

Fact Sheet



Brisbane

Brisbane is the hub of a diverse holiday region - a modern cosmopolitan city with a subtropical climate that is famous for its friendly charm. As Queensland's thriving capital city, Brisbane offers the very best in food, wine, arts, entertainment, shopping, and sporting events with relaxed sub-tropical flair.

Brisbane is the heart of an area bounded by surf beaches, mountain ranges and pristine subtropical rainforest. It is an ideal stepping-off point for day tours to glorious places like the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast. Head into the surrounding hinterland and wake up to the beauty of lush green forest and the warm hospitality of south-east Queensland country. And close to the city is Brisbane's own aquatic playground – Moreton Bay and Islands, the perfect place for water sports.

Attractions

Brisbane is a green city. Almost 25 per cent of its area is bushland. In all, the city has 9,500 hectares of bush and 1,500 parks and public gardens – making Brisbane an easy city to find a shady place to sit and watch the world go by. There's so much to see and do, and we can cater for your every mood from meandering by the river to the adrenaline rush of skydiving. For something different try a ghost or eco tour, or experience the view from the top, with a champagne breakfast balloon flight over the city.

Queensland Art Gallery

If art is your thing, first port of call should be the Queensland Art Gallery at South Bank. Aside from the excellent exhibitions, including a permanent collection, the price tag is also attractive; visiting is free! www.qag.qld.gov.au.

Queensland Museum

After the Art Gallery, be inspired by the ever-changing displays at the museum, located right next door. www.qmuseum.qld.gov.au.

Gallery of Modern Art

The Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA) is our premier visual arts institution and the newest in the cultural precinct. www.qag.qld.gov.au

Brisbane's cultural calendar features The Brisbane International Film Festival, Brisbane Writers Festival and Riverfestival – a weeklong event at the beginning of spring in celebration of our natural landmark, the Brisbane River.

South Bank Parklands

Walk through the 16-hectare South Bank Parklands – next door to the Queensland Art Gallery – and you will find the perfect spot to revel in our relaxed city. Tandem bicycles, available for hire, are a great way to get around the park.

City Botanic Gardens

Laze on the lawns with a good book, walk through the mangroves on the boardwalk, or enjoy a leisurely lunch in the licensed cafe at our City Botanic Gardens. If you have energy to burn, grab some rollerblades or hire a bike and get some exercise in the fresh air.

City Cat and River Cruises

Riding on a high-speed City Cat is an excellent way to see a different side of the city. The cats cruise 19 kilometres from St Lucia to Hamilton on the Brisbane River, and, for just a few dollars, you can ride with the wind in your hair for as long as you like. Step into history and take a cruise to the colonial prison on St Helena Island in Moreton Bay.

Story Bridge

Brisbane's Story Bridge links the inner city suburbs of Fortitude Valley and Kangaroo Point. A [Story Bridge Adventure Climb](#) will give you a different view of our city.

Have a picnic or BBQ under the bridge at [Captain Burke Park](#) or eat out at the historic [Story Bridge Hotel](#).

Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens

The [Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens](#) are only 7 kilometres from the CBD and feature a magnificent tropical display dome, Japanese gardens, themed gardens on 52 hectares and the Sir Thomas Brisbane Planetarium.

Shopping

Queen Street Mall

For serious shopping, you can't go by the Queen Street Mall with its 500 specialty stores. The Myer Centre alone has 200 shops and is the biggest inner-city retail complex in Australia. The most recent addition is the Queens Plaza with leading international brands, as well as emerging design talent.

Fortitude Valley

"The Valley" is a haven for the young and funky, hip and stylish. Centred on the junction of Brunswick & Ann Streets, this is the place to find cutting-edge wares and the work of emerging designers. The James Street and Emporium precincts are also great for boutique fashion labels and unique stores.

Milton & Paddington

For something quirky or arty, try chic boutiques in the suburbs of Milton and Paddington.

Oxford Street, Bulimba

A little further from the city in Brisbane's eastern suburbs, Oxford Street, in Bulimba, has some great shops and cafes. From funky home ware to affordable boutiques, Oxford Street caters for those with an individual style. The cafes, restaurants and delicatessens offer a range of quality cuisines, accommodating all budgets.

