

**BLUELIST<sup>1</sup>** (blu,list) v.  
to recommend a travel experience.

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## THE ARTS

### top picks

- Sydney Theatre Company (p172)
- Opera Australia (p172)
- Bangarra Dance Theatre (p171)
- Moonlight Cinema (p170)
- Australian Chamber Orchestra (p171)

It's too easy to categorise Sydney as shallow and silly, when it actually has a thriving and sophisticated arts scene. It's not a complete accident that its main icon is an opera house, after all.

Probably the most exciting genre to explore during your stay is the theatre, which has given birth to many major international stars. One of these is Oscar-winner Cate Blanchett, whose early career included stints with the Griffin (p172) and Sydney (p172) theatre companies. She's now returned to pay her dues, taking on a three-year contract (started in 2008) as co-artistic director of Sydney Theatre Company, along with her husband, playwright Andrew Upton. Sydney's very excited by the prospect.

On the live music front, all the big names head through Sydney and you might just find your trip coincides with one of your favourites. Check the main ticketing websites when you're planning your trip (below).

Without having the extensive repertoires of European cities, there's always plenty of classical music on offer to give you an excuse to check out the interiors of that famous set of sails by the harbour.

One of the best sources of 'what's on' information is Friday's Metro section in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It lists events for the week ahead and includes gallery listings, film reviews, and music and theatre interviews.

## TICKETS & RESERVATIONS

### MOSHTIX

% 9209 4614; [www.moshtix.com.au](http://www.moshtix.com.au)

A local outfit handling tickets for lots of smaller and independent concerts, theatre and other performances.

### TICKETEK Map pp62-3

% 9266 4800; [www.ticketek.com.au](http://www.ticketek.com.au); 195 Elizabeth St, City; 9am-5pm Mon-Wed, 9am-7pm Thu & Fri, 9am-4pm Sat; ☐ St James

The main booking agency for theatre, concerts and sport. Book by phone, internet or outlets around town.

### TICKETMASTER

% 13 61 00; [www.ticketmaster.com.au](http://www.ticketmaster.com.au)

The other biggie for music, sports, arts and theatre ticketing; there's an outlet at the [Sydney Entertainment Centre](#) (opposite).

## PERFORMANCE VENUES

### ACER ARENA Map pp50-1

% 8765 4321; [www.acerarena.com.au](http://www.acerarena.com.au); Olympic Blvd, Sydney Olympic Park; tickets \$29-150; ☐ Olympic Park

This is Australia's largest indoor entertainment and sporting venue (21,000 seats). Everything from concerts to Disney On Ice to off-road-vehicle shows are hosted here. Disabled access is excellent.

### CAPITOL THEATRE Map p72

% 9320 5000; [www.capitoltheatre.com.au](http://www.capitoltheatre.com.au); 13 Campbell St, Haymarket; tickets \$65-215; ☐ Central Lavishly restored, this large theatre is home to big-name concerts and long-running musicals.

### CITY RECITAL HALL Map pp62-3

% 8256 2222; [www.cityrecitalhall.com](http://www.cityrecitalhall.com); 2 Angel Pl, City; tickets \$45-103; ☐ Martin Place This is a world-class, 1200-seat venue with wonderful acoustics for live music performances. Its architecture is based on the 19th-century European blueprint, and it's an excellent place to hear the [Australian Brandenburg Orchestra](#) (p171), [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) (p171) and Australian String Quartet, among others.

### ENMORE THEATRE Map pp100-1

% 9550 3666; [www.enmoretheatre.com.au](http://www.enmoretheatre.com.au); 130 Enmore Rd, Newtown; tickets \$20-150; ☐ Newtown The lovely old Enmore plays host to major Australian and overseas acts (Jet, Alice Cooper, Oasis), plus comedy and jazz. The Rolling Stones played an intimate concert here in early 2003.

### GAELIC CLUB Map pp90-1

% 9211 1687; [www.thegaelicclub.com](http://www.thegaelicclub.com); 64 Devonshire St, Surry Hills; tickets \$10-35; ☐ Central Whether it's the latest darlings of the British music press or a particularly successful

local band, concerts at the Gaelic are a cosy affair bridging the gap between the pub scene and the larger theatres.

### HORDERN PAVILION Map pp84-5

% 9921 5333; [www.hordernpavilion.com.au](http://www.hordernpavilion.com.au); 1 Driver Ave, Moore Park; tickets \$54-72; ☐ 339 Holding over 4000 people, the historic Hordern (1924) hosts plenty of big-name rock gigs and, along with neighbouring venues, the spectacular Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Party. If these walls could talk...

### LYRIC THEATRE Map pp100-1

% 9657 8500; [www.starcity.com.au](http://www.starcity.com.au); Star City, 80 Pyrmont Rd, Pyrmont; tickets \$50-103; MLR Star City The large Lyric in the casino stages flashy musical extravaganzas (*Priscilla, Miss Saigon*) and has good acoustics.

### METRO THEATRE Map pp62-3

% 9287 2000; [www.metrotheatre.com.au](http://www.metrotheatre.com.au); 624 George St, City; tickets \$13-60; ☐ Town Hall Easily the best place to see local and alternative international acts (plus the odd DJ) in well-ventilated comfort. Other offerings include comedy, cabaret, music and theatre.

### NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DRAMATIC ART

% 9697 7600; [www.nida.edu.au](http://www.nida.edu.au); 215 Anzac Pde, Kensington; tickets \$25-35; ☐ 393-394 Former stomping ground of Mel Gibson, Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush, NIDA is a good place to see future stars. Student and graduate plays are presented throughout the year at its attractive 725-seat theatre or intimate 120-seat studio.

