

COASTAL WALKS



Coastal walk at Bronte Beach. Photo: James Horan/Destination NSW.



Michael Snape, *breach*, Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2013. Photo: Clyde Yee.

As one of the world's great outdoor cities, Sydney's coastal walks combine spectacular water views, native bush, historical monuments and a splash of coffee. By Julie Ihle.

BONDI TO BRONTE

It's one of Australia's most iconic walks, and there's no better time to do this coastal clifftop trek than when the Sculpture by the Sea exhibition is held. From 23 October to 9 November, the track is lined with over 100 sculptures by Australian and international artists. From Bondi Baths follow the walkway all the way to Bronte, eyeballing original installations that line the track and discovering quirky art in unexpected places. And of course, there's always the view. The well-trod path hugs the coast with many fantastic vantage points and photo opportunities on the way. Stop at a café at Tamarama (Glamarama to locals) and you might even spot some celebrities too!

Distance: 1.5km one way.

Time suggested: 45 minutes each way.

Public Transport: Bus 333 or 380 from the city or Bondi Junction to Bondi.



Walking the harbourside trails, Manly. Photo: Hamilton Lund/Destination NSW.

TARONGA ZOO TO CHOWDER BAY

As one of Sydney's classic coastal walks, it all starts with a ferry ride to Taronga Zoo. Take the well-signed path on a mostly flat bush trail, circling headlands with iconic views of the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge. At Bradleys Head check out the convict-made cannon batteries and military relics, built to repel feared foreign invasion, which today is a fun place for kids and big kids alike to explore. It's all downhill to Chowder Bay, so named for the chowder the whalers used to make from local seafood. The area was only opened to the public in 2000 after being used as a military



Military history on the walk to Balmoral Beach from Taronga Zoo.

precinct. There's good coffee to be had at Bacino Bar or chow down on seafood at Ripples, set in the deck of the former Submarine Miner's Depot. From there, if you want to keep walking, it's only 2km to beautiful Balmoral Beach.

Distance: 5km one way.

Time suggested: 1 hour 45 minutes each way.

Public Transport: Ferry from Circular Quay to Taronga Zoo Wharf and return bus 244 from Chowder Bay.

HERMITAGE FORESHORE WALK

This delightful Eastern Suburbs walk hits all the harbour highlights. Start at old-school Nielsen Park, a harbour beach surrounded by lovely parkland, presided over by historic Nielsen Park Café. Then follow the signs on the narrow but well-maintained waterfront track. You'll pass historic Strickland House, secluded Milk Beach and get your camera ready for floor-to-ceiling waterfront views of Shark Island and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Tear your eyes away from the view to ogle glittering harbourside homes. The track ends at Bayview Hill Road and then it is time to retrace your steps and finish with a coffee at Nielsen Park Café.

Distance: 1.5km one way.

Time suggested: 1 hour each way.

Transport: Bus 324 from the city to Vacluse.

SPIT BRIDGE TO MANLY

Up for an adventure? One of Sydney's most famous walks, The Spit to Manly takes you on a jaunt from The Spit foreshore past waterfront mansions, over heathland, bush and beaches to Manly, with sweeping watery views as you go. Check out Aboriginal rock engravings on the way and if you have time it's worth detouring to Grotto Point Lighthouse and Arabanoo Lookout. This classic walk makes for a full day outing and afterwards you can enjoy a well-deserved beer at Manly Wharf.

Distance: 9.5km one way.

Time suggested: 3–4 hours each way.

Transport: Bus 169 or 178 from city to The Spit and return ferry from Manly.

SOUTH HEAD HERITAGE TRAIL

Take a trip on famous Watsons Bay ferry and then follow the cobblestone road, past Lady Bay Beach (one of Sydney's few nudist beaches) before heading to candy-striped Hornby Lighthouse. Enjoy spectacular wraparound views of Middle Head, North Head and the Pacific Ocean. You can also explore historic gun emplacements, trenches and tunnels built in the 1870s, and from May to November keep your eyes peeled for whales.

Distance: 1.4km one way.

Time suggested: 1 hour each way.

Transport: Ferry or bus 324 or 325 from the city to Watsons Bay.

STILL WANT MORE?

Barrenjoey Lighthouse at Palm Beach, a 45-minute drive north of the city, is a 1km uphill slog to the lighthouse, which offers stunning ocean views. Take a picnic lunch and join locals relaxing in the sun.

MORE INFORMATION

nationalparks.nsw.gov.au
sculpturebythesea.com