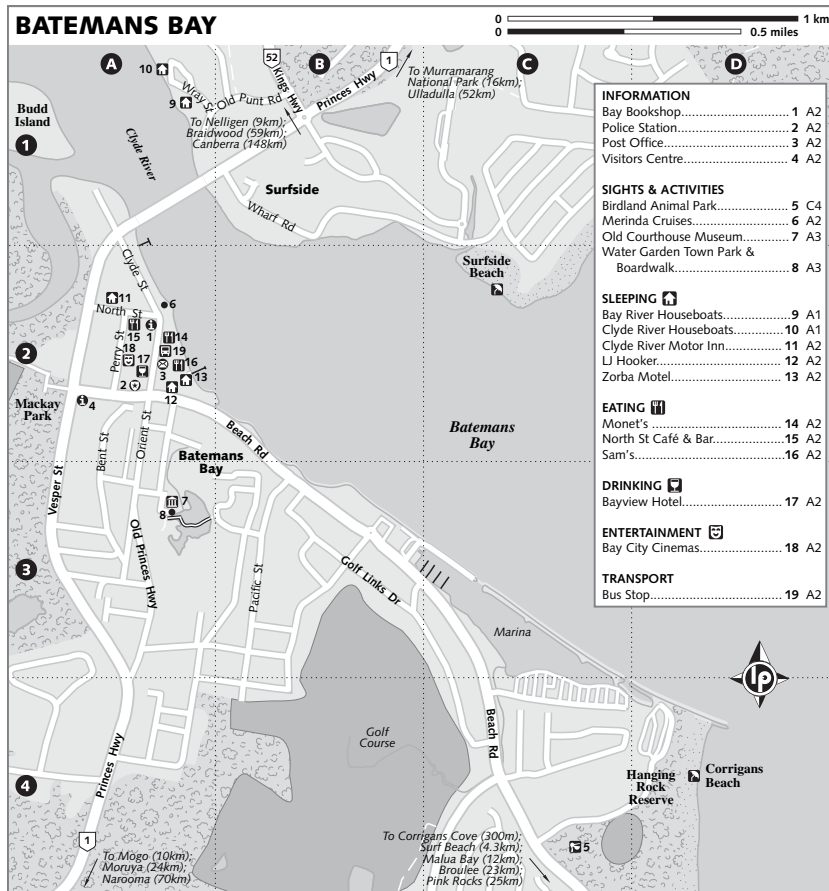
**Birdland Animal Park** (☎ 4472 5364; 55 Beach Rd; adult/child \$16/8; ☎ 9.30am-4pm), near Batehaven, has the usual collection of cute Aussie critters.

The closest beach to the town centre is **Corrigans Beach**. South of this a series of small beaches dot the rocky shore. There are longer beaches along the coast north of the bridge, leading into Murramarang National Park.

Surfers flock to **Surf Beach**, **Malua Bay**, small **McKenzie's Beach** (just south of Malua Bay) and **Bengello Beach**, which has waves when everywhere else is flat. For the experienced, the best surfing is at **Pink Rocks** (near Broulee) when a north swell is running. Locals say the waves are sometimes 6m high. **Broulee** itself has a wide crescent of sand, but there's a strong rip at the northern end.

### Sleeping

There are many holiday apartments offering weekly rentals; enquire at **LJ Hooker** (☎ 4472 9294; www.ljhooker.com.au/batemansbay). If your karaoke repertoire stretches to *Proud Mary*, you might want to consider a houseboat. Both **Bay River Houseboats** (☎ 4472 5649; www.bayriverhouseboats.com.au; Wray St) and **Clyde River Houseboats** (☎ 4472 6369; www.clyderiverhouseboats.com.au; Wray St) have eight- and 10-berth vessels available. Prices for three-night rentals start from \$510 in the low season but double during the peak.



**Zorba Motel** (☎ 4472 4804; www.zorbamotel.com.au; 15 Orient St; s \$85-95, d \$100-110; 🚽) You can't beat the views from Zorba's front rooms. The motel is little changed in decades but continues to offer an old-fashioned Greek welcome.

**Clyde River Motor Inn** (☎ 4472 6444; www.clydehotel.com.au; 3 Clyde St; s \$102-112, d \$107-152, q \$182; 🚽) An older motel on the river in the centre of town, this one's bathed in the sweet smell of jasmine. Rooms are clean and some have views.

**Corrigans Cove** (☎ 4472 6111; www.corriganscove.com.au; 204 Beach Rd; apt \$165-300; 🚽 🚿) These flash apartments have all the mod cons (including laundry and dishwashers) and a swimming pool that resembles a giant pac-man.

## Eating

**Monet's** (☎ 4472 5717; 3/1 Orient St; mains \$7-20; 🍳 breakfast & lunch Mon-Sat) The gentle hues of Monet's waterlilies cover the walls of this snug Mediterranean café. Organic produce and free-range eggs are the norm and there are plenty of vegetarian options available.

**Ourpick North St Café & Bar** (☎ 4472 5710; 5 North St; mains \$8-20; 🍳 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Thu, 8.30am-late Fri & Sat) While much of Batemans Bay seems to be stuck in the Golden Age Of Motels, this café is a beacon of modernity – from its shiny counter to its range of organic and gluten-free treats. On Fridays and Saturdays you can kick-start the day with a first-rate coffee and then head back in the evening for cocktails.

**Sam's** (☎ 4472 6687; Orient St; mains \$11-18; 🍷 lunch Wed-Fri, dinner Wed-Mon) Grab a seat by the water at this classic old-school Italian, with a devoted following of locals who come for the fresh seafood and unpretentious pasta and pizza.

## Drinking & Entertainment

**Bayview Hotel** (☎ 4472 4522; 20 Orient St; 🍷 10am-midnight) The only real pub in town, it attracts everyone from tourists chilling to yobbos yelling. There's a lively roster of bands, DJs and trivia nights.

**Bay City Cinemas** (☎ 4472 6009; www.baycitycinemas.com.au; Perry St; tickets \$10.50-11.50) Blockbusters for rainy days.

## Getting There & Away

The scenic Kings Hwy climbs the escarpment and heads to Canberra from just north of Batemans Bay. Both **Murrays** (☎ 13 22 51; www.murrays.com.au) and the **Surfborder Express** (☎ 6241 0033; www.transborder.com.au) service this route (both \$24, 2½ hours).

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premierms.com.au) coaches stop on the run between Sydney (\$41, six hours) and Melbourne (\$68, 12 hours) via Ulladulla (\$13, one hour) and Moruya (\$8, 30 minutes).

# CANBERRA

☎ 02 / pop 322,000

Don't let the dismissiveness of Australians about their capital put you off. Canberra may not be the most riveting city to live in, but it's a fascinating place to visit. Sure, Mussolini would have approved of the grand avenues and triumphal parades, but the geometrical precision of its layout has created a green and spacious city with uplifting vistas at every turn.

When the separate colonies of Australia were federated in 1901, a decision to build a national capital was included in the constitution. American architect Walter Burley Griffin won the competition to design it and in 1908 this site, diplomatically situated between rivals Sydney and Melbourne, was selected. In 1911 the Commonwealth government bought land for the ACT and in 1913 christened the capital Canberra, a name derived from an Aboriginal term for 'meeting place'.

An exploration of Canberra will unearth some of the best examples of modern Australian architecture and some of the

grandest public edifices and cultural attractions that taxes can buy.

## ORIENTATION

The city is arranged around Lake Burley Griffin. Approaching from the north, the main arterial road, Northbourne Ave, dissects the city centre (aka Civic). The pedestrian malls to its east comprise Canberra's main shopping areas.

Northbourne Ave becomes Commonwealth Ave, which spans Lake Burley Griffin and intersects Capital Circle. This road encircles Capital Hill, the apex of Walter Burley Griffin's parliamentary triangle. Located within and near the triangle are many noteworthy buildings.

## Maps

The visitors centre stocks city maps and cartography for bushwalks.

**Mapworld** (☎ 6230 4097; 65 Northbourne Ave, Civic) Extensive selection of maps and Lonely Planet guidebooks.  
**NRMA** (☎ 6222 7000; Canberra Centre, City Walk, Civic) Information for motorists and road maps.

## INFORMATION

The YHA (p161) has a reliable, central internet café.

**Canberra Hospital** (☎ 6244 2222, emergency dept 6244 2611; Yamba Dr, Garran)

**General post office** (☎ 13 13 18; 53-73 Alinga St, Civic) Mail can be addressed: poste restante Canberra GPO, Canberra City, ACT 2601.

**National Library Bookshop** (☎ 6262 1424; Parkes Pl, Parkes) Superb selection of Australian books.

**Visitors centre** (☎ 1300 554 114; www.visitcanberra.com.au; 330 Northbourne Ave, Dickson; 🕒 9am-5.00pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun)

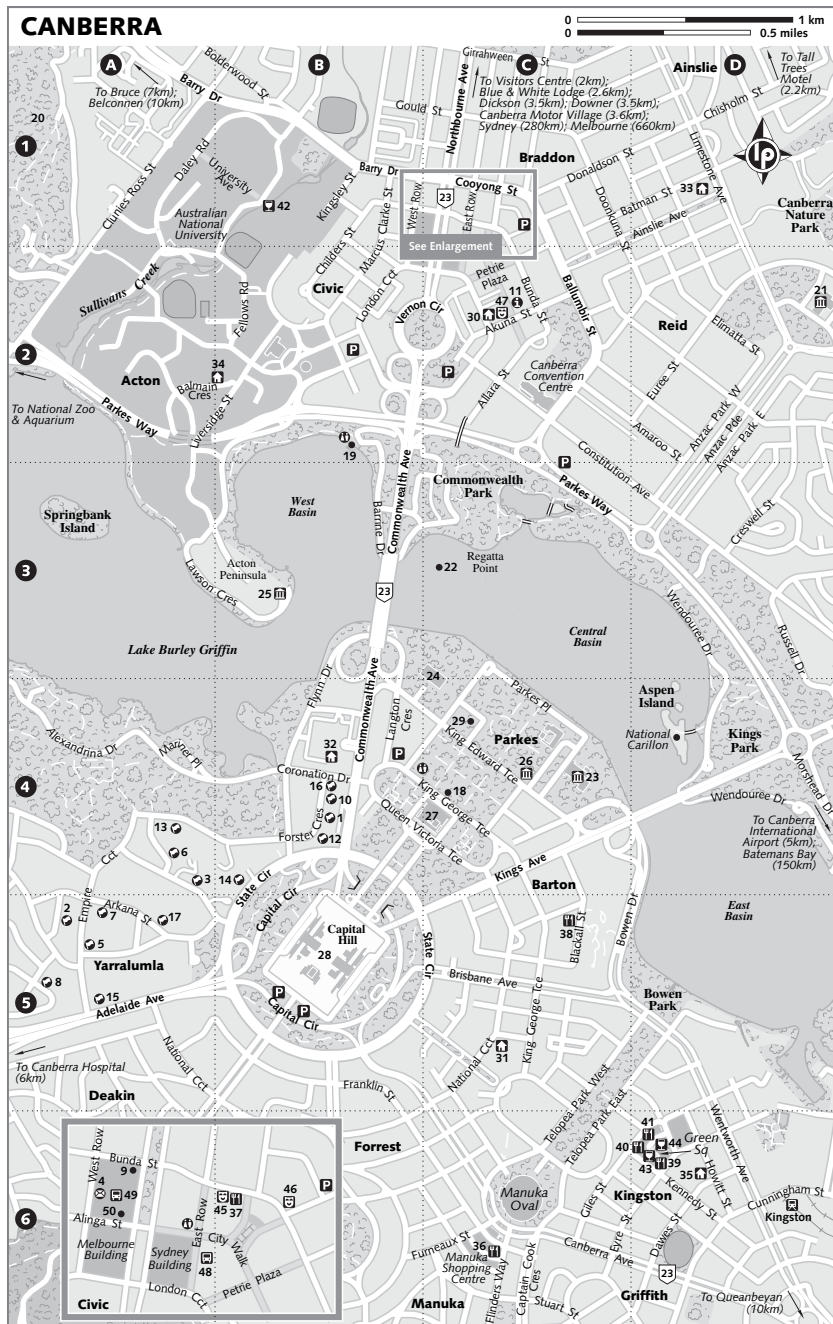
## SIGHTS

Most of Canberra's significant buildings, museums and galleries are scattered around Lake Burley Griffin. You can easily walk here from Civic, Manuka or Kingston. Otherwise any bus heading over the Commonwealth Ave bridge can drop you outside the National Library.

