

A GUIDE TO

Esperance Beaches

Esperance. In your element.

Esperance Region



Great Ocean Drive



20 BEACHES TO EXPLORE

1. West Beach
2. Blue Haven Beach
3. Twilight Beach
4. Wylie Bay
5. Lucky Bay
6. Hellfire Bay
7. Little Hellfire Bay
8. Four Mile Beach
9. Wharton Beach
10. Thistle Cove
11. Eleven Mile Lagoon
12. Ten Mile Lagoon
13. Observatory Beach
14. Le Grand Beach
15. Tagon Beach
16. Thomas River
17. Munglinup Beach
18. Alexander Bay
19. Quagi Beach
20. James Street Jetty Beach

Cape Le Grand



Welcome to Esperance

“Kaya Wanju Kepa Kurl Boodja”

...where the water lies like a boomerang



Located on the south coast of Western Australia, Esperance is known to have some of the best beaches in Australia.

Weather in Esperance is subject to wide variations, and it's not uncommon to experience four seasons in a day. It is notorious for being windy, however, a good understanding of wind direction can have a positive impact on your visit.

The wind direction varies between seasons, with summer dominated by south-easterly winds, which tend to drop off through autumn, before turning to north-westerly winds that prevail in winter.

The good news is that the beaches of Esperance are beautiful white sand beaches that stretch between rocky headlands. And it's these rocky headlands that provide wind blocks, giving you calm areas to enjoy, even on the windiest days. This guide will help to inform you which beaches are best to visit and when - to get the most out of your visit.

The Esperance Promise

WHILE TRAVELLING IN ESPERANCE / KEPA KURL COUNTRY, I PROMISE TO EMBRACE THE ELEMENTS OF THIS LAND AND ENSURE MY VISIT IS SUSTAINABLE AND RESPECTFUL.

I will enjoy following paths less trodden,
Yet I will stay on the marked trails.

Camping under the stars will be a wonder,
Enjoyed from designated camp areas.

Wildlife will remain wild,
Never fed or touched by human hands.

I will feel the wind on my face, and swim in the cool sea,
Leaving only footprints in the sand.

Walking on the earth will ground me,
Boots scrubbed clean, to stop the spread of weeds and disease.

When embarking on a 4WD adventure,
I promise to be prepared and respectful of others.

I will admire the power of the ocean,
Being mindful of swell, rips, and slippery black rocks.

I will feel the sun on my back, or the warmth of a campfire,
Never forgetting to be bushfire smart.

Time away from technology's range will recharge me,
Yet, I will plan to have no coverage.

Where locals live in their element and visitors feel like locals,
I agree to be kind, take it slow and go with the flow.

I make this promise with nature and the community of Esperance,
To care for this special place that you call home.

Make the Promise: esperancepromise.com

Esperance. In your element.



Weather and the Seasons...

Aboriginal people have always lived by the seasons, relying on the seasonal changes to tell them when is the right time to gather fruits or when certain species are abundant for hunting. This has allowed Aboriginal people to practise sustainable hunting and gathering methods for millennia, ensuring the preservation of resources for future generations.

The seasons are not strictly anchored to dates, but are determined by nature and environmental changes like a change in weather, a plant flowering or the hibernation of reptiles.

The aboriginal seasons are depicted below, with the corresponding western seasons.

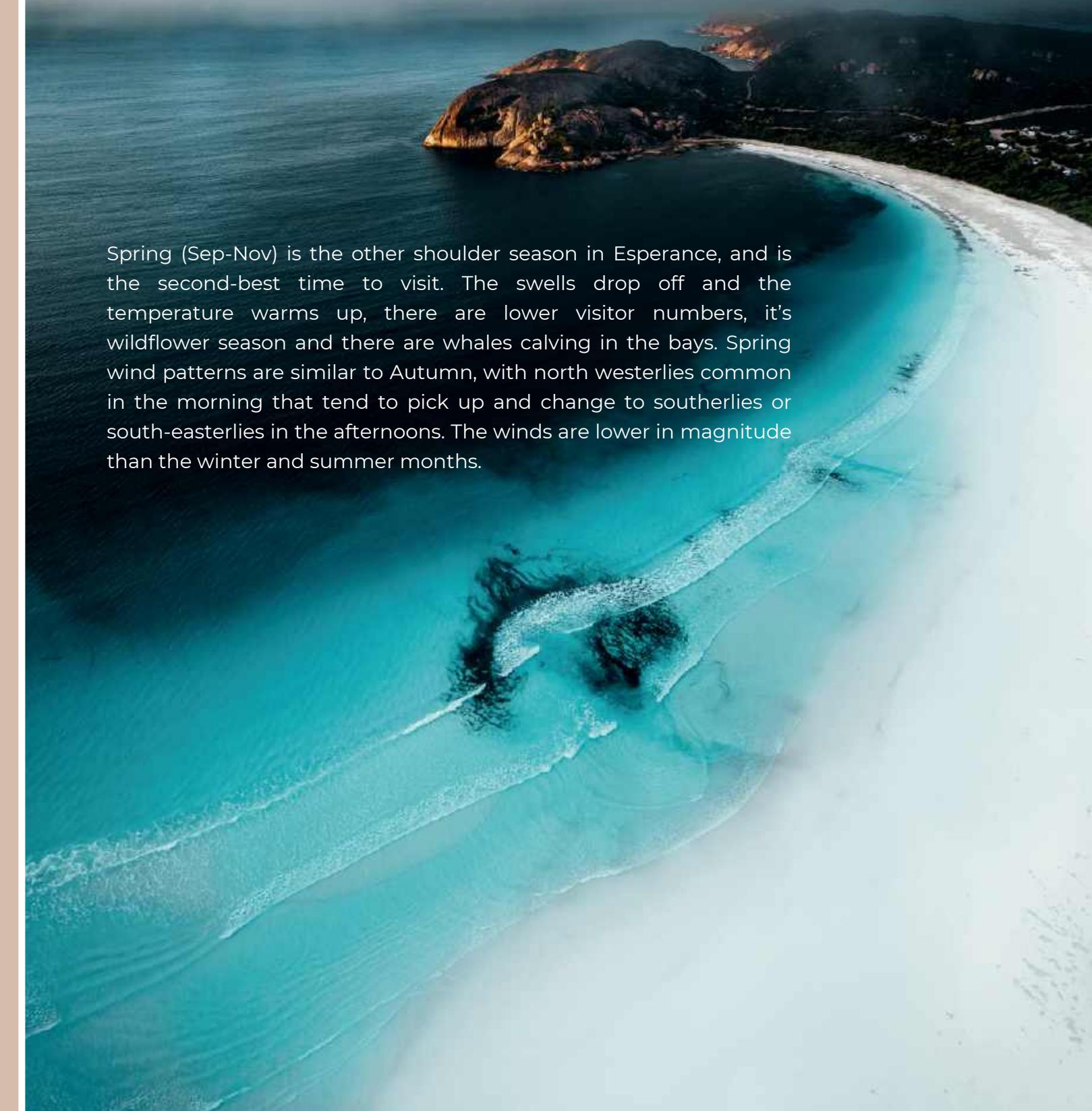


A QUICK DIVE INTO THE SEASONS

Summer (Dec-Feb) is the most popular time to visit Esperance. The days are usually warm and long and typically clear. It is windy during Summer, most commonly south-easterlies. The mornings are generally calmer (morning winds can be north-easterly) before picking up and blowing south-easterly in the afternoons. It's not uncommon to have a strong persistent easterly all day during summer.

Autumn (Mar-May) is considered the shoulder season but is the best time to visit according to the locals. Winds drop off, the temperatures are still comfortable, the days are generally clear and there's less visitors (compared to the Summer months). This period typically experiences northerly, or north-westerlies in the morning, tending to south-easterlies in the afternoon, but generally of a lower magnitude than the summer months. The swells start to pick up through the autumn period and run through the winter months.

Winter (Jun-Aug) is the low season, with colder temperatures, large swells and a higher chance of rain. It is however the best time to visit if a) you don't like the crowds, b) you like to spend your nights cosy by a fire, or c) you enjoy spotting native wildlife. Whales can be seen from June to October and sometimes come right into the bays to calve. Most people don't realise it but there are lots of sunny blue sky days during Winter, but of course it's colder and there is more chance of rain. Be prepared for both and you won't be disappointed.



Spring (Sep-Nov) is the other shoulder season in Esperance, and is the second-best time to visit. The swells drop off and the temperature warms up, there are lower visitor numbers, it's wildflower season and there are whales calving in the bays. Spring wind patterns are similar to Autumn, with north westerlies common in the morning that tend to pick up and change to southerlies or south-easterlies in the afternoons. The winds are lower in magnitude than the winter and summer months.

Wind, Wind, Wind

IT GETS WINDY IN ESPERANCE.



BUT UNDERSTANDING A FEW KEY ELEMENTS
ABOUT THE WIND CAN ENHANCE YOUR EXPERIENCE
TENFOLD. ON ANY DAY, THERE'S ALWAYS A NOOK OR
CRANNY THAT WILL PROVIDE A WIND BREAK - YOU JUST
NEED TO KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR.

