

About this Book

Thanks for taking a look at Accessible Melbourne, Lonely Planet's pilot ebook focusing on accessible travel.

This ebook is a first for us. It brings together content from our Melbourne & Victoria 9 guidebook authored by Melbourne experts; bespoke content that we've researched specifically for this guide; plus comments, opinions and recommendations from people in the disability sector, including those with a disability, carers, community organisations and government bodies.

Our mission in writing Accessible Melbourne is to pull together resources for all visitors and locals to get the most out of Melbourne and Victoria. We want to inspire great experiences for travellers, regardless of their access needs.

If you want to find out more about other aspects of Melbourne and Victoria, download an ebook version of our Melbourne & Victoria guide from www.lonelyplanet.com or visit your local bookstore.

Lonely Planet Content & Community Content

To make this ebook happen, we received amazing contributions from a wide variety of sources. Look at the <u>Behind the Scenes</u> section to find out who helped.

Throughout this ebook, Lonely Planet content has a white background. Comments, reviews and opinions from others appear with a shaded background, or with a mention of who has contributed the recommendation.

In the Melbourne and Geelong, Great Ocean Road & Bellarine Peninsula chapters, accessibility information appears in a shaded box after the main review, and uses a rating system (see below). Italics represent comments from community users; normal text comments come from expert Lonely Planet author research.

What Does 'Accessible' Mean?

When writing and researching this book, we've found the term 'accessible' to be a complex one. What is accessible for some might be difficult for others.

We have included a range of sights, activities and venues in this book that can be enjoyed by those in wheelchairs, as this was the information that surfaced most readily during our research. The guide also includes content for those with a vision or hearing impairment.

But not every attraction will suit every user. We suggest that you use this guide as a starting point to make your own enquiries for your particular situation.

Rating System

When gathering content from community users for the Melbourne chapter, we asked them to use a star system to rate each place on how well set up it was for those with mobility, vision, or hearing impairments; how good the staff were at dealing with special needs; whether there was an accessible toilet and parking, and how good the public transport access was. One star is poor, two is OK, three is great.

If we didn't receive a rating from any users, we deleted that category for that place.

Where possible, we've included the comments submitted by users - they provide first-hand opinions from our community.

Reviews & Liability

The cornerstone of Lonely Planet's reputation has always been, 'We know because we go'. Our intrepid authors visit every establishment reviewed in our books and give their unbiased, first-hand reviews based on personal experience. For the most part, since it is based on our *Melbourne & Victoria* guide, the same is true of *Accessible Melbourne*.

However, for this pilot project, we've augmented our authors' reviews with feedback from community members who have access issues and with information gathered directly from venues and businesses over the phone. We've also consolidated information from other sources such as local government offices, NGOs and Parks Victoria.

Given that everybody's level of ability is different, we cannot accept any liability if venues are not as accessible as claimed. While we believe that the information we are presenting is both accurate and useful, we urge you to make your own enquiries about whether the venue or activity is suitable for you, particularly when it comes to accommodation.

WE LOVE FEEDBACK

Send your thoughts and comments about our ebook to accessmelbourne@lonelyplanet.com.au - we'd love to hear from you.

Welcome to Melbourne & Victoria

With its highly accessible public transport system and compact city centre, Melbourne is one of the most accessible cities in the world.

Food & Wine

Melbourne loves its food. A growing passion for street food has been grafted onto a longstanding multicultural culinary scene that has few peers. Throw in a highly developed cafe culture and all manner of designer dens where serious eating is the order of the day, and you have one of Australia's true culinary capitals.

Regional Victoria has several respected wine regions, and many of the state's wineries are wheelchair-accessible. In particular, check out the Bellarine Taste Trail and the 12 Apostles Gourmet Trail.

Great Outdoors

Victorians are spoilt for wilderness choice. Southwest, the Great Ocean Road snakes along one of the world's most spectacular coastlines. For close encounters with seals, little penguins and koalas, you can't beat Phillip Island. And there are loads of accessible national parks dotted throughout the state.

In addition, just a stone's throw from Melbourne's city centre, Birrarung Marr and the Royal Botanic Gardens provide accessible places to unwind and relax or just soak in the riverside ambience.

Sports

Melbourne is the undisputed sports capital of Australia, hosting events such as the Australian Open Tennis Championship, the Formula 1 Grand Prix, the Phillip Island Moto GP and the Melbourne Cup, the richest two-mile handicap horse race in the world. Some of the world's most highly regarded sports venues, including the Rod Laver Area and the historic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), are a short distance from the city centre and are all fully accessible. All stadiums reserve some of their best seats for patrons with a disability. The MCG Sports Museum caters for deaf visitors with a fully iterative sign-language app for mobile devices.

The Arts & History

In the 19th century, gold-rich Melbourne and small towns in Victoria were stamped with architectural wonders. These days many of those grand buildings survive as luxury hotels, theatres bursting with talent or colourful state-of-the-art galleries. Melbourne is an arts lover's smorgasbord. While the Melbourne Arts Centre and the National Gallery of Victoria comprise the central hub, the city is endowed with art-strewn intimate laneways. In recent years, street art – such as the world-famous graffiti art of Hosier Lane – has become an attraction in its own right. While Melbourne's signature bluestone-cobbled laneways may present a problem for some wheelchair users, most of Melbourne's major galleries, theatres and museums are fully accessible.