## Parliament House

The four-legged, 81m flagpole atop Capital Hill marks the location of **Parliament House** (☎ 6277 5399; www.aph.gov.au; admission free; 🕒 9am-5pm), an accomplished piece of modern architecture in harmony with its environment. The public spaces contain informative displays,





**INFORMATION**

Canadian High Commission.....	1 B4
Dutch Embassy.....	2 A5
French Embassy.....	3 A6
General Post Office.....	4 B1
German Embassy.....	5 A5
Indonesian Embassy.....	6 A4
Irish Embassy.....	7 A5
Japanese Embassy.....	8 A5
Mapworld.....	9 A6
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an excellent collection of Aboriginal art and a 1297 edition of the *Magna Carta*.

Free guided tours (45-minutes on non-sitting days, 20-minutes otherwise) are held every half-hour from 9am to 4pm. You're welcome to find your own way around but you may have to queue to watch parliamentary proceedings from the public galleries. Note that tickets for question time (2pm on sitting days) are free, but must first be booked through the **Sergeant at Arms** (☎ 6277 4889); get them by midday or you may miss out. Tickets aren't required for other sessions in either house. Inside, the red and green of Britain's parliamentary chambers has been transmuted into the pale hues of a eucalyptus forest.

Bus 39 runs to Parliament House from Civic.

**Old Parliament House**

Elegant **Old Parliament House** (☎ 6270 8222; www.oph.gov.au; King George Tce, Parkes; adult/concession \$2/1; ☎ 9am-5pm), the seat of government from 1927 to 1988, is much smaller than its replacement. There's a fascinating, free, 40-minute guided tour (departs every 45 minutes from 9.30am to 11.45am and 12.45pm to 3.45pm), or guide yourself via a free leaflet.

Opposite the main entrance is the **Aboriginal Tent Embassy**, established in 1972 in response to governmental refusal to recognise land rights.

**National Gallery of Australia**

This excellent **gallery** (☎ 6240 6502; www.nga.gov.au; Parkes Pl, Parkes; permanent collection free; ☎ 10am-5pm)

showcases Australian art, including important paintings by Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan and Grace Cossington Smith. Aboriginal works include the wonderful *Aboriginal Memorial* (1988), a forest of 200 burial logs painted by 43 Arnhem Land artists for the bicentenary of colonisation. Of the international pieces featured, perhaps the most famous is Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles: Number 11, 1952*.

There are all-inclusive guided tours (11am and 2pm), along with one focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art (11am Thursday and Sunday). The gallery often has free lectures and film screenings; phone for details.

**National Portrait Gallery**

By late 2008 the **National Portrait Gallery** (www.portrait.gov.au; King Edward Tce, Parkes; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm) should be in a flash new home. Its wonderful collection of painting, sculpture and photos has as its subjects Australians famous and obscure, historical and contemporary. Favourites include a luridly spray-painted Nick Cave by Howard Arkley (1999).

**Lake Burley Griffin**

Named after Canberra's architect, Lake Burley Griffin was created by damming the Molonglo River in 1963. Swimming is not recommended, but the lake is suitable for boating and great to cycle around. Boats, bikes and in-line skates are available for hire at Acton Park ferry terminal, on the northern shore.

Around the lake's 35km shoreline are many places of interest. The most visible is the **Captain Cook Memorial Water Jet**, built in 1970 for the bicentenary of Captain Cook's landfall.

### Australian War Memorial

The colossal **war memorial** (☎ 6243 4211; www.awm.gov.au; Treloar Cres, Campbell; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm) is set in beautiful grounds at the foot of Mt Ainslie, littered with mature trees, sculpture and big guns. It houses an interesting collection of dioramas, relics and exhibitions. Free 90-minute guided tours are held throughout the day.

Entombed in the glorious **Hall of Memory** is the **Unknown Australian Soldier**, whose remains were returned from a WWI battlefield in 1993. The hall itself is steeped in symbolism, with church-like stained glass and an exquisite 1958 mosaic covering the roof and walls with over six million Italian tiles. It's here that the cult of the Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) reaches its apotheosis, the figures haloed like religious icons. Even those uncomfortable with Australia's unquestioning glorification of its military will be impressed.

The view down **Anzac Pde** across the lake to Parliament shows Canberra at its most planned, geometric and grandiose. It's well worth walking to the lake to view the various military memorials stretched along the road like an open-air gallery of 20th-century monument design.

To get to the War Memorial catch bus 33 from Civic.

### Australian National Botanic Gardens

Spreading over 90 hectares of the lower slopes of Black Mountain, **Australian National Botanic Gardens** (☎ 6250 9540; www.anbg.gov.au/anbg; Clunies Ross St, Acton; admission free; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) is devoted to the growth, study and promotion of Australian plants. Dedicated trails take in the highlights of the gardens, including sections of rainforest and themed plantings.

Its **visitors centre** (☎ 9am-4.30pm) has maps and is the departure point for free guided walks (11am and 2pm, plus 9.30am in spring and summer).

Bus 81 from Civic will take you directly to the gardens on weekends, public holidays and school holidays. If you're feeling fit, it's a pleasant walk to the gardens through the grounds of the Australian National University.

### National Museum of Australia

This **museum** (☎ 6208 5000; www.nma.gov.au; Lawson Cres, Acton Peninsula; admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm), a dramatic modern construction on the northern shore of the lake, showcases the land, nation and people of Australia through Australian eyes and with the aid of interactive gizmos. There are attendants on hand to help you navigate exhibitions on environmental change, indigenous culture, national icons and more, and you can take one-hour guided tours (adult/child \$7.50/5.50). First Australians tours are held at 11am and Highlights tours are held at midday, 1.30pm and 3pm.

Bus 34 from Civic runs here.

### National Library of Australia

The **National Library of Australia** (☎ 6262 1111; www.nla.gov.au; Parkes Pl, Parkes; admission free; ☎ main reading room 9am-9pm Mon-Thu, 9am-5pm Fri & Sat, 1.30-5pm Sun) is one of the most elegant buildings in Canberra, with an effective use of stained glass in its frontage.

It holds more than six million items, including rare books, paintings, early manuscripts, photographs, oral histories and maps. Bookings are required for the free, 45-minute **Behind-the-Scenes Tour** (☎ 6262 1271; ☎ tour 12.30pm Thu). The **Exhibition Gallery** (admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm) presents thematic displays collated mainly from the library's diverse collections.

### Questacon – National Science & Technology Centre

This hands-on **museum** (☎ 6270 2800; www.questacon.edu.au; King Edward Tce, Parkes; adult/child \$18/11.50; ☎ 9am-5pm) is educational and great fun. The 200-plus interactive exhibits show how science and technology work in everyday life.

### National Zoo & Aquarium

This impressive **zoo** (☎ 6287 8400; www.zooaquarium.com.au; Lady Denman Dr, Yarralumla; adult/child \$26.50/14.50; ☎ 10am-5pm) is near Scrivener Dam at the western end of Lake Burley Griffin.

Bus 81 from Civic heads to the Zoo before stopping at the Botanic Gardens, but only on weekends, public holidays and school holidays.

### Embassies

Being a relatively new capital, many nations have custom-built their embassies. The Yarralumla embassy zone is a fascinating place to explore if you're a fan of 20th-century

architecture. Many incorporate elements of their respective cultures. The Papua New Guinea High Commission (Forster Cres) is shaped like a traditional building and decorated with colourful paintings, while New Zealand's has a corrugated-iron cow sculpture.

### FESTIVALS & EVENTS

**National Multicultural Festival** (www.multiculturalfestival.com.au) Celebrated over 10 days in February.

**Royal Canberra Show** (www.mcas.org.au/showwebsite/main.html) The country meets the city (it's not that far to travel) at the end of February.

**Celebrate Canberra Festival** (www.celebratecanberra.com) Canberra's extended birthday party, held mid-March.

**National Folk Festival** (www.folkfestival.asn.au) Held Easter weekend.

**Floriade** (www.floriadeaustralia.com) A month-long celebration of spring flowers, held in September/October.

### SLEEPING

This is a government town. There are very few bargains and even shoddy choices dry up when Parliament is sitting. It pays to book ahead. There's hardly any accommodation in the livelier suburbs, such as Manuka and Kingston. Most motels are spread out along Northbourne Ave. The inner city has some options but parking can be a problem.

### Budget

**Canberra Motor Village** (☎ 6247 5466; www.canberra-village.com; Kunzea St, O'Connor; camp sites per 2 people \$26, cabins \$109-175; ☎ ☎) Dozing in peaceful bush 6km northwest of the centre, the orderly arrangement of tidy cabins and camp sites mirrors Canberra itself.

**Canberra City YHA** (☎ 6248 9155; canberracity@yhansw.org.au; 7 Akuna St, Civic; dm \$28-34, r/tr \$89/112; ☎ ☎ ☎) This large, bright complex offers plenty of potential to mingle, with its rooftop barbecue area, bar, indoor swimming pool, spa, pool tables and comfy lounge.

**Victor Lodge** (☎ 6295 7777; www.victorlodge.com.au; 29 Dawes St, Kingston; s/d & tw \$69/85; ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) Far from flash yet quite presentable, this large house offers clean rooms with shared facilities and a communal kitchen.

### Midrange

**Blue & White Lodge** (☎ 6248 0498; blueandwhitelodge@bigpond.com; 524 Northbourne Ave, Downer; s/d \$95/100; ☎ ☎) Somewhere between a brick-and-tile home and the Parthenon (Ionian columns and pediments) this family-run B&B offers cooked

breakfasts and comfortable, clean rooms. It also has the identical **Canberran Lodge** (528 Northbourne Ave, Downer) a couple of doors down.

**Olims Hotel Canberra** (☎ 6243 0000; www.olims-hotel.com; cnr Ainslie & Limestone Aves, Braddon; r \$115-209; ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) This 1927 heritage-listed building and its later refurbishments surround a lovely courtyard. The 1st-floor, self-contained 'loft' rooms are more spacious and have balconies overlooking the garden.

**Tall Trees Motel** (☎ 6247 9200; www.bestwestern.com.au/talltrees; 21 Stephen St, Ainslie; r \$119-149; ☎ ☎) The green grounds of this motel and its location in leafy Ainslie lend it a relaxed air. It's a good place to base yourself if you want to be near but not in the centre.

**Our pick University House** (☎ 6125 5211; www.anu.edu.au/unihouse; 1 Balmain Cres, Acton; s \$123-136, tw/d \$123/136; ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) Restored rather than renovated, this glorious 1950s building (with furniture to match), is soothingly positioned amid the rambling university grounds. The rooms are actually minisuites; many have balconies.

### Top End

**Hotel Realm** (☎ 6163 1888; hotelrealm.com.au; 18 National Circuit, Barton; r/stc from \$245/275; ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) From its shiny chrome lettering to its cavernous reception void, everything about this large hotel screams modern – albeit in a painfully tasteful grey-on-grey way. You may find it hard to drag yourself out of the comfy beds.

