



AN UPDATE FROM MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL



We thought it timely to send out another update to our valued customers. Nothing much has changed in the office since our last update. In short, we are still here.....

The effects of COVID-19 continue to play out around the world, making interstate and overseas travel at best very difficult. We feel for all our Victorian friends who are struggling through this pandemic as best they can. Hopefully the coming weeks will see an easing of restrictions.

For everyone else, we encourage people to travel within their own state. Every state within Australia has unique features and hidden gems to discover. Group travel is still very difficult, but for anyone with a driver's licence, you can explore your own backyard with comfort and flexibility.

Below are some ideas for travel in NSW and Queensland that may pique your interest. For residents of other states, we are happy to offer some suggestions if you would like to get in contact with our office.

SUGGESTED ITINERARY FOR NORTH COAST NSW



1. Sydney - Australia's most populated city. Most Australians have previously visited Sydney, but this iconic city always has something to offer for young and old.

2. Hunter Valley - Located 2 hours from Sydney, the Hunter Valley is one of Australia's major wine regions, with a viticultural history dating back to the early 1800's. Take in a wine-tasting, relax at some wonderful boutique hotels and country lodges. Visit the renowned Hunter Valley Gardens, play golf on some premier rated courses, or try your skills on a segway tour of the area, passing through local vineyards.

Suggested accommodation: Hermitage Lodge, Pokolbin - Approximate price \$260 per room, per night.

3. Port Macquarie - Once a penal colony, Port Macquarie is a beautiful coastal city on the Mid North Coast. There is plenty to see and do, including river cruises, the local koala hospital, coastal walks, good shopping, fine dining and comfortable accommodation options.

Suggested accommodation: Sails Resort by Rydges - Approximate price \$170 per room, per night.

4. Coffs Harbour - Located 2 hours north of Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour is another coastal city with spectacular panoramic vistas. On your way to Coffs Harbour, be sure to stop in Kempsey and visit our office. For those who have been travelling with us since our early days, we might even be able to arrange for Alan to drop in and treat you to a coffee at his favourite cafe overlooking the Macleay!

Suggested accommodation: Breakfree Aanuka Beach Resort Coffs Harbour - Approximate price \$150 per room, per night.

5. Tamworth - Head west from Coffs Harbour and enjoy a cuppa in Dorrigo, located on the plateau with green meadows year round. Next stop is the heritage town of Armidale, gateway to New England. Stop for a coffee and meal at the Alternate Root in Uralla, and visit Thunderbolt's Rock, renowned hiding place of the infamous bushranger. Your destination is Tamworth, the country music capital of Australia. (Approx drive time 4 hours)

Suggested accommodation: Mercure Tamworth West - Approximate price \$150 per room, per night.

6. Dubbo - From Tamworth to Dubbo there are a number of routes you can take. Why not go via the rural town of Gunnedah, located on the Liverpool Plains. Then head inland to Dubbo passing

Coonabarabran and the scenic Warrumbungle Range. Be sure to visit the Western Plains Zoo during your stay. (Approx drive time 3 1/2 hours)

Suggested accommodation: Abel Tasman Motor Inn - Approximate price \$145 per room, per night.

7. Parkes - Located 90 minutes from Dubbo is the charming town of Parkes. On your way be sure to visit 'The Dish' located in rolling hills and beautiful green farmland (the huge telescope is located in the north of town). Parkes has a number of retail and dining options to make the most of your time. Perhaps enjoy dinner at one of their many local pubs.

Suggested accommodation: Astro Dish Motor Inn - Approximate price \$155 per room, per night.