Why I Love Melbourne



By Bill Forrester, founder of Travability

I was born In Melbourne and spent my childhood growing up on the beaches of the Mornington Peninsula. My early childhood memories are of a city passionate about its lifestyle: elegant, refined and multicultural. Over the years Melbourne has been enriched by its embrace of every wave of arriving immigrants and the result is an amazing cultural diversity. It is also well bestowed with natural assets and is regularly rated among the most liveable cities in the world. My passion has become accessible tourism and Melbourne boasts some of the best accessible infrastructure available – from its cafes and restaurants to its museums and art galleries; from its shops and markets to its sporting venues; from its urban parks and gardens to its state parks and day-trip destinations. It has always had a culture of inclusion and is now embracing accessible tourism.

Melbourne & Victoria's Top 10

Great Ocean Road

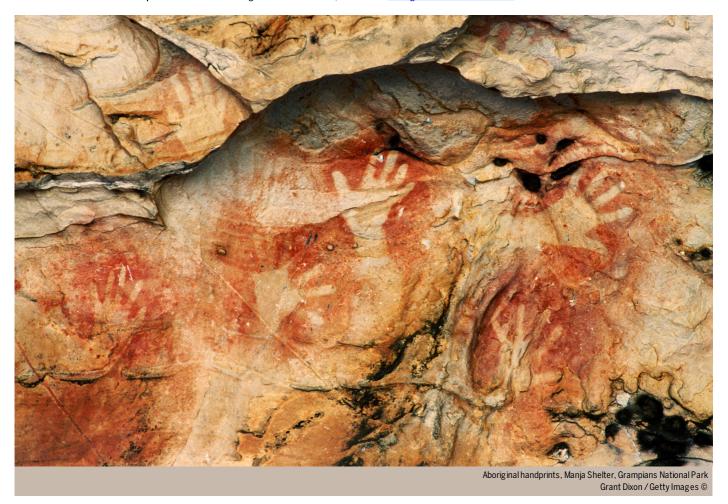
Take it slow driving along roads that curl beside spectacular beaches then whip inland through rainforests. Check out Bells Beach's legendary surf and go koala-spotting at Cape Otway. Then look in awe at the Twelve Apostles, one of Victoria's most vivid sights. Head inland for gourmet treasures in Timboon, watch whales in Warrnambool and discover the maritime treasure of Port Fairy. For the ultimate in slow travel, tackle the Great Ocean Walk.



Top Experiences

Indigenous Culture

In recent years there have been strong efforts to promote the culture of the Wurundjeri people, who have lived in the Melbourne area for around 50,000 years, through Indigenous-inspired cuisine, artwork and museums. The Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at the Melbourne Museum is a great place to start, as is Birrarung Marr, a park that incorporates art installations and stories of Wurundjeri people. Hungry for more? Charcoal Lane offers a modern take on bush tucker. For more places to see Indigenous Culture, see the Indigenous Melbourne section.



Top Experiences

Get Lost in Arcades & Laneways

Head down the many arcades and laneways in Melbourne to find hidden restaurants as well as bright, bold street art that encapsulates the alternative vibe Melburnians carry so well. In Degraves St let a local barista change the way you think about coffee. Be agog at Gog and Magog, two mythological figures that take pride of place in Royal Arcade. Let the evening steer you upstairs to a rooftop or down a graffiti-covered lane to find smooth drinking establishments serving up quality cocktails, wine and craft beer. Note that some laneways are paved with bluestone, so accessibility might be tricky for those in manual wheelchairs.

