



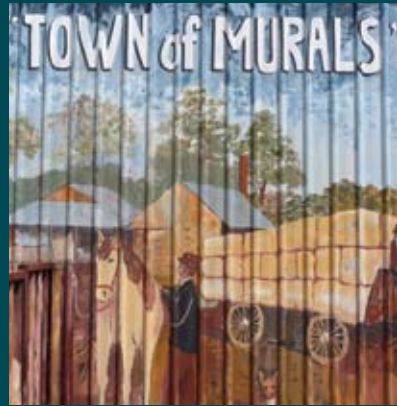
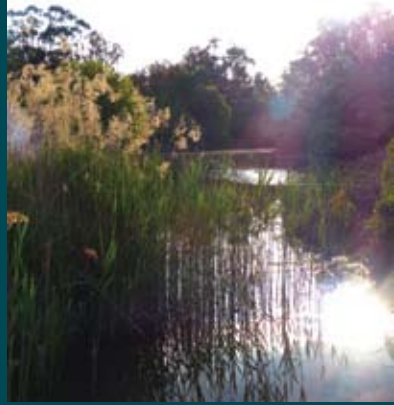
discover new horizons

Warrumbungle

region

COONABARABRAN • BARADINE • COOLAH • DUNEDOO
MENDOORAN • BINNAWAY

OFFICIAL VISITORS GUIDE



welcome to Warrumbungle Shire

from younger to older
from museums to memories
from wine to water
from sculptures to skeletons
from views to villages
from biking to buying
from bushwalks to bowls
from fossils to flix
from culture to community
from nature to neptune
from parks to pottery
from caves to cafés
from hats to horseriding

a place of many contrasts

If it's history or adventure, the natural or architectural, art or science, flora or fauna, swags or saunas ... we've got something to satisfy the diverse needs of each member of the family, each friend in the group, each husband or wife, each stop over or tree changer.

Take a short break or travel the universe, order a long black or tea bag, educational, inspirational, challenging and relaxing this is the life of the Warrumbungle Shire.

We welcome you to our life.

... we've got it all ... the only thing missing is YOU!





Indigenous Occupation

Across the region there are many sites which indicate a strong link with Aboriginal occupation. The Gamilaroi and the Wiradjuri peoples are the traditional owners and sites have been identified dating back 21,000 years. Displays in the Keeping Places in Coonabarabran and Baradine, The Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre, Sculptures in the Scrub and King Togie's gravesite near Coolah take you on journeys to the dreamtime of the custodians.

Colonial Beginnings

European explorers were quite taken with the landscape as they forged their way across incredibly inhospitable terrain. John Oxley along with his team of botanists and surveyors climbed Mt Exmouth in the Warrumbungles in 1818 to survey the amazing view and in 1823 Allan Cunningham on his exploration came upon Pandora's Pass which links the eastern parts of the Warrumbungle Range with the Liverpool Plains. Legends abound of bushrangers and early squatters, shearers and bullockies and life on farms and in villages. From the mid 1800's the villages across the region were gazetted.

Prehistoric Past

Reminisce of a prehistoric past, the fossilized bones of a Diprotodon, often mistaken as a dinosaur skeleton are displayed in the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre Australian Megafauna display, it's one you won't want to miss ...



geology

Volcanic Wonders

The Warrumbungle Region boasts two extinct volcanoes. The action of the Garrawilla Volcano to the east of Coonabarabran commenced 200 million years ago and ceased 45 million ago while the Warrumbungle eruptions occurred between 17 and 14 million years ago. The Warrumbungle Range was formed when surges of volcanic magma thrust through the sandstone landscape to form an amazing network of peaks and spires that were eroded over many years to create the range we see today. Volcanic upheavals have exposed leaves of the glossopteris period some 225 million years old.

Minerals, Crystals & Fossils

The extinct volcanic ranges yield some of the best, rarest and most colourful zeolite crystals in the world. These crystals were formed more than 45 million years ago and the volcanic opal, fossil leaves and petrified wood found in the Warrumbungles formed some 14 million years ago. From the jurassic sandstone of the Pilliga Beds near perfect fossils of fish and leaves have been unearthed.