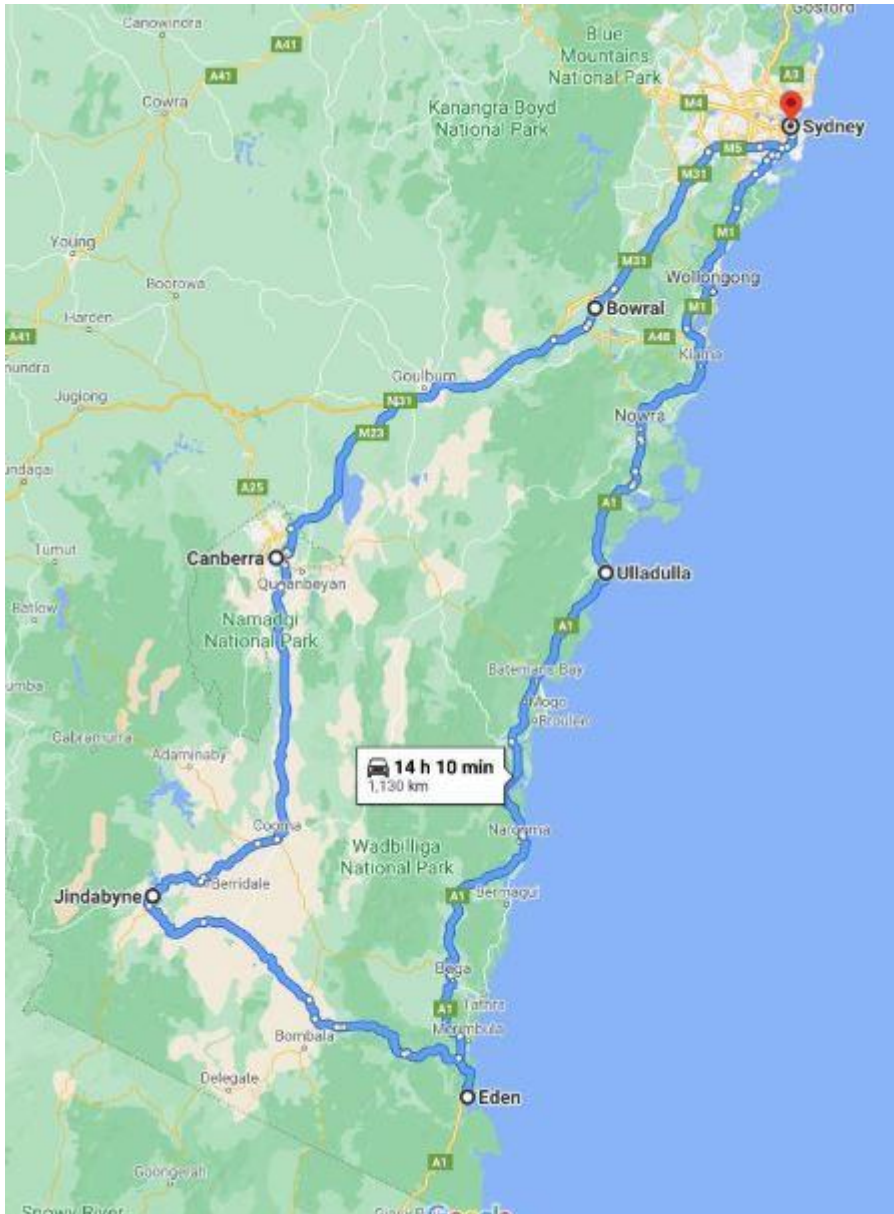
8. Bathurst - Head east through more beautiful green farmland from Parkes to the Central Tablelands city of Orange, known for its historic buildings. If you are a golfer or would like a lovely lunch, the Duntryleague Golf Club (1836) is the place to visit. Continue east to Bathurst, home of the Bathurst 1000 V8 Supercars. Be sure to take a lap around Mount Panorama. (Approx drive time 2 hours)

Suggested accommodation: Rydges Mount Panorama Bathurst - Approximate price \$150 per room, per night.

9. Sydney - Head east from Bathurst to the scenic Blue Mountains. Be sure to take in the unusual rock formation and wonderful views of The Three Sisters, before heading back to Sydney to conclude your memorable journey.

PLEASE NOTE: The above program has been suggested as a loop so you can commence or conclude your journey at any point along the way. The benefit of travelling by car is that you have the flexibility to add to or reduce your trip. Accommodation prices listed are just a guide and may be more expensive, depending on availability. Macleay Valley Travel is happy to book any accommodation, car hire or day tours that you wish to undertake. Phone us on our toll free number 1800 810 809 for any assistance.