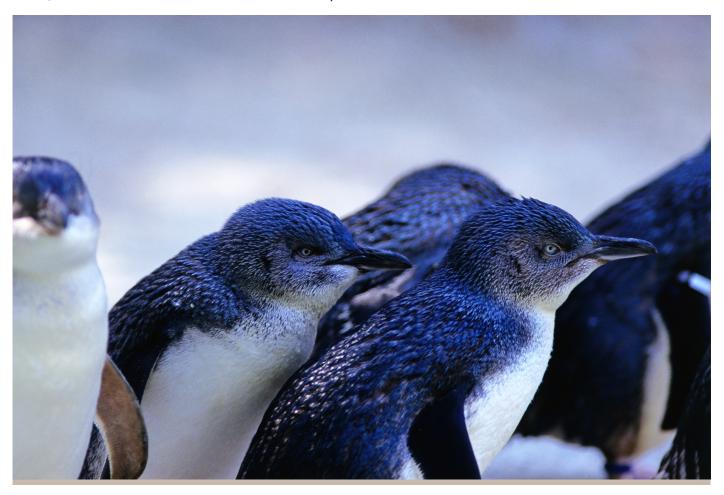


Centre Place, Melbourne Glenn Van Der Knijff / Getty Images ©

Top Experiences

Phillip Island Getaway

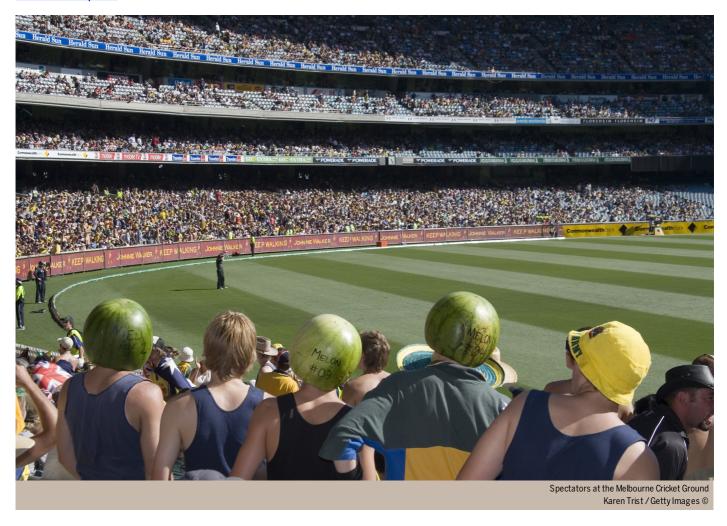
Who can resist the nightly parade of cute little penguins waddling out of the ocean and into their sandy burrows? Not the three million—plus tourists who visit Phillip Island annually, that's for sure. Luckily there's plenty more to this little island in Western Port Bay: fabulous surf beaches, wildlife parks, a MotoGP circuit that will satisfy revheads even when there's no racing on, and loads of things to keep kids busy. For something different, jump on the ferry for the short trip to French Island, where there are neither sealed roads nor mains power.



Top Experiences

Sporting Melbourne

If it's footy season in Melbourne, you'll know about it. But it's not only winter that sees absolute sporting dedication from Melburnians: come spring it's the horseracing, in summer it's cricket and tennis – and everyone's invited to join in the conversation and watch the action; be sure to check out the <u>National Sports Museum</u> for your sporting fix. And spectator sport isn't the only thing that gets the heart racing. Sailing, football, rugby and horse riding are just some of the <u>accessible sports</u> on offer.



Top Experiences

We *Heart* the Arts

Melbourne was named a Unesco City of Literature in 2008, thanks in part to the <u>State Library of Victoria</u>. All public spaces in the library are wheelchair-accessible, and temporary and permanent exhibitions mean there's always something to see even if you don't feel like reading a book. The arts scene is similarly engaging: explore Melbourne's top art galleries, such as <u>NGV International</u> and the <u>lan Potter Centre: NGV Australia</u>, and wear your best dark clothes to one of the many literary, comedic and musical events that pack Melburnians' diaries.



Top Experiences

Beach Escape to St Kilda

It isn't just the palm trees, bay vistas, briny breezes and pink-stained sunsets that give <u>St Kilda</u> its appeal. An eclectic cast of characters calls this place home, so it's got something for everyone. Dine at an assortment of chic eateries or indulge in one of Acland St's historical European cake shops. Up the road you can get your thrills at an iconic amusement park, then knock back beers in a divey bar before catching a local band belting it out at the pub.



Luna Park, St Kilda David Hannah / Getty Images ©

Top Experiences

Cafe Culture

This city takes its coffee seriously. Whether you're after single-origin beans, cold-filter-press, siphon coffee, or just a latte, you'll find it here. Almost every corner has a great cafe, such as the CBD's Mr Tulk, South Melbourne's St Ali and Prahran's Market Lane. Cafe styles range from quirky to serious, industrial to chic, with some occupying converted warehouses and others no bigger than a hole in the wall. The best are not just caffeine-pushers, they're an insight into local life.



Greg Elms / Getty Images ©

Top Experiences

Migration Melting Pot

Thanks to its strong history of migration, Melbourne has a rich cultural diversity that means you can explore shops, cafes, museums and galleries from around the world without leaving town. Start at the fascinating Immigration Museum, head to Chinatown for lunch, learn about Australia's Jewish community at the Jewish Museum of Australia, dine on African food in Footscray – and work out how much you've saved in airfares while circling the globe in one city.



Top Experiences

Weird & Wonderful Wildlife

When a platypus pelt was sent from Australian to Great Britain in 1798, British scientists thought it was a hoax. These remarkable creatures can sometimes be seen in the wild, but to guarantee a viewing head to <u>Healesville Sanctuary</u>, where you can also meet kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, emus, and birds of prey that swoop right over your head. If you feel like something even more exotic, go on safari at <u>Werribee Open Range Zoo</u>. A wheelchair-accessible bus will take you through savannah-like plains where you'll see everything from antelope to zebra. And don't forget the iconic <u>Royal Melbourne Zoo</u>, just a short tram ride from the CBD. All three locations are a hit with kids and kids-at-heart.



Eastern grey kangaroo Auscape / UIG / Getty Images ©

Need to Know

Currency

Australian dollar (\$)

Language

English

Visas

Visas are required for international travellers except New Zealand passport holders; check www.immi.gov.au for information.

Money

ATMs can be found in most towns, and credit cards are widely accepted

Mobile Phones

Local SIM cards are available and cheap. CDMA band phones don't work in Australia; other phones can be set to roaming before leaving.

Time

Australian Eastern Standard Time (GMT +10 hours; +11 hours during daylight saving)

When to Go Warm to hot summers, mild winters Dry climate, very hot summers, mild winters Mildura GO Jul-Oct Mt Hotham GO Jun-Sep Ballarat GO Mar-Jun Melbourne GO Sep-Apr Cape Otway GO Jan-Apr High Season (Dec-Jan) →Beaches are packed with local holidaymakers soaking up the sun and enjoying school holidays. →Easter and June/July school holidays are also busy times. ▶Book months ahead for coastal accommodation, including camping. **Shoulder** (Feb-Mar) → Quieter time with many more accommodation vacancies. Late-summer's weather can be particularly hot. **Low Season** (Apr-Nov) → Milder weather; often decent rainfall during second low season of September to November. July to September is peak whale-watching season off Warrnambool.

