

Sydney – Self Guided Walks

Introduction

Sydney is a great place to explore on foot whatever your interests: Architecture, history, scenery or wildlife – mostly within a short ferry ride from Circular Quay. Below are a selection of walks that are complimentary to the suggestions for spotting wildlife and eating out.

Suggested Walks

Each of the walks below can be completed in a couple of hours (not including getting to and from the start point or any stops for food & drink) and can be extended or combined with visiting other places of interest and other accessed via other transport modes.

#	Walk	Transport mode	Best from
1	Walking tour of The Rocks	Walk	City
2	North Shore: Cremorne to Mosman wharf	Ferry	City
3	North Head , Q Station, North Head Lookout, military barracks and Shelly Beach	Bus	Manly or City
4	Watsons Bay, South Head & the Gap	Ferry	City
5	Kings Cross to Opera House via Woolloomooloo , Royal Botanical Gardens and the Domain	Train	City
6	Hunters Bay : Taronga Zoo (Athol Wharf) to Balmoral Beach via Bradley's Head and Middle Head	Ferry & Bus	City or Manly
7	Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park : West Head for scenery, aboriginal carvings and wildlife	Car ½ day	Manly or City
8	Blue Mountains National Park : Three Sisters to Scenic World walk and other places of interest	Car Full day	City

Please note: The Google map snapshots below and smart phone GPS mapping you might use are primarily road maps that do not accurately show walking paths, rights of way, other obstacles such as impenetrable bushland or cliffs. For public transport times I recommend the **Trip View** smart phone app. Buses, trains and ferries run on reduced frequencies (or not at all) at weekends and public holidays.

