

MEDIA RELEASE

27 May 2015

REGIONAL NSW HOLIDAYS HEAT UP FOR 25 MILLION VISITORS AS THE WEATHER COOLS

Must do 'only in NSW' experiences for this June Long Weekend

As the weather cools and with June long weekend just around the corner, Regional NSW is the hot place to be with more than 25 million visitors expected to holiday in the Australia's most geographically diverse state this winter.

NSW Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres said: "Regional NSW visitation doesn't slow down in the cooler months and it's easy to see why. New South Wales is Australia's most geographically-diverse state with lush rainforests, pristine beaches, snowfields and the Outback's rugged beauty all vying for attention. It's a great time to get out and about in Regional NSW."

Destination NSW Chief Executive Officer Sandra Chipchase said: "Autumn and Winter are a fabulous time to get out into Regional NSW, and with the June long weekend just weeks away, now is the perfect opportunity to discover a host of experiences and attractions that are special to our State."

According to data from NSW Government's tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW, about 25 million visitors made an overnight or daytrip visit to Regional NSW from April to September last year.

Destination NSW offers these suggestions of 'only in NSW' experiences and attractions to be enjoyed over the colder months and this June long weekend:

1. June long weekend marks the official start of the NSW snow season. So don your snowshoes and climb [Australia's highest peak](#), Mount Kosciuszko. Snow season kicks off with the [Peak Festival](#), a four-day festival of music, play and partying over the June long weekend.
2. Book a weekend at [Australia's most easterly point](#) in the Assistant Lighthouse Keeper's Cottages at Cape Byron, where you can watch the sunrise and see whales migrating from your balcony.
3. Book a long weekend to Lord Howe Island and discover the [world's southern-most coral reef](#), which plays host to more than 500 species of fish and 90 different coral species. Lord Howe's native environment is rich and diverse, with new species of marine life regularly being discovered. [Lord Howe Island winter sales packages](#) starting from \$799 are now on sale.
4. Looking for warm weather, then consider a weekend away to Lightning Ridge in Outback NSW. Enjoy daily winter temperatures of 20 degrees and try your luck at finding [Lightning Ridge's illusive black opal](#). Lightning Ridge is the birthplace of the exquisite black opal and the only place in Australia where the stone is found and still mined.
5. Discover why the Hunter Valley, which is [Australia's oldest wine growing region](#), is still one of the most visited wine regions in Australia. June marks [Hunter Valley Wine and Food Month](#), a month long celebration of impressive events, workshops, dinners and tastings that showcase why the Hunter Valley remains one of Australia's most prestigious wine growing regions.

6. Ride the [world's steepest incline railway](#), the Scenic Railway at an incline of 52 degrees and a descent of 415m, at Scenic World in the Blue Mountains. While in the Blue Mountains, tick off another 'only in NSW experience' by visiting Jenolan Caves, which began operating in the 1880's and is the [longest continually operating tourist destination](#) in Australia.
7. Journey along the [official Australia's Oyster Coast](#), from Greenwell Point in the Shoalhaven to Eden on the far South Coast, and visit 'oyster gates' brimming with fresh Sydney Rock, Pacific and the native Angassi oysters straight from the grower.
8. Hike the [world's second largest canyon](#), Capertee Valley near Lithgow. Surrounded by the wonders of World Heritage Listed wilderness, Capertee Valley is a bird lovers paradise and is considered as one of the top 50 birdwatching locations in the world. From the 13-14 June is the [Glow Worm Tunnel Trail Running Weekend](#), a perfect event for amateur and experienced runners.
9. Ride the [world's longest and Australia's first rollercoaster zipline](#) on the Central Coast. The incredible TreeTop Crazy Rider Xtreme is the longest in the world at 1km long, four times the length of any other.

Events not to miss this June Long Weekend in NSW:

- Taste the best of the Riverina at [unWINEd](#) in Griffith, which showcases the region's best wine and food through a stellar line-up of events, dinners, tastings and cooking demonstrations.
- Celebrate the start of the NSW Snow Season at the [Peak Festival](#), a four-day celebration of with concerts throughout the Perisher Valley. If you love the snow, love music and love to party, this is an event not to be missed.
- History lovers will enjoy the [Henry Lawson Heritage Festival](#) in Gulgong, near Mudgee. Enjoy a weekend packed with events to celebrate Lawson's birthday including poetry, markets, food and wine, live music and vintage displays.
- Car lovers and motoring fans will enjoy the [Hay Mini Nationals](#), where Mini enthusiasts bring their classic cars to outback NSW and show what these vehicles are really made of.
- Celebrating 25 years this year, the [Festival of the Fleeces](#) this year celebrates *Everything Australian*. Perfect for families young and old, the festival has something for everyone including its iconic Running of the Sheep.
- One of the best and biggest rodeos on the calendar, [Coonamble Rodeo and Campdraft](#) is where you will see real Aussie cowboys and cowgirls in action – steer wrestling, calf roping, barrel racing and of course saddle bronc, bareback and bull riding.
- [Shoalhaven Coast Winter Wine Festival](#) celebrates everything great about the NSW South Coast's food and wine scene. Taste your way through award winning wines, delicious local produce and of course plates of oysters at cellar doors across the region.
- Experience the thrill and spectacle of the finals of the [National Cutting Horse Association Futurity](#) in Tamworth. The largest indoor equine event in the southern hemisphere and June long weekend see's the best of the best compete in the finals.

Share your favourite NSW only experience or event with Destination NSW @VisitNSW and #NewSouthWales.

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Note to editors, images can be found in the Destination NSW image library.

<http://images.destinationnsw.com.au/>

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