Useful Websites

Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com/melbourne) Destination information, hotel bookings, traveller forum and more.

Visit Victoria (www.visitvictoria.com) Official state tourism site.

⇒Ski-resort high season is from June to August.

Parks Victoria (www.parkweb.vic.gov.au) Profiles Victoria's national parks with details on accommodation.

Accessibility-specific information is detailed at (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/visit/improving-park-access-for-all/)

 $\textbf{Broadsheet} \ (\underline{www.broadsheet.com.au/melbourne}) \ \ \textbf{Finger-on-the-pulse site devoted to getting the best out of Melbourne}$

The Age (www.theage.com.au) Local news and reviews.

Bureau of Meteorology (www.bom.gov.au/weather/vic) Guidance for the weather, which can change at a moment's notice

Public Transport Victoria (www.ptv.vic.gov.au) Great resource for planning your trip by public transport. For more on using the PTV Trip Planner for wheelchair users, see the Transport chapter.

For more useful websites, see the **Directory** chapter

Travellers Aid

An indispensable resource is **Travellers Aid** (www.travellersaid.org.au), which provides a range of services including mobility equipment hire and transport and travel advice.

Travellers Aid has two Melbourne CBD locations:

Flinders St Station (03-9610 2030; Main Concourse, close to platform 10; Sun-Thu 8am-8pm, Fri & Sat 8am-10pm)

Southern Cross Station (03-9670 2072; Lower Concourse, opposite Bourke St entrance; Mon-Sun 7am-10pm)

Important Numbers

Callers to Australia need to drop the first '0' in a mobile-phone number and the '0' of Victoria's 03 area code

Country code	2 61
International access code	2 00
Police, fire & ambulance	2 000
Parks Victoria	2 13 19 63

Accessibility Help

AQA (03-9489 0777; www.aqavic.org.au) Australian Quadriplegic Association

Companion Card (www.companioncard.org.au) Lists how and where the Companion Card can be used.

National Public Toilet Map (https://toiletmap.gov.au) This Federal Government program has details of every public facility in the country, including accessibility and opening hours.

RACV (13 11 11; <u>www.racv.com.au</u>) Wheelchair breakdowns

Spinal Hub (03-9418 0452; www.spinalhub.com.au) Useful resources with community forum

Victorian Deaf Society (03-9473 1111, TTY 03-9473 1199; www.vicdeaf.com.au) AUSLAN Interpreter Service

Villa Maria (www.villamaria.com.au) Provider of disability services. Check out their great Out & About mobile travel app (http://outandaboutapp.com.au). It's a great resource covering all of Melbourne. Currently available on iPhones only, although an Android version should be available in late-2014.

Vision Australia (1300 84 74 66, www.visionaustralia.org)

Daily Costs

Budget:

Less than \$125

→Dorm beds: \$20–50

→Cheap meals and fresh food markets: \$15-25

→Local live music: \$10→DIY walking tour: free

Midrange:

\$125-200

→Hotel room: \$80–100

→Breakfast at a quality cafe: \$15–20

→Tapas and a couple of cocktails: \$50-80

→A live major gig: \$50-100

Top End:

More than \$200

→Hotel room: \$150-300

→The top restaurant in town: \$120-150

→Tickets to an event: \$100-250

Exchange Rates

Canada	C\$1	A\$1.02
Europe	•1	A \$1.44
Japan	¥100	A \$1.06
New Zealand	NZ\$1	A \$0.89
UK	£1	A \$1.72
US	US\$1	A \$1.06

For current exchange rates see www.xe.com

Opening Hours

Business	Opening Hours
Banks	9.30am-4pm Mon-Thu, to 5pm Fri
Bars & clubs	4pm-late (between 2am & 5am)
Cafes	breakfast 8-11am (later on weekends), all-day lunch
Post offices	9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat
Pubs	11am-1am
Restaurants	lunch noon-3pm, dinner 6-10pm
Shopping centres	9am-5.30pm, often to 9pm Thu & Fri
Tourist offices	9am-5pm daily

Arriving in Melbourne

Melbourne Airport (Tullamarine)

SkyBus (www.skybus.com.au) runs express services every 10 to 30 minutes to/from Southern Cross Station (\$18), taking approximately 25 minutes. It's fully accessible and can provide accessible hotel transfers (www.skybus.com.au/skybus-service/mobility-access).

Taxis cost around \$50 to the city and take around 25 minutes. **13CABS** (13 22 27; <u>www.13cabs.com.au</u>) is the more reliable (that's not saying much) of Melbourne's two main taxi companies. To book a wheelchair-accessible taxi call 303-9277 3877.

Avalon Airport

The Avalon Airport Bus meets every flight and takes passengers to Melbourne (\$22, 40 to 50 minutes). Taxis cost \$80 to the city (one hour), or \$50 to Geelong (20 minutes). Anyone with accessibility concerns should contact the Sita bus company (03-9689 7999) 48 hours prior to travel. See www.sitacoaches.com.au/avalon/about_avalon.shtml for timetable details.

Getting Around

Melbourne has a great <u>public transport</u> system, but the same can't be said for public transport around the rest of the state. Buses are infrequent and the rail network is limited in its reach. <u>Hiring a car</u> is the ideal way to explore the state and make the most of your time here.

