

THE SPLURGE

# HARBOUR VIEW APARTMENT

Cockatoo Island, Sydney



**Why it's worth it:** Against the shiny facade of Sydney Harbour, Cockatoo Island's rugged, industrial look provides a stark contrast. Over two centuries, the 18-hectare island housed a convict prison, reformatory girl's school and, most recently, a sprawling shipyard. Boat building ended in 1991 and, after a UNESCO World Heritage listing in 2010, tourism is now the primary industry. With its multi-level maze of

pathways, tunnels and precarious stairways, intrigue lurks around every corner. Nature meets history on an epic scale.

**Bang for your buck:** Accommodation comes in a few guises. For a fun night under canvas, pitch your own tent or "glamp" on the shoreline. But for a refined stay, choose one of the refurbished buildings perched atop the island's upper levels



FROM BOAT BUILDING TO TOURISM

Sydney's Cockatoo Island was once a prison, then a shipyard, and now it attracts travellers keen to soak up its unique industrial island setting

and gaze down, just a little smugly, at the campers below. The best choice is a harbour view apartment, with their million-dollar views from well-appointed balconies. Pour a glass of your favourite drop and soak up the tranquility, as stars appear over the shimmering water. After the last ferry departs, at around 11pm, only a few rogue seagulls remain to break the silence. In the morning, start the BBQ early and enjoy sunrise over the Harbour Bridge.

**The digs:** The apartments have stories to tell, as they originally housed the island's launch driver and coxswain. Original features, such as iron fireplaces and wooden sash windows, are lovingly restored. The interiors are modern, minimalist and stylish; all-white fittings and polished wooden floorboards create a classic atmosphere. Facilities are top-notch and include a large-screen TV, entertainment system, fully equipped kitchen and washer-dryer.

**Must-do experience:** Grab a torch and take a spooky stroll around the island at night. The decrepit outlines of the ancient industrial equipment have a sinister aura after dark. Truly brave souls can walk the lengths of two underground tunnels that bisect the island. Peer beyond the 'Do not enter' signs at your own peril.



**The damage:** Both apartments sleep four and cost \$470 per night on weekends (min. two night stay) and \$370 midweek. Add \$35 for a Breakfast Pack and \$45 for a BBQ Pack (each feed two). Regular ferries serve the island. Or treat yourselves to a water taxi at \$120 each way (for up to 10 people).

[cockatooisland.gov.au](http://cockatooisland.gov.au)

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