

Art trails

AUSTRALIA

TRY A TRIP WITH
A DIFFERENCE WITH
FIVE TOP ART TRAIL
EXPERIENCES
AROUND AUSTRALIA.
BY **CARLA GROSSETTI.**

FLEURIEU PENINSULA ART TRAIL

When you've had enough of slurping inky-black shiraz in South Australia's "red wine country", you can nourish the soul with a bit of gallery-hopping on the Fleurieu Peninsula Art Trail.

The McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Peninsula is a creative and artistic hub that celebrates the landscape in every possible way. But despite being surrounded by sea on three sides, many of the works produced in this area are not sunny images featuring blue-green waves crashing against sandy shores.

In fact, at any one time, the 20 different galleries that participate in the Art Trail showcase everything from the distinctive weaving traditions of the Ngarrindjeri people, to original fine art, sculpture, glass pottery, textiles, jewellery and paintings and prints of everything from wild bush flowers to flooded rivers and stark, lonely landscapes.

Visit any national or state gallery and you will find works by Hans Heysen, Dorrit Black, John Olsen, Horace Trener and Kathleen Sauerbier. All of these big names in Australian visual art have drawn inspiration from this vast and rugged land. Along the three-day drive, where grassy hills spill into the sea and cliffs and chasms meet, you will understand exactly why the landscapes around this dramatic peninsula so inspired Australia's greats.

Stroll down the main streets of McLaren Vale, Normanville and in the laneways of Port Noarlunga in Onkaparinga City (try saying that after a few glasses of shiraz) and you will find several art cooperatives and small galleries, stained glass workshops and quirky shops full of bric-a-brac, genuine antiques, junk and ephemera. The trail is identified in each destination by a purple flag.

MORE INFO

Visit fleuriepeninsula.com.au to download a map

All images SATC



Red Poles Gallery



Chapel Hill Estate



Fox Creek Winery

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WHERE TO STAY

PORT ELLIOT YHA

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yha.com.au

NORTHERN TERRITORY INDIGENOUS TOURS

The Top End often grabs headlines around the world because of the number of tourists that have been attacked by crocodiles while holidaying in the region. But as well as being Croc Dundee territory, the State is also home to some of Australia's oldest rock art galleries. Kakadu and Litchfield National Parks are two of the more well-known places to visit and who better to guide you through the environment than the 2013 winner of Ecotourism Australia Indigenous Tourism Award, Tess Akie.

Join Akie, of Northern Territory Indigenous Tours, on a tour through jade-green woodlands to the edge of the Arnhem Escarpment, where a local Kakadu guide will be on hand to interpret hand stencils painted in ochre pigments that have been around for at least 20,000 years.

Kakadu has about 5,000 rock art sites and Akie's tours offer a cultural interpretation of the ancient art from an indigenous viewpoint. Akie's tours include visits to hot springs and gorges and sites that are ecologically critical for wildlife such as the pig-nosed turtle and the freshwater whipray. Bush tucker is seasonal, but visitors can expect lunches of freshly cooked kangaroo, barramundi and crocodile as well as sides of yams, sugarcane grass and termite mound (which you are not advised to try at home!).

MORE INFO

Northern Territory
Indigenous Tours
T: 1300 92 11 88.
ntitours.com.au

Tourism Australia



Tess with couple above Tolmer Falls

Shutterstock



Aboriginal rock art, Nourlangie, Kakadu



Litchfield National Park

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WHERE TO STAY

DARWIN YHA

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Greg Balding

BUNDEENA-MAIANBAR ART TRAIL, NSW

For decades, the tiny townships of Bundeena and Maianbar, just south of Sydney, have attracted artists who have become linked by their love for their location. The adjacent villages are on the outer edges of NSW's Royal National Park, or 'Nashos' as it's known, and just a short ferry ride away from the sparkly beachside Sydney suburb of Cronulla.

On the first Sunday of every month, 20 of the resident artists fling open the paint-splattered doors to their studios to offer guests a glimpse into their working lives. Ask the trail secretary and exhibiting artist Doris Kaminski what the local collective of creative types draw their inspiration from and she'll happily tell you. "There is some sort of energy in this place that draws people who are creative spirits – everyone from the musically inclined to painters and potters, too," says Doris, who specialises in figurative works and cityscapes using mixed media and acrylic on canvas.

Self-taught artist Peter Mulder, whose bold, acrylic landscapes are also inspired by the beauty of the rugged surrounds, created the Bundeena-Maianbar Art Trail in 2002. More than a decade on, Studio 8 on the art trail map is Jia Wei Shan, regarded as one of Australia's leading portrait artists. Jia Wei Shen's studio is one of the must-see stop-offs on the trail, which takes at least half a day to explore; he has been selected as a finalist in the Archibald Prize 16 times since he first submitted a work in 1992 and was recently invited to Rome to unveil the first official portrait of Pope Francis, which was commissioned by the Catholic Church (pictured below).

MORE INFO

Bundeena-
Maianbar
Art Trail
T: 9527 1318
arttrail.com.au

Destination NSW



Bundeena Ferry

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WHERE TO STAY

CRONULLA YHA

located just across the water from Bundeena – with a ferry connection.

