

COME AND SAY *G'day*

BRAD FARMER AM

BEST AUSTRALIAN BEACHES 2023



STOKES BAY
South Australia
Karta Pintingga Country

1

South Australian Tourism Commission

Bouncing back from devastating bushfires is Kangaroo Island - its name alone conjures up an emblematic image of Australia. This is a sprawling island of immense natural beauty, brimming with wildlife on land and in sea. 'KI' has been sensitively settled, with a resident population of just 5,000, who live an enviable oceanic and paddock to plate lifestyle. Most of the island's 50 or so glorious beaches are all relatively secluded, yet accessible, so visitors are much more likely to encounter paw prints of the many furry lounging locals than footprints of the work weary human. Stokes Bay Beach on the gentler north coast, with its long 500m sandy sweep of low impact waves features a generous and safe tidal swimming pool for wading or snorkelling with its aquarium like atmosphere. There's a timeless hint of mystique about this hidden treasure with a shimmering reward when the curtains lift. From the western entry carpark and seasonal café, this veiled beach is reached through a 'secret tunnel' - a hand-hewn cavernous carved trail finally revealing a stunning scene as if rewarding the adventurer. Stokes Bay is long overdue to be recognised as Australia's Best Beach in 2023. The locals are authentic and welcoming, so pack light and indulge deeply on the culinary offerings from fine wine to sumptuous seafoods. This island coastline is vast and stunning, steeped in sacred First Nations history and European forays, starting with roguish pirate types, American sealers and the 'French Connection'. KI is the third largest of Australia's 8,222 islands, roughly the size of Bali, but that's where the similarity ends. This is a relaxing place, clean and green, lived at a much slower pace. If it's not already, it should be listed as a national treasure, worthy of topping the Australian bucket list for discerning travellers worldwide. With its Mediterranean climate, a protected sanctuary for Aussie wildlife and so many secluded patches of pristine sands, here lies a feast for the nature lover's senses seeking safe daily sojourns on their own terms. The short sea swept journey south to KI from the SA's capital Adelaide, is as delicious an entree as the final destination itself. The southern Fleurieu Peninsula self-drive threads along majestic coastal green folds down to a smorgasbord of many boundless beaches and coves. It's just an appetiser for a holiday most delectable on the menu of great Australian beaches. So, go get stoked.

EXPERIENCE WHY
THERE'S NOTHING
LIKE AUSTRALIA



BRAD FARMER'S BEST AUSTRALIAN BEACHES 2023

AMBASSADOR & BEACH EXPERT



bestaustralianbeaches





BOOMERANG BEACH

New South Wales
Worimi Country

2

@baker_films

Like any seriously invested coastal connoisseur with a good nose for salty dives, I keep returning with unbridled enthusiasm to the allure of the many sand-cuffed beaches around Boomerang. This beach region is always a solid ROI for beach explorers scrolling through pages to find a slice of paradise. Nature has gifted us this superbly woven tapestry of beaches, lakes, rivers, coves, and estuaries. Located not too far from the crowds of Sydney, few other places in Australia offer such coastal assets — placid lakes of shimmering sunlight and moonlight set against scenic mountainous backdrops, casual holiday village style hubs and, of course there's the irresistible selection of pure beaches. The coast scape here on the Barrington Coast portion of the mid north coast of NSW is among the top five best seaside stretches in Australia's southern half. While Boomerang Beach typifies a sunburnt Aussie surfing haven, there's so many beaches beyond, north, and south for short hourly or longer day trips. Cellito or Sandbar Beach, Seal Rocks to the south and the isthmus Tiona, oyster rich township of Forster-Tuncurry to the north, are just teasers, with many more to casually speculate anywhere in between. You can chill out on wood-fired pizza, local prawns, and a cool bevvy - stay in a jungle-fringed eco-spa cabin, or book into raw campsites for tents, van-lifers, or tidy parks for RV's. With deeper pockets, there's a long list of stylish digs for honeymooners or family holidays, rented out by the wealthy, who have cleverly invested in this wave lashed treasury. Here, like the whole of our 59,700kms of Australian coast, remain sites of significant cultural value to Worimi people. Boomerang is east facing and simply spectacular, a sensory feast and dog friendly, around sunrise and sunset. Nearby Blueys Beach headland is spectacular as is Shelly Beach, a tucked away heavenly beach for nudists (unofficial) while just next-door, Elizabeth Beach, is a royal spot in a National Park, north facing, family friendly and safe, as it is patrolled by the ever popular and well-appointed Pacific Palms Surf Life Saving Club. It doesn't get much better than this