Sandstone Formations

For many thousands of years the Sandstone Caves in the Pilliga Nature Reserve have been a special place for the Gamilaroi people. The fragile sandstone hills were eroded by wind and rain over time to form a network of caves used as shelter by the Aboriginal people. Today the visitor can take a break and view the engravings and magical formations. An interpretive walking track tells the story of this hidden jewel of the Pilliga.



ery Spire

Pillarukute

Bluff Pyramid

Barre Point

www.warrumbungleregion.com.au



experience natural



Meet Nature

The protected havens of three national parks and a number of nature and flora reserves in an area identified as where east meets west provide perfect places to see an amazing variety of wildlife in their natural environment. Chance meetings with kangaroos, echidnas and koalas, along with sightings of colourful parrots, cheeky emus and kookaburras and the occasional goanna are almost guaranteed.

The devastating bush fires of 2013 impacted on the vegetation and landscape of the Warrumbungles. However, the resilience of this natural landscape can be seen in the regeneration of white gums and iron barks which complement the craggy peaks and sandstone outcrops that have been worn by wind and rain over millions of years. This wild terrain, along with the rich farming blocks all merge to create a reflection of the work of Mother Nature.

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Walk on the Wild side

Be brave .. choose your discovery experience. Walking trails are designed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. Try a wheelchair/pram friendly walk with magnificent views or be adventurous and take a tougher walk for that amazing experience; The Breadknife Walk in the Warrumbungles is one of Australia's Top 10 Walks.

Go out on a High

There are great ways to take an even closer look at the natural wonders on offer. Like Oxley you can walk to the highest peak in the Warrumbungles; Mt Exmouth is 1206 metres high or bring your climbing gear and scale the craggy rock faces.

Why the Warrumbungles?

An early morning sunrise in the Warrumbungles is unparalleled, just ask an intrepid walker, one who is keen to begin their day with the first glimpse of sunlight on mountain tops. The Warrumbungle and Coolah Tops National Parks are both part of the Warrumbungle Range and support an amazing micro-climate, one where east meets west and shows us a little of the wildlife and plant life of the moist east coast and the dry western climates.

Captivating Coolah Tops

Playing host to an amazing sub-alpine vegetation including ferns and massive Snow Gums, Coolah Tops is one of Australia's best kept secrets. Your visit to The Tops is like a journey to a new world .. or is it an old world set amongst those towering grass trees?

beauty



Picture perfect Pilliga

Flora and fauna lovers flock to the Pilliga to experience the special places where nature and nurture intersect. An extensive native forest with stories of the evasive yowie, a carpeted forest of some of Australia's most beautiful wildflowers, a protected scrubland of cypress, ironbark and gum trees .. home to butterflies in their millions and the rare little Pilliga Mouse.





A Space for Science

The curious will find that Warrumbungle Region has much more than the mysteries of the scientific world of astronomy to research.

Aboriginal people used the night sky and the seasons to guide their hunting and their celebrations.

Today the science of living is still prevalent but the ways in which it is expressed differs.

The diversity of the region and the importance of environment and conservation is reflected in the distribution of national parks and wildlife conservation areas. Warrumbungle Region is rich in agriculture and the farming community has embraced scientific processes to produce high quality grains and livestock for the local and export markets.

As a visitor, you can explore the new horizons of science simply by taking a walk into the natural environment, visiting a working farm or take a heritage walk through our local streets to observe unfolding development which impact on our lifestyle and the natural and built environment. Just another way to satisfy one's curiosity about the world we live in.



science

Drive and Discover

Thirty-eight million times smaller than the real solar system, the Worlds Largest Virtual Solar System is a drive where the visitor can learn about the universe. The roadsides leading to Coonabarabran and Siding Spring Observatory are speckled with planets. Complement this experience with resources made to demystify and make the universe a little more comprehensible.

The perfect viewing point

It's the perfect vantage point at 1160m above sea level, it's the crisp clean air, the low humidity, non turbulent atmosphere, lack of light interference and high percentage of clear nights that earns the region the title "Astronomy Capital of Australia". For the amateur or professional, visit a private observatory and study the universe at your leisure.

A Photogenic Landscape

Click, click .. Whether it be nature up close, vast landscapes, historical record or simply your own personal record of a visit to our area, this amazing landscape provides opportunities to record memories worth keeping.