T: +61 2 9527 7772

E: cronulla@yha.com.au

yha.com.au



Artist Jia Wei and Pope Francis



Cronulla, with Bundeena in the distance. Cronulla Tourism

ONE TRACK FOR ALL, NSW SOUTH COAST

One Track for All is a 2km trail that hugs the northern headland at Ulladulla about two hours' drive south of Sydney. Despite overlooking one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline on the NSW South Coast, this cliff-top walk offers so much more than just mind-bogglingly beautiful views.

The heritage track is made memorable by the fact it is dotted with exquisite relief carvings, paintings and striking sculptures. However, it's the stories told along the way that remain etched in your memory long after you've left the tiny harbour town.

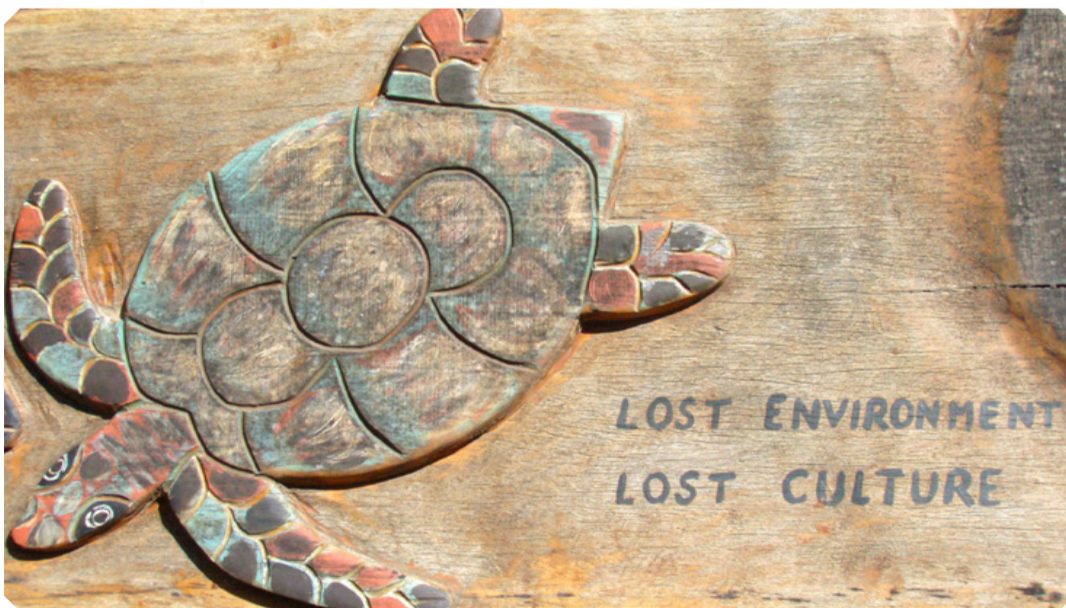
The art trail, created by local Noel Butler, charts the history of the southern Shoalhaven region from an Aboriginal perspective. Here, subtlety is key and, much like the march of modernity itself, the impact of the stories isn't fully realised until all the messages – about “industry + technology + money = depletion” are brought home.

Butler presents cold, hard facts alongside wry observations and exquisite illustrations and sculptures – “shellfish was our traditional food; now it's AU\$50 a kg” – and in so doing gently reminds us that Australian Aboriginals were the nation's original eco warriors.

The name Ulladulla comes from the Aboriginal word Nulladulla, meaning “safe harbour”. In honouring the history of his local Budawang tribe, Butler challenges those who use the track to look at what has happened – environmentally and economically in the Ulladulla area – and all around Australia – since the “strange-looking gunyah” arrived. It's his hope that we will “learn from the past in order to protect our future”.

MORE INFO

Access to the trail is via Dolphin Street from the main street of Ulladulla.



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WHERE TO STAY

BATEMAN'S BAY YHA

Less than an hour's drive from Ulladulla, and can be combined with a visit to the charming town of Milton.

T: +61 2 4472 4972

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One Track for all, Ulladulla art trail

THE SUNSHINE COAST ART TRAIL

The Sunshine Coast has long been considered a compulsory pit-stop for those exploring the East Coast of Australia. But as well as being strewn with grizzled surfers, the southern Queensland region is now popular with tourists who want to get a fresh perspective on this lush southern Queensland region.

The beauty of the Sunshine Coast Art Gallery and Culture Trail is that you can be in the centre of a coastal town full of crusty hippies one minute and then cruising at snail's pace in the countryside the next.

A highlight of the self-guided tour is meeting some of the eccentric characters that contribute to the creative energy of the region. The cultural trail will lead you to galleries that showcase the work of leading local, national and international artists and craftspeople – from painters to potters, sculptors, jewellers and ceramic artists.

And, for dedicated shoppers, the fact that you can connect with the artisans means you get to learn, enjoy and perhaps even purchase a small memento of your trip.

The lush scenery along the complete trail – which is about 100km in distance – runs from Caloundra to Gympie and is like a beautiful work of art in its own right. But the beauty of such self-guided tours is that you can pick it up and leave it as you like. The entire trail takes about three days, but a shorter version of the trail – which takes in Eumundi, Kenilworth, Maleny and Montville – could be completed in a leisurely day's drive.

MORE INFO

You can print out a map brochure of the trail [here](#).

All images Tourism & Events QLD



Glass House Mountains



Montville Village



Craft shop

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WHERE TO STAY

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