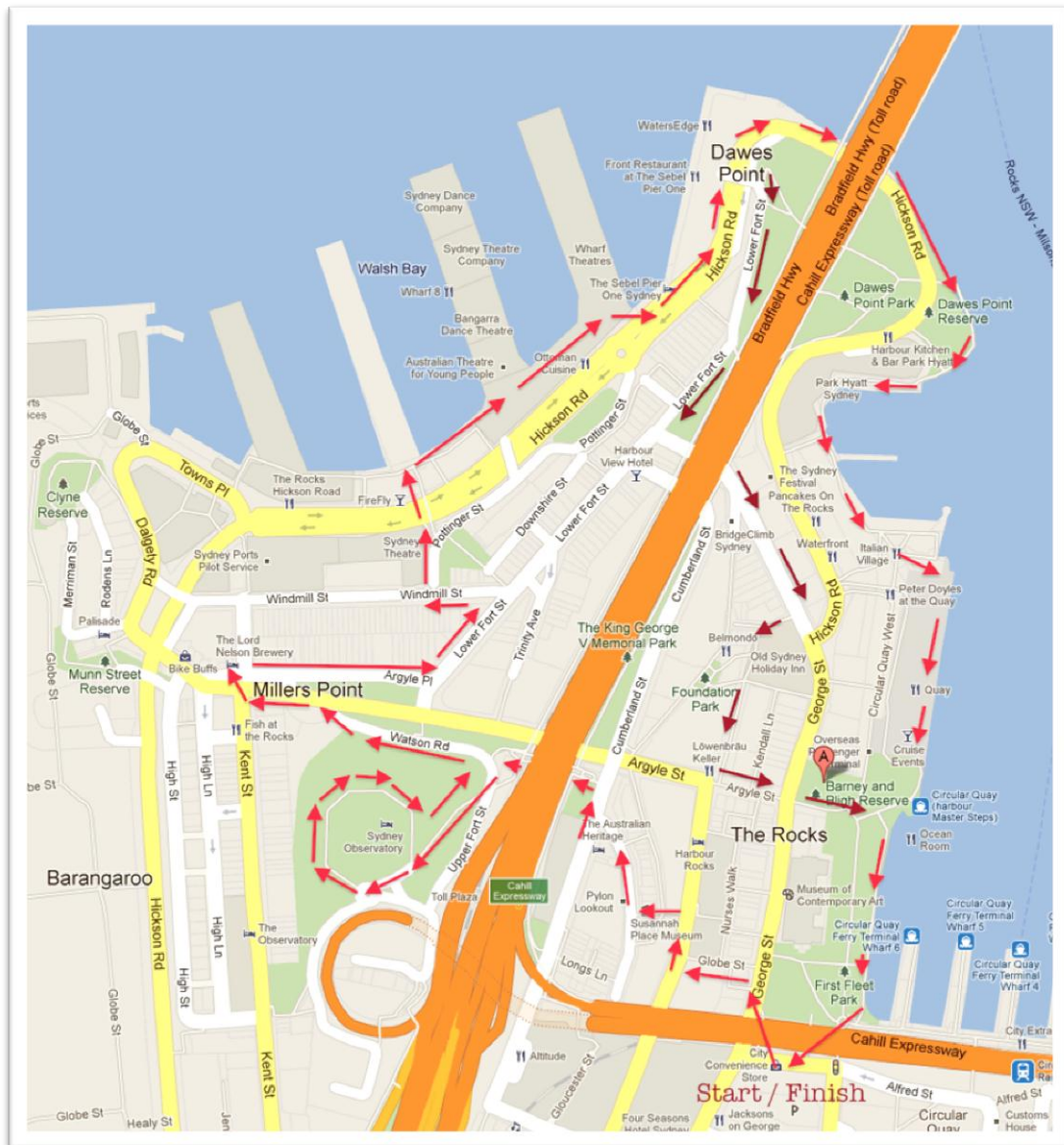
Location Guide



Walk 1: The Rocks

Starting at the corner of Alfred and George Streets, Circular Quay head up George Street for 100 metres, take steps on left (Globe St) up to Harrington Street, and then up more steps to Cambridge St and **Suzannah Place Museum** (visit if open) and at end of street, The **Australian Hotel**, head towards the Harbour Bridge but not as far as the **Glenmore Hotel**, take the underpass to **Observatory Hill**, visit the observatory if you have time. This open space is a good alternative to the **Royal Botanical Gardens** for viewing the NYE fireworks (as is the roof top bar of the Glenmore Hotel if you can get in!). From Observatory Hill walk down Watson Street, at the intersection of Kent and Argyle Streets you will find the **Lord Nelson**. Retrace your steps along Argyle Place to Lower Fort Street, at Windmill Street you will find the **Hero of Waterloo**. Walk down Windmill Street to steps at Pottinger Street and down to the finger wharfs of Walsh Bay, one of which houses the **Sydney Theatre Company** and