### NEW THEATRE Map pp100-1

% 9519 3403; [www.newtheatre.org.au](http://www.newtheatre.org.au); 542 King St, Newtown; tickets \$10-27; ☐ St Peters Australia's oldest continuously performing theatre (happy 75th!), the eclectic New Theatre produces cutting-edge drama in addition to traditional pieces.

### STATE THEATRE Map pp62-3

% 9373 6852; [www.statetheatre.com.au](http://www.statetheatre.com.au); 49 Market St, City; tickets \$17-210; ☐ St James The beautiful, 2000-seat State Theatre is a lavish, gilt-laden, chandelier-dangling palace. It hosts the [Sydney Film Festival](#) (p18), concerts, comedy and the odd musical. For more details, see p68.

## SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC Map p54

% 9351 1222; [www.music.usyd.edu.au](http://www.music.usyd.edu.au); Macquarie St, City; tickets free-\$28; ☐ Circular Quay This historic [music venue](#) (p59) showcases the talents of its students and their teachers. Choral, jazz, operatic and chamber concerts are held from March to September, along with free lunch-time recitals on Wednesdays at 1.10pm.

## SYDNEY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE Map p72

% 1300 883 622; [www.sydentcent.com.au](http://www.sydentcent.com.au); 35 Harbour St, Haymarket; tickets \$68-165; MLR Paddy's Market A big concrete box purpose-built for superstar extravaganzas, seating just over 12,000 fans.

## SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE Map p54

% 9250 7111; [www.sydneyoperahouse.com](http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com); Bennelong Point; ☐ Circular Quay The glamorous heart of performance in Australia, with the Concert Hall and Opera Hall holding about 2600 and 1500 people respectively. Witness theatre, comedy, music, dance and ballet, but it's opera that really shines.

## SYDNEY THEATRE Map p54

% 9250 1999; [www.sydneytheatre.org.au](http://www.sydneytheatre.org.au); 22 Hickson Rd, Walsh Bay; tickets \$65-75; ☐ Circular Quay Opened in 2004, this venue is the most significant theatre built in the city since the Sydney Opera House. The state-of-the-art theatre seats 850 and is managed by Sydney Theatre Company.

## WHARF THEATRE Map p54

% 9250 1777; [www.sydneytheatre.com.au](http://www.sydneytheatre.com.au); Pier 4, Hickson Rd, Walsh Bay; tickets \$25-125; ☐ Circular Quay Sydney Theatre Company's own theatre is also home to the [Bangarra Dance Theatre](#) (p171) and the [Sydney Dance Company](#) (p171). The Wharf restaurant delivers excellent pre- and post-show fare.

## CINEMA

Most suburbs have their own mainstream cinemas (often in shopping centres), while art-house cinemas hover around the inner city. Movie listings can be found in Sydney's daily newspapers.

**CHAUVEL CINEMA** *Map pp84–5*  
% 9361 5398; [www.chauvelcinema.net.au](http://www.chauvelcinema.net.au); cnr Oxford St & Oatley Rd, Paddington; adult/child \$16/9; h 11.30am-midnight; g 380  
Occupying the former ballroom of the Paddington Town Hall since 1977, the much-loved Chauvel plays quality art-house releases both new and old (with a liberal does of the quirky and out-there), and hosts various themed festivals.

**DENDY NEWTOWN** *Map pp100–1*  
% 9550 5699; [www.dendy.com.au](http://www.dendy.com.au); 261 King St, Newtown; adult/child \$14/9.50; h 10am-9.30pm; d Newtown  
Sydney's premier art-house chain, Dendy screens first-run independent films in comfortable theatres. Discount nights are Mondays (\$9). There's another lavish Dendy at [Opera Quays](#) (% 9247 3800; 2 Circular Quay East).

**GOVINDAS** *Map p78*  
% 9380 5155; [www.govindas.com.au](http://www.govindas.com.au); 112 Darlinghurst Rd, Darlinghurst; dinner & movie \$17, movie only \$8; h 5.45-10.30pm; d Kings Cross  
Hare Krishna-run Govindas has an all-you-can-gobble vegetarian smorgasbord that you can combine with mainstream blockbusters, art-house fare and old favourites. There's incense in the air and plenty of cushions on the floor.

**GREATER UNION GEORGE ST CINEMAS** *Map pp62–3*  
% 9273 7431; [www.greaterunion.com.au](http://www.greaterunion.com.au); 505 George St, City; adult/child \$16/12; h 10am-11.30pm; d Town Hall  
This monster movie palace has 18 screens, plenty of eateries and some youth-oriented distractions. It's an orgy of popcorn-fuelled mainstream entertainment, and disabled access is good. Discount night (\$8.50) is colloquially known as Tight-Arse Tuesday.

## OUTDOOR CINEMAS

You can't keep Sydneysiders indoors for long in summer, not even for the flicks. Join the bats in Centennial Park to watch [Moonlight Cinema](#) (*Map pp84–5*; Ticketek % 132 849; [www.moonlight.com.au](http://www.moonlight.com.au), tickets \$15) or risk being distracted by the incredible city views at [OpenAir Cinema](#) (*Map p54*; % 1300 366 649; [www.stgeorgeopenair.com.au](http://www.stgeorgeopenair.com.au), tickets \$23), where the screen is erected over the water at Mrs Macquaries Point. The roar of the surf adds to the soundtrack at [Bondi Openair Cinema](#) (*Map pp94–5*; Moshitix % 9209 4614; [www.bondiopenair.com.au](http://www.bondiopenair.com.au), tickets \$13).

**HAYDEN ORPHEUM PICTURE PALACE** *Map p108*  
% 9908 4344; [www.orpheum.com.au](http://www.orpheum.com.au); 380 Military Rd, Cremorne; adult/concession \$16/11; h 10.30am-9.30pm; g 151  
Return to cinema's golden age via this fabulous Art Deco gem (1935). It still has its original Wurlitzer organ, which is played at special events and the monthly Wednesday Luncheons (movie, lunch and coffee \$13).

