Overview

The drive from Perth to Broome is a long one, full of surprises and some of Australia's most decadent sights. The cities include some of the most vibrant atmospheres in the country, while the small towns will remind you that it takes more than big cities to give the world's largest island its culture. From beaches and national parks to ancient rock drawings and annual animal migrations, the list of attractions and destinations is as endless as the wild Australian Outback itself. You'll have plenty of time to enjoy every sight along this lengthy west coast road trip, so don't be tempted to rush through the cities and don't feel guilty if all you want to do is spend all day on the beach!
Leg One of this Perth to Broome road trip will be a tough act to follow. Perth is an incredible destination in itself, where you’ll need several days to just scratch the surface of what it has to offer. After that, it only gets better as you visit caves, koalas, and sand dunes along the coast before arriving at one of Australia’s best attractions - The Pinnacles. The small town of Cervantes adds a few more iconic experiences to the list along the coast before finally turning in and heading inland, ready for the next adventure.

**Perth**

It can be tough to describe Perth. It’s the bustling capital of Western Australia, a place of immense beauty and history, a city blooming with greenery and advancing with the times, and a beachside resort that makes time fly like jet planes - all at once. First, get your bearings with a stroll through Kings Park and its Botanic Gardens. More than 6 million people visit this park every year, and it’s one of the largest inner city green spaces in the world. Then, get amongst the nightlife at Perth’s collection of small wine and tapas bars that have been cropping up around the city in recent years and adding a vibrant buzz to the town. Relax on the sand for a day or two by soaking up the sun at iconic locations such as Cottesloe Beach, then get out of the city and visit historic Fremantle for its reminders of the colonial days such as the Fremantle Prison and the Old Courthouse. Of course, you could pass several days alone on Rottnest Island, where you can spend more time on beaches, dive around shipwrecks and meet Western Australia’s cutest residents - the quokkas. You can even drive a little inland to Swan Valley where there are 40 wineries awaiting you and your tastebuds. Perth is certainly not a city you want to rush, so make sure you give yourselves a good amount of time here (and then some) before moving on.
**Yanchep National Park**

The drive from Perth to **Yanchep National Park** is a gorgeous one heading north up the coast starting off on State Route 2. This park is known for three things; bushland, caves, and koalas. There are more than 400 caves in the park altogether, but the most well known and accessible ones are the Yonderup Cave, Crystal Cave, and Cabaret Cave. You can also learn more about Western Australian history when you visit the Wangi Mia meeting place, a significant site for the Nyoongar aboriginal peoples. For nature fans, get out your binoculars and get ready to spot a variety of birds throughout the park. You can also take a wander at sunrise or sunset when the kangaroos are most active, or stroll along the 240-metre koala boardwalk to see these fuzzy, cuddly creatures in their native environment. On top of all this, the park offers endless hiking trails, as well as barbeque facilities and countless picnic spots.

**Lancelin**

Only a little further up the coast is the small fishing town of **Lancelin**, which has made a name for itself on the international stage thanks to its surfing, sand dunes and lobsters. There are 14 shipwrecks along the coast in this area to attract the divers, and the town is the location of Australia's biggest annual windsurfing event thanks to its perfect wind and surf conditions. On the other side of the town wait immense white sand dunes, which are best enjoyed on top of a hired board from town as you try your hand (and feet) at sandboarding. That said, you can also take to them in a 4WD or simply bring a picnic to enjoy the views. Of course, the beach at Lancelin Bay is a must-see, and once you've seen it, you'll likely decide it's a must-do, too.

**Nambung National Park**

Continue following Route 60 along this scenic drive up the coast, and you'll come to **Nambung National Park** - one of the biggest highlights of your entire Perth to Broome motorhome itinerary. This park is largely known for one thing and one thing only: **The Pinnacles**. Almost 200,000 people come from all over Australia and the world to see these formations every year. The pinnacles are giant limestone spires, some as tall as several metres, others only knee-height. There are thousands of them scattered across the desert like a giant, living art project of the world. You can visit the discovery centre to learn more about how they were formed, and you should certainly wait until sunset to get a view of these epic pillars as they light up in a mesmerising orange and red extravaganza. While you wait, spend time in the water swimming, surfing or snorkelling, or wander the land along hiking tracks as you look out for emus and galahs. If you're there during spring, you'll also get to see the resplendent wildflowers that grow in abundance throughout the national park.