For more on getting around, see the Transport chapter.

What's New

Melbourne Star

Finally, the giant Melbourne Star Ferris wheel is open for business. Ride a gondola up 120m for fabulous views from its Docklands location. The Melbourne Star has mobility access via a lift to the boarding level. Wheelchairs are permitted, with some restrictions. See www.melbournestar.com/plan-your-visit/mobility-access.html for details.

Tactile street signs

Ten of Melbourne's major CBD intersections have been fitted with tactile street signs, all set at an accessible height and fitted with braille labels.

Federation Bells App

The Federation Bells (www.federationbells.com.au) are 39 computer-controlled bells that ring out daily, for which you can create your own piece and hear it played. The bells have been at Birrarung Marr since 2002, but now the City of Melbourne is launching an app, so you can play the bells live from your smart phone or tablet. Ding dong!

Explore Phillip Island

The big four wildlife attractions on Phillip Island have all made great efforts to create fully accessible facilities for all visitors. Roll along the tree-top boardwalks at the Koala Conservation Centre, explore farm-life and the coastal paths of Churchill Island, take to the boardwalks at the Nobbies, and don't miss the island's waddling superstars at the Penguin Parade.

Street Food

Melbourne's niche obsession with international street food has gone mainstream, with an ever-growing fleet of <u>food trucks</u> serving everything from Thai to Mexican, souvlaki to soup. The trucks usually visit inner-city suburbs; find your nearest truck at <u>www.wherethetruck.at</u>.

City of Melbourne recently approved a food truck trial in the CBD, with most vans grouped in and around St Kilda Rd on the south side of Princes Bridge. Outside MSV International is probably the most accessible location. See MSV International is probably the most accessible location. See MSV International is probably the most accessible location. See

Hot Air Ballooning

Get a seagulls-eye-view of Melbourne as you float over the city in a beautiful balloon. Global Ballooning has been inflating and rising over the city and the Yarra Valley for years and now has a specially designed easy-access basket for wheelchairs. Becoming more accessible has won the company a 2014 Victorian Disability Sector award. Well done, float on.

Library at the Dock

What's brand new, architecturally interesting, built out of wood and in Docklands? The <u>Library at the Dock</u>. This is the City of Melbourne's newest library and greenest public building. As it's perched just metres from the water, it's a sensational space to relax and read.

White Night Melbourne

Melbourne's annual all-night event sees the city illuminated in colourful projections, forming a backdrop to free art, music and film. For a program and information on the accessibility of each event, visit www.whitenightmelbourne.com.au.

12 Apostles Gourmet Trail

The area's whisky distillery, ice cream, dairy farms, wineries and Belgian chocolatier now form a tourist route for a day's indulgence on local produce.

Great Ocean Walk

This epic coastal walk from Apollo Bay to Port Campbell has recently been extended to take in spectacular views from Gibsons Steps to the Twelve Apostles. Some sections of the walk are suitable for mobility impaired users.

SeaWorks Maritime Complex

This historic Williamstown waterfront complex has been open since 2007, but the arrival of the Sea Shepherd conservation organisation has added considerable appeal. Check out its fleet of anti-poaching vessels.

Explore Melbourne Interactive Map

The City of Melbourne has just released its new Explore Melbourne interactive map (http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/index.html), which features a three-tier Mobility overlay, showing manual wheelchair limit (1:20), assisted wheelchair limit (1:14) and steep gradient (>1:14) in the CBD and inner suburbs.

Stop Here App

Developed to assist people with vision or hearing impairments who travel by public transport, the Stop Here App uses your smartphone's GPS to provide alerts when you're approaching your public transport stop.

Month by Month

TOP EVENTS

Midsumma Festival, January
Melbourne International Comedy Festival, April
AFL Grand Final, September
Melbourne Cup, November

January

It can get asphalt-melting hot, with the only respite to be found in cool-water beaches or in the High Country. Beach towns are packed with local holidaymakers and their families.



Australian Open

The world's top tennis players and huge crowds descend on Melbourne Park for Australia's Grand Slam championship (www.ausopen.com). Grab a ground pass or book ahead to see a top seed from the arena seats. Wheelchair viewing bays are available at several of the courts, companion cards are accepted and facilities are provided for the hearing- and vision-impaired (www.ausopen.com/en_AU/tickets/disability.html). Check out the accessibility map at (www.ausopen.com/en_AU/tickets/disability.html). Check out the accessibility map at (www.ausopen.com/en_AU/tickets/disability.html).



Midsumma Festival

Melbourne's gay and lesbian arts festival (www.midsumma.org.au) features more than 150 events with a Pride March finale. Expect everything from film screenings to same-sex dance sports and massive riverside dance parties. Several of the events are wheelchair accessible and/or provide hearing services; check the website for details.



Chinese New Year

Melbourne has celebrated the Chinese lunar new year since Little Bourke St became Chinatown (www.chinatownnnelbourne.com.au) in the 1860s. The time to touch the dragon happens either sometime towards the end of January or early February. Beyond the CBD, the firecrackers go off across Melbourne as celebrations continue in Footscray, Box Hill, Richmond and beyond (www.chinesenewyear.com.au/mel-home.html).

February

Heatwaves are likely, but since school holidays have ended, accommodation is plentiful by the beach. City folk are still in summer mode, filling the long evenings and weekends outside.



