INSIDE...

Ten photo walks with detailed maps, curated itineraries, and step-by-step directions so you can get the best photos while you’re in Sydney.
Like many great cities, Sydney is a collection of villages and neighbourhoods, each with its own unique atmosphere and local characteristics - whether it's the design culture of Surry Hills, Newtown's indie scene, or Paddington's elegant style.

The best way to discover the array of possibilities in Sydney's villages is to explore them yourself.

It's a relatively safe and easy place to get around, but like any large city, it can be a bit daunting.

That why we've created these photo walking itineraries to help you find the must-see highlights, whilst optimizing your time, preserving your energy, and maximizing your shooting opportunities.

This curated collection of ten neighbourhoods in Sydney will immerse you in village life; wherever you are in this wonderful city.

Here is a map and a brief description of our top ten villages, neighbourhoods, and precincts we recommend you check out while you’re in Sydney.
1. Circular Quay and The Rocks

The birthplace of both the city and the modern nation, this compact area combines the historic with the modern.

Join the tourist pilgrimage to the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, and then grab a beer at a convict-era pub in The Rocks.
2. Sydney Harbour

Stretching inland from The Heads for 20 km until it morphs into the Parramatta River, the Harbour has shaped the local psyche for millennia, and today it’s the city’s sparkling playground. Its inlets, beaches, islands, and Harbourside parks provide swimming, sailing, picnicking, and many wonderful photo opportunities.

3. City Centre and Haymarket

Sydney’s city centre offers many choices for shopping, eating, sightseeing, and photographing with gracious colonial buildings scattered among the skyscrapers and orderly parks providing green breathing space. The breathless jumble of Haymarket and Chinatown provide the yin to the CBD’s yang.

4. Darling Harbour and Pyrmont

Unashamedly tourist focused, Darling Harbour will try and tempt you to its bars and restaurants with fireworks displays and a sprinkling of glitz. On its western flank, Pyrmont groans under the weight of its casino and motorway flyovers.

5. Inner West

Quietly bohemian Glebe and more loudly bohemian Newtown are the most well-known of the Inner West’s tightly packed suburbs, grouped around the University of Sydney. All the essential hang-outs for students – bookshops, cafes, and pubs – are present here in abundance.
6. Surry Hills and Darlinghurst

Sydney’s hippest and gayest neighbourhoods are also home to its most interesting dining and bar scenes. For the most part, they are more gritty than pretty and actual sights are thin on the ground, but there’s still plenty to do and photograph here, especially after dark.

7. Kings Cross and Potts Point

In equal parts thrilling and depressing, but never boring, this is where you come for night time blinders or surprisingly pleasant daytime meanders.

8. Paddington and Centennial Park

The next band of suburbs to the east is distinctly well-heeled. Despite taking a hit with the opening of the Westfield Bondi Junction mall just up the road, this is still Sydney’s fashion and art heartland.

9. Bondi to Coogee

Beach after golden-sand beach, alternating with sheer sandstone cliffs, are the classic vistas of this beautiful, laid-back and egalitarian stretch of the city.

10. Manly

Sydney’s only ferry destination boasting an ocean beach, Manly caps off the harbour with scrappy charm. The surf’s good and as the gateway to the Northern Beaches, it makes a popular base for the board-riding brigade.
Photo Walk 1
Circular Quay and The Rocks

Start: Cadman's Cottage
End: Royal Botanic Gardens
Length: 3.5 km; 2 hours walk (plus photographing time)

Head north along Circular Quay West past the 2. Overseas Passenger Terminal where cruise ships weigh anchor.

For a killer harbour view, head up to the Level 4 Observation Deck in the turret on the northern end.
Further along the Quay are **3. Campbell’s Storehouses**.

Buildings like these were common around Circular Quay into the early 20th century, but most have been demolished.

Loop past the **4. Park Hyatt** and into the small park at the end of Dawes Point.

As you pass under the Harbour Bridge, keep an eye out for Luna Park on the opposite shore.

Walk past Walsh Bay's **5. Edwardian wharves** and then cross the road and cut up the stairs (marked "public stairs to Windmill Street") just before the **6. Roslyn Packer Theatre**.

Continue up the hill on tiny Ferry Lane.

Near the top, you'll find the foundations of **7. Arthur Payne's House**, who was the first victim of the 1990 bubonic plague outbreak.

At the corner of Windmill Street is the **8. Hero of Waterloo**, one of Australia's oldest pubs.

Turn right on Lower Fort Street and head to **9. Argyle Place**, a quiet, English-style village green lined with terraced houses.

