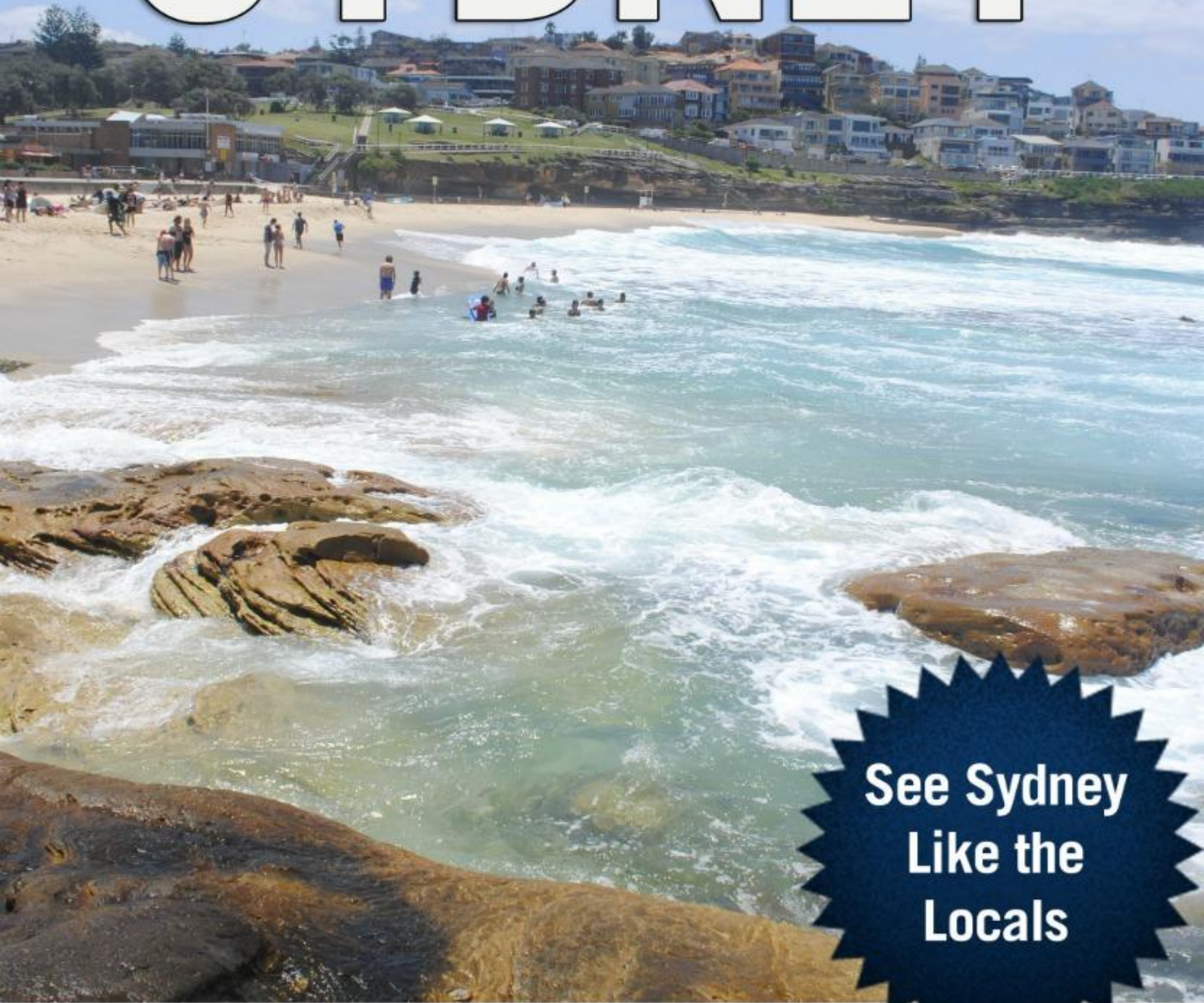


# BACKSTREET NOMAD'S ANTI TRAVEL GUIDE SYDNEY



**See Sydney  
Like the  
Locals**

**Luke Marlin**

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## About this Anti Travel Guide

The Sydney Opera House. The Sydney Harbour Bridge. The Sydney Tower. Bondi Beach. Darling Harbour. Manly. Taronga Zoo. These are the top 7 most popular and iconic attractions of Sydney. Be it sheer magnificence or well marketed to appeal to the desires of the tourist, they are iconic for a reason. As such they are very well known and presumably these iconic sights have inspired you to visit this wonderful city.

For this reason, Backstreet Nomad's Sydney Anti Travel Guide will introduce you to the parts of Sydney you don't know yet: the neighbourhoods that the locals love to frequent; the places to visit to avoid tourists; and insider tips to ensure your Sydney experience is unique and exciting. These are the places you will brag about to your friends and family because when *they* went to Sydney, they only had time for the Big 7 and moved on. But what they really mean is they only *made* time for these sights.

This Anti-guidebook will show you where to explore beyond the CBD, the best places to eat and drink, and some cheaper, quieter, alternatives to what you might expect. The focus is less about attractions and more about sourcing Sydney's most unique eating and drinking establishments, grouped by neighbourhood with a few choice attractions thrown in for good measure. You will of course still want to see the things that brought you here in the first place, so a summary of the big attractions will also be present along with tips on how best to get there, and what to see while there so you can spend more time in the alleys of less-frequented neighbourhoods.

My goal in this book is to tell it how it is. If it's not worth going to, you want to know just as much as the places that are definitely worth going to. I have read travel books where every attraction listed is described with more adjectives than a luxury catalogue that blurs the line between helpful review and flowing poetry. If the popularity of something is based on hype or if there is a better, lesser known alternative you can be sure that it will be pointed out. I'm not here to sell any of these places to you, just to point you in the right direction to what you might otherwise have missed.

Like most cities, Sydney has bars and restaurants coming out of the wazoo. Finding a place for a drink can be as simple as walking out the front door. If you

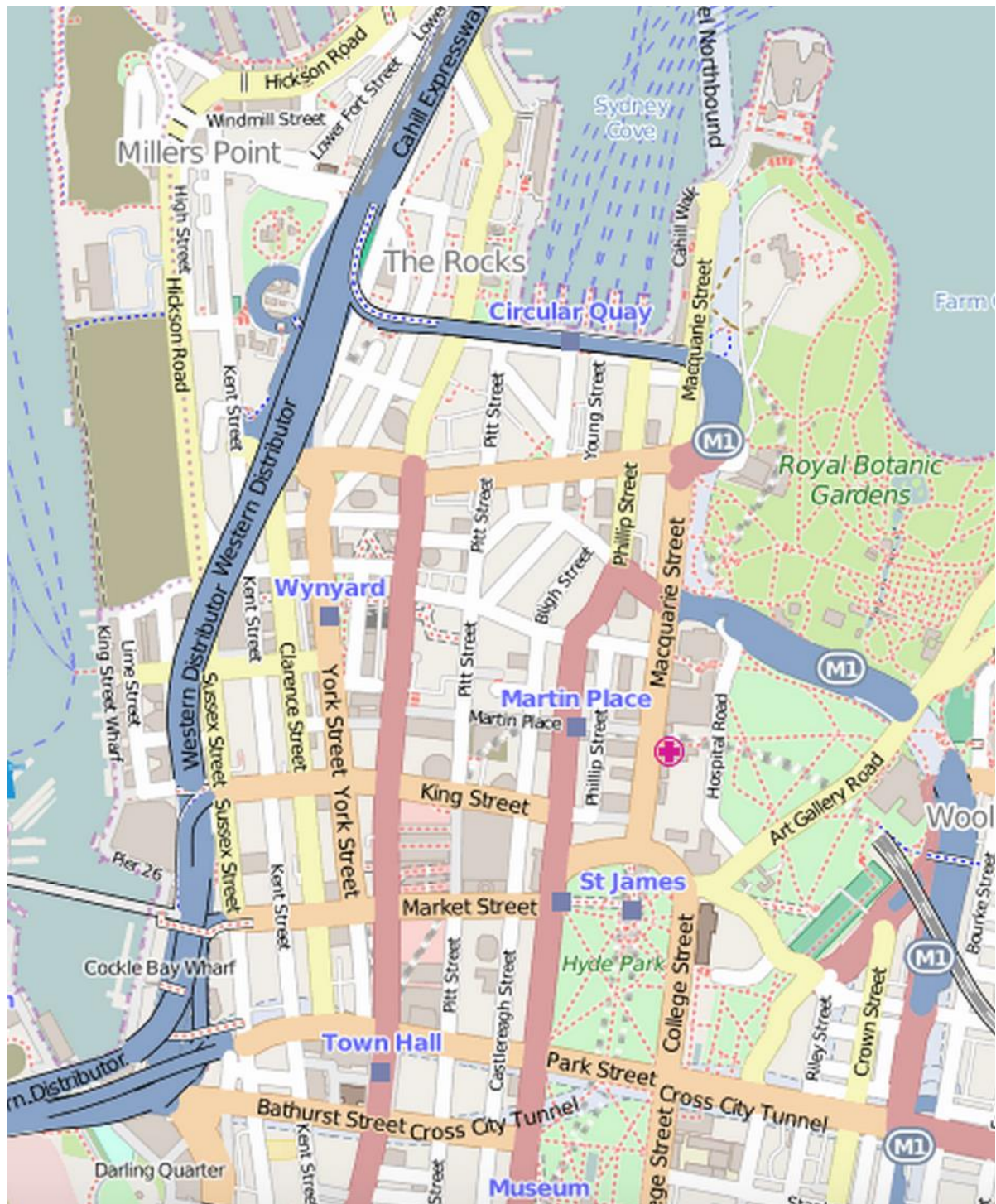
would rather find those hidden unique venues than a place whose main attraction is electronic horse racing and sports betting, then read on.

My name is Luke and I'll be your guide through your stay in the magnificent city of Sydney. I believe tourists and locals each bring a unique perspective when it comes to any city. Locals obviously know the city better than outsiders and are aware of places travellers could never find in a short stay in the city, while outsiders are without the curse of knowledge and can view a city with completely fresh eyes, free of any preconceived perceptions. The tourist can see the forest, but the local can navigate the trees. It is not until you combine them that you can truly have a complete experience of a city. I am lucky (and now so are you) in that I have been both a tourist and a local in Sydney at different points of my life. Living a short 2 hour drive away means I visit Sydney as an outsider somewhat regularly and growing up have visited all tourist spots numerous times. I have also spent time living in Sydney and have experienced Sydney as a local. Welcome to my master list of the best places to see (and avoid) in Australia's first city.

## Chapter 1 – Before You Go

### Orientation

A joke among Sydneysiders when looking at a map is that when Sydney was being planned, the Town Planner threw up on a sheet of paper and this became the plan for the city. Actually this might just be my joke. Regardless, the streets of the city itself are not well thought out and the ability to use public transport to



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navigate does not make things easier. Regardless, the CBD extends from Circular Quay and The Rocks area south to Central Station, and includes the busy streets between Darling Harbour (Cockle Bay Wharf) to the west and Hyde Park to the east. The main streets are Pitt and George Streets and are scattered mostly with shops, arcades, businesses in high-rise, bars and cafés, as well as plenty of souvenir shops.

## Transport

Use [www.131500.com.au](http://www.131500.com.au) to plan routes around the city. Public transport is adequate, but unless you're on the train line buses or walking are your only cheap option, especially if outside of the CBD. Use the city circle line for staying within the bounds of Circular Quay, Central, George St and Hyde Park. Also keep an eye out for the free shuttle bus (bus 555) that loops the CBD between Circular Quay and Central Station. It theoretically comes every 10 minutes and can be very handy, but I wouldn't rely on it too heavily if in any sort of hurry. It is often too full to allow passengers and runs an unreliable schedule.

For longer stays you may also wish to buy an Opal card. It is Sydney's answer to London's Oyster card and electronically charges your card each time you ride a bus, train or ferry. For info and purchases head to [www.opal.com.au](http://www.opal.com.au). Or you can also purchase in any convenience store around the city. It's ferry convenient!