A SUPER QUICK LESSON ON HOW WIND AFFECTS A BEACH VISIT...

An offshore wind is where the wind blows from (or 'off') the shore to the ocean, and an onshore wind is where the wind blows from the ocean 'on' to the land. Cross-shore wind is a wind perpendicular to the shore.



Offshore winds create the best conditions for a beach visit. The wind slows the waves down, having a grooming effect (they don't create any chop). It's offshore winds that can create those beautiful glassy conditions. In contrast, onshore winds cause choppy, rough conditions by creating their own waves (wind chop) disrupting the swell. Without diving too deep into the science of sea-breezes - offshore winds are more likely in the mornings and onshore winds in the afternoons (due to the temperature difference and rate in which the land heats relative to the ocean).

PUTTING THIS INTO CONTEXT FOR ESPERANCE...

As Esperance is located on the South Coast, most (but not all) of the beaches face to the south - meaning a northerly component wind (blowing from the north) will generally provide an offshore wind, and the southerly (or south-easterly) will be an onshore wind. Best conditions for the beach are therefore on winds with a northerly component. These are more likely to occur in the mornings, and are much more common in the Winter months.

Esperance wind data from the last 15 years shows that 66% of the time, the wind is blowing from a southerly direction (S, SE or SW) at 3pm, which as above will likely be an onshore wind. In the summer months, this figure is a consistent 90%. And of that figure, 91% of the time its blowing over 20km/hour.

SO WHAT?

If visiting between September and May (as most people do), you will experience a south-easterly or easterly while in Esperance. On arrival, check the wind forecast and if you see any days where the south-easterly isn't blowing, or it's calm – then these days should be locked in as beach days. And select the beaches that are usually susceptible to those southerlies or south-easterlies like Lucky Bay, Hellfire Bay, Twilight Bay, West Beach etc. Then on the days you do have that south-easterly blowing – you can use the quick guide below to visit the beaches that are least susceptible to those winds.

AS DOC REYNOLDS PUTS IT...

You can always find a beach - it doesn't matter which way the wind is blowing - because of the kepa kurl with the granite outcrops jutting out into the ocean. They create wind breaks where you can get tucked in and still enjoy the beach, even though the conditions on other beaches might not be so good. So, you don't have a favourite beach, you just look for the beach that suits the conditions in which you are.



Where to go in the wind...

	N	NE	E	SE	S	SW	W	NW
WEST BEACH								
BLUE HAVEN BEACH								
TWILIGHT BEACH								
WYLIE BAY								
LUCKY BAY								
HELLFIRE BAY								
LITTLE HELLFIRE BAY								
FOUR MILE BEACH								
WHARTON BEACH								
THISTLE COVE								
ELEVEN MILE LAGOON								
TEN MILE LAGOON								
OBSERVATORY BEACH								
LE GRAND BEACH								
TAGON BEACH								
THOMAS RIVER								
MUNGLINUP BEACH								
ALEXANDER BAY								
QUAGIBEACH								
JAMES STREET JETTY								

*N = Northerly (wind is blowing from the North)

The beaches at a glance

	PETS	FAMILIES	SNORKEL	FISH	4WD	CAMP	SURF
WEST BEACH	■	■					
BLUE HAVEN BEACH	■	■		■		■	
TWILIGHT BEACH	■	■		■	■		
WYLIE BAY	■	■	■		■	■	
LUCKY BAY		■		■		■	
HELLFIRE BAY		■	■	■	■	■	
LITTLE HELLFIRE BAY		■	■	■	■	■	
FOUR MILE BEACH	■	■		■		■	
WHARTON BEACH	■	■	■	■	■		
THISTLE COVE	■	■					
ELEVEN MILE LAGOON	■	■					
TEN MILE LAGOON	■	■					
OBSERVATORY BEACH	■	■		■	■		
LE GRAND BEACH	■	■		■	■	■	
TAGON BEACH		■	■		■	■	
THOMAS RIVER		■	■			■	
MUNGLINUP BEACH	■	■		■	■		
ALEXANDER BAY	■	■		■	■		
QUAGI BEACH	■	■		■	■		
JAMES STREET JETTY	■	■	■	■	■		





Costal Safety

Esperance is a popular tourism destination, with many visiting to experience the vast coastline. Our aim is to ensure you are aware of the local risks & advocate safe behaviours while exploring the region.

For more info scan the QR code



Emergency Alerts and Warnings

Some of these beaches listed are located in National Parks, please check park alerts before travelling to a National Park. [Park alerts](#) are available from the Park Alerts website. Emergency alerts and warnings are posted by the [Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#), the [Bureau of Meteorology](#) and the ABC through various digital channels. The ABC also broadcasts warnings on [ABC Local Radio](#). Check [Main Roads](#) for road alerts and closures.



1. West Beach

(GREAT OCEAN DRIVE)

West Beach is a testament to just how good the beaches are in Esperance. One would expect to travel deep into a national park to find a beach of this calibre – but no, West Beach is nestled quite literally within the town, boasting white sand, shimmering blue water, swimming lagoons formed by close-to-shore reefs, popular surf breaks and towering headlands.

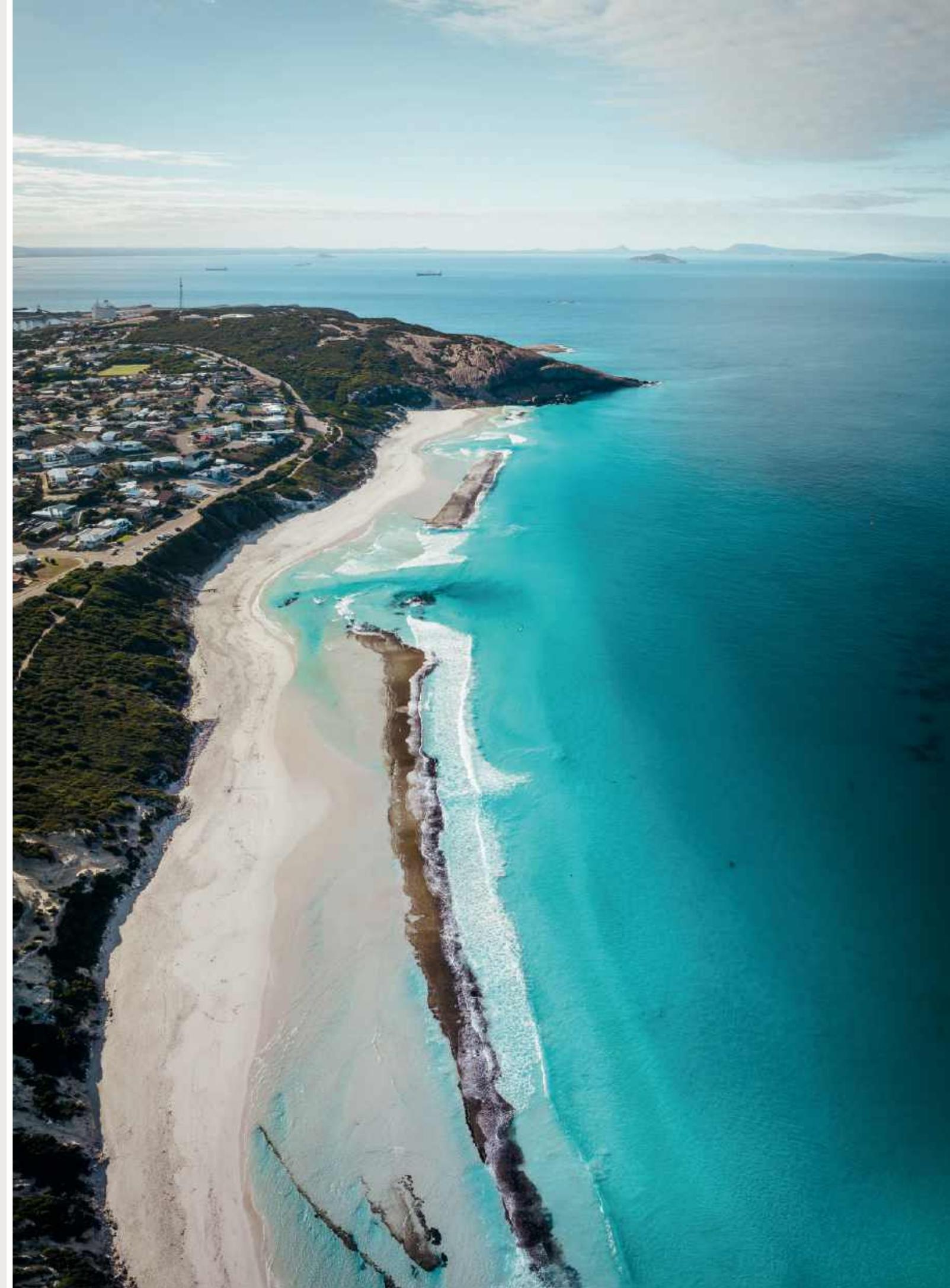
Access is via a set of wooden steps at each end of the beach (near the two car parks). Surprising, it's a fair way down, but this means the elevation of the car park provides amazing views over the beach. Dolphins can be spotted year-round, and in the June-October months expect to see whales from the car parks. You'll find toilets and showers at the main (western) car park. Dogs are allowed on West Beach, and even permitted off-leash 5-8am and 4-8pm daily.

