

Cockatoo Island / Wareamah



FREE
MAP

**Convict prison.
Historic dockyard.
Accommodation & tours.
Heart of Sydney Harbour.**

Cockatoo Island Harbour Trust



Overview

Discover a different side to Sydney! Located in the heart of the world's best harbour, Cockatoo Island is an incredible place to explore due to its visible layers of history.

There are countless reasons to visit for the day... or even stay a night or longer! A major drawcard is the UNESCO World Heritage listed Convict Site. Other highlights include the historic dockyard, our waterfront campground, licensed cafes, charming holiday houses and apartments, regular tours and exciting seasonal events.

Known to Sydney's First Nations peoples as Wareamah, Cockatoo Island is just a short ferry ride away. So, what are you waiting for? Plan an island adventure today!

Upon arrival, head to the visitor and accommodation centre (Map ref 4E), located just beyond the main entrance. A friendly visitor services volunteer will share tips for a great day out.

Plan your trip

Getting here is easy!

The F3 and F8 ferry services operate to the island daily, departing from Circular Quay and Barangaroo as well as from wharves along Parramatta River.

To arrive in just 10 minutes, hop on the F3 fast ferry at Barangaroo. For up-to-date information, including prices, timetables and ticket retailers, visit transportnsw.info.

You can also visit the island by water taxi, private boat or kayak.

Eat and drink

Cockatoo Overboard

Licensed | Family-friendly | Open daily

Enjoy a range of classics including burgers, fish and chips, sandwiches and mezze plates. BBQ packs are also available for campers to order.

(Map ref 3F)

Marina Cafe & Bar

Licensed | Family-friendly | Open daily

A harbour-side hangout with a beer garden that exudes country-style charm. Relax with a coffee or beverage and enjoy a diverse menu.

(Map ref 2C)



Guided tours

Journey to the island's convict and dockyard eras or discover a hidden world of dark deeds and strange characters! Online bookings essential. Check website for dates and times.

Convict Prison Tour

Discover iconic landmarks from the island's turbulent convict era (1839 to 1869).

Curious Tales Family Tour **NEW** (Accessible)

Step into a hidden world and meet a weird but wonderful cast of characters... and creatures!

Dark Past Tour (15+) **NEW**

Dark deeds. Eerie events. Unspeakable tragedies Unearth the island's raw, unfiltered truths.

Island Highlights Tour

Enjoy a crash course in the island's storied history. Discover its different uses over time.

Shipyards Tales Tour (Accessible)

Visit landmarks from the island's shipbuilding era. Plus, hear fun and thrilling dockyard tales.



Scan to learn more about our tours

Guided tours, including an accessible Lower Island Tour, are also available for private group bookings. Details: cockatooisland.gov.au/request-tour

Self-guided tours

Want to journey through the island's layered history at your own pace? Choose from 3 immersive audio tours or purchase our booklet-led family tour.

Audio tours

Our audio tours transform your mobile phone into a personal guide and vividly bring history to life. As you explore the historic convict jail and dockyard, you'll travel to a different time.

We offer 3 audio tours (\$10 each). BYO device. Headphones recommended. Scan any of the audio tour signs, located around the island, to get started.

Family tour

Discover the island's incredible story with our activity-filled family tour, aimed at kids aged 6 to 10. Equipped with a colourful booklet – and guided by a series of pink cockatoo signs – families will visit 8 exciting stops.

Family tour booklet available for \$5 from the visitor and accommodation centre (open daily 10am to 4pm). Includes pencil and paper flags.

Accessibility

We aim to make Cockatoo Island accessible to as many visitors as possible. Due to the island's history as an industrial site, and the fact we are still on our accessibility journey, we encourage you to visit cockatooisland.gov.au/accessibility.

Houses and apartments

Our holiday houses and apartments combine authentic heritage character with modern amenities. Plus: Many offer epic harbour views, framed by lush gardens.



Learn more about our houses and apartments



Fire Station Studio

From \$335 per night | Sleeps 2

The island's former fire station has been tastefully converted into a studio apartment. Located above the visitor and accommodation centre on the lower island, it features a rooftop deck and offers a panoramic view.

Note: An extra guest can be accommodated for an additional cost.