If traveling in a small group, Uber has recently come to Sydney. Uber is the new way to catch cabs. You can order and track a taxi from wherever you are and it is completely cashless (as in, you pay Uber through the app, not the trips are free). The app will also give you an estimated cost of the trip. Use my referral code UBERBSN11 to get \$10 off your first trip.

## Customs

No, not getting through the airport without the sniffer dog detecting your mum's special brownies, but how do things work in Sydney? Well, for starters forget whatever you know about table service. Cafes, bars, the lot. Table service is for places with nice tablecloths and menus that aren't laminated. Be prepared to at least pay for your meal at the counter afterwards and possibly also order at the counter as well. I'm not saying I agree with it, I'm saying this is what to expect. But on the plus side...

Forget what you know about tipping. Below is a list of the types of places and people you should tip in Australia:

- 
- 
- 
- 

I hope I didn't miss any. Australian's in the service industry (and as a whole) are paid absurdly well by world standards so your average waiter does not need to *rely* on tips like in most countries because they are being paid over \$20 an hour. In a sense this is actually a shame because without the need to work for tips, the level of service you might expect in, say America, is rarely seen in most ordinary restaurants.

### **Getting from the airport**

As you successfully evade the sniffer dogs and pass through to the arrivals hall, prepare yourself for one of Sydney's biggest swindles: catching the Airport Link train to the city. A single ticket will cost \$16. The airport is no more than 7 kilometres (4.3 miles) from Central Station or 15 minutes in a cab, which would cost about \$35-40. If there are more than 3 of you it will most certainly be worth splitting a cab. Even 2 people would be worth a few extra dollars for the convenience.

The reason this is such a swindle is because the train you use is the same train that regular commuters use and pay the standard \$3.80 for their trip. But since the airport has a monopoly on transport to the city they can charge what they like.

These are essentially your options. Despite the above, the train is in fact very easy to use as it is well signposted and comes regularly. It is about a 10 minute journey to Central Station and your hotel will have given you instructions on how to proceed from there.

## How much to Budget

**Sleeping:** Hostels will cost approximately \$20-\$35 per night for a bed in a dorm. Hotels can range from \$180/night up to, well, the sky is the limit really.

**Alcohol:** alcohol is not cheap in Australia due to ludicrously high excise taxes. A schooner of Tooheys or other house beer will set you back about \$5, a pint of craft beer will be \$9+ and a glass of house wine will most likely be \$7-\$10. A cheap cocktail outside of happy hour will not likely be less than \$15 and could stretch up to \$25, depending on type and venue of course.

**Pub meal:** The average pub meal is between \$10-15. If you are not sure what to get (and you are not from Germany or Austria) always default to a Chicken Schnitzel with mushroom/Diane sauce. It's an Australian pub staple and very difficult to screw up.

**Restaurant meal:** a meal in a real restaurant will vary by what your order (obviously). Pastas, salads and burgers will generally be in the high teens (\$16-\$19), pizzas around the \$20 mark, and a good steak could be \$25-\$30.

**Transport:** a single train ticket is \$3.80, a single ferry is \$6, and a single bus (within the city) is \$2.30. There is no discount for buying a return ticket on any of these services. Buy an Opal card to take the stress out of travel, especially because many buses in the city do not sell tickets on board.

## Supermarkets

Sometimes you just want a cheap or home-cooked meal. Sometimes you need to pack a picnic lunch and snacks. Or sometimes you just need a 6-pack of Red Bull to supercharge your night. There are three Coles and two Woolworths Supermarkets that you are likely to use in the city:



|                                  |                                    |  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Woolworths Town Hall</b>      | Cnr George/Park Sts, Sydney        | Diagonally across from the Town Hall end of the Queen Victoria Building.   |
| <b>Woolworths Metcentre</b>      | 60 Margaret St, Sydney             | Can enter from just north of the Wynyard Station entrance on George St   |
| <b>Coles Express</b>             | 388 George St Sydney               | On the corner of King St   |
| <b>Coles World Square</b>        | 650 George St                      | Inside the mall, which should be pretty obvious but it's across from Hungry Jacks on Liverpool and Cheers Bar on George. |
| <b>Coles Central Kings Cross</b> | 82-94 Darlinghurst Rd, Kings Cross | Underneath the enormous Coca-Cola sign   |

## Sports

If you arrive in winter (March to September) you will be overwhelmed with the amount of coverage the local rugby league teams receive from the media. For the vast majority of Sydney's population it is the only sport that matters. Somewhat of a majority of games will be played at Moore Park in Sydney eastern suburbs or Olympic Park in the western suburbs. You can check [www.nrl.com](http://www.nrl.com) for game times if this sort of thing interests you.

However, if watching two lines of men run into each is not exactly your idea of an afternoon well spent you might try your hand at an Aussie rules match, your options being to watch the Sydney Swans (who won the 2014 premiership) or



the Greater Western Sydney Giants (not so much). It is a very unique game and if you can get past how 'messy' some of the plays seem and the fact that you get a consolation point for missing the goal, you'll appreciate the skill these players have in hand passing the ball around the ground before kicking the ball behind them for a goal. Visit [www.afl.com](http://www.afl.com).

The biggest spectacle of course will be to see a Western Sydney Wanderers football (soccer) game, who just keep breaking attendance records. Experience the incredible atmosphere the most passionate fans in the country create at Parramatta Stadium or if you can get a ticket, seeing the Wanderers take on Sydney FC is a must-see derby. The season goes from October to May. Tickets and information at [www.a-league.com](http://www.a-league.com).

Lastly, Aussies love a good game of cricket. More specifically, Aussies love a day out at the cricket. The atmosphere is like no other game and the fans are the most laid back than any other, completely exuding the Australian spirit. Throughout summer the Sydney Cricket Ground will play host to a number of international cricket games, a test match and a few one day matches. For something shorter and more action filled try a domestic Twenty20 match. (This is only domestic cricket competition anyone actually follows. For more information check out <http://www.cricket.com.au/>).



## Coffee

Sydney is not known for its coffee scene. However, neighbouring the CBD to the east is Surry Hills: the place with the best coffee options. Cafes are aplenty, many of which take some unearthing to even find. If at a loss, ask someone with tight jeans, tattoos and/or a beard where their favourite coffee place is and they'll point you in the right direction. Newtown will be a close second in this category.

Most coffee places in the CBD make most of their money from businesses and workers getting morning coffees during the week so interestingly, it is reasonably difficult to find good coffee places that are actually open on weekends. Not to say it's impossible, some are definitely open, but be aware that just because that place you found is open on a Friday does not guarantee it will be open on Saturday and Sunday.

## Beers

The Australian beer market is dominated by two players: Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) and Lion Nathan. Carlton brew such big names as Victoria Bitter, Crown Lager, and a range under the Carlton name. The Lion range includes Tooheys, XXXX (pronounced Four X), James Boags, Hahn, and the James Squire range. You will find most, if not all of these labels on tap at most any corner pub in NSW and will generally be the cheapest on offer. Mostly because they taste like a corporate fat cat pissed directly into your mouth. Don't worry, I'll take you through plenty of places with better beverages if this is not your style.

## Common Phrases

To make things easier on the foreigner, below is a quick guide to Australian terms that are in high circulation of most vocabularies. Contrary to what you might be expecting, this is actually not a joke page. You will see and hear most of these words often if you spend any length of time with other Australians.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Arvo             | Afternoon  |
| Bin              | Trash can  |
| Boardies         | Board shorts   |
| Bogan            | Australia's VB-drinking, singlet-wearing, rugby-watching, ocker-speaking version of a redneck or chav. |
| Bottle-o         | Bottle shop, Liquor store  |
| G'day            | Legitimate friendly greeting for "hello".  |
| "Had a gut full" | "Had enough"   |
| Heaps            | A lot of, loads.   |
| "I reckon"       | "I completely agree"   |
| Keen             | Excited, eager.  |
| Maccas           | McDonald's   |
| Middie           | A smaller (330mL) glass that beer is poured in on request.   |
| "No worries"     | "Not a problem", "It's all good", "you're welcome", depending on context                               |
| Ocker            | A thick, seemingly exaggerated Australian accent   |
| Pokies           | Slot machines  |
| Roadie           | A drink for the road/trip/journey.   |
| Schooner         | The 425mL glass most beers are served in   |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Servo    | Service station, gas station.  |
| Shout    | To buy a round of drinks   |
| Slab     | A case of 24 beers, usually cans.  |
| Smoko    | Morning or afternoon break from work, whether you smoke or not.                    |
| Spewin'  | Disappointed   |
| Sunnies  | Australian for shades/sunglasses   |
| Stubby   | A can, or short bottle of beer   |
| Swimmers | Bathing suit   |
| Thongs   | The common flip-flop.  |
| Toilet   | A perfectly acceptable word to use when asking for a location to do your business. |
| Uni      | University or college.   |



## Chapter 2 – Introduction to Sydney

Despite the requirement to battle with throngs of fellow tourists, you would be kidding yourself if someone want to visit Sydney without wanting to see such icons as the Sydney Opera House/Harbour Bridge and Bondi Beach. This section will give brief overviews of each, how best to get there and check the box to be able to move on to more serendipitous attractions.

### Sydney Harbour Bridge

To Australians, the Harbour Bridge is iconic Sydney. The best and most accessible view is from the Sydney Opera House or better yet, from the back of a ferry. Walking across the bridge itself is not as silly as it sounds. Catch a train to Milsons Point Station (North Shore Line), explore the other side of the Bridge and make the trek back across. But if you're happy to admire the bridge from a distance, walk north up George or Pitt street until you can walk no more. You'll see it.



### Sydney Opera House.

Around the corner from Circular Quay is the Opera House, which, let's be honest, is one of the main reasons you came to Sydney. If you are lucky, you have

checked the website and are seeing a show or concert there tonight in the incredible concert hall.

### **Botanical Gardens.**

If you were to continue walking past the Sydney Opera House you will see the city greys fade into greens as the concrete jungle becomes an actual jungle. Or at least, a large grassy area with scattered trees and gardens. If you are feeling abnormally energetic walk the entire way through the park, past the Tropical Centre and Fernery, over the M1 and exit through Mrs Macquarie's Road to St Mary's Cathedral, Hyde Park and eventually Sydney's Anzac Memorial. It's about a 2 km walk. It's pretty easy to find if you just keep walking south.

### **Sydney Tower Eye.**

While the Sydney Tower is a major landmark of Sydney I actually do not recommend paying the exorbitant \$26 entry fee just to see the view from the observation deck. If money is no object then by all means, but you are looking for value go up the Shangri La Hotel to the bar on the 36<sup>th</sup> floor for a similar view without the price tag. Well, admittedly the drinks are pricey, but at least you are getting a drink with your view.



### **George and Pitt Streets.**

This is where all the action happens. Businesses, bars and cafes line George St while Pitt St turns into a pedestrian mall full of the shops we know and love. You will most likely walk these a number of times while exploring the city on foot. Some of the best buskers in the city can be found along Pitt but you'll want to avoid if you get claustrophobic in large crowds, as this is the mother of them all.

### **Queen Victoria Building (QVB).**

A very ornate building from the outside and an upmarket mall on the inside. If you exit Town Hall Station in a particular way you will walk through the QVB. But escaping the labyrinth that is Town Hall is a challenge for even the seasoned commuter. If you have taken out a loan



there are plenty of places to drop cash. The Tea Palace is perfect for the tea lover and also boasts front row seat to an enormous clock celebrating Sydney's History.

### **Darling Harbour**

On a hot day Darling Harbour will very much make you feel on vacation. Busy restaurants will complement the many ambling tourists as they wander around Cockle Bay. The quantity of restaurants is astounding, especially if you keep walking south towards the Entertainment Centre, so you are sure to find something that tickles your fancy.

Darling Harbour is also host to weekly fireworks every Saturday at 9pm. Get there early with an ice-cream to get a good seat on the southern end for the best views.

Slightly underrated is the Chinese Garden of Friendship, a bicentenary gift from China. A tranquil escape from the hustle and hassle of city life offers shady trees to relax around as well as a tea room. See Chapter 4 for more information.