The best time to visit is a calm day, or when the winds are blowing from the north (more likely to be in the morning during Summer). This is because rough sea conditions can cause waves to break over the reef and create rips/currents, rendering the lagoons unsafe for swimming.

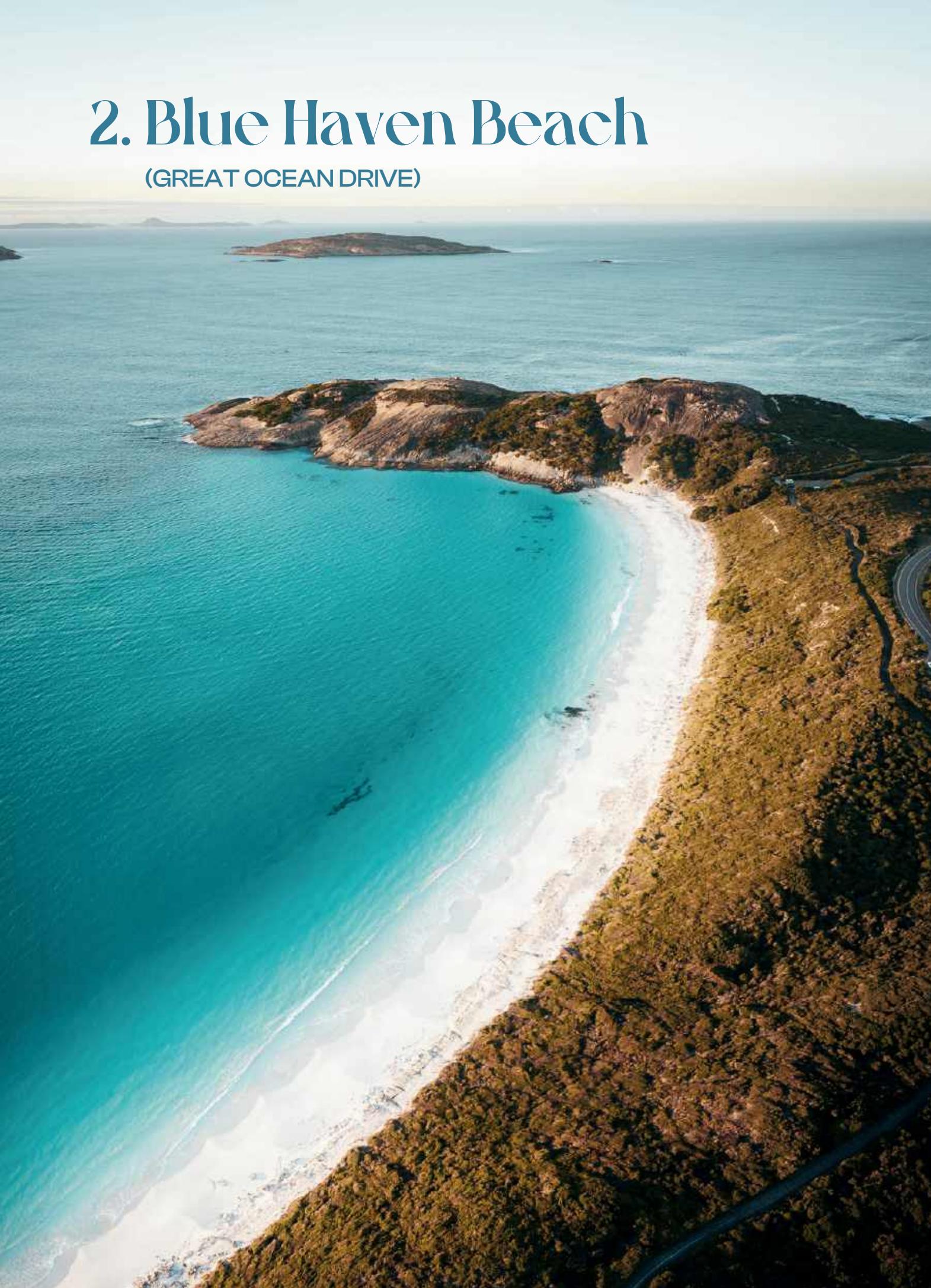


Late afternoon through to sunset is the best time to visit for photography, as the setting sun bathes Dempster Head in soft light, reflecting beautiful gold shades in the wet sand from outgoing waves.

There are some great viewing points of West Beach. As well as both car parks providing astonishing views, you have Rotary Lookout on the eastern side on the beach providing 360-degree views over the town and the Southern Ocean. You also have Chapmans Point on the western side, giving views of both West Beach one way and Blue Haven beach the other.



2. Blue Haven Beach (GREAT OCEAN DRIVE)



Another beautiful blue shimmering beach on the edge of town, Blue Haven Beach is perfect for both those wanting to relax, or adventure, or a bit of both. As its name suggests, this beach can be a haven from the persistent south-easterly summer winds, thanks to the large headland. You can access the top of the headland halfway along the walking track between Blue Haven and Salmon Beach. Climbing to the top will give you stunning panoramic views over Salmon Beach to the west and Blue Haven to the north.

Access is via a long set of wooden stairs from the car park. The car park is a small clearing with room for 10-12 vehicles, however if full, you can park at Salmon Beach and use the sealed walking track to Blue Haven. This walkway is part of the 25km Great Ocean Trail running from town to Twilight Beach, returning via Pink Lake.

The best time to visit Blue Haven Beach is the morning through to early afternoon (late afternoon, the beach is cast into shadow). It's one to avoid on a strong easterly, which occurs occasionally during the summer months. From a photography standpoint, visiting in the morning hours will provide the best light on the water, beach sand and headland.

Similar to West Beach, since Blue Haven is a long way down the stairs – there are many great viewing points. A standout favourite is the view from the winding stairs as you head down, but you also have a dedicated Blue Haven lookout located on Twilight Beach Road. If you miss it as you drive past, it's less than 300m north of the carpark along the Great Ocean walking trail. Other options include the lookout at Chapman's Point, and climbing the top of the Blue Haven Headland itself.



3. Twilight Bay

(GREAT OCEAN DRIVE)



The most popular beach along the Great Ocean Drive and with good reason. The headland and the rocks off shore create the perfect little cove to spend the day. On low tide, you can walk out to the rocks, and on high tide - the thrill seekers can jump off into the ocean below. And for families, the little bay is nicely protected. The beach is patrolled on Sundays during the Summer months. There are toilets, showers and picnic benches at the main car park.

The whole of Twilight Bay, stretching from the headland at Salmon Beach is absolutely stunning. There are several car parks along this stretch of road, so if you prefer a quieter section, or your own stretch of beach (when Twilight Cove is particularly busy), you have plenty of alternatives. Whilst dogs are not allowed at Twilight Cove, they are allowed on the eastern side of the Surf Club.

The best time of day to visit Twilight Beach is morning through to early afternoon. It is in fact stunning at all times of the day, but the wind tends to pick up in the afternoons. With the positioning of the headland and offshore rocks, you are fairly well protected from most of the common Esperance winds. Care should be taken on big swells, as rips can be present.

From a photography perspective, all times of the day can provide great imagery. At sunrise you'll be shooting directly into the sun, which has its challenges but there will be a lot less people around.

The late afternoon provides nice soft light without the glare on the water, but the sun will be setting behind the hills casting the beach into shadow just before sunset (so don't arrive too late).

Similar to many of the town/great ocean drive beaches, there are several viewpoints of Twilight Beach. There is a small pullover/lookout directly above the main car park that gives you some elevation, or else there is a dedicated lookout 300m past the turn off to the car park. You'll also be treated to great views of Twilight Beach along the whole length of the road as you drive from Salmon Beach.



4. Wylie Bay

(12KM EAST OF TOWN)

Only a 15-minute drive out of town, you'll find the stunning Wylie Bay – known for its tidal sandbar that leads to a large set of rocks on the edge of the ocean. It's a haven for 4x4 enthusiasts as you have the soft sand beach to access, a steep hill/rock that can be driven up for panoramic views, and access to a huge set of sand dunes.