**Cervantes**

Cervantes, a small town along the coast to the north of The Pinnacles, has several of its own
wonderful attractions. For starters, it’s the perfect place to try the lobster that the western coast of Australia is known for. **The Lobster Shack** is the stuff of legend, as you can jump aboard the ‘Shack Attack’ boat for the full fisherman experience before heading back to the factory to see how they package and post live lobster to locations all over the world. Naturally, it’s also where you can taste this oceanic delicacy. Another of Cervantes’ attractions is **Lake Thetis**, only a kilometre from the centre of town. The lake is one of the few places on earth where you can find ‘living fossils’ (stromatolites), which you can easily see during drier months when the water level is at its lowest. Be sure to take the 1.5-kilometre walking route around the lake to fully appreciate the beauty and history of this stunning attraction.

After continuing through a handful of small coastal towns (keep an eye out for Dongara’s giant crayfish along the way) you’ll arrive in Geraldton.

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**Leg 1 Highlights**

- Perth
- The Pinnacles
- Lake Thetis

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**Leg 2  Geraldton to Monkey Mia**

The drive on Leg Two of this itinerary will take you from a seaport known for its oceanic activities to the blue waters of a World Heritage Area. You’ll love the small towns, natural wonders, and endless coastline outside your window every step of the way. On a safety note, avoid driving after sunset whenever possible on this leg, as wildlife on the roads tends to get busier after this time,
If looking out the window at the Indian Ocean for the whole first leg of your journey has you itching to take a dip, **Geraldton** is a great place to give in to those urges. Thanks to warm sea temperatures and steady breezes, all sorts of watersports and activities are on offer here. If you’ve managed to fit your surfboard in the back of the motorhome, you’re in luck - Flat Rocks, Back Beach, Headbutts and Greenough are all popular spots to catch a wave or two. Snorkelling and scuba diving are also regular parts of Geraldton life and there are a number of much loved wreck diving sites, with the wreck of the South Tomi among the most accessible.

Roughly halfway between Geraldton and Kalbarri is one of Western Australia’s best hidden gems. The Pink Lake of Kalbarri - or the Hutt Lagoon - is an unbelievable Barbie rose colour. The phenomenon is caused by an algae that’s often used as a food-colouring agent, and the lake is best seen either mid-morning or at sunset. It will depend on the season, weather and time of day, but the lake can appear as anything from a soft blush colour, to pale purple, to red.

**Kalbarri**

Kalbarri, further up the coast along Route 1 and Port Gregory Road, is a small town surrounded by natural playgrounds - a coastline on one side and a fantastic national park on the other. In the town itself, check out the Rainbow Jungle Australian Parrot Breeding Centre. Here you’ll meet birds such as the Purple Crowned Lorikeets, Eclectus Parrots, and Cockatoos in one of the most beautiful bird sanctuaries this side of the equator. In the **Kalbarri National Park**, you won’t be able to put away your camera as you explore more of the wildflowers through spring and early summer, and discover the multiple scenic walking tracks. The Loop is a must-do, as it winds around to give you multiple lookout points over the Murchison River gorges, and includes the spectacular Nature’s Window, a postcard perfect rock arch that frames an unforgettable view of the river. The Z-Bend walk is another track that gets you up close to where the gorge drops 150 metres - all from a safe and scenic viewing platform. Those seeking adventure activities can also try canoeing, fishing, diving, swimming and abseiling in the park, so allow plenty of time in this spot! Back on the coast of Kalbarri, Chinaman’s Beach right at the mouth of the Murchison River is a brilliant bright blue and a wonderful swimming spot, while the Red Bluff is the perfect spot to watch the sunset.

On your way to Denham, make a quick stop at Shell Beach, a strange but wonderful shoreline that offers no golden sands - just millions of tiny white shells. It’s a great photo opportunity and the kids will love it!

**Denham**

Your final stop before reaching Monkey Mia is the glorious **Denham. Ocean Park Aquarium** is one
of the biggest attractions, located just before you reach the town. This park is a multi-award winning destination where you can discover extremely venomous sea snakes, endangered sea turtles, stonefish and more, and you can watch a live shark feeding, or even take a 4WD tour of the Shark Bay World Heritage Area. When you’re feeling peckish, try a lunch at the Ocean Restaurant overlooking the bay, or the Old Pearler Restaurant, which serves tasty seafood meals and is built from seashell bricks. Much of Denham is simply about its raw beauty, so you’ll spend most of your time here walking along shorelines and snapping photo after photo. Head to the Eagle Bluff lookout for an astounding view of the area, and aim to be there just before sunset to catch it in its full glory.