Markets

We are a crafty lot and our hidden talents are revealed at Brisbane's many markets. On Friday nights and all day Saturday and Sunday, the South Bank Parklands Lifestyle markets in Stanley Street Plaza buzz. All goods are handmade in Australia and you can browse to the sounds of nearby entertainment from the regular South Bank attractions.

On Saturdays the Brunswick Street Market, Fortitude Valley, offers treasures from the fringe: old records, vintage clothes and much more.

Sundays the city comes alive with the colourful, popular Riverside Markets located around the Riverside Centre and Eagle Street Pier.

Entertainment & Dining

Brisbane boasts a modern metro cuisine and a dining diversity you'd expect from this culturally colourful city. The atmosphere is alfresco with an emphasis on original menus focusing sharply on fresh food and wines. The Moreton Bay bugs (seafood) and fresh tropical produce are favourites that sit comfortably on menus next to exotic Asian delights, simple Mediterranean meals and traditional European fare. You'll find cafes, fast and fun noodle bars, and fine dining.

After dark, there is plenty of entertainment in Brisbane. Aside from the 24-hour casino, there are nightclubs, pubs and wine bars to socialise in and meet some friendly Brisbane locals. For staged performances, the Performing Arts Complex hosts theatre, opera and musical productions. Smaller theatre venues are dotted around the city. ShowBriz (<http://www.showbriz.com.au>) is the events and entertainment, ticket and accommodation guide to Brisbane.

The City

The Queen Street Mall's many alfresco restaurants offer European, Asian and modern Australia menus. Many of these eateries are also open late and are licensed. On Albert Street, the indoor and outdoor dining spaces offer everyday prices and cosmopolitan style. Eagle Street Pier and Riverside offer fine dining as well as slick new bars and casual pubs. Cafes are thriving throughout the city, and are perfect spots to take a rest between shopping expeditions.

Fortitude Valley

Fortitude Valley is renowned for its restaurants, lively bars and nightclubs. Just north of the city, you can enjoy everything from elegant restaurants, wine and tapas bars to cheap and cheerful food options. Fortitude Valley is home to Brisbane's Chinatown and there's a vast choice of restaurants and cafes featuring Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Malaysian food. Eateries stay open late, and there are great spots for breakfast and brunch.

New Farm

One of the city's oldest districts, New Farm, has undergone a revitalisation in recent years and is now youthful and vivacious. Brunswick and James Streets are the places to dine. New Farm is also home to the Powerhouse, a centre for performing arts that features entertainers from Australia and overseas. www.brisbanepowerhouse.org.

Milton

Clusters of cafes have emerged in the city and surrounds. We gather under the miniature Eiffel Tower at Park Road, one of the first cafe suburbs in Brisbane, to enjoy our coffee.

Eagle Street Pier

Rimming the river's northern banks and a few steps from the Queen Street Mall, Eagle Street Pier has some of Brisbane's most awarded restaurants and talented chefs. The decor of the restaurants is stylish and elegant, and there are spectacular river views.

South Bank

South Bank was formerly the site of World Expo '88 and is now a hub for recreation, cultural activities, entertainment, educational programs and dining just south of the city. Cafes and restaurants line the Promenade and Little Stanley Street. You can also cook your own food at one of the barbecues set in tranquil landscaped grounds.

Sport

From footy to cricket and horse races to triathlons, there's sport galore to take part in or watch from the sidelines. Get your running shoes on for one of the many charity walks held throughout the year.

Each year the Grand Prix Cycling Tour transforms the heart of Brisbane's South Bank into a vibrant, exciting event venue with international cycling action attracting the world's best male and female cyclists.