dance studios with a nice arty bar/cafe inside. The finger wharfs are now a mix of commercial and residential accommodation with bars and restaurants on the inner side facing the water. Hickson Road continues around and underneath the Harbour Bridge and back to the Rocks via the Park Hyatt boardwalk, Campbell's Bond Stores (more restaurants) and the

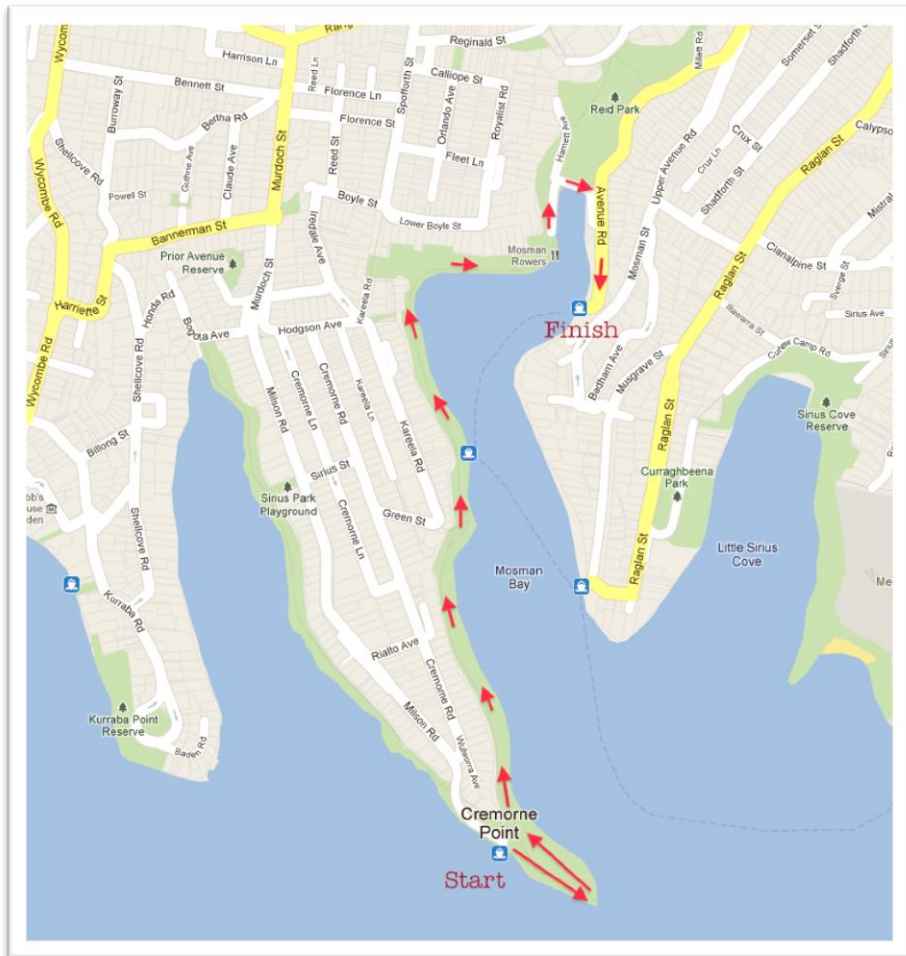
Overseas Passenger Terminal (Doyles Restaurant and many other fine dining opportunities with views of the Opera House). Alternatively stay on the western side of the bridge follow the road up to the top of George Street and the Harbour View Hotel almost underneath the bridge. The entrance to **Bridge Climb** is close by on Cumberland Street. George Street has a number of popular pubs including the Mercantile, and **Phillips Foote** mentioned for its cook your own BBQ. Be sure to explore the laneways off and around Playfair Street (The **Lowenbrau Keller** is on the corner of Playfair and Argyle Streets). Note: From Argyle Street there are steps up to the Glenmore and Australian hotels.



