



Life's a beach

Christina Ching highlights the hot spots for sun, sand and sea in Sydney

An hour after having breakfast in a café in downtown Sydney, I was standing on Bondi Beach, sand between my toes.

Bondi, the most famous beach in Sydney, needs no introduction. Loud and proud, it buzzes with life. With a gorgeous beach, weekend market, streets bursting with shops, restaurants, cafés and bars, one can easily while a day away there.

But I had a mission to accomplish: a 6km coastal walk from the south of Bondi to Coogee.

Getting there

I flew to Sydney on Singapore Airlines. The Sydney Airport is 13 minutes by train to the city or 20 minutes by car or taxi.

Australia has some of the highest ultraviolet levels in the world, so protect your skin with sunscreen.

Wear comfortable shoes and carry sunblock, sunglasses, towel, flip-flops and a bottle of water when you embark on a coastal walk.

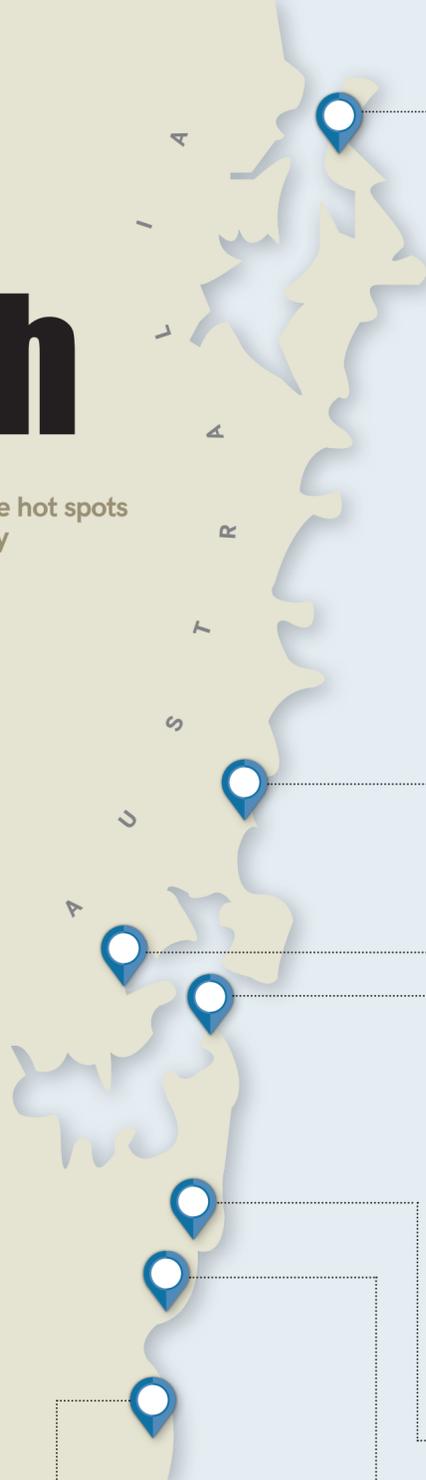
I made my way to the swish Icebergs Dining Room and Bar at the southern end of Bondi Beach, where the Eastern Beaches Coastal Walk begins. I gasped at the ocean vista; it was the start of good things to come.

Crashing waves, turquoise waters, swirling rock pools, dramatic cliffs and beautiful bays greeted me at every turn, as beach after stunning beach came into sight.

The coastal walk brought me past the beaches of Tamarama, Bronte and Clovelly. It also led me through the tranquil Waverley Cemetery perched atop sandstone cliffs and rock platforms, with sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean.

Two hours later, I arrived at Coogee Beach, the next biggest and busiest beach after Bondi along this scenic route.

The beaches I passed are among the more than 100 in the city of Sydney, from calm and protected harbour coves suitable for families with young children, to untamed ocean beaches that beckon surfers and bodyboarders. Here are a few of Sydney's best beaches.



Palm Beach

Best for: Celebrity spotting

This is the most northern suburb in Sydney, and an Instagram-worthy destination. Summer is a time for Hollywood celebrity spotting, when the stars rent stunning multimillion-dollar ocean-facing homes to escape winter in the northern hemisphere. Even if you do not see anyone famous, the place is still worth the 45km drive from the city centre, if only to sink your feet into its golden sand and enjoy a glass of wine along the promenade.