Ceramic Wares

Clearly defined by their regional influences, it's the unique creations of local artists that depicts the land and lifestyles here. The ceramic interpretation of the landscapes and depiction of nature in coloured glazes make these earthen vessels a souvenir reminder of the beauty here.

Cultural Creations

Opportunities to immerse yourself in the visual history of this land are many. Secret places will show you a rich Aboriginal culture with stories depicted on rock faces. Interpretation of Gamilaroi stories are also presented in National Parks Discovery Tours. Locally produced Aboriginal art pieces are a reminder of the skills and the culture of the Gamilaroi people and a reflection of the connection to land.

Performance & Entertainment

A well turned piece of ironbark .. and there it is a bowl, a twisted piece of metal, hammered and heated to make a bird in flight. A dab of paint, the clacking of needles, the shuttle of the spinning wheel or maybe a rollicking evening of bush poetry sharing or a strings performance. A foreign film to whet the appetite or great night out under the stars soaking up the vibes of visiting performers and locals alike. All are reflections of the way we fill our time and present it for the world to see.

culture



Ceramics inspired by the surrounding beauty of the Warrumbungles





architecture



Village Versatility

The villages sprinkled throughout the region offer diverse architectural attractions. From the pillars of a Memorial Hall to the recently built The Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre, marvel at the architectural diversity and how well it works within a village surround.

Art Deco Streetscapes

A delightful mix of art deco and colonial buildings in the towns and villages of Warrumbungle Shire create a reflection of the influences of the colonial heritage of the area. The changing streetscapes also remind us that this was an area that utilised the materials found locally when building through the years.

Sandstone Structures

Some might think that the streetscape in Coonabarabran has been built to reflect the Warrumbungle skyline with the iconic clocktower standing sentinel over the centre of town, a memorial to those who served Australia during the Great Wars.

Like the clocktower, the court house constructed in 1878 is built of locally mined sandstone. Many homes built in the 1800 and 1900's reflected the prosperity of the times.

ANTIQUES
AND
COLLECTABLES
OUTBACK

Join the Excitement of OUR Lifestyle

Residents and visitors alike can experience what makes it special to live in Warrumbungle Shire. Not a week goes by when we do not have to choose which way to go. Events range from local shows and rodeos to poetry evenings, Speakers Club to Rotary, the WACCI Art Exhibition to Crooked Mountain Concert, ArtUNlimited to a bike ride into the hills, join the locals at a race meeting.. and if all this seems tiring .. simply enjoy coffee with friends in one of our many quirky little cafes and coffee haunts or a beer and country hospitality at one of our great pubs.

Caring Communities

Caring for our communities has become a part of what makes small town living so important. Service clubs and community committees support a range of activities and services that enhance the well-being of each community.

www.warrumbungleregion.com.au



*Lifestyle
Industry*

Industrial

Warrumbungle Shire offers a level playing field in industry and development with agriculture being a significant player. Growing it and getting it to market has become a way of life for many of our residents.

Retail

Retailing in the shire caters to the needs of the communities they serve .. and to the visitor .. try our special products.



itinerary

SUGGESTIONS

Making your Warrumbungle visit a Warrumbungle Adventure

The following itineraries have been built to help you get the best out of your visit .. be it a half day, an overnight stay or a longer exploration of our region. Grab pieces from each itinerary to suit your needs as you move around the shire.

With a half day to spare and overnighiting for an early start on your trip tomorrow morning....

The Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre has two exhibition spaces – the Australian Museum Megafauna Exhibition with the Diprotodon Display .. get up close to this fossil of the largest marsupial to have lived. Then pop around to The Keeping Place to learn about our Aboriginal history where there are artefacts and stories to help you understand the culture of the traditional owners, the Gamilaroi. When Coona' celebrated its 150th in 2010 a wall of tiles was located on the outside wall of the VIC highlighting the families who contributed to the community. Allow 20minutes to an hour.. open every day 9-5pm. *FREE*

A walk through our main street will introduce you to gift shops, coffee shops and a great variety of stores to rummage through .. even antiques and tools to suit all comers. Yes, in Coona the locals welcome visitors. This is where you choose between a tea bag or a long black .. or something stronger if you like.