Getting Around Brisbane

Brisbane's international terminal is 13 kilometres from the city centre and the domestic terminal is a little further out. Bus, train and taxi services run regularly from each terminal. A taxi fare from the airport to the city is about \$20. Airtrain provides a direct link between Brisbane's central business district and the airport. www.airtrain.com.au

If you are in the city and looking for a free ride, catch the Downtown Loop – a service that circles the central business district. The loop's distinctive red buses stop at several convenient destinations including Central Station, Queen Street Mall, Botanic Gardens, Riverside Centre, QUT and King George Square. www.transinfo.qld.gov.au

Buses and trains link the city with surrounding suburbs. www.gr.com.au

Using the Brisbane River to get around is an excellent way to save time and take in some spectacular sights. The Brisbane River Experience Guide will help you plan your journey. Tel 13 12 30, www.transinfo.qld.gov.au

Climate

Our balmy climate is like a magnet. Just over half the state lies in the tropical zone and the southern half, including Brisbane, is temperate. In the temperate zone, the average maximum temperature is 25°C and the average minimum 15°C. It is truly the Sunshine State, with the gateway cities of Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville enjoying an average of 300 days of sunshine a year.

Beyond Brisbane

Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast is about 100 kilometres north of Brisbane – a heavenly stretch of white sandy beaches, crystal-clear waters, and rolling green mountains. From the charm of mountain towns like Montville and Maleny to the stunning beauty of the Glass House Mountains - a dramatic series of 13 volcanic crags rising into the sky, the Sunshine Coast is a favourite holiday spot for many Australians. Don't miss the dramatic surfing beaches stretched along the coastline, or the sophisticated cafe society and fabulous restaurants of Noosa. The Sunshine Coast is best known for its perfect weather and sensational surf.

Noosa Heads

Set on the edge of Noosa National Park and Laguna Bay, Noosa Heads exudes chic in its shopping, food and places to stay. From the township's heart of Hastings Street, you are only a short distance from the Noosa National Park, the Noosa River Everglades, and Cooloola National Park. Take off from here for a four-wheel-driving jaunt to Fraser Island.

Fraser Island

Just off the coast from Queensland's Hervey Bay is the World Heritage-listed Fraser Island, the largest sand island in the world (120 kilometres long and 30 kilometres across) and the only place on the planet where rainforest grows on sand. It took more than 800,000 years to create this unique natural environment. Fraser Island has pure freshwater lakes, crystal-clear creeks, wonderful swimming rock pools and amazing coloured sand formations known as The Cathedrals. Fraser Island has many bird species and its warm waters attract dugong, dolphins and turtles. Magnificent humpback whales, with their young, pass on the western side of the island between August and November.

Gold Coast

70-kilometres of rolling surf and sandy beaches stretch from South Stradbroke Island to Cabarita. This is the glorious Gold Coast and it's only one hour's drive south of Brisbane. With 35 beaches, patrolled year-round by professional surf lifesavers, the Gold Coast is dedicated to fun. A centre of non-stop activity and entertainment – heart thumping theme parks, sophisticated shopping, a thriving cafe society centred on outdoor dining and nightlife – the Gold Coast is a favourite playground.

The Gold Coast hosts the Indy Car motor-racing carnival, the Magic Millions horseracing carnival, and dozens of iron-man and iron-woman competitions. There is always a reason to get your joggers on and join in. But if you need a break from the sun and action, you can escape to the magical Gold Coast rainforest-clad hinterland – a short drive, but another world away.

Hinterland

Head inland from Brisbane, and the laidback country style of south-east Queensland is waiting. Pretty inland cities, like Toowoomba and Warwick, are complemented by boutique wineries, national parks, breathtaking scenery, and friendly shopping.

Go adventuring in the hinterland and you'll sample wines straight from the cellar door, indulge your tastebuds with locally produced fruits, olive oil and cheeses, or find yourself fossicking for gold and precious stones. Romantic bed-and-breakfast accommodation, country cottages and farm stays abound, and the hospitality is among the warmest you'll find in Australia.

Islands of Southern Queensland

Splash into Moreton Bay for some refreshing recreation – sailing, fishing, whale watching, and cruising. The vast beaches and tiny communities of North Stradbroke Island, lovingly known as "Straddie", offer the perfect escape. Although mostly undeveloped, South Stradbroke Island can accommodate you in award winning 5-star eco style. On Moreton Island, you'll discover the world's highest coastal sand dune, dive on shipwrecks and feed wild dolphins visiting the shores at Tangalooma Resort.

Useful Websites

www.australia.com

www.ourbrisbane.com

www.queenslandholidays.com