



UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12.01AM TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2024

WOTIF ANNOUNCES 2024 AUSSIE TOWN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Bendigo, VIC claims the top spot as half of Aussies seek local cultural experiences in 2024

SYDNEY, 13 FEB 2024 – Today, leading travel app [Wotif](#) announces the winners of the 2024 Aussie Town of the Year Awards, as new research reveals half (51%) of Aussies will travel domestically this year to experience Australia’s rich local culture*.

Renowned for its gold rush legacy, dating back to the 1850s, Bendigo in Victoria claims the top spot this year, as 4.5 million Aussies plan on visiting the state in 2024. Rounding out the top three destinations are Broken Hill in NSW and Queensland’s Stanthorpe, each providing unique experiences and primed for seven in ten (69%) who plan on travelling domestically in 2024, a 9% increase year-on-year.

Now in its seventh year, the Wotif Aussie Town of the Year Awards recognise trending Aussie destinations for the year ahead and is based on a Wotif data index that looks at accommodation affordability, quality, and traveller satisfaction**.

The awards come at the perfect time as over two-fifths (43%) of Aussies who plan to travel domestically want to visit new destinations within Australia. In addition, three in ten (29%) are open to travelling to new destinations if it means finding a good deal and over a quarter (27%) are choosing to travel locally rather than overseas to help keep costs down.

Swapping classic coastal getaways for inland educational experiences this year’s awards feature a diverse mix of regional towns, reflecting the desire of many to learn more about Australia. Local domestic travellers are most interested in exploring historic sites (89%) which they’ll find in Broken Hill with its sacred Aboriginal site Mutawintji National Park, places that showcase Australia’s unique outback experiences (84%) such as the underground town of Coober Pedy in SA, and destinations that showcase the arts (76%) such as Godinymayin Yijard Arts and Culture Centre in Northern Territory’s, Katherine.

Wotif Travel Expert, Sarah King, says, “Aussie travellers are driven by a curiosity to experience the world around them and it’s fantastic to see that pursuit of discovery leading many to find culture close to home. As one in five (20%) Aussies are planning a trip during the upcoming Easter long weekend and over half (56%) plan on taking advantage of school holidays for local getaways, these awards provide the ultimate inspiration for those planning their travels for the year ahead.”

2024 Wotif Aussie Town of the Year Award winners:

Destination insights included in Notes to Editor

1. Bendigo, VIC

2. Broken Hill, NSW
3. Stanthorpe, QLD
4. Katherine, NT
5. Bathurst, NSW
6. Tanunda, SA
7. Griffith, NSW
8. Stanley, TAS
9. Exmouth, WA
10. Coober Pedy, SA

To read more and see the latest travel deals from this year's winning destinations, head to www.wotif.com/australiawards.

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Notes to Editor

- **Bendigo Visual Assets:** Images, b-roll and pre-recorded interviews are available for download [here](#).
- **Top 10 Visual Assets:** Images and b-roll for all 10 towns are available for download [here](#).
- **Destination Insights:**
 1. **Bendigo, VIC** - Nestled in central Victoria, Bendigo is renowned for its gold rush legacy, dating back to the 1850s where visitors can explore below ground at the Central Deborah Gold Mine. Bendigo also offers spectacular cultural experiences, including the Djaa Djuwima First Nations Art Gallery and the Bendigo Art Gallery, one of Australia's largest and most innovative regional galleries. Lastly, Bendigo's exciting cultural and food and beverage scene led to the city being recognised as Australia's first UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Mercure Bendigo Schaller](#)
 2. **Broken Hill, NSW** - Famously featured in the iconic 1994 Australian movie, Priscilla Queen of the Desert, Priscilla's spirit lives on with the Broken Hill Festival, a 5-day event that celebrates the film. Visitors can also enjoy contemporary works by leading Aboriginal artists at the oldest regional gallery in NSW - the Broken Hill City Art Gallery. For ruggedly beautiful landscapes, just outside of Broken Hill is the Mutawintji National Park, one of Australia's most sacred Aboriginal Historic Sites with superb ochre hand stencils and rock engravings. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Royal Exchange Hotel](#)
 3. **Stanthorpe, QLD** - Nestled in Queensland's south-west corner is Stanthorpe, 2.5 hours west of Brisbane, home to one of the state's two recognised wine-growing regions. Stanthorpe's cooler climate and high altitude make it popular for winter escapes and wine tasting with 50+ cellar doors. Beyond wine, food experiences range from apple and strawberry picking in warmer months to truffle hunts in winter. Outdoor enthusiasts can hike trails in Girraween National Park or take a self-guided walk to appreciate Stanthorpe's vibrant street art. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Apple & Grape Motel](#)
 4. **Katherine, NT** - Marking the point where the traditional lands of the Jawoyn, Dagoman, and Wardaman Aboriginal Peoples converge, Katherine is home to spectacular sandstone country, majestic gorges, misty waterfalls and authentic Aboriginal experiences. Katherine also boasts a thriving art scene, from vibrant street art to the Barunga Festival and galleries like Godinymayin Yijard Arts and Culture Centre. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Beagle Motor Inn](#)