The final drive of this leg is straight across the peninsula on to Monkey Mia.

**Leg 2 Highlights**

Geraldton  
Kalbarri National Park  
Denham

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**Leg 3  Monkey Mia to Exmouth**

As you come to the halfway point of your Perth to Broome itinerary, you’ll wonder if the natural beauty of Australia and the countless gems along the Coral Coast will ever come to an end. Monkey Mia is one of the best places on the planet to get up close with dolphins, while Hamelin Pool adds a touch of ancient geography and history to the trip. As you continue north through Carnarvon, Coral Bay and Ningaloo, you’ll truly understand why this route is such a favourite with...
locals, and such an unforgettable once-in-a-lifetime trip for everyone else.

**Monkey Mia** is another small town within the Shark Bay World Heritage Area, and despite its primate-inspired name, it’s actually known as one of the best dolphin watching spots in the world. A pod of friendly dolphins are known to visit the shore most days of the year for feeding, making for an incredible sight for locals and tourists alike. You can simply stand on the shore to see them playing in the water, or if you’re lucky enough to be picked by one of the trained rangers, you may even get to help feed these clever creatures. If dolphins aren’t enough, you can also enjoy a variety of water-based activities in Monkey Mia, including swimming, fishing and cruising. On shore, try a camel safari in the morning for something completely different, or a four wheel drive excursion to explore the area.

**Hamelin Pool** is one of the reasons why Shark Bay is such a special place. After you leave Monkey Mia, Hamelin Pool is a quick but awesome little stop with further examples of living fossils - stromatolites. The water here is extremely salty, which means that normal sea creatures don’t live in the water and the microbes are able to flourish. Stromatolites found in Hamelin Pool are surprisingly similar to lifeforms that would have been on Earth up to 3.5 billion years ago.

Carnarvon is a small town on the coast with fewer than 5,000 residents, but some fantastic attractions to tick off on your Coral Coast road trip. One of the major drawcards of this area in general is the Gascoyne region, which is also known as the food bowl of Western Australia. There’s a great food trail you can take around local farmer’s gates, but for a taste of the region without going too far, make a stop at **Bumbak’s**. This working banana and mango plantation lets you tour the trees and pick up ice cream, preserves, and fruits. The One Mile Jetty offers a gorgeous sun-soaked stroll out over the water, and the **Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum** will teach you all about this tiny town’s surprising role in the space program and the communication industry. As you head out of Carnarvon, make a stop at the Carnarvon Blowholes roughly 75 kilometres north of the city. It’s where sea water shoots up out of holes in the rock, reaching heights of up to 20 metres - and soaking you if you stand too close.

**Coral Bay** is one of those paradisiacal locations that makes you feel like you’ve driven straight out of Australia and onto the shores of Fiji. As roughly the halfway mark of your Western Australia road trip, Coral Bay is the perfect location for a proper rest if you’re ready for one. Here you can kayak, swim, snorkel, and generally relax in the sun on the blissful white sands of the bay. Depending on the time of year, you may also see some of the region’s most spectacular wildlife. From November to February, you might spot turtles nesting on local beaches, and you can even take a tour at this time to see more of them. Following that, March through to June is the best time to see whale sharks - these beasts of the sea grow up to 14 metres long, but are entirely safe to swim with. June until October is when you may see Humpback Whales passing by on their annual migration, so you’ll never be short of wildlife while in Coral Bay! There are two campervan parks in the town, so you shouldn’t have any problems finding somewhere to stay.
The Ningaloo Marine Park is a place of unique and spectacular beauty. If you’re going to dive anywhere in Australia, this should be it. This fringing reef is the largest of its kind in the world, stretching from Coral Bay up to Exmouth. There are more than 500 species of fish that call the marine park home, as well as 50 species of soft coral and 200 species of hard coral. Even if you don’t go diving, you can easily slip on a snorkel and flippers to cruise about the calm waters, or simply lie about on the beach for more of that hot Western Australia sunshine.