A visit to Crystal Kingdom will also help you understand the way the mighty Warrumbungles were formed, spend time in the Crystal Shop. Allow 30minutes to 1.5hours .. open daily from 8am-5pm. *FREE*

Your evening can be well spent exploring the night sky at one of three privately operated telescope – Call Warrumbungle Observatory, Milroy Observatory or Coona Astro Ventures for times and costs and to book in .. booking is essential. Allow 15minutes to travel to any of the observatories and then 1 to 1.5hrs for the viewing session. *Costs vary*



**For more itineraries visit the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre
or www.warrumbungleregion.com.au | P 1800 242 881**



With a day or more to spend in Warrumbungle Region ...there is a lot to pursue

- Visit Siding Spring Observatory** – open only between 9.30-4pm weekdays and 10am-4pm weekends. Exploratory entry fee applies then visit the mighty AAO, Australia’s largest optical telescope. Coffee shop available for lunch or snacks. Allow 30 minutes travel from Coonabarabran; 1 – 2 hours to visit the Exploratory Centre and AAO. *Costs vary.*

- Explore the Warrumbungle National Park** your own way .. if its just a quiet day out then take a picnic lunch and be sure to visit White Gum Lookout .. its easy walking and spectacular views. Allow 30 minutes travel time from Coona to White Gum Lookout Car Park .. a 30 minute return walk .. and then some sitting and snapping time .. say 15 minutes .. makes this visit almost an hour. Continuing into the Park to the Visitor Centre and get the lowdown on the park. Picnic areas and walking track info from the Centre. Allow another 10 mins travel time .. and then another 15-20 mins at the Centre before venturing out to picnic or explore further .. remember its another 40 minutes back into Coona .. beware of wildlife on this road. Open daily. *A Park User Fee of \$7 per car is applicable if you do not have an annual parks pass or a concession card.*

- The mysteries of the Pilliga will unfold at Baradine at **The Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre** – likened to a walk in the Pilliga with stories of the conservation values, birdlife, timber industry, Aboriginal culture and European settlement. The drive to Baradine from Coona is 30 minutes; allow an hour to check out the Discovery Centre. Open daily. *FREE*

- While in Baradine, a visit to the Baradine LALC Keeping Place in Wellington Street will introduce you to some more history of the area. Open weekdays. *FREE*

- Throughout the Pilliga are amazing indicators of habitation and places like the Salt Caves Picnic Area with its lofty fire tower are great picnic and exploration areas. Legend has it that the caves were 30m deep and the salt was like stalactites hanging from the roof; kangaroos, wild horses and later sheep used this as licks and of course the salt was collected by the women to cure meat. The Fire Tower stands high above the forest and provides a great view of the landscape. A nearby dam is a great gathering place for wildlife and an immense number of birdlife. In spring the floor of the forest is a spectacular display of wildflowers .. makes you wonder why people travel so far to see wildflowers when they are here on our doorstep. Travel time from Baradine to the Salt Caves is about an hour .. all unsealed roads so be sure to collect a map before adventuring out. The day is then yours. *FREE*

- Now if you’re a birdo, a “Twitcher” is the term .. collect a Bird Routes of Baradine and the Pilliga and go exploring for yourself to find birds .. be sure to let NPWS know if you spot something not on the list .. always good to record sightings for the next twitcher. Allow all day .. but early morning starts are best. *FREE*

- To take a closer look at the Aboriginal culture of the Pilliga, head to Sculptures in the Scrub; be prepared to picnic as this is a longer day. From Baradine, Sculptures is another half hour and then the walk to the Sculptures and along the Gorge takes 2 hours .. then its another half hour back into town. If you are visiting from Coona then allow 2 hours total travel time, some time at the Discovery Centre to get maps and info and then 2 hours on the walking track .. a day out for most. *FREE*

- More Pilliga Exploration .. again a whole day .. but travel from Coona out to the Sandstone Caves .. this attraction is in a protected area so collect a map from the Visitor Info Centre in town. Travel time is 35 minutes to the carpark then the walk is about an hour. *FREE.*
From Baradine the Artesian Bore Baths at Pilliga is another hour (30kms unsealed road) and provide the opportunity to immerse yourself in the therapeutic waters. *FREE.*