### **Manly.**

If you love ferries, a strip mall with tourist shops and classic Australian beach, you will love Manly. An institution of the Manly mall is the souvenir shop yelling at you that they are in the final days of a closing down sale – and have been since the mid-2000s. Misleading marketing aside, you never do know what you'll find in there.

Catch a ferry to Manly from Circular Quay, walk through the mall to the beach and hang a right. Keep walking for about 15 minutes to Shelley Beach, a very pretty, quiet beach that is seldom visited by tourists with time constraints. Have a drink and a Burger at 4 Pines Brewing before heading back to the mainland.





## **Bondi Beach**

If you've seen sweeping shots of Sydney during an after school special then you've seen Bondi Beach from the air. While it is definitely worth your time, so too is the Bondi to Coogee walk that begins to the South of the beach. Find the path and follow the runners.

Catch the Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra train line from Central to Bondi Junction and change to bus 380, 389, or 333 to Bondi Beach. Get off where everyone else gets off. More information on Bondi and surrounds in chapter 6.

## **Taronga Zoo and Sea Life Sydney Aquarium**

I put these two attractions in the same box because they offer similar things (looking at animals) and my comments towards them are also similar. The Zoo and Aquarium are incredible examples of what they are, and do have a very extensive showing of animals. However, Sydney has so much more to offer than looking at animals from other countries. Not to mention that it will make for a very expensive day: the Zoo is \$23/46 for a child/adult and the Aquarium is \$28/40 (or \$20/28 online). Unless you're an animal fiend, skip these attractions in favour of experiencing the real Sydney.

## Chapter 3 – Sleeping in Sydney

There are many options for sleeping in Sydney and the best way to get the most out of your trip is to base yourself in the CBD. When you use tools like Booking.com or Hostelworld.com, this won't be difficult. The reason being it is central, and will serve as a good base for exploring the neighbourhoods that will be discussed in detail in this book. Ideally, a hotel near a train station would be perfect because buses in Sydney can be difficult and time consuming, and it is likely that one leg of your day will require train travel.

The exception to staying in the CBD is of course the party animals who wish to paint Kings Cross every shade of red. For the uninitiated, Kings Cross is infamous for its density of night clubs and is the place to be for anyone who feels at home with strobe lights in the air, sound waves kick-starting your heart, a pint glass in one hand, and a dance partner in the other. There are no shortage of hostels around Kings Cross so if this sounds like heaven to you finding a hostel in this area will be the most convenient. And even if you can bring yourself to crawl out of the top bunk, Kings Cross Station connects directly with the City Circle and Bondi on the same line so you are fairly well placed in that respect as well.

### **Maze Backpackers Sydney**

One of the cheapest backpackers in Sydney and as the name suggests, feels like a maze the first time you explore your way through to your bed in a 4, 6 or 8 bed dorm. The rooms are very basic – literally just bunks in a room with a bin – yet equally adequate. The bathrooms never look busy, despite the hostel always having a packed feel. Maze very much presents itself as a party hostel is well-located for nightclubs in the city. An additional bonus are the security guards stopping non-patrons from getting in late at night. It also has an enormous industrial size kitchen and being around the Corner from Coles World Square, if you wish to cook your own dinner or breakfast it is an easy option.

### **790 on George**

As you exit Central Station onto Eddy Avenue walk left towards George Street for 5 minutes and you're there. Very convenient for trains, buses and the city in general. Even better, it makes Surry Hills and Darlinghurst a very walkable distance away. The rooms are not flashy by any means but a major draw card is

the huge lockers with universal power point for each bed. There is also a common room with large television and comfortable couches as well as a kitchen to cook your own food if you so desire.

### **Eva's Backpackers, Kings Cross**

Quite a small backpackers in the heart of Kings Cross, Eva's will certainly do the job if you wish to base yourself in this area of Sydney. Not the best place if you are hoping for a quiet night's sleep, but is a great place for meeting other travellers in the common room or kitchen.

### **Castlereagh Boutique Hotel**

The Castlereagh is one of the cheapest full service hotels in the city. Established in an old Masonic building, it is well located around the corner from Town Hall Station – just a 5 minute walk. For a definite wow factor you must at least once eat breakfast in the incredible dining hall. Framings in the corridors and the rooms paint a picture of Colonial Sydney with images and sketches of a Sydney that has been long forgotten. One drawback is that although the beds are very comfortable and rooms are well decorated, they are definitely on the smaller side. But if you don't mind being very close to your partner and constantly walking around the bed you will find it suits your needs perfectly.

### **Meriton Apartments**

One of Sydney's premier hotels, Meriton will not disappoint if you are willing to drop some serious cashola. You are greeted by a smiling clerk in a sparse lobby before being led up to your spacious and excessively comfortable room. If possible, ask for a higher room for some pretty impressive views of Sydney.



## Chapter 4 – Sydney CBD

### Mojo Record Bar

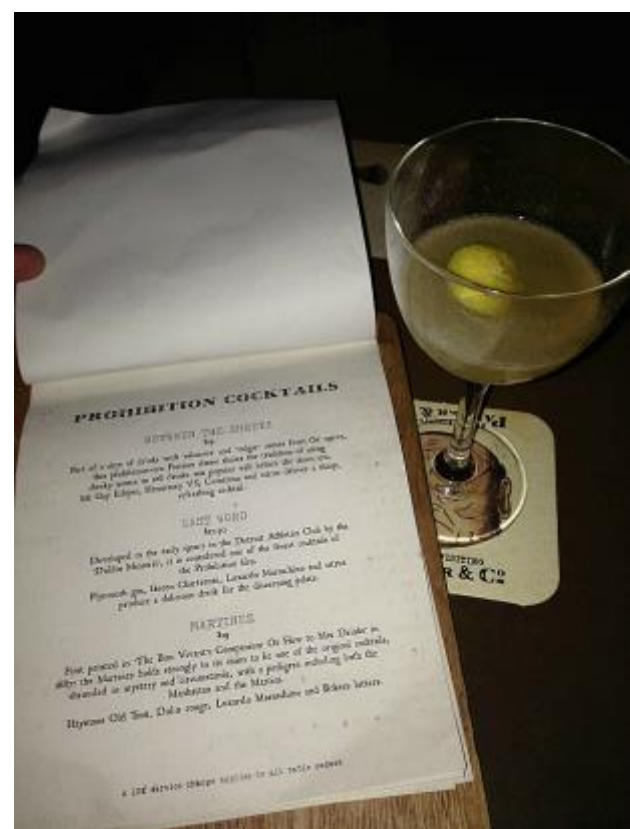
Sometimes finding a unique bar in a new city can be like finding a needle in a haystack. Give Mojo's record bar a spin for a different take on your drinking experience as you browse for records while you sip and chat. In fact, the record store is at the front. You'll be amazed at how instantly indie you'll feel just by browsing records you probably won't buy with a drink in your hand. *73 York St, Sydney. 4pm-12 midnight Mon-Sat.*

### Palmer and Co.

Palmer and Co is not well signposted and not well known unless you have been there before. You will not stumble across Palmer and Co unless you generally make a habit of walking down suspicious alleys. This conveniently ties in with its overwhelming theme of a Prohibition era cocktail bar. Appropriately dressed waitresses, and displays loaded with 1920s paraphernalia gives this bar an authentic feel. The cocktails offered are also recipes that would have been served in bars through Prohibition. Unfortunately, the price tag has evolved significantly since those days. Unearth Palmer and Co down Abercrombie Lane, between Bond and Bridge, off George and Pitt Streets.

### Opera Bar

Opera Bar is the very opposite of a place that is hidden, or locals only knowledge, however it is most certainly unique. Nestled in its own walkway along the water below the Opera House, the bar offers unparalleled views of the Harbour Bridge you are likely to see with a drink in your hand. The drink offerings are reasonably pricey and not much to write home about, but you will be too busy taking in the view to worry about such trivialities.



**Baxter Inn**

Another truly hidden bar, Baxter Inn can be found underground off Clarence Street, serving a vast selection of whiskey that even Ron Burgundy would be impressed by. Despite its secluded nature it is very popular, to the extent that a queue will occasionally form. The bar does an incredible job of creating a real 1920s speakeasy style bar, complete with old timber furnishings and music to match. *Basement, 152 Clarence St, Sydney. 4pm-1am, Mon-Sun.*

**Frankie's Pizza**

For years, Australia has been crying out for a pizza place offering pizza by the slice worthy of the standard New York produces. Frankie's takes the style of Italian pizza, mixes with the quality of New York pizza, and adds a quirky, mum and dad Italian restaurant with just the right amount of irony. The fun doesn't stop here though. The restaurant doubles as a bar open until 4am where you can enjoy a boutique beer while playing 20 cent pinball under the low hum of the neon Miller Lite and PBR signs. A mish-mash of concepts that have pulled together seamlessly to form an eclectic dinner and late night venue. *50 Hunter St Sydney. 12 midday-3am Mon-Fri, 4pm-3am Sat, 4pm-3am Sun.*

**The Escape Hunt Experience**

A puzzling trend in the entertainment sphere is to be locked in a themed room for around an hour without knowing the way out. Lateral thinkers and Sherlock fans alike will relish in the challenge provided by The Escape Hunt in searching for a series of clues that will literally unlock your path to freedom. (Unless of course you run out of time). At around \$40 a pop though this is no ordinary activity, but I assure you, (especially if successful) this will be much more memorable than a game of bowling or, dare I say it, an afternoon at the aquarium. *Level 4, 393 George Street, Sydney. 10am-10pm every day.*

**Paddy's Market**

I'll be honest. Paddy's Market is a bit of a let-down. If you are in to cheap toys made in China, leather goods and tacky souvenirs though, you are in luck, because that is Paddy's specialty. But it's not all bad, there is a fresh fruit section and plenty of delicious nuts to snack on so if you happen to be in the

Darling Harbour/Chinatown area it is worth a walk-through en route to your next destination, but I wouldn't be going out of my way to visit.

### **Cockatoo Island**

For years it has been shrouded in mystery, but is now open for the public to learn of its history. Cockatoo Island has been many things including a fishing base, prison, shipyard and now a UNESCO heritage site. You can arrive by ferry, kayak or arm power and have the option to buy food on the island or bring a picnic. There is also a variety of sleeping options for those wishing to put a real unique spin on their Sydney adventure ranging from camping to cabins.

### **Darling Harbour**

Darling Harbour encompasses a massive stretch of real estate from King St Wharf where you'll find the Sydney Aquarium, down to the Sydney Entertainment Centre. Between the two are a plethora of restaurants of varying prices and styles. You could easily spend half a day wandering around the bay, or in Harbourside Shopping Centre on the western side. Beware though, this is a highly frequented area for tourists and locals alike so on a good day the crowds will be thick and the prices generally reflect this.

### **The Star**

Although The Star is another option not necessarily 'off the beaten track', it does offer some serious fun, especially if you have a gambling problem. While not as glamorous as the casinos of Las Vegas or Monte Carlo, as oftentimes not as good odds either, it will deliver exactly what it promises: tables to play cards, roll dice, spin wheels, drink drinks and party like its 2014.

### **The Chinese Garden of Friendship**

The Chinese Garden of Friendship is an absolutely fascinating piece of real estate. Dumped right in the heart of this enormous city is this tranquil oasis with a lake, small waterfalls, a plethora of plants and is home to many types of animals such as colourful fish, water dragons, birds, and keep your eye out for one of the local turtles. It exceptionally pretty and provides a real escape from city life. *South end of Darling Harbour. 9:30am-5pm every day.*

## Chapter 5 – The Rocks

### Harbour Bridge Pylon Lookout (1)

The view from the peak of the Sydney Harbour Bridge is arguably the best view in the city. But unless you are made of money (specifically, between \$148 and \$348 depending time day, week and year), skip the Bridge Climb experience and opt for the much more affordable pylon lookout. You will still be treated with incredible and unique views of Sydney for a mere \$13. *42 Cumberland St, The Rocks. 10am-5pm every day.*

### Lord Nelson Brewery and Hotel (2)

One of Sydney City's most northern pubs, the Lord Nelson is also Sydney's longest licensed hotel, dating back to 1841. Fittingly, the décor reflects that of an old London pub with stools at the bar, low hanging glasses inside the original stone building. As well as beers brewed onsite, the pub food on offer ranges from crab spaghettoni to, burgers and curry – something for everyone. Upstairs offers a more upscale restaurant with prices in the 'thirties' range. An excellent experience for anyone wishing to step back in time to old England. *19 Kent St, The Rocks. 11am-11pm Mon-Sat, 12 midday-10pm Sunday.*

### Shangri-La Hotel (3)

The Shangri-La is a grand hotel in The Rocks with plenty of luxury suites and bellman to take your money. On the 36<sup>th</sup> floor however, is a bar with an exceptional view. The bar itself is nothing notable, however, throw into the mix stunning views of the city and harbour while drinking fancy cocktails or expensive wines and you've got yourself an excellent reason to skip the Sydney Tower while also having a drink. The bar is free entry, but obviously it would be weird if you just did a lap of the windows taking in the view. Buy a drink.