**Hyatt Hotel Canberra** (☎ 6270 1234; www.canberra.park.hyatt.com; Commonwealth Ave, Yarralumla; r \$310-610, ste from \$750; ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) Staff zing to attention in plus-fours at this Gatsby-esque, Art Deco hotel. You can almost smell the whiff of past power-plays in the diplomatic suites. The illusion fades in the newer wing, where it's back to the Hyatt world of comfortable normality.

### EATING

Most restaurants are in Civic, Kingston, Manuka and Griffith. There's a fantastic Asian strip in Dickson and many other possibilities scattered throughout the suburbs.

### Restaurants

**Ginseng Restaurant** (☎ 6260 8346; 15 Flinders Way, Manuka; lunch mains \$11-26; ☎ lunch & dinner) Making up for its shoebox size by spilling onto the street, Ginseng serves modern Chinese dishes and lots of vegetarian options.

**Portia's Place** (☎ 6239 7970; 11 Kennedy St, Kingston; mains \$17-29; ☎ lunch Sun-Fri, dinner daily) The

effervescent Portia is very much the host at this popular and accomplished traditional Chinese restaurant. It's a good place to spot politicians.

**our pick Ottoman Cuisine** (☎ 6273 6111; cnr Broughton & Blackall Sts, Barton; mains \$29-35; ☎ lunch Tue-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) A real sense-of-occasion restaurant, Ottoman is to Turkish what Mod Oz is to meat-and-two-veg. The service is impeccable, there's a good wine list and the mezze plates are amazing.

### Cafés & Self-catering

**Silo Bakery** (☎ 6260 6060; 36 Giles St, Kingston; mains \$3-15; ☎ 7am-4pm) Popular to the point of insanity, this legendary bakery and cheese shop has café seating and an excellent breakfast menu.

**Milk & Honey** (☎ 6247 7722; Garema Pl, Civic; breakfast \$5-16, lunch \$11-22, dinner \$18-29; ☎ breakfast, lunch & dinner) There are lots of longstanding cafés on this alley but this newcomer has the most interesting food. Try the breakfast trifle or for something more substantial, the truffled scrambled eggs with avocado.

**Pizzazz Café** (☎ 6239 6200; 41 Kennedy St, Kingston; mains \$10-19; ☎ breakfast & lunch) Although the name sounds like a dodgy 1980s hairdresser, Pizzazz offers an interesting take on café fare with a vaguely Mexican bent.

### DRINKING & ENTERTAINMENT

For entertainment listings, see the 'Fly' section of Thursday's *Canberra Times* and the free monthly street mag *bma*. **Ticketek** (☎ 132 849; www.ticketek.com.au; 11 Akuna St, Civic) sells tickets to major events.

**B Bar** (☎ 6295 1949; 21 Kennedy St, Kingston; ☎ 3pm-late) A slick place to toss back a few cocktails while snacking on tapas.

**Filthy McFadden's** (☎ 6239 5303; Green Sq, Kingston; ☎ noon-late) There's a suitably dingy ambience at this better-than-average Irish pub with a big selection of beer on tap.

**ANU Union Bar** (☎ 6125 3660; www.anuunion.com.au; Union Court, Acton; ☎ gigs 8pm) Has energetic live music up to three times a week during semester; usually around \$10 for local bands, but cover charges can climb to \$50.

**Academy** (☎ 6257 3355; www.academyclub.com.au; Bunda St, Civic; admission \$5-15; ☎ 5pm-late Tue-Sat) The original movie screen of this former cinema dominates the crowded dance floor of this nightclub with frenetic, larger-than-life visuals.

**Dendy Canberra Centre** (☎ 6221 8900; www.dendy.com.au; 148 Bunda St, Civic; adult/child \$15/11) A flash new art-house cinema complex.

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

#### Air

**Canberra International Airport** (☎ 6275 2222; www.canberraairport.com.au) is serviced by four airlines:

**Brindabella Airlines** (☎ 1300 66 88 24; www.brindabellairlines.com.au) Services Newcastle (70 minutes) and Albury (45 minutes).

**Qantas** (☎ 13 13 13; www.qantas.com.au; Jolimont Centre, Northbourne Ave, Civic) Heads to Brisbane (95 minutes), Sydney (50 minutes), Melbourne (one hour), Adelaide (1½ hours) and Perth (four hours).

**Tiger Airways** (☎ 03-9335 3033; www.tigerairways.com) Services to/from Melbourne.

**Virgin Blue** (☎ 136 789; www.virginblue.com.au) Also has services to Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, plus the Gold Coast (90 minutes).

#### Bus

The interstate bus terminal is the **Jolimont Centre** (Northbourne Ave, Civic), which has free phone lines to the visitors centre.

**Greyhound** (☎ 13 14 99; www.greyhound.com.au; ☎ Jolimont Centre office 7am-6pm) has frequent services to Sydney (\$40, 3½ hours) and Melbourne (\$89, nine hours).

**Murrays** (☎ 13 22 51; www.murrays.com.au; ☎ Jolimont Centre counter 7am-6pm) has daily services to Sydney (\$37, 3½ hours), Batemans Bay (\$24, 2½ hours), Narooma (\$37, 4½ hours) and Wollongong (\$31, 3½ hours).

**Surfborder Express** (☎ 6241 0033; www.transborder.com.au) connects the capital to Batemans Bay (\$24, 2½ hours) and Ulladulla (\$35, 3½ hours).

### Car & Motorcycle

The quickest route between Canberra and the coast is the Kings Hwy, passing through grazing land before descending the nearly sheer cliffs of the escarpment in a steep, winding, but extremely beautiful road through **Mongo National Park** to Batemans Bay (150km).

If you're fast-tracking it to Sydney (280km), take the Federal then the Hume Hwy. For Melbourne (660km), take the Barton Hwy and then the Hume. For the Victorian Coast, take the Monaro Hwy to Lakes Entrance (420km).

### Train

**Kingston train station** (☎ 6295 1198; Burke Cres), off Wentworth Ave, is the city's rail terminus. Buses 35 and 39 run between here and Civic.

You can book trains and connecting buses inside the station at the **CountryLink travel centre** (☎ 13 22 32; www.countrylink.info; ☎ 6am-4.45pm Mon-Fri). CountryLink trains run to/from Sydney (\$40, 4½ hours, two daily). There are no direct trains to Melbourne but you can catch a CountryLink coach to Yass and transfer to a train there but it will take a couple of hours longer than the direct bus.

### GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

Canberra International Airport is 7km south-east of the city. A taxi to the city costs around \$30. **Deane's Buses** (☎ 6299 3722; www.deanesbuses.com.au) operates the frequent AirLiner bus (one-way/return \$9/15, 20 minutes) between the airport and the city.

### Bus

Canberra's public transport provider is **Action** (☎ 131 710; www.action.act.gov.au), with routes that criss-cross the city.

You can purchase single-trip tickets (adult/concession \$3/1.50), but a better deal is a daily ticket (adult/concession \$6.60/3.30). Prepurchase tickets from Action agents (including the visitors centre and some newsagents) or buy them from the driver.

### Taxi

**Cab Express** (☎ 6260 6011)  
**Canberra Cabs** (☎ 13 22 27)

## SHOALHAVEN COAST

The coastal beauty is undiminished in this region, with its great beaches, state forests and numerous national parks, including the huge (190,751-hectare) Morton National Park in the westerly ranges. You're now in striking distance of Sydney, so expect holiday spots to fill up and prices to explode on the weekends and school holidays.

### MURRAMARANG NATIONAL PARK

This beautiful 11,978-hectare **coastal park** (admission per car \$7) begins just above Batemans Bay and extends to within 20km of Ulladulla. If you haven't seen a kangaroo in the wild yet, here's your chance. At dawn and dusk large numbers of them wander out of the gum- and rainforests to the edges of lovely **Durras Lake**, while colourful parrots fill the trees.

**Wasp Head, Depot, Pebbly** and **Merry Beaches** are all popular with surfers and **Myrtle Beach** with nudists. We're not sure where nude surfers go. There are numerous walking trails snaking off from these beaches and a steep but enjoyable walk up **Durras Mountain** (283m).

At the north of the park, **Murramarang Aboriginal Area** encompasses the largest midden on the south coast, its remains suggesting 12,000 years of continual occupation. A self-guided walking track has been laid out with interpretive displays.

### Sleeping

NPWS has idyllic **camp sites** (per adult/child \$14/7) with showers, flushing toilets and barbecues at **Depot Beach** (☎ 4478 6582), **Pebbly Beach** (☎ 4478 6023) and **Pretty Beach** (☎ 4457 2019). Sites are scarce during school holidays; book ahead. It also rents tidy, self-contained **cabins** (\$85-100) at Depot Beach and Pretty Beach, sleeping between four and six people.

Friendly **Durras Lake North Holiday Park** (☎ 4478 6072; www.durrasnorthpark.com.au; 57 Durras North Rd; camp sites per 2 people \$20-25, cabins \$70-225) has shady camp sites and cute cabins. It's very popular with kangaroos.

Another favourite of the marsupial mob is **EcoPoint Murramarang Resort** (☎ 4478 6355; www.murramarangresort.com.au; camp sites per 2 people \$30-74, villas \$129-381; ☎). It's a big, modern place with a row of Norfolk pines between it and the beach. Posh extras such as camp sites with en suites and cabins with spas are the norm.

