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Top 5 Free Things To Do During The Adelaide Fringe

Written by [Grant Mills](#) on February 3, 2016. Posted in [Art](#), [City Guides](#), [Festivals](#), [History](#), [Society](#), [Top List](#), [Travel](#)

While the [Edinburgh Fringe](#) is the undisputed king of arts festivals, on the far side of the world the Australian city of Adelaide is home to its sister festival, The Adelaide Fringe, proudly the southern hemisphere’s largest arts festival.

I’ve been lucky enough to live in both Edinburgh and Adelaide, and have deliriously immersed myself in both festivals. While alike, there are some significant differences.

The sheer size of the Edinburgh Festival season is daunting. Its sheer breadth and multitude of locations is much like an entire planet of aliens descending on the city, fracturing into different language and community groups each with their own individual customs and practices. You can flit between the dark caverns of the Underbelly to the airy atmosphere of the appropriately named Pleasance, and then rush on to the statuesque Gilded Balloon, and feel like you’re bouncing between distinct social groups, complete with loyalties and allegiances.

The Adelaide Fringe is more like a wave of arms, legs and silliness has washed over the city, settling into all the cracks and crevices. Adelaide is a highly planned city – all right angles – in stark contrast to the Edinburgh Old Town’s urban planning. Yet it is during Fringe that this ordered city opens up revealing it’s hidden spaces; the Adelaide Fringe is tumble-down chaos that knows little boundaries and it’s a delight to swim through.

The other great difference is the weather, of course. Part of Edinburgh’s magic (even in summer) is emerging from an underground comedy cave into the rain-slicked and misty streets of the ‘Burgh’s medieval town. It turns cosy fires and warm ale into something almost mystical, a fog-laced wonderland where everything is on offer.

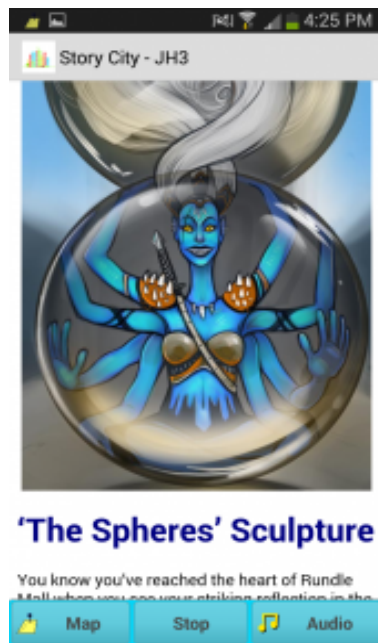
The flipside of this is the Adelaide Fringe; sweaty nights, open skies, midnight beach swims. Adelaide becomes a buffet of all of life’s pleasures, there’s nothing like it.

Yet anyone who has committed themselves to month long orgies of comedy, theatre and music knows how quickly the costs mount up. Both the [Edinburgh](#) and [Adelaide Fringe](#) have no trouble telling you what’s around for you to purchase, but what about the **FREE** options that are out there over the course of the Adelaide Fringe.

Here are a few of the best:

1. Story City - FREE mobile storytelling app





Adelaide is one of only three places in the world where you can experience the city via a real-life choose-your-own-adventure book – the other two are Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The *Story City* app is FREE to download from the [Android](#) and [Apple](#) app stores and uses GPS technology to immerse you in a fictional story in which you make the choices.

Why be a tourist when you can be a time-traveller? See the sights of Adelaide, learn a little bit of the history, all while on an adventure where you make the decisions. Will your choices lead you to victory, or to a sticky end?

And for the 2016 Fringe, *Story City* are releasing their third Adelaide story – the Treasure of Light – which takes you on a treasure hunt across town.

A brilliant and utterly unique way to see the city in a break between Fringe shows.