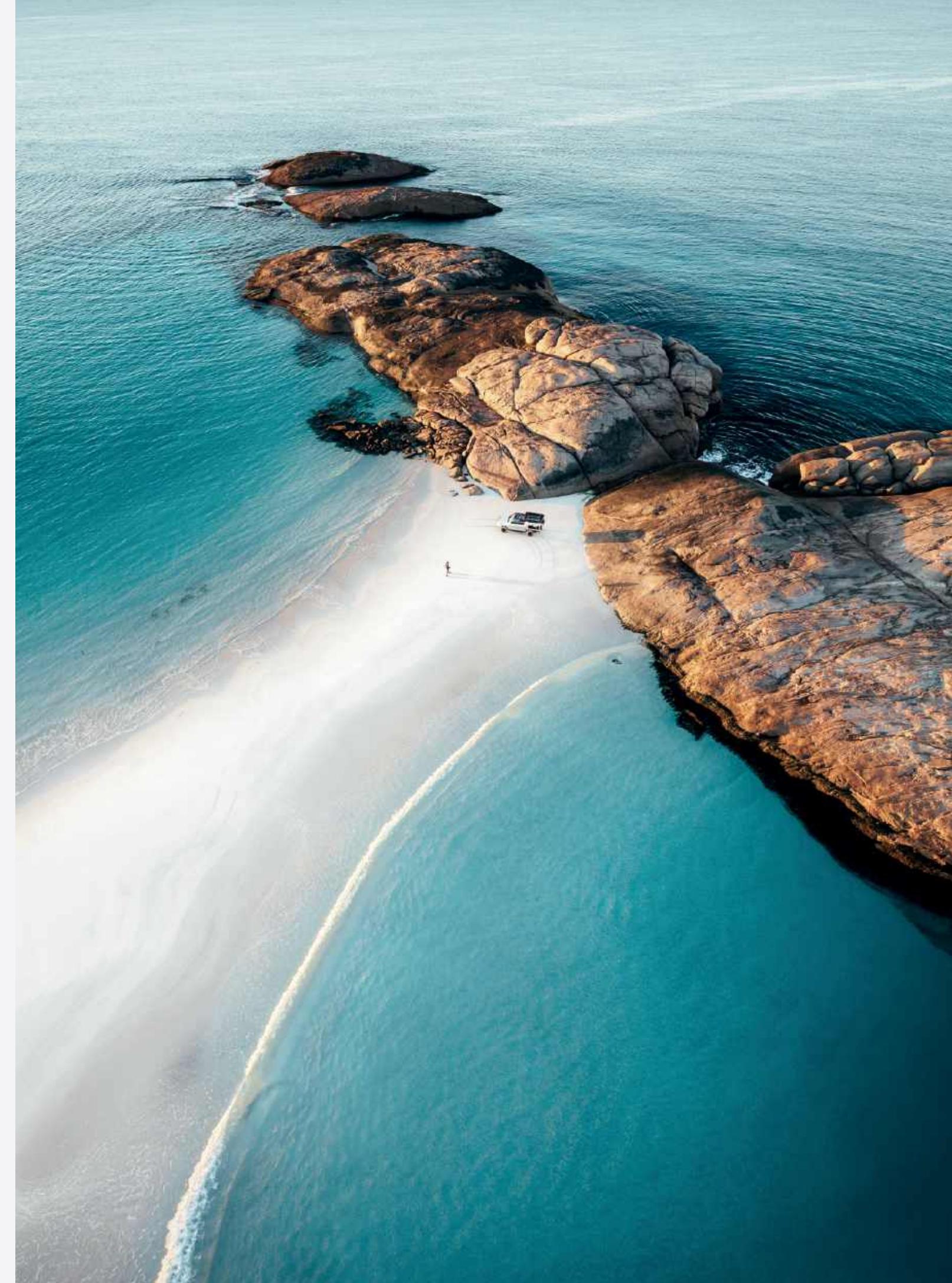
For the experienced 4WDers, you can also access Cape Le Grand National Park from here with a 22km drive along the beach at low tide after checking the beach conditions (better in summer, very soft in winter). However, this beach isn't just for those with a 4WD. You can park at the end of Wylie Bay Road, and take a short walk out to the sandbar, climb Wylie Bay Rock, or go for a swim in the protected bay.

The best time to visit Wylie Bay is on a low to mid tide so you can walk the length of the sandbar. To be perfectly honest, it's only right on high tide that the sandbar disappears. It's a popular spot for 4WDers to set up for the day and enjoy the surrounding beach. For photographers, particularly those using a drone, the best time to visit is when a mid-tide coincides with golden hour, so the sandbar is still visible but you can capture the water on both sides of your frame (with a low tide the sandbar becomes too wide).



As the tide comes in, a little waterfall cascades down between the two large rock structures, creating a temporary tidal pool. This makes a great opportunity for a unique image, or a fun place to swim as the waves crash in.

Wylie Bay Beach is best on a northerly, north-easterly or north-westerly wind (if you have the flexibility to choose). It is fairly exposed to the summer south-easterly winds, which is evident with the seaweed that washes up directly to the north of Wylie Bay Rock. The best viewing point of Wylie Bay is at the top of the rock, and is very popular spot to watch the sun setting.



5. Lucky Bay

(CAPE LE GRAND)

The most famous beach in the area, and voted best beach in the world in 2023. It's really not hard to see why – the sand is pure white, the water aqua blue and the beach stretches over 3km around the bay. You can comfortably drive on the beach and if you're lucky – you'll see a kangaroo or two. There is also camping available at the entrance to the beach, as well as toilets, showers and a picnic area with BBQs.

4WDs are recommended to drive onto the beach. The sand is most compacted near the entrance. The sand does get softer the further you drive, so let down your tyres to drive further along the beach.

There isn't one specific best time to visit Lucky Bay – it is stunning at all times. If pressed to pick a best time, it would be early morning on a calm day, (or a day with a northerly wind component). Since the beach spans such a long distance, it can be more susceptible to winds so generally visiting in the morning is the best way to minimise those winds, and it's also the time that the beach is the least busy.

The south-easterly winds in summer tend to trap seaweed near the headland on the western end of the beach, so it's best to head further along the beach for a patch of



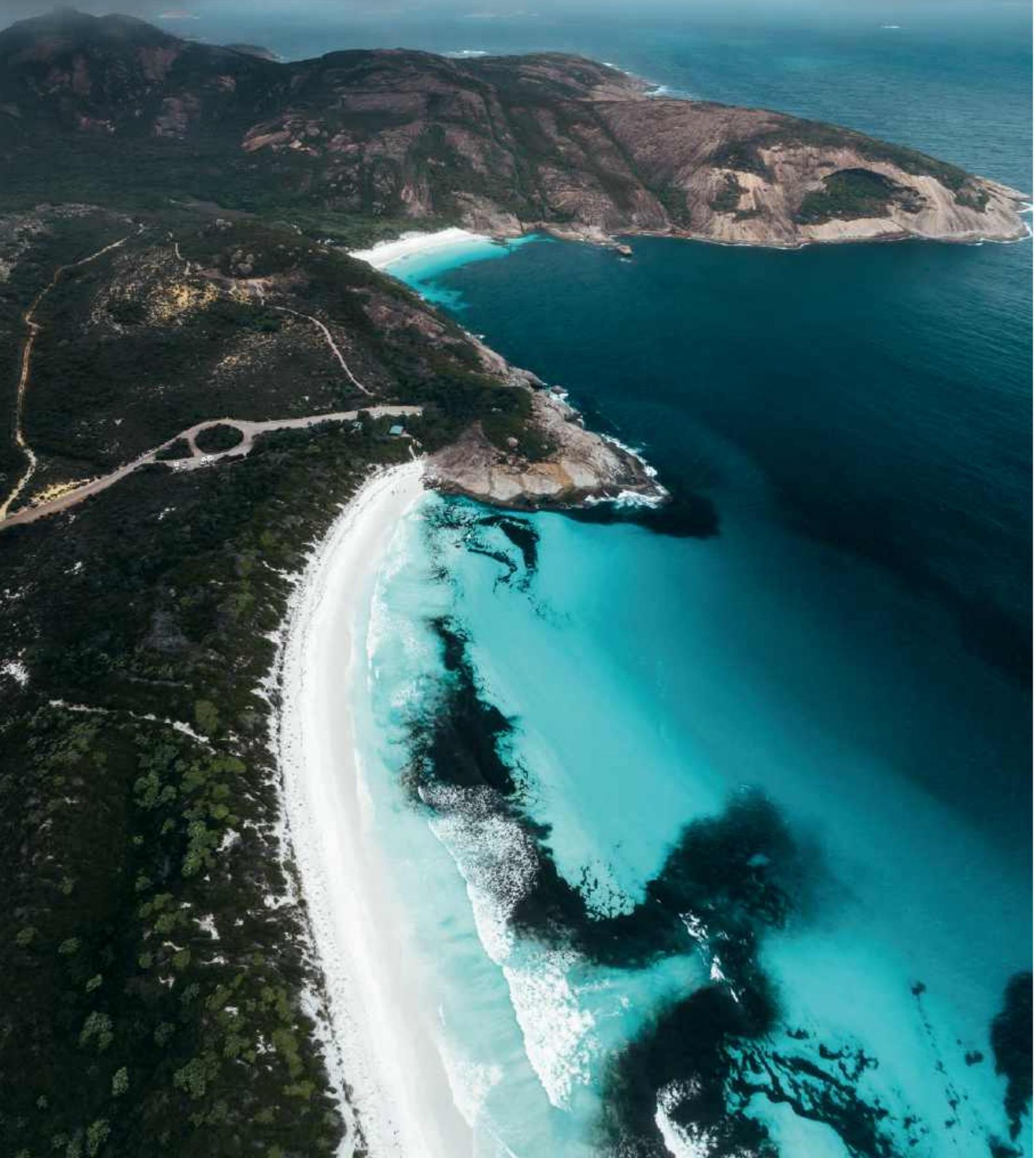
pure heaven. If you continue to the furthest point you can access via car to the East there is a set of rocks with stairs and a great view back over Lucky Bay.

