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## Follow the NSW 'Whale Trail' this winter

From May to November the waters along the NSW coastline will become a living, moving spectacle as more than 20,000 whales make their annual migration. This winter follow a do-it-yourself whale trail along 2000km of scenic coastline between the Tweed and Eden offering a multitude of vantage points and experiences to spot these majestic mammals.

NSW Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres said: "Whale watching is one of the most popular activities for visitors to Sydney and NSW, with more than 237,000 visitors enjoying a whale or dolphin experience in 2015\*. The state boasts a huge variety of whale watching opportunities from islands, lighthouses, lookouts, foreshores and national parks right along the coast," he said.

Destination NSW CEO Sandra Chipchase added "I encourage everyone to take full advantage of this special time of year and go whale watching in NSW. Don't miss The Eden Whale Festival which is held on the last weekend of October celebrating the annual migration offering visitors the chance to have a close encounter with a whale, while enjoying Eden's stunning natural environment and rich whale history."

Here are 10 suggestions from Destination NSW to include on a NSW Winter Whale Trail:

1. - Spend a couple of days whale watching from one of the 1920-1950's eco-certified beach shacks in the Cape Byron Conservation Area. **Imeson, Mildenhall** and **Thomson Cottages** are nestled between the bush and the beach at The Pass and boast breathtaking views right out to sea. The nearby **Assistant and Head Lighthouse Keeper's Cottages** are perched on the headland adjacent to the Cape Byron Lighthouse, the most eastern point in Australia to see whales as they pass by
2. - In the **Camden Haven** area south of **Port Macquarie**, walk through **Kattang Nature Reserve** to **Perpendicular Point** to spot the passing whales. Wander along the 9km **Port Macquarie Coastal Walk**, where boardwalks and viewing platforms hug the coastline to the historic **Tacking Point Lighthouse**, looking for tell-tale signs of whales passing - breaching, tale splashing and water spouts. The 10-metre catamaran **Pacific Explorer** makes daily whale watching trips to the nearby **Solitary Islands Marine Park**, one of the places where humpback whales converge on their annual migration to and from Antarctic waters
3. - The Central Coast is buzzing with a multitude of whale watching vantage points. **Captain Cook Lookout**, Copacabana is a great place to take the kids with two viewing decks, interpretative signage and a fully accessible path. **The Skillion** is the iconic tall outcrop at Terrigal with amazing views of North Avoca and Avoca beaches to the south, and Wamberal and Forresters beaches to the north. Set up a picnic blanket and enjoy expansive views over The Entrance and Shelly Beach at **Crackneck Point** in Wyrabalong National Park. **Norah Head Lighthouse** also offers stunning views out to the Pacific Ocean and is home to the annual **Whale Dreamers Festival** in July
4. - The Legendary Pacific Coast's **Whale Watching Trail** features 71 of the best places to spot a whale between Avoca Beach and Tweed Heads. Plan a whale watching day-trip or week long whale watching mission with information on the [website](#) detailing best vantage points and

experiences. A must-do is a cruise with **Tamboi Queen, Imagine** or **Moonshadow** in **Port Stephens** who all offer memorable experiences with whales

5. - Grab a pair of binoculars and make the short climb to Newcastle's iconic **Nobbys Lighthouse**, a popular place to spot whales with 360 degree views of the city, beach, coastline and ocean. **Nova Cruises** operate 2.5 to 3 hour ocean cruises from Newcastle including a bonus harbour and outer beach cruise
6. - See whales from the air in Sydney with **Blue Sky Helicopters** on a 60 minute flight over Botany Bay and Cape Banks, heading north up the coast towards Palm Beach and Broken Bay. Be sure to visit the aptly named **Whale Beach**, which is said to have been named after the shape of its northern headland. Closer to town the viewing platform at **Cape Solander** in **Botany Bay National Park** is popular with whales often spotted only 200 metres from the coast. The site is also part of a long-running whale-counting volunteer program running each June and July. The stunning cliff-top walking trail from **Bondi to Coogee** beach also offers fantastic opportunities for whale watching as do headlands at **Clovelly Beach** and **North Maroubra**. Plus get up close to these majestic animals on a whale-watching cruise departing from Circular Quay or Manly with **Fantasea, Captain Cook, Manly Whale Watching, Oz Whale Watching** or **Whale Watching Sydney**
7. - **Jervis Bay** boasts a huge array of land and sea based whale watching options. Find a vantage point on the headland overlooking the bay, and head to **Penguin Head** at Culburra or the viewing platform in **Booderee National Park** located at **Cape St George Lighthouse**. Enjoy a seafood platter at **Portside Cafe** before boarding a Whale Eco-Cruise with **Jervis Bay Wild. Dolphin Watch Cruises** specialise in calm water whale watching staying close to shore to view the "Humpback Highway" as it passes by. They also offer special event cruises including sunsets with the whales, BBQ with whales and even weddings with the whales
8. - Walk some or all of the **Bingi Dreaming Track**, a 14 km coastal trail that traces the ancient Song Lines of the Yuin Aboriginal people and runs from Congo to Tuross. Stop at **Bingi Bingi Point**, which is perched on the edge of Eurobodalla National Park and is a top spot for spotting a whale, offering a scenic expanse of golden beaches and untouched coastline
9. - Get a group of friends together and book a stay at the heritage **Head Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage** on **Montague Island**, just off the coast of Narooma. The cottage, which was built in 1881, is the perfect place to relax and watch as whales pass by with extensive verandahs, BBQ facilities and secluded courtyards to enjoy; and
10. Finish in **Eden** on the Sapphire Coast, where whales regularly stop in the calm waters of Two Fold Bay to feed on the plentiful krill and pilchards. Explore the **Killer Whale Trail** which features an interactive map revealing the history of Eden's whaling past and top look-out points around the bay and along the coastline in stunning Ben Boyd National Park. Eden's **Killer Whale Museum** is home to the skeleton of the most famous killer whale, Old Tom, which is the only complete Orca skeleton in the Southern Hemisphere.

Share your whale sightings in NSW with Destination NSW on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook:  
**Sydney** @sydney, #ilovesydney; **NSW** #NewSouthWales and tag the @wildaboutwhales community using #whaleon.

*\*Source: International and National Visitor Surveys, year ending December 2015*

#ENDS

Note to editors: A selection of images to accompany this story is available on request.

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