Walk 2: Cremorne to Mossman Wharf

Grade: Easy, around 1 hour, plus ferry each way. Catch Mosman ferry from Circular Quay; get off at first stop – Cremorne. From wharf turn right up steps and follow path to Cremorne Point and harbor light. Taronga Zoo can be seen across the water of Athol Bay on left hand side. Retrace steps to park and follow right hand path to Mosman. Enjoy architecture of 1900's houses and Federation style apartments. This charming walk was not always like this see the plaques about who created the gardens and the earlier history of coal and gas industries on the North Shore.

Mosman Bay is full of expensive boats at anchor through which the ferry weaves from side to side as it makes its way down Mosman Bay. Just before the wharf is the Mosman Rowers Club. As with all clubs in NSW a bona fide visitor may enter, eat & drink providing you can show ID with proof of normal residential address and fill in a visitor slip at door. Whilst the ferry wharf is just opposite you must go to the head of the bay and walk around the park so allow 10-15 minutes if you intent to catch the next ferry back to Circular Quay. This walk can be extended by catching bus 230 (buses meet all ferries) to Mosman village for up-market shopping boutiques or by walking to either Taronga or Neutral Bay wharfs.



Walk 3: North Head

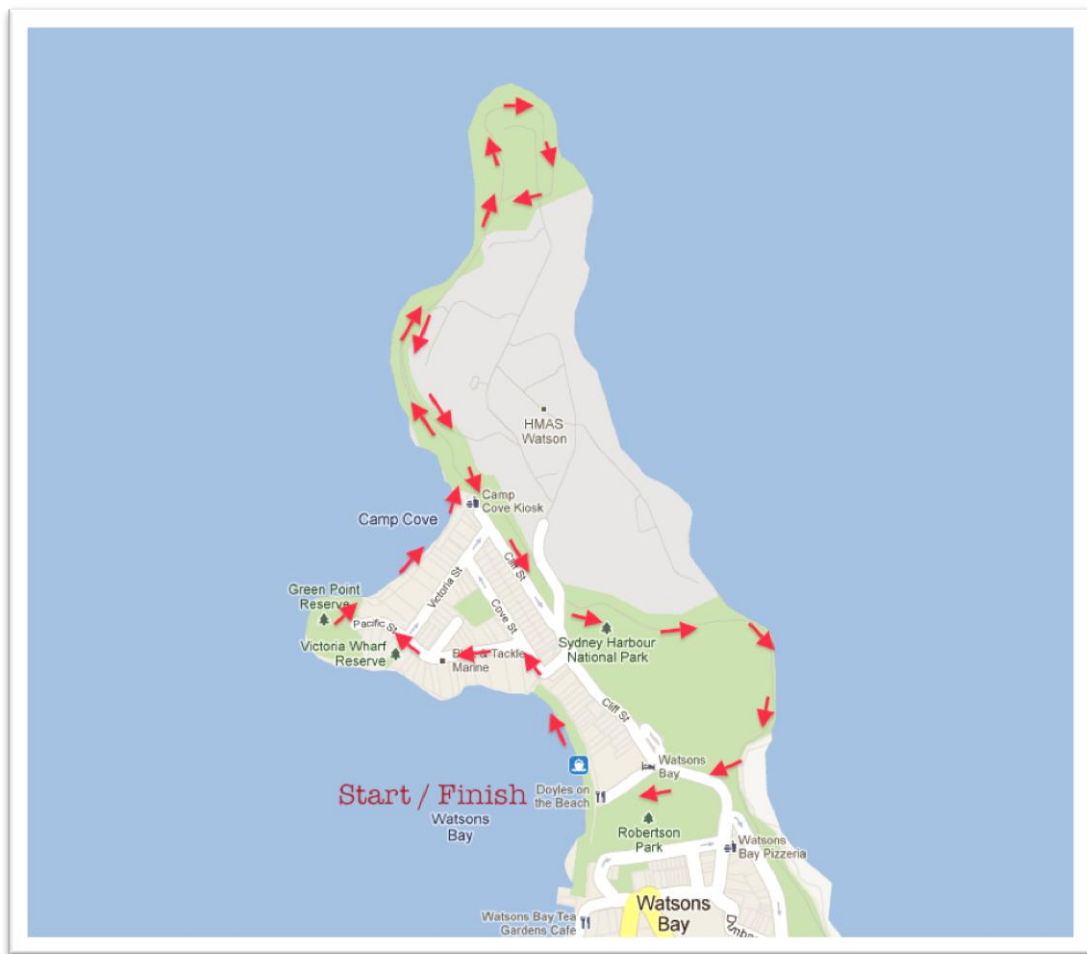
From the Manly ferry wharf either catch bus 136 to Manly Hospital or walk along esplanade to **Little Manly Cove**, Spring Cove then up Collins Beach Road to the North Head Scenic Drive walk to the entrance of the **Q Station** (unfortunately I am told there is no direct access at water level) take a tour, eat in the café or just explore the grounds. Alternatively for paying guests and visitors there is a complimentary **shuttle bus** around the grounds, and to/from Manly Wharf.