Leg 3 Highlights

Monkey Mia  Coral Bay  Ningaloo Marine Park

Leg 4  Exmouth to Karijini

By now, you are well and truly in the wilds of Western Australia - where the largest towns are the sizes of small suburbs from the big cities, and where you’re generally best filling up on petrol at every station you see - as it may be a while before you reach the next one. This leg will take you from Exmouth and up across a small corner of the country’s northwest where you’ll lose yourself amongst the rugged landscapes and ancient history of the area.

Exmouth

The population of Exmouth, WA is a touch over 2,000 people - but it’s still the last ‘town’ you’ll see for a while. Again, it’s the water that in some way or another will be your favourite attraction here.
Turquoise Beach will be at the heart of your visit, as this shoreline is every bit as exquisite as it sounds. Spend a day lounging on the sands and dipping into the clear, warm water to cool off and see the stunning coral reef just offshore. Note that the currents here can be strong, so pay attention to signs and warnings. There are multiple options for boat tours from Exmouth, from fishing charters and diving excursions to sightseeing trips for a better look at that reef. You can also take a short trip north of Exmouth to the Vlamingh Head Lighthouse for a spot of history from the area and an unbeatable view of Turquoise Beach - it’s a great spot for a picnic so stock up before you drive up!

Cape Range National Park

The Charles Knife Canyon is part of the Cape Range National Park that covers part of the North West Cape. The canyon itself is accessible by a drive that’s an attraction in itself, a winding road that takes you up from the exit of Exmouth to the top of the ranges. Once you reach the top, you’ll be treated to fantastic views, and you can take the Badjirrajirra Loop Trail to stretch the legs from the picnic area. If you do plan to do this walk or any of the hiking tracks, stock up on plenty of water as the temperature can get very hot. Unless you are in a 4WD, it’s not recommended to venture further than the tar sealed road, as the dirt path only travels on for another kilometre and can include rough terrain.

When you’re ready to leave the coast, it’s time to head inland for Karijini National Park. Remember to bring plenty of food, water and fuel with you, as it’ll take a full day’s drive to get to the park and the area is quite remote.

Leg 4 Highlights

Turquoise Beach  Vlamingh Head Lighthouse  Cape Range National Park

Leg 5  Karijini to Port Hedland

The rest of this itinerary has had you journeying along Western Australia’s sparkling coastline, but now you’ve taken a detour into the state’s heart to see the very special Karijini National Park. Before you make the journey inland, double check that your motorhome rental supplier allows you
to take your vehicle onto dirt/gravel roads. This isn’t a given, as some specify that you need to stick to sealed roads. This may be something you want to ask suppliers before you book, as a visit to Karijini National Park isn’t something you’ll want to miss if you can help it.

**Karijini National Park**

This gorgeous slice of Australian wilderness will treat you to an entirely different aspect of the country from what you’ve experienced so far. The mountains and gorges of **Karijini National Park** break up the land in dramatic, eye-catching swaths and provide plenty of exploration opportunities for intrepid travellers.

Karijini’s gorges provide some of the most spectacular sights in the park, so don’t forget to pack your hiking boots. **Dales Gorge** is one of the most popular places to explore - consider packing a picnic lunch to enjoy along the way. The Gorge Rim walk trail offers awesome views down into Dales Gorge, starting from Circular Pool Lookout. It’s a two kilometre walk and will take around one and a half hours all up. The Dales Gorge Trail on the other hand runs along the bottom of the gorge itself - this is a four kilometre walk that will take you around three hours return. You can also drive from lookout to lookout if you are short on time. While you’re in the area though, you must take a refreshing dip in **Fortescue Falls**. It’ll take about an hour to get from the car park to the pool and back, but the walk alone is with the trip. The rocks and vegetation transform as you descend into the gorge, until you finally reach a welcome oasis where you can reward yourself with cool swim.

**Weano Gorge** may be the most accessible gorge in Karijini National Park but that doesn’t diminish its beauty one bit. The walks around the top of the gorge are easy routes, suitable for just about anyone, and for those who prefer something a little more adventurous, you have plenty of options for detours and to carry on further to trickier areas to access. Proceed with caution as this can get very slippery and for some, you must wade (neck high) through water to reach the other side. It can be dangerous - water shoes and extreme care are recommended.

