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## What's new in 2023

Australia's largest State continues to draw wide acclaim from around the world, with Lonely Planet, Forbes and CNN all including Western Australia in their annual lists of dreamiest travel destinations, so here's what's new and trending in 2023.

### Tiny dream stays

Restoration in nature continues to reign supreme across the south, whether it's amongst the forest, overlooking a lake or a hay-cation with neighbouring farm animals and even a wheat crop. In WA's South West, **Unyoked** (Margaret River), **Stillwood Retreat** (Denmark) and **Serenity Gully** (Bridgetown) all made their very delicate mark last year, providing visitors the dream disconnection from the madness of everyday city life. In the hills around Perth (Boorloo), **Heyscape** opened its latest tiny cabins – including the first family and luxe editions – with an Esperance opening on the horizon in the first half of 2023. **Oliobello** (Margaret River), **Cygnets Bay Pearl Farm** (Dampier Peninsula, near Broome), **Karijini Eco Retreat** and **Bullara Station** (near Exmouth) all expanded on their existing low-impact glamping offerings.

### Bigger dream stays

WA's hotel development spotlight has shone brightly on Perth in recent years – and rightly so. Australia's first Hilton Garden Inn opened its doors in Albany (Kinjarling) in November 2021, and the Margaret River Region in WA's South West will welcome the brand's second property in 2023. The **Hilton Garden Inn Busselton** will offer stunning views over Geographe Bay and the iconic Busselton Jetty, and includes a rooftop bar. Construction for the new 66-room Seashells Albany at Middleton Beach is also due to start in 2023, offering a mix of one and two-bedroom stylish suites. Another urban development in the South West nearing completion is **South Camp Dunsborough**, which includes a brewery and 18 pre-fabricated pods in this coastal town in the Margaret River Region. In WA's North West, **The Cambridge Kununurra** is due to open for the 2023 season, providing a 5-star accommodation option right in the heart of the eastern Kimberley region. Formerly trading as ibis Styles Kununurra, this revitalised hotel is the ideal base for accessing El Questro Wilderness Park, Lake Argyle and World Heritage-listed Purnululu National Park.

### Returning old favourites and new events

Iconic WA rock history will be celebrated in a new West Australian AC/DC inspired event, **High Voltage** - set to take over the streets of **Fremantle** (Walyalup) on May 7, 2023. This new street circuit-style event will celebrate music, community and the spirit of Fremantle-raised former lead singer of AC/DC Bon Scott. National and international live

music acts will perform from trucks in a musical procession throughout the streets of Fremantle. Other highlights on the 2023 events calendar include the **FIFA Women's World Cup** – with Olympic champions Canada playing in Perth (Boorloo), as well as China and Denmark – and a run of Australian exclusive Bjork performances for **Perth Festival**. After a one-year hiatus, Manjimup in WA's South West will host an incredible line-up of Australia's top culinary talent when **Truffle Kerfuffle** returns in June 2023, while in WA's North West, the **Boab Metals Ord Valley Muster** (May 13 to 22) will shine a spotlight on the culture and extraordinary natural landscapes of the eastern Kimberley region.

### **Ningaloo Eclipse**

On April 20, 2023 visitors to Exmouth in the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo region will have front row seats for one of nature's rarest and most phenomenal occurrences – a total solar eclipse. At around 11.27am, those in the region will experience 62 seconds of totality as the sun is completely blocked by the moon. Whilst Exmouth is in complete darkness for just over a minute, the rest of WA will experience a partial solar eclipse. Those in Perth will witness a 72 per cent eclipse, Geraldton (Jambinu) about 80 per cent, Carnarvon 97 per cent, Karratha 97 per cent, and Coral Bay and Onslow will see a 99 per cent eclipse. WA is one of the very few land places worldwide where people can view the natural phenomenon, with the next solar eclipse to take place in WA 2031.

### **Cultural connection**

Western Australia's ancient aboriginal stories and more recent European history continue to be told through a range of exciting new and refurbished products. 2022 saw the opening of the sixth **Camping with Custodians** campground - a 37-site campground owned and operated by the Djarindjin Community, accessible off the newly sealed Cape Leveque Road on the Dampier Peninsula north of Broome (Rubibi). In the Coral Coast, **Baiyungu Dreaming** is the first Aboriginal tour experience in the Ningaloo region, offering 4WD tag-along tours in Coral Bay, a sunset campfire experience and the chance to snorkel on World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Reef (Nyinggulu). The region will welcome the inaugural direct Qantas service from Melbourne on 30 April 2023. On the most southwestern point of the continent, Cape Leeuwin in the Margaret River Region recently marked its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being spotted at sea, by the Dutch. The [Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse](#) has reopened its tours after a year-long restoration of the limestone structure that has cast its protective light since 1896. At 39 metres high, it remains the tallest lighthouse on mainland Australia, at the treacherous meeting place of the Southern and Indian Oceans – and beginning of Western Australia's humpback highway. In Perth (Rubibi), the refurbishment of the 118-year-old [His Majesty's Theatre](#) is now complete with the original heritage balconies fully reinstated following removal in 1953. His Maj, as it's affectionately known, is a world-class venue for opera, dance and theatre, and is the only remaining operating Edwardian Theatre in the Southern Hemisphere.