As you can imagine – Lucky Bay does get busy, especially in the summer months. If you would like to camp at the Lucky Bay Campground, you do need to book ahead on the Park Stay website (through DBCA), and they open bookings 6 months in advance.



6. Hellfire Bay

(CAPE LE GRAND)



Another picture-perfect beach in Cape Le Grand – Hellfire Bay boosts incredible blue water and white sand. There are toilets located at the car park, as well as barbeques and an undercover picnic area. The perfect place to spend the day.

The best time to visit Hellfire Bay is in the morning. It's more exposed to the south than the other beaches, so it's best enjoyed before the south-easterly winds pick up. The morning also puts the sun behind you as you walk down the stairs to the beach and first see the beautiful view that is Hellfire Bay.

This is a great spot for swimming, and for families to enjoy the beach. For great views of the bay, you can follow the beach to the end, and then continue along the Coastal Trail Walk, which climbs the neighbouring headland, giving amazing views back over Hellfire and Little Hellfire Bay. Another favourite viewpoint of Hellfire is from the walking track to Little Hellfire. You initially climb up a set of gradual steps on your way to Little Hellfire Bay, so be sure to turn around and take in the view of Hellfire Bay, and out to the north you can easily see Frenchman Peak.



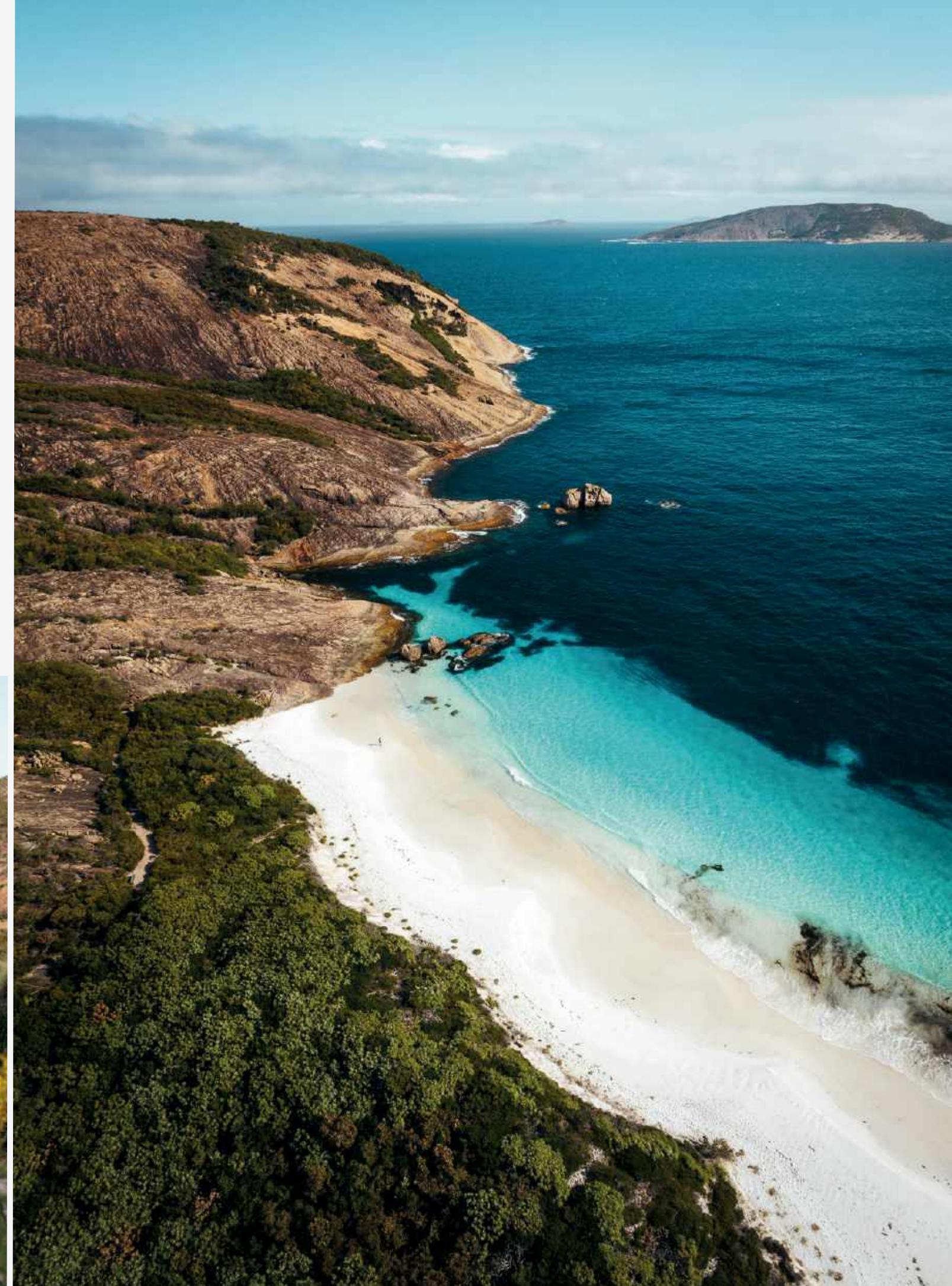
7. Little Hellfire Bay (CAPE LE GRAND)

Little Hellfire Bay is not to be missed. It is often one of the quieter beaches in Cape Le Grand National Park because it requires the longest walk from the car park. And this “longest walk” totals a mere 15 minutes. The beach is very small but very protected from the wind.

The best time to visit Little Hellfire Bay is in the afternoon. It's one of the beaches that's a great option on a strong easterly or south-easterly because it is so well protected. The bay is literally dwarfed by headlands so even in those strong easterly or south-easterly winds, the bay is calm.

Photography-wise – late afternoon is our recommendation – shooting back onto Little Hellfire Bay with the sun lighting up the surrounding rocks. While this is best achieved with a drone, please be mindful to follow CASA regulations and note that no drone usage should be carried out with other visitors in the bay.

The best viewpoint of Little Hellfire Bay is from the rock you enter the beach on. You can climb up this rock (which forms part of the coastal track) to gain some elevation and look back down on the bay.



8. Four Mile Beach

(FITZGERALD RIVER NATIONAL PARK)



Four Mile Beach is located on a stunning stretch of coastline characterised by the towering mountains of Fitzgerald River National Park. Whilst located 200km west of Esperance, this beach has earned itself a place in the top ten for its views and activities on offer. The beach is predominantly located inside the National Park, but the eastern side is outside the National Park bounds, meaning dogs are permitted on this side.

The eastern side has easy 4WD access from a large pull off on Hamersley Road. This area is where the large inlet meets the ocean, making it a great spot for fishing. Over on the western side, Four Mile Beach has a DBCA campground for those wanting to stay overnight. Walking to the far western edge of the beach takes you past some rocks to Barren's beach, which is a lovely secluded beach.

Four Mile Beach is an open stretch of coastline so is susceptible to winds. The best time to visit is on a calm day. Late afternoon golden hour is an incredible time to visit as the sea mist glows in the air and Mount Barren towers above in this light.

There are some amazing viewpoints of Four Mile Beach. For unmatched aerial views, you can hike East Mount Barren and look down over the beach stretching all the way to Hopetoun and beyond.

The view from the eastern side of the beach (near the inlet) is also stunning because you see Mount Barren towering behind the beach, and the mountainous backdrop that stretches along the coast as far as you can see.



9. Wharton Beach

(85KM EAST OF TOWN)

Wharton Beach, in our humble opinion would have a strong claim at Australia's best beach. Boasting flawlessly white sand, a stunning headland and sparkling shallow blue waters with picture perfect crashing waves, Wharton Beach has it all. You can comfortably drive onto the beach with a 4WD and the shallow waters make it great for families and those visiting with dogs. There is a toilet block located at the main car park.

It's a great beach for swimming, surfing and there's even good fishing off the headland rocks. Wharton Beach stretches 4.5km and it's worth noting that the western half of the beach is located within Cape Le Grand National Park.

The whole Duke of Orleans Bay is stunning, but Wharton Beach itself, particularly the eastern cove, is pure Esperance goodness. For the best viewpoint of Wharton Beach, follow the walking track and climb up the headland for amazing panoramic views. If you have a 4WD, you can continue along the road to access Little Wharton Beach.



Wharton Beach is so stunning any time of day is great for a visit. The orientation of the Beach and the headland means that by tucking into the eastern corner, you are protected from the most common (and strong) south-easterlies, or easterlies. The beach does tend to get very busy (and rightfully so!) so arrive early to find a good spot. From a photography perspective, Wharton Beach looks incredible all throughout the day, but the late afternoon is particularly stunning with both the headland and cove bathed in golden light.

For accommodation options, the Duke of Orleans Bay Caravan Park is located only 3km away.



10. Thistle Cove (CAPE LE GRAND)

Thistle Cove is another absolute gem in Cape Le Grand National Park. Often overlooked due to its neighbour; Lucky Bay, Thistle Cove holds its own as one of Esperance's best beaches.