Across the road is the handsome **10. Garrison Church**.

Hook left into Argyle Street and stroll through the **11. Argyle Cut**.

Just past the Cut, take the stairs to the left and head along Gloucester Walk to **12. Foundation Park**.
Take the stairs down through the park, duck around the building at the bottom, and exit onto Playfair Street where there is a row of historic terraced houses.

Cross Argyle Street into Harrington Street then jag left into 13. Suez Canal. One of the few remaining such lanes, it tapers as it goes downhill until it's less than a metre wide.

Where it intersects Nurses Walk, look for the hoist jutting out of the building, once used for hauling goods to the upper floors.

Turn right into George Street and cut through the 14. Museum of Contemporary Art.

Exit onto Circular Quay and follow the waterline past the ferry wharves. Cut underneath the train station to the fabulously renovated 15. Customs House.

Stroll back to the water to check out the plaques of the 16. Sydney Writers Walk.

This series of metal disks, set into the Circular Quay promenade, holds ruminations from prominent Australian writers.

Continue past the 17. Opera Quays apartment and entertainment complex on Circular Quay East.

The sails of the 18. Sydney Opera House are directly in front of you, adjacent to the unmissable perspective of the Sydney Harbour Bridge off to the left.

Circumnavigate Bennelong Point, then follow the water's edge to the gates of the 19. Royal Botanic Garden.
Photo Walk 2
North Shore Harbourside

Start: Cadman's Cottage
End: Royal Botanic Gardens
Length: 3.5 km; 2 hours walk (plus photographing time)

Ride the ferry from Circular Quay to chilled-out 1. Cremorne Point, surrounded by the native scrub of Cremorne Reserve.

Wander out to the 2. tip of the point for brilliant city views.
Heading north, you’ll trundle pass the well-attended plots of palms, ferns, and philodendrons in **3. Lex and Ruby’s Garden**, named after the local couple who planted it and lovingly tended it for decades.

Keep walking around the other side of exclusive **4. Mossman Bay**.

Check out the historic stone building called **5. The Barn**, an early colonial structure that is now a scout hall.

Just beyond is the Wharf Store; go up the stairs to Mossman Street and follow Trumfield Lane to McLeod Street.

Turn left, scoot across Musgrave Street and take the stairs down to the other side, then cross Raglan Street, where more stairs descend to the shore.

Wind around **6. Little Sirius Cove** and take the stone steps onto a shoreline path, which runs around Taronga Zoo.

Before you reach the zoo entrance, take the stairs down to **7. Whiting Beach**, a secluded sandy bay.

Further along the lush, sandy path is the **8. Taronga Zoo** entrance and ferry wharf.

Keep following the path into Sydney Harbour National Park where you will link up with a bush track that leads to the tip of **9. Bradleys Head**, offering great views of South Head.
Next up are Chowder Head, **10. Clifton Gardens Reserve**, and **11. Headland Park** which occupies the site of an old naval base above Chowder Bay.

Head up to the lookout near the **12. Tea Room Gunners Barracks**, which has a glorious cityscape panorama and views over the battlements that once defended Sydney from threats both real and imaginary.

From here, pick up the track that darts through bushy scrubland before angling left, crossing Middle Head Road and heading past some magnificently gnarled red gum trees.

It will eventually head down some steps and pop you out near **13. Balmoral Beach**.
Photo Walk 3
Central and Haymarket

Start: Central Station
End: Martin Place
Length: 3 km; 1 hour walking (plus photographing time)

Start in the main concourse of 1. **Central Station**.

Take the George Street exit, turn left and walk through the small park down to 2. **Railway Square**, with its DNA-strand towers. Cross Pitt Street and head onto George Street. Step off Sydney’s main drag into
the calming 1845 sandstone **3. Christ Church St Lawrence**. Check the thickness of your moral fibre before George Street lures you into a saucy stew of sex clubs and porn shops.


Walk through the QVB and duck right into Market Street. On your right is the extraordinarily extravagant **8. State Theatre**; stop to scan the foyer.


As you cut across, check out the giant chess board and the splendiferous fountain.

Across College Street, skateboarders careen around the sturdily buttressed **11. St Mary’s Cathedral**.

Curve north from here around the top of Hyde Park under the watchful gaze of **12. Prince Albert**, then angle right into **Macquarie Street**.

Governor Lachlan Macquarie commissioned convict forger Francis Greenway to design this illustrious strip in the early 19th century.