From the Q Station entrance cross over to the military compound and follow the path to the **North Head** lookout (don't walk on the Scenic Drive as it is not particularly scenic and is dangerous) take the Fairfax nature trail loop if time permits or re-enter the military reserve and explore the camp to pick up the path with a great view of the Northern Beaches to **Shelly Beach** and then back to Manly via the Corso and to the Ferry Wharf. PS the large building that dominates the skyline is St Patrick's College, now a hospitality School, I believe that Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban got married there.



Walk 4: Watsons Bay

Take ferry from Circular Quay, from the wharf turn left and walk along the small beach to Short Street, follow Pacific Street to Laings Point, Camp Cove and head of walkway to **South Head**, pass Lady Bay Beach (nude bathing permitted) and on to South Head light keepers cottage and fine views of City and harbour. Continue to the **Hornby Light** and follow the loop path back to Watsons Bay. From the wharf walk up through the park to **The Gap** and the **Dunbar Memorial** for the passengers and crew that lost their lives here in the 1800's. Eat at any of the establishments or takeaways that take your fancy. Buses run from here to Bondi, Bondi Junction or City, if you take the 235 ask to be dropped off at **Vacluse House** for more yesteryear grandeur, or of course return to City by Ferry.

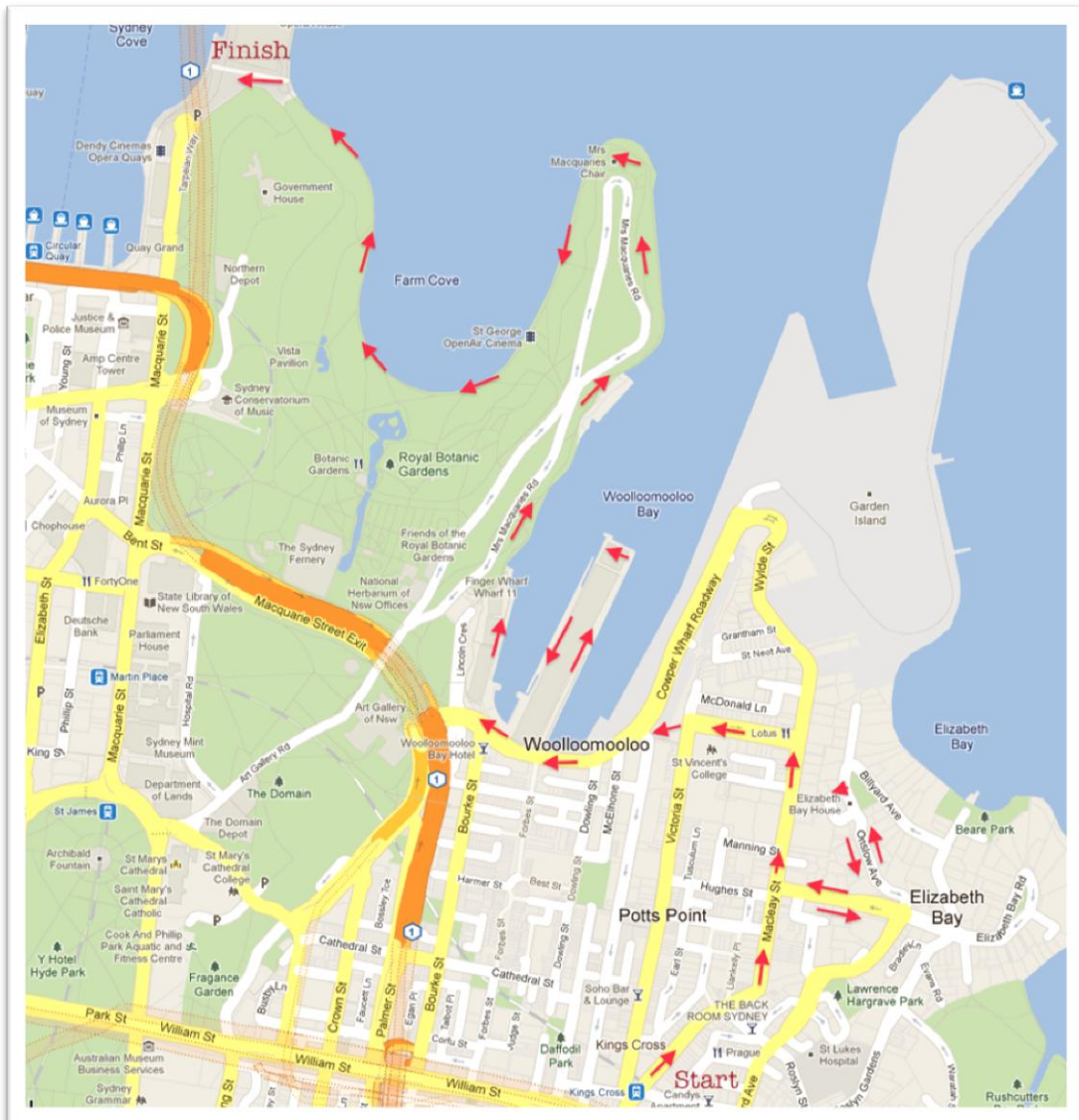


Walk 5: Kings Cross to Opera House

Take an eastern suburbs train to **Kings Cross** walk down Darlinghurst Road to view the clubs and bars. This used to be the sleaze and porn district, but it is now very tame and very policed. Tucked away in a back street is **Elisabeth Bay House** on Onslow Avenue inspect if you have time and it is open. Retrace your steps to Macleay Street take short detour to Manning Street to view the headquarters of the architects association, a colonial classic. If **Garden Island Naval Base** is open or a visiting warship is open for inspection at the fleetbase continue down Macleay Street to the dockyard gates, otherwise take shortcut via Challis Avenue and McElhone Stairs to **Woolloomooloo** and **Harry's Café De Wheels**. The heritage listed finger wharfs are now home to up-market hotels, apartments and restaurants; you can walk through the centre of the buildings and around the outside decks before proceeding to the **Domain**, past the Boy Charlton Swimming Pool, and on to Mrs Macquarie's Chair (This is the best free spot in town to see NYE fireworks, but it fills up early with the picnic set). The path continues to the heart of the **Royal Botanical Gardens**, take time to explore the full extent of the gardens including the tropical hot houses and spot the **flying foxes** at roost or just follow the foreshore walk to the **Opera House**. The Opera House actually has a number of auditoriums for plays, dance, concerts and of course opera, so there is always something going on. Catherine likes the Opera House Bar that is on the underground walkway between the Quay and the main building.

Macquarie Street starts at the Opera House and heads uphill past the entrances to the gardens, the Domain (a short walk across the Domain the NSW Art Gallery), the State Library (see entrance foyer for excellent terrazzo depiction of the southern hemisphere), NSW Parliament, the Sydney (Rum) Hospital and **Hyde Park** (Convict) **Barracks** on the edge of Hyde Park. For the best view of the harbour for the price of a coffee the café on level 13 of the Federal and Supreme Courts building is hard to beat. Entry is free and food moderately priced (weekdays only) but you do have to go through the ubiquitous scanning and bag check.

This walk could be combined with a trip to **Bondi Beach** via Bondi Junction (end of the eastern suburbs rail line and then bus 380 to the beach). Bondi is the largest and most famous of the Sydney beaches, but it gets very crowded. Much better is the cliff walk from **Bondi** to **Coogee** via **Tamarama** and **Bronte** beaches. All of these suburbs are connected by bus to Bondi Junction, unfortunately you have just missed **Sculptures by the Sea** but it is still a great walk.



Walk 6: Taronga to Balmoral Beach (Hunters Bay)

