

PUBS AND HOSPITALITY

Cool off in the outback ...and meet the locals...

A UNIQUELY AUSTRALIAN INVITATION

Next time you're passing through a country town, head for the wide verandahs and cheery atmosphere of the local pub. It's here you'll discover the soul of a town – it's also where the beer is cold and yarns are spun; pubs across Australia are brimming with character.

There's nothing that we Aussie's like more than to crack open a "cold one" on a hot summer's day. But, when you're in the Outback, stopping at a welcoming watering hole to wash down the taste of dust with an ice-cold beer is the closest sensation to heaven you're likely to get.

Outback pubs are the gathering place for locals, where you'll find 'fair dinkum' Australians who'll share their stories and call you 'cobber'. Shout the bar, make good mates, and escape the heat. Buy a raffle ticket, bet on a cane toad race or take part in a game of 'Two-Up'. Then enjoy a hot meal and bed down for the night.

True Australian country hospitality is still very much alive and well in our Outback pubs, whether it's an Outback 'motel', an historic old pub in the Flinders Ranges offering world-class 'bush tucker' cuisine, or the legendary Pub with No Beer. Whatever the style of accommodation or the location, the locals will greet you with a firm hand shake and a strong stare and call you 'mate'. In the Outback, it's all about the people, the places and the pubs.

Key pub and hospitality facts

- We are the world's 11th highest consumer of beer² and Australians drink on average over 100 litres of beer each year.³
- There are 1280 licensed hotels (with more than five rooms) in Australia.⁴
- Country singer Slim Dusty once lamented: "There's nothin' so lonesome, so dull or so drear, than to stand in the bar of a pub with no beer". But as legend has it, that's exactly what happened at this historic pub in Taylors Arm on the NSW North Coast. While debate still rages as to whether this pub was the inspiration for the song, the addition of a new brewery means the pub's valuable liquid asset will never run dry again.⁵
- The Walkabout Creek Hotel in Queensland is famous as Crocodile Dundee's regular drinking spot in the movie. Known originally as the Federal McKinlay Hotel, it is now the town's one tourist attraction.⁶
- The William Creek Pub is in South Australia's smallest town in the middle of the world's largest cattle property, Anna Creek Station which, at 34,000 sq km, is roughly the size of Belgium.

- Australia's best known and much loved national song and the nation's unofficial national anthem, *Waltzing Matilda*, was sung for the very first time in 1859 at the North Gregory Hotel, in Outback Winton.
- 'Bundie' rum, our favourite and most famous rum, produced in the Queensland town of Bundaberg, was first made in 1888. At the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899, the Australian armed forces requested that entire year's production as rations for Australian troops serving in South Africa.

Uniquely Australian

- You can't get more outback than the famous **Prairie Hotel** at Parachilna in South Australia. Built in the 1890s, the pub attracts visitors from all over the world who come to try the renowned Australian native cuisine or 'bush tucker', otherwise known as 'feral food' while drinking in the magnificent Flinders Ranges.

Animal pubs

- **The Pub in the Paddock** is surely one of Australia's quirkiest pubs. This 1880's watering hole sits in the middle of a paddock in Tasmania's Pyengana Valley and is famous for its beer swilling pig, Priscilla, who can scull a watered-down stubby in seven seconds. A Tasmanian institution since 1880, the pub offers hearty country meals and comfortable accommodation.
- While sunset camel rides on Broome's Cable Beach are world famous, it's the tales about beer drinking camels that draw attention at the **Whim Creek Pub**. Half way between Karratha and Port Hedland, it has its own wildlife sanctuary, and was once home to a camel with a penchant for beer. Don't worry about missing the pub – it's painted bright pink!

Character pubs

- Apart from the legendary **Pub With No Beer** in NSW, the outback is littered with quirky and colourful character pubs.
- Over on our West Coast, **The Roey**, Broome's oldest pub lives by the saying "if it's going to happen in Broome, it's going to happen at the Roey". If you stumble across local character, 'Swindle', pull up a chair and order a coldie because he has enough tales about pearling and gangsters to last a week.
- You'll meet locals as colourful as Mick Dundee over an ice cold beer in the historic **Walkabout Creek Hotel** in outback Queensland.