**HOYTS EQ** *Map pp84–5*  
% 9332 1633; [www.hoyts.com.au](http://www.hoyts.com.au); Bent St, Moore Park; adult/child \$16/11; h 10.30am-midnight; g 339  
The large movie complex in the [Entertainment Quarter](#) (*p86*) has more than a dozen cinemas. These include La Premiere, the cinematic equivalent of a 1st-class cabin, offering snuggle-friendly lounges, glasses of wine, and cheese platters (\$35). Art-house films and ethnic film festivals tend to screen in [Cinema Paris](#), just down Bent St.

**IMAX CINEMA** *Map p72*  
% 9281 3300; [www.imax.com.au](http://www.imax.com.au); 31 Wheat Rd, Cockle Bay; adult/child \$17/12; h 10am-10pm; d Town Hall  
If you're into being wowed (or made motion-sick) by the world's biggest movie screens, then Imax is for you. Movies shown tend to be either thrill-fests or nature documentaries (some in 3D).

**PALACE VERONA** *Map pp84–5*  
% 9360 6296; [www.palacecinemas.com.au](http://www.palacecinemas.com.au); 17 Oxford St, Paddington; adult/concession \$16/9; h 10.15am-9.30pm; g 380  
This cinema has a café and bar, useful for discussing the artistic merits of the latest nonblockbuster flick you've just seen. Other Palace cinemas include [Palace Academy Twin](#) (*Map pp84–5*; % 9331 3457; 3A Oxford St, Paddington; g 380), home of the Mardi Gras Film Festival, and [Palace Norton St](#) (*Map pp100–1*; % 9564 5620; 99 Norton St, Leichhardt; g 435-8).

## CLASSICAL MUSIC

Sydneysiders live with an image of being self-absorbed, sports fanatics, but there is still an active audience for classical music. While Sydney's relative youth means there's no confusion as to whether you're in Old Europe or Sin City, concerts occur year-round. The Sydney Opera House is a good place to start.

Broadcasts (live and prerecorded) of major concerts can be heard on the ABC's radio network (ABC Classic FM 92.9). Check the Guide in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Monday for details. See also [right](#).

### AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA

ABO; % 9328 7581; [www.brandenburg.com.au](http://www.brandenburg.com.au); tickets \$50-103  
The ABO is a distinguished part of Australia's artistic landscape, playing baroque and classical music on instruments of those periods. Leading international guest artists appear frequently. Performances are held at [City Recital Hall](#) (*p168*) and various local churches.

### AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

ACO; % 8274 3800; [www.aco.com.au](http://www.aco.com.au); tickets \$45-80  
Since 1975 the ACO has been making chamber music sexy and adventurous, especially under the tutelage of artistic director and lead violinist Richard Tognetti. Concerts are staged throughout the year at both the [Sydney Opera House](#) (*p169*) and the [City Recital Hall](#) (*p168*). Cheaper tickets are often available for the under 30s.

### MUSICA VIVA AUSTRALIA

% 1800 688 482; [www.mva.org.au](http://www.mva.org.au)  
Musica Viva is the largest stager of ensemble music in the world, providing some 2,500 concerts around Australia in a number of musical styles (including chamber music, a cappella, experimental and jazz).

### SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

% 9251 2024; [www.sydneyphilharmonia.com.au](http://www.sydneyphilharmonia.com.au)  
If you want your world rocked by 300 enthusiastic voices, this is your choir. They also have a 100-voice symphonic choir, 32-voice motet choir and a youth-based choir. Internationally renowned, you can generally find them at the Sydney Opera House, City Recital Hall and St Andrew's Cathedral.

### SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SSO; % 8215 4600; [www.sso.com.au](http://www.sso.com.au)  
The SSO is blessed with chief conductor and artistic director Gianluigi Gelmetti and plays with famous local and international musicians. Catch them at the Sydney Opera House or City Recital Hall.

## DANCE

With its idolisation of the body beautiful, it seems only logical that Sydney has a vital dance culture. Performances range from straight-down-the-line traditional ballet with tutus and packed-lunchbox tights to edgy, liberating 'physical theatre'. Australian dancers have a reputation for fearlessness in performance, resulting in some breathtaking displays of physical skill and bravado (and sometimes a lack of costume).

### AUSTRALIAN BALLET

% 1300 369 741; [www.australianballet.com.au](http://www.australianballet.com.au)  
The Melbourne-based Australian Ballet performs a wide repertoire of classic as well as contemporary works. See them perform at the Sydney Opera House.

### BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE

*Map p54*  
% 9251 5333; [www.bangarra.com.au](http://www.bangarra.com.au); Pier 4, Hickson Rd, Walsh Bay; tickets \$25-125; d Circular Quay  
Widely regarded as one of Australia's finest dance companies, Bangarra regularly performs in Sydney and around Australia. Artistic director and national treasure Stephen Page creates a fusion of contemporary and traditional influences, blending indigenous and Western dance styles.

### PERFORMANCE SPACE

*Map pp90–1*  
% 9698 7235; [www.performancespace.com.au](http://www.performancespace.com.au); 245 Wilson St, Redfern; tickets \$20-30; d Redfern  
This edgy artists' hub stages performances of new dance, acrobatic, multimedia works... basically anything that can be lumped under the broad umbrella of The Arts.

### SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

*Map p54*  
% 9221 4811; [www.sydneydancecompany.com](http://www.sydneydancecompany.com); Pier 4, Hickson Rd, Walsh Bay; d Circular Quay  
Australia's best dance company has a reputation for innovative choreography, spellbinding performances and great production values with the sexiest dancers.

