

Our Favourite Things

MERCURE
HOTEL
CHARLESTOWN

NEWCASTLE & SURROUNDS — OUR FAVOURITE THINGS

Ask any local and they'll tell you the same thing — there's nowhere quite like Newy.

Novocastrians are genuinely proud of where they live, and it's easy to see why. From world-class beaches and coastal walks to vibrant laneways, incredible food, and some of the most beautiful natural surrounds in NSW — Newcastle punches well above its weight and continues to surprise first-time visitors.

Our team are locals at heart and love nothing more than sharing their favourite spots. Don't hesitate to ask at reception — we're always happy to point you in the right direction.

GET OUTSIDE

Newcastle's coastline is something special. Here are some of our favourite spots to explore:

Merewether Beach & Ocean Baths — one of Newcastle's most beloved stretches of sand, with the iconic ocean baths perfect for those who prefer their swim without the waves.

Bar Beach — a favourite with locals, with a skate park, playground, the sheltered Granny Pool, and great rocks to explore. Walk up to the Newcastle Memorial Walk from here for sweeping coastal views.

Strzelecki Lookout — one of the best views in the city. Keep an eye out for whales during migration season (June to November) and walk the Newcastle Memorial Walk down to Bar Beach.

Nobbys Breakwall & Fort Scratchley — walk to the end of the breakwall and back, then wander around the historic Fort Scratchley, a fascinating former defence fort with stunning harbour views and a daily 1pm cannon firing.

Bogey Hole & King Edward Park — swim in the historic convict-carved ocean pool or simply take a picnic and soak up the park's natural beauty.

Newcastle Foreshore & Honeysuckle — walk or ride along the foreshore path, pop into the Newcastle Museum or Maritime Centre at Honeysuckle, or catch the Stockton Ferry for a quick adventure across the harbour.

GET OUTSIDE CONTINUED...

Caves Beach — worth the drive for some cave exploring and a quieter stretch of sand.

Redhead Beach — a beautiful long beach, perfect for a swim or a sunset walk.

NATURE & WILDLIFE

Glenrock National Park — a hidden gem right on the city's doorstep. Walk, run or mountain bike through stunning bushland with coastal views.

Blackbutt Reserve — a wonderful nature reserve featuring native wildlife including kangaroos and koalas, plus bush walking trails, a playground and BBQ facilities. Perfect for families.

ARTS, CULTURE & HISTORY

Newcastle Art Gallery — freshly reopened in 2026 after a landmark expansion, Newcastle Art Gallery is now the largest public art institution in NSW outside Sydney. With over 7,000 works and an impressive \$145 million collection featuring works by Australian icons including Albert Namatjira and Margaret Olley [Broadsheet](#), it's well worth a visit. Check their website for current exhibitions.

Newcastle Museum — located at Honeysuckle, a great way to explore the city's rich industrial and cultural history.

Newcastle Civic Theatre — check what's on during your stay at this beautiful historic venue.

SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOURS

The Visit Newcastle website offers several fantastic self-guided walks including the Bathers Way coastal walk, Newcastle Architecture, Newcastle at War and Convict & Industry trails. Pick up a map from reception or download them at visitnewcastle.com.au

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DAY TRIPS WORTH TAKING

Hunter Valley — just over an hour away, the Hunter Valley is one of Australia's most celebrated wine regions. Explore the many cellar doors, visit Hunter Valley Gardens and enjoy world-class dining among the vines.

Port Stephens — dolphin watching, sandboarding down the famous Stockton Sand Dunes, gorgeous beaches and stunning coastal views. A brilliant day out.

Lake Macquarie — head to Warners Bay and walk or ride along the lake foreshore. A favourite local spot for picnics, ice cream and watching the boats go by.

ON THE WATER

Nova Cruises — for a memorable experience on Newcastle Harbour, Nova Cruises offers everything from scenic harbour cruises to dinner and entertainment on the water. Highly recommended.

Stockton Ferry — a short and iconic ferry crossing that locals take for granted — visitors love it. Hop on from Queens Wharf and explore Stockton on the other side.

Whale Watching — from June to November, whales migrate along the Newcastle coastline. Strzelecki Lookout and Nobbys Beach are great vantage points, or book a dedicated whale watching tour for a closer look.

SHOPPING

Charlestown Square — right on our doorstep, one of the largest shopping centres in the Hunter region.

Westfield Kotara — a short drive away with a great range of stores and dining options.

Darby Street, Cooks Hill — Newcastle's most charming shopping strip. Boutique stores, great cafes and a lovely village atmosphere.

The Junction — another favourite for boutique browsing.

Hunter Street Mall — the heart of Newcastle's CBD with pop-up shops and a great sense of the city's energy.

SHOPPING CONTINUED...

The Olive Tree Markets — a popular local market with fresh produce, artisan goods and local makers. Check the calendar for dates at visitnewcastle.com.au

USEFUL LINKS

visitnewcastle.com.au — the best starting point for exploring the city

visitolakemac.com.au — everything Lake Macquarie has to offer

huntervalleyvisitorcentre.com.au — plan your Hunter Valley day trip

portstephens.org.au — Port Stephens visitor information

newywithkids.com.au — brilliant resource if you're travelling with family

Our team is always happy to help with bookings, directions or recommendations — just dial 9 from your room phone or pop down to reception.