The Cove is tucked nicely between two wide stretching headlands, making it one of the calmest bays in the region, especially on a windy or choppy day. Access is via a walking track that does involve walking down a large rock structure, so care must be taken here – especially if it's wet.

Thistle Cove is a great place for swimming and relaxing on the beach. You can explore the full length of the beach and find some private little bays at the far end, which can be easily accessed by following the Coastal Walk Trail.

The best time to visit here is mid-morning to early afternoon, and for photography, early morning is best (with the sun rising behind you as you walk to the beach).

This is a great beach to visit on an easterly or westerly wind, and is only really exposed to the south-easterly winds. So as a rule of thumb, the late afternoons in summer are generally not the best time to visit.

There are a series of rock formations located right by the car park, with Whistling Rock being the main attraction. This area offers stunning views over the entire bay area. A favourite viewpoint of Thistle Cove is from the rock structure you climb down to access the beach, as the double peaked mountain provides the perfect backdrop. For the hikers or more adventurous explorers, you can follow the Coastal Walk Trail past the little bays and up the western headland for views back over Thistle Cove.



11. Eleven Mile Lagoon

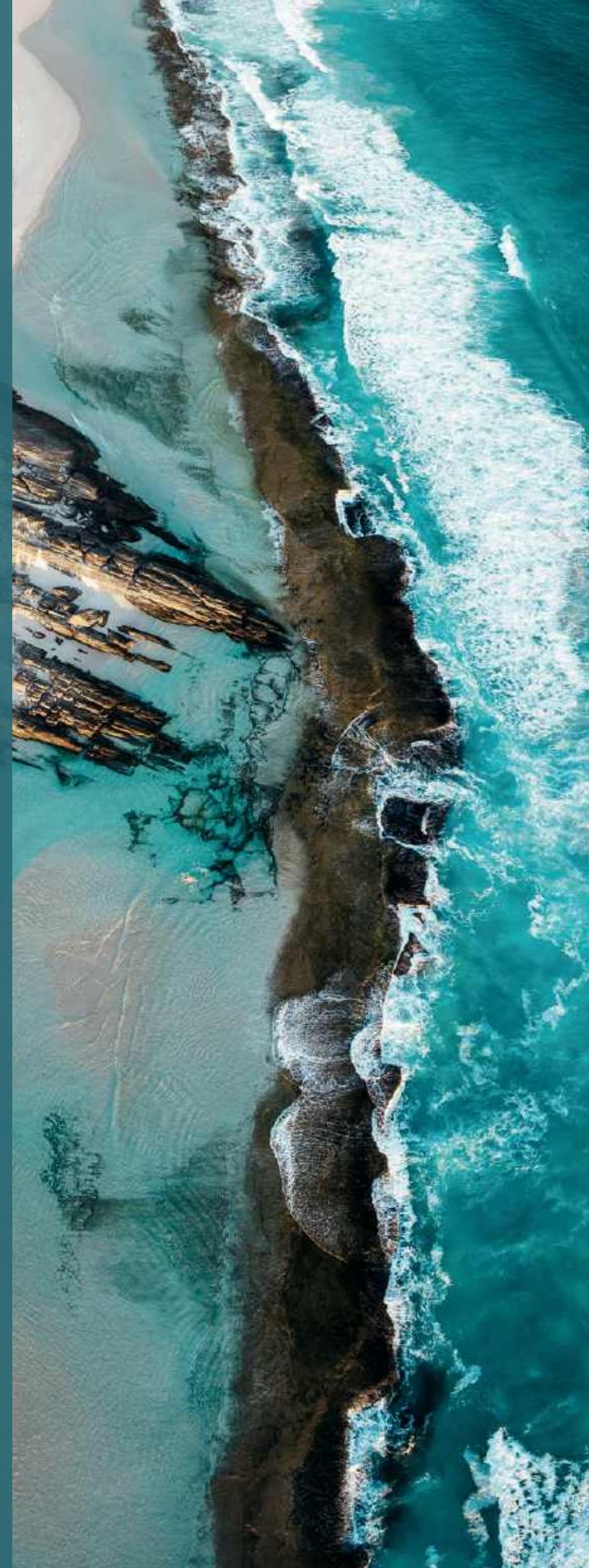
(GREAT OCEAN DRIVE)

Eleven Mile Lagoon is an absolutely stunning beach that was very unlucky to miss the top 10. This really demonstrates the depth and range of the incredible beaches in the Esperance area. Here, the large, close to shore reef creates a beautiful and calm lagoon that is perfect for a relaxed and sheltered dip.

The best time to visit Eleven Mile Lagoon is on a high tide to ensure the lagoon has water in it. Access to the Beach is via two sets of scenic, wooden staircases (which make for great photos!). You can also drive down onto the beach but it's a steep ascent on soft sand to get back up so it's really recommended for experienced 4WDers only.

Golden hour is best for photography here (both sunrise and sunset) with a range of different views and compositions. Either shoot from the carpark, the staircases or use the tidal pools and rocks along the ocean floor.

Dogs are permitted here.



12. Ten Mile Lagoon

(GREAT OCEAN DRIVE)

Similar to Eleven Mile Lagoon, Ten Mile Lagoon is also protected by a stretch of reef (about 20-30m from the shore) making it a perfect place for a sheltered swim. To access the beach, take the scenic wooden staircase straight from the car park. (Dogs are allowed)

However, unlike Eleven Mile Lagoon, where visiting on high tide is preferable, low tide is best for Ten Mile Lagoon. This is because the reef opens up on either side, ensuring the lagoon is always filled with water. On low tide (and low swell) the waves don't make it over the reef, meaning the lagoon is extremely calm and protected.

There is a viewing platform which provides fantastic views over the whole stretch of coastline, all the way to Eleven Mile Lagoon and to Observatory Beach.

Ten Mile Lagoon is also Esperance's dedicated clothing optional beach (the section is marked as a 200m stretch to the west of the stairs).

13. Observatory Beach

(GREAT OCEAN DRIVE)

Observatory Beach is a favourite with the locals, and quite possibly because it is often overshadowed by Twilight Beach and Eleven Mile lagoon. Stretching 1.2km with the carpark and a long set of stairs situated right in the middle, the beach is beautiful white sand snaking to Nine Mile lagoon. There are often people walking their dogs along this piece of paradise.

The best time to visit is generally in the morning when the wind is lower and the swell is down. However, sunsets are also a beloved spectacle that draws people from near and far. Visitors often bring picnics to fully enjoy the experience.

Large pods of dolphins are often seen at Observatory Beach, so keep your eyes out when visiting! The best viewpoint is undoubtably from the top of the stairs at the car park, which has a great elevation gain. There is a toilet in the car park.



14. Le Grand Beach

(CAPE LE GRAND)

Offering beach side camping, 4WDing, fantastic fishing, surfing, swimming and snorkelling, Le Grand Beach not only has something for everyone, but it's incredibly scenic too. Le Grand Beach is located on the western side of Cape Le Grand National Park with its beautiful white sand stretching 22km to the north where it joins Wylie Bay.

There is a small campground located at the carpark/entrance to the Beach, which requires online booking in advance (via [Department of Parks and Wildlife](#)), and needs to be booked far in advance, especially during peak and immediate shoulder seasons.

During the summer months, Le Grand Beach is especially busy as it faces directly west, meaning it offers great protection and shelter from the south-easterlies and easterlies, particularly in the corner by the headland.

Interestingly, over the winter months, the wind direction changes, becoming north-westerly and in doing so, causes seaweed to be washed ashore. Visiting Le Grand Beach in the summer months versus the winter months can therefore be a completely different experience; not just temperature wise but appearance wise too.

