



THE HARBOUR CITY

SYDNEY

From sailing to bridge scaling, Australia's biggest city has everything you need to end the tour on a high



WHETHER YOU arrive in Sydney by road, rail or sky, the effect when you first set eyes on the harbour is equally

mesmerising. In the Harbour Bridge and Opera House, the city has two of the world's most iconic structures, and a close examination of both should be on your to-do list.

The bridge was designed by a Middlesbrough company and built largely with English steel, its famous 'coat-hanger' arch structure enabling it to bear more load.

You'll discover a host of fascinating facts when climbing the steps to the bridge's 134-metre apex (see panel), but the one you mustn't forget comes prior to getting there - don't drink beforehand because all climbers are breath-tested.

The view from the top is breathtaking and it's worth visiting the museum, which features a film on its construction set to stirring music. The museum in the south-east pylon is just more of the same, so best to skip it.

The bridge is found in **The Rocks** area, where Sydney first took root when being founded as a British penal colony in 1788.

Darling Harbour is the leisure and entertainment area, including the world's biggest cinema screen at the IMAX theatre - eight storeys



ANZ STADIUM

Built for the 2000 Games, the third-Test venue drew a crowd of 109,874 for a Bledisloe clash. Capacity was later cut to 83,500

high. Outside the Maritime Museum can be found **Sydney by Sail** (sydneybysail.com), which runs three-hour sails round the harbour. Sights include the Opera House, Taronga Zoo, a ship bought from the Royal Navy to use if the floods recur, and **Fort Denison**, a former jail (prisoners would be chained to a post for weeks) that is now a restaurant accessible only by boat.

Not long ago, there was a race with 200-odd swimmers in one of the bays. It emerged later that the Government had been monitoring 14 bull sharks in the harbour on the same day!

Winter daytime temperatures seldom dip below 14°C, so head east to the beach. **Bondi** is the

most famous, Manly also popular. Go west and you'll hit the **Blue Mountains**, a World Heritage site that gets its blue hue from oil-bearing eucalyptus trees.

The final Lions Test takes place at **ANZ Stadium** and a tour there (stadiumtour.com.au) grants an insight into the technology that

DID YOU KNOW?

Many think Sydney is Australia's capital as it's the biggest city (4.6m). But Canberra has that distinction after being created 100 years ago as a compromise, Sydney and Melbourne unable to reach agreement

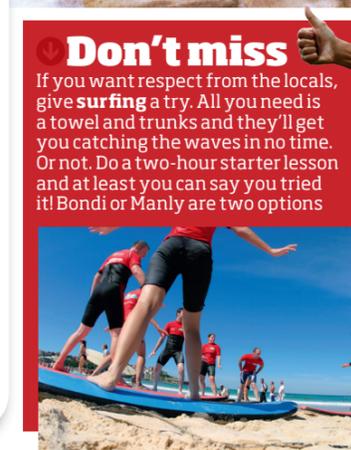
allows them to move seats in and out and thus shape the ground for rugby, soccer, AFL or cricket. There's a 'signature wall' signed by Jonny and Johnno (U2 refused

to sign), while the Rabbitohs, RL tenants, have their own changing room paid for by Russell Crowe.

Our guide was as grumpy as a flea-bitten mule, but it's an impressive setting to bring the curtain down on the Lions tour.



Bridge over untroubled water: a great view - and it's even better from the top



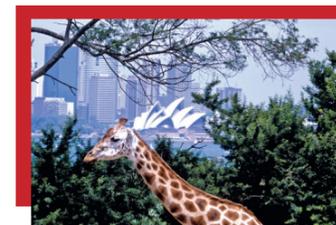
Don't miss

If you want respect from the locals, give surfing a try. All you need is a towel and trunks and they'll get you catching the waves in no time. Or not. Do a two-hour starter lesson and at least you can say you tried it! Bondi or Manly are two options



Wind power: take a sailing trip around the harbour to see all the sights

National icon: Sydney Opera House is a performing arts centre of world renown



Don't miss

Animal watching isn't just for kids. For a zoo with a view, visit Taronga on the shores of Sydney Harbour (taronga.org.au). It's home to 340 species and a sister to Dubbo Zoo, just as good but a lengthy six-hour drive out into NSW country

What to do



1 Have a beer at **Sydney Rugby Club** in Pitt Street, a members' club that is "a home for anybody who supports rugby". It used to be the offices of the ARU and it houses the tables where the creation of the Rugby World Cup was drafted! See rugbyclub.com.au



2 They're building a new casino but for now there's only one place to go - The Star in Pyrmont. From poker to roulette, it's 24-hour gambling action. And if you win at the tables, celebrate at a signature restaurant: BLACK by Ezzard (above) is probably the best



3 Don't even think of giving this a miss - climbing **Sydney Harbour Bridge** is mandatory (bridgeclimb.com). Opened in 1932, it's the world's largest steel-arch bridge. There are four climbs and four times of day to choose from, and you even get a nice certificate

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