If money is no object definitely look into this hotel as a possible launch pad for your adventures in Sydneytown. *176 Cumberland St, Sydney. 5pm-12 midnight Mon-Thu, 5pm-1am Fri-Sat, 5pm-11pm Sunday.*

### The Rocks Markets (4)

Every Saturday and Sunday dozens of stalls open up through Playfair Street and the northern end of George St of the Rocks, selling everything from hand-made

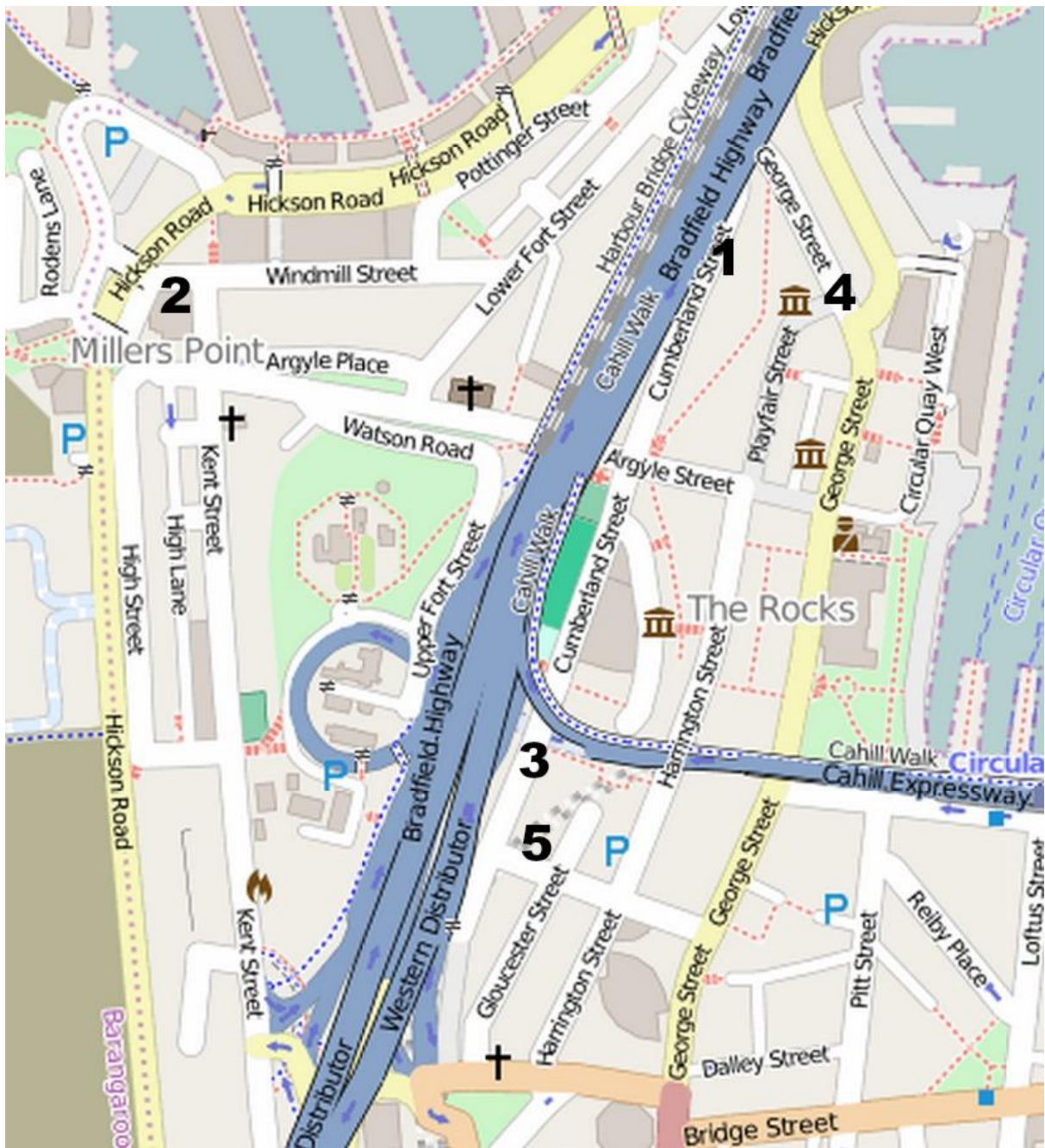
cupcakes to flowers, vintage clothes, ice-cream and an ever changing assortment of decorations and other wares you might never use. The Rocks itself is teeming with cafes, restaurants and bars so combining the markets with an afternoon drink or morning coffee is a no-brainer.

### Harts Pub

Harts Pub is a local Sydney favourite because it combines the trifecta of good pubbery: great food, great drinks, and a unique atmosphere. The atmosphere is crafted with a strong “early settlers” vibe, with timber furnishings, old barrels as tables and amusing, if a little inspiring beer quotes printed on every wall. This vibe is reinforced with 6 permanent taps from Rocks Brewing Co, named after personalities of our early settlers such as ‘The Governor’, ‘The Butcher’ and ‘The Convict’. The other 8 taps rotate from other craft beers from Australia. Although the food is a more modern expression that the outfit might suggest, the gourmet burgers are well above the average pub grub you’ll find at most places. *Corner of Gloucester and Essex Street. Midday-midnight Sun-Wed, Midday-1am, Thu-Sat.*







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## Chapter 6 – Newtown

What do you think of when you hear *Sydney*? Opera House? Big Harbour? TV specials sponsored by Qantas? What you probably don't think of is grungy, urban, hipster cafes, bookshops and clothes stores. May I introduce to you Newtown. The reason you probably don't know this part of Sydney is because, when visiting a new city, no one ever goes anywhere based on one measly paragraph in the guidebook (I've seen it!). It is however, a favourite suburb of the locals and is well worth an afternoon even if you are only in Sydney for a few days.

A short 10 minute bus ride south of the city makes the ease of access to enjoyment ratio perfect. Just find a bus stop and jump on the 422, 423, 426 or 428. If you are struggling to find a ticket seller nearby however (CBD buses are prepaid only), just find a train station and go a handful of stops south-west on the Inner West or Bankstown lines to Newtown Station.



### Claire's Crepes (1)

The walls are a collage of old wooden doors and hanging Nutella jars are used as lampshades. Your eyes will wander almost immediately to the lines on the menu that displays *Nutella hot chocolate* and before you know it the words "I'll have a large please" have already spilled from your mouth. Moments later the most glorious of milk-based drinks will be delivered to your table sporting more Nutella than you thought possible in the bottom of the mug, topped up with frothed milk, and extra Nutella smeared around the rim.

The decision of which Crepe to order, is however much more difficult. With so many excellent options including various combinations of feta cheese, mozzarella, ham, oregano, spinach and of course, Nutella. Whatever you order you won't be disappointed. *457a King St, Newtown. 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat-Sun.*



### Repressed Records (2)

Every good hipster neighbourhood needs a good record store and Newtown is no exception. They have everything from latest releases to \$2 and \$5 bargain bins, and also sell a small selection of t-shirts and CDs. *412 King St Newtown.*

### Elizabeth's Bookshop (3)

Despite technically being a small chain of bookstores (not that they'll ever admit it), Elizabeth's Bookshop gives a warm and inviting feel as the store is charmingly crowded with books, both old and new. And even though there are 7 stores across Australia, it still feels like your local second-hand bookstore. If a genre exists, they sell it here. Everything from fantasy to erotic to comic books is available. And I'm sure you could find one that encompasses all three if you look hard enough (pun intended). Stop by to experience Elizabeth's 'blind date with a book' concept, where a section of books are all wrapped, and on the

wrapping is a few key details about the story to encourage you to not judge a book by a cover. *257 King St, Newtown. 9am-late.*

### **Gould's Book Arcade**

If Elizabeth's is too orderly or small for you (or you just find yourself at the other end of King Street), you are sure to get lost in Gould's Book Arcade and guaranteed to find something tolerable to read in the process. Even if you don't, this Newtown institution is an experience in itself to wander the multiple levels and the labyrinth of aisles of books that seem on the brink of covering you in an avalanche of beautiful smelling pages. (It's not just me that thinks that right?). *32 King St, Newtown. 10am-10pm.*

### **Newtown Community Markets (4)**

If you visit Newtown on a Saturday between 10 and 4, across from Newtown Train station will be a number of markets setup ready for your perusal. The usual market fare is generally available including vintage clothes, candles and second hand books. *1 Bedford Street, Newtown.*

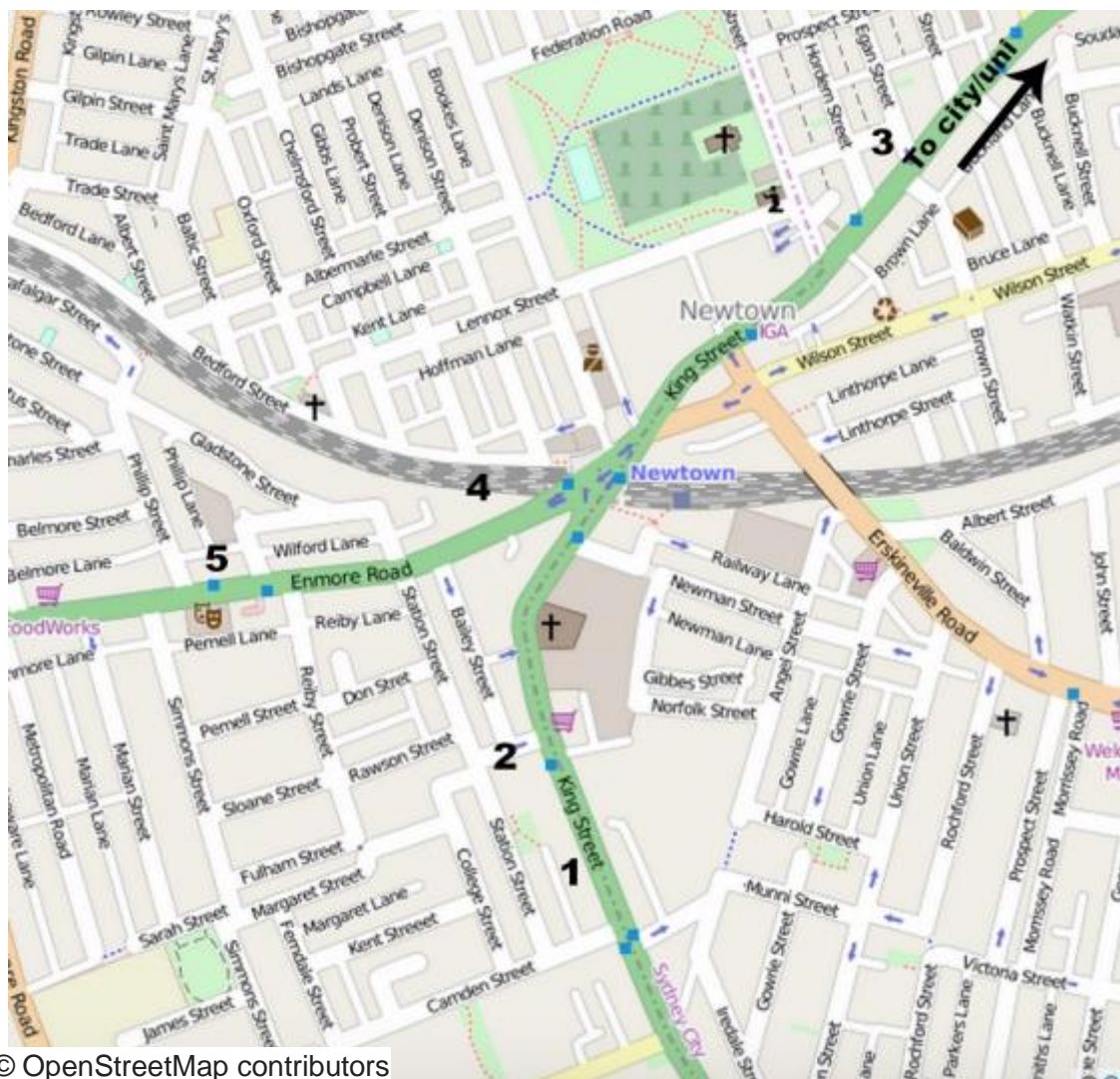
### **Young Henry's Brewery (5)**

Young Henry's is less of a bar and more of a 'tasting room', and in fact this is what they call it. Buy a pint or a sampling paddle to help you decide which one is your favourite. The bar is very bare bones with bare brick walls and industrial looking stools and tables, but not in the vintage way you might expect from a young, hip place in Newtown. It is definitely worth coming for a pint just to sit at the bar in front of the enormous conical brewing fermenters that take centre stage. *Units D & E, 76 Wilford Street, Newtown. 10am-7 Mon-Sat, 12 midday-7pm Sun.*



