



SYDNEY

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The Flying Connoisseur Sydney Guide

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Your feedback is welcome.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This is a guide to the best of Sydney.

As one frequent, discriminating traveller to another I'm sharing what I like to do...that is, eat, drink and experience the city like a local lover of the same pursuits. And get to know its pulse.

Take your pick of the itineraries – they are arranged in districts by the day. Use them as half or full days in whatever order according to whim, or pick the eyes out of them.

They are your ticket to understanding the essence of the city, use them jumpstart your relationship, without the hindrance of extraneous advice.

Forget the guidebooks – download this guide or post it to your phone.

Your *FC Sydney* is overloaded with recommended restaurants – choose a restaurant according to its cuisine and location, from the select group – all of them have been carefully screened and reviewed.

Tell us if you have any comments or suggestions – we are here to take the work out of it for you.

Enjoy!

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FLYING CONNOISSEUR'S SYDNEY

INTRO

All streets lead down to the harbour (so to speak) - the heart and soul of the city, framed by the “Old Coathanger” of the *Sydney Harbour Bridge* on one side and the giant, gleaming “Nautilus” of the *Sydney Opera House* on the other. The breath-takingly beautiful spread of the harbour is pure theatre - a harmonious dialogue between sea and sky.

It dictates Sydneysiders' obsession with the outdoors.

Your first view of the cityscape of timeless old convict-built sandstone buildings, juxtaposed with the prosperous tall towers of the 21st Century, round a multi-inlet harbour bustling with boat life, bordered with belts of green bush and park and white rocky coastline - tells why Sydney is one of the lifestyle capitals of the world.

Sydney life revolves round the physical - the 40 or more beaches, parks, outdoor culture – sailing, swimming, surfing, the Opera House, The Domain, walks round Mrs Macquarie's Chair (beside the Opera House and Botanical Gardens), Rushcutter's Bay, Bondi to Bronte, Centennial Park (originally Sydney Common); and the hedonistic - the multitude of outdoor cafes, hip bars and restaurants with spectacular water views. Try a Darlo' – local lingo for the suburb of Darlinghurst, or Potts Point café for some local colour, or one of the many burgeoning hotspots in the fast-gentrifying, inner suburb of Surry Hills.

Contemporary arts and culture has taken over from the marine culture of the old industrial buildings clustered round the harbour, hastened by the city's smartening for the 2000 Olympic Games. The former Maritime Services Building was several years ago converted to a *Museum of Modern Art* with a sophisticated café/restaurant overlooking the harbour, which is a top place for lunch.

The Finger Wharves, either side of Circular Quay, have been reborn as celebrity apartment/office blocks - city pads/cum marinas for stars such as Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe.

The wharf at Pier 4 in Walsh Bay is a hive of contemporary culture, home to arts organizations like the *Sydney Theatre Company*, *Sydney Dance Theatre*, *Bangarra Dance Theatre*, with a dedicated theatre and a restaurant with one of the best water views in the city.

The Finger Wharf on the other side of the harbour in the old port area of Woolloomooloo, behind the *Sydney Harbour Bridge* and *Royal Botanical Gardens*, boasts a long row of reputable cafes and restaurants, topped by one of the city's most glamorous – *Otto*, and a chic hotel – *Blue* (part of the *W* chain).

Settle down at one of the tables on *Circular Quay* or *Finger Wharf*, beside the catamarans and motor launches, order a plate of crabmeat lasagne and a glass of Hunter Valley (NSW Wine region) Semillon, while you plan your cultural sojourn. When are you going to the *Sydney Opera House* and which restaurant are you going to eat at tonight?

The city abounds with stylish restaurants of every cuisine and at every level - from the tiny *Burke Street Bakery* with three tiny tables in the newly trendy inner suburb of Surry Hills (663 Bourke Street), to top-of-the-range, fine-wine-and-dine establishments such as *Forty One* at the top of the Chifley Tower - 2 Chifley Square, Ph: +61 (2) 92212500, in the Central Business District (known as CBD). www.forty-one.com.au, - with all that's groovy and glamorous in between.

Many – like *Forty One*, offer the bonus of breathtaking views. The current trend in these top-of-the-range restaurants, is to offer degustation or tasting menus. The high-energy Sydney fashionista is notoriously fickle - the right place to eat and drink changes by the week.