## OPERA

Despite its relatively small population, Australia has produced some of the world's most magnificent opera singers, including Dames Nellie Melba and Joan Sutherland. While the Opera House may be the symbol of the city, supporting such a cost-heavy art form, however, is a difficult prospect. While new and more

obscure works are staged, it's the big hits that pull in the punters. The opera season lasts from January to March and then from June to November.

### OPERA AUSTRALIA

☎ 9318 8200; [www.opera-australia.org.au](http://www.opera-australia.org.au)  
Opera Australia is a big player on the Sydney arts scene, based at the Sydney Opera House and at Melbourne's State Theatre.

### PINCHGUT OPERA

☎ 9518 1082; [www.pinchgutopera.com.au](http://www.pinchgutopera.com.au)  
This relative newcomer stages one intimate, often neglected, chamber opera every December at the City Recital Hall.

## THEATRE

There's no distinct theatre district in Sydney, but that doesn't mean theatre-lovers suffer. The city offers a vigorous calendar of productions from Broadway shows to experimental theatre. Tickets prices vary widely.

### BELVOIR ST THEATRE Map pp90-1

☎ 9699 3444; [www.belvoir.com.au](http://www.belvoir.com.au); 25 Belvoir St, Surry Hills; tickets \$32-52; ☐ Central  
In a quiet corner of Surry Hills, this intimate venue hosts the often experimental and consistently excellent Company B. Shows sometimes feature big stars, like Geoffrey Rush.

### DARLINGHURST THEATRE Map p78

☎ 8356 9987; [www.darlinghursttheatre.com](http://www.darlinghursttheatre.com);  
19 Greenknowe Ave, Elizabeth Bay; tickets adult/  
concession \$30/25; ☐ Kings Cross  
This relative newcomer has been developing a good name for high quality productions in its comfortable little theatre.

### ENSEMBLE THEATRE Map p108

☎ 9929 0644; [www.ensemble.com.au](http://www.ensemble.com.au); 78 McDougall St, Kirribilli; tickets \$45-61; ☒ North Sydney

The long-running Ensemble presents eight or nine mainstream productions per season. Playwrights can be Australian or international, and well-known Australian actors are generally featured. It caters to a mature crowd.

### GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY Map p78

☎ 9250 7799; [www.griffintheatre.com.au](http://www.griffintheatre.com.au);  
10 Nimrod St, Kings Cross; tickets adult/concession/  
under 30 yr \$42/32/25; ☐ Kings Cross  
The Stables Theatre is the home of this important little company, dedicated to the development and production of new Australian plays since 1970. Cate Blanchett started her professional career here. On Mondays there are 'pay what you can' 6.30pm sessions.

### OLD FITZROY THEATRE Map p78

☎ 9356 3848; [www.oldfitzroy.com.au](http://www.oldfitzroy.com.au);  
129 Dowling St, Woolloomooloo; tickets \$10-28;  
☐ Kings Cross  
Is it a pub? A theatre? A bistro? Actually it's all three. Grab a bowl of laksa, see the acting stars of tomorrow and wash it all down with a beer. The ticket-laksa-beer deal costs from \$16 to \$34. Old Fitzroy is grassroots with a good reputation, and has premiered dozens of new Australian plays.

### SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY Map p54

STC; ☎ 9250 1777; [www.sydneytheatre.com.au](http://www.sydneytheatre.com.au);  
level 2, Pier 4, Hickson Rd, Walsh Bay; tickets \$73;  
☐ Circular Quay  
Established in 1978, the STC is Sydney's top company and has been an important step in the careers of many famous Australian actors, including Mel Gibson, Judy Davis, Hugo Weaving, Miranda Otto, Geoffrey Rush, Toni Collette and Cate Blanchett. Expect meticulously crafted works that appeal to mainstream sensibilities while still managing to push a few buttons.

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## SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

### top picks

- Watching a rugby league match (p179)
- Kayaking around the harbour (p176)
- Cycling in Centennial Park (p174)
- Learning to surf (p178)
- Swimming in a pool with a view (p175)

# SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

Who wants to be stuck inside on a sunny day? Certainly not most Sydneysiders. Give them any excuse and they'll be stripping off every item of clothing not absolutely essential for public decorum and hitting the beaches, parks and pools. If you're going to spend a considerable chunk of your leisure time with bits of flesh revealed, it follows that you're more likely to make an effort to keep in shape.

You only need head out into the suburbs to see that not all Sydneyites are Bondi lifesaver types. Plenty settle for watching rather than participating in the rough and tumble of sporting life. Conveniently, the most popular spectator sports happen in the winter, not interrupting the beach schedule too much.

## HEALTH & FITNESS

With looking good such an obvious concern to many Sydneysiders, the city's devised a myriad of ways to stay built, bronzed and beautiful. Oh, and healthy, too. When in Rome...

## CYCLING

Sydney's narrow streets and busy traffic aren't ideal, but a few adventurous eco-warriors get about on their wheeled mounts. Some roads have designated cycle lanes but these often run between parked cars and moving traffic. With less-hecktic traffic and long cycle paths, both Manly and Centennial Park are popular pedalling spots.

Bicycles can travel on suburban trains for child rates during peak hours, and for free outside peak times. See [p217](#) for bike hire.

## BICYCLE NSW

9281 4099; [www.bicyclensw.org.au](http://www.bicyclensw.org.au)  
Lots of information for bikers and an excellent range of cycling books on its online store.

## ROAD TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

RTA; 132 213; [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au)  
The RTA issues free maps of metropolitan Sydney's cycle path network. You can pick them up at bicycle retailers or download them from the website.

## GYMS

Many large hotels have a small gym for guests' use, usually free. Casual sessions at Sydney's top inner-city gyms can be steep, but combined gym/swim deals at the public swimming pools can be cheaper – see Aquatic Centre ([opposite](#)),

Bondi Icebergs Swimming Club ([opposite](#)), Cook + Phillip Park ([p176](#)), North Sydney Olympic Pool ([p176](#)) and Victoria Park Pool ([p176](#)).