RAINBOW BEACH

Queensland
Butchulla Country

3

Tourism and Events Queensland

Ice-filled eskies, beach umbrellas, waxed surfboards, and weathered fishing rods on salty 4WD rigs is the modern-day playground scene here, attracting free-wheeling salty types, young and old, year-round. Rainbows feature prominently in First Nations dreaming. The richly layered coloured sands of the high-scarped dune face gave this beach region its authentic name. It's a long stretch to get well and truly beached, from Double Island Point (north of Noosa) through Rainbow Beach township proper, all the way north 10 kms to Inskip Point and K'gari (Fraser Island). Local Aboriginal creation has it that the coastal cliffs were coloured when Yiningie, the spirit of the gods representing Rainbow, was killed in a fight, and spread his 'colourful' spirits across the cliffs. The story of the coloured sands actually goes back several hundred thousand years. Each time the sea level rose to near its present height, sand was blown onto the dunes. Over time, layer after layer of sand dune accumulated until it reached the present towering height. After each major accumulation, vegetation and soil slowly formed on the dune surface, colouring the sand — until it, too, was buried by the next layer of sand 100,000 years later. When the most recent sea level rise reached its present position, it not only created the curving bay but also scarped the dunes, exposing the layers. Rainbow Bay, the heavenly hamlet, about 3 hours north of Brisbane, is a key entry point to the sub-tropical 41,000-hectare Cooloolo National Park. There's quality pub-grub in town or from the perched spectacular views at the local Surf Club. Among the dunes you can also saddle up a nag for a beachside trot. It's all very Queensland



APOLLO BAY

Victoria

Gulidjan Gadubanud Country

4

@visitgreatoceanroad

Gorgeous Apollo Bay is a safe, family friendly, crescent-shaped beach that has been slowly developed with coastal enjoyment, passive recreation, and nature experiences in mind. Named after the wrecked schooner 'Apollo', this small, low rise coastal town has been a perennial summer favourite since the 1930's, situated at the tail western end of the Great Ocean Road, only a few hours from Melbourne. With a mountainous backdrop, the 3kms of clean, white sandy beach facing the Southern Ocean enjoys a gentle atmosphere with welcoming locals from its golf club to its cafes. During an offshore wind there is a reasonable surfing wave, but generally this is an open swimming beach with a SLSC at the protected southern end being the safest between the red and yellow flags. Casting a fishing line into the rips often rewards eager anglers but if you're unlucky grab a locally baked seafood pie or feast on a platter. Catering for discerning beach loving tourists, Apollo Bay has a generous grassy foreshore to relax within a variety of eating and accommodation options from budget to better. It's also the entry point for a number of short and multiday walks to discover the nearby forest of the Otway Ranges with a wealth of natural features to explore. The region has a heritage of forestry and fishing with a working marina still in use today. Deservedly, Apollo Bay is one of Australia's 10 best beach destinations in 2023. Nearby Lorne and Joanna beaches are also pretty special. The icing on the cake is the nearby Twelve Apostles, one of Australia's most iconic coastal features, seen from lookouts or by helicopter charters