### **Cheers to that**

The proliferation of mega suburban pubs being restored continues into 2023 with **The Claremont Hotel** picking up where **The Beaufort**, **The Leederville** and **The Bassendean** left off. It opens next week, with the more than 100-year-old western suburbs venue nearly doubling in size! A three-tiered seafood tower and caviar served in ice with scalloped potato and cultured cream are destined for icon status. In Perth's Swan Valley, the storytelling around gourmet delights continues with the addition of immersive tours coming to **Funk**

**Cider** including production tours, cider blending workshops and regular ‘meet the maker’ events. All are due to start in early 2023, delving deeper into the region’s produce offering beyond Verdelho, Chenin Blanc, beer and diverse roadside stalls.

**Spinifex Brewery’s** landmark first venue is set to open in Broome’s Cable Beach (Walmanyjun), pouring its signature beers that support the local aboriginal supply chain and veterans across Australia. In WA’s South West, the Margaret River Region was recently certified as one of only four eco destinations in Australia, with one of the region’s most iconic wineries, **Voyager Estate**, stamping the organic seal of approval on their production in 2023. Margaret River has the highest percentage of sustainable vineyards in the country, with more than 12 per cent of the 150 wineries being leaders in the field. A selection of these premium wines will be available at the new **Busselton Jetty** dining development, allowing visitors the opportunity to enjoy casual sunset dining 1.8-kilometres out to sea on the Southern Hemisphere’s longest timber-piled jetty.

### **On the water**

Western Australia is renowned for its otherworldly landscapes, incredible coastline and endless summer. Beaches and coastal experiences are the top emotional driver for people to visit Western Australia\*. Intimate aquatic exploration options ramp up in 2023 with new products across the Kimberley and Coral Coast regions. Luxury Lodges of Australia member, **True North Adventure Cruises**, has added a second vessel to journey from Broome to the surrounding archipelago, reef systems and waterfalls – complete with helicopter atop for the ultimate adventure. The 2023 Kimberley season will also see **PONANT** unveil a new level of luxury for exploring this ancient wilderness, with up to 32 guests able to experience the three-masted sailing yacht on 7 to 14-day itineraries with an exclusive **Paspaley Pearls** flight experience. Closer to Broome (Rubibi), **Horizontal Falls Seaplane Adventures** has introduced a luxurious new way to enjoy the thrill of the changing directional tides at this sideways waterfall. The newly refit Jetwave Pearl is a ‘floating hotel’, offering an exclusive base for a maximum of 20 guests to enjoy 24 hours of pure excitement with helicopter flights, a mix of adrenaline power boat and relaxing cruises, and a guided fishing charter. In the Coral Coast, Exmouth-based [Dive Ningaloo](#) has recently welcomed [Lady Ningaloo](#) to its fleet, providing high-end liveaboard options for three or seven nights to explore the underwater wonderland of the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Marine Park (Nyinggulu), and the Muiron Islands.

### **Outdoor encounters**

Western Australia is one of the ultimate destinations for truly unique experiences, when compared to other Australian states\*, and it’s no wonder why with an explosion of new wildlife offerings across the State. On the Coral Coast Highway close to Perth (Boorloo), the fishing town of Cervantes is now offering a tour providing opportunities to see the friendly local sea lions, departing the iconic **Lobster Shack**. 1,000-kilometres north on this iconic road trip, **Exmouth Adventure Co** has launched a Turtle Sunset Tour in the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo region for the 2022-23 summer season, in partnership with **Jurabi Turtle Centre** for small groups of 10 people. In WA’s North West, Broome (Rubibi) has added a mud crabbing adventure to existing wildlife encounters with camels, snubfin dolphins, humpback whales, turtles, camels and saltwater crocodiles. **Broome Tours** allows visitors a catch-and-cook experience with this prized Kimberley delicacy, adding a dash of chilli to pair with a Broome sunset sail. In Perth, one of the state’s longest-running ecotourism operators has

launched a new offering in the spectacular Shoalwater Island Marine Park, located just a 40-minute drive south of the city. **Perth Wildlife Encounters'** 3 Island Snorkel, Wildlife & Seafood Cruise offers encounters with the best of the local marine life – including the Australian sea lions who call the nearby Seal Island home. Two hours inland from Perth, in the Golden Outback, **Dryandra Woodlands** is one of WA's newest national parks – and home to the endangered numbat, a small marsupial that is actually the state's fauna emblem!

There's so much more to see and do in Western Australia, and plenty coming up for 2023. Find out more information on these offerings and more at [tourism.wa.gov.au](https://tourism.wa.gov.au).

**ENDS**

*\* Source: Tourism WA, Interstate Brand Tracking, Aug-Sep 2022, n=1,409*

**Images:** Images available on request.

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