St Kilda Festival

The week-long St Kilda Festival (www.stkildafestival.com.au) ends in a suburb-wide street party on the final Sunday (Festival Sunday). Massive crowds come for both the live music and atmosphere. Several accessible bus routes can get you to the festival. Be sure to bring a hat to beat the heat!



Melbourne Food & Wine Festival

Market tours, wine tastings, cooking classes and presentations by celeb chefs take place at venues across the state (www.melbournefoodandwine.com.au). Wineries and restaurants across Victoria hold events profiling local produce.



White Night Melbourne

Melbourne stays up all night (http://whitenightmelbourne.com.au) for free art, light shows and street performances. Expect throngs of people after dark. The website provides specific information on the accessibility of each event.

March

Possibly the most festival-packed month of the year, March has fine weather, though everyone notices the turning leaves.



Moomba

The action at Moomba (www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/moomba) is focused around the Yarra River, where waterskiing and the wacky Birdman Rally (watch competitors launch themselves into the water in homemade flying machines) take place. Wheelchair access is good on both the Birtarung Marray and Alexandra Gardens sides of the Yarra, but it does get crowded.





Note: Port Fairy Folk Festival

Historic Port Fairy is charming at any time of year but fills with music fans every Labour Day long weekend for this folk festival. Join them for an impressive line-up of roots acts from around the world. Victorian Companion cards are accepted and accessibility across the venue is good for all sorts of folksters.



Australian Formula One Grand Prix

The normally tranquil Albert Park Lake becomes a Formula One racetrack and the buzz, both on the streets and in your ears, takes over Melbourne for four days of rev-head action (www.grandprix.com.au). A free accessible shuttle bus can get you to the track from Southern Cross station and an accessible shuttle bus runs within the circuit. Companion Cards also accepted.

April

Mild weather and the promise of a few laughs and blooms give Melbourne an April glow.



Melbourne International Comedy Festival

Local and international comedians entertain Melbourne with four weeks of mostly stand-up comedy. After the Melbourne laughfest (www.comedyfestival.com.au), comedians hit the road to spread the love around the state. Often begins in March. Most venues have wheelchair access and several shows provide AUSLAN translation; check the website for details.

May

It's time to breathe in the last of the summer fragrances before shrugging on a jacket. It's still warm in the northwest, but nights are getting chilly.



St Kilda Film Festival

Australia's premier short-film festival (www.stkildafilmfestival.com.au) has a grab-bag of genres and talents on show. Venues include the venerable Astor Theatre (COOGLEMAP); 203-9510 1414; www.astortheatre.net.au; cnr Chapel St & Dandenong Rd, Windsor; 5, 64, 78, Windsor) and the Palais Theatre, which have limited wheelchair access; be sure to call ahead.

June

It's getting darker earlier and people are rugging up and polishing their skis for a trip to snow-covered alpine regions.



Melbourne International Jazz Festival

International jazz cats head to Melbourne and join locals for festival gigs at venues around town. Most of the main venues are wheelchair accessible and companion cards are accepted; see www.melbournejazz.com/festival-info/access-info for details.

Though it's cold in Melbourne and icy in the alpine regions, coastal towns such as Lorne are cosy for weekend breaks.



Ski Season

It does snow in Australia! The snow zones of Mt Buller (http://www.mtbuller.com.au/Winter/Mountain/Facilities-Services/Disability-Access), Mt Hotham and Falls Creek (http://www.fallscreek.com.au/disabledwintersport) are perfect for some wintry fun. Baw Baw (http://mountbawbaw.com.au/winter/snow-sports-school-2/disability-snowsports/) suits families (and won't burn a hole in skiers' pockets).

August

The region is cold and darkness continues to fall early, so it's truly time to head inside for some film- and literatureinspired enlightenment.



Melbourne International Film Festival

Kicking off in late July and consuming most of August's first three weeks, the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF; www.miff.com.au) is Melbourne's biggest film festival, with plenty to excite, offend, delight and dismay cinephiles. Screenings take place across the CBD; check www.miff.com.au/attending-miff/venuesandaccess for accessibility details.



Melbourne Writers Festival

Beginning in the last week of August, the Writers Festival (www.mwf.com.au) features forums and events celebrating reading, writing, books and ideas. Venues include ACMI, the Wheeler Centre and the Deakin Edge, which all have reasonable wheelchair access. Some events include AUSLAN interpreters, and Companion Cards are accepted.

23/12/2014

September

The end of September (and the AFL grand final) signals the end of rugging up on weekends and the start of sunny days.



X AFL Grand Final

It's not easy to get a ticket to the Australian Football League (AFL) grand final (www.afl.com.au), but it's not hard to get your share of finals fever anywhere in Melbourne. Pubs put on big screens and barbecues (often accompanied by a spot of street kick-to-kick at half-time).



Melbourne Fringe Festival



Parade participants, Melbourne Fringe Festival Richard l'Anson / Getty Images ©

The Fringe (www.melbournefringe.com.au) has gone from alternative to relatively mainstream without losing its edge. It showcases experimental theatre, music and visual arts in venues all over Melbourne. Wheelchair accessibility varies according to the venue so check before you buy tickets (www.melbournefringe.com.au/visitor-info/accessibility).



Royal Melbourne Show

The country comes to town for this school-holiday fair (www.royalshow.com.au), where carnival rides and junk-filled showbags face off against traditional farming exhibits. All the pavillions are wheelchair accessible and Companion Cards are accepted. Don't miss the wood chopping!