16. Thomas River (CAPE ARID)

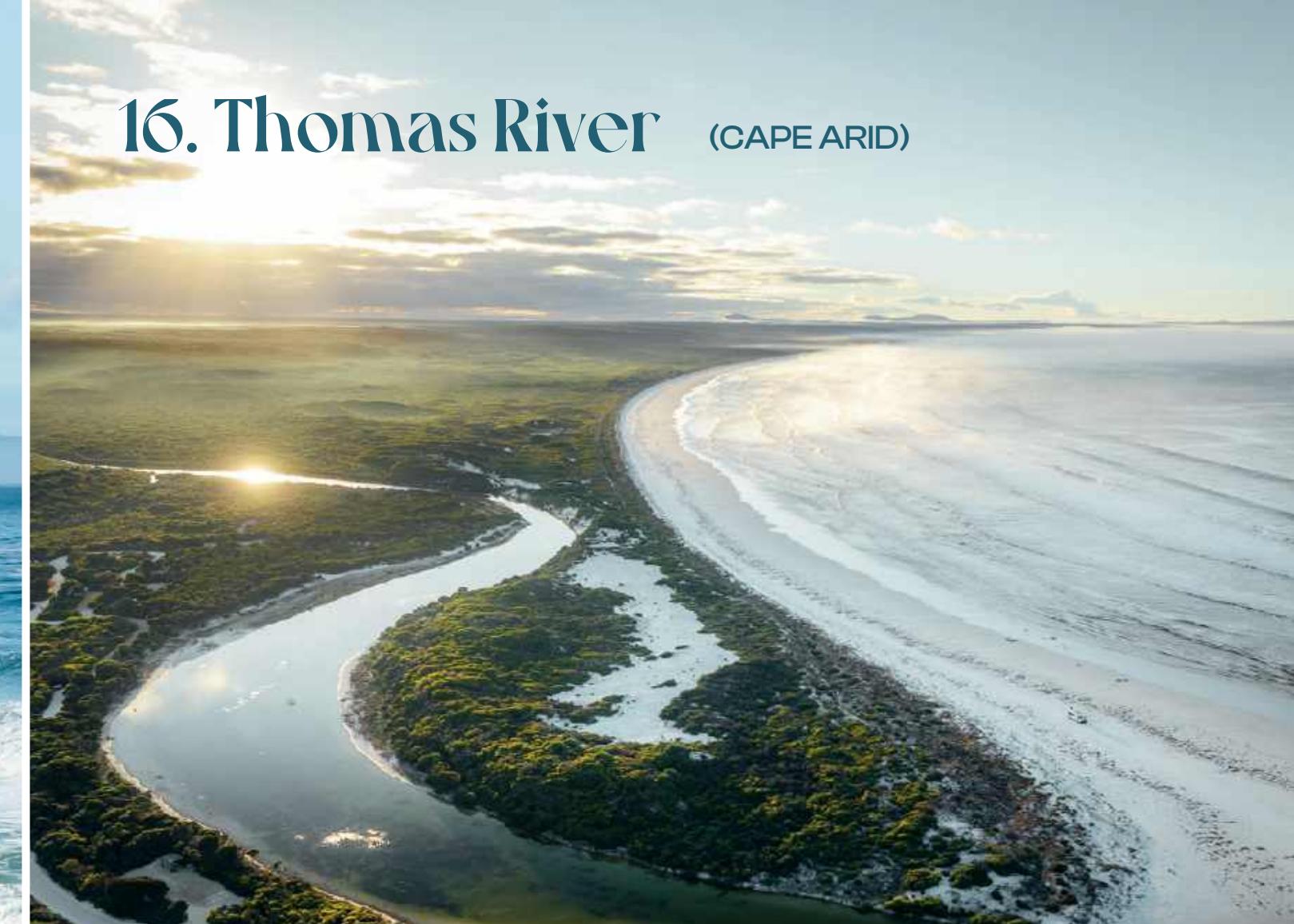
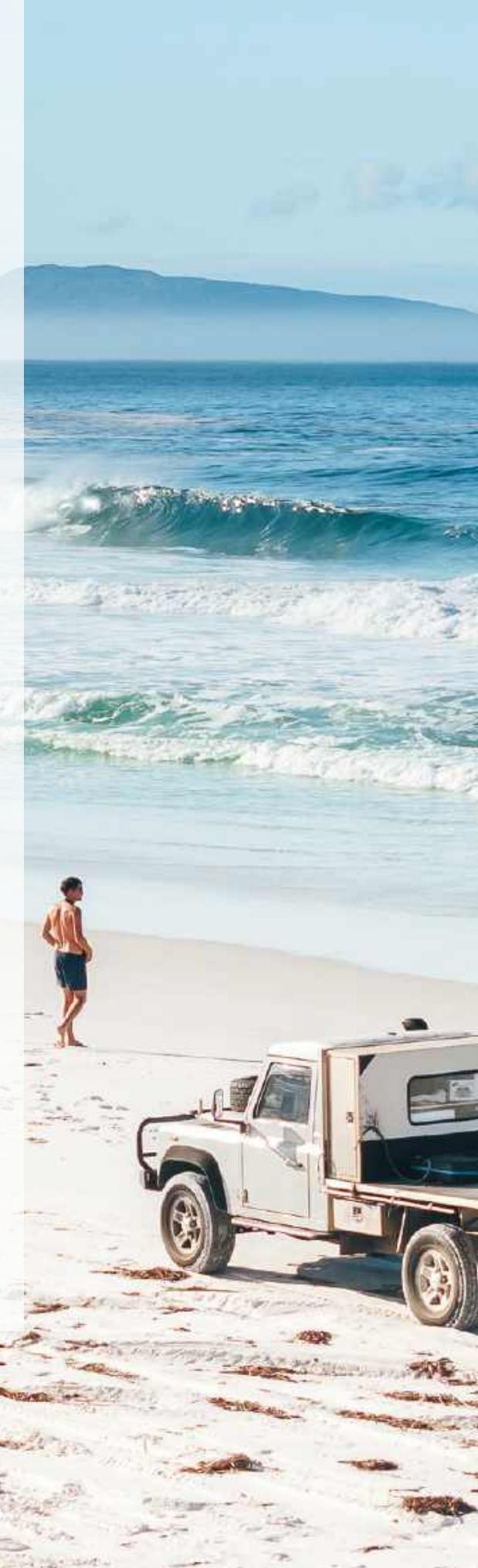
15. Tagon Beach

(CAPE ARID)

Tagon Beach is one of the more remote beaches, stretching 2km in length and located in Cape Arid National Park (close to the park headquarters at Thomas River). Access is via a 4WD track that does involve soft sand and beach driving experience is recommended.

However, the good news for those without a 4WD (or experience), is that there is a picturesque hiking track that begins at the start of Yokinup Bay and takes you along the coastline; past Dolphin Cove and Little Tagon Bay, leading all the way to Tagon Beach (approx. 4km). And for those who want to visit Tagon Beach but perhaps not walk so far, there is 2WD drive access to a lookout above Little Tagon Bay which you can use to join the hiking track.

Tagon Beach itself is best for beach fishing and rock fishing. It's not recommended to swim here as it's an exposed bay with large swells (waves typically average over 1.5m). The best time to visit is on a calm day, or when the wind is blowing offshore (i.e. northerly or north-westerly). Check road conditions before setting off, especially in Winter when the access roads are often closed.



This unique beach refers to the sweeping beach located along Yokinup Bay in the Thomas River area of Cape Arid National Park. Access is via Tagon Road, which is a 15km unsealed road usually suitable for a 2WD.

Stretching at almost 25km along the bay, not only is this lesser-known gem ideal for those wanting a beach visit without the crowds, but its length also means you will have no trouble finding your own secluded stretch of beach.

There are two campgrounds located right on the bay; Yokinup Mia Mia, which is situated on higher ground and offers stunning views over the whole bay, and Belinup, which is nestled along the Thomas River estuary. Campsites are a first-come first-served basis (no bookings) but generally do not reach 100% capacity unless it's school holidays in the busy/peak season.

Recreation wise, Yokinup Bay is wonderful for fishing, 4WDing and hiking. At low tide, you can drive the entire length of the beach in a 4WD (check river water level and beach conditions) with defined tracks provided to navigate around the small headlands. At the very end of the Bay you will find the Mount Arid Walk, which takes you up to the summit for spectacular 360-degree views of the area (including the Recherche Archipelago).

17. Munglinup Beach

(130KM WEST OF TOWN)

Protected by a reef which forms a large natural lagoon and offering spectacular snorkelling (and swimming!), Munglinup Beach is a true hidden treasure in the area.

To the east is a shallow headland with a walking track that leads to a stunning second beach. This second beach continues along the south coast all the way to Stokes National Park. The headland itself has several tidal rock pools that fill on high tide, and can be the perfect calm place to cool off on lower tides.

To the west is the Oldfield estuary, which is perfect if you have a kayak or SUP board. There are 4WD tracks that allow you to drive onto the beach where the estuary meets the ocean and small boats can be launched directly into the estuary. The whole area is a great location for fishing, and for that reason it's very popular with the locals.

The only potential catch to Munglinup Beach is that there are 14 camping sites which operate on a first in best dressed policy so you need to get in quick to secure a site. However, if you do miss out, there is a caravan park located 3km back down the road.

Access to Munglinup Beach is via a 7km unsealed road. The road is hard gravel so it's easily accessible in a 2WD, but do note it can also be corrugated at certain times of the year. Take it steady and reduce your tyre pressures for a smoother drive. If coming from Ravensthorpe direction, Coxall Road is also unsealed.



18. Alexander Bay

(100KM EAST OF TOWN)

Alexander Bay – known as 'A Bay' by the locals - is another hidden gem situated between Cape le Grand and Cape Arid National Parks. Access is via an unsealed road which can vary in condition so a 4WD is recommended. Camping is permitted, of which there are 20 bays on a first come, first served basis. Camping is run by the shire, with toilets being the only facilities provided. Dogs are permitted at Alexander Bay.

Similar to Lucky Bay, Alexander Bay is a pristine white sand beach, meaning it creates the same entertaining 'squeaky sounds' as you set off by foot and explore, but here you will notice, it is without the crowds. This also means driving on the beach is relatively easy, especially on the western side near the campground. The Bay stretches for a massive 9km, and can be driven all the way to Alexander Point in the east – noting the sand gets softer the further you head east. For the keen surfers, there is also a surf break on this (east) side.