Greenway’s **13. Hyde Park Barracks** and **14. St James Church** guard the southern end.
In quick succession on the right as you continue north are **15. The Mint, 16. Sydney Hospital, 17. Parliament House, and the 18. State Library of NSW.**

Cross the road and head into **19. Martin Place** – sadly, it is now famous as the site of a deadly day-long siege in 2014.

Roam through the foyers and dodge the skateboarders along this pedestrian mall. Channel Seven news is filmed live behind the glass of the Colonial Centre, on the right past Elizabeth Street.
Photo Walk 4
Darling Harbour and Pyrmont

Start: The Star
End: King Street Wharf
Length: 3 km; 1 1/2 hours walking (plus photographing time)

Catch the light rail to 1. The Star and try to negotiate your way out of the casino complex without haemorrhaging money or piling on pounds at Adriano Zumbo’s luscious patisserie.
Cross over and stroll through **2. Pyrmont Bay Park** and then turn right.

As you enter Darling Harbour you’ll pass the **3. Welcome Wall**, celebrating immigration to Australia, and a little lighthouse, moored ships, and submarine that form part of the **4. Australian National Maritime Museum**.

Cross under the 1902 **5. Pyrmont Bridge** (the world’s first electric swing bridge) and zoom through the **6. Harbourside Shopping Centre**.

Depending on when you visit, the next part of Darling Harbour is likely to be in the throes of a major redevelopment, replacing the giant convention centre which once stood here with an even more colossal one.

Duck under the freeway and continue strolling through **7. Tumbalong Park** to the **8. Chinese Garden of Friendship**, arguably the most tranquil spot in the city. Soak up the Zen over tea and cake in the teahouse.

Boomerang back past glassy **9. Darling Walk** and the giant **10. IMAX Cinema** and trace the waterline past the restaurants and bars of **11. Cockle Bay Wharf**; keep an eye out for the frolicking storks.

Listen out for the squawks of the native birds in the giant netted aviary.

Continuing along the waterline, **15. King Street Wharf** is lined with still more restaurants and bars.

North of here, the Barangaroo entertainment, casino, and residential complex is being built in earnest.

Depending on its progress, you may be able to continue your waterfront stroll. Otherwise, reward your walking efforts with a beer and a bite at any of the establishments that took your fancy along the way.
Photo Walk 5
Inner West

Start: Erskineville Station
End: King Street
Length: 1.5 km; 1 hour walking (plus photographing time)

Exiting 1. Erskineville Train Station, turn left and cruise through Erskineville Village. On your left, you’ll pass the lavishly tiled 2. Rose of Australia pub, and on your right the defunct 3. Erskineville Town Hall, and the art-deco 4. Erskineville Hotel.
You may recognise the 5. **Imperial Hotel**, on the Union Street corner, as the spot from which the bus departed in the hit movie *Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

In June 1931, this unassuming side street was the setting for the “Battle of Union Street”, one of several Great Depression eviction clashes.

Hundreds of people gathered and jeered as police brutally evicted residents who had barricaded themselves inside a house.

Another socialist landmark, 6. **Green Bans Park**, just before the railway bridge on Erskineville Road, owes its existence to the construction workers’ green bans of the 1980s and 90s.

Ceramic tiles tell the story of the 1992 union ban that lead to this land being retained as a community park.

Similar green bans saved the Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf and parts of The Rocks.

Cross the bridge and truck up to King Street, Newtown.

Across the road is a 7. **Martin Luther King mural**. Although it was painted without permission in 1991 by a group of artists calling themselves *Unmitigated Audacity Productions*, it’s become a much-loved symbol of Newtown – so much so that the local Council awarded it heritage protection in 2014.

Cut down Mary Street to the narrowest slice of 8. **Camperdown Memorial Rest Park**, Newtown’s green meeting place.
Turn right on Lennox Street then left into Church Street; the evocatively ramshackle **9. Camperdown Cemetery** is on your left. Grab a self-guided pamphlet from the box near the gate and go exploring.

Leaving the cemetery, go straight ahead on Victoria Street then turn right into Hordern Street, before hanging left onto **10. King Street**, Newtown’s pulsing thoroughfare.

Above shop level, the largely extant facades tie the streetscape to its past.
Photo Walk 6
Darlinghurst to Surry Hills

Start: Green Park
End: Crown Street
Length: 1.5 km; 40 minutes walking (plus photographing time)

This largely residential neighbourhood isn’t big on sights, but it’s liberally peppered with awesome pubs, bars, cafes, and restaurants.

1. Green Park sits at the start of the Victoria Street restaurant strip, flanked by the Sydney Jewish Museum, St Vincent’s Hospital, and
Sacred Heart Hospice. Both the Hospital and the Hospice found themselves at the front line of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s.