Harbour View Apartments (1 and 2 bedrooms)

Option 1 – 1-bedroom apartment

From \$350 per night | Sleeps 2

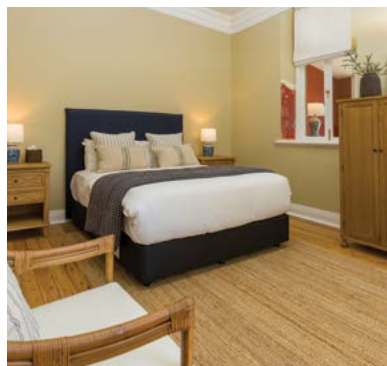
Option 2 – 2-bedroom apartment

From \$422 per night | Sleeps 4

Once occupied by Cockatoo Island's dockyard launch driver and coxswain, our Harbour View Apartments truly live up to their name thanks to unspoiled views of the harbour, including the city skyline and Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Both of our 2-bedroom apartments include an outdoor verandah area while the 1-bedroom apartment features a rear lawn.

Note: An extra guest can be accommodated in a 2-bedroom apartment for an additional cost. Plus, book both 2-bedroom apartments and unlock their connecting door.



Overseers Apartments (1 bedroom) **NEW**

From \$335 per night | Sleeps 2

Our elegant, convict-era Free Overseers Quarters building has been restored and adapted into 2 adjoining 1-bedroom apartments with views across Sydney Harbour to Hunters Hill. Each has a dedicated outdoor area.

Note: Book both apartments and unlock their connecting door.



Garden Riverview Apartments (2 bedrooms)

From \$386 per night | Sleeps 4

Each apartment features 2 bedrooms plus a private garden with views towards Hunters Hill. They once housed the dockyard's Assistant Medical Officer and Police Sergeant.

Note: An extra guest can be accommodated for an additional cost. Apartments also available in a 1-bedroom configuration.



Heritage Holiday Houses (4 bedrooms)

From \$644 per night | Sleeps 8

Once home to the dockyard's medical officer and engineering manager, our 2 Federation-style Heritage Holiday Houses are double-storey dwellings with a shared garden. Each features large entertainment areas and verandahs to the north and south.

Note: An extra 4 guests can be accommodated for an additional cost.

Waterfront campground

Campers have access to dedicated facilities, including toilets, hot showers, a laundry and a sheltered kitchen with fridges, BBQs, hot water, microwaves and seating. Plus: Free nightly screenings at our campground cinema.



BYO tent option

From \$55 per night | Max 4 guests per site

If you're a seasoned camper or on a budget, you can book an unpowered 4m x 4m site and pitch your own tent.

Note: An extra guest can be accommodated for an additional cost.



Deluxe package

From \$142 per night | Sleeps 2

Our deluxe camping package enables guests to combine their love of the great outdoors with their desire for a truly hassle-free getaway.



2-bedroom deluxe waterfront package

From \$336 per night | Sleeps 4

Seeking a camping experience for a double date or a family of 4? This package features a pair of large, pre-furnished tents plus a covered communal space.

Note: An extra 2 guests can be accommodated for an additional cost.



Basic package

From \$105 per night | Sleeps 4

Keen for an affordable stay with friends or family? Book our basic camping package and check into a pre-pitched tent.

Note: Sleeps 3 adults OR 2 adults with 2 small children.

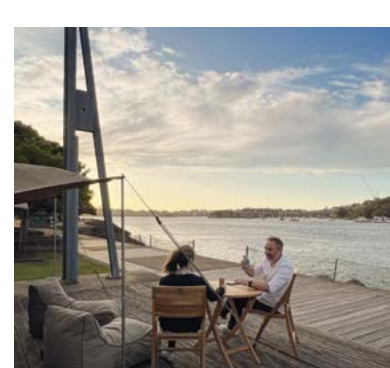


Deluxe waterfront package

From \$142 per night | Sleeps 2

Watch the sun set and rise on Sydney Harbour from the comfort of a pre-furnished tent.

Note: An extra guest can be accommodated for an additional cost.



Premium waterfront package

From \$315 per night | Sleeps 2

Seeking a romantic island getaway? Our premium waterfront camping package is perfect for couples seeking a slice of luxury with their canvas shelter.



The Harbour Trust

Cockatoo Island / Wareamah is one of the extraordinary places protected by the Harbour Trust. Located in First Nations countries on Sydney Harbour, the Harbour Trust's destinations are known for their natural beauty. They also feature heritage-listed structures and other remnants from Australia's layered history. For these reasons, they have significance on a national and international scale.

