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**Australia**

# Ten great ways to see Australia

**Jolyon Attwooll**  
*finds some compelling reasons for heading Down Under this year*

**Join the British Lions tour**

The four-nation team visits Australian shores for the first time in 12 years this summer, looking to avenge their defeat back in 2001 when the Wallabies won the series by two games to one. Fixtures are in Brisbane (June 22), Melbourne (June 29) and Sydney (July 6). Lions Rugby (0844 788 4070; lionsrugby.com) has a first and second test flight and ticket offer from £2,399, including return flight from London Heathrow.

**Watch turtles nest in Queensland**

Witness the egg-laying rituals of turtles on the Sunshine Coast where Mon Repos Beach, near Bundaberg, has the largest concentration of nesting marine turtles on the eastern Australian mainland. On the coral beaches of Lady Elliot Island a short flight away, you can watch green turtles gather for this enthralling annual ritual from November to December. Flight Centre (0800 587 0058; flightcentre.co.uk) has a 10-night Bundaberg Turtles and Rum package from £1,479.

**Brisbane culinary tour**

It is two years since widespread floods engulfed Queensland and caused

millions of pounds of damage to the state's capital city, but Brisbane is bouncing back. The city has recently welcomed a flurry of new restaurants, and will host the opening tests in both the British Lions series and the 2013-14 Ashes tour later in the year. Read our expert Brisbane city guide for more information: telegraph.co.uk/brisbane.

**Hunt for the Tasmania tiger**

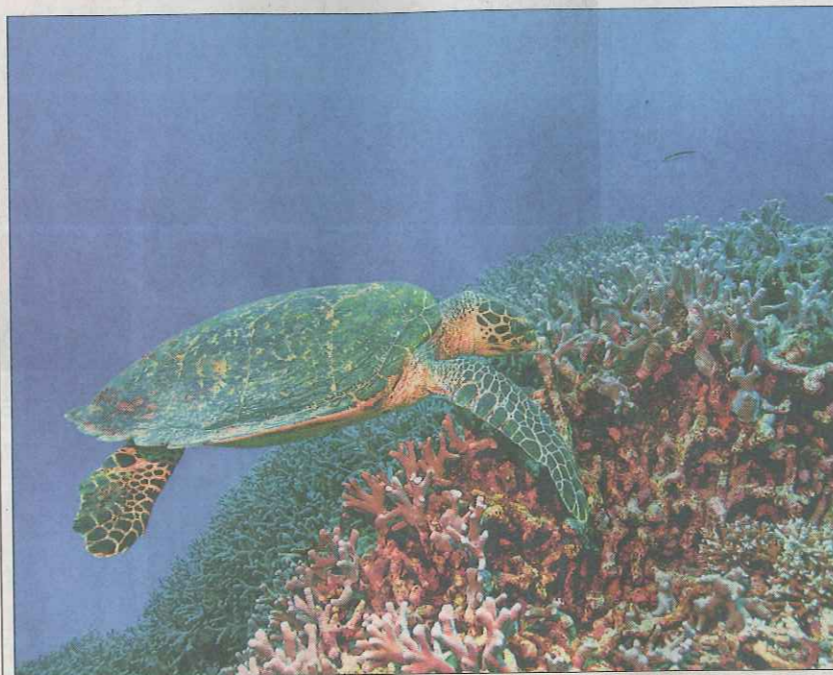
Go in pursuit of the Tasmanian tiger, as Willem Dafoe did in the film *The Hunter*, on a self-drive tour of Tasmania's rugged landscape. If that proves too elusive (it was registered extinct in 1936), the island is the final refuge of many other unique species, including the Tasmanian devil. Wildlife and Wilderness (0845 004 4599; wildlifewilderness.com) has an eight-day "The Hunter" holiday from £1,665 per person, including return flight, car hire and accommodation.

**Great Barrier Reef by air**

One of the most luxurious resorts on the Great Barrier Reef, Lizard Island (0061 3 9426 7550; lizardisland.com.au) now has two helicopters based on its premises, opening a range of new possibilities to visitors, with the island's privileged location at the northern end of the Great Barrier Reef. Skysafari Australia (skysafari.com.au) now operates a range of luxury scenic tours each day from there and other locations. Prices start at £680 per person.

**Wine country walking tour**

Just an hour's drive from Melbourne, the Mornington Peninsula is now an established wine-growing area, with



Be captivated by the egg-laying ritual of turtles on Australia's Sunshine Coast

plenty of opportunities for food and wine lovers to indulge themselves. Wineries on Foot (wineriesonfoot.com.au) has three new leisurely walking tours through the area, calling at a selection of boutique wineries. See also the *Telegraph's* expert guide to Melbourne: telegraph.co.uk/melbourne.

**Protect Australia's marsupials**

Help scientists study threatened wildlife, including marsupials such as

the quokka, quoll and quenda, among the tall forests of Western Australia. Biosphere Expeditions (0870 446 0801; biosphere-expeditions.org) has eight-day placements to work in a small international team with a local scientist. No experience or qualifications are necessary. Placements run from February 1-9 and February 11-19.

**Discover the outback by bike**

A new bike trail, stretching from Perth

through an unspoilt natural corridor to Albany on the rocky southern coast of Western Australia, opens in March. A 22-day group trip along the whole 621-mile Munda Biddi ("path through the forest" in the local Noongar Aboriginal language) trail runs from April 7 from £2,290 (flights not included). See mundabiddi.org.au for more details. Return flights to Perth from London start from £899 with Qantas.

**Take a ride on the Ghan**

The Ghan (greatsouthernrail.com.au) has short-break packages for travellers keen for a taste of this great Australian train journey. A three-night package from Alice Springs to Adelaide costs from AU\$1,299 (approx £860) per person, including one night on board the Ghan, and all on train meals and beverages. Book by March 31 for travel between April 1 and October 31. To book in Britain, contact Wexas (020 7590 0651; wexas.com/australia). For more on the Ghan, see telegraph.co.uk/theghan.

**The Ashes**

It's a big year for Ashes cricket fans with two back-to-back series taking place within six months. The Australia leg begins at the Gabba in Brisbane (November 21-25), followed by tests in Adelaide (December 5-9), Perth (December 13-17), Melbourne (December 26-30) and Sydney (January 3-7, 2014). Freedom Australia (0844 567 8040; freedomaustralia.co.uk) has Ashes packages including six nights' accommodation in the host city and match tickets from £720 per person.

*Shedding new light on the history of Hobart*

'Hobart was put on the map by flames lit from whale scrap. In London in the early 19th century, the lamplight by which you read your newspaper or ate your dinner or strolled down a smog-shrouded Piccadilly was fuelled by Tasmanian whale-oil.'

Nicholas Shakespeare delves into the history of Hobart:

**telegraph.co.uk/hobart**



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