



# KOALA

## 8 Day Sydney to Brisbane Tour

Stray Journeys - Australia East Coast

**RETAIL:** AUD\$1,695

**STARTS:** Sydney; **FINISHES:** Brisbane

**DURATION:** 8 days

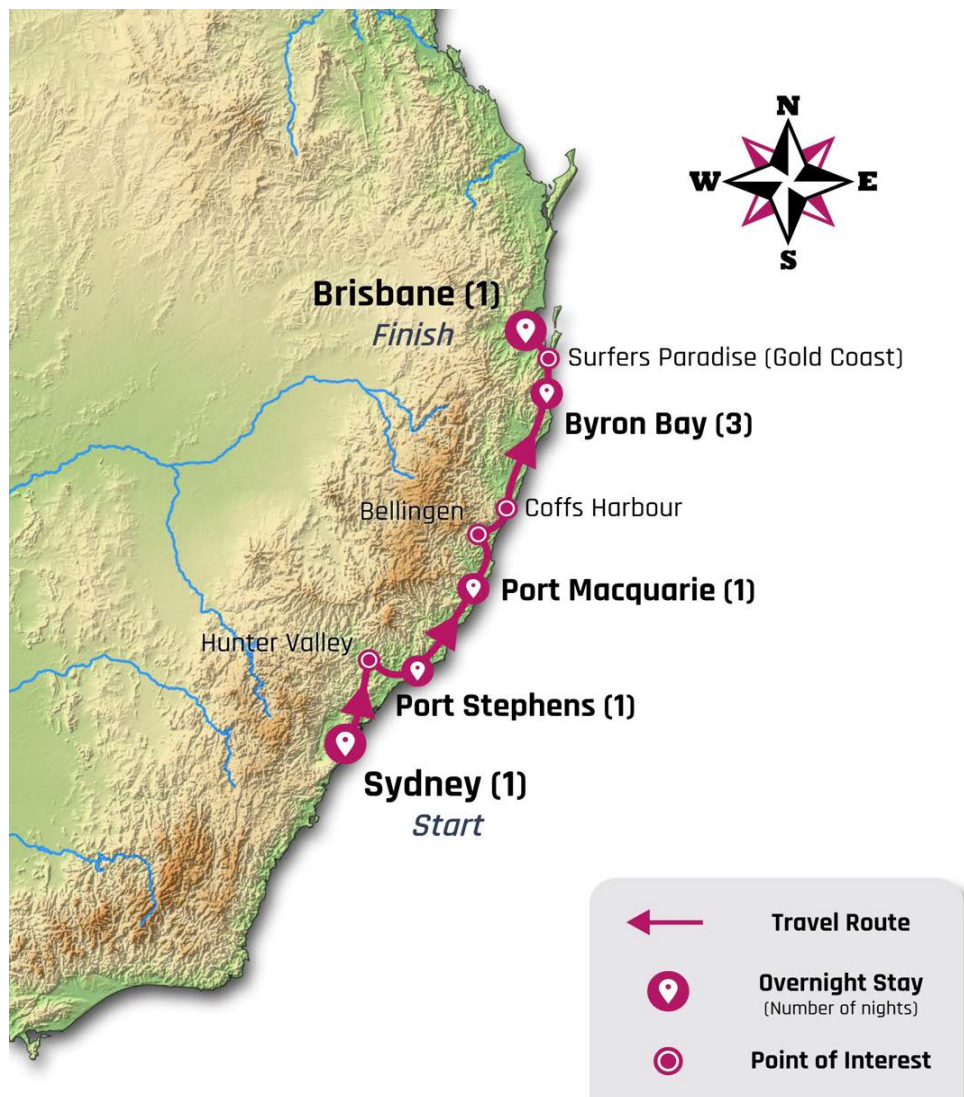
**START DAY:** Monday

**2022 DEPARTURES:** 3 Oct, 31 Oct, 28 Nov

**2023 DEPARTURES:** 2 Jan, 30 Jan, 27 Feb, 10 Apr, 8 May, 5 Jun, 10 Jul, 7 Aug, 4 Sep, 9 Oct, 23 Oct

**MINIMUM NUMBERS:** 8 passengers

**MAXIMUM NUMBERS:** 24 passengers



## Overview

The cute Koala is a total beach lover! Grab your towel, slap on your sunnies and journey up the East Coast from Sydney to Brisbane on this 8-Day Koala Tour. If you love beautiful port towns, long stretches of beach and you want to travel Australia in style then this is the tour for you. We'll take you off the tourist trail with a local guide (who will share their insider knowledge) and a bunch of like-minded travellers (who will become lifelong friends) and explore everything that Aussie has to offer in style!