October

Spring has sprung and the fillies are out as Melbourne glams up for the races. The weather should be warming up with summer just around the corner, although cold snaps are common.



Melbourne International Arts Festival

Held at various venues around the city, the arts festival (www.melbournefestival.com.au) features an always thought-provoking program of Australian and international theatre, opera, dance, visual art and music. Shows take place at a variety of venues, mainly around central Melbourne, some with limited access; contact the venue if you are unsure (http://www.melbournefestival.com.au/festival-information/access-information.html).



Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix

Phillip Island's Grand Prix circuit attracts the world's best motorbike riders for this three-day event (<u>www.motogp.com.au</u>). Wheelchair-accessible transport is available to the island from Federation Square and an accessible shuttle bus operates within the circuit. Companion and Carer Cards are accepted.

November

Just when you think it's going to be hot, it's not. As with most of the year, pack for four seasons in one day. The pace in the city heats up as holiday preparations begin.



Melbourne Cup



The Cup, held on the first Tuesday in November, is the horse race that 'stops the nation' and is a public holiday in Melbourne. It's all part of the fashion-conscious Spring Racing Carnival (www.springracingearnival.com.au). Companion Cards are accepted at the track, but remember crowds can be huge and 'lively'; see http://melbournecup.com/whats-on/your-visit/accessibility-limited-mobility-and-special-needs for accessibility information for Flemington Racecourse.



Queenscliff Music Festival

This out-of-town music festival (www.qmf.net.au) is possible to do as a day trip, but the great range of local acts will make you want to stay for the weekend. Companion Cards are welcome and the website has up-to-date information about the festival's accessibility.

December

It's peak holiday time as school takes a break and offices close down until mid-January. Cricket is on the screens and streets.



Disability Sport & Recreation Festival

Want to get active but don't know where to start? Each year on the International Day of People with Disability, 3 December, Federation Square is transformed into a sports hub for people with disability and carers for the Disability Sport & Recreation Festival (www.dsrf.org.au).

This unique, free and interactive public event showcases more than 30 sport, recreation and disability service providers. They can answer questions and help you try the activities, which range from gymnastics to wheelchair tennis to modified cricket.

There's also plenty going on during early December in disabled sports; check the festival Facebook page (www.facebook.com/DisabilitySportandRecreation) and Twitter feed for details (https://twitter.com/DisabilitySportandRecreation) are not only the feed for details (https://twitter.com/DisabilitySportandRecreation) are not only the feed for details (https://twitter.com/DisabilitySportandRecreation) and the feed for details (https://twitter.com/DisabilityS



Boxing Day Test

Day one of the Boxing Day Test draws out the cricket fans on 26 December. Crowds are huge and excitable; expect some shenanigans from Bay 13,

the infamous section of the MCG ($\underline{www.mcg.org.au}$). If you want a great day of Test cricket without the swarms of Boxing Day (90,000 saw England play Australia in 2013), aim for Day 2, 3 or 4. Companion Cards are accepted and the wheelchair seating provides a great view.

Plan Your Trip

Accessible Sport

If you're keen to ride it, hit it, sail it or throw it, there's guaranteed to be an accessible sport in Melbourne for you. Here's a selection of activities and groups to contact to get involved in Victoria's strong sporting culture.

Accessible-Sport Organisations

Disability Sport & Recreation

Disability Sport & Recreation (DSR; www.dsr.org.au) runs a number of programs, both active and educational, such as 7-a-side football, lawn bowls and handcycling. It also hires out adaptive sporting equipment at a nominal cost to members (and it's free to become a member). DSR also organises the annual Disability Sport & Recreation Festival held on the International Day of People with Disability (December 3) at Federation Square.

Sports for the Blind & Vision-Impaired

Blind Sports Victoria (BSV; www.blindsports.org.au; 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong) coordinates a wide range of programs for the blind or vision-impaired, including archery, swish (a locally adapted form of table tennis), cricket, golf, indoor and lawn bowls, square dancing, tennis, ten-pin bowling and walking. To try any of these sports, contact BSV on 03-98228876 or info@blindsports.org.au.

Sailing

If you're keen to get out on Victoria's waters, contact Sailability Victoria. This volunteer-based organisation – part of the Sailability network that operates internationally – encourages people of all abilities to enjoy the freedom and fun of recreational sailing. It has eight metropolitan and 12 regional Victorian locations, so the chance to get on the water is never far away.

And if you've got a competitive streak, Sailability can help you go to the next level of competitive racing at state, national and even world championship level.

You can gain sailing skills through the organisation's Discover Sailing courses run at clubs and Discover Sailing Centres.

To get involved, and to find out about session times, fees and access, visit www.sailabilityvictoria.com.au or email sailability@yachtingvictoria.com.au.

Venues: Various locations around the state

When: Various, contact Sailability for details

Suitable for: Anyone with a disability and an interest in sailing.



MY INJURY HASN'T STOPPED ME SAILING - ON THE CONTRARY..

Neil Patterson, Paralympic sailing hopeful

In August 2011 I broke my back while cliff diving in Croatia on a sailing holiday, leaving me partially paralysed in my lower limbs. I can now walk a short distance with crutches, but still rely heavily on a wheelchair for mobility.