ADVENTURE BAY

Tasmania
Lunnawannalonna,
Neunonne Country

5



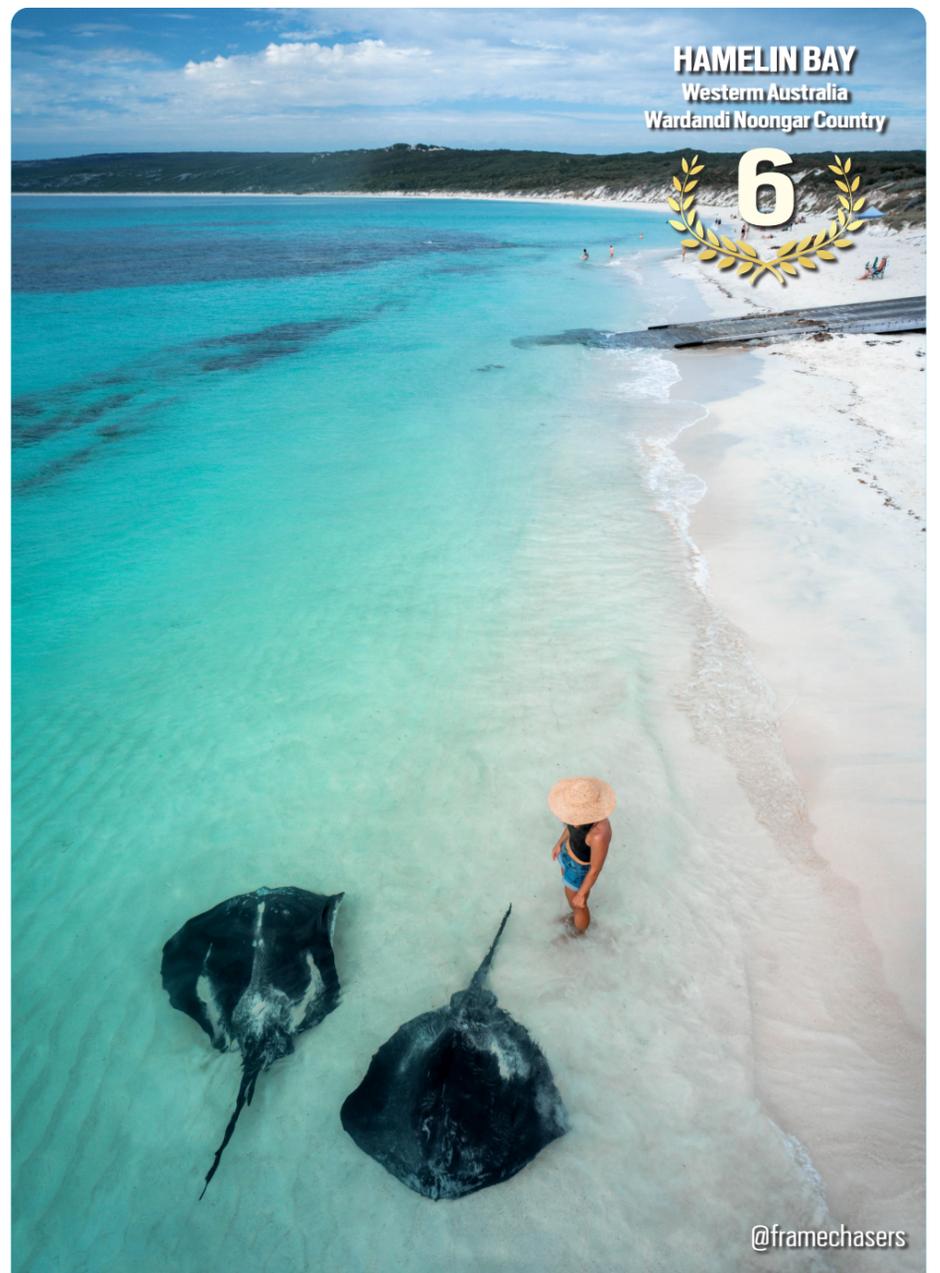
@fudgin_around

Adventure Bay and beautiful Bruny Island surely lives up to its name from the moment you step ashore. This spot epitomises everything Tassie—pure, natural, and unpretentious. The winding journey by land and sea will reward travellers with plenty to activities to dive into year-round or just relax, beachside or fireside. This island is the size of bustling Singapore (pop. 5.6m) but with only a tiny fraction of that island's population. Here there is only 500 or so locals - many involved in fine local produce for visitors. Only 40 km from Hobart, the passenger and vehicle ferry from Kettering quickly transports you to another world of timeless natural beauty — and 94 beaches. It is also one of Australia's most historically fascinating islands, which includes the removal of the local Neunonne people from the island, convict imprisonments, and also an honour roll of visiting early navigators who laid anchor here that surely is unrivalled by any other island of Australia's 8,222. This Tassie treasure is really one island in two parts, precariously connected by a 7-km long — and in places only 50m wide — sandy isthmus, known as the Neck, which leads south-west to Adventure Bay. It's the largest community on the island, strung out along a curved north-facing beach, offering a range of exploratory activities including adrenalin charged eco boat tours. Fishing, surfing, camping, beachcombing, admiring fur seals and dolphins, and hiking the rugged southern coast of towering cliffs and coastal heath, are a few pursuits to enjoy. Walking and nature tours are available. The Neck lookout and the stunning view it provides, is a social media favourite. To embrace the full beauty of the island it's best to climb the 238 timber steps from the dunal carpark up to Truganini lookout for a 360-degree vista. Signage tells the sobering story of the Nuenonne people, and the Nuenonne woman, Truganini, who was born on Lunnawannalonna (Bruny Island) before European settlement. An epicurean's delight set amid bountiful natural wildlife on land and sea, Bruny is indeed a multi-layered island paradise.

