

7 Great Reasons to Holiday in Bargain Basement Australia

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Australia tops the list of holiday destinations for overseas visitors and is now even more popular due to the world economic recession and the weak Aussie dollar. Truth is, Australia is unlikely to be cheaper for international visitors than it is now.

Here are 7 ways you can save big dollars on your Aussie vacation.

1. The dirt cheap Australian dollar.

In August 2008 my wife and I enjoyed a European holiday. It was relatively cheap because the Australian dollar was almost par with the US dollar. Not any more! It is now worth less than 70c per US dollar.

It has become very expensive for Australians traveling overseas, but provides a bonanza for international travelers to Australia. Would you enjoy a cup of coffee for around \$2US or a quality meal for less than \$30US?

2. Cheap international flights.

British billionaire Sir Richard Branson has unveiled his new V Australia Boeing 777 passenger jets to compete with Qantas on the Los Angeles to Sydney and Los Angeles to Brisbane routes. Melbourne will be added to this timetable in September.

The airline is offering return fares from \$1100 (around \$750US) for Australians traveling to the US. It has linked up with several US airlines for connections to a host of cities. With United Airlines already on this route and Delta entering the market, competition will be fierce, so compare your options for the best deal.

3. Cheap domestic flights.

Airfares between Australian capital cities are also highly competitive. Qantas has opposition from Jetstar, Virgin Blue, Ozjet, Skywest and Air North on the domestic routes. The Best Flights web page will give you the most competitive prices on the day you wish to travel for your departure and arrival cities.

Virgin Blue is currently offering a one way fare of \$54 (\$37US) between Sydney and Brisbane and \$76 (\$52US) between Sydney and Melbourne. How cheap is that?

4. Cheap domestic rail fares.

The best way to see and experience the Australian Outback is by rail. The main domestic carrier, Great Southern Rail (GSR) is offering special discounts for seniors, backpackers and international students on its Ghan and Indian Pacific services.

It is also offering a special free upgrade from Red Service sleeper to Gold Service sleeper on its Ghan service between Adelaide and Darwin. This offer is valid to 30 June 2009.

5. Cheap accommodation and meals.

Hotels are slashing prices like never before, making the current economic climate a hit for prospective holiday makers. An example is a deluxe king room at a 4 star hotel in Perth reduced from \$300 to \$190 (\$130US) per night.

Check the Wotif web site for the best bargains including a planned month long half price hotel sale.

Looking for something cheaper? Check out the YHA Australia website for any special deals. If you are planning to stay in Melbourne, a new backpacker hostel, Urban Central, offers safe, clean budget accommodation at Southbank. This convenient location is just a 10 minute walk from the CBD.

6. Cheap tours.

Many of the large Australian tour operators, including AAT Kings and AP Touring are offering special deals to attract customers.

AAT Kings is offering 50% off the second passenger for its Northern Territory tours of 2 days or more and 25% off the second passenger for Australian tours of 10 days or more.

AP Touring is offering a saving of \$400 per couple for an 11 day Kimberley cruise and \$700 per couple for a 10 day Tasmanian tour.

7. Free city transport.

Most Australian cities offer discounted fares on buses, trams and trains, particularly if you buy a day pass or longer. If you are in Melbourne, ask for a metcard.

Both Melbourne and Perth offer FREE transport within the city.

Perth has an extensive system of CAT (central area transport) buses operating throughout the city and inner suburbs.

The main stopping place is the central railway station in Wellington St.

Melbourne has 2 free public transport networks. The first is the Melbourne City Tourist Shuttle. It takes you on a tour of the outer rim of the city and has 3 stops in both William St and Exhibition St. The second is the City Circle Tram and as its name suggests, this red and gold tram covers mainly the inner city streets.

The worst peacetime disaster in Australian history has shocked the nation. Australian travel writer Graeme Lanham will donate \$10 from the sale of each copy of his Ebook Travel Tips Australia to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal.

Available at: <http://www.traveltipsaustralia.com>

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