### Getting There & Away

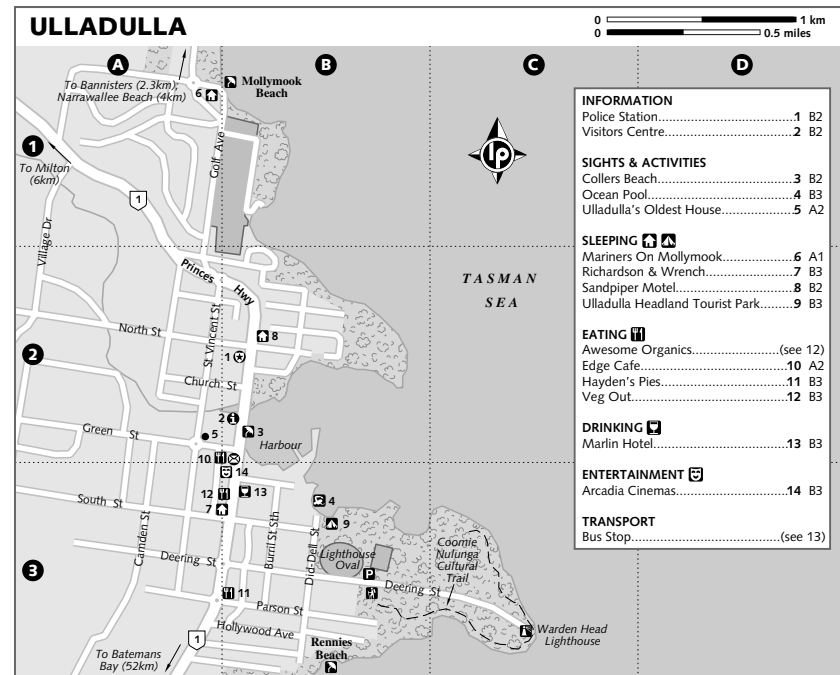
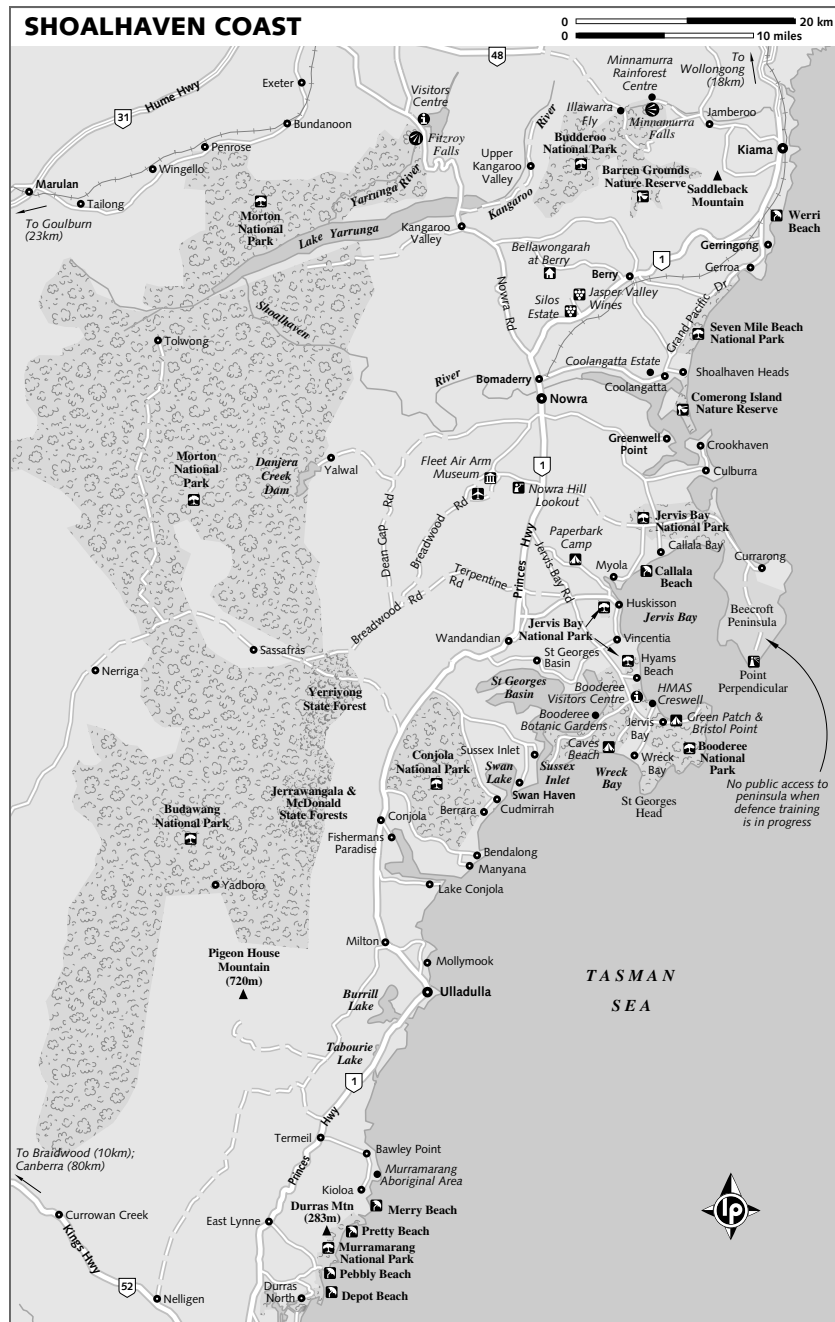
The Princes Hwy forms the park's western edge, but it's 10km from the beaches. Many of the roads are pretty rough, but those to Durras, Durras Lake, Depot Beach and Durras North are all sealed, as is Mt Agony Rd to Pebbly Beach (but not Pebbly Beach Rd).

### ULLADULLA

☎ 02 / pop 10,300

The harbour is the centre of life in this fishing-focussed town that lets its hair down at Easter for the **Blessing of the Fleet** ceremony. While Ulladulla can be a bit, well, dull, it does have some beautiful beaches.

North of the centre, gorgeous **Mollymook** stretches to over 2km of golden sand. **Narrawallee Beach**, the next one up, ends at a pretty kayak-friendly inlet. Both have beach breaks, although the serious surfers head for



**Collers Beach** below the golf course, which offers left- and right-hand reef breaks and decent barrels. Immediately south of the harbour is a small beach with a large **ocean pool**.

### Information

**Post office** (Princes Hwy)

**Visitors centre** (☎ 4455 1269; www.shoalhavenholidays.com.au; Princes Hwy; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat & Sun) Has internet access (per half hour \$1.25)

### Sights & Activities

The **Coomee Nulunga Cultural Trail** is a 700m walking trail established by the local Aboriginal Land Council. It begins near Lighthouse Oval (take Deering St east of the highway) and follows a path forged by the Rainbow Serpent (an important being in Aboriginal mysticism) from the headland through native bush to the beach.

In comparison to the trail, **Ulladulla's Oldest House** (☎ 4455 6996; www.miltonulladullahistoricalsociety.org.au; 275 Green St; admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon & Wed-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat, 10am-3pm Sun) is a youngster, having been built in 1850. It's now a speciality tea shop but gawkers are welcome.

Climbing **Pigeon House Mountain** (720m), in the far south of Morton National Park, is an enjoyable challenge. A road runs close to the summit, from where it's a walk of over three hours and 5km to the top and back. The last stretch features steep steps and ladders. The main access road leaves the highway 5km north of Ulladulla just before Milton, then it's 28km to the car park.

### Sleeping

For holiday home rentals try **Richardson & Wrench** (☎ 4455 3999; www.randwulladulla.com.au; cnr Princes Hwy & South St).

**Ulladulla Headland Tourist Park** (☎ 4455 2457; www.holidayhaven.com.au; South St; camp sites per person \$10-20, cabins \$70-235; ☎) Not skimping on the 'park' part of the tourist park equation, this headland property has a lovely, leafy setting with ample ocean views. Facilities are good and well-kept.

**Sandpiper Motel** (☎ 4455 1488; www.sandpiper-motel.com.au; 78 Princes Hwy; s/d \$70/75; ☎) Clean rooms, friendly staff, reasonable rates and a large DVD library separates this traditional motel from the other brick-and-tile places.

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**Mariners on Mollymook** (☎ 4454 2011; www.marinersmollymook.com.au; 1 Golf Ave, Mollymook; apt 1-bedroom/2-bedroom \$160/180) A smart renovation has rendered this older establishment fresh as a daisy. The self-contained apartments have dreamy beach views; some have spa baths.

**our pick Bannisters** (☎ 4455 3044; www.bannisters.com.au; 191 Mitchell Pde, Mollymook; r \$260-350, ste \$410-560; ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎; wi-fi) The ultimate extreme makeover: the bones of a 1970s concrete block motel provide the basis of this hip, unassumingly luxurious place. Splash to the lip of the infinity pool for sublime views up the coast, or enjoy them from your balcony.

## Eating

**Hayden's Pies** (☎ 4455 7798; 166 Princes Hwy; pies \$3-5; ☎ 6.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 7am-4.30pm Sat & Sun) From the traditional to the gourmet (Moroccan lamb; salmon and prawn) and vegetarian, this little pie shop is filled with crusty goodness and delicious smells.

**Edge Cafe** (☎ 4454 3565; cnr Green & Boree Sts; breakfast \$4-13, lunch \$7-14, dinner \$22-26; ☎ 9am-4.30pm Mon-Thu, 9am-late Fri & Sat) Part licensed café, part gallery and part bakery, Edge Cafe has an enticing menu of sandwiches, bagels, pasta and pizza.

**Veg Out** (☎ 4455 2266; Bellbrook Arcade, 95 Princes Hwy; mains \$5-10; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-2pm Sat) The awesome coffee may not be conducive to vegging out, but the organic, meat-free salads, wraps, quiches and cakes certainly are. Stock up on earth-friendly groceries at **Awesome Organics** ☎ 9.30am-5pm Mon-Thu, 10.30am-5pm Fri, two doors down.

**Bannisters Restaurant** (☎ 4455 3044; 191 Mitchell Pde; breakfast \$14-17, dinner \$29-42; ☎ breakfast daily, dinner Tue-Sun) Elegantly situated on Bannister's Point, 1km north of town, the Mod Oz fare matches the fine views, showcasing local ingredients in a creative menu.

## Drinking & Entertainment

**Marlin Hotel** (☎ 4455 1999; cnr Princes Hwy & Wason St) There are harbour views from the back bar of this big old pub, and regular bands and DJs.

**Arcadia Cinemas** (☎ 4454 1224; Rowens Arcade, Boree St; tickets \$10-12) Blockbuster and art-house movies make their way here.

## Getting There & Away

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premiers.com.au) coaches stop on the run between Sydney (\$31, five hours) and Melbourne (\$76, 12¾ hours) via Batemans Bay (\$13, one

hour) and Nowra (\$17, one hour). **Surfborder Express** (☎ 6241 0033; www.transborder.com.au) heads to Canberra (\$35, 3½ hours).

**Ulladulla Bus Lines** (☎ 4455 1674) services the local area, including Milton, Narrawallee and Mollymook.

## ULLADULLA TO JERVIS BAY

**Milton**, on the highway 6km north of Ulladulla, is this area's original town, built to serve the nearby farming communities. In a sign of how values have changed, note that Milton, like so many early towns in this coastal region, was built several kilometres inland, away from the cold and stormy coast.

There are several cafés and a few antique shops on the main street (Princes Hwy) and it gets pretty busy here on weekends. **Pilgrims Wholefoods** (☎ 4455 3421; Princes Hwy; meals \$5-9; ☎ breakfast & lunch Mon-Sat) has interesting vegetarian lunches (six types of vege burger!), along with organic supplies.

The highway passes **Conjola National Park** before skirting **St Georges Basin**, a large body of water that has access to the sea through narrow **Sussex Inlet**. The north shore of the basin has succumbed to housing developments reminiscent of the suburban sprawl on the central coast.

## JERVIS BAY

One of the most stunning spots on the south coast, this large, sheltered bay is a magical amalgamation of snow-white sand, crystalline waters, national parks and frolicking dolphins. Seasonal visitors include hordes of Sydney holidaymakers (summer and most weekends) and migrating whales (May to November).

To reach the bay you have to pass through sections of **Jervis Bay National Park**, 4854 hectares of low scrub and woodland, which shelter the endangered eastern bristlebird. The bay itself is a marine park.

In 1995 the Aboriginal community won a land claim in the Wreck Bay area and now jointly administers **Booderee National Park** (opposite) at the southern end of the bay. By a strange quirk this area is actually part of the ACT, not NSW.

Most of the development in Jervis Bay is on the western shore, around the settlements of **Huskisson** and **Vincentia** (combined population 3391). The northern shore has less tourist infrastructure. **Callala Bay** (population 2717), despite its close proximity to Huskisson, is cut off by

the Currumbene Creek – you have to drive back to the highway and head south (which is just the way the locals like it). **Becroft Peninsula** forms the northeastern side of Jervis Bay, ending in the dramatic sheer wall of appropriately named **Point Perpendicular**. Most of the peninsula is navy land but is usually open to the public.

## Sights & Activities

Huskisson (Huskie to her friends) is the centre for most tourist activities.

**Lady Denman Maritime Museum** (☎ 4441 5675; www.ladydenman.asn.au; cnr Woollamia Rd & Dent St; adult/child \$8/4; ☎ 10am-4pm) has an interesting historic collection as well as the 1912 *Lady Denman* ferry. Also here, **Timbery's Aboriginal Arts & Crafts** sells work produced by one family of artisans. The shop is normally staffed by Laddie, the entertaining patriarch.

Behind the pub, **Huskisson Sea Pool** (admission free; ☎ 7am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun) has salt water but is more like an Olympic pool than the usual ocean pools.

**Dolphin Watch Cruises** (☎ 4441 6311; www.dolphinwatch.com.au; 50 Owen St; adult/child from \$20/15) offers several dolphin and whale-watching trips on its custom catamaran.