HAMELIN BAY

Western Australia
Wardandi Noongar Country

6



@framechasers

World class vineyards, epic surf-breaks and lush forests are the signatures of Western Australia's great South-West, with Margaret River being its central hub sitting halfway between Cape Leeuwin and Cape Naturaliste. Both Capes have historic lighthouses open to visitors. The densely forested drive 20 mins south from 'Margs' to Hamelin Bay is a treat in itself. Hamelin Bay, once the port for the sawmills at Karridale, is a sleepy little settlement which is now no more than a neat camping and caravan area, a beautiful beach, some islands near the shore, and a couple of remnant jetties, which are literally no more than a few pylons and weathered timbers. The sweeping vista of untouched coast to its north is truly spectacular. The waters closer to Hamelin Bay are usually calm, clear, and visited by local rays — curious stingrays and eagle rays, particularly during summer. These gentle giants often swim in small groups together right up to ankle deep water making for a wonderful interaction with these truly amazing wild animals. Stay still, don't touch, and just respect their personal space. While near shore snorkelling and fishing are probably the most popular pastimes here at Hamelin, there is also great coastal walking trails and a boat launching ramp taking fisherfolk offshore into marine rich sites. Family friendly, wide-open spaces and a charming environment make Hamelin Bay a must-see experience on Australia's pristine west coast.

LITTLE BONDI

Northern Territory
Yolngu Country

7



@theultimateaus

Little Bondi (Baringura) is many dusty miles away from its glamorous Sydney counterpart of the same name, but this rough diamond enjoys its own unique signature, identifying proudly as 'Baringura'. The Top End's 'Little Bondi' has a lost world feel and deserves to be listed among our best beaches. Australia's busiest patch of sand, big Bondi is a wide smile-shaped crescent beach, whereas cute 'Little Bondi' is a compact, tranquil embayment of around 250m and square shaped, identified as a pocket beach. Be it catching a fish or a small wave here, it's a little piece of bliss for those who like their accompaniments served naturally where beach fashion is unbranded. Little Bondi is well off the beaten track, about one hour's drive from Gove (Nhulumbuy), where supplies are sourced in this remote region. There are only a handful of campsites, so plan-ahead intrepid explorers. While a cool dip looks inviting in humid conditions, be cautioned about lurking saltwater crocodiles and other 'aquatic hazards' — be Crocwise. You may find fresh water nearby to wash off, but this is a BYO drinking water with only one composting toilet. It's visual fusion of hues in rich red, white, blue, and green — desert red laterite rock bookends, powdery white sands, shimmering blue waters, and verdant green forest - a hypnotic salve for any weary traveller's eyes. Flanked by eucalypt, paperbark, pandanus and vine forest, this beach is one of the most untouched along the virgin coast of northern Australia, so typical of the Top End. There are shaded inland waterways nearby also. The NE corner of NT here at East Arnhem Land boasts a good number of sandy beaches facing the calm waters of the Arafura Sea and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Not far from Little Bondi are Macassan Beach (Garaham) and Turtle Beach (Ngumuy), just a couple of neighbours worth an exploratory visit by a strong 4WD. Google and apply for an online Visitors Access Pass from the Dhimurri Aboriginal Corporation. Visitors and campers are welcome but be mindful that this land is a sacred site and must be respected. Penalties apply. Take out what you bring in also. While camping numbers are limited, dreaming under open night skies are not. Note, there is no phone reception here, which to some, is a blessing

