

Bondi to Manly fully-supported self-guided walk

'Spectacularly draped around its glorious harbour and beaches, Sydney has visual wow factor like few other cities. Scratch the surface and it only gets better' Lonely Planet, 2018.

This marvellous five-day, fully-supported self-guided walk takes you around one of the most stunning waterways in the world, presenting the very best of this exceptional city: the best the walks, the best the beaches, the best parks, the best food and the best accommodation (in fact, you will experience *all* ten of Lonely Planet's 'Sydney Top 10').

Starting at glorious Bondi Beach, it takes you walk above sandstone cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean before reaching South Head (the grand entrance to Sydney Harbour). The marked trails then lead you around Sydney Harbour, past islands, hidden bays and beaches, through national parks, botanic gardens and the glamorous residential suburbs that fringe the southern and northern shores of the bay before finishing at the golden sands of Manly Beach.

Staying in 'king' rooms in 4-star accommodation each night, you will have the opportunity to explore the city's colourful history, vibrant cultural life and rich gastronomic traditions (along the walk you will pass some of the city's finest, and best-situated, restaurants). You will also spend a night in the heart in the centre of the CBD, with access to theatres, art galleries and cinemas as well as the celebrated Sydney Harbour Bridge Climb. As a special treat, we include an night with dinner at Sydney's celebrated Taronga Zoo's 4-star eco-retreat.

This is an all-year-round walk. Although it does get hot in the summer (getting up to the high thirties) there is plenty of shade along the way and many wonderful places to swim each day. We recommend, if possible, doing the walk during the week to avoid the weekend crowds, particularly in the warmer seasons.

The accommodation:

The getaway includes four nights' accommodation: the first night is at pretty Watsons Bay at the beginning of the harbour. The second night is in a beautiful hotel in the heart of the city, overlooking the Opera House, the ferries of Circular Quay and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The third night is an elegant eco-retreat in Sydney's famous Taronga Zoo. The final night is in a luxurious boutique hotel (originally built as a stately home in 1886) in the fashionable suburb of Mosman. *Please note, additional accommodation at the beginning (Bondi) and end of the walk (Manly) can be organised on request.*

The food:

The tour includes breakfast each day as well as two dinners (on the first and third nights). We have included recommendations for lunch and dinner in the notes and are happy to assist with bookings. Along the walk you will pass many beautiful bay and beach cafes and restaurants, where you'll be able to stop for a coffee or lunch. You will also pass delicatessens and produce shops where you can get provisions for each day's walk if you prefer a waterside picnic lunch.

The walks:

The eighty-kilometre walk is regularly marked. Navigation is straightforward. It generally follows good, well-maintained pathways through national parks, suburban streets and along beaches. There are occasional sets of stairs but no sustained climbs. The only challenge will be the distance of the walks (see the itinerary for details). Comfortable, good quality walking shoes will suffice, boots aren't necessary.

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Day 1:

The walk starts from Bondi Beach, Australia's most famous beach. Setting out from pavilion behind the beach, you head north, weaving through suburban streets before following a trail through parklands along sandstone cliffs to South Head, the spectacular southern gateway into Sydney Harbour. Your accommodation and dinner are in an historic hotel overlooking pretty Watsons Bay. 10 kms, 3 hrs.

Day 2:

Today is the longest, but possibly the most interesting, walk of your getaway that takes along the southern shore of the harbour through some of the most glamorous suburbs in the city, past pretty beaches and parklands, the colourful Kings Cross district, the New South Wales Art Gallery, the beautiful Botanical Gardens to your hotel in Circular Quay in the city centre, flanked by the Sydney Opera House and the Harbour Bridge. 21 kms, 4.5 hrs.

Day 3

This morning you walk cross the celebrated Sydney Harbour Bridge and follow a trail which takes that skirts around the bays, beaches and parks of the exclusive suburbs of Kirribilli, Cremorne and Mosman to Sydney's famous Taronga Zoo, a parkland zoo with sweeping views back over the city that is dedicated to scientific conservation, education and preservation. Your accommodation and dinner tonight is in the Zoo's own elegant eco-retreat hotel (tickets to visit the zoo will be included). 13 kms, 3.5 hrs,

Day 4:

Today's walk is quite short, which will leave you the morning free to visit the Zoo, if you wish. The walk takes you through Sydney Harbour National Park, beautiful bushland trails that skirt around the shore with beautiful views across the harbour to the south, via Middle Head, a spectacular lookout point with breathtaking views across to North Head, South Head and out into the Pacific Ocean, finishing at pretty Balmoral Beach. From here, you will be transferred to your accommodation, a boutique hotel in upmarket Mosman, ten minutes' drive away.

Day 5:

You will be transferred back to Balmoral Beach for the final walk, a gorgeous route that crosses the Spit Bridge and wraps around the hidden beaches and stunning national park bushland of Clontarf and Balgowlah Heights before bringing you out to laid-back Manly, dominated by its bustling Corso and a magnificent two kilometre long beach on golden sand, lined by Norfolk Pines.