## BAYSWATER FITNESS [Map p78](#)

9356 3555; [www.bayswaterfitness.com.au](http://www.bayswaterfitness.com.au);  
33 Bayswater Rd, Kings Cross; admission \$19;  
11 6am-midnight Mon-Thu, 6am-11pm Fri, 7am-10pm Sat, 7am-9pm Sun; 1 Kings Cross  
As well as friendly staff and good equipment, this place offers lots of classes and a great discount for backpackers (\$12 casual, \$35 weekly, \$99 monthly).

## CITY GYM [Map p78](#)

9360 6247; [www.citygym.com.au](http://www.citygym.com.au); 107 Crown St, East Sydney; admission \$18; 11 24hr;  
1 Museum  
This sweaty gym has been pumping hard bodies for over 30 years. Classes (aerobics, pilates, yoga) are available, along with massage, chiro and spray-tan services. The steam room's only for the gay-curious.

## HEALTH & DAY SPAS

### GINSENG BATHHOUSE [Map p78](#)

9356 6680; Crest Hotel, 111 Darlinghurst Rd, Kings Cross; adult/child from \$28/14; 11 9.30am-9.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-9.30pm Sat & Sun; 1 Kings Cross  
Korea comes to Sydney in this marvelous bathhouse, which will eliminate your toxins and have your circulation firing in no time. Separate men's and women's facilities have ginseng spas, hot/cold baths and wet/dry saunas. Pay extra for various massages or be scrubbed to within an inch of your life and emerge on the mean streets of the Cross as smooth as a baby's bottom.

## SPA CHAKRA [Map p78](#)

9368 0888; [www.spachakra.com](http://www.spachakra.com); Finger Wharf, Woolloomooloo; treatments from \$140; 11 9am-9pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; 1 311  
This day spa offers all the pampering your credit card can handle, using the magical unctons of Guerlain Paris.

## INLINE SKATING & SKATEBOARDING

The beach promenades at Bondi and Manly are favoured spots for rollerblading, but Centennial Park is the best for a serious workout. There's a decent skate ramp at the south end of Bondi Beach ([p93](#)) and a new skate centre has opened at Sydney Olympic Park ([p117](#)). There's always a crowd of teenage skater dudes pulling stunts in front of St Mary's Cathedral.

## MANLY BLADES [Map p110](#)

9976 3833; [www.manlyblades.com.au](http://www.manlyblades.com.au);  
49 North Steyne, Manly; 1 Manly  
The Manly twin of [Skater HQ](#) (see [below](#)) offers the same deal.

## SKATER HQ [Map pp84-5](#)

9368 0940; [www.skaterhq.com.au](http://www.skaterhq.com.au); Entertainment Quarter, Moore Park; 1 391-2  
Well positioned for Centennial Park, this busy place will get you sorted for blades, skateboards, razor scooters and bikes (all \$15 per hour), or you can look sweet on a bicycle built for two (\$25 per hour).

## JOGGING

In the city centre, the Royal Botanic Gardens ([p57](#)) and The Domain ([p66](#)) are great for joggers. Running across the Harbour Bridge ([p52](#)) or Anzac Bridge ([p103](#)) makes for a popular and healthy commute to the city. Centennial Park ([p83](#)) gives a good escape from traffic fumes.

For a good glute workout, nothing beats a soft-sand shuffle in your swimmers along one of the beaches, offering the added advantage of a cooling dip at the end. Bondi ([p93](#)) is popular for bronzed gods and goddesses, particularly in the early morning and late afternoon; you don't have to a supermodel to jog here, but it helps. If it's steep challenges you're after, the Bondi to Coogee walkway is a scenic sweat-fest.

For a serious running club, contact Sydney Striders ([www.sydneystriders.org.au](http://www.sydneystriders.org.au)). For information on August's 14km City2Surf Run, see [p18](#).

## SWIMMING

Sydney offers both sheltered harbour beaches and crazy surf. In areas patrolled by lifeguards, swim between the flags; there are some treacherous rips, even at Sydney's most popular beaches. Many of the surf beaches have seawater pools built into the headlands; most are free.

Despite the clear-looking water, after heavy rains avoid swimming in the ocean for a day and the harbour for three days. The storm-water carries all of the cigarette butts and grime of the streets, as well as sewage overflow, straight into the ocean.

Australians are obsessed by swimming and Sydney boasts over 100 public pools within the city limits. Many outdoor pools close at the end of April for the cooler months and reopen in early October.

See also Coogee Ocean Pools ([p96](#)) and Dawn Fraser Baths ([p103](#)).

## ANDREW 'BOY' CHARLTON POOL

[Map pp50-1](#)  
9358 6686; [www.abcpool.org](http://www.abcpool.org); Mrs Macquaries Rd, The Domain; adult/child \$5.20/3.60; 11 6am-8pm Sep-Apr; 1 441  
Sydney's best saltwater pool, smack bang next to the harbour and a magnet for water-loving gays, straights, mums and fashionistas. It attracts serious lap swimmers, so keep to your lane if you're a leisurely swimmer. Worth it for its five-star change rooms alone. Wheelchair accessible.

## AQUATIC CENTRE [Map pp50-1](#)

9752 3666; [www.aquaticcentre.com.au](http://www.aquaticcentre.com.au); Olympic Blvd, Sydney Olympic Park; adult/child \$6.40/5.10; 11 5am-9pm Mon-Fri, 6am-7pm Sat & Sun; 1 Olympic Park  
Indulge your Ian Thorpe or Misty Hyman fantasies in the actual record-shattering pool used in the 2000 Olympics. There's also a leisure pool with a cool whirlpool in one corner, a state-of-the-art gym (\$13 with pool), large outdoor patio area, café and swim shop; childcare and massage services also available. Wheelchair accessible.

