

Turquoise Coast & Wheatbelt Gems 3-4 days



The Turquoise Coast is a relatively short distance north of Perth. This region includes Nambung National Park, better known for the Pinnacles Desert, as well as the coastal town of Lancelin.

This drive allows you to branch inland once you have discovered the Indian Ocean Drive, Pinnacles and coastal strip up to Cervantes. Explore what the Wheatbelt has to offer - small towns, New Norcia, country pubs, friendly locals, Indigenous history and heritage, national parks, reserves and even experience some glamping or farmstays on your return to Perth, via the Swan Valley.

Suggested itinerary

Day 1 » Perth to Cervantes 200km

Travelling via Mitchell Freeway turn off at Burns Beach Road towards Wanneroo Road, which turns into the Indian Ocean Drive. The first recommended stop along this pleasant drive is Yancheep National Park. Known as Perth's natural and cultural meeting place, Yancheep National Park offers daily tours of Crystal Cave. Aboriginal cultural experiences are available on weekends and public holidays (subject to availability).

Enjoy a café and chocolate shop, BBQ and picnic facilities, scenic walk trails, koalas, kangaroos and an abundance of other native animals and plants in one of the state's oldest National parks. Accommodation is also available. Next stop is Guilderton, a small popular holiday town on the mouth of the Moore River.

Explore the upper reaches of the river and its wildlife with a River Cruise. Travel to Lancelin, famous for



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windsurfing, surfing and the massive sand dunes for sand-boarding. For extra excitement a Desert Storm Adventure Tour over the dunes is a must. Cervantes is home to the famous Pinnacles in the Nambung National Park. A sunset in the Nambung National Park is highly recommended for photo enthusiasts.

You experience stunning scenic views over the desert to the ocean. After visiting the other sights of Cervantes, including the Stromatolites. Stay overnight at RAC Cervantes Holiday Park.

Day 2 » Cervantes to Jennacubbine 340km

Travel east from Cervantes through Badgingarra National Park, to Moora. Moora is located less than two hour's drive to the north of Perth. It is a thriving town, nestled amongst a diverse range of economic opportunities including horticulture and livestock developments. It is also strategically located between two of the State's most popular tourism attractions - New Norcia and the Pinnacles.

After sighting the murals of Moora, pass through Walebing to the east and onwards, south towards New Norcia. A tour at the Spanish Benedictine Monastic town of New Norcia is well worthwhile.

The New Norcia museum and art gallery tells the story of the trials and tribulations of the early pioneers and on show all the early basic tools and equipment or photos to show how they developed and farmed the land.

The aboriginals were their main workforce and the Monks were renowned for their building skills whereby a monastery and a girls and boys college together with Aboriginal boys and girls colleges were built. New Norcia is famous for its unique architecture and now-a-days, the monks are famous for their wine, olive oil, nut cake and other produce.

From New Norcia travel further south and then east via Calingiri-West Road, though Calingiri and on to Bolgart. Bolgart is a small Wheatbelt town and railway siding, which claims the first settled farm in the district and features the historic Bolgart Hotel built in 1916 and the Bolgart Bell Tower.

Nearby, the farm-stay Boshack attracts diverse groups of people each year, both Australian and visitors to Australia who are keen to experience a farm stay or 'glamping' -glamorous camping- whilst learning a little of farming in the Wheatbelt, of history, of Indigenous culture and also a chance to enjoy the freshwater lake on the property. Boshacks freshwater lake was originally owned by the founder of New Norcia (Bishop Salvado) as a watering hole for his animals and a stopover water place on his journey to and from New Norcia to Perth.

Boshack Farmstay and the nearby Jennacubbine Tavern offer accommodation for short term stays. Jennacubbine is another 45kms from Bolgart.

A typical Wheatbelt town that has gradually shrunk in population.

The town originally serviced the farming community and now the only building left is the 'Jenna Pub' that has an atmosphere of its own as well as the biggest steaks you can enjoy with a nice cold beer.

Also active in Jennacubbine is the church St Isadore's, tennis courts and hall for community events, a CBH grain wheatbin, a go kart track and working railway.

Day 3 » Jennacubbine to Perth, via Bullsbrook and the Swan Valley 150 km

From Jennacubbine travel via the Goomalling - Toodyay Road to Toodyay - about a 25 minute journey.

Toodyay was one of the earliest towns in WA with a functioning flour mill and gaol for holding both convicts and criminals. The infamous criminal Moondyne Joe was held at the Toodyay gaol and became famous for his several escapes.

Toodyay sits on the banks of the Swan River and amongst the surrounding hills and so has many parks, lookouts and scenic drives in and around town. Toodyay is as a result a popular destination for day trips from Perth for car rallies and jazz festivals and has great community interest for local entertainment and tourism.

Leaving Toodyay, try travelling along the Julimar Road and via Chittering Road to Bullsbrook. You will pass through the Julimar Conservation Park and through Lower Chittering. Almost half the park was farmed early last century, but the farms were mainly abandoned in the Depression of the 1930s and later became State forest. The area was then logged for timber until about 1970. The Park is now an important reserve for native fauna conservation. Bushwalking is popular in the Park as well.

On nearing Bullsbrook and the Swan Valley various attractions are on offer down side roads and along the main routes. Try wandering off the main track for a little adventure, or to inspire your next day tip drive. The 2-3 day journey winds through Bullsbrook and the Swan Valley allowing you to take advantage of the diverse retail attractions of the region.

If you haven't visited Whiteman Park and have children or would like to relax with a picnic lunch, the park offers lovely grounds and access to Caversham Wildlife Park as well.

The Swan valley offers accommodation of varying ratings, if you would like to extend your journey, with plenty of entertainment of offer as well.

Highlights

- » Rural communities, towns and pubs and taverns
- » An opportunity to try 'Glamping' (glamorous camping)
- » Country Pubs and Meals
- » Wineries, local produce and attractions throughout the Chittering Valley, Gingin, Bindoon.
- » Museums and Art Galleries
- » New Norcia Heritage Trail
- » Swan Valley attractions
- » Indigenous culture

RAC Recommends

Inattention affects all drivers, especially in rural WA. Fatalities in the Wheatbelt are 6x higher than that of the WA state average. RAC recommends rest, before driving, stopping regularly, sharing the drive and allowing enough travel time.

Visitor Centres

Toodyay	(08) 9574 2435
Yanchep National Park	(08) 9303 7759
Swan Valley	(08) 9379 9400
Cervantes	(08) 9652 7700

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Accommodation

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