Fishing is great direct from the beach (especially during salmon runs), or small boats can be launched anywhere along the Bay.

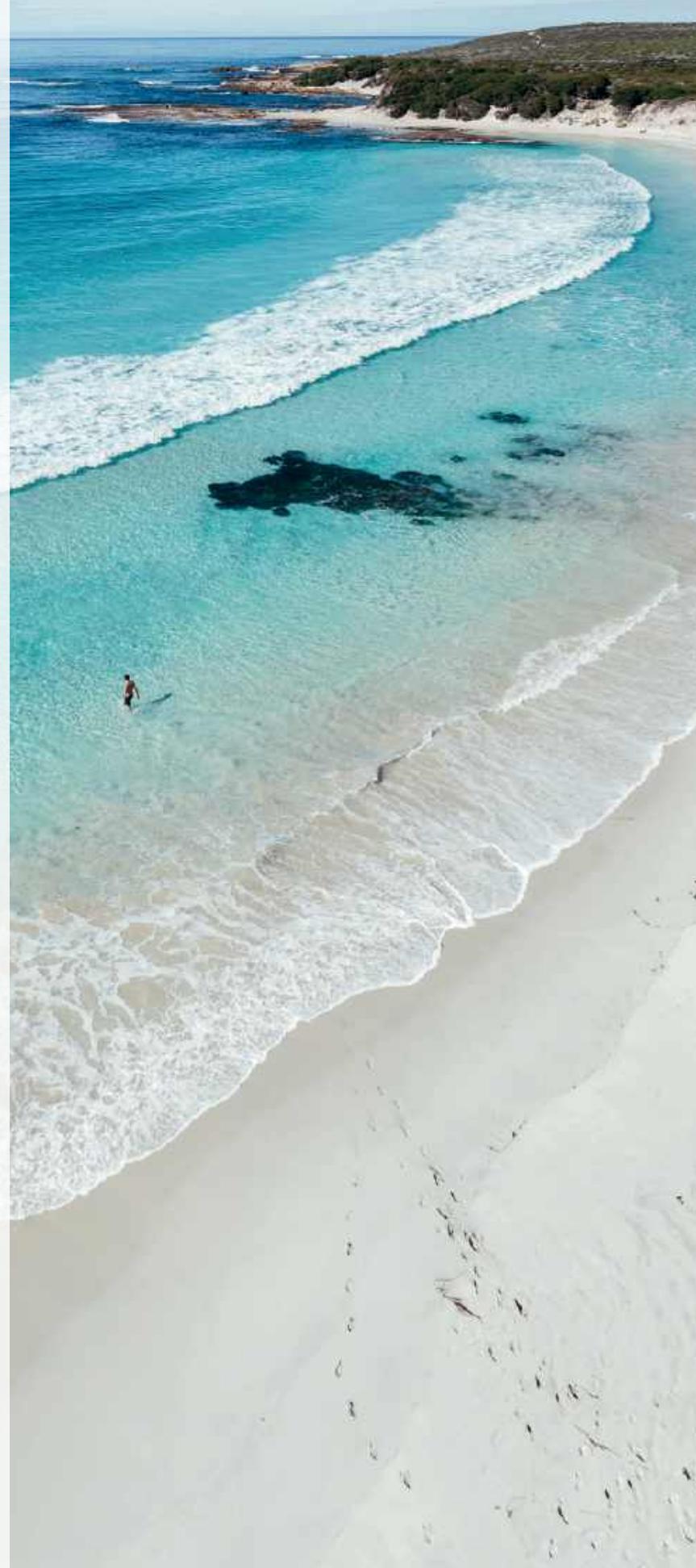
19. Quagi Beach

(80KM WEST OF TOWN)

Another lesser-known gem in Esperance is the beautiful Quagi Beach. With camping permitted right by the water (managed by the shire), there are 18 camp sites operating on a first come first served policy. Access is via Farrells Road, which is 10km and unsealed. The road is hard/compact gravel so it's easily accessible in a 2WD, however depending on current conditions, it can also be corrugated – particularly the last 2km as you approach the beach. Take it steady and reduce tyre pressures for a smoother drive.

The beach itself is sheltered and perfect for swimming and fishing right off the beach. There are rocks to explore to the south of the beach, and you can take the 4WD track south of the campground to find a stunning infinity rock pool. There are also lots of 4WD tracks in the greater area to explore as Quagi Beach is surrounded by both a DBCA managed nature reserve and Stokes National Park.

Dogs are permitted at Quagi Beach, but do note the neighbouring nature reserves are managed by DBCA where pets are not permitted.



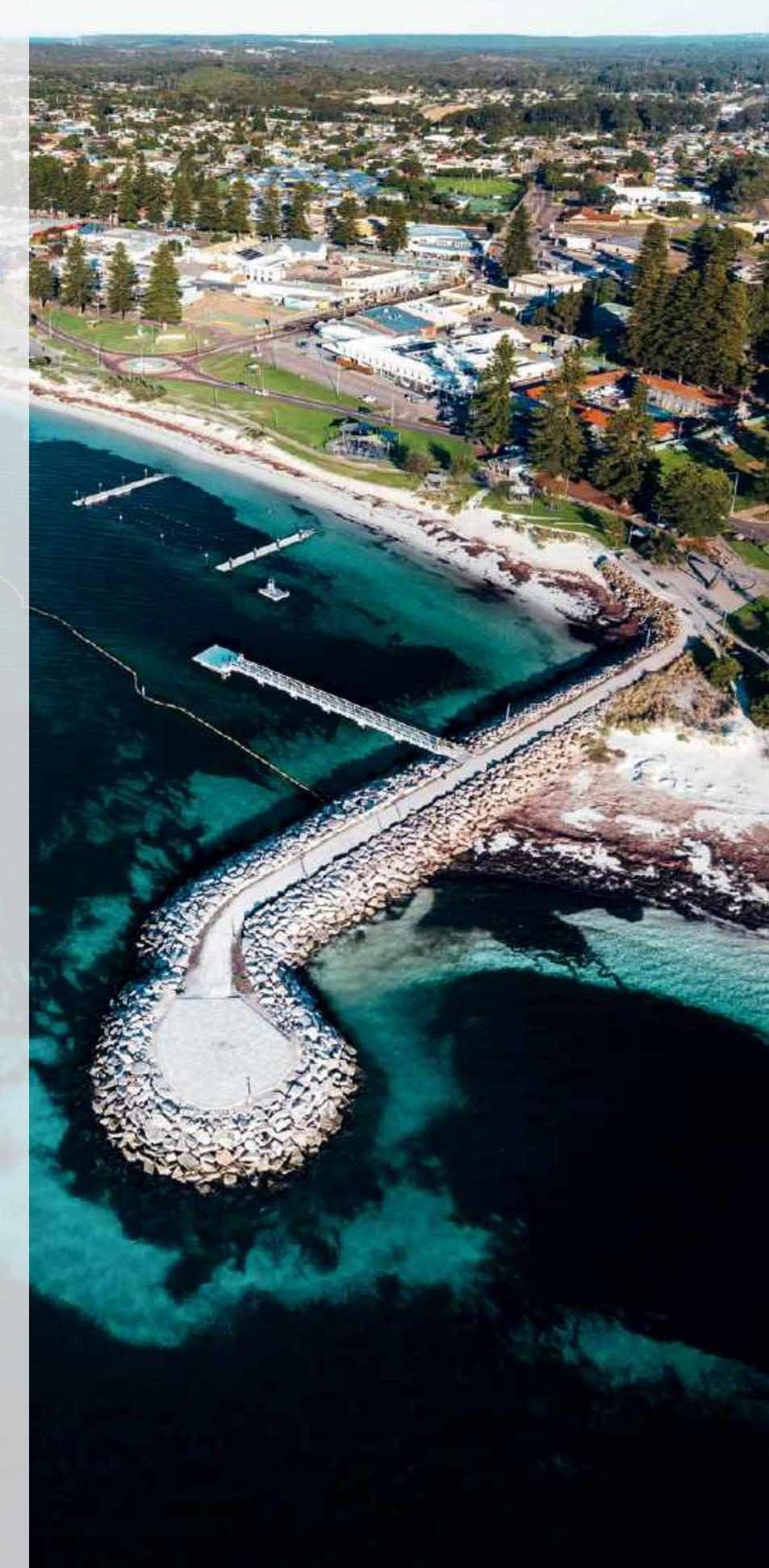
20. James Street Jetty Beach

(IN TOWN)

James Street Jetty Beach is located in the centre of town by the Esperance foreshore and Whale Tail sculpture. The beach is perfect for swimming as it's protected by a shark proof barrier. There is also a floating pontoon and a jetty to walk along (noting you can't walk on the jetty when the helicopter is based at the end of it)

This beach is ideal for families. Not only for the protected swimming area and calm bay, but there is a playground, toilet and shower facilities and a long stretch of green grass along the foreshore.

The beach faces to the east so it's susceptible to the south-easterlies and easterlies in the summer months. The best time to visit is when these winds are not blowing, which is typically in the mornings. Dogs are permitted on-leash in this area.





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