SUGGESTED ITINERARY FOR SOUTH COAST NSW & CANBERRA



1. Sydney - Ulladulla (Approximately 3 1/2 hour drive)

Leave the city behind and drive south. Head towards Stanwell Park to take the beautiful, scenic drive along the coast. Cross the Sea Cliff Bridge to Wollongong. Continue on to Kiama and see the renowned blowhole which is the largest in the world and can blast sea water 20 metres high. Stretch your legs and enjoy lunch at one of the quaint cafes Kiama has to offer. On to Ulladulla which is known for its lovely harbour and seafood. Ulladulla is a good base to visit the surrounding beaches, villages and national parks with excellent walking tracks. There are also some beautiful wineries in the area.

Suggested accommodation: Harbourview Serviced Apartments - Approximate price \$140 per room, per night.

2. Ulladulla - Eden (Approximately 2 1/2 hour drive)

In just under an hour you can be in the beautiful town of Batemans Bay. Enjoy some morning tea and a visit to Batemans Bay Heritage Museum. Perhaps a visit to Birdland Animal Park where you can see 100 species of native birds and animals in a waterfront bushland setting. A little further along the road is the beautiful coastal town of Narooma with spectacular wildlife, home to a colony of fur seals and more than 90 bird species.

Continue on to Bega, the state's unofficial cheese capital. The original Bega Cheese Factory opened 120 years ago. Learn the history of the valley and cheesemaking at Bega Cheese Heritage Centre. Last stop for today is Eden, a quaint town on a headland which juts out into

Twofold Bay. Historically, Eden is connected to the age of whaling. It is one of the best spots in Australia for whale watching. You can visit Eden Killer Whale Museum and learn about Old Tom, the killer whale who measured 22 feet long and weighed 6 tonnes! In the evening, you will find a number of restaurants at the wharf at Snug Cove where you can dine on freshly caught oysters. Suggested accommodation: Twofold Bay Motor Inn - Approximate price \$135 per room, per night.

3. Eden - Jindabyne (Approximately 2 1/2 hours drive)

Today, leave the coast and travel inland to Jindabyne via the Snowy River Way. Stop along the way at Bombala and if you're lucky you might spot some platypus at the Bombala Platypus Reserve. Explore Bombala Historic Railway, Crankies Plain Bridge and the beautiful colonial homestead of Burnima. Continue on to Jindabyne in the Snowy Mountains famous for the Banjo Paterson poem 'The Man from Snowy River'. The scenery of the high country is spectacular. Why not go for a walk in the bush or paddle a canoe or go horse riding? Or just sit back at one of the cafes, pubs or restaurants. On the outskirts you can visit Wildbrumby Distillery and sample their Australian Schnapps!

Suggested accommodation: Rydges Horizons Snowy Mountains - Approximate price \$130 per room, per night.

4. Jindabyne - Canberra (Approximately 2 1/2 hours drive)

About 45 minutes from Jindabyne is Cooma, home to the Snowy Mountains Hydro Discovery Centre. Here you will learn about the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, considered one of the engineering wonders of the modern world.

Next on to our nation's capital Canberra, ACT. You'll definitely need a few days here to see the major highlights. Take a lift to the roof top of Parliament House for fabulous views over the city. Visit the Australian War Museum, National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Australia, Questacon, National Dinosaur Museum and the Royal Australian Mint.

Suggested accommodation: Crowne Plaza Canberra - Approximate price \$150 per room, per night.

5. Canberra - Bowral (Approximately 2 hours drive)

En route to Bowral, stop off in Goulburn to see the Big Merino! Goulburn is a historic town with museums, galleries & restaurants. See St Saviour's Anglican Cathedral and historic Riversdale Homestead, which dates back to the 1830's. Rail enthusiasts will love the Goulburn Rail Heritage Centre.