5. **Bathurst, NSW** - As Australia's oldest inland colonial settlement, there is a wealth of history and heritage to experience including visiting authentic gold rush villages and gold panning. Bathurst is also the home of Australian Motor Sport with the iconic Mount Panorama/Wahluu right on our doorstep. With no shortage of things to do in the Bathurst region, experience the thrill of v8 Supercars during major races, drive around the circuit for free, or visit one of four world-class museums right in the CBD. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Rydges Mount Panorama Bathurst](#)
6. **Tanunda, SA** - Known as the 'red heart' of the Barossa, Tanunda sits in a prime position. From iconic heritage buildings to the beauty of the Barossa ranges and surrounding vineyards, it aptly derives its name from the Aboriginal word for watering hole. The town of Tanunda also boasts a strong European heritage thanks to the German immigrants who settled in the town in the 1800s. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Barossa Weintal Hotel](#)
7. **Griffith, NSW** - Griffith has the highest proportion of Italian ancestry of any Local Government Area in Australia, due to the high number of Italian immigrants that settled in the area in the 1930s and in the postwar period. This influence remains strong in Griffith today, and is seen in the city's vibrant café, restaurant and wine making scene as showcased in the 'A Taste of Italy Griffith' program which is a seven-day celebration that occurs in August each year, honouring the Italian culture and heritage that is unique to Griffith. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Quest Griffith](#)
8. **Stanley, TAS** - Take a stroll through time in this coastal town with its preserved cottages and historic landmarks. Explore the 1830s Highfield Historic Site, wander the Stanley Heritage Walk, and delve into the Stanley Discovery Museum for a rich understanding of the area's history. All while the iconic Stanley Nut graces the backdrop, adding a touch of majesty to this charming coastal gem. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Halon Guest House](#)
9. **Exmouth, WA** - Visitors to Exmouth can discover the culture and the country of the Nyinggulu's First Nations people as they take in the ancient wilderness landscapes of the region. A mecca for divers and snorkelers, Exmouth offers the world's largest fringing reef with an incredible coastline and some of the most unforgettable marine life encounters to experience. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Exmouth Escape Resort](#)
10. **Coober Pedy, SA** - Australia's opal capital, Coober Pedy is an underground town in the heart of the desert, boasting a sun-baked lunar landscape, fascinating history and a unique way of life. Beneath the ground, visitors can explore underground houses, hotels, churches, museums and even shops. Above ground, travellers can try their luck fossicking for opals, watch a movie at SA's last drive-in or take an outback tour in a 4WD to one of the many surrounding natural wonders. **Wotif accommodation tip:** [Desert Cave Hotel](#)

***About the research:**

Wotif research commissioned in collaboration with YouGov. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,048 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 4 - 8 January 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Australian adults (aged 18+).

****About the 2024 Wotif Aussie Town of the Year Award index:**

- Trending traveller interest: Based on accommodation searches on Wotif.com in 2023, compared to 2022

- Affordability: Based on the average daily rate for accommodation demand on Wotif from January to September 2023
- Accommodation: Based on accommodation quality and quantity on Wotif in 2023
- Reviews: Based on the average traveller review rating on Wotif for each destination in 2023

About Wotif

Wotif ... it's Aussie for Travel. Wotif offers travellers access to accommodation, flights, packages, activities and car hire both locally and overseas, with verified accommodation reviews from almost two million Australian and New Zealand travellers.

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For media enquiries, contact wotif@onegreenbean.com.