## University of Sydney

Not technically Newtown, but pretty close is Australia's oldest (and arguably most picturesque) university. From Newtown, continue walking down the hill (towards the city), your best point of entrance is from Carillon Avenue, where you'll walk down Western Avenue past beautiful residential colleges, past a couple of sports fields before turning right onto Manning Road. This will bring you to the quadrangle, which you can walk through. From there walk back down the main university strip to City Road. You can catch a bus from City road back to the city.



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## Chapter 7 – Alexandria

While Newtown might be a local Sydney institution, Alexandria is the new kid on the block and is currently being transformed from an industrial wasteland to a trendy paradise, burgeoning with cool cafes to wake up to and relaxed bars to kick back in of an evening. With all this said though, Alexandria probably shouldn't be your first priority if time is somewhat limited. While it does boast some of Sydney's best up and coming café's, prioritise Newtown and/or Surry Hills before making the foray into Alexandria. But of course, if it wasn't worth visiting at all, it would not have been made mention in this guide book. The suburb itself is most certainly off the beaten track and while places like The Grounds of Alexandria might be very busy, you'll be hard pressed to find tourists this deep into Sydney-country.

### **The Grounds of Alexandria (1)**

The Grounds was one of the first places to stake their claim on the map of Alexandria and is still one of the most popular in the area and it is easy to see why. Coffee is their prime passion, as not only do they roast their own beans, they have a dedicated 'Research Facility' that they use to test different roasting techniques of different types of beans to find the best recipe for what they then sell. Who knew so much science went into coffee! There is plenty of seating both inside and in the rather large garden and caters well to both people dining in or taking away with a dedicated coffee station for each.

Interestingly, what also makes The Grounds really unique is a handful of farm animals that call this mega-café home. They also grow their own fresh produce adjacent to the café garden, which visitors are welcome to peruse and ask questions of the full time horticulturist. An absolute gem of a venue with so much more on offer than excellent coffee and food. It demands a visit if you are in the neighbourhood. Catch the Bankstown/Airport train line from the city to Green Square then walk south down Bourke Rd to Huntley St. *7am - 12 midnight Mon-Fri, 7:30am-12 midnight Sat-Sun.*

### **The Potting Shed (2)**

In case you thought the Grounds of Alexandria didn't offer you enough (unlikely!), you can now walk around the corner to their similarly themed, yet still very unique garden restaurant and bar. You'll feel like you've actually been

invited to a garden party, and the furniture reflects this as much as the hanging pots and epic greenery. Booking ahead is recommended as it can be quite busy. *11:30am-late.*

### **Salt Meats Cheese (3)**

Did you know salt comes in an extraordinary array of flavours beyond “sea salt”? If, like me you didn’t, then take an adventurous stroll through Salt Meats Cheese, a large gourmet Italian grocery store on steroids. The deceptively descriptive name tells you of their flagship goods, that being ridiculous styles of delicious salt which *must* be tried, deli style cured Italian meats and a delectable selection of cheeses. While this is the focus, it is also just the beginning of what is on offer here. It is conveniently located on Bourke Road, around the corner from The Potting Shed. *41 Bourke Road, Alexandria. 9am-6pm every day.*

### **The Lord Raglan**

In Sydney, when a bar owner finds a formula that works we often see them open a sister store. This was true for Shady Pines/Baxter Inn and Grandma’s/The Wild Rover, and now it is also true for Harts Pub and the Lord Raglan. Harts Pub has been a mecca for beer elitists since 2009 and the owners (Rocks Brewing Co) have recently opened their new pub a few kilometres away from the reasonably new Rocks Brewing Co brewery – also in Alexandria.

The pub is more modern than its rustic counterpart in the Rocks, sporting colourful, cartoony murals on the walls, but some parts do feel a little unfinished with the ‘peeling paint’ and concrete floors not quite fitting in with the style. If you can ignore this (you’d be hard pressed to fault the place purely on that), the American-inspired menu will take you on a journey to the south with spicy BBQ wings and the north with a Philly cheese steak and crab cakes. Washed down with a selection of craft beers from their rotating tap list you’re bound for a delicious afternoon. *12 Henderson Road Alexandria. Midday-midnight Mon-Sat, midday-10pm Sunday.*

### **In2Ski**

Sick of mountain lift queues? The cold? Spending 30 minutes to get to the mountain peak just to spend 10 coming down? Have a hankering for snowboarding and it’s the middle of the Australian summer? Well I’ve got news

for you...this is entirely possible thanks to the new addition to the Inner West, In2Ski. Founded by a 5 time world skiing champion, the focus seems to be on giving lessons and experience to people leading up to the embarrassingly short Australian snow season. But they certainly also accommodate for the more experienced as each "slope" can have varying speeds and inclines for you to practice you snow plough or parallels. The novelty does come at a price though and that price is \$75 per adult for an hour, but if you can squeeze it into your budget it will certainly be an experience even the most casual skier will talk about for years. *75 O'Riordan Street, Alexandria. 12 midday-9pm Tue-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat, 9am-4:30pm Sun.*



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## Chapter 8 – Eastern Suburbs

The residential area of the Eastern suburbs is reserved predominately for Sydney's elite. Passing a Lamborghini dropping kids off at school is fairly commonplace. Luckily for the rest of us, they do not hold the monopoly on the beaches and the views. Since the 'Eastern Suburbs' is largely residential this section will stretch from the beaches on the inside-south of Sydney Harbour, around the coast along to Coogee.

### **Shark Beach (1)**

Seldom visited by tourists Shark Beach is the perfect beach to escape the hordes that Bondi shamelessly attracts. Located in Vaucluse opposite Nielsen Park, you will be greeted with calm Harbour waters protected by a net to keep all those pesky sharks at bay. The tranquil beach offers families wave-less water as an escape from city life, but those wishing to get those legs moving, there are rocks to climb on at either end of the beach.

As you will well know by now, Sydney is not well served by public transport unless you wish to only stay between Circular Quay and Central Station. This means that Shark Beach is not the easiest to get to. Your best bet is to catch the Eastern Suburbs/Illawarra train line from the city, disembark at Edgecliff and get the 325 bus towards Watsons Bay.

### **Watson's Bay (2)**

For a day out that will combine amazing views of the bridge with open ocean, cliffs and a serene beach, catch a ferry out to Watson's Bay. Ferries leave from Circular Quay about every 40 minutes and only takes about 20 minutes. But it's a quick 20 minutes because you will be busy taking in the wonderful 'coastline' of Sydney Harbour from the water. You'll disembark the ferry at a small, calm beach: a gorgeous little spot for a swim, paddle or sunbake, assuming you have selected your day intelligently. Just beyond the beach is a large park where there are always plenty of people having a picnic or just enjoying the serenity.



For those a little more adventurous (and I only mean a *tiny* bit more adventurous), walk about 3 minutes past the park, across the road and up the steps and you'll come to what they call The Gap: a large bluff that overlooks the Pacific Ocean, Sydney's favourite place to commit suicide. It's such a problem they have installed phones with a direct line to Lifeline to dissuade would-be jumpers. If you are not here to kill yourself carry on and choose your own adventure – left or right. Choose right and you can follow the path along the cliff, through gardens past a lighthouse all the way to Clarke Reserve. This is about 2 km each way. However, if time and/or energy is limited and you only want to do one of these, I would choose left and walk out to Hornby Lighthouse, situated at the southern edge of the entrance to Sydney Harbour. If you time it right and lady luck is on your side you may even see a ship coming in. Follow the coast all the way around until you reach the ferry wharf. Finish your adventure at Doyle's Fisherman's Wharf for some Fish n Chips or Chowder and relax with a well-earned beer while you await your raft to take you back to the big smoke.

### **Bondi Beach (3)**

Bondi Beach is an icon of Sydney, and a visit to Australia's most famous beach is a must. However, every other visitor is also having this same bright idea and will be meeting you there. The overcrowded beach is only half of it though: prepare to queue for the bus from Bondi Junction to the beach and when returning. To minimise this, arrive as early as you can and leave as early as you can so you can get in a few hours of rays while people are still arriving.

From the city, get the Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra line train to Bondi Junction – a large shopping mall. Bondi Junction is only half way there. You will need to then catch the 333 bus to Bondi Beach – it will be obvious as it will be the bus with the longest queue. Alternatively, you can catch the 333 bus direct from Museum Station, though somehow, this actually takes longer.

### **Bondi to Coogee Walk or walk north**

The above plan however may not be as feasible if you plan to walk to Coogee. The walk is by no means a secret as it is very popular with tourists and locals alike (many of whom like to run it). However it is quite a spectacular, yet hilly walk that weaves around headlands, and on a clear day you'll wonder why anyone would want to be anywhere else. If time or energy is short, walking all the way to Coogee is not necessary, you could finish at a closer beach and catch a bus back to the city or just walk back to Bondi.

### **Out of the Blue**

The *takeaway food shop* in general is an Australian institution and has been providing Australians with a standardised array of burgers, chips and battered seafood for years, no matter where you are in the country. No trip down under is complete without waiting in the heat and eating on the beach or grass. If you find yourself hungry during the Bondi to Coogee walk, take the opportunity to visit a classic example of a takeaway food shop in Clovelly via Out of the Blue.