Download the app via the website: <http://www.storycity.com.au/>

2. BankSA Free Concert Series / Street Theatre Festival



While Adelaide doesn't have anything rivalling [Edinburgh Free Fringe offerings](#), there are a number of excellent free events and mini-festivals embedded in the Fringe.

[Bank SA supports a FREE Concert Series](#) throughout the Fringe, which offer up some of the best cabaret, music and performance of the Fringe. And you get to laze about in the scrumptiously shady Garden of Unearthly Delights (see below). And it's all free. A great starting point for any day's Fringe binge.

The other one that you're bound to bump into is the [Adelaide Street Theatre Festival](#), which happens over three subsequent weekends. Where? You guessed it – on the street. No entry fees, no obligations; just some of the world's best busker/performers, hamming it up or wowing the crowds in the hope that you'll drop some money in their hat.

Another great way to blow some time between pubs or between shows.

And remember to give generously if you can.

3. Garden of Unearthly Delights



'The Garden' has become the iconic, midsummer night's dream, beating heart of the Adelaide Fringe. Open during the day, but coming alive after dark, there's no cost to get into [The Garden of Unearthly Delight](#), but you do get priority entry if you have tickets booked for a show.

This is where much of the Fringe's mischief occurs. You can easily drift between shows, linger near the box office to snatch up discount tickets for a show you've never heard of, or just laze around beneath the shifting coloured canopy and the stars.

There's not a person in Adelaide that hasn't had a great night in The Garden. A festival staple

4. Beach Sunsets



Away from the city, one of the most spectacular opportunities for some free fun, comes at sunset along Adelaide's coastline.

Because of Adelaide's west-facing location, it is spoiled for something that almost all of Australia's capital cities lack, sunset over the ocean.

Adelaide is spoilt for gorgeous soft sand beaches, generously served by fish and chip shops and ice cream parlours.

If you like your sunsets pumping and served by fine food and a proliferation of cooling beverages then head to Glenelg. It's the easiest to get to from the city, with the tram heading directly there.

If you're more for a quiet chip on the beach, the sound of the rolling ocean and a little bit solitude, then try Henley Beach, Grange or Semaphore though they are not as well serviced by public transport. Of course the other option is to cycle...

5. Adelaide free bikes!



It's the Fringe, Adelaide is swamped in people but if you're an early riser and love a bargain then you can rent bikes and helmets from the BikeSA for FREE. But you will need to get there early before everyone else cashes in on this awesome idea.

Other than a spiffing way to get around town, you can also head down to the river and get onto the Linear Park Bike path which follows the river from the hills to the sea. Pack a picnic, pick a direction and just go!

There you go! 5 of the best things to do in Adelaide for Free during the Fringe!

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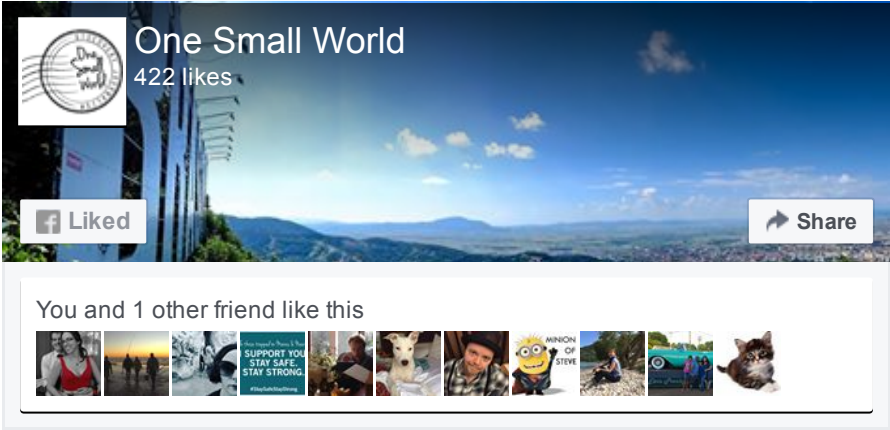
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