### Day 1 - Monday: Arrive Sydney

G'day and welcome to your epic East Coast adventure. Your tour begins in Sydney with a day to yourself to explore the city sights and world-famous landmarks. If you've just flown in, we recommend taking the train from the airport to Central Station, your accommodation is conveniently located straight across the road. Check into the hostel anytime after 2pm and if you'd like to begin your trip with a delicious cocktail (because wine-not?), head down to Circular Quay and the Opera Bar. Located at the base of the Opera House, with views of the Harbour Bridge, you'll get all the iconic Sydney pics you can dream of. At 7pm head down to the hostel bar for pizza night and to meet your Stray guide and travel mates for the next few weeks.

**Accommodation included:** Wake Up Sydney or similar

**Optional activities:** Bondi to Coogee beach walk, visit Darling Harbour, explore King Street Wharf, Royal Botanic Gardens, Taronga Zoo, walk around the Opera House and the Rocks, the oldest area of Sydney. You can also take the ferry from Circular Quay to Manly.

**Meal options:** Head down to the hostel bar for Pizza Night

### Day 2 - Tuesday: Sydney to Port Stephens

We depart the harbour city this morning and make our way north to the Hunter Valley wine region where we'll spend a classy afternoon drinking wine and tasting chocolate before continuing through to Port Stephens, our destination for the night.

We'll be staying at the Surfside hostel, set on 6 acres of natural bushland, with kangaroos and wallabies on site. This boutique accommodation is about creating a relaxing experience in an environmentally conscious way. They've used wood and glass to maximise light and ensured all development encompasses the natural flora and fauna.

Once we've checked in, you can explore the area, relax, or head to the beach for a swim.

Tonight, we'll enjoy a classic Aussie BBQ dinner and get to know each other - anyone have a good icebreaker?

**Accommodation:** Surfside Hostel

**Meals included:** BBQ Dinner

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

**Included activity:** Wine and Cheese Tasting

**Free activities:** Wildlife spotting at our accommodation, beach swim

## Day 3 - Wednesday: Port Stephens to Port Macquarie

This morning either enjoy a relaxing sleep in, head to the beach for a swim, or get up bright and early and jump in a 4WD bus to partake in some first-class sandboarding down the Stockton Sand Dunes (optional expense). The local guide will teach you how to safely sandboard as well as inform you all about the amazing area and the rich aboriginal history of the region.

Depending on the conditions, we will go for a walk to the summit of Tomaree Head, which stands at 161 metres above the Port Stephens entrance. This short 2.2km return track offers breathtaking views of the coastline and panoramic views of Yacaaba Head, Cabbage Tree and Boondelbah islands, as well as Zenith, Wreck and Box Beaches, Fingal Island and Point Stephens Lighthouse - you might even be lucky enough to see some dolphins (and if it's May - September, you could see Whales!).

Late morning, we'll pack up and move on to our next overnight stop, Port Macquarie. We'll have lunch on the way before visiting the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, where we'll get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and arguably cutest) marsupials. Check out the information centre to learn all about the hospital's efforts to rehabilitate, protect and preserve the koalas.

**Accommodation:** Port Macquarie YHA or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

**Included activity:** Koala Hospital visit

**Free activities:** Sleep in, swim, relax on the beach, Headland Walk

**Optional paid activities:** Sandboarding

## Day 4 - Thursday: Port Macquarie to Byron Bay

Today we're heading to the iconic surfing town of Byron Bay, known for its relaxed vibes and no worries attitude. On the way to Byron, we'll stop at the historic and hipster town of Bellingen to get some lunch, followed by a special Aboriginal experience learning about the First Nations people of Australia.

Your Cultural Experience takes place at an important cultural site of the Gumbaynggirr people, the stunning location of "Niigi Niigi" (Sealy Lookout) within the Orara East State Forest. You'll go for a 2-hour tour and see 360-degree views, as well as getting the opportunity to immerse yourself in culture through stories, songs, language and the uses of native plants. By taking part in the experience, you're making a direct contribution to the revitalisation of Gumbaynggirr language and culture. This will be an unforgettable cultural experience with an emphasis on authentic connection and contributing to helping a community regain their culture and identity.

When we arrive in Byron Bay, we'll take you on an orientation drive around town to help you get your bearings, showing you points of interest and the top spots for food, shopping and nightlife. For the next few nights we're staying at boutique hostel The Surf House, located right in the heart of Byron and just a couple of hundred metres from the main beach - heaven!

