

Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains in New South Wales are found approximately 48 kilometres west of Sydney. They are a range of sandstone geological structures that reach to at least 1,190 metres. The Blue Mountains are not, as the name suggests, a range of mountains but rather a plateau with rugged eroded gorges of up to 760 metres depth. A large part of the Blue Mountains is incorporated in the Greater Blue Mountains Area World Heritage Site and its constituent seven national parks and a conservation reserve.

The two main routes into the Blue Mountains are along the Great Western Highway or along the much prettier Bells Line of Road. There is also a train service from Sydney to Katoomba that departs Sydney approximately every hour. There is also a Blue Mountains Explorer bus which stops at 18 attractions around the Blue Mountains. This can be booked from Katoomba, which is where most travelers base themselves from which to explore the region. There is a range of accommodation located around the Blue Mountains, mostly found in Katoomba including hostels, boutique hotels, motels and bed and breakfasts. The Blue Mountains and its many attractions can also easily be visited in a day tour from Sydney. Just ask us at Travel Forever and we can organize one for you!

Sights & Attractions

The Blue Mountains offer amazing scenery, flora and fauna. The mountains have been given their name due to the blue haze that hovered above the mountains produced by the oil from the plentiful Eucalyptus trees. The Blue Mountains National Park offers fantastic walking trails, scenic rail and cable ways and plenty of other activities such as abseiling, mountain bike riding, rock climbing and canoeing.

If you're driving from Sydney, there are some fabulous lookout points and points of interest on the way to the Blue Mountains. Just south of Glenbrook you will find the Red Hand Cave which features a selection of Aboriginal hand stencils. Leura is a small and pretty town which offers a number of cafes and dainty stores. Just south of this is Sublime Point, a great lookout. For fantastic views of the Jamison Valley and to see the spectacular waterfall, head to Wentworth Falls. Between Leura and Wentworth Falls is Katoomba which is the main tourist centre and viewing area for the Three Sisters.

The Three Sister's is the most recognizable sight you may have seen in photos of the Blue Mountains. These three large rock formations seem to appear out of the mist and are a truly beautiful sight to behold. Another great way to view this lovely national park is on the Katoomba Scenic Railway, (the steepest in the world, according to the Guinness Book of Records), the 415m descent will take you through a cliff side tunnel into ancient rain forest. Enjoy the stunning rainforest, ancient ravines and dazzling waterfalls from 270m above on the Scenic Skyway, which is a glass-bottomed aerial cable car that traverses an arm of

the Jamison Valley at Katoomba. There's also the Scenic Cableway, the steepest aerial cable car in Australia. This takes you on a 545 metre ride into - or out of - the World Heritage-listed rain forest of the Jamison Valley. The Zig Zag Railway is another option for relaxed cruising in the Blue Mountains, this is an old-fashioned railway with steam-powered engines near Lithgow.

Near the Three Sisters, you'll find the Giant Staircase walking track, which runs down a cliff into the Jamison Valley, offering access to extensive nature walks through the valley. Also worth a visit is the Jenolan Caves, a spectacular series of limestone caves that are regarded as some of the world's best. The caves lie 45 kilometres (70 kilometres by road) to the south west of Katoomba.

Other places that are worth visiting include Anvil Rock, Evan's Lookout, Govetts Leap, Perry's Lookdown and Pulpit Rock lookouts, just outside of the small town of Blackheath. There are some wonderful bushland walks including a spectacular 4 hour walk to the Blue Gum Forest at the base of the valley.

Climate

During the winter months (June, July, August), the average temperature in the Katoomba is around 11°C while in summer (December, January, February), the average temperature is around 22°C. The Blue Mountains has a similar rainfall to Sydney, most of this falling in the winter months. The mountains even experience snow, about 5 days a year.

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