The marine park is popular with divers, offering the chance to get close to grey nurse sharks and fur seals. **Deep 6 Diving** (☎ 4441 5255; www.deep6divingjervisbay.com; 64 Owen St) charges \$100 for two boat dives, plus equipment hire (\$150 with full gear).

**Jervis Bay Sailing Charters** (☎ 4441 8777; www.jervisbaysailingcharters.com.au; 9 Hawke St) offers two- or three-hour cruises on a luxury catamaran. The boat holds 12 passengers and rates vary widely.

**Jervis Bay Kayaks** (☎ 4441 7157; www.jervisbaykayaks.com; 13 Hawke St) offers rentals (two-hour/day \$36/66) or guided half-day paddling and snorkelling trips (\$96).

South of Huskisson, **Hyams Beach** is an attractive stretch of sand that is said to be the whitest in the world. It's a little like walking on warm snow.

## BOODEREE NATIONAL PARK

Occupying Jervis Bay's southeastern spit, this sublime national park offers good swimming, surfing and diving on both bay and ocean beaches. Much of it is heath land, with some forest, including small pockets of rainforest.

Booderee means 'plenty of fish' and it's easy to see what a bountiful place this must

have been for the indigenous people. For personalised tours with an Aboriginal focus, talk to Wreck Bay identity **Unde Barry** (☎ 0402-441 168).

There's a good **visitors centre** (☎ 4443 0977; www.booderee.gov.au; ☎ 9am-4pm) at the park entrance with walking-trail maps and information on camping. Inside the park is **Booderee Botanic Gardens** (☎ 4442 1122; ☎ 8.30am-4pm), which is a branch of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra and includes some enormous rhododendrons.

There are many walking trails around the park. Keep an eye out for the 206 species of bird, 27 species of land mammal and 23 species of reptile. Amphibian enthusiasts can thrill to the 15 species of frogs.

Entry to the park costs \$10 per vehicle per 48 hours, or you can buy an unlimited annual pass for \$40 (NPWS passes are not valid). There are idyllic camping grounds at **Green Patch** (camp sites \$20-45 plus \$10/5 per adult/child) and **Bristol Point** (camp sites \$20-52 plus \$10/5 per adult/child). For a more secluded experience try the basic camping at **Caves Beach** (camp sites \$11 plus \$10/5 per adult/child). Book through the visitors centre or via the internet up to three weeks in advance at peak times. There's a 24-hour self-registration system at the entrance to the park.

Surfing is good at Caves Beach, but the real drawcard is the **Pipeline** (aka Black Rock, Wreck Bay or Summercloud Bay), an A-grade reef break that produces 12-foot tubes in optimal conditions.

The park is also home to the naval training base HMAS *Creswell*, which is off limits to the public.

## Sleeping

There's plenty of accommodation in Huskisson and Vincentia but it still pays to book ahead. Prices skyrocket on weekends. Hyams Beach is a relaxing place to stay, but options are limited to mainly private rentals; try **Hyams Beach Real Estate** (☎ 4443 0242; www.hyamsbeachholidays.com.au; 76 Cyrus St, Hyams Beach).

**Huskisson Beach Tourist Resort** (☎ 4441 5142; www.holidayhaven.com.au; Beach St; sites per 2 people \$30-42, cabins \$85-190; ☎ ☎) Run by the Shoalhaven Council, this well-equipped camping ground has a great location right on the beach and flash cabins.

**Jervis Bay Motel** (☎ 4441 5781; www.jervisbaymotel.com.au; 41 Owen St; r \$115-165; ☎ ☎) An old-fashioned motel that's been tarted up, you'll

find pleasant décor and quality furnishings, as well as lovely views from the upstairs rooms.

**Jervis Bay Guesthouse** (☎ 4441 7658; www.jervisbayguesthouse.com.au; 1 Beach St; r \$175-235; 🏠 📺) This beautifully restored wooden guesthouse is opposite the beach, surrounded by tropical gardens. Most rooms have a beach view and wide verandas.

**Paperbark Camp** (☎ 4441 6066; www.paperbarkcamp.com.au; 59 Woollamia Rd; tent \$320-450) Camp in ecofriendly style in one of 12 luxurious solar-powered safari tents, with comfy beds, gorgeous en suites and wrap-around decks. It's set in dense bush 3.5km from Huskisson; you can borrow kayaks to paddle up the creek to the bay.

## Eating

**Supply** (☎ 4441 5815; 1/54 Owen St; mains \$5-15; 🍳 breakfast & lunch) The best of Huskisson's cafés, Supply doubles as a deli. Grab a newspaper and settle into the smart surroundings for a satisfying breakfast.

**Hyams Beach Café** (☎ 4443 3874; 76 Cyrus St, Hyams Beach; breakfast \$8-14, lunch \$14-17, dinner \$24-29; 🍳 breakfast & lunch daily, dinner Fri & Sat) Once a simple beach store, it's now a smart café selling fancy provisions, frilly gifts and copies of *Vogue Living*. The menu is varied and excellent; takeaways are a cheaper option.

**Gunyah Restaurant** (☎ 4441 7299; 59 Woollamia Rd; mains \$29-32; 🍳 breakfast & dinner) Sit under the canopy and watch the light change through the trees from the balcony of this acclaimed restaurant at Paperbark Camp (above). The focus is on local ingredients, although ordering 'roo has less appeal when there's a possibility of a live one walking past.

## Drinking & Entertainment

**Husky Pub** (☎ 4441 5001; www.thehuskypub.com.au; Owen St) The funnest place in town has fabulous bay views from indoors and outside at the many picnic tables. There's live music most weekends.

**Huskisson Pictures** (☎ 4441 6343; www.huskpics.com.au; cnr Sydney & Owen Sts; tickets \$8.50-9.50) This tiny picture house leans towards the art house.

## Getting There & Away

Being off the highway, Jervis Bay is poorly served by public transport. **Stuart's Coaches** (☎ 4421 0332) runs a school-bus service from Nowra to Callala Bay.

## NOWRA

☎ 02 / pop 27,480

From a traveller's perspective, Nowra's more of a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It may be the largest town in the Shoalhaven area but it doesn't have the charm of Berry, 17km northeast, or the beaches of Jervis Bay, 25km southeast. It is, however, the southernmost point that the train from Sydney stops on the east coast. There are some good eateries and when Jervis Bay fills up you can stop here and commute.

## Information

**NPWS office** (☎ 4423 2170; 55 Graham St;

🕒 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri)

**Post office** (59 Junction St)

**Visitors centre** (☎ 4421 0778; www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au; cnr Princes Hwy & Pleasant Way; 🕒 9am-5pm) Internet is available (\$1 per 15 minutes).

## Sights & Activities

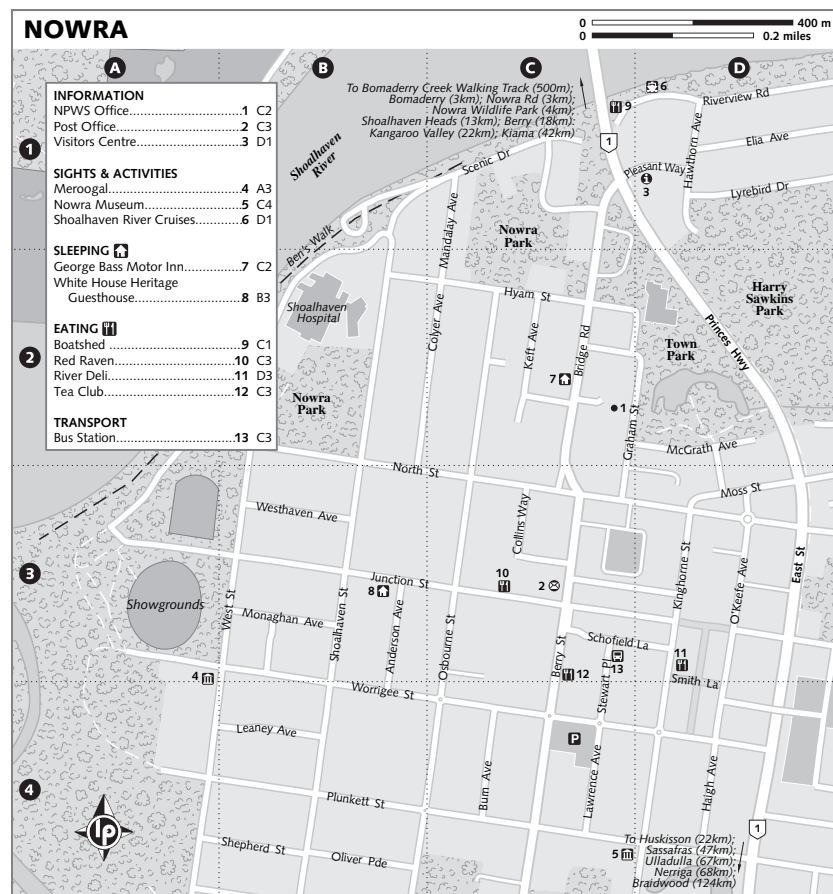
The 6.5-hectare **Nowra Wildlife Park** (☎ 4421 3949; www.nowrawildlifepark.com.au; Rock Hill Rd; adult/child \$16/8; 🕒 9am-5pm), on the north bank of the Shoalhaven River, is where you can kiss a cockatoo and meet other native animals. Head north from Nowra, cross the bridge and immediately turn left, then follow the signs.

**Nowra Museum** (☎ 4421 1228; cnr Kinghorne & Plunkett Sts; adult/child \$1/50c; 🕒 1-4pm Sat & Sun) has heaps of old stuff. **Meroogal** (☎ 4421 8150; www.hht.net.au/museums/meroogal; cnr West & Worrigeer Sts; adult/child \$8/4; 🕒 1-5pm Sat, 10am-5pm Sun) is a historic 1885 house containing the artefacts accumulated by four generations of women who lived there. Entry is by guided tours, which leave on the hour.

If you're at all interested in military planes and helicopters, **Fleet Air Arm Museum** (☎ 4424 1920; www.navy.gov.au/faam/; 489A Albatross Rd; adult/child \$7/free; 🕒 10am-4pm), 10km south of Nowra, has an excellent display. Nearby **Nowra Hill Look-out** offers expansive views over the plains to the escarpment.

The visitors centre produces a handy compilation of walks in the area. The relaxing **Ben's Walk** starts at the bridge near Scenic Dr and follows the south bank of the Shoalhaven River (6km return). North of the river, the circular 5.5km **Bomaderry Creek Walking Track** runs through sandstone gorges from a trailhead at the end of Narang Rd.

**Shoalhaven River Cruises** (☎ 0429 981 007; www.shoalhavenrivercruise.com) has tours either up (\$25, two



hours) or down (\$35, three hours) the beautiful Shoalhaven River, leaving from the wharf just east of the bridge. Call ahead for times.

## Sleeping

**Our pick White House Heritage Guest House** (☎ 4421 2084; www.whitehouseguesthouse.com; 30 Junction St; s \$85, d \$100-130; 🏠 📺) A friendly family runs this beautifully restored guesthouse with comfortable en suite rooms. The light breakfast out on the wide veranda is a great way to start the day.

**George Bass Motor Inn** (☎ 4421 6388; www.georgebass.com.au; 65 Bridge Rd; s \$93-115, d \$99-125; 🏠) An unpretentious but well-appointed single-storey motor inn, the George Bass has clean and sunny rooms. The more expensive ones are slightly newer.

## Eating

**Boatshed** (☎ 4421 2419; 10 Wharf Rd; breakfast \$5-12, lunch \$13-15, dinner \$19-24; 🍳 breakfast & lunch Sat & Sun, dinner Thu-Sat) Nowra's most atmospheric eating option is right by the river, almost under the bridge. Enjoy weekend brunch on the terrace or settle into the Mod Oz dinner menu.

