

LANDMARK POSTCODE

# 6450



Lucky Bay Beach  
Image courtesy of Western Australia Tourism

**LOCATION:** Esperance  
8 hours south east of Perth

**POPULATION:** 14,500

**INDUSTRIES:** Agriculture, resources, retail, community services, tourism

**CLIMATE:** Temperate  
Summer 15.5°C - 26.1°C  
Winter 8.3°C - 17.1°C  
Rainfall 617.9mm

Esperance has been a magnet for explorers since the Dutch sailed along this spectacular stretch of coast nearly 400 years ago. The secluded port town continues to attract adventurers but these days they are looking for the perfect coastal holiday, a sea change or, perhaps, the chance to strike it lucky in this resource rich corner of Western Australia.

Landmark's Paul Thomason says Esperance abounds with opportunity. It is the largest regional centre in the southeast and services a vast and prosperous agricultural region and rapidly growing mining sector.

Esperance port is the gateway to Australia's most important nickel mining region and handles more nickel than anywhere else in the southern hemisphere. The biggest local operation is BHP Billiton's \$2.3 billion mine at Ravensthorpe, an hour and a half away. It was the company's single biggest investment when it opened this year and employs 650 workers.

Other commodities shipped out of Esperance include iron ore and grain. Woodchips will be a

major export when the region's tree farms mature.

Landmark's Paul Thomason says Esperance has prospered because of the spirit and resourcefulness of locals.

Even the wind is put to good use. Esperance is the second windiest place in Western Australia and two local wind farms generate 20 per cent of local electricity needs.

The French named Esperance Bay when they sheltered their ships in the harbour in 1792. Settlement came nearly a century later when a large pastoral station was established.

In its early years, the town grew as a port facility for the Coolgardie goldfield but it wasn't until modern farming techniques transformed the region's poor soil into fertile farm land in the late 1940's that Esperance grew as a service town for wheat, sheep and cattle farmers.

"Esperance is a terrific place to raise children," says Paul. "The town is big enough to have great education and sporting facilities but our coastal location means living here is like being on a constant holiday."

The region's reputation for having Australia's best beaches is luring increasing numbers of tourists. Visitor numbers have climbed nearly 25 per cent in the past year.

Snow-white sands, stunning coastal drives and several national parks are winning attractions. The acclaimed Archipelago of the Recherche surrounds Esperance. More than 100 islands cover 4,000 square kilometres and all are A-class nature reserves.

Because of its history, Esperance has always

welcomed newcomers, says Paul. "It was traditionally a place for people to come and get started, especially in farming."

But these days land isn't as easy to come by, thanks to competition from the resource sector, tree companies and cashed up grain producers. Cropping is a major industry and, after ten bumper years, it is worth half a billion dollars a year to the local economy.

"The drought hasn't affected us so our land values have continued to improve. Farmers are short of rain at the moment but it's not too late for the season to change."

Buyers come from interstate and overseas but generally it's neighbours increasing the size of their own operations.

"There's plenty of scope for further growth, that's for sure," says Paul.

Contact:

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#### PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: 4 bedroom family home from \$550,000

Lifestyle: 150 acres with shedding \$980,000

Rural land: Cropping: between \$1,200 and \$1,400 an acre

Grazing: Between \$1,000 and \$1,400 an acre

Tree land: up to \$2,000 an acre