Freshwater Beach

Best for: Laid-back surfing

With a bodyboard in my backseat, I drove up the stretch of more than 15 golden sand beaches of Sydney's Northern Beaches. After the touristy Manly in the south, I noticed that the suburbs became more residential, until I arrived at the exclusive Palm Beach in the north. If you're short for time, head for Freshwater Beach, the birthplace of Australia's surfing culture. This is where the Hawaiian style of surfboard riding was introduced Down Under in 1914 by American Olympic swimming champion Duke Kahanamoku.



Sydney's Northern Beaches suburbs are blessed with the rugged shoreline in their backyard.

Balmoral Beach

Best for: Blissful serenity

To chill out, I grabbed a latte and crossed a curved sandstone bridge onto the headland at this beach on the North Shore. Then I kicked back on my picnic mat with a book, occasionally taking my eyes off my book to enjoy the tranquil vista before me. If you prefer to be indoors, enjoy coffee with a view at Bather's Pavilion café by the beach. Swimming is safe in the calm waters protected by shark nets. Maximise your stay here with a visit to the nearby Taronga Zoo.



Balmoral Beach and its beachfront Bather's Pavilion restaurant and café.

Camp Cove

Best for: Catching a sunset

From Camp Cove beach in the eastern suburb of Watsons Bay, you can go on a coastal walk around the South Head national park at the southern entrance of Sydney Harbour. The trail offers panoramic views of the city, harbour, ocean and surrounding headlands. I lingered in Watsons Bay till evening and settled on Camp Cove beach with takeaway fish and chips to catch the gorgeous sunset. To get to Watsons Bay, take the ferry from Circular Quay in the city centre.



Dramatic views along the South Head coastal walk.

Tamarama Beach

Best for: Babe watching

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, it was well-known as the site of the city's first coastal amusement park. Today, "Glamarama", as the locals know it, is a beautiful spot that draws a good-looking crowd. Gorgeous runway models with hot bods would not be out of place here. Only 80m long, Tamarama has the biggest rips and is considered the most dangerous patrolled beach in New South Wales.

Maroubra Beach

Best for: Mingling with the locals

It was easy to find a quiet spot on the 1.1km-long stretch of sand to lay my beach towel. Most beachgoers here are residents of the suburb, a previous working-class neighbourhood that has been gentrified, and is now home to young professionals and families. Maroubra Beach is also the first National Surfing Reserve (NSR) in Australia. NSRs are iconic surfing locations that have intrinsic environmental, heritage, sporting and cultural value.



Most beachgoers here are residents of the suburb.

Clovelly Beach

Best for: Sandless, hassle-free fun

This cosy beach is a godsend for those who enjoy sun-tanning but can't stand having sand everywhere they set foot. Thanks to the man-made feature surrounding the foreshores, you can roll out a mat on the concrete and sunbathe on it without the hassle of sand getting everywhere. This is also a favourite snorkelling spot, where you can swim among corals and fish, including the friendly blue groper.



Visitors here can sunbathe without getting sand on their feet.



Stunning views along the Eastern Beaches Coastal Walk. PHOTOS: CHRISTINA CHUNG

CHAN BROTHERS EXPRESS Top Performing Agent for 10 Years Running

CHAN BROTHERS GROUP OF COMPANIES Club Med Leading Booking Centre

Special Promotion
Up to 50% OFF*

Up to \$200 OFF
Per Couple*

Club Med

amazing you

4D3N Bintan Island	fr \$ 698
4D3N Cherating Beach	fr \$ 758
4D3N Phuket	fr \$ 828
4D3N Bali	fr \$ 998
4D3N Kani, Maldives	fr \$ 1838
6D5N Sahoro, Japan	fr \$ 3088
6D5N Tomamu, Japan	fr \$ 3388

• Return Airfare* • Return Airport / Ferry Transfer
 • Sumptuous Buffet Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner Daily
 • FREE Flow of Beer & Wine
 • All Recreational Activities & Sports Facilities
 • Unique Nightly Entertainment

All prices are subjected to associated taxes & surcharges correct at time of print & subject to change fr \$0 to \$190
 *Terms & conditions apply.

Visit Booth 37 at
Travel Revolution 2018 - The Event

Chan Brothers Express 6389 9836

45 Hong Kong Street #03-01 Mon - Fri 10am - 7pm Sat 10am - 2pm
 Sun & PH Closed clubmed@chanbrothers.com.sg