## BONDI ICEBERGS SWIMMING CLUB

[Map pp94-5](#)  
9130 4804; 1 Notts Ave, Bondi; adult/child \$4.50/2.50; 11 6.30am-6.30pm Fri-Wed; 1 380  
With supreme views of Bondi Beach, this place is an institution (with membership

hard to get). Casual swimming is open to all and available year-round. There's also a gym (\$15 including pool entry) on the premises.

**COOK + PHILLIP PARK** [Map pp62-3](#)  
% 9326 0444; [www.cookandphillip.com.au](#); 4 College St, City; adult/child \$6/4.40; h 6am-10pm Mon-Fri, 7am-8pm Sat & Sun; c d St James  
This Olympic-sized underground indoor pool also has a hydrotherapy area and gym (\$16 with pool use). Also available are massage services, acupuncture, a basketball court, yoga, swimming lessons and a fun wave pool that the kids will love.

**NORTH SYDNEY OLYMPIC POOL**  
[Map p108](#)  
% 9955 2309; Alfred St South, Milsons Point; adult/child \$5.10/2.50; h 5.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-7pm Sat & Sun; c d Milsons Point  
Next to Luna Park these beautifully situated pools include an Olympic-sized outdoor one, a 25m indoor one, some kids' splash zones and a gym (\$14 with pool access). The views are unbelievable.

**VICTORIA PARK POOL** [Map pp100-1](#)  
% 9351 2812; cnr Broadway & City Rd; adult/child \$4.20/2.10; h 6am-7.15pm Mon-Fri, 7am-5.45pm Sat & Sun; g 422-3  
This 50m outdoor pool – heated to a minimum of 25°C year-round – serves as Newtown and Glebe's beach. There's also a gym (\$9.50 with pool access), crèche, café and swim shop.

**TENNIS**  
**MILLER'S POINT TENNIS COURT**  
[Map p54](#)  
% 9256 2222; Kent St, The Rocks; per hr \$25; h 8am-10.30pm; g 431-4  
This synthetic-surface, old-school court has a charming, secret-location feeling. Call ahead or reserve through the concierge at the [Observatory Hotel \(p188\)](#).

**RUSHCUTTERS BAY TENNIS**  
[Map pp84-5](#)  
% 9357 1675; Waratah St, Rushcutters Bay; per hr \$20-24; h 7am-11pm; c d Kings Cross  
The courts here are open to the public, with the cheapest rates available before 4pm weekdays. It's a relaxed place for a game, and racket hire (\$3) is available.

**YOGA**  
You'll find yoga classes offered at many gyms, pools and community centres.

**ASHTANGA YOGA SPACE** [Map pp84-5](#)  
% 9360 7602; [www.ashtangayogaspace.com.au](#); Verona Cinema Bldg, 17 Oxford St, Paddington; per class \$17; g 380  
Ashtanga Yoga Space adheres to Ashtanga and offers wonderful Mysore-style classes that'll make your muscles sing. Find nirvana at its spacious, wood-floored studio in the lane between the Verona Cinema and Berkelouw's, and follow the smell of incense up the stairs.

**SYDNEY YOGA SPACE** [Map p78](#)  
% 9360 0577; [www.sydneyyogaspace.com](#); Level 3, 63 William St, East Sydney; per class \$10-20; c d Museum  
Iyengar Yoga classes (emphasising standing asanas, precision and alignment) are offered at this large studio at three different skill levels.

**ACTIVITIES**  
If you're bored with wandering around sights, Sydney offers plenty of outdoorsy opportunities to do something active. Don't forget the sun block.

**CANOEING & KAYAKING**  
**MANLY KAYAKS** [Map p110](#)  
% 0411 247 917; West Esplanade; 1hr hire/lesson \$15/45; h 9am-5pm Mon-Wed & Fri, 6.30am-5pm Thu, 7am-5pm Sat, 8am-5pm Sun; f Manly  
As long as you can swim you can hire a kayak from this stand near Oceanworld. You'll be provided with a lifejacket and instruction on how to paddle, including recommendations on secluded beaches to visit. Hours dependent on weather.

**NATURAL WANDERS**  
% 9899 1001; [www.kayaksydney.com.au](#); per half-day tour \$90  
Natural Wanders has exhilarating kayak tours of the harbour that pass under the bridge and stop in secluded islands and bays.

**NEW SOUTH WALES CANOEING**  
% 8116 9730; [www.nswcanoe.org.au](#)  
This association has information on canoe courses and hire around Sydney.

**SYDNEY HARBOUR KAYAKS**  
% 9960 4389; [www.sydneyharbourkayaks.com.au](#)  
Based near the Spit Bridge, Mosman, rentals (per hour \$15) are offered, along with half-day eco-tours (\$99).

**DIVING**  
The best shore dives in Sydney are the Gordons Bay Underwater Nature Trail, north of Coogee; Shark Point, Clovelly; and Ship Rock, Cronulla. Popular boat dive sites are Wedding Cake Island, off Coogee; around the Sydney Heads; and off the Royal National Park. In Manly, you can make beach dives from Shelly Beach.

**DIVE CENTRE BONDI** [Map pp94-5](#)  
% 9369 3855; [www.divebondi.com.au](#); 192 Bondi Rd, Bondi; g 380  
This Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) five-star centre offers double boat dives (\$170) or shore dives (\$120), including gear, as well as various courses.

**DIVE CENTRE MANLY** [Map p110](#)  
% 9977 4355; [www.divesydney.com](#); 10 Belgrave St, Manly; f Manly  
One of the largest dive shops in Sydney, offering shore and boat dives. An open-water PADI course costs \$395.