**River Deli** (☎ 4423 1344; 84 Kinghorne St; meals \$5-15; 🍳 breakfast & lunch Mon-Sat) The smart set gathers at this trendy spot to pour over the stacks of newspapers and savour the array of deli items including filled baguettes and salads. The *barrista* with the Dali-esque moustache makes a mean coffee.

**Tea Club** (☎ 4422 0900; www.teaclub.com.au; 46 Berry St; breakfast \$5-8, lunch \$9-10; 🍳 breakfast & lunch Mon-Sat) Nowra's bohemian set hangs out at this

**WORTH A TRIP: FITZROY FALLS**

Water falling 81m makes a big roar and that's what you hear at this stunning spot in **Morton National Park** (admission per vehicle \$3). Even more spectacular is the view down the Yarrunga Valley from the sheer cliffs of the escarpment. There are various walks in the vicinity where if you're very lucky you might spot a platypus or a lyrebird. The **visitor centre** (☎ 4887 7270; ☎ 9am-5.30pm) has a café and good displays.

From either Nowra or Berry the road is a delight, heading through pretty Kangaroo Valley where the historic town is hemmed in by the mountains. Then it's over castle-like Hampden Bridge, an ostentatious 1898 sandstone affair, before taking the steep climb up the escarpment.

comfortable little vegetarian café with a vast back garden. Check its website for interesting live gigs.

**Red Raven** (☎ 4423 3433; 55 Junction St; lunch \$13-20, dinner \$20-28; ☎ lunch Tue-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) Occupying the 1908 fire station, this BYO restaurant serves interesting Italian-influenced dishes with plenty of vegetarian options.

**Getting There & Around**

The **train station** (☎ 4423 0141; Meroo St) is 3km north of town at Bomaderry. Frequent **CityRail** (☎ 131 500; www.cityrail.info) trains go to Wollongong (\$8.60, 75 minutes) via Berry (\$3.40, 10 minutes), with connections to Sydney. Local buses link Nowra to the train station on weekdays with only limited services on Saturdays. Or take a **taxi** (☎ 4421 0333).

**Premier Motor Service** (☎ 13 34 10; www.premiers.com.au) coaches stop on the run between Sydney (\$22, 3½ hours) and Melbourne (\$76, 13¼ hours) via Ulladulla (\$17, one hour).

**AROUND NOWRA**

East of Nowra, the Shoalhaven River meanders through dairy country in a system of estuaries and wetlands, finally reaching the sea at Crookhaven Heads.

On the north side of the estuary is **Shoalhaven Heads**, where the river once reached the sea but is now blocked by sandbars. Just north of the surf beach here is **Seven Mile Beach National Park** (admission free) stretching up to Gerroa.

Just before Shoalhaven Heads you pass through **Coolangatta**, the site of the earliest European settlement on NSW's south coast. **Coolangatta Estate** (☎ 4448 7131; www.coolangattaestate.com.au; s/d & tw \$110/130; ☎ winery 10am-5pm) is a slick winery with a golf course, a good restaurant and accommodation in convict-built buildings. Prices nearly double on the weekends.

**BERRY**

☎ 02 / pop 1490

Berry has the potential to be a chintzy nightmare, yet somehow it maintains its considerable historic graces without folding under the weight of antique shops and Devonshire teas. Founded in the 1820s, it remained a private town on the Coolangatta Estate (above) until 1912. **Queen St**, Berry's short main street, is worth a stroll for its National Trust-classified buildings and a multitude of shops and cafés.

**Pottering Around** (☎ 4464 2177; 99 Queen St; ☎ 10am-4.30pm) is a gift shop with tourist information and internet access (\$3 per 30 minutes). The **museum** (☎ 4464 3097; 135 Queen St; admission free; ☎ 11am-2pm Sat, 11am-3pm Sun), near the post office, is in an interesting 1884 bank building.

The popular **Berry Country Fair** is held on the first Sunday of the month at the showgrounds. On the last Saturday in May the peace is shattered by the caber-tossers and haggis-hurlers of the **Berry Celtic Festival** (☎ 4234 1346; Berry Showground; adult/child \$10/5), not to mention the bagpipes.

**Jasper Valley Wines** (☎ 4464 1596; 152 Croziers Rd; ☎ 10am-4pm Fri-Sun) is 5km south of Berry, and offers tastings and lunches. Nearby, **Silos Estate** (☎ 4448 6082; www.thesilos.com; B640 Princes Highway, Jaspers Brush; lunch \$25, dinner \$30-33; ☎ lunch Thu-Sun, dinner Thu-Sat) also offers tastings along with an acclaimed restaurant.

**Sleeping**

Conjuring up images of cosy wood fires, Berry is a popular weekend in winter as well.

**Berry Hotel** (☎ 4464 1011; www.berryhotel.com.au; 120 Queen St; s/d midweek \$45/70, s/d weekend \$70/100) This country pub is a rarity – it caters to weekend-ing city slickers without totally losing its status as a local watering hole. The rooms are standard pub bedrooms with bathrooms down the corridor, but large and well presented.

**Bunyip Inn B&B** (☎ 4464 2064; blakekittle@myoffice.net.au; 122 Queen St; s/d \$90/120; ☎) Next to the Berry

**GRAND PACIFIC DRIVE**

In an attempt to distract travellers from chugging along the freeway and bypassing their region, the good burghers of the Illawarra region are actively promoting a coastal alternative with the lofty name Grand Pacific Drive.

Start by turning right immediately after the bridge out of Nowra (in decidedly un-grand Bomaderry) and head towards Shoalhaven Heads. The route then passes through Gerroa, Gerringong, Kiama, and on to Wollongong and its northern beaches, before cutting through Royal National Park and rejoining the Princes Hwy above Waterfall.

The most scenic section is north of Wollongong, especially the stunning **Sea Cliff Bridge**, which sinuously curls along the base of the Illawarra Escarpment where it meets the ocean.

The only downside of this route is that it bypasses lovely Berry, but you can rectify that by starting from the dreamy back road from Berry to the coast, which starts as Prince Alfred St.

Hotel, this is an excellent place in one of the town's more impressive buildings: an old bank. There's a variety of spacious rooms, some with spas and all with loads of character.

**Berry Village Boutique Motel** (☎ 4464 3570; www.berrymotel.com.au; 72 Queen St; r \$145-165 Sun-Thu, \$175-195 Fri, \$215-225 Sat; ☎ ☎) Large, comfortable rooms are the go at this upmarket place at the edge of the main strip. The tiny pool, just off reception, seems to work more as a water-feature.

**Bellawongarah at Berry** (☎ 4464 1999; www.accommodation-berry.com.au; 869 Kangaroo Valley Rd, Bellawongarah; r/ste/cottage \$200/250/260; ☎ ☎) Misty, magical rainforest surrounds this wonderful place, 8km from Berry on the mountain road leading to Kangaroo Valley. Asian art features in the main house, while nearby an 1868 Wesleyan church has been given a French provincial makeover and is rented as a self-contained cottage for two. The lovely hostess serves up full country breakfasts.

**Eating**

**Berry Woodfired Sourdough Bakery** (☎ 4464 1617; 23 Prince Alfred St; mains \$5-17; ☎ breakfast & lunch Wed-Sun) Stock up on delicious bread or sit down for a light meal at this highly esteemed bakery, which attracts foodies from far and wide.

**Coach House Restaurant** (☎ 4464 1011; 120 Queen St; mains \$15-25; ☎ 10am-late) The restaurant at the Berry Hotel offers a nice ambience and meals a cut above usual pub grub. Sit in the large covered beer garden or grab a table in the 1860 Kangaroo Inn, a single room brick building at the back.

**Twenty Three** (☎ 4464 2323; 85 Queen St; mains \$23-25; ☎ dinner Tue-Sat) There's a small but upmarket and stylish dining room inside as well as a courtyard and garden. The menu is adventurous: Mod Oz with an Asian influence.

**Getting There & Away**

Frequent **CityRail** (☎ 131 500; www.cityrail.info) trains go to Wollongong (\$7.20, one hour) and Nowra (\$3.40, 10 minutes) from **Berry station** (☎ 4464 1022; Station Rd), with connections to Sydney.

**GERRINGONG**

☎ 02 / pop 3590

The lesser of the coast's two Gongs, Gerringong is a pleasant little town surrounded by farmland above the impressive sweep of **Werri Beach**. It's popular with both retirees and surfies.

**Just Gifts** (☎ 4234 4443; cnr Fern & Belinda St; ☎ 9am-5pm) acts as the visitors centre. **Boolarng Nangamai** (☎ 0414 322 142; www.boolarng-nangamai.com; 5/9 Bergin St; ☎ 10.30am-3.30pm Sat & Sun) is an Aboriginal art and culture studio that runs workshops and acts as a gallery for local artists. Take the first left after the train station.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**Tumblegum Inn** (☎ 4234 3555; www.tumbleguminn.com.au; 141C Belinda St; s/tw/d \$80/100/120) There's three rooms with en suites in this pretty wooden villa with friendly hosts. On sunny days you can enjoy a cooked breakfast on the veranda.

**Bellachara Boutique Hotel** (☎ 4234 1359; www.bellachara.com.au; 1 Fern St; r midweek \$250-550, weekend \$295-650; ☎ ☎) An old motel has been given quite a makeover to turn it into this luxurious complex. The rooms are smartly furnished and the day spa suitably glam.

**Gerringong Deli & Café** (☎ 4234 1035; 133 Fern St; breakfast \$5-14, lunch \$10-17; ☎ 8am-5pm) Housed in a nice old wooden building with lots of art on the walls, this deli café has plenty of vege choices, along with sandwiches, wraps, burgers and pasta.

## Getting There & Away

From **Gerrigong station** (☎ 4234 1422; Grey St) regular **CityRail** (☎ 131 500; www.cityrail.info) trains go to Wollongong (\$6.60, 56 minutes) and Berry (\$3.40, nine minutes), with connections to Sydney.

## KIAMA

☎ 02 / pop 12,290

Kiama's a large town with fine old buildings, magnificent mature trees, numerous beaches and crazy rock formations, but it's the **blowhole** that's the clincher. At its most dramatic when the surf's up, the water pounding the cliff explodes out of a gaping fissure in the headland known as Blowhole Point. It's been drawing visitors for a century and is now floodlit at night. The **visitors centre** (☎ 4232 3322; www.kiama.com.au; ☎ 9am-5pm) is nearby, beside the small **Pilot's Cottage Museum** (☎ 4232 1001; adult/child \$3/2; ☎ 11am-3pm Fri-Mon).

It's only a couple of feet wide, but **little blowhole** (off Tingira Cres, Marsden Head) rivals its big brother, shooting water in a great jet like a dragon snorting. There's a small enclosed **surf beach** right in town and **Bombo Beach**, 3km north of the centre has a great beach and a CityRail stop near the sand.

From the top of **Saddleback Mountain** you get a great view of the Illawarra Escarpment, the massive sandstone rampart that separates the coastal plain from the Southern Highlands. From Manning St, turn right on to Saddleback Mountain Rd, keeping an eye out for the historic **dry stone walls** lining the road.

By the time this book is published there will also be spectacular views from the **Illawarra Fly** (☎ 1300 362 881; www.illawarrafly.com.au; 182 Knights Hill Rd, Knights Hill; adult/child \$19/9; ☎ 9am-5pm), a 500m viewing tower above the rainforest canopy at the top of the escarpment, 25km west of town.