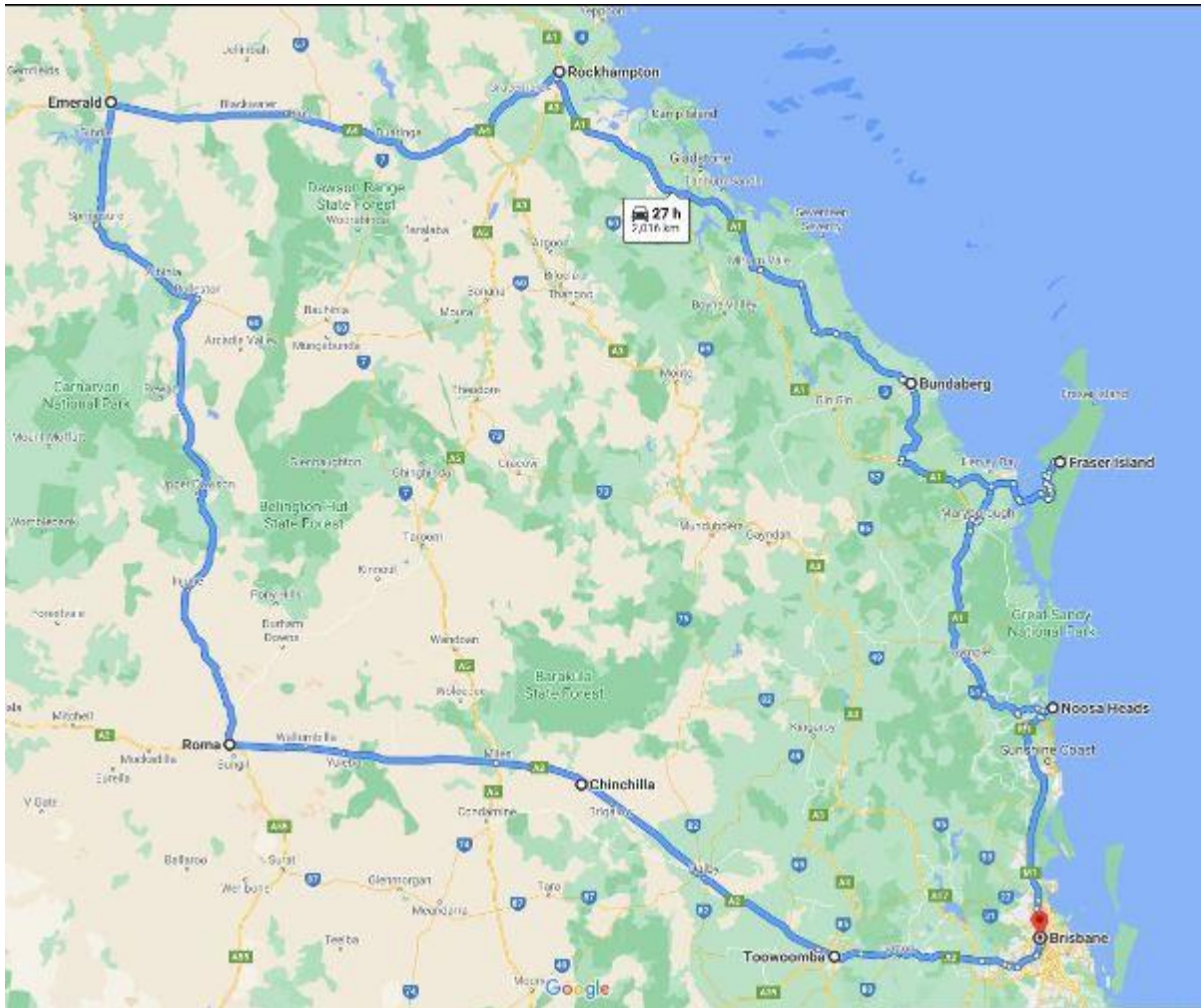
Continue on to Bowral which is the largest town in the Southern Highlands, Bowral was once a rural summer retreat for Sydney's gentry and today you can still see fine manor houses, antique stores and gourmet restaurants. Bowral is of course famous for the legendary batsman Sir Donald Bradman and here you can visit the Bradman Museum & International Cricket Hall of Fame. There are some lovely vineyards to visit and several highly acclaimed restaurants and pubs. Walk through the beautiful Corbett Gardens and for spectacular views of the gardens and town, visit Bowral Lookout.