**PRO DIVE** [Map pp62-3](#)  
% 9264 6177; [www.prodivesydney.com](#); 478 George St, City; c d Town Hall  
Another PADI five-star centre, offering everything from introductory dives (\$135) to three-day open-water courses (\$395). It's conveniently located in the city, but operates out of Manly.

**GOLF**  
**BONDI BEACH GOLF CLUB** [Map pp94-5](#)  
% 9130 1981; [www.bondigolf.com.au](#); 5 Military Rd, North Bondi; 9 holes/18 holes/unlimited/club hire \$15/20/45/19; g 380  
It's not much of a course (nine holes, par 28) but the views are breathtaking and hazards come in the form of [Aboriginal rock engravings \(p95\)](#) and the Pacific Ocean. Try not to hit any passing surfers or whales.

**MOORE PARK GOLF CLUB** [Map pp84-5](#)  
% 9663 1064; [www.mooreparkgolf.com.au](#); cnr Anzac Pde & Cleveland St, Moore Park; 18 holes \$45 Mon-Fri, \$50 Sat & Sun; g 391-2  
Moore Park is the most central of Sydney's public golf courses, with 18 holes and par 70.

**HORSE RIDING**  
**CENTENNIAL PARKLANDS EQUESTRIAN CENTRE** [Map pp84-5](#)  
% 9332 2809; cnr Cook & Lang Rds, Moore Park; per hr \$50; g 391-2  
Those looking for some horseplay will enjoy the large indoor arena and 3.6km of track at this world-class centre, near the Entertainment Quarter in Moore Park.

**KITEBOARDING**  
**KITEPOWER** [Map pp94-5](#)  
% 9315 7894; 126 Beach St, Coogee; g 372-3  
Sydney Harbour's too busy and the ocean too rough, but Botany Bay is a great spot for indulging in this exhilarating combination of kite flying and surfing. Brush up your kite-flying skills before booking one of these courses (half-/full day \$210/350).

**LAWN BOWLS**  
Generally the pastime of old-age pensioners, lawn bowls has experienced something of a revival in recent years. Young folks are playing thanks to the sports' qualities of affordability, accessibility to all fitness levels, and the tradition of drinking and smoking while balls are rolling. A certain retro-kitsch vibe doesn't hurt.

**CLOVELLY BOWLING CLUB** [Map pp94-5](#)  
% 9665 1507; [www.clovellybowlingclub.com.au](#); cnr Ocean & Boundary Sts, Clovelly; h 3.30-6.30pm Mon, noon-6.30pm Tue-Thu, noon-7.30pm Fri, 11am-6.30pm Sat, 9am-6.30pm Sun; g 360  
This club offers glorious ocean views and something of a hipster scene on weekends. Being right on the [Bondi to Coogee walk \(p97\)](#) means folks pop in for a refreshing drink, but if you want to bowl it'll cost you \$10 (be sure to book). There's free coaching for beginners.

**SAILING**  
With such a glamorous harbour, an introductory sailing lesson can be a fun way of getting out on the harbour (though it's not for the budget-conscious). More experienced sailors can skipper their own boat.

**EASTSAIL** [Map pp84-5](#)  
% 9327 1166; [www.eastsail.com.au](#); d'Albora Marina, New Beach Rd, Rushcutters Bay; c d Edgecliff  
Nobody ever said that yachting was a cheap sport. These guys offer an 18-hour

course for \$475, or you can arrange a charter (four hours \$575 \$995, skippers available for \$55 per hour).

### SYDNEY BY SAIL Map p72

☎ 9280 1110; [www.sydneby sail.com](http://www.sydneby sail.com); Festival Pontoon, Darling Harbour; ƒ Pyrmont Bay Departing daily from outside the Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney by Sail offers plenty of cruises (three hours \$130) and courses, including a weekend introductory sail course (\$425).

## SURFING

South of the Heads, the best spots are Bondi (p93), Tamarama (p96), Coogee (p96) and Maroubra. Cronulla (p120), south of Botany Bay, is also a serious surfing spot. To the north, the best beaches are Manly, Curl Curl, Dee Why, North Narrabeen, Mona Vale, Newport Reef, North Avalon and Palm Beach (see p112). For current wave activity check [www.coastalwatch.com](http://www.coastalwatch.com).

### DRIPPING WET Map p110

☎ 9977 3549; 95 North Steyne, Manly; 1 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat & Sun; ƒ Manly This surf shop also hires surfboards (one hour/two hours/four hours/day/week, \$15/25/35/50/150), bodyboards (one hour/two hours/four hours/day/week, \$5/8/15/20/60) and wetsuits (same as bodyboards).

### LET'S GO SURFING Map pp94-5

☎ 9365 1800; [www.letsgosurfing.com.au](http://www.letsgosurfing.com.au); 128 Ramsgate Ave East, Bondi; ☎ 380 You can hire gear (board and suit one hour/two hours/four hours/day/week \$25/30/50/150) or learn to surf with this outfit. It caters to practically everyone, with classes for grommets aged seven to 16 (two hours \$79), adults' classes (two hours \$69 to \$79), women-only classes (same price) and private tuition (one hour \$120). Bondi's a great beach for learners, but Maroubra's quieter and the classes cheaper (two hours \$49).

### MANLY SURF SCHOOL Map p110

☎ 9977 6977; [www.manlysurfschool.com](http://www.manlysurfschool.com); North Steyne Surf Club, Manly; adult/child \$55/45; ƒ Manly Offering surf lessons year-round at Manly and Palm Beach; boards and wetsuits provided. Also surfing safaris up the Northern Beaches – which include a lesson, lunch and gear (\$110).

### WAVES SURF SCHOOL

☎ 1800 851 101; [www.wavessurfschool.com.au](http://www.wavessurfschool.com.au); surf trips from \$75 This popular surf school offers one- to five-day surf camps to Royal National Park, Seal Rocks and Byron Bay.