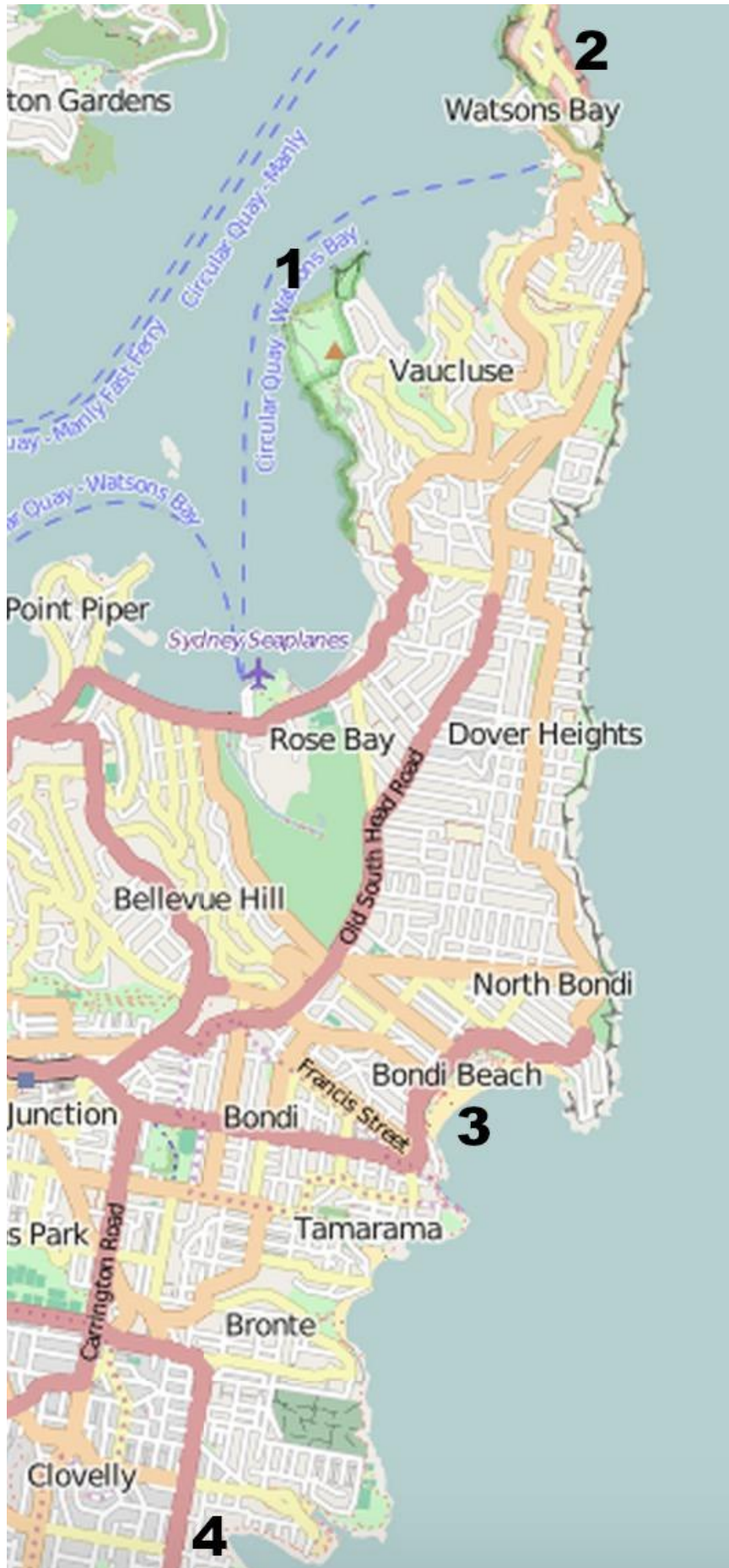


Be warned though, it is a 10-15 minute walk from Clovelly beach and after waiting in line and likely stuffing yourself full of grease and other such health foods you may just not get back on the track. *2/272 Clovelly Road, Clovelly. 11:30am-8:30pm Wed-Thu, 11:30am-9pm Fri-Sat, 11:30am-8:30pm Sun.*

### **Gordon's Bay (4)**

Another Alternative beach experience is Gordon's Bay. However, it is less a beach, and more large rocks to sit on around the water. A bay (and a hill) around from Clovelly Beach, and about a half hour walk around from Bondi, you will be greeted by old dinghy boats pulled up on the shore and plenty of sunbathers on the rocks (is that some type of drink?). Walk around to the right and pick your favourite spot on the rocks by the water. Bring a towel though because they can get hot.





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## Chapter 9 – Surry Hills

### Reuben Hills Coffee Roastery (1)

As you enter this nondescript backstreet café you wonder how anyone knows about this place. But as you drink your coffee – the beans of which were roasted upstairs – and take in the somewhat noisy atmosphere you begin to think of all the people you know would enjoy the eclectic, faux industrial style that Reuben Hills has made their own. If you are not into coffee (or even if you are) you simply must have a shake. The Apple and Rhubarb shake tastes exactly like an apple and rhubarb pie in liquid form. Delicious! *61 Albion St, Surry Hills. 7am-4pm every day.*

### Local Tap House (2)

If you are into craft beer this should actually be your first stop in Sydney- before the Opera House. Located a stone's throw from the Entertainment Quarter (sports grounds, concert halls etc.) the Tap House has an ever-rotating tap-list of rare and exquisite local and international craft beers. Try and spot some stars from the rooftop bar while discerning the malt profile of a highly hopped American IPA or the sweetness of a Belgian strong ale. *122 Flinders St, Darlinghurst. Midday-midnight Mon-Wed, midday-1am Thu-Sat. Midday-11pm Sun.*

### Single Origin Roasters (3)

Touted as one of the best places in the area for coffee, at the western edge of Surry Hills on an unassuming corner on Reservoir St, Single Origin does exactly what its name says: they serve single origin coffee. Coffee connoisseurs will jump for joy that they roast their own 'house' blend as well as an alternate 'origin of the week' offering, both of which can be served in any way that coffee can possibly be served. Inside seating is limited though so in winter it may be chilly at times and you may just opt for a roadie. *60 Reservoir Street, Surry Hills. 6:30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 7:30am-3pm Sat.*

**Dove and Olive (4)**

For some, the Dove and Olive's main draw card is a dedicated craft beer pub with over 20 different boutique beers on offer. But even if craft beer is not your preference they also have a fantastic American-style menu boasting gourmet ribs, buffalo wings, and the divinely-inspired crumbed and fried bacon bites with jalapeno dipping sauce. Located on Devonshire St midway between Central and Moore Park. *156 Devonshire St, Surry Hills. 10am-12 midnight Mon-Fri, 11am-12 midnight Sat-Sun.*

**The Wild Rover (5)**

Following the trend of "unsignposted" bars, The Wild Rover hides behind an ordinary door on Clarence Street. Being east of Elizabeth Street, The Wild Rover is technically part of Surry Hills but it is just on the precipice. It is a very small bar and boasts a unique offering of cocktails. Even with a few staples missing you are sure to find something you like. *75 Campbell St, Surry Hills. 4pm-12 midnight Mon-Sat, 4pm-10pm sun.*

**Royal Albert Hotel (6)**

The royal Albert is just a short 5 minute walk from Central Station and in all honesty the only draw card is the great line-up of rotating tap beers on offer. The pub itself is your usual corner public house, complete with gaming machines and sports on the television. If you are sleeping in the vicinity of Central it's a cosy spot for a pint, but if you are confused by the phrase "late boil Citra hop addition" then the Royal Albert will be of little interest to you. *140 Commonwealth St, Surry Hills. 12 midday-12 midnight Mon-Sat.*

**Absinthe Salon (7)**

Perhaps the only bar in the city of its type, Absinthe salon is dedicated to and passionate about Absinthe, and drinking it properly. Never has a shot of Absinthe been lit on fire, nor required a chaser at Absinthe Salon, as they teach you the correct way to enjoy one of the many varieties of Absinthe. Hidden in plain view, the gothic interior is a striking contrast from the mundane corner building. You'll be creeped out, but it will be an experience you'll remember for a long time.

**Chur Burger (8)**

A block from the Royal Albert on Albion Street lies an inconspicuous burger restaurant on a corner with 'Chur' scrawled on the wall in paint. Inside you will find a delectable menu of burgers and other snacks with not a single item over \$10. The place is a favourite with locals, not just as the décor complies with the universal rustic and quirky vibe of Surry Hills, but the brioche-laden burgers will satisfy even the harshest burger critic. *48 Albion St, Surry Hills. 11:30am-5pm Mon, 11:30am-10pm Tue-Sat.*

**Bourke St Bakery (9)**

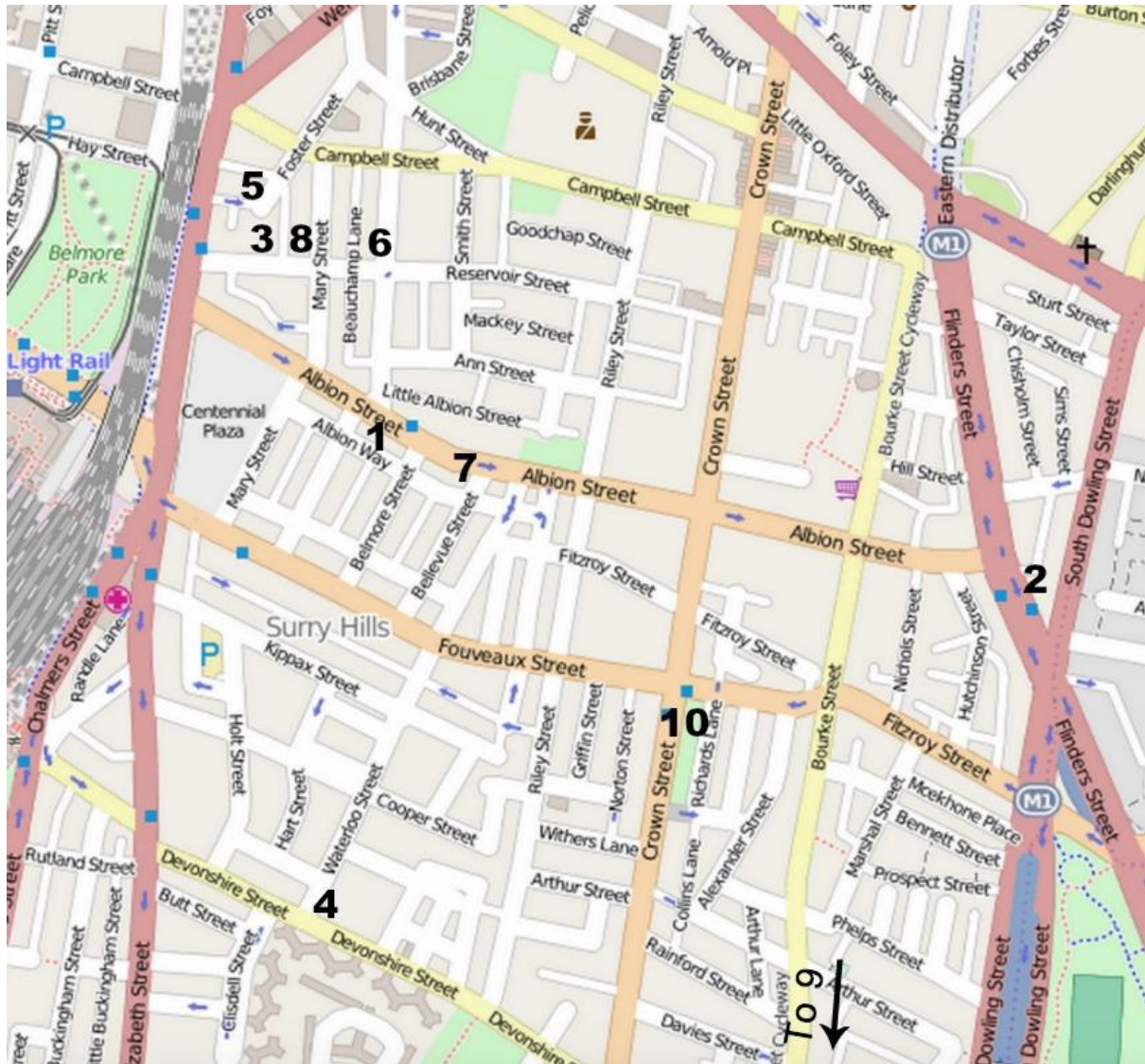
Located a little deeper in Surry Hills is bakery-cross-café Bourke St Bakery. Patrons have the option to sit outside while they enjoy traditional baked goods and coffee or for those just needing a loaf of bread or sourdough, takeaway options are available. *633 Bourke St, Surry Hills. 7am-6pm Mon-Fri. 7am-5pm Sat-Sun.*

Bourke Street Bakery have also opened another location in Alexandria.



## Surry Hills Markets

Every first Saturday of the month the courtyard adjacent to the Clock Hotel (on Crown St) fills with peddlers of trinkets, books, and vintage clothing. Being markets there will of course be the usual trash of used toys and old shoes, but the selection of clothes to shop for is high quality.



