

BIG ADVENTURES MINI BUDGET

LOOKING FOR AN
ADVENTURE BUT
KEEN TO KEEP YOUR
WALLET CLOSED?

WHETHER YOU'RE AFTER a brief getaway or a longer holiday, there's a stack of things to do both here in your own backyard or across the ditch.

With fierce competition between airlines it's easy to snag a bargain fare on domestic flights or if you are eager to head to the world adventure capital across to the land of the big white cloud, fares are at an all time low.

Want to save on accommodation? Of course camping is the best option for this; but if it's not your bag and you need a few more creature comforts there is a vast array of hostels, pubs, B&Bs, motels, and cabin accommodation options available.

Here are some ideas that will get the wind in your hair and your heart pumping without breaking the bank.

On ya bike!

Whether it's the downhill adrenalin rush in Australia's High Country or a much cruiser terrain in the lowlands you're after, mountain biking offers something for every age, fitness level and experience.

You don't have to go bush to find trails. Every Australian state or territory has a patch of bushland designated to mountain bike trails, and often not too far from the CBD.

Get ready to ride! It's time to dust off that

unused Christmas present, borrow or hire a bike and take to the trails.

In New Zealand, get into:

- + Whakarewarewa Forest, Rotorua (North Island)
- + Makara Peak, Wellington (North Island)
- + The Queen Charlotte Track, Marlborough Sound (South Island)
- + Central Otago (South Island)
- + Waimate, South Canterbury (South Island).

In Australia, head for:

- + The Alpine High Country (VIC)
- + Stromlo Forest Park (ACT)
- + Munda Biddi Trail (WA)
- + Noosa Trail Network (QLD)
- + Blue Mountains (NSW)
- + Thredbo, Mt Kosciuszko National Park (NSW).

These boots are made for walkin'!

A land for all seasons, Australia is definitely the lucky country where hiking is concerned. Any time of the year you'll find a place to hike in some corner of the country. In the summer months hit the high country or the Apple Isle. In winter head north or to Central Australia. If you are after wildflowers, try spring in Western Australia. New Zealand is best from November to May. Wherever you point your compass, remember to always pre-plan your hike and let people know where you are going.

Either find yourself a base and do a series of day hikes from there; or, for the more adventurous, strap on your backpack and lose yourself.

In New Zealand, we recommend:

- + Lake Waikaremoana Track, Te Urewera National Park (North Island)
- + Tongariro Northern Circuit, Tongariro National Park (North Island)
- + Heaphy Track, Kahurangi National Park (South Island)
- + Abel Tasman Coast Track, Abel Tasman National Park (South Island)
- + Milford Track (South Island)
- + Routeburn Track, Mount Aspiring National Park with Fiordland National Park (South Island).

In Australia, head for:

- + Overland Track – Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair National Park (TAS)
- + Freycinet Circuit (TAS)
- + Great Ocean Walk – Apollo Bay - 12 Apostles (VIC)
- + Warrumbungle National Park (NSW)
- + Blue Mountains (NSW).

Come on a surfari

Australians have been surfing for almost a hundred years since Hawaiian surfer The Duke, first introduced the ancient Hawaiian sport during his visit Down Under in 1914. If you haven't experienced the sweet taste of adrenalin pumping success of catching your first wave, then you are missing out! But don't fear, with a handful of lessons and an iron will determination, you'll be riding waves in the coolest locations up and down the coast.

In New Zealand, carve it up at:

- + Northland, Auckland, Waikato (North coast of north island)
- + Coromandel, Bay of Plenty, Eastland (East coast of north Island)

- + Taranaki, Wellington (Lower coast of North Island)
- + West Coast, Canterbury, Otago, Southland (South Island).

In Australia, head for:

- + The Great Ocean Road surf coast – Torquay, Bells Beach, Anglesea, Lorne (VIC)
- + Cabarita, Byron Bay, Lennox Head (Northern NSW).

Sydney to Byron Bay 5-day surf safaris for beginners and intermediates are run by many companies including:

- + Nomad Surfers (NSW)
- + Mojo Surf Camps (NSW)
- + Surf Diva Australia (NSW)
- + Waves Surf School (NSW)
- + Surfaris (NSW)
- + Surf and Sun (SA)
- + Beach Bum Australia (QLD).

Discover hidden treasures

Head out for a caving adventure where you can drift through a star-studded glow worm grotto or dangle, squeeze, swing and scramble your way through a subterranean adventure playground. There's a caving experience for all levels of daring, just don't go it alone. Find someone experienced and with all the necessary safety equipment. Most show caves offer an adventure option, such as Jenolan Caves (NSW) and Naracoote Caves (SA).

In New Zealand, cave it up at:

- + Waitomo- Waikato Region (North Island)
- + Taniwha Caves –Greymouth (South Island)
- + Paparoa National Park-Westport (South Island).

In Australia, we recommend:

- + Ngilgi Cave-Yallingup (WA)
- + Labertouche Caves-Melbourne (VIC)
- + Blue Mountains (NSW).

So what are you waiting for? Close that wallet, head into the great outdoors and go get yourself some fun!

With fierce competition between airlines it's easy to snag a bargain airfare.



WIN IT FIRST!

Want more ideas for big adventures on a mini budget? Win yourself a copy of Lonely Planet's *Southeast Asia on a Shoestring*, valued at \$44.99, by emailing 50 words or less to editor@fitnessfirst.com.au before 5 June, telling us what your best idea is for a big adventure on a mini budget. And if your idea is deemed the most convincing, you'll win! Remember to include your postal address.

TONI KRASICKI, BHMS (ExSc) PGDipHlthProm

Toni is a group exercise instructor with almost 20 years experience in the industry both here and abroad. She is a freelance writer and can be contacted via tkrasicki@hotmail.com