BRITISH ADMIRAL BEACH

King Island

8



Tourism Australia

An island off an island off an island, this gem sits in the wild waters of Bass Strait with its smaller twin sister, the stunning Flinders Island, sits to the east. An hour by plane from Southern Victoria or from the top of Tassie, the island is as wild and rugged as are the locals weathered and welcoming. British Admiral Beach in my opinion is the best of the islands 45 beaches where it's likely you'll have the waves and beach all to yourself. Same goes with the islands' two golf courses. King Island is an authentic fusion of farm and coastal lifestyle. The royally titled British Admiral Beach lies just 2 km south of the main island town and harbour of Currie which is home to almost half of the islands 1700 residents. The road from town traces down to the low northern headland and provides a view down the beach, where you will usually see a solo surfer or three out amongst the punchy beach and reef breaks. It is a beach for experienced surfers only, as waves are usually pretty wild, rip currents strong and reefs scatter the surf zone. If not a surfer, this 1.5km long beach is great for a brisk walk, with the wave pounding to one side and wind-swept dunes to the other - and where the sun sets over the ocean. Back in Currie is a full range of modest accommodation and facilities, and just up the road is the world-famous King Island dairy, source of its much-loved cheeses, milked from King Island cows, which feed on the bull kelp that washes up by the tonne on the beaches and salt drenched marram grass that covers the dunes. It's the closest thing in the world to an oceanic derived cheese with a subtle 'beach' flavour. The sand dunes of King Island became the shallow hand dug graves for the many hundreds who lost their lives in numerous shipwrecks here. It is worth taking time to think about just how many First Nations people are buried here. A number of obscure monuments around King Island mark the sites where ships from England were tossed against the rocks of this shipwrecked coast with no chance of survival or rescue, including the ill-fated schooner, the 'British Admiral'.