In the same vicinity, **Minnamurra Rainforest Centre** (☎ 4236 0469; car \$11; ☎ 9am-5pm, last entry 4pm) is on the eastern edge of **Budderoo National Park**, about 14km inland from Kiama. From the NPWS visitors centre you can take a 1.6km loop walk on a boardwalk through the rainforest following a cascading stream. Keep an eye out for water dragons and some of the most sociable lyrebirds in the country. A secondary 2.6km walk on a beautiful but sometimes steep track leads to the Minnamurra Falls. The visitors centre has a café.

On the way to Minnamurra you'll pass through the old village of **Jamberoo**, which has a nice pub.

## Sleeping

**Kendalls On The Beach Holiday Park** (☎ 4232 1790; www.kiama.net/holiday/kendalls; Bonaira St; sites per 2 people \$35-40, cottages \$100-300; ☎) Perched on one of Kiama's loveliest beaches this upmarket holiday park has flash cottages facing the beach and good clean facilities for campers.

**BelleVue Accommodation** (☎ 4232 4000; www.bellevueaccommodation.com.au; 21 Minnamurra St; units \$160-200; ☎) Six large modern units with wide porches and good town views have been carved out of this lovely 1890 house, steeped with the scent of jasmine. The décor is plush and units have DVD players and kitchen facilities.

## Eating

**Chachi's** (☎ 4233 1144; 32 Collins St; mains \$14-29; ☎ dinner) Located in a historic strip of terraced houses, Chachi's offers casual Italian alfresco dining. The smells wafting onto the pavement are hard to resist.

**our pick** **55 On Collins** (☎ 4232 2811; 55 Collins St; breakfast \$4-13, lunch \$12-29, dinner \$28-33; ☎ 9am-4pm daily, dinner Mon-Tue & Thu-Sat) Big city culinary creativity comes to Kiama with this smart place, which combines local produce with eclectic tastes. The wait-staff are so switched on you'd half expect them to know the first names of the animals being served. If you can't justify a dinner splurge, reasonably priced café fare is available during the day.

Every fourth Saturday, the **Kiama Produce Market** (☎ 0409-377 132; Black Beach; ☎ 8am-1pm) offers an array of local organic produce, unusual baked goods and prepared foods.

## Getting There & Away

**CityRail** (☎ 13 15 00; www.cityrail.info) trains hit **Kiama station** (☎ 4223 5613; Railway Pde) on their run between Wollongong (\$5.60, 47 minutes) and Bomaderry/Nowra (\$4.60, 28 minutes), via Gerrigong (\$3, nine minutes).

# WOLLONGONG

☎ 02 / pop 234,500

Hemmed in by the majestic Illawarra Escarpment, Wollongong sprawls along the coast from Lake Illawarra in the south, to within spitting distance of the Royal National Park. It's a city that gets progressively nicer as

you head north, with the southern end dominated by the biggest steelworks in Australia at Port Kembla. The town centre isn't about to be crowned Miss Australia either, but a string of ever prettier surf beaches to the north compensate somewhat, as does the ever-present backdrop of those immense cliffs.

The region is part of the traditional lands of the Dharawal people, which continue north to Botany Bay. It was explored by Europeans in the early 19th century, but apart from timber cutting and dairy farming there was little development until the escarpment's coal-fields attracted miners. By the turn of the 20th century Wollongong was a major coal port. Steelworks were developed in the 1920s and today the region is one of Australia's major industrial centres and Wollongong its ninth biggest city.

The Gong's surf ethos is a happy contrast to its blue-collar grit, and the result is genuine locals and a laid-back lifestyle. The city's cuisine measures up to that of any major city and the robust student population ensures that bar staff are never bored for long.

## Orientation

Crown St is the main commercial street, and between Kembla and Keira Sts is a two-block somewhat sterile pedestrian mall. Keira St is part of the Princes Hwy, but through traffic bypasses the city on the Southern Fwy.

## Information

At the time of research plans were afoot to move the **Wollongong visitors centre** (www.tourismwollongong.com) to the Princes Hwy, Bulli. Addresses and phone numbers hadn't been confirmed, so you're best to check the website. A smaller office may also open in the city itself. There's a post office and banks with ATMs on Crown St Mall.

**Network Café** (☎ 4228 8686; Upstairs, 157 Crown St; per hr \$3.50; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Wed, 10am-11.30pm Thu & Fri, 10am-5.30pm Sat) Internet access.

**NPWS office** (☎ 4223 3000; ground fl, State Government Office Block, Market St; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri)

## Sights & Activities

Wollongong's fishing fleet is based at **Belmore Basin** at the southern end of the harbour, which was cut from solid rock in 1868. There's a fishing cooperative and an 1872 **lighthouse** on the point. Nearby, on the headland, is the newer **Breakwater Lighthouse**.

**North Beach** generally has better surf than **Wollongong City Beach** and you can't see the mill. The harbour itself has beaches that are good for children. Others run north up the coast, including the surfer magnets of **Bulli**, **Sandon Point**, **Thirroul** (where DH Lawrence lived during his time in Australia; the cottage where he wrote *Kangaroo* still stands) and pretty **Austinmer**.

The excellent **Wollongong City Gallery** (☎ 4228 7500; www.wollongongcitygallery.com; cnr Kembla & Burelli Sts; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun) displays a permanent collection of modern Australian, indigenous and Asian art, and diverse temporary exhibits.

Quizzical kids of all ages can indulge their senses at the **Science Centre & Planetarium** (☎ 4286 5000; http://sciencecentre.uow.edu.au; Squires Way, Fairy Meadow; adult/child \$10/7; ☎ 10am-4pm). Operated by the University of Wollongong, this interactive science extravaganza covers everything from dinosaurs to electronics. Planetarium shows run through the day (\$3 per person).

The utterly serene **Wollongong Botanic Gardens** (☎ 4225 2636; 61 Northfields Ave, Keiraville; admission free; ☎ 7am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun) is a beautiful spot to wind down with a picnic lunch. The gardens represent a range of habitats including tropical, temperate and woodland. During summer, outdoor movies are often played.

Just south of the city, **Nan Tien Temple** (☎ 4272 0600; www.nantien.org.au; Berkeley Rd, Berkeley; admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun) is the largest Buddhist temple in the southern hemisphere. The custodians of this ornate complex encourage visitors to contemplate the 10,000 Buddhas and participate in meditations and cultural activities. Dress appropriately (no shorts, singlets or flip-flops) and remove your shoes before entering the shrines.

The **Cockatoo Run** (☎ 1300 653 801; www.3801limited.com.au; adult/child/family \$40/35/100; ☎ 11am, 2nd Sun of each month) is a heritage tourist train that travels inland across the Southern Highlands to Moss Vale. The route traverses the escarpment, coursing through dense rainforest along the way.

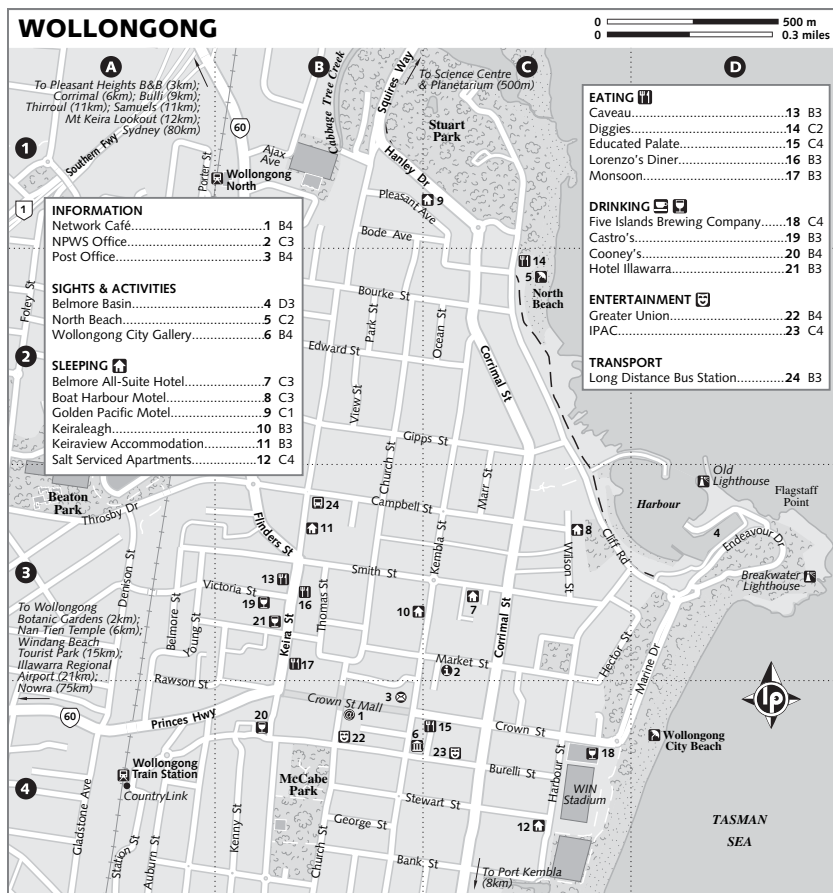
## Sleeping

Most of Wollongong's motels seem to have been time-warped in from the 1970s or earlier. Prices leap by around \$20 on weekends.

## BUDGET

The council runs three **tourist parks** (http://touristparks.wollongong.nsw.gov.au; camp sites per 2 people \$20-25)





on popular beaches: **Windang** (☎ 4297 3166; Fern St; cabins \$55-145), **Corrimal** (☎ 4285 5688; Lake Pde; cabins \$75-110) and **Bulli** (☎ 4285 5677; 1 Farrell Rd; cabins \$55-170).

**Keiraleagh** (☎ 4228 6765; keiraleagh@backpack.net.au; 60 Kembla St; dm \$20-25, s \$35, d/tw \$55-65) This rambling heritage house is clogged with atmosphere, with pressed metal ceilings, roses in the cornices and festively painted rooms. The basic dorms are out the back, along with a sizeable patio and a BBQ.

**Keiraview Accommodation** (☎ 4229 1132; www.yha.com.au/hostels; 75-79 Keira St; dm \$29-41, tw/d \$82/110; ☑) Modern and clinically clean, this complex contains the YHA hostel, which caters to students and backpackers in tidy four-bed dorms. The double rooms have verandas and kitchenettes.

### MIDRANGE

**Golden Pacific Motel** (☎ 4226 3000; fax 4228 3853; 16 Pleasant Ave, North Beach; r \$95-135; ☑) The friendly owners keep the place so spick-and-span that it seems churlish to giggle over the dated furnishings – although it's hard to resist with the satin and lace draped four-poster in the honeymoon suite.

**Boat Harbour Motel** (☎ 4228 9166; www.boatharbour-motel.com.au; cnr Campbell & Wilson Sts; s \$110-129, d \$120-145; ☑) Dressed like a sailor in white and navy blue trim, this older style motel has nice balconies and comfortable if unmemorable décor.

**Belmore All-Suite Hotel** (☎ 4224 6500; www.belmore.net; 39 Smith St; apt \$139-219; ☑) All the units (ranging from studios to two bedroom apartments) are spacious in this gracious, conservatively

decorated building near the beaches. There are kitchenettes and attractive patios.

### TOP END

**Salt Serviced Apartments** (☎ 4229 6866; www.saltwollongong.com.au; 5 Stewart St; apt \$170-240; ☑; wi-fi) Extremely schmick, these identical corner apartments are four to a floor in a contemporary block next to the stadium. Compared with the rare thrill of a rugby league view, the ocean views seem mundane.

**Pleasant Heights B&B** (☎ 4283 3355; www.pleasantheights.com.au; 77 New Mt Pleasant Rd; r \$250-450) Eccentrically but stylishly furnished, these three very different rooms are very luxe indeed. Some have awesome views while others have opulent spa baths. All smell very nice.

### Eating

North of the mall, Keira St is jammed with eateries of all types and budgets. Other places are spread across town.