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## Chapter 10 – Darlinghurst and Kings Cross

### Shady Pines Saloon (1)

If you were to walk down Foley St (near the intersection of Crown and Oxford) between the hours of 4pm and midnight all you would see is a single security guard standing in an alley. You might think nothing of it, or you might go inside and find one of the best themed bars in Sydney. Decked out in American country and western paraphernalia, you can eat free peanuts and swig and array of incredible (and rather expensive) cocktails, wines or expensive beers in the company of mounted moose, elk, cow and carp. The Shady Pines character is an eclectic mix of old-country tunes that complete the picture perfectly. *4/256 Crown St, Darlinghurst. 4pm-12 midnight every day.*

### The Victoria Room (2)

For something a little more elegant, the Victoria Room will whisk you away to a time of the longest serving British Monarch. The menu may be intimidating for the uninitiated but those willing to open their wallet will be well rewarded with an exquisite dining experience. There are a range of menus to select from depending on your desired experience: dinner, banquet, cocktails/wines or high tea. The décor is a beautiful homage to the Victorian era and a perfect inclusion for a night with a touch of class. *235 Victoria St, Darlinghurst. 6pm-12 midnight Wed-Fri, 12 midday-2am Sat, 12 midday-12 midnight Sun.*

### Lucio Pizzeria (3)

Lucio Pizzeria is as close to traditional Italian pizza as you will find in Sydney. While some restaurants will boast about only using local ingredients, Lucio's big claim is his imported ingredients from Italy. Being Italian himself, I suppose Lucio is included. You will not find your beloved Meatlovers, BBQ chicken or even supreme at this shop, Lucio is all about the Margherita, the formaggi and of course, the Napolitana. *248 Palmer St, Darlinghurst. 6pm-10pm Wed-Mon.*

### Gelato Messina (4)

Messina will satisfy even the pickiest of sweet teeth. They have an incredible selection of gelatos and sorbets that you are sure to find one you enjoy. If you are after some dessert but not quite in the mood for gelato (or not keen to wait

in such a long queue), walk next door to their dessert bar to peruse their assortment of cakes and other desserts. *241 Victoria St, Darlinghurst. 12 midday-11pm Sun-Thu, 12 midday-11pm Fri-Sat.*

### **Kings Cross Razorhurst Tour**

In Sydney, Kings Cross often makes headlines for drunken violence and is infamous for drunken tomfoolery thanks to the high density of clubs, both adult-themed and otherwise. It polarizes the population by being a mecca for party-heads and often an embarrassment for the rest. However, what many don't know is that this was not always the case.

Darlinghurst has an even seedier past, involving prostitution, cocaine and gangs engaged in 'razor wars' (as jail time was a significant enough threat to deter most carrying firearms). Suffice it to say that one did not go outside around Darlinghurst in the 1920's and 30's. You can learn more about this fascinating part of Sydney's History with a walking tour of the neighbourhood by *Two Feet and a Heartbeat Walking Tours*. Book online at [www.twofeet.com.au](http://www.twofeet.com.au).

### **Love, Tilly Devine (5)**

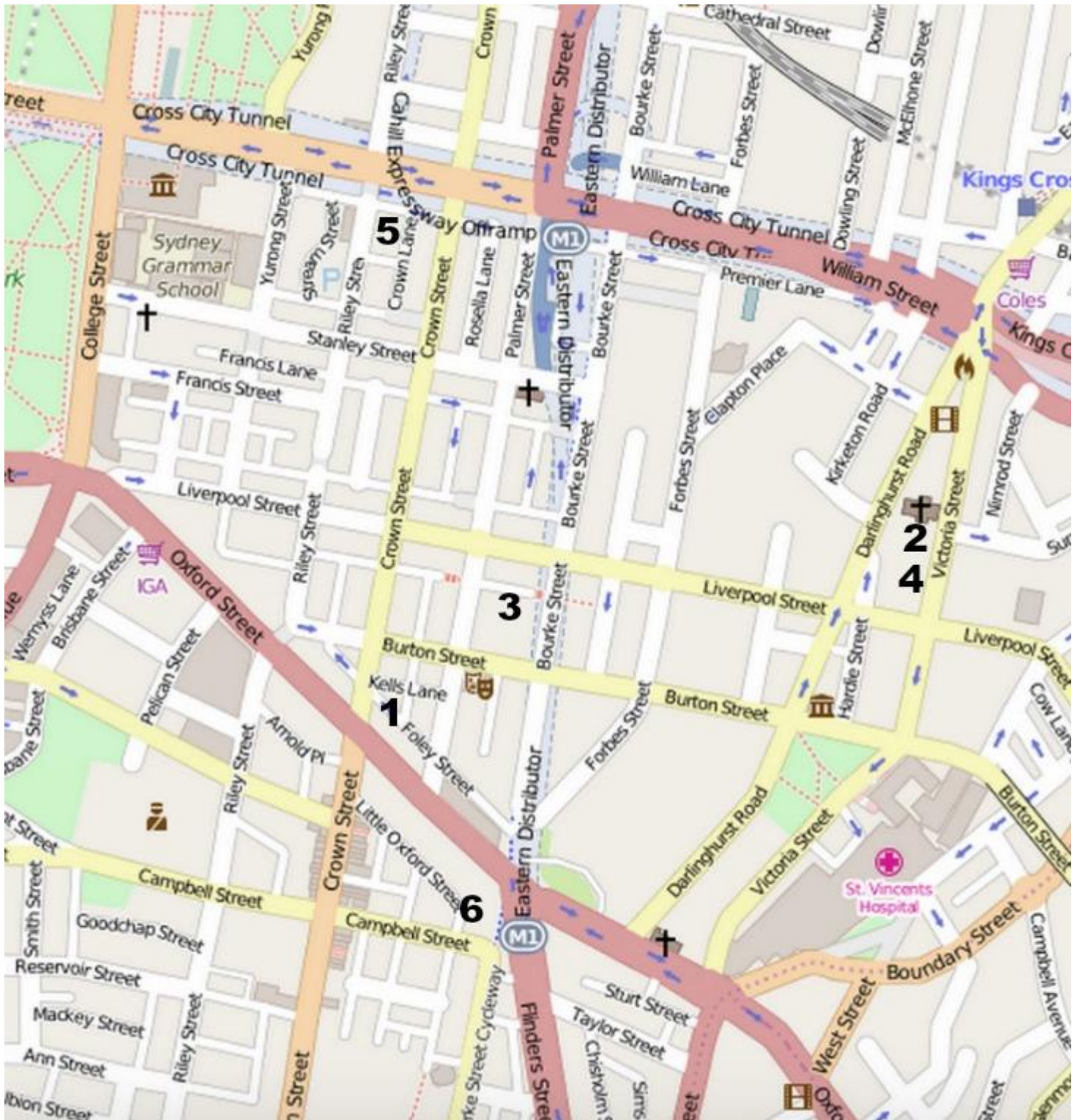
If you prefer drinking wine in a dark alley to walking around in a safe group you may still learn something about these times at Love Tilly Devine: a wine bar on Crown Lane (near the intersection of Crown and William). Tilly Divine was one of two gang bosses during the razor years and has inspired this laneway bar, which is – in typical Tilly Devine character – hidden in an alley away from the masses. *91 Crown Ln, Darlinghurst. 5pm-12 midnight Mon-Sat, 4am-10pm Sun.*

### **The Standard Bowl (6)**

What do you get when you cross a bowling alley and a live music venue? Well, if enough people warrant it opening its doors, you get a late night of great music interspersed with the sounds of pins being attacked by that bearded fellow in the tight jeans and the buttons. Best part is, the price of the music and the bowling is free. (The drinks however, not so much). If you are having a night out in Darlinghurst it is likely you will walk past it as it is above Lo-Fi in Taylor Square (intersection of Oxford and Bourke Streets).

If bowling is not for you, but free music and (unfortunately not free) beer is, sit upstairs on the viewing deck overlooking the action and have a beer delivered

via pulley. You could also play some pool and pinball in what looks to be a cage. A late night venue that tries to be everything does a pretty good job of delivering. *Level 3, 383 Bourke St, Darlinghurst. 9-late Thu, 6-late Fri-Sat, 6-12 midnight Sun.*



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## Chapter 11 – North of the Bridge

When visiting Sydney it is very tempting to stay south of the bridge your entire stay, which in fairness, is due to an incredible amount of attractions, as well as a plethora of restaurants and bars that will occupy you for days. But don't let the charm of the city proper delude you into thinking that to cross the bridge is to cross to the dark side and never return. Quite the opposite, some of the best views of the bridge can be found on the north as well as plenty of beaches that might give you a 'truer' idea of what an Australian beach day experience is like.

### Milson's Point Walk (1)

When visiting Sydney, it is very tempting to stay south of the bridge and for good reason, there is plenty to keep you busy for weeks. But to mix it up, a great day out can be had exploring Milson's Point. Milson's Point is the first suburb you go through on the north side of the bridge – in fact the train station is still on the bridge. Get off at the Milson's Point Station and walk down the stairs. If you arrive on the second Sunday or third Saturday of the month you will be greeted by art or general markets respectively.

Walk down to the water by Luna Park, it is to the west of the bridge but is pretty obvious. Eat some fairy floss and have a ride on the Ferris wheel for some pretty close up views of the bridge before continuing your walk west to Blues Point. The building at Blues Point has perhaps the best view of the bridge of any residential building in Sydney. Take in the view on the grass while bottling up your jealousy of the tenants. Walk up Blues Point Road and find a place to recharge the batteries along this road on your way to North Sydney Station (15 minutes uphill), where you can catch the train back to the City.



**Waverton (2)**

Waverton is the suburb perched on the second point west of the Bridge and is a true tourist free option for a morning out, not too far removed from the familiar surrounds of the city. Explore the walking tracks of Balls Head Reserve and view the Harbour Bridge and city skyline from a new perspective. The park is a perfect distance to take in its grandeur, but close enough to still see detail. Waverton is an easy 3 or 4 stops from the city on the North Shore train line. On your way back, stop by Botanica Garden Café for incredible coffee in an outdoor garden setting. If you exit Waverton Station on Bay Street you can't miss it.

**Manly Beach (3)**

Manly Beach is the obvious choice for beach-going north of the bridge and for good reason. It is beautiful, long, and easy to access by a single ferry from Circular Quay. There are also plenty of hotels around if you'd like to base yourself there – and there are worse places in the world to do so. The beach is surrounded by restaurants, bars and shops that are kept alive mainly by visiting tourists. Not that this is a bad thing but the popularity does mean that if it's warm towel real estate will at a premium, not unlike a day at Bondi Beach.

**Freshwater (4) and Dee why (5)**

To escape the city and experience an Australian beach the way the locals do, it does not get much better than the Northern Beaches. Another of Sydney's more expensive and elite regions to live, but this won't stop anyone from visiting the



expansive and wavy beaches they offer. Geographically, Freshwater is the next beach north of Manly and Dee Why is the following. If you are visiting Manly, this is probably the ideal time to visit one of these suburbs as they are not easy to get to from the city without a car. Not impossible, just difficult. From Manly, catch the 159 or 136 buses towards Dee Why or Chatswood respectively.

There is nothing inherently special about these beaches except that they are just a great representation of why Australians (and the world) love Australian beaches. I say this because Bondi is an impressive beach for sure, but it is not the norm. It's absolutely enormous and on a hot summer day will be monstrously crowded. Freshwater and Dee Why has a more natural calm about it. Don't rush out here and miss out on some of the other extraordinary features of Sydney if your time is limited. But if you have a somewhat extended itinerary definitely take the effort to make your way to Freshwater or Dee Why.

In the summer months, every Sunday these beaches will be overflowing with what we call 'nippers'. Calm down gentlemen, it's not what you might think. Nippers is the surf lifesaving training program for youngsters, who learn beach skills like swimming in the surf, beach sprints and eventually how to use equipment to save a life. Don't let the Sunday crowds detract from your beach experience though, this is a very unique insight into the culture of Australian beach life. But most importantly, if you are not a strong swimmer, just think of all those trained surf lifesavers on hand to save you if you start drowning.

### **Spit Bridge to Manly Beach Walk**

The Spit Bridge to Manly walk is a perfect way to experience the variety of Sydney Harbour National Park. The walk starts at the Spit Bridge in Mosman and snakes its way around Middle Harbour 10 kilometres (6.2 miles) to Manly Beach. Signs point your way along the path that varies between stony paths, boardwalks and purpose built steps. Either way, the track is well-beaten and very popular among locals. Expect the walk to take between 3 and 4 hours, but there are plenty of places to stop for a rest including beaches and lookouts with spectacular harbour views.