FLYING FISH COVE

Christmas Island

9



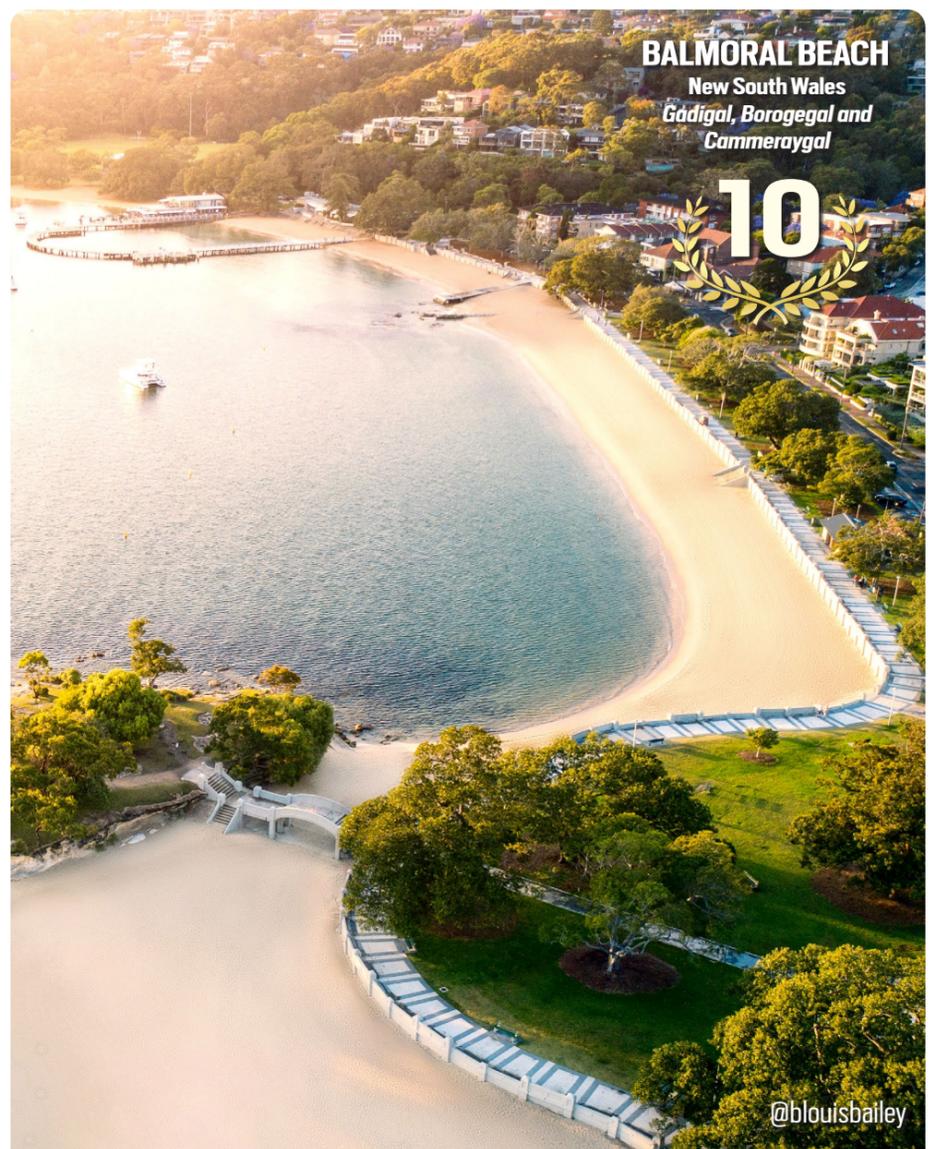
Christmas Island Tourism Commission

If you're looking for an abundance of nature's gifts, of beauty rich and rare, then this far-flung island delivers like its Christmas. Closer to Indonesia than the Australian mainland, 'CI' and its 11 unique beach settings is an oasis of dense green jungle in a vast sea of radiant blue. Known as the 'Galapagos of the Indian Ocean' this is where industry and tourism blend to make for an unforgettable experience in a melting pot of multicultural origins. While some of the islands 10 other outer beaches, like Dolly or Ethel, resemble sets from a Robinson Crusoe novel, the town beach of Flying Fish Cove quite unlike any other beach in Australia. Reached by flights from Perth, divers, anglers and naturalists are drawn to its fine features on land, sea and skies. Most inbound visitors also take to look at the neighbouring Cocos-Keeling group (CKI) of 27 tropical islands set in a horseshoe shaped archipelago, sitting south of Singapore. Flying Fish Cove with its generous foreshore of shade and BBQs is also an entry point for snorkellers and shore divers into coral gardens and a dramatic drop off zone, many jetty jumpers and on good swell, local surfers. This west-facing beach also offers some of the best sunsets on the island, so grab a duty free cold drink and watch nature put on a show. Christmas Island began appearing on the charts of English and Dutch navigators from the early 1600s. But it wasn't until 1643 that Captain William Mynors of the British East India Company named the island after sighting it on Christmas Day. Thankfully, most of the island is dominated by an unspoilt National Park which protect many species including the famous migratory red crabs. Take your camera, all your aquatic gear, a keen sense of adventure and an appetite for Chinese-Malay cuisine. The thrice weekly flights are triangulated so there's the option to check out CKI and the stunning Cossies Beach on Direction Island which took out Best Australian Beach in 2017.

BALMORAL BEACH

New South Wales
Gadigal, Borogegal and
Cammeraygal

10



@blouisbailey

With over 100 beaches peppered around the Sydney's magnificent salty shored Harbour, many consider Balmoral its finest jewel set in palatial urban leafy surrounds. It's simply majestic and is one of the world's most beautiful city beaches. It's a mere 20 minutes either by car or by ferry from Circular Quay. Parking is premium along The Esplanade, a reward for early arrivals who go for a dip, coffee, or a picnic lunch on the grass or at one of its upmarket shoreline restaurants. Directly opposite the entrance to the Harbour, Balmoral includes the northern Edwards Beach separated by Rocky Point, with its decorative footbridge. The longer southern stretch of sand is interrupted by a central reef, beyond which Sydney's largest and most popular tidal pool curves 100m out into the bay. Together, the two beaches sweep into an east facing arc of white sand, fronting calm waters or a lazy ocean swell washing through he heads. Beyond here is Balmoral Park with caves and Aboriginal middens (shell feasting sites) attesting to the long human presence. The British when exploring Sydney Harbour described the physique of the local Aboriginal people they saw as 'manly' hence the nearby place names of Manly Cove and Manly Beach. Just over the hill here, winding down through wooded tracks off Chowder Bay Road is the smallish Obelisk Beach, one of a few unofficial nudist beach enclaves on Sydney Harbour. Balmoral is always busy, particularly on Sydney's many sunny days, so planning ahead is recommended

We acknowledge the Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Owners of the land, sea and waters of the Australian continent, and recognise their custodianship of culture and Country for over 60,000 years.

The curator Brad Farmer, thanks Professor Emeritus Andrew Short OAM of Sydney University, with whom and between them, have researched and visited every Australian beach since the 1980's. Australia has the largest number of beaches in the world - over 12,500.