**Accommodation:** The Surf House or similar

**Meals included:** Breakfast

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants, BBQ at the rooftop of the hostel

**Included activities:** Historic town and Aboriginal Cultural Experience

## Day 5 - Friday: Byron Bay Free Day

Today you have a full day in Byron Bay to "cheer up, slow down, and chill out" as the town's famous welcome sign instructs. Start your day off with a morning yoga class on the rooftop of your hostel and then spend your day exploring the laidback hippy town.

You can walk to Cape Byron Lighthouse, mainland Australia's most easterly point, or check out the many eclectic boutiques and cafes around town. You could join a sea kayaking or snorkel trip and search for dolphins and other marine life, or even go for an iconic Australian activity - learning to surf.

**Accommodation:** The Surf House or similar

**Included activity:** Morning yoga class

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

**Optional paid activities:** Surf lesson, dolphin kayak, snorkel or dive at Julian Rocks, skydive

**Free activities:** Walk to the lighthouse, swim, relax on the beach, check out the shops and cafes, free surfboard hire

## Day 6: Saturday: Byron Bay Free Day

You lucky thing - you have ANOTHER free day to explore Byron Bay today. Tick off any activities you didn't get the chance to do yesterday or pass the day wandering the township or relaxing on the beach. Hone your surf skills with more lessons or borrow one of the free surfboards at your hostel to try it out by yourself.

If you're a foodie, we assure you that eating your way around Byron is an experience in itself. There are heaps of vegetarian and vegan options available, a couple of our favourites are the Cardamom Pod for lunch and No Bones for dinner, both of which are super close to your hostel. This evening, head to the Saturday twilight markets for some live music and lots of boutique stalls showcasing local arts, crafts and some incredible food.

**Accommodation:** Surfhouse or similar

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants. We recommend trying one of the many great vegan options!

**Optional paid activities:** Surf lesson, dolphin kayak, snorkel or dive, skydive

**Free activities:** Walk to the lighthouse, swim, relax on the beach, check out the shops and cafes

## Day 7 - Sunday: Byron Bay to Brisbane via Surfers Paradise

This morning, meet your guide and group outside the Surf House hostel at 8:50am. Then we'll jump on the Stray bus and depart north across the NSW border to Queensland, and head to the famous Surfers Paradise where we'll stretch our legs and grab some lunch. . We'll then head to a nearby nature reserve to spot some wild kangaroos, before continuing to Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland for the night. We'll head down to Southbank for a walk along the Brisbane River and then check out some of the many bars and restaurants.

**Accommodation:** Brisbane YHA or similar

**Meal options:** Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

**Free activities:** Surfers Paradise, kangaroo spotting, catch the Brisbane city ferry

## Day 8 - Monday: Brisbane

Today is the final day of your Stray adventure. Give a wave and a hug to your new mates and head off for the next leg of your adventure, taking with you the most incredible memories, everything you've learned about Australia's special culture and wildlife, and of course some classic Aussie lingo - G'DAY MATES!

*This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over Australia's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.*

## What's Included:

- Experienced tour guide
- Private coach transport
- 7 nights' accommodation in 4-6 shared dorms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, and eco-lodges.
- 3 meals (2 Breakfasts, 1 Dinner)
- Wine and Cheese Tasting, Hunter Valley
- Koala Hospital Visit
- Aboriginal Cultural Bush Walk
- Yoga Class
- Walks and wildlife, lookouts and so much more!

## What to Bring:

Camera, Sturdy walking shoes/boots, Warm clothing, Waterproof jacket, Hat & Sunscreen, Swimsuit/towel, Water bottle, Toiletries, Motion sickness tablets, Insect repellent

## Please Note:

- Luggage is limited to one piece per person with a maximum weight of 20kg plus a day pack
- A basic level of fitness is required for medium length walks
- Accommodation is in 4-6 shared dorms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, eco-lodges.
- 3 meals are included. We make regular supermarket stops so you can self-cater for other meals, or there are usually quite a few cafe/restaurant options in each location.

## Highlights:

From waterfalls and wildlife spotting to cultural experience, there are so many awesome inclusions with the Stray Koala Sydney to Brisbane Tour:

- Discover your inner wine connoisseur at **Hunter Valley** and taste award-winning samples fresh from the vineyard
- Catch a glimpse of local wildlife and snap the amazing views at **Port Stephens**
- Get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and cutest) marsupials at the **Port Macquarie Koala Hospital**
- Visit the quirky, historic town of **Bellingen**
- Connect and gain an understanding of the incredible Aboriginal Culture through a bush walk and cultural experience
- Centre yourself with a yoga class in laid-back **Byron Bay** and have two free days to relax or explore at your own pace
- Drop into the iconic **Surfers Paradise** and a local conservation park
- Spend a night exploring the buzzing riverside city of **Brisbane**