itinerary

SUGGESTIONS

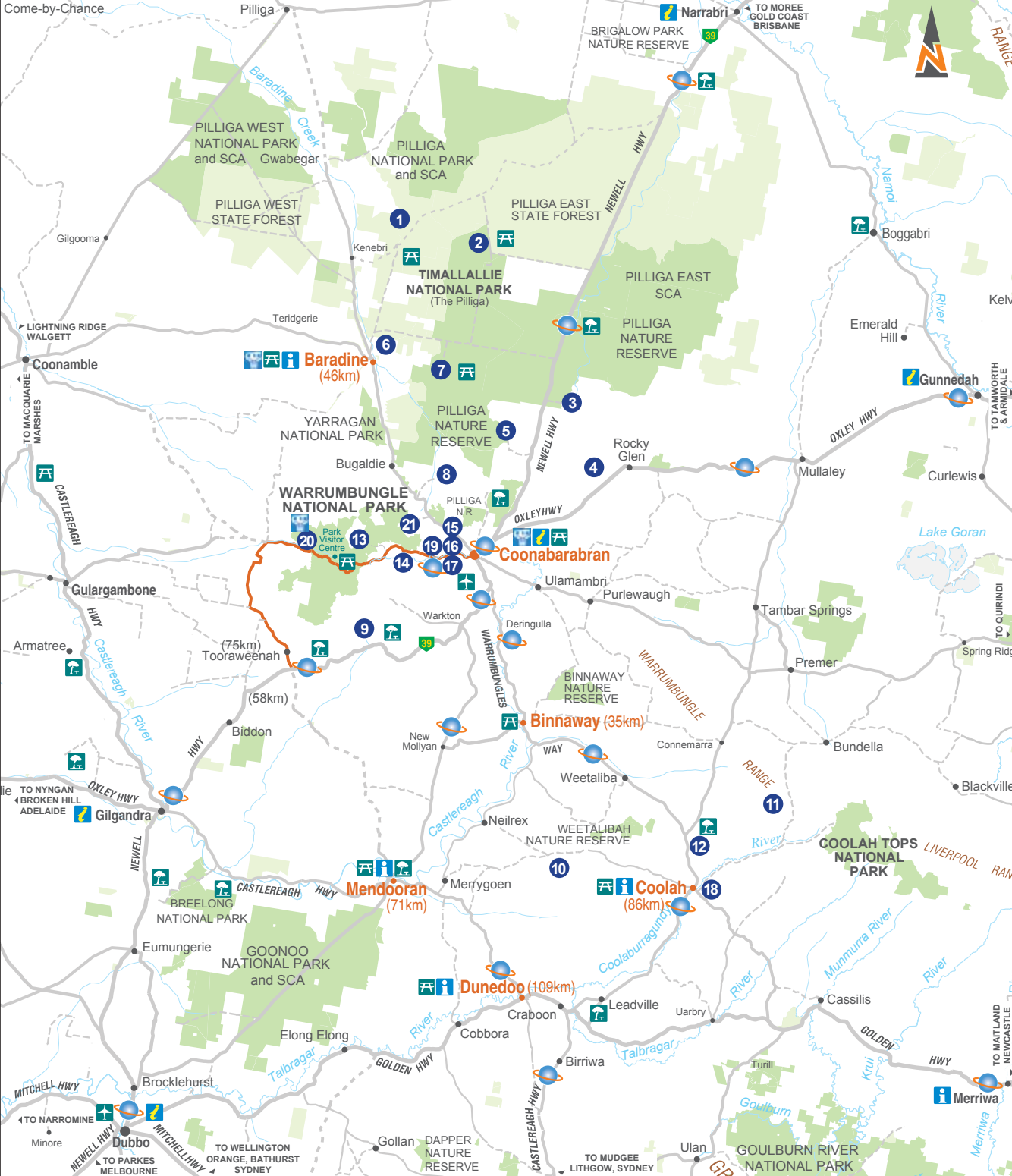
... and if you're staying longer why not pick and match to make up a program of activity to suit your interests ..

