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A picture's worth a thousand words

Sunsets, like childhood are viewed with wonder not just because they are beautiful but because they are fleeting – so said Richard Paul Evens. Whoever he may be, his words capture the feeling we have all experienced when presented with a breathtaking sunset. Sunsets are a reminder that try as we might, we will never match the beauty of mother nature at her best.

At this time of the year, The Long Paddock, in south western NSW, provides some of the best opportunities for photographers to capture that beauty. By photographers we are not talking about flacked jacketed, big lens carrying adrenaline junkies - we are talking about anyone with a camera and just a bit of time on their hands.

Any photographer will tell you that the key to a great sunset shot is to be ready. This may sound obvious but how many times have your admired a sunset, thought about grabbing the camera only to look at the photo and wonder what went wrong? There is a golden hour before sunset which good photographers know is the time to capture a beautiful sunset. This means you have to be at your spot ready to go before the golden hour – there is not point turning up and unzipping the bag as you watch your award winning image disappear over the horizon. So check your times and know where you are going. This may involve a bit of extra travel but the experience will be well worth the shot.

The Long Paddock has some great designated photography spots known internationally for their ability to turn anyone into a National Geographic photographer. Probably the best known spot is the Sunset Viewing area just outside of Hay. The area is part of the vast Hay Plains and is recognised as one of the flattest places on earth. Spectacular sunsets are so common here, where you can see the curvature of the earth, that it is almost impossible to take a bad shot. The Headless Horseman sculpture between Boooroban and Wanganella provides the perfect focus for an award winning image. Further south at Moama, the Murray River, provides a great focus for sunset shots, with the warm evening light bringing an almost heavenly feel to the river.

As you head north on The Long Paddock, towns become fewer and nature really begins to come alive. The vastness of the landscape provides ample opportunity to pull over and capture an award winning shot – and if your lucky the local wildlife will jump in to make the image even more spectacular. Just remember you don't have to be a cowboy to ride off into the sunset.

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About the Long Paddock- Cobb Highway Touring Route

The Long Paddock – Cobb Highway Touring Route follows The Cobb Highway (named for the famous coach company) from Echuca Moama on the Victorian border, through to Wilcannia leading to the iconic outback towns of Bourke, Broken Hill and White Cliffs.

The Long Paddock includes 47 road side information panels, located at various sites of significance along the route. These tell the stories and history of the region in words and images and are a great way to get to know the area.

Five great rivers, major museums, National Parks, Red Gum forests, wetlands and waterways, the flattest, natural open plains on Earth and one of the world's oldest geological landmarks – welcome to The Long Paddock.

www.thelongopaddock.com.au

Things to see and do on the way

Take The Long Paddock touring route

Visit the 47 information panels tell the story of the Long Paddock in words and images

Stop and take a photo of the 11 large scale public artworks located along the touring route

www.thelongpaddock.com.au

Visit the Back Roads Trail

Just off the Cobb Highway at Moama – visit paddock to plate producers including Pacedon Pork (traditional English pork products and Barham Avocados

www.backroadstrail.com.au

Stop at the Murray Valley National Park

At Moama stop in at the brand new Murray Valley National Park – Mountain Bike Track. Including a skills and pump track this is a must for all bike enthusiast

At Mathoura Stop at the Murray Valley National Park and view the internationally renowned Reed Beds Bird Hide

www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/Murray-Valley-National-Park

Drop in to Deniliquin

Visit the Peppin Heritage Centre in Deniliquin which includes a full replica of an 1880's school room and visiting exhibitions

www.denitourism.com.au



Indulge your taste buds at The Long Table Cafe - an on farm restaurant, showcasing local produce

www.longtablecafe.com.au

Capture the amazing sunset the Headless Horseman Sculpture located at the Black Swamp

Afterwards stop in to the Royal Mail Hotel for a quick drink

Have a great time in Hay

Throw a line in the Murrumbidgee River at Hay with some of the best Murray Cod fishing in Australia

Pick up a free bike from the Visitor Information Centre and explore the town

Head out to the historic One Tree Pub to take in the flattest land in the southern hemisphere

www.hay.nsw.gov.au/visithay.aspx