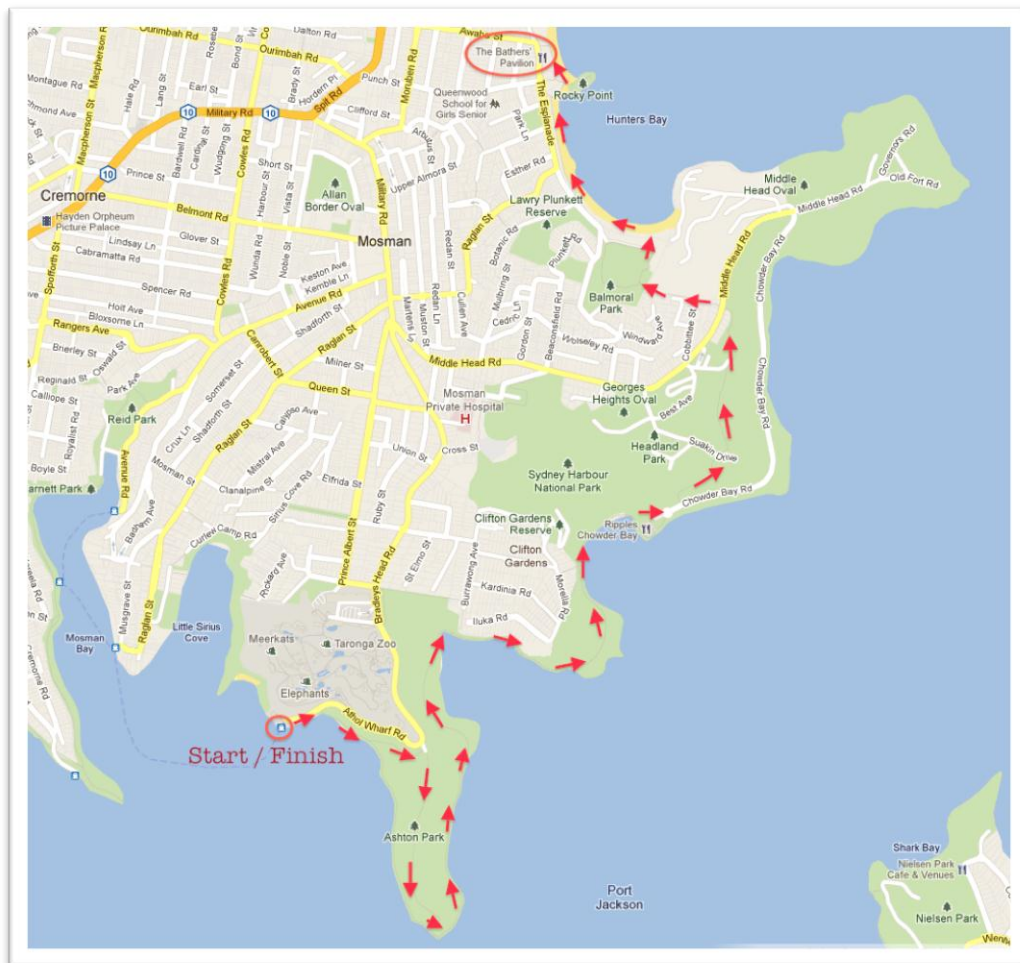
This is the toughest walk in this guide with lots of ups and downs that requires a full half-day to complete, or you could just catch the bus to Balmoral Beach to view **Hunters Bay**. A major draw-card is the Bathers' Pavilion that has two restaurants overlooking the beach as an alternative to the fish & chips previously suggested (Corner of Raglan St and the Esplanade). One of the Pavilion restaurants does not take bookings is moderately priced and very popular.

Bus 238 meets the Taronga ferry and it is a short 15 minute ride to the terminus directly outside the Bathers' Pavilion on the Esplanade (the bus does divert down some side streets, but eventually emerges at the beach).

The Walking trail begins about 200 metres up the road from Athol Wharf, follow this to **Bradley's Head** for views of the Harbour. The path continues to Chowder Bay where there is a refreshment kiosk, you are now in the remnants of the military reserve, Chowder Bay Road continues to Middle Head or there is a shortcut which climbs the hill above you to Suakin Drive. **Middle Head** includes WW2 gun emplacements and fine views of Manly, North & South Heads etc. Walk back along Middle Head Road past the HMAS Penguin compound looking for a footpath on the right down to Balmoral, the beach and a well-earned rest. PS Also opposite Penguin is 'Burnt Orange' -

A boutique cafe and retail operation located in the historic golf clubhouse on Middle Head Peninsula. The Burnt Orange concept emanates from Irish company Avoca, widely recognised as one of Europe's most stylish retailers and purveyors of fine foods.

If you eat at Burnt Orange and don't want to visit Balmoral you can return directly to Taronga wharf on bus 238 that emerges from Beaconsfield Avenue on to Middle Head Road. Other bus services from Clifton Gardens and Balmoral run via Mosman, Spit Junction and then to City, but may be commuter services that run infrequently and not at all at weekends.



Walk 7: Ku Ring Gai National Park

By car drive north up Pittwater Road from Manly past the Northern Beaches, visit any one of them for surfing action and the occasional surf carnival. At Mona Vale the main road become Barrenjoey Road, whilst Pittwater Rd becomes a turn-off to the main road! If you stay on the main road you eventually arrive at Barrenjoey Head and Lighthouse (which can also be viewed from West Head). The ocean beach and surf life saving clubhouse is a location for the Australian TV Soap 'Home and Away' and they can often be seen filming here. On the Pittwater side there is boat hire, kiosk and a pontoon for the flying boat for joy flights over Sydney and the northern waterways.

Continuing on Pittwater Road it arrives at **Church Point** for views of **Pittwater** and **Scotland Island**. We used to know a family that lived there. There are no roads or cars on the island and everything must be carried to or from the island by small boat (tinnies as they call them and you will see racks them around the wharf area).