Suggested accommodation: Berida Hotel- Approximate price \$220 per room, per night.

6. Bowral - Sydney (Approximately 1 1/2 - 2 hours drive)

PLEASE NOTE: The above program has been suggested as a loop so you can commence or conclude your journey at any point along the way. The benefit of travelling by car is that you have the flexibility to add to or reduce your trip. Accommodation prices listed are just a guide and may be more expensive, depending on availability. Macleay Valley Travel is happy to book any accommodation, car hire or day tours that you wish to undertake. Phone us on our toll free number 1800 810 809 for any assistance.

SUGGESTED ITINERARY FOR BRISBANE & NORTH QUEENSLAND



1. Brisbane - Noosa Heads (Approximately 2 hours drive)

Today head north to the beautiful Noosa Heads on the Sunshine Coast. Noosa is very laid-back and is surrounded by beach, river and national park. It has great boutique shopping and inviting coffee shops, bars & restaurants. Noosa Heads and the surrounding area has something for everyone. You may want to just relax on the beach or stroll along the boardwalk. In the evening enjoy a moonlit river cruise on a gondola.

Forty minutes away you will find the Noosa Everglades which is one of only two everglade systems in the world. It is known as the 'River of Mirrors' due to its reflections in the water. It is 60kms long with amazing flora and fauna. You may wish to travel out to the Hinterland for the day. See the beautiful lakes, rolling green hills, rock formations & boutique vineyards. If your stay includes a Wednesday or Saturday, you can see the fabulous Artisan Market at Eumundi.

Suggested accommodation: The Sebel Noosa - Approximate price \$250 per room, per night.

2. Noosa Heads - Fraser Island (Approximately 2 1/2 hours drive & 50 minute ferry ride)

A nice stop along the way is the heritage city of Gympie. Visit the Gold Mining & Historical Museum or Woodworks Museum. Enjoy a cup of coffee on historic Mary Street. Fraser Island is the world's largest sand island and is World Heritage listed. Vehicle barges and passenger ferry services run daily from River Heads (20 minutes south of Hervey Bay).

You can easily spend a couple of days on Fraser Island. Why not join a 4WD tour? You'll drive along the Seventy Five Mile Beach then you can cool off in the clear waters of Lake McKenzie and float along Eli Creek. You'll also have a chance to explore the rainforest and learn all about the island's unique ecosystems and wildlife from your expert guide. See the Maheno Shipwreck and coloured cliffs of The Cathedrals. Fraser Island is famous for its pure dingoes. There is thought to be 25-30 packs on the island, each containing 3 to 12 dingoes.

Suggested accommodation: Kingfisher Bay Resort - Approximate price \$210 per room, per night.

3. Fraser Island - Bundaberg (Approximately 50 minute ferry ride & 1 1/2 hours drive)

Today will take you to Bundaberg. Perhaps have a look in Hervey Bay before your drive north. Bundaberg is a historic sugar cane city with beautiful tropical gardens and gracious colonial buildings. Cruise down the Burnett River. Watch sea turtles hatch at Mon Repos. Visit the famous Bundaberg Rum Distillery & Hinkler Hall of Aviation. Bundaberg is the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef so perhaps you might like to take a day trip to Lady Musgrave Island or Lady Elliot Island.

Suggested accommodation: Koola Beach Apartments Bargara - Approximate price \$170 per room, per night.

4. Bundaberg - Gladstone (Approximately 1 1/4 hours drive)

A nice easy drive today. Stop off at Miriam Vale, where a big Queensland mud crab is perched on top of a petrol station! Detour into the scenic seaside town of 1770, named after the year it was discovered by Captain Cook. Continue on to the green city of Gladstone, surrounded by rainforest gorges, lakes and beaches stretching to the Great Barrier Reef.

Hop on the Heron Islander and within 2 hours you will be on Heron Island. You can snorkel and see the outstanding underwater world of the Southern Great Barrier Reef. If you prefer not to get in the water, you could take a semi-submersible tour on the 'I-Spy' and see turtles, sharks, manta rays & sea urchins.