## SPECTATOR SPORT

With so much national pride hung around sporting success, supporting their teams is like a religion to many Australians. Sport dominates the telly most weekends, but nothing beats catching a game live. Sydney's big passion is rugby league, creating the most intense atmosphere for spectators. Otherwise, a big test between Australia and New Zealand in any code (but particularly rugby union) will get the blood pumping.

## AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

Sydney's never been much of an Aussie Rules city – until now. The Sydney Swans ([www.sydneyswans.com.au](http://www.sydneyswans.com.au)) brought home the pennant for the first time in 2005, and their fan base is devoted and expanding. Catch the Swannies in their skimpy shorts and vests from March to September at the SCG (below; tickets from \$36) or Telstra Stadium (p117; tickets from \$20). Book through Ticketek (p168).

## CRICKET

### SYDNEY CRICKET GROUND Map pp84-5

SCG; ☎ 9360 6601; [www.sydneycricketground.com.au](http://www.sydneycricketground.com.au); Driver Ave, Moore Park; ☎ 339 The SCG is the venue for sparsely attended Pura Cup (interstate) matches, well-attended five-day tests and sell-out one-day internationals. The cricket season lasts from October to March. Daily admission for a test match costs upwards of \$47. Book through Ticketek (p168).

## NETBALL

Despite taking it in turns with New Zealand as world champions, and being Australia's top women's game and one of the most played sports in the country, netball doesn't get either the coverage or the money that the football boys rake in. During its winter season, you can catch the Sydney Swifts or a test international at Acer Arena (p168) for as little as \$16. Book through Ticketek (p168).

## RACING

### HAROLD PARK PACEWAY Map pp100-1

☎ 9660 3688; [www.haroldpark.com.au](http://www.haroldpark.com.au); Ross St, Glebe; adult/child \$8/free; MLR Jubilee Park Close to the city, the Harold Park trots are easy to get to and a lot of fun, especially on a Friday night.

### ROSEHILL GARDENS Map pp50-1

☎ 9930 4000; [www.theraces.com.au](http://www.theraces.com.au); James Ruse Dr, Rosehill; admission \$7-12; ☐ Rosehill Located near Parramatta, this is one of Sydney's most famous racecourses. Its premier event is the Golden Slipper (see p17).

### ROYAL RANDWICK RACECOURSE

Map pp50-1

☎ 9663 8400; [www.ajc.org.au](http://www.ajc.org.au); Alison Rd, Randwick; admission from \$11; ☎ 372-4 Royal Randwick attracts some glamorous types, plus the usual array of 'colourful' racing identities. Races are usually on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, with gates generally opening at 11am, and the last race at around 5pm. The big event on the calendar is the Easter Carnival (see p17).

### WENTWORTH PARK Map pp100-1

☎ 9552 1799; [www.wentworthparksport.com.au](http://www.wentworthparksport.com.au); Wentworth Park Rd, Glebe; admission \$5.50; 1 6-10.30pm Mon & Sat; MLR Wentworth Park Wentworth Park is Australia's premier greyhound-racing complex, with skinny, fast dogs salivating madly after tin hares every Saturday and Monday evening. Races have been held at these grounds since 1932 and the grounds hold a café, some bars and a bistro. There's a lovely old-fashioned feel about the place, like something from another era.

## RUGBY LEAGUE

Sydney is one of rugby league's world capitals, and this is the city's big game. The National Rugby League's (NRL) Telstra Premiership ([www.nrl.com](http://www.nrl.com)) runs from March to October, culminating in the sell-out Grand Final at Telstra Stadium (see p18). You can catch games every weekend during the season, played at the home grounds of Sydney's various tribes. The easiest to access is Aussie Stadium, home of the Sydney City Roosters (tickets from \$22).

The other big rugby league series is the annual State of Origin (p17) comp, when Queensland battles New South Wales. Sydney games

are at Telstra Stadium (tickets from \$42). Book through Ticketek (p168).

## RUGBY UNION

Rugby union, which has a more upper-class reputation despite its biff content, has a less fanatical following, but Australia's team, the Wallabies, is one of the world's best. The Waratahs are NSW's team, calling Aussie Stadium home. The annual Tri Nations series (Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) usually has a game in Sydney. The Australia vs New Zealand Bledisloe Cup matches in particular are huge on atmosphere and well worth attending. Visit [www.rugby.com.au](http://www.rugby.com.au) to find out when matches are being played, and where.

## SOCCER

Soccer comes in a poor fourth among the football codes, although Australia's qualification for the World Cup in 2006 has increased its popularity. Visit Football Federation Australia's website ([www.footballaustralia.com.au](http://www.footballaustralia.com.au)) for information on catching a game.

## SURF LIFESAVING CARNIVALS

Surf lifesaving originated in Sydney, and the volunteer lifesaver is one of the country's icons. Despite the macho image, many lifesavers are women and in 2007 a contingent of lifesavers marched for the first time in the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade. You can see these dedicated athletes in action each summer at surf carnivals held all along the coast. Check at a local surf lifesaving club for dates or contact Surf Life Saving NSW (☎ 9984 7188; [www.surflifesaving.com.au](http://www.surflifesaving.com.au)).

## YACHTING

The yachting season runs from September to April, with lots of races on the harbour. South Head (p116) offers a good vantage point. The Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race (p19) departs on Boxing Day.

### SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON Map p108

☎ 9955 8350; [www.sydneflyingsquadron.com.au](http://www.sydneflyingsquadron.com.au); 76 McDougall St, Milsoms Point; ƒ North Sydney Ferries depart from this club to watch skiff racing from 2pm to 4.30pm on Saturdays during the yachting season (adult/child \$15/5.50).

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