- After the Sandstone Caves why not head back towards Coona and pop into Pilliga Pottery – this German inspired complex features alternative building materials and styles so its not just about pottery, there are beautiful gardens, and Blue Wren Café serving homestyle German meals and great coffee. Talk to the family at Pilliga Pottery and you will come to understand the magical pull of the Australian bush, particularly for those from closely settled Europe, and you will be captivated too. Watching artisans at work is restful or you might try your hand at potting yourself. Enjoy the food and atmosphere and be sure to check out the Tree of Life .. remnant pottery pieces formed into a massive lifelike tree. A retail section complements the factory and studio.
Allow a half hour of travel from Coona (note you travel over 10kms unsealed road .. but its all worth it) and you could spend the day there .. *FREE*

- Take a day trip along the Castlereagh to Binnaway; a former steam rail town with a main street that reflects the bustle of times gone by. Binnaway is the hometown of a former premier of NSW, Jack Renshaw and the dulcet tones of local boy Frank Bourke and his White Rose Orchestra were heard in many a country hall. Race meetings and street fairs are driven by the community of Binnaway and the occasional old time dance to commemorate Frank's time are held. From Binnaway continue through New Mollyan to Mendooran; again an old Castlereagh town originally known as Mendooran. Both little towns were change stations in the early days. Wander Mendooran's street and take a look at the murals depicting life in the area. There is a great little collectors' haunt in Mendooran to fill your day or simply sit by the river and enjoy the peace and calmness. Mendooran also has an active New Vogue Dance group that meets regularly and holds a Country Music event to coincide with the race weekend.
Travel time to Binnaway from Coona is 30 minutes and thence to Mendooran another 30 minutes; the day is yours to fill but when you return to Coona from Mendooran it's 45 minutes trip .. all sealed roads.

- A day trip to Coolah also takes you through Binnaway, so allow another half hour to Coolah. First stop should be Pandora Gallery and Information Centre to ensure you have the latest Coolah info and check out the ever-changing exhibition on show. Coolah is a pleasant little town with quirky shops and cafes and you're sure to find a special treasure. From Coolah, along the Merriwa Road is Coolah Tops National Park; note that the road into The Tops is unsealed – enquire about road conditions at the information centre. Your return trip from Coolah should be along the Mullaley Road, turning off near Bomera (an old farming run) to Purlough and Coonabarabran. This trip is through beautiful farming land and shows another perspective of rural life.
Travel time to Coolah is one hour no matter which way you travel from Coonabarabran. And if you are coming to Coolah from the Hunter Valley its an easy drive of less than three hours .. but you will think you're a world away from it all.

- Dunedoo is a small town straddling the Golden Highway. With all of its shops on one side of the main street and the railway line on the other. The community is active and presents a number of events. The Annual Dunedoo Bush Poetry Festival, the ArtUNlimited Art Show, the annual agricultural show and a number of smaller events welcome visitors. The Grassy Box Woodland Learning Centre is worth a visit and a small museum and collectors shop add to the ambience of an old town, catering to visitors. There are a number of specialty food places in Dunedoo so be sure to make this your lunch stop on your journey.
Dunedoo is less than 1.5 hours from Coonabarabran, travelling via Mendooran; all sealed road and is also an hour to Dubbo and less than an hour to Mudgee. Travellers from Newcastle and the Hunter happen on Dunedoo quickly; less than 3.5 hours of road travel.



- EXPLORE WARRUMBUNGLE REGION**
THINGS TO SEE & DO WHILE YOU'RE HERE...
- 1 The Aloes Picnic Area
 - 2 The Salt Caves
 - 3 The Sandstone Caves
 - 4 Oxley's Crossing
 - 5 Pilliga Pottery
 - 6 Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre
 - 7 Sculptures In The Scrub
 - 8 Goanna Tracks Moto X
 - 9 Hickey's Falls
 - 10 King Togee's Headstone
 - 11 Pandora's Pass
 - 12 The Black Stump
 - 13 Siding Spring Observatory & Exploratory
 - 14 Warrumbungle Observatory
 - 15 Newcastle Hats
 - 16 Crystal Kingdom
 - 17 Diprotodon Exhibition & Keeping Place
 - 18 Pandora Gallery
 - 19 Coona Astro Ventures
 - 20 Warrumbungle National Park
 - 21 Milroy Observatory
- Caravan Dump Point
 - Airport
 - Picnic Area
 - Roadside Rest Area
 - Visitor Information
 - Accredited Visitor Information Centre
 - Attractions
 - Solar Systems Drive



Highways
 Road sealed, unsealed
 State Forest (SF)
 National Park (NP)

Tourist Drive 1
 (109km) Distance in kilometres from Coonabarabran



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Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre
 Friendly and helpful advice from locals in the know
OPEN 7 days, 9am - 5pm

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