Head west on Burton Street, following the sandstone walls of the 2. National Art School – formerly Darlinghurst Gaol.

As you enter, look for the creepy morgue on your right.

Turn right at the circular chapel, exit onto Forbes Street and head off past the 3. Darlinghurst Courthouse and enter 4. Taylor Square, the heart of Sydney’s main gay strip, Oxford Street.

Cross over to the Surry Hills side.

Before you continue up Bourke Street, note the art deco 5. Belgenny apartment building, and the 6. antique red postbox.

The first block of Bourke Street harbours reminders of the neighbourhood’s once-prominent Greek community. 7. Christopher’s Cake Shop has been selling Greek sweets since 1955.

A few doors down is 8. St Sophia’s Greek Orthodox Church.

Shuffle along the street to 9. the old St Margaret’s Hospital site.

Pricey apartments and restaurants now there stand in contrast to the sandstone 10. Wesleyan Chapel across the road, where the Edward Eager Lodge assists the Hills’ homeless.

Continuing along Bourke Street, you’ll pass some interesting houses, including a sandstone-and-brick Georgian block and some hefty Victorian terraces. Just after number 454, blink-and-you’ll-miss-it 11.
Fred Miller Park is unremarkable except that it commemorates a very Surry Hills character. Miller (1926 – 1992) was a plumber turned Labour politician who was a staunch supporter of gay rights, despite being straight himself.

Hook right into Arthur Street, which spits you out onto 12. Crown Street, Surry Hills’ main cafe, bar, and hipster strip.
Start under the giant Coca-Cola sign at the William Street overpass: the “Top of the Cross”. It’s this intersection, where the streets named after two kings cross, that gives this part of Potts Point its name (OK, so one is a queen, but Monarchs Cross doesn’t have the same ring).
Behind you is Ken Unsworth’s much-derided 1. **Stones Against the Sky** sculpture. Locals call it “Shits on Sticks”, which is maybe why it has changed colour from brown to grey.

Take a deep breath and follow Darlinghurst Road into the dark heart of the Cross.

If you don’t want to make eye contact with any strip-club touts, dealers, or hookers, scan the ground for a series of inscriptions offering titbits of local history. Continue to the spindly 2. **El Alamein Fountain**.

Pass the distinctive round 3. **Gazebo Tower**, turn left into Elizabeth Bay Road and follow it downhill, then sharply right at a roundabout.

Turn left at Ithaca Road and head down to 4. **Elizabeth Bay** itself, where there is a tiny park by the water.

Backtrack slightly and turn right into Billyard Avenue, where you’ll pass by the high walls of 5. **Boomerang**, one of Australia’s most expensive private houses.

You’ll know it by its distinctive multi-coloured tiled roof and Spanish Mission styling.

Take the stairs on the left leading up to genteel 6. **Arthur McElhone Reserve**. Beyond this little park is the stately 7. **Elizabeth Bay House**.

Turn right (downhill) and take the stairs just before 8. **17 Billyard Avenue**. At the top, turn right into Macleay Street and then left into caffeinated Challis Avenue, where you’ll pass an impressive row of colonnaded mansions.
At the bottom is 9. **Embarkation Park**, with photogenic views over Woolloomooloo and the city.

Head down Mc Elhone stairs to Woolloomooloo, where **10. Harry’s Cafe de Wheels** has been a Sydney institution since 1938.

Refuel with a pie or continue onto **11. Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf** for a classier finale.
Photo Walk 8
Paddington and Centennial Park

Start: Victoria Barracks
End: Centennial Park
Length: 1.6km; 1 hour walking (plus photographing time)

This walk should take around an hour (plus photography time) and not including Centennial Park, extended shopping frenzies, or getting lost in the Neild Avenue maze.
The old **1. Victoria Barracks** are still an active army base, so unless you join the tour, you’ll have to ogle the impressive sandstone structures from the guarded gates.

Cross Oxford Street, turn left and head down to **2. Glenmore Road**, where temptation comes in the form of sassy boutiques.

The boutiques eventually give way to the beautiful Victorian terraced houses which are a defining feature of the neighbourhood.

Follow the curves of Glenmore Road for several blocks then jag downhill on Brown Street to the cute **3. Neild Avenue maze**.

Turn right into Lawson Street, then take the second right into Goodhope Street and continue to **4. Five Ways**, a roundabout at the confluence of five roads: Oxford Street may be the main drag, but the quirky cafes, galleries, shops, and pub here make it the hip heart of Paddington.

