

THE ONE PLAIN

The pancake-flat Hay Plain, which surrounds the eponymous town on the edge of NSW's vast Riverina region (about 725 kilometres west of Sydney) is claimed to be one of the world's three flattest places. Certainly, you'd be flat out finding many that are any flatter. It's a little like the Nullarbor you're having when you're not driving all the way across the Nullarbor.

THE ONE MUSEUM

If the history of the Australian wool export industry isn't your idea of sheer excitement, think again. A short clip out of town on the confluence of the Stuart and Cobb highways, Shear Outback: the Australian Shearers Hall of Fame is built inside an architecturally-imposing contemporary building with a fair dinkum shearing shed. The museum details the proud and, at times volatile, history of shearing in Australia with expert demonstrations and talks staged daily in the aforementioned shed.

THE ONE STAY

If not the best place to stay in town, The Convent is definitely the most interesting to bed down in for a night or preferably two. A former convent, as the name suggests, this heritage boutique-style hotel-cum-guesthouse is tucked away in the quiet backstreets of town and is fronted by one of the lushest lawns in this parched town. Along with its private courtyard pool, there's also a good in-house cafe so breakfast, brunch or lunch is just a mere stroll down the hallway from your room.

See theconventhay.com.au

THE ONE SUNSET SPOT

To gain an even better, if not more beautiful, perspective of the Hay Plain, drive 15 minutes out of town along the Cobb Highway and park at the new 360-degree sunset viewing area. Soak up the spectacular pinker-than-a-galah display as well as the silence, which is punctuated only by the sound of the odd cow in the paddocks nearby. The viewing area also comes with its own sculptural chaise lounge, of sorts. Take care in the enveloping darkness on the way back into town as wildlife may be about.

THE ONE RIDE

Grab a free bike (how good is that?) for an hour from the friendly local tourism information centre off the main street and head off on a pedal along the banks of the eucalypt-shaded Murrumbidgee River which runs through Hay. Following the Bidgee River Trail close to the river, allow for some stops along the way to read the historical markers that explain the natural and human history and admire the sculptures. Of course, you can also tackle the trail on two feet. See theriverina.com.au

THE ONE BED & BREAKFAST

It's not only urban folk who have been



Clockwise from main: The vast Hay Plain with a storm approaching; the drawing room at the Bank B&B; and shearing at Shear Outback.

exchanging the city for the bush but country folk who lived in the city and decided to return to the bush. Interior designer Sheila Smith recently returned to Hay to establish not only her studio in a stately old bank building but also to launch a stylish bed and breakfast. The luxury B&B, filled with designer furnishings under towering ceilings, has its own large verandah overlooking Hay's main street and enough space for the exclusive use of four guests. See bankbedandbreakfast.com.au

THE ONE ARTWORK

Not every piece of oversized public artwork in the bush is painted on the side of a silo. In Hay, the local water towers, set back from the main street, have been utilised as the heavy metal canvases for murals commemorating the town's significant human contribution to two world wars. Completed late last year, the murals at

Sandy Point Beach and painted by Melbourne artist Matt Adante, depict the male and female visages of five local Hay heroes who served in both conflicts. See australiansiloarttrail.com

THE ONE PRISON

Except for a small sign indicating its original site, sadly, nothing remains of Hay's World War II prisoner of war camp, where not only were enemy combatants interred, but also hundreds of mostly Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany known as the "Dunera Boys". But still intact is Hay Gaol, one of several 19th century prototype NSW prisons designed by Scottish-born colonial architect James Barnet, who was also responsible for Sydney's grandiose GPO. See mgns.org.au

THE ONE TOURING ROUTE

A still working stock route, the

610-kilometre Long Paddock runs from Echuca-Moama on the NSW-Victoria border all the way to Wilcannia in northern NSW. Hay is one of the key points on this touring route and, if you choose, you can start the journey from the town. The Long Paddock is set to receive more visitors once the Cobb Highway, running north of Hay, is fully bituminised (a project not without controversy). See thelongpaddock.com.au

ONE MORE THING ...

Hay has tended to be a one-night stopover for roadtrippers travelling the 1375 kilometres between Sydney and Adelaide. There's more than enough to keep you entertained for at least an extra day's stay.

Anthony Dennis

The writer was a guest of Destination NSW. See visitnsw.com; theriverina.com.au



Choose The Best

What's your definition of adventure?

We reckon it's any experience that takes you into your unknown. And that's what we do, every day. An adventure on the TRUE NORTH is not a typical expedition cruise. We have been exploring the Kimberley coast for more than 30 years, tracking down the region's most unique experiences.

We can't necessarily say what you'll be doing each day. Because it's up to you. With six dedicated adventure boats and an onboard helicopter at your disposal – you can choose if today is the day that you catch your first barramundi or, perhaps you might choose to fly to an otherwise impossible-to-reach spot that others don't even know about.

An adventure on the Kimberley coast is a once in a lifetime experience. Make sure you *Choose the Best* and, here's to not knowing the rest, here's to your next adventure.



Contact our reservations team to choose your 2021 adventure

True North
experiences@truenorth.com.au +61 8 9192 1829
www.truenorth.com.au