You might have got the impression that Karijini is just barren rock with the occasional oasis but nothing could be further from the truth. Wildflowers thrive here: depending on the time of year you arrive, you might see the ground blanketed with purple mulla-mullas, yellow-flowered cassias and wattles, and northern bluebells. There’s also quite a variety of animal life, including red kangaroos, echidnas, bats, goannas and dingoes.
There are a few safety issues to be aware of when you’re in Karijini National Park - mostly just common sense stuff. First off, don’t feed or approach dingoes. These are wild animals and they can be aggressive, but they’ll leave you alone if you leave them alone. Secondly, visitors should always be aware of what the weather is up to. It can be brutally hot during midsummer, so try to visit at a different time of year or at least stay inside your campervan during the hottest part of the day. Gorges are also prone to flash floods during heavy rain, so always check the weather forecast before descending into Karajini’s gorges.

You may want to schedule a few days to explore Karajini - you can stay either at the Dales Gorge Campground or the privately run Karijini Eco Retreat. Once you’ve had your fill of hiking and picnicking across Karijini National Park, it’ll be time to make for the Great Northern Highway (95) and drive north to Port Hedland.

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**Leg 5 Highlights**

- Dales Gorge
- Fortescue Falls
- Weano Gorge

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**Leg 6 Port Hedland to Broome**

The final stretch of your Perth to Broome road trip is a long one that’s largely comprised of expansive stretches of road across a vast red desert. You’ll need to take as many breaks as you feel necessary on the drive, and you’ll need to have your cameras at the ready, because the drive is nothing short of spectacular. It will take you from one of the
country’s most active ports to Australia’s hottest town and right through to the final stop at Broome. Note that along the way, there are very few places to stock up on petrol, so be sure to fill up Whenever you see one just in case.

**Port Hedland**

**Port Hedland** is a relatively large town in the Pilbara region with more than 14,000 residents, and it can also claim to be the port with the highest tonnage in all of Australia. While it is largely just that - a port - there’s plenty more to do here than watch the ships come and go. Take a picnic down to **Pretty Pool** where you can take a dip in the water on a hot day as it’s one of the few places in town that’s good for swimming. Escape the midday sun in the Courthouse Gallery to see the mix of contemporary and local art, and keep an eye out for the craft markets that occasionally crop up nearby. Of course, for the best place to watch the tankers arrive, unload, load, and depart, set yourselves up at Marapikurrinya Park and keep watching after the sun goes down for a spectacular night-time view of the scene.

**Eighty-Mile Beach**

Don’t forget to leave enough time to cool off at **Eighty-Mile Beach**. This shoreline is the kind you have to see to believe - the land is perfectly flat, the water is perfectly blue, and the shore is a mix of shells and white gold sands in every direction. Birders will love this spot as it’s one of the best places on the planet to see wading shore birds who stop by every summer, but it’s also where you might come across dugong, dolphins, flatback turtles and sawfish. As well as swimming, it’s an ideal spot for fishing (check out the Department of Fisheries rules on this first), four-wheel driving and walking. The only real man-made attraction in town is the local caravan park, which offers barbeques, water, a small store and a lawn area.

**Broome**

Finally, follow Route 1 up the coast to your final destination, **Broome**. After driving through hundreds of miles of what is essentially desert, Broome will be a welcome shock to the senses with its colour, atmosphere, and vibrant city life. It’s tough to say what the best thing about Broome is. It could be **Cable Beach**, which is beautiful in its 22-kilometre entirety, and is where you can take a scenic camel ride shortly before sunrise or sunset for a purely unforgettable memory from this long road trip. The best thing could be the shopping throughout Broome and in Chinatown, where you’ll find plenty of the pearls that helped put Broome on the map. Or it could be the Japanese Cemetery, where more than 900 pearl divers are buried and where you will learn more about Broome’s incredible history. Or perhaps it’s the dinosaur footprints that are so clear at low tide at **Gantheaume Point**? Whatever you decide is your favourite Broome attraction, you will no doubt leave this town with a mix of sadness that it’s time to say goodbye, and happiness at an incredible road trip that will be with you forever.
By the end of this road trip, you’ll understand that luscious golden sands and bright blue waters can easily sit side by side with arid red desert. You’ll know that the wildlife on Australia’s west coast is as diverse as it is beautiful and abundant. And you’ll have no doubt that those 4,200+ kilometres will be remembered for the rest of your lives. It’s the kind of road trip that gives road trips a good name, and one that will quickly have you booking your next one to see even more of Australia’s incredible landscapes, culture and attractions.

**Leg 6 Highlights**