

Title:

Kangaroo Island - An Australian Island Paradise

Word Count:

624

Summary:

Kangaroo Island has been described as one of earth's last unspoilt island refuges, and with very good reason. This idyllic island located off the coast of South Australian is an idyllic tour destination for those seeking sun, surf, and everything that goes with them, including swimming, fishing, sailing and scuba-diving. Islands are almost always special places ... isolation, solitude, the ocean ... just think of places like the West Indies, Hawaii, the Maldives, all of which have unique characteristics and special natural environments that have evolved through thousands of years of isolation. Australia 's Kangaroo Island is no exception.

Keywords:

kangaroo, island, south, australia, tour, travel, holiday, vacation

Article Body:

Kangaroo Island has been described as one of earth's last unspoilt island refuges, and with very good reason. This idyllic island located off the coast of South Australian is an idyllic tour destination for those seeking sun, surf, and everything that goes with them, including swimming, fishing, sailing and scuba-diving. Islands are almost always special places ... isolation, solitude, the ocean ... just think of places like the West Indies, Hawaii, the Maldives, all of which have unique characteristics and special natural environments that have evolved through thousands of years of isolation. Australia 's Kangaroo Island is no exception.

Kangaroo Island is about seven times the size of Singapore and around 155 kilometres in length, with the town of Kingscote being the island's capital and main settlement. Wildlife is abundant on the island, where koalas laze in the gum trees and seals laze on the beach. In addition, kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas, platypi and goannas all thrive on the island.

A wide range of tours are available on Kangaroo Island, enabling you to relax while someone else does the driving. In addition, guides can provide a great deal of information about Kangaroo Island on the way. Both coach tours and four-wheel drive tours are available, with most tours collecting passengers from

their accommodation, the airport or the ferry terminal. Bike riding and hiking are also possible for those with the energy, but beware that Kangaroo Island is large and the necessary level of fitness is required for these options.

Large luxury vehicle and passenger ferries operate between Cape Jervis on the South Australian coast and Penneshaw on Kangaroo Island (travelling time 45 minutes). There are four departures daily, with extra services at peak times. Bus connections are available to/from Adelaide to Cape Jervis, and to/from Penneshaw to American River and Kingscote on the island. Regional Express operates a 30-minute air service from Adelaide to Kingscote Airport, located 13km from Kingscote.

Because of its relative isolation, Kangaroo Island has experienced much less impact from European settlement than the South Australian mainland. Half the bushland on Kangaroo Island remains untouched since the time of British navigator Matthew Flinders named the island in 1802, and more than a third of the Island has National Park or Conservation Park status. This pristine bushland supports a rich wildlife population of wildlife and makes Kangaroo Island one of the best places in Australia to see wildlife in its natural environment.

Kangaroo Island was separated from mainland Australia about 10,000 years ago. In that time, some species have evolved differently from their mainland counterparts. This is evident for example in the Kangaroo Island Kangaroo (a subspecies of the Western Grey Kangaroo common in south-eastern Australia) which is today smaller, darker and has longer fur than its mainland counterpart. The now endangered Glossy Black Cockatoo is also a unique Kangaroo Island subspecies, as is the small marsupial carnivore the Sooty Dunnart.

Similarly, King Island's plants have evolved in isolation to the point where at least 45 species are endemic (found only on Kangaroo Island) including several eucalypts. The total absence of feral creatures such as foxes and rabbits helps ensure the integrity Kangaroo Island's bushland ecosystems.

In recognition of Kangaroo Island's unique plant and wildlife species (some of which are either threatened or unique to the island), National and Conservation parks were declared across the island very early in the history of its European settlement. Kangaroo Island's National Parks provide access to spectacular coastline scenery, unique geological formations, fascinating history and abundant wildlife. There are four major parks: Flinders Chase National Park (walking trails and spectacular rock formations), Kelly Hill Conservation Park (limestone caves and hiking), Seal Bay Conservation Park (Australia's largest accessible colony of sea lions) and Cape Willoughby Conservation Park (first lighthouse in South Australia).

