

ADVERTISING FEATURE



48 HOURS IN IPSWICH

FANCY A WEEKEND FILLED WITH CRAFT BEERS, LUXURY ACCOMMODATION, FINE DINING AND HERITAGE SIGHTS? THEN HEAD WEST AND UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF QUEENSLAND'S OLDEST PROVINCIAL CITY

STEPHEN NADIN



Enjoy the view from the pool at Spicers Hidden Vale.

FRIDAY

3pm: Queens Park, Nerima Gardens and Ipswich Nature Centre, Ipswich.

Cast off big city stresses in no time by making the impressive green expanse of Queens Park your first stop. One of the state's oldest parks, it is home to a monument erected in 1864 while white rocks offer a glimpse of the city's early history as a limestone mining settlement. Architecture buffs should seek out the heritage-listed Incinerator Theatre, the only building in Queensland designed by Walter Burley Griffin. Take a moment to stroll around the tranquil Japanese Nerima Gardens where tea ceremonies are held in the tea house and stop in at the Ipswich Nature Centre, opened in 1936, and home to wombats, wallabies, quolls, a nocturnal bilby exhibit and vibrant rainforest aviary.

5pm: Pumpyard Bar and Brewery, 88 Limestone St, Ipswich. Brewer Wade Curtis attracted nationwide attention in 2015 when

discover
Ipswich

FLOATING IMAGES HOT AIR BALLOON FLIGHTS



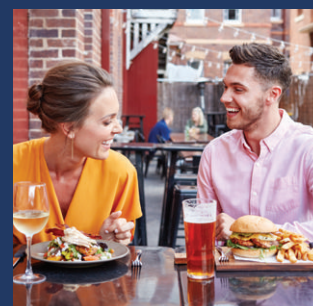
Experience the adventure of ballooning with Brisbane's closest balloon company over Ipswich, Scenic Rim and Somerset countryside. One hour flight, restaurant breakfast and flight certificate. Call or Book online for Flights, Gift Vouchers and Accommodation.

TripAdvisor Rating   
from 93 reviews

259 Junction Road, Karalee | 07 3294 8770
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4 HEARTS BREWING PUMPYARD BAR AND BREWERY



We have built the first brewery in Ipswich since 1903. Set within a heritage listed building, The Pumpyard offers beers brewed onsite, wine, cider and spirits. Our food is focused on house made fresh local menu items. If you only have time to visit one Ipswich restaurant - this is it!

TripAdvisor Rating    
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88 Limestone St, Ipswich | 07 3282 9076
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Hot air ballooning is one of the best ways to appreciate the beauty of Ipswich and its rural surrounds.

he produced a beer made from carrots farmed in the nearby Scenic Rim. You can sample other, more mainstream, brews at the first microbrewery to open its doors in Ipswich since 1904. From the light Ipswich Challenger to the award-winning Coal Miners Stout, there is plenty to quench the thirst.

7pm: Spicers Hidden Vale, 617 Grandchester Mt Mort Rd, Grandchester.

Take a short drive further west to the Hidden Vale homestead, where former British Secret Service spy Sidney Cotton grew up. Reportedly the inspiration for Ian Fleming's James Bond, Cotton was also a pioneer aviator and inventor who met Fleming – then working for British naval intelligence – in 1939. Today, Spicers Hidden Vale is a luxury retreat where chef Ash Martin produces a paddock-to-plate experience in the Homage restaurant using ingredients from gardens on the property and nearby farms from the Lockyer Valley to the Darling Downs.

SATURDAY

8am: Spicers Hidden Vale.

Enjoy a leisurely lie-in in your immaculately restored and lavishly furnished cottage, one of a number dotted around the 5000ha property. Admire the view from your front porch across to Cunninghams Gap before heading to breakfast where the paddock-to-plate theme continues with Scenic Rim milk and yoghurt among the menu items.

9am: Pterodactyl Helicopters, Ipswich.