### BUDGET

**Austibeach** (☎ 4268 5680; 104 Lawrence Hargrave Dr, Austimmer; breakfast \$4-17, lunch \$13-20, dinner \$17-23; ☑) breakfast & lunch daily, dinner Wed-Sat) Drop in for brunch or a homemade gelato as you're heading up the coast. The views from the terrace look to heaven via Austimmer Beach. There's live music on Saturday nights.

**ourpick Diggies** (☎ 4226 2688; 1 Cliff Rd, North Beach; breakfast \$5-18, lunch \$18-23, tapas \$7-11; ☑) breakfast & lunch daily, dinner Fri & Sat, cocktails from 4pm Sun) Sunny service matches the views at this informal café on the beach. Keep an eye on the surf while ordering from the foodie-friendly breakfast menu or just listen to it roar over tapas at night.

**Educated Palate** (☎ 4225 0100; 87 Crown St; mains \$7-17; ☑) breakfast & lunch) Forgive the seriously pretentious name and raid the deli counter for provisions, or let the cooks put in the hard yards over, say, the grilled haloumi and chorizo omelette. The coffee is excellent.

### MIDRANGE & TOP END

**Monsoon** (☎ 4229 4588; 193 Kiera St; lunch \$8-10, dinner \$15; ☑) lunch Tue-Sat, dinner Tue-Sun) The décor is typically oddball Vietnamese: there's a mirror ball, a Buddha and a cat-headed Egyptian figure. Thankfully the food is also authentic; try the wonderfully fragrant *pho bo* (beef noodle soup).

**Samuels** (☎ 4268 2244; 382 Lawrence Hargrave Dr, Thirroul; breakfast \$9-16, lunch \$25, dinner \$25-30; ☑) break-

fast Sat & Sun, lunch Tue-Fri, dinner Tue-Sun) Well worth the drive out to Thirroul, this excellent restaurant has a lively Mod Oz menu where all the dishes come with a choice of two sides. Sunday nights feature \$25 soup-and-roast deals.

**Lorenzo's Diner** (☎ 4229 5633; 119 Keira St; mains \$29-34; ☑) lunch Thu & Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) Seriously nice people run this upmarket modern Italian restaurant. The food matches the excellent service.

**Caveau** (☎ 4226 4855; 122-124 Keira St; 2 courses \$57; ☑) lunch Thu & Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) The top-rated restaurant on the south coast, even with its hip corrugated-iron trim Caveau shrieks 'formal!' The menu is all 'champagne *veloute*' this and 'perigord truffle' that, promising memories that will live on after the credit card pain subsides.

### Drinking

**Five Islands Brewing Company** (☎ 4220 2854; www.fiveislandsbrewery.com; WIN Entertainment Centre, cnr Crown & Harbour Sts; ☑) Its 10 signature draughts lubricate the crowd, which bursts the seams on weekends. There's a great patio overlooking the sea.

**Cooney's** (☎ 4229 1911; 234 Keira St) This vast, dark bar has cosy nooks, pool tables and constant tunes. There's also a beer garden and often live music and DJs.

**Hotel Illawarra** (☎ 4229 5411; cnr Keira & Market) Modernised into the city's swankiest pub complex, the Illawarra has a decent bistro, orange pool tables, regular DJs and a urinal-like waterfall constantly tinkling in the beer garden.

**Castro's** (☎ 4227 2058; 5 Victoria St; admission free, \$10 after 11pm Sat; ☑) 9pm-late Wed-Sat) Wollongong's gay bar-club plays host to a mixed student crowd on Wednesdays and drag shows on Saturdays.

### Entertainment

**Illawarra Performing Arts Centre** (IPAC; ☎ 4226 3366; www.ipac.org.au; 32 Burelli St) This busy venue presents an excellent and continuous stream of theatre, dance and music. It's home to the impressive Merrigong Theatre Co.

**Greater Union** (☎ 4228 4888; www.greaterunion.com.au; 68 Burelli St) Multiple screens showing Hollywood blockbusters.

### Getting There & Away

#### AIR

**Illawarra Regional Airport** (☎ 4221 6102; Airport Rd) is 21km south of the centre at Albion Park Rail, a 15-minute walk from Albion Park

Rail station. On weekdays there are flights to/from Melbourne on **QantasLink** (☎ 13 13 13; www.qantas.com.au).

### BUS

All long-distance buses leave from **Wollongong City Coach Terminus** (☎ 4226 1022; cnr Keira & Campbell Sts). **Premier Motor Service** (☎ 133 410; www.premierms.com.au) operates buses to/from Sydney (\$15, two hours, two daily) and Melbourne (\$79, 15 hours, daily). **Murrays** (☎ 13 22 51; www.murrays.com.au) travels to Canberra (\$31, 3½ hours, daily).

### TRAIN

**CityRail** (☎ 131 500; www.cityrail.info) trains run frequently from Sydney's Central Station to Wollongong (\$9.60, 1¾ hours), continuing south to Kiama (\$5.60, 47 minutes) and Bomaderry/Nowra (\$8.60, 75 minutes).

### Getting Around

**Local buses** (☎ 131 500) link most suburbs. You can reach most beaches by rail and trains are fairly frequent. Bringing a bike on the train from Sydney is a great way to get around; a cycle path runs from the city centre north to Bulli and south to Lake Illawarra.

For taxis, call ☎ 4229 9311.

## AROUND WOLLONGONG

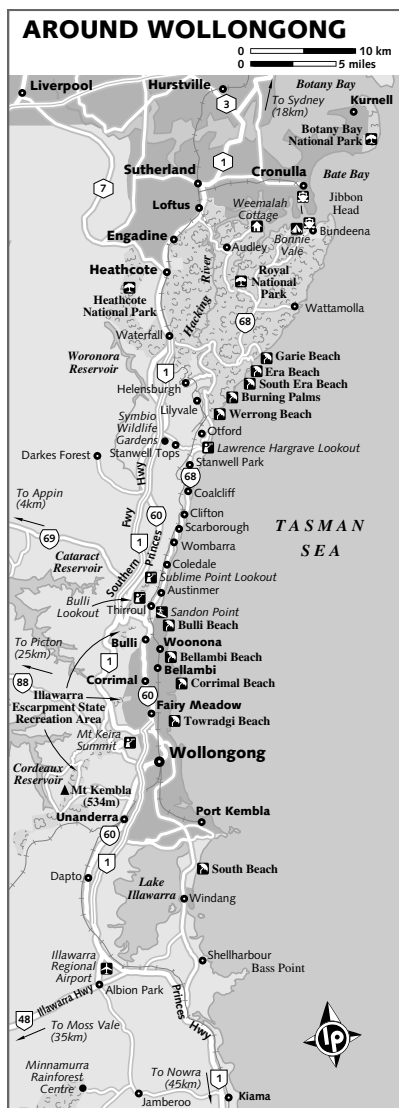
### SOUTH OF THE CITY

Just south of Wollongong, **Lake Illawarra** is popular for water sports including windsurfing. There are good ocean beaches on the Windang Peninsula to the east of the lake. Further south is **Shellharbour**, a popular holiday resort, and one of the oldest towns along the coast. Its name comes from the number of shell middens (remnants of Aboriginal occupation) that the European colonists found here.

### ILLAWARRA ESCARPMENT STATE CONSERVATION AREA

Rainforest hugs the edge of the ever-eroding sandstone cliffs of the escarpment, which rise to 534m at their peak at **Mt Kembla**. This discontinuous conservation area protects much of it. For wonderful views of the coast, you can drive up to the **Mt Keira lookout** (464m); take the freeway north and follow the signs. There are other lookouts at **Bulli** and **Sublime Point**.

The park is accessible from several road-side car parks; grab the excellent pamphlet



from NPWS (p173), with maps and details of walks.

### NORTH OF THE CITY

On the road to the Royal National Park, the **Lawrence Hargrave Lookout** at Bald Hill above Stanwell Park is a superb cliff-top viewing point. Hargrave, a pioneer aviator, made his

first attempts at flying in the area early in the 20th century. His obsession has since been picked up by avid hang-gliders. To join in, **HangglideOz** (☎ 0417 939 200; www.hangglideoz.com.au) and **Sydney Hang Gliding Centre** (☎ 4294 4294; www.hanggliding.com.au) offer tandem flights from \$199.

**Symbio Wildlife Gardens** (☎ 4294 1244; www.symbiozoo.com.au; 7-11 Lawrence Hargrave Dr, Stanwell Tops; adult/child \$19/9.50; ☎ 9.30am-5pm) has more than 1000 cute and furry critters. Some are native, some are exotic and some are farm animals, but all are popular with kids.

You can hit the trails on the back of a horse at **Darkes Forest Riding Ranch** (☎ 4294 3441; www.horsesiding.au.com; 84 Darkes Forest Rd, Darkes Forest; per hr from \$40).

## ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

The only thing preventing Wollongong from becoming a suburb of Sydney is this wonderful **coastal park** (admission per car \$11, pedestrians & cyclists free), which protects 16,300 hectares stretching inland from 32km of beautiful coast. Encompassing dramatic cliffs, secluded beaches, scrub and lush rainforest, it's the oldest national park in the world having been gazetted in 1879. The park has a large network of **walking tracks**, including a spectacular 29km (two day) coastal trail.

There are lots of beautiful beaches, but most are unpatrolled and rips can make them dangerous. **Garie, Era, South Era** and **Burning Palms** are popular surf beaches and **Werrong Beach** is 'clothing-optional'. The side roads to the smaller beaches are closed at 8.30pm. Cycling is popular but stick to the trails to avoid a fine.

The **visitors centre** (☎ 9542 0648; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm) is at Audley, 2km inside the north-eastern entrance, off the Princes Hwy. Nearby, you can hire row boats, canoes and kayaks from the **Audley Boatshed** (☎ 9545 4967; per hr/day \$20/40; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5.30pm Sun), as well as mountain bikes (per hour/day \$16/34).

The sizeable town of **Bundeena**, on the southern shore of Port Hacking opposite Sydney's southern suburb of Cronulla, is surrounded by the park. From here you can walk 30 minutes towards the ocean to **Jibbon Head**, which has a good beach and interesting Aboriginal rock art. Bundeena is the starting point of the coastal walk.

### Sleeping

The only park camping ground accessible by car is at **Bonnie Vale** (camp sites per adult/child \$14/7), near Bundeena. Bush camping is allowed in several other areas, but you must obtain a permit (adult/child \$5/3) from the visitors centre, where you can get information about current usable camp sites. NPWS also rents out gorgeous **Weemalah Cottage** (cottage winter/summer \$190/220), by the river at Warumbul. Once kept for visiting dignitaries, this fully self-contained house has wide verandas and sleeps eight.

**Garie Beach YHA** (☎ 9261 1111; www.yha.com.au; Garie Beach; dm \$16) Secluded behind the dunes, this hostel is near great surf breaks and has no phone, power (apart from solar lighting), showers or other amenities to spoil the rustic mood (OK, there are composting toilets). You need to book, collect a key and get detailed directions from the YHA Membership & Travel Centre (p184) in Sydney.

**Beachhaven B&B** (☎ 9544 1333; www.beachhavenbnb.com.au; 13 Bundeena Dr, Bundeena; r \$275; ☎ ☎) Shaded by palms and with direct access to gorgeous Hordens Beach, there are two swank rooms here. Amenities include DVD players, antiques and a spa overlooking the sand.

### Getting There & Away

**Cronulla National Park Ferries** (☎ 9523 2990; www.cronullaferrys.com.au; adult/child \$5.40/2.70; ☎ hourly 8.30am-5.30pm) travels to Bundeena from Cronulla, which you can reach by train from Sydney. Hours are longer on weekdays and in summer.

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