Suggested accommodation: Mercure Gladstone - Approximate price \$135 per room, per night.

5. Gladstone - Rockhampton (Approximately 1 1/2 hours drive)

Arrive in Rockhampton, where the Big Bull represents Rockhampton's reputation as Australia's beef capital. You'll find six bull statues representing the six different breeds found in the region! 'Rocky' as it is affectionately known is a magnificent city with elegant, well-preserved Victorian buildings in the CBD and beautiful tree lined streets. Don't miss the Botanic Gardens and Kershaw Gardens with its lovely waterfall. Visit Archer Park Rail Museum and go for a ride on the Purrey Steam Tram! You can easily fill in a few days in Rockhampton.

Suggested accommodation: Mercure Rockhampton - Approximate price \$160 per room, per night.

6. Rockhampton - Emerald (Approximately 3 hours drive)

Today leave the coast behind and travel inland. Located on the Nogoa River in Queensland's beautiful Central Highlands you will find Emerald. It is not named after the gem, but the lush green paddocks surrounding the town. It is however known for another gem, the sapphire. The Sapphire Gemfields are some of the largest in the world. Perhaps you could join an underground mine tour or digging tour and find one yourself!

Emerald's Botanic Gardens are a beautiful place to stroll through. The gardens are on the banks of the Nogoa River and cover 42 hectares. There is no charge to enter the gardens. Emerald was once a huge producer of sunflowers. As a tribute to this, you will see the world's largest reproduction of Van Gogh's Sunflower painting in Morton Park. If you would like to get out of town for the day, a nice trip is to Minerva Hills, a magnificent park in the Central Highlands. Alternatively, not far from Emerald is Lake Maraboon, a lovely place to walk around and have a picnic lunch or perhaps hire a kayak and go for a paddle.

Suggested accommodation: Route 66 Motor Inn - Approximate price \$130 per room, per night.

7. Emerald - Roma (Approximately 4 1/4 hours drive)

You may choose to take a packed lunch or snacks with you today. The villages you will pass through may only have a small general store which may not be open! Roma is the Gateway to Queensland's Outback. It has the largest cattle yards in the Southern Hemisphere with over 400,000 cattle passing through the yards each year. Don't miss The Big Rig History Museum where you will discover how and where the Australian oil and gas industry originated. See the massive bottle tree, which has a girth of 9.5 metres, a height of 6 metres and a crown of 20 metres.

Suggested accommodation: Roma Central Motel - Approximate price \$160 per room, per night.

8. Roma - Chinchilla (Approximately 2 hours drive)

Located on the Warrego Highway is the colourful town of Chinchilla, famous for its melons, fossicking & fishing. A nice overnight stay on your way to the much larger Toowoomba.

Suggested accommodation: Central Motor Inn - Approximate price \$130 per room, per night.

9. Chinchilla - Toowoomba (Approximately 2 hours drive)

Toowoomba is Queensland's largest inland city and is known as Queensland's Garden City with over 200 public parks and gardens. It sits on the edge of the Great Dividing Range, 700 metres above sea level overlooking the Lockyer Valley. Visit the Cobb & Co Museum and see thirty 19th century horse-drawn vehicles. At the museum you will also see over one hundred artefacts including saddles, machinery, tools and items of domestic and occupational use.

Take a nice relaxing walk through the tranquil Japanese Garden which is a 15 minute drive from the city centre. To the north of Toowoomba is the 236 hectare Crows Nest National Park with its rugged landscape, waterfalls and 'Valley of Diamonds' gorge. See beautiful wildflowers and birds.

Suggested accommodation: Burke & Wills Hotel - Approximate price \$160 per room, per night.

10. Toowoomba - Brisbane (Approximately 1 3/4 hours drive)

PLEASE NOTE: The above program has been suggested as a loop so you can commence or conclude your journey at any point along the way. The benefit of travelling by car is that you have the flexibility to add to or reduce your trip. Accommodation prices listed are just a guide and may be more expensive, depending on availability. Macleay Valley Travel is happy to book any accommodation, car hire or day tours that you wish to undertake. Phone us on our toll free number 1800 810 809 for any assistance.