Prepare to take flight with Mike Jarvis, who offers helicopter tours through the scenic areas of Ipswich, Brisbane, the Scenic Rim, Lockyer Valley, Somerset, Logan and Redlands regions. On top of the thrill of a private helicopter ride, there's an opportunity to sample delicious local food and wine. Mike will drop the craft down at one of the many excellent wineries dotted across greater Ipswich, the Scenic Rim and the Somerset region, or, if beer is better on your palate, he can pilot you on a tour of great country pubs.

4pm: Ipswich Art Gallery, d'Arcy Doyle Pl, Ipswich.

There's just time for a quick visit to Ipswich Art Gallery, which has a fine collection of 19th and early 20th century fine art and folk art. Unleash your inner child with creative play in the gallery's Construction Site, where you can build your dream cubby, and TapeScape, a two-storey play space made entirely of packing tape – 56,000m of it – designed by US artist Eric Lennartson.

7pm: The Cottage Restaurant, 108 Limestone St, Ipswich.

Local couple Angela and Mark Naoum serve fine cuisine at The Cottage, aptly located in an immaculately renovated cottage. The Naoum family once lived in the 1860s heritage home where Mark is head chef and Angela leads the front of house. The modern menu features a French/Mediterranean twist – try the rolled rabbit with

wood mushrooms followed by a lavender crème brulee. The dessert highlights the lavender products of the Scenic Rim's Kooroomba Vineyards, where Mark grew up.

Overnight: Metro Hotel Ipswich International, 43 South St, Ipswich.

With views to the D'Aguilar Range, the Metro is about as central as it gets, in the heart of the Ipswich CBD. Stop for a nightcap at the Harvest lounge bar, before heading up to rest your head – the hotel offers rooms and apartments.

SUNDAY

5am: Hot air balloon flight with Floating Images.

Rise with the sun and keep your camera handy for a boutique ballooning experience. Owner and chief pilot Graeme Day has more than 25 years' experience across three continents and knows the local weather, geography and history like the back of his hand. With a maximum of 10 passengers in the basket, the balloon floats majestically over the city with glorious views out to the surrounding countryside of the Scenic Rim and Somerset regions. Finish with breakfast back at the Metro Hotel Ipswich International.

Noon: The Workshops Rail Museum, North St, North Ipswich.

No visit to Ipswich is complete without a trip to this award-winning museum. You don't have to be a train buff to be fascinated by the exhibits or the location – once the workplace of more than 3000 railway workers. The collection is housed in the old boilershop. From the opulent Vice-Regal rail carriage once used by Queensland's governor to the hands-on diesel locomotive simulator, there is so much to see – be sure to leave time for the exquisite model railway, Queensland's largest.

3.30pm: Kholo Gardens, Riverside Drive, Muirlea.

Take a short drive 7km northwest of town to this picturesque natural retreat. Explore a crystal clear lily pond, lush gardens, bush walks and open spaces where giant kauri trees and hoop pines planted by early settlers make this a peaceful place. Follow a 400m path through Tree Fern Lane under a natural rainforest canopy before tackling the steeper 800m Coal Creek Walk, site of some of the earliest recordings of coal in the area, in 1825. Formerly the site of a water pumping station, Kholo Gardens has a historic well and a charming old church, relocated here in 1990 from Redbank.

For more information, visit discoveripswich.com.au



Queensland's largest model railway, at The Workshops Rail Museum, incorporates scenes from the state's vast rail network.

QUEENS PARK AND IPSWICH NATURE CENTRE



Ipswich's Queens Park is not just shady picnic spots, stunning views and cool playgrounds. A visit to Queens Park will see you get up close to Australian wildlife in the free Ipswich Nature Centre (mini zoo) and embracing the tranquillity of the Japanese-themed Nerima Gardens.




TripAdvisor Rating     
from 241 reviews

Goleby Ave, Ipswich | 07 3281 0555
DiscoverIpswich.com.au/queenspark

ROBELLE DOMAIN AND ORION LAGOON



Robelle Domain is 24ha of parkland fun featuring a rainforest walk, waterfalls, playground, picnic spots, bike tracks and a spectacular nightly sound and light show. Cool off under the tipping bucket or in Orion Lagoon - an amazing oasis of interconnected pools of varying depth.

TripAdvisor Rating     
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Southern Cross Circuit, Springfield Central | 07 3281 0555
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