- In the tiny township of Tilpa, 130km north of Wilcannia, in far west NSW, there's another classic, the **Tilpa Hotel**. The interior of this 100-plus year-old corrugated pub is plastered with graffiti from its many adorning fans. For a \$2 donation to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, you can leave your mark on the pub's tin wall.
- Clad in corrugated iron, the **Daly Waters Pub** in the Northern Territory is crammed with decades of Australian memorabilia and quirky knick-knacks. Once a popular drover's rest, today, it is a popular pit-stop for thirsty tourists travelling the Explorer's Way between Alice Springs and Darwin.
- Walking into the rustic **Nindigully Pub** is like walking into the lounge room of the Outback. This quintessential Outback pub on the banks of the Moonie River has been the meeting point for locals for well over 100 years. It's famous for the more than 140 Akubra hats from local farmers and stockmen which adorn the walls. Queensland's oldest hotel, it was issued a license in 1864 after it had been shearers' accommodation for Nindigully Station and is still in its original condition.
- Call into the **Palace Hotel** In Broken Hill, the historic, three-story pub with long verandas and elaborate cast-iron balustrades featured in the movie, *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, or visit the Silverton Hotel in the former mining ghost town, known for great hospitality and quirky locals.

Historic hotels

- The **William Creek Pub** has an almost legendary status and is the only 'watering hole' on the Oodnadatta Track between Marree and Oodnadatta. The only iron hotel left trading in South Australia, this original pub is filled with unique mementoes left by thousands of visitors.
- Right in the heart of Burke and Wills explorer country, the **Innamincka Hotel** at Cooper Creek in South Australia once played host to early drovers who brought cattle down the Strzelecki Track. The pub's convivial 'Outamincka Bar' has become the stuff of bush legends and is must stop for anyone travelling in these parts.
- One of Australia's most legendary watering holes is the **Birdsville Hotel** in Outback Queensland. Built in 1884 it has been witness to history made, yarns spun and the survival of Australian mateship. It epitomises the essence of the Outback.
- The historic 1863 **Romavilla Winery** is a rarity – an Outback winery. Sample the local wines in the rustic timber and corrugated iron building, and imagine the hardships establishing a winery here.
- On the Matilda Highway through outback Queensland be sure to stop and drink a toast to Australia's hardest working dog, the blue heeler, at the **Blue Heeler Hotel** in Kynuna, the 100-year-old hotel where Banjo Patterson observed champagne being handed through the window to end the angry shearers strike of the 1800s. The Combo Waterhole, the famed billabong featured in *Waltzing Matilda*, is 20km south of Kynuna.
- The only stopover on the 528km Birdsville Track, the **Mungerannie Hotel** sits on the edge of the Sturt Stony, Simpson, Tirari and

Strzelecki deserts and is nestled beside the Derwent River – an oasis in sharp contrast to its surrounds.

- The **Tattersalls Hotel** has been serving up genuine Outback hospitality in the north-west Queensland town of Winton for 120 years. A top spot to share an icy beer with locals including miners, station owners, ringers, truck drivers, cattle buyers and shearers.
- The biggest and best known pub In Kalgoorlie, with 11 beers on tap, **The Exchange** holds the record for the biggest sales of Jim Beam in regional WA. It was originally constructed as a shed in the late 1800s.
- The population of the small goldmining town of Kookynie, 200km from Kalgoorlie in Western Australia, is less than 10 people, but the town's 1894 vintage **Grand Hotel** with its big verandahs and spacious rooms continues to survive. It was once the favourite watering hole for local prospectors.
- At York, in the Avon Valley just outside Perth, is the **Castle Hotel**, built by convicts in 1853. The Shearer's Bar is the place to go for good vibes, cold beer and pub grub. It's also a popular spot for a post-skydive beer so there are plenty of exhilarating tales to be overheard.

Upmarket Outback

- The four-star **Aurora Alice Springs** recently underwent a major facelift so it's a bit more ritzy than your average outback pub, with a pool and spa. With its central location fronting the banks of the famous Todd River, it also has one of the best restaurants in Alice, the Red Ochre Grill, serving bush tucker cuisine, and some of the very best rooms.

***Our burnished landscape and scorched heart
are dotted with towns, pubs and motels
where true Australian country hospitality is
still alive and well...***

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1 Such as the Winton Outback Motel in outback Queensland.

2 http://www.cbc.ca/consumers/market/files/food/beer_challenge/lukewarm.html

3 <http://abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@nsf/Lookup/4307.0.55.001Main+Features12004-05?OpenDocument>

4 <http://abs.gov.au>

5 www.pubwithnobeer.com.au

6 <http://www.smh.com.au/news/Queensland/McKinlay/2005/02/17/1108500203553.html>