From Church Point the road becomes McCarrs Creek Road as it winds its way around the head of the creek and into the bushland adjacent to the National Park. After about 3KM there is a turning to the right for West Head and a second right turn another 2KM further on. After paying your park entrance fee the road runs directly to West Head. On either side you will see signed walking paths, look out for America Bay and The Basin Tracks for the return trip. There is a small rangers cabin, toilet block and BBQ's about 0.5KM before the end of the road. At **West Head** take in the views keep your eyes open for the wildlife. Back at the BBQ area there is a short walk to **Red Hand Cave** to see the hand stencils made a long while ago. Returning to the **Basin Track**, it is only ten-minute walk to the **aboriginal rock carvings**, they are best seen at dawn or dusk so that shadows outline the carvings. They are reputed to be thousands of years old and certainly made by people who populated this land for centuries before the arrival of the Europeans. The **America Bay** walk is only around 2KM and it ends at a viewing point above the bay and does not go down to the water, so no steep climb back. It also has some aboriginal carvings on rocky sandstone outcrops.

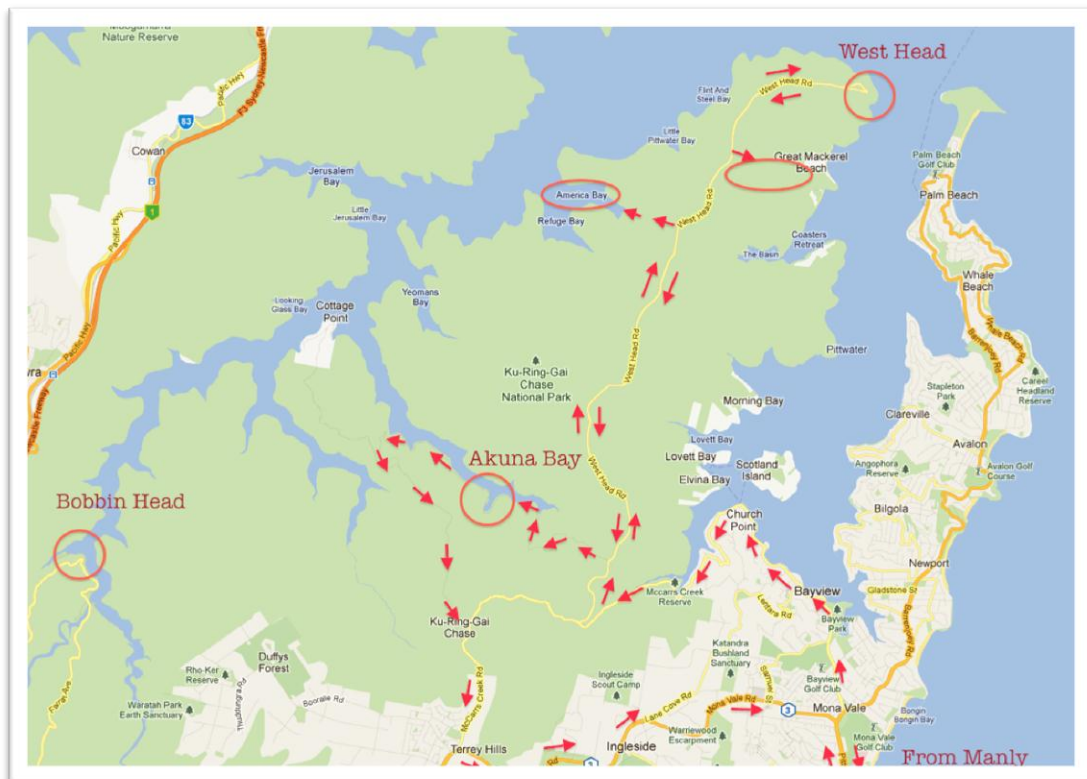
PS The Basin Track continues to The Basin camping grounds and also Currawong Beach, via the Mackerel Track, where there is a small community that pre-dates the National Park. Both are connected to Palm Beach by infrequent ferry. Palm Beach is also the starting point for the Hawkesbury River postman service. The recent film 'The Oyster Farmer' should be seen for a better appreciation of the mighty Hawkesbury River.

The drive can continue to Akuna Bay, a marina complex (food and drink available) on Liberator General San Martin Drive and (Cottage Point, which

is scenic but better seen from the water). Liberator Drive returns to McCarrs Creek Road, which connect with Mona Vale Road at Terrey Hills. You can either return to the Northern Beaches or continue to explore more of the park, namely Bobbin Head, but to do so you must head back into suburbia as there are no internal link roads, which is why this National Park is so popular boaters.