From the city, catch the M30 bus (prepaid) to Military Road near Watson Street Mosman, and change to the 144 or 143 (Chatswood to Manly Service). You'll only cross one bridge so get off on the other side. Alternatively, if you prefer not to change buses you could catch a ferry to Manly then catch the 143 or 144 from

Belgrave St (4 minute walk from the wharf) to the Spit Bridge. Of course, all of this applies in reverse and use [www.131500.com.au](http://www.131500.com.au) to plan and map your day.

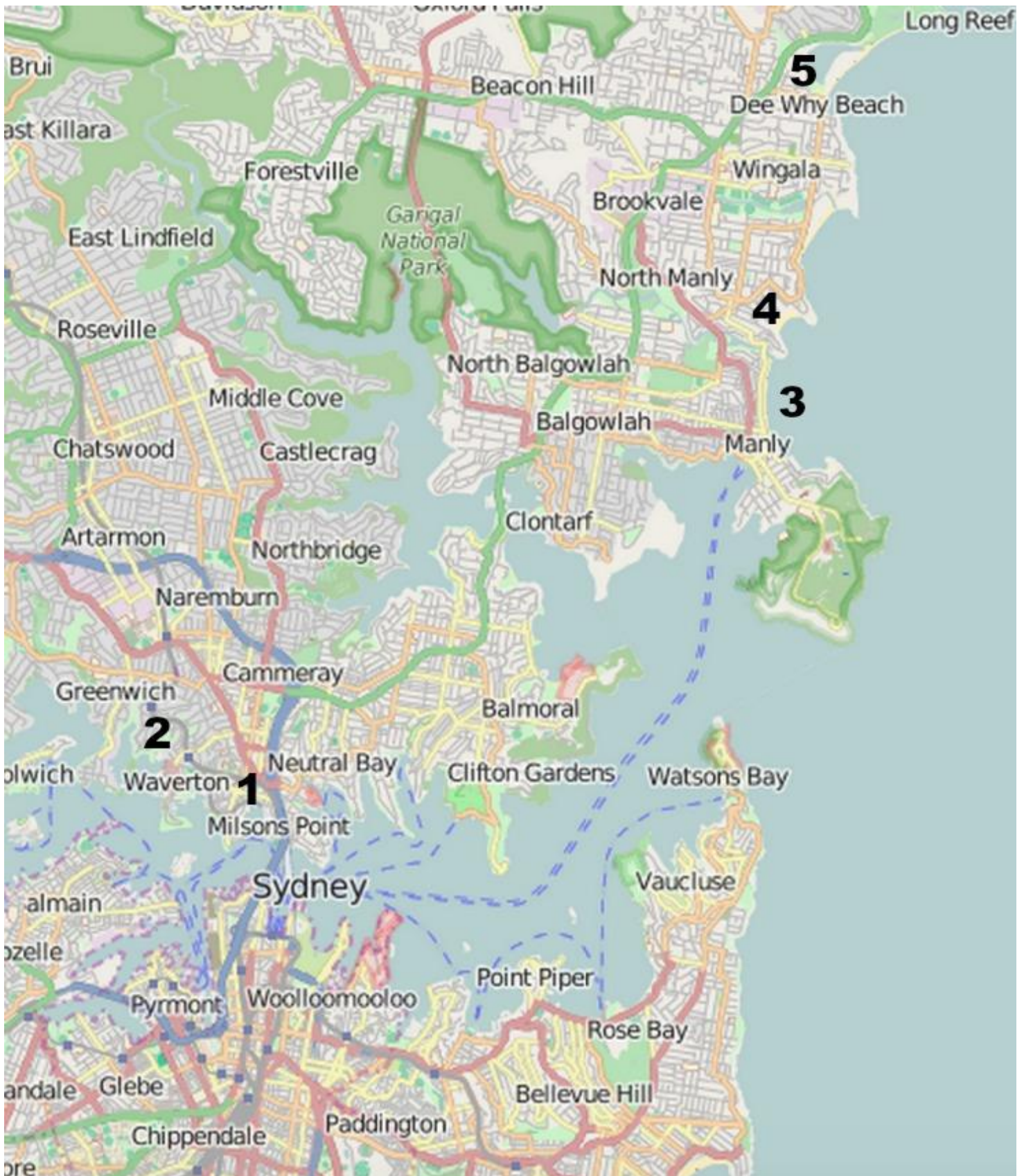
### **The Treehouse Hotel, North Sydney**

Set amongst the concrete jungle of North Sydney is a restaurant and bar that will immediately let you forget about that report that needs to be done by close of business. The exposed brickwork, candelabras and purposefully mismatched cane furniture create a charm that would feel at home in the trendiest of suburbs. Large glass windows and indoor plants do very well in creating the theme of an actual 'treehouse' setting. Certainly not cheap by any stretch of the word but the classic Australian menu is quality in every sense of the word, which you can enjoy for breakfast, lunch or dinner. The Treehouse offers a wide range of wines but the selection of beers and cocktails is modest at best. *60 Miller St North Sydney. 7am-late Mon-Fri, 2pm-late Sat, closed Sunday.*

### **The Oaks Hotel, Neutral Bay**

Much more than your regular pub or hotel, The Oaks is a pub, bar, restaurant and beer garden all in the one complex. Yes, it's a complex. The *Garden Bar* is centred around one incredible Oak Tree that was planted when the hotel first opened in 1885 and has a reasonable selection of craft beers as well as other favourites. The upstairs bar *nineteenthirtysix* is designed with an authentic art deco feel while the restaurant simply called *Bar and Grill* will impress even the most elitist of steak eaters. But don't tell me you're serious about your steak until you've tried their 1.7-1.9kg (4.2 lbs) tomahawk rib eye steak challenge. The Oaks has something for everyone and is definitely worth the trek out to Neutral Bay. *118 Military Road, Neutral Bay. 10am-12 midnight Mon-Wed, 10am-12:30am Thu-Sat, 12 midday-12 midnight Sun.*





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## Chapter 12 – 4 Day Itinerary

The nature of travel is to explore new places and create your own story by finding unique and individual experiences. That is why I provide this itinerary with a grain of salt. Please use it as a guide but by all means, chop and change where necessary to fit your own plans, as there are infinite ways to have an unforgettable Sydney experience. Finding out which one you'll have is half the fun!

### Day 1 – Check all the boxes

Don the comfortable shoes and fill your stomach because today will involve a substantial amount of walking. In fact, most days in Sydney will be due to the difficulty in navigating public transport.

1. Start your day with Breakfast in the Queen Victoria Building. If you are into exotic tea the Palace Tea Room will be the perfect starting point for your day. Do a spot of shopping or just peek into some stores before you...
2. ...Walk to Circular Quay. This is probably the most people you will see in one spot in Sydney so either come prepared to get lost in a sea of iPads and bum-bags (fanny packs) or come early. Real early. Snap your photos of the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, because, despite the people and the hype they really are quite spectacular and one-of-a-kind.
3. Once you have your photos, explore the Botanical Gardens to the degree that your inner botanist and nature-lover will allow.



However, don't let the name fool you, it is more of a park than a garden so prepare for large, hilly expanses of grass and spotted with trees. The "Gardens" are a great spot for a break and morning tea so bring something to nibble on and enjoy a rest.

4. Walk through the park and find Art Gallery Road (there's only one road). Follow this road to the exit of the Gardens, past St Mary's Cathedral, Archibald fountain in Hyde Park and continue along Market St (or King St) to Darling Harbour. It's about a half hour walk in total. Darling Harbour is *full* of restaurants on both sides of Cockle Bay and further south towards the Entertainment Centre as well.
5. Enjoy an afternoon of people watching and wandering Darling Harbour before getting a ferry from King St Wharf back to Circular Quay where you can walk to the Shangri-La Hotel to watch the sun set over a drink from the 36<sup>th</sup> floor at Blu Bar.
6. Find dinner in the Rocks (try Harts pub for a gourmet Aussie burger experience), then have drinks at either Palmer and Co, Baxter Inn or the Lord Nelson Brewery, depending on your style and beverage preference.

## Day 2 – Explore suburbia

1. With most of the big sights out of the way, escape the CBD to Newtown (see Chapter 3) and find a place for brunch. Newtown is all about exploring and given the culture, finding the perfect spot along King Street will be no trouble. Walk up and down King Street, looking in shops that pique your interest, and even some that don't: it's all part of the experience. Make your way to Young Henry's for lunch and a pint. If you're lucky you might even meet a brewer or two.
2. In the event that you have not quite reached your independent, hip quota for the day, retreat back to Central Station and begin an exploration of Surry Hills before settling on a place for dinner. When you couldn't possibly bear to hear another person ask "Would you

like single origin?” or tell you the profile of the water you have been served, get way out of your comfort zone at Absinthe Salon for a strikingly gothic and authentic absinthe experience.

### Day 3 – Coastal Sydney

1. Get to Circular Quay using your favourite travel method and board a ferry to Watson’s Bay. Walk through the park up to ‘The Gap’ and if you are feeling energetic walk north to the lighthouse, around the point and back to the park. Enjoy lunch at either Doyle’s on Fisherman’s Wharf or Doyle’s on the beach, depending on your budget.
2. Catch bus 380 south to Bondi Beach (about 25 minutes and departs every 20 minutes). Navigate the maze of people to your small allotment of sand, soak in the sun and have a dip in Australia’s most famous coastal waterway. Follow the hoards around the point and walk for a couple of hours all the way to Coogee. It is all beautiful coast and on a clear day you will probably feel like you would want to be nowhere else in the world. Walk past Coogee Beach to Wylie’s Baths for a dip in one of Australia’s most picturesque colonial pools.



3. Catch the 373 bus back to Darlinghurst to explore the underbelly of Sydney. History-heads will want to drop \$40 on *the Two Feet and a Heartbeat* "Kings Cross Razorhurst Walking Tour", which will walk you through the heart of gangland wars, prostitution and drugs of the 1920s. Eat dinner at either Lucio Pizzeria or The Victoria Room before donning your cowboy boots for a cocktail at the Shady Pines Saloon, satisfied with your success of seeing as much of Sydney as possible in only 3 days.

#### **Day 4 – North of the Bridge**

1. Make your way back to Circular Quay and board a ferry bound for Manly. Manly is the most popular suburb for visiting on Sydney's Northern Beaches. It has a long pedestrian mall that stretches from the ferry terminal to Manly Beach. You will likely see many shops that you have seen plenty of already on the "mainland", and a few that are clearly just after tourist's money - one store in particular has been advertising a "closing down" sale for over 4 years now!) Spend a few hours relaxing in the sun and if you like you water a bit calmer, take a 15 walk south to the end of the path to Shelley Beach.
2. As an alternative, if the crowds are too much for you at Manly Beach and you'd like to see a beach in a more local setting, from Manly, catch the 159 or 136 buses towards Dee Why or Chatswood respectively. Freshwater is a great representation of Australian Beach culture. Get there on a Sunday morning to see the Surf Life Saving Nippers, kids in training for to learn beach skills like swimming in the surf, beach sprints and eventually how to use equipment to save a life.
3. If time permits, upon your return to Circular Quay, catch the city circle train to Milsons Point, the station on the south end of the Harbour Bridge. Walk through Luna Park, take in the incredible views of the city skyline and walk back along the bridge to the CBD for dinner. You will be perfectly placed for dinner in Sydney's oldest neighbourhood, The Rocks.

## Thank You

I hope that you have enjoyed learning all about how to see Sydney as the locals do, but more than that I hope and trust it will be immensely helpful. If you have any comments regarding the book – positive or negative – I'd love to hear from you. You can email me direct at [nomad@antitravelguides.com](mailto:nomad@antitravelguides.com) or leave me a comment at [www.antitravelguides.com](http://www.antitravelguides.com).

Most importantly, if you have enjoyed this book why not let others know why so they can benefit as well. You do so by leaving a review or comment directly on the sales pages at <http://www.antitravelguides.com/guide>.

Thank you again, and I sincerely hope you have a most enjoyable stay in one of the world's greatest cities.