The Harbour Trust's other protected places include North Head Sanctuary in Manly, Sub Base Platypus in North Sydney and the precincts of Headland Park in Mosman. They also manage Woolwich Dock and Parklands, Macquarie Lightstation in Vaucluse, and the Former Marine Biological Station at Camp Cove. Plan a trip: harbourtrust.gov.au/our-places

Stay connected

Interested in volunteering, signing up for email updates or finding out more about the Harbour Trust? Visit us at: harbourtrust.gov.au

Follow us on social media:

@HarbourTrust

@HarbourTrust

@CockatooIsland

@CockatooIslandSydneyHarbour

In an emergency at Cockatoo Island

Phone Triple Zero (000) – or 112 if mobile coverage is limited – and your location. Then contact:

Ranger 0434 652 153 | 7am – 4pm

Security 0433 632 791 | 4pm – 7am



Cockatoo Island / Wareamah – a brief history

Pre 1788

The island is known as Wareamah to local First Nations peoples. Wareamah connects to the waterways and homelands of the Wallumedegal, Wangal, Cammeraygal and Gadigal peoples.

1839 to 1869

The island is used as a prison for reoffending convicts as well as local criminals. Their punishment includes hard labour like quarrying stone for buildings.

1848 to 1857

Convicts are forced to work on the island’s Fitzroy Dock – the earliest graving dock commenced in Australia. Its completion marks the start of the island’s dockyard era.

1871 to 1887

Neglected and vulnerable girls are sent to the island and placed in either the Biloea Industrial School for Girls or Biloea Reformatory. During this period, the island is known as Biloea – a First Nations word for cockatoo. This was an attempt to distance the island from the stigma attached to the former prison.

1871 to 1911

Neglected and vulnerable boys are educated aboard nautical school ships, moored off the island – first the *Vernon* and later the *Sobraon*.

1882 to 1890

Sutherland Dock is built using free labour. It enables the dockyard to repair larger ships.

1888 to 1909

Male and female prisoners convicted of crimes in NSW are held on the island in Biloea Gaol – opened to alleviate overcrowding at Darlinghurst Gaol.

1914 to 1918

Against the backdrop of the First World War, the island’s dock workers build and service Australian navy vessels. As a result of the heightened wartime activity, the dockyard expands.

1914 to 1991

During this period, submarines are maintained and refitted at the dockyard. The AE1 and AE2 vessels are the first 2 submarines serviced here. The final one is HMAS *Orion* – one of the Oberon class-submarines based at HMAS *Platypus* in North Sydney.

1938 to 1945

The dockyard plays a pivotal role in building, maintaining and repairing naval ships during the Second World War. As with the First World War, the dockyard expands to meet the wartime requirements of the Allied powers.

1991

The dockyard completes its final major project. It closes its doors the following year.

2000

A branch of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy camps on the island for 4 months in support of an unsuccessful land claim.

2001

The Harbour Trust is established to return former Defence lands, including Cockatoo Island / Wareamah, to the people of Australia. From this time, it undertakes heritage restoration and conservation works. It also starts offering tours, accommodation and events.

2009

Highly significant convict structures – 2 solitary confinement cells, a ration store and a coal store – are uncovered during an archaeological dig.

2010

The island is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List with 10 other heritage sites nationwide. Collectively known as the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage Property, these sites feature outstanding examples of convict era structures.



2024

The Harbour Trust releases the Cockatoo Island / Wareamah Master Plan. It outlines a vision for the destination’s future renewal.

Today

Cockatoo Island / Wareamah offers a vibrant mix of culture, history, recreation and accommodation. It is both a popular tourist destination and a treasured place of connection and memory.

Legend

- Emergency assembly point
 - First aid
 - Ranger/Security
 - Visitor & accommodation centre
 - Cafe & bar
 - Toilets
 - Accessible toilet
 - Parent room
 - Accommodation
 - Campground
 - Berths (for hire)
 - Marina
 - Conference centre & meeting space
 - Display
 - Drinking fountain
 - Stairs
 - Public barbeque
 - Ferry wharf
 - Access through buildings/tunnels
 - Cliff top & convict silos walk
 - Accommodation area (guest use only)
 - Buildings – restricted access
 - Buildings – public access
- 65m
Map scale is approximate only