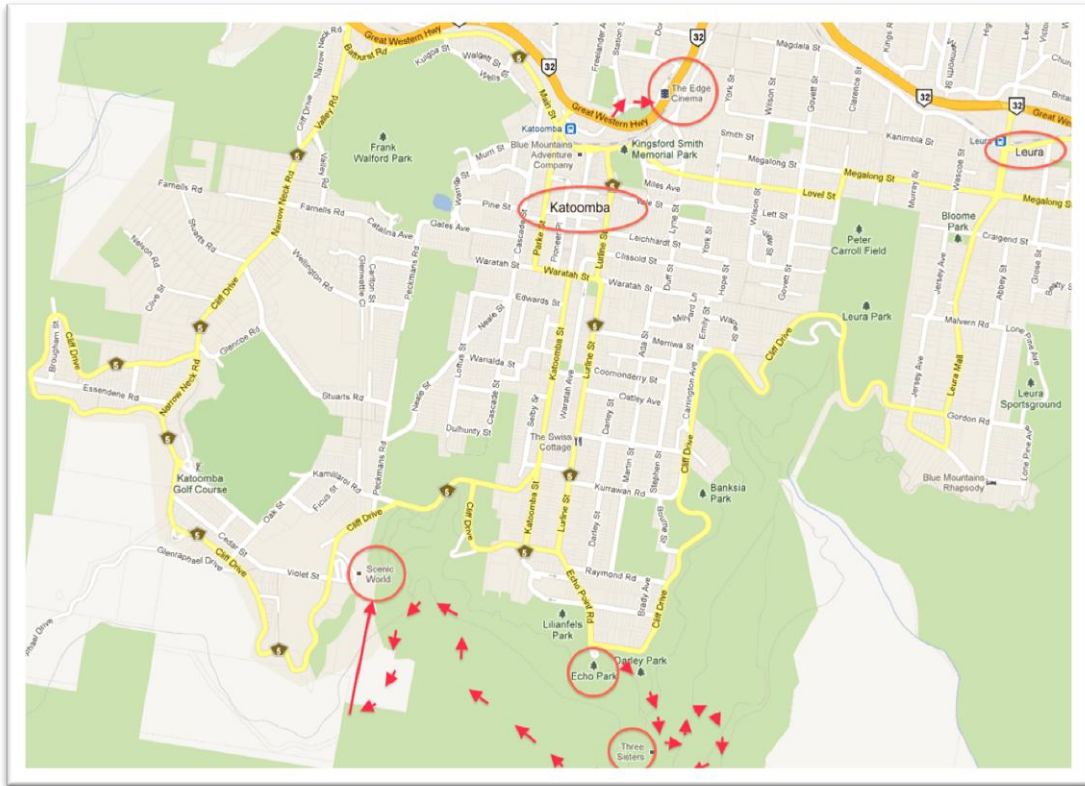
Travel along Mona Vale Road towards Pymble, change to the Pacific Highway (north bound) and drive 2KM to Bobbin Head Road, a right turn, then around 8KM north through North Turramurra and re-enter the park (fee paid). Just past the gatehouse is the **Sphinx Memorial** carved by a veteran of the First World War who was convalescing nearby. The Sphinx Track is a very enjoyable walk to Bobbin Head and takes about 2 hours, which would be handy if there was a car waiting at Bobbin Head! There are a number of boat hire and kiosks at Bobbin Head and more aboriginal carvings that can be accessed via the suspension bridge at the head of the picnic grounds.

If staying in the City return to the Pacific Highway and head south over the Harbour Bridge. The shortest distance to Manly is to turn off the Pacific Highway at Boundary Road before Chatswood and follow the signs to Brookvale but turn right onto the Wakehurst Parkway just after Frenches Forest. This in turn leads to Seaforth and then Sydney Road to Manly.



Walk 8: Blue Mountains National Park

Katoomba is the principal town of the Blue Mountains about 2 hours west of Sydney. Stops can be made at the **Featherdale Wildlife Park**, **Penrith White Water Centre** and **Euroka Clearing**. Most people head straight for the **Three Sisters** and the **Jameson Valley** lookout, but I recommend visiting the Edge Cinema first (check for times of the movie the 'Edge' before setting out to minimize delay). The adventurous can take the Giants Staircase down to the valley and walk to the foot of the Scenic Railway (pay on exit) or slog back up a few hundred steps. **Scenic World** is a full-on tourist spot on the Blue Mountains hop-on hop-off Tour Bus route, but someone waiting in a car would be better as it is a long hike back along the cliff path to the starting point (but is a good walk in its own right) or to walk back into town (not recommended). There are many more great walks in the mountains and plenty of detailed guidebooks available if you want to see more.



Are you ready?

Whatever the size of walk a little planning and preparation can go a long way to making an enjoyable day even if things don't go according to plan.

- Are you fit and healthy?
- Do you have a sunhat and sunscreen?
- A lightweight rain jacket can be handy at anytime in Sydney
- Do carry a water bottle and drink regularly in the summer

- Take the best map or guide you can find
- Don't walk alone and leave word of your intended route
- And remember to take a mobile phone; the Australian emergency number is 000 (mobile coverage is not guaranteed in the bush)

More information

Let me know if you want a more detailed description of the military installations, history etc., for example the 1942 Japanese midget submarine attack or anything else you want more detail on.

Don't forget the camera and have a great time!

Version 1.0