From Five Ways, head uphill along Broughton Street, turn right into Hopetoun Street, and follow it around to the bottom of **5. William Street**. This photogenic side street has sprouted a strip of classy boutiques.

Turn left into **6. Oxford Street**, Sydney’s fashionista freeway. Local and international designers fill the shopfronts, selling swanky threads for ladies and lads.

Cafes, pubs, and homewares stores join the competition to prize the credit card from your wallet.
At the eastern end of the strip, hang left into Queen Street, the beginning of the upmarket Woollahra.

Boutiques give way to antique stores and providores as you head downhill.

7. **Simon Johnson** at number 55 sometimes has tastings.

At number 132, **8. Victor Churchill** may look like another boutique, but it actually is a butcher shop – the flashiest butcher shop you’ll ever see.

Turn right into Ocean Street and head back up to Oxford Street.

Cross the road and enter the leafy folds of **9. Centennial Park**.
Arguably Sydney’s most famous, most popular and best walk, this coastal path really shouldn’t be missed.

Both ends are well-connected to bus routes, as are most points in between should you feel too hot and bothered to continue.

A cooling dip at any of the beaches en route should cure that (pack your swimmers). There is very little shade on this track. So make sure you dive into a tub of sunscreen before setting out.

A hat is also a good idea. Starting at 1. **Bondi Beach**, take the stairs up the south end to Notts Avenue, passing
above the glistening 2. Icebergs pool complex.

Step onto the cliff-top trail at the end of Notts Avenue. Walking south, the blustery sandstone cliffs and grinding Pacific Ocean couldn’t be more spectacular (watch for dolphins, whales and surfers).

Small but perfectly formed 3. Tamarama has a deep reach of sand that is totally disproportionate to its width. Descend from the cliff tops onto 4. Bronti Beach. Take a dip, lay out a picnic under the Norfolk Island pines, or head to a cafe for a caffeine hit.

After your break, pick up the path on the southern side of the beach. Some famous Australians are among the subterranean denizens of the amazing cliff-edge 5. Waverley Cemetery.

On a clear winter’s day, this is a prime vantage point for whale watchers. Pass the locals enjoying a beer or a game of lawn bowls at the Clovelly Bowling Club, then breeze past the cockatoos and canoodling lovers in 6. Burroughs Park to sheltered 7. Clovelly Beach.

Follow the footpath up through the car park, along Cliffbrook Parade, then down the steps to the upturned dinghies lining 8. Gordons Bay, one of Sydney’s best shore-dive spots.

The trail continues past 9. Dolphins Point and lands you smack-bang on glorious 10. Coogee Beach. Swagger into the Coogee Bay Hotel and toast your efforts with a cold beverage or two.
This epic walk traces the coast west from Manly past million-dollar harbour-view properties and then through a rugged 2.5 km section of Sydney Harbour National Park that remains much as it was when the First Fleet sailed in.
There aren’t any eateries en route, so fortify yourself in Manly beforehand or stock up for a picnic.

Make sure you carry plenty of water, slop on some sunscreen, slap on a hat, and wear sturdy shoes.

Check the surf at 1. **Manly Beach** then cruise down the 2. **Corso** to the 3. **Hello Manly Information Centre** where you can pick up a walk brochure with a detailed map.

Head down to 4. **Manly Cove** and pick up the path near the 5. **Manly Sea Life Sanctuary**. After 700 m you’ll reach 6. **Fairlight Beach**, where you can scan the view through The Heads.

Yachts tug at their moorings as you trace the North Harbour Inlet and after 2 km you will come to 7. **Forty Baskets Beach**.

Kookaburras cackle as you enter the national park and approach 8. **Reef Beach**.

The track becomes steep, sandy, and rocky further into the park – keep an eye out for wildflowers, spiders in bottlebrush trees, and fat goannas sunning themselves.

The views from 9. **Dobroyd Head** are unforgettable.

Check out the deserted 1930s see shacks at the base of the 10. **Crater Cove** cliff, and 11. **Aboriginal rock carvings** on an unsigned ledge left of the track before the turn-off to 12. **Grotto Point Lighthouse**.
Becalmed **13. Cassell Rock Beach** is at the western end of the national park. From here the path winds around the rear of houses to **14. Clontarf Beach**.

**15. Sandy Bay** follows and then **16. Fisher Bay** before you reach the **17. Spit Bridge**.

From the southern end of the bridge you can either bus it back to Manly (buses 140, 143 or 144) or into the city (176 to 180).
Click here for online map showing the best spots for Sydney skyline shots.

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