You'd better know that there's an underpinning rivalry between Sydney and its more elegant and conservative sister, Melbourne - self-branded as the cultural capital of Australia. It extends from football teams and sports stars, to the chef-drain – the many leading restaurateurs and chefs, drawn to the bright lights and warmer climate of Australia's largest city.

Sydney culture revolves round the *Sydney Opera House*: it's essential to plan your trip according to its programmes and to book early. Make sure you also book a tour of "*The House*" and a meal ensconced among its concrete ribs, before or after the show, at *Guillaume at Bennelong*. It's a quintessential Sydney experience - dining haute cuisine, gazing over the harbour from within one of the Wonders of the World.

Many of Sydney's most fashionably smart casual restaurants, such as *Longrain* and (Australian Chinese Television personality Kylie Kwong's) *Billy Kwong's* annoyingly, refuse to take bookings. It's a case of first in, first served. This is EAT city, however - it does pay to book whenever you can.

Sydney has a renowned *Art Gallery of NSW* in the parkland setting of The Domain - an area that was set aside in 1788 by an early Governor (Phillip) for his private use. Concerts and outdoor cinema are held there during the summer – white wine and deckchairs under the sky. There's a riot of other Outdoor Film Festivals in summer in other interesting sites such as Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Centennial Park, Olympic Park and North Sydney Cricket Ground.

New Year's Eve on Sydney Harbour has to be experienced at least once in a lifetime – fireworks across the Bridge, the harbour thronged with every kind of boat, the Opera House illuminated, champagne corks popping, and ecstatic people.

Whatever time of year, the sense of excitement remains -

Let the party begin!

DAY 5**STYLISH SYDNEY****A DAY IN DARLO/POTTS POINT/PADDINGTON
THE DOMAIN TO WOOLLOOMOOLOO/KING'S CROSS FOR LUNCH
PADDINGTON FOR SHOPPING****INTRO**

Potts Point is the stylish older sister of King's Cross, brimming with cafes, restaurants and small hotels. Walkers can get the measure of these inter-related suburbs by walking through the *Royal Botanic Gardens*, over the hill to the former port district of Woolloomooloo and on up through Potts Point to King's Cross, at the top of the hill.

Until 1870, Sydney was a garrison town – built mostly by gangs of convicts. Paddington was a barracks dominated area - a mushroom village of mean shacks, converted by 1880's developers to flung-together terrace houses, smothered with ostentatious ironwork. "*Paddo*" declined into a criminal slum in the early 1900's and was rescued by the intellectual, artistic and fashionable in the 1970's. Yesteryear's dilapidated terraces are now a showplace of folk architecture, hip shops, galleries, designer boutiques and some exciting eating places. The little streets leading off the main Oxford Street are packed with fascinating surprises – particularly, the designer haven of William Street.

Paddington Markets, born of the hippie movement during the "70's, is a major launch pad for Australian fashion and craft - worth a visit for its eclectic range of wares Saturday 10 am – 4pm 395 Oxford Street www.paddingtonmarkets.com.au

BREAKFAST

Fratelli Paradiso – stylish, Italian small café/pasticceria, with rows of fresh baked sweet & savoury temptations, including assorted pizza.

It's almost compulsory to wear black. Sit outside and join the newspaper-reading, people-watching crowd of understated, arts-orientated, inner city-ites.

One of the best cafes - in a caffeine-driven suburb - top espresso and great Italian food. Snacks & full meals from a blackboard menu.

Entrees \$15 - \$18, Mains \$18 - \$29

Open Monday to Friday, 7 am – 11 pm Saturday and Sunday 7 am – 5 pm

12 – 16 Challis Avenue, Potts Point, Ph: +61(2) 9357 1744

BREAKFAST/LUNCH/GALLERY

The Yellow House (Yellow bistro & Food Store) – is a fascinating, Gaudi-like (although the content is French in style), sunshine yellow-painted building with charcoal grey balconies – renowned for its architecture and history.

One of a small remaining group of distinctive federation Queen Anne-style terraced houses, built in the late 19th Century, *The Yellow House* was reborn as a radical arts enterprise in the 1970's by Sydney artist Martin Sharp, inspired by Van Gogh's Yellow House Arts community in Arles, France. He created a living artwork – a 24-hour performance & installation artwork space –mecca of Sydney Pop-art.