I was an avid sailor in my youth, competing at a club level. While still in rehab I made contact with Sailability and within a month of leaving rehab I was sailing again in a Hansa class boat at my local Sailability club. The 2012 Hansa World Championships was being held in Sydney two months later and after only two weekends in a boat it was suggested that I should attend, since Hansa class boats are sailed by people who are able-bodied and those with a disability. This was my first regatta in a Hansa 303 and, much to my amazement, I finished in 4th place. I was hooked and spent the next year competing at state and national Hansa regattas.

During this time I started trying out the Paralympic class boats and was invited to attend training sessions with the Australian Sailing Team (AST) in the two-person SKUD. There are three Paralympic sailing classes: the single-person 2.4mR keelboat, the two-person SKUD 18 skiff and the three-person Sonar keelboat. I went to Hobart and tried out the 2.4mR with the AST. After just one day in the boat I was invited to the 2013 International Association of Disabled Sailors (IFDS) World Championships in Kinsale, Ireland. The Worlds were only a couple of months away and I would have only a handful of chances to sail a 2.4mR before then. Filled with apprehension I said, 'Yes.' The Worlds was my first regatta in a 2.4mR and I finished an impressive 28th out of 45.

Hooked on the 2.4mR I bought a boat in Europe and have been training in Melbourne and Hobart for the next Worlds, to be held in Canada. I have recently been named on the Australian Sailing Squad – Paralympic Team, a developmental squad that feeds into the AST. The IFDS Worlds in Canada will be the first qualifier for the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games. The second and final qualifier will be the 2015 IFDS Worlds held in Williamstown, Victoria (www.ifdsworlds2015.com). There will be 150 to 240 competitors over the three Paralympic sailing classes competing for a final spot in Rio. My personal goal is to continue training and working towards the Tokyo Paralympic Games in 2020.

With the Worlds being hosted in Victoria in 2015 this is a perfect time to consider sailing in a Paralympic-class boat. The Royal Brighton Yacht Club, where I am based, has a fleet of 2.4mR boats sailed by both able-bodied and people with a disability and is always looking for new members. If you are interested in 2.4mR sailing or Paralympic sailing in Victoria, you can email me for more details (neil.patterson@uqconnect.edu.au).



Neil Patterson and Duncan MacGregor on the water ${\bf David\ Staley/Sailability\ } \circledcirc$

Disabled Surfing

Founded in 1986, the Disabled Surfers Association of Australia (DSA; www.disabledsurfers.org) has two branches in Victoria. The disabled facilities and wheelchair access to the beach at both locations are great. It's possible to borrow beach wheelchairs free of charge at both locations, too; enquire with the Point Leo Surf Lifesaving Club or directly with DSA Ocean Grove.

Venues: Ocean Grove Main Beach (0413 925 970; oc.secretary @ disabledsurfers.org) and Point Leo Beach on the Mornington Peninsula (0409 197 307; infodsamp@gmail.com)

When: Two events annually, in the first few months of the year.

Suitable for: Anyone with a disability who is willing to have a go!

23/12/2014

Horse Riding

Horse riding offers freedom, movement, sensory feedback and exhibaration, not to mention the chance to form a bond with a majestic four-legged friend and experience being in the natural world.

Through the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), riders of all abilities can develop their skills and abilities, and improve balance, core strength, posture and coordination.

With 38 centres across metropolitan and rural Victoria, and 800 volunteers and 200 coaches, RDA gives over 1200 children and adults with a disability every year the chance to enjoy horse riding. Programs include recreational and competition riding, carriage driving, vaulting and therapeutic riding, and you can learn about the disciplines of dressage and jumping too. Riders also have the opportunity to be integrated into mainstream equestrian clubs, riding schools and organisations.

For more information about climbing into the saddle when you're in Melbourne, contact RDA Victoria (03-9258 4730; www.rdav.asn.au; 400 Epsom Rd, Flemington).

Venues: Six Melbourne metro venues, and more throughout the state.

When: Varies according to location and program.

Suitable for: People of all ages and disabilities

7-a-side Football

If you're an aspiring Lionel Messi or Tim Cahill, consider having a go at 7-a-side football. Played under FIFA rules, with slight modifications, it's perfect for players with cerebral palsy, acquired brain injury and those who have experienced stroke.



Disability Sport & Recreation ©

The game is played on a reduced field size of 75m by 55m, with two 30-minute halves. Unlike regular football, the off-side rule does not apply and players must roll the ball into the field using only one hand instead of throwing it.

Venue: Darebin International Sports Club (33-8470 8305; www.darebininternationalsportscentre.com.au; 281 Darebin Road, Thornbury)

When: Sundays on a fortnightly basis from 2 10-11.30am.

Suitable for: People with cerebral palsy, acquired brain injury and those who have experienced stroke

Lawn Bowls

Lawn bowls is a relatively straightforward sport that takes minutes to learn but years to master.

Disability Sport & Recreation (DSR) coordinates a program for bowlers with physical disability. With the support of Fitzroy Victoria Bowls Club,

participants can learn and develop the ability to send their bowl down the green with confidence and skill in a relaxed, fun and social environment. The program incorporates friendly competition and drills specifically designed to increase skills and improve technique.

Venue: Fitzroy Victoria Bowls Club (03-9481 3137; <u>www.barefootbowling.com.au</u>; 578 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy North; 112 or 112 or 112 or 113 or 114 or 115 or 1

When: Monthly, Sundays 3-5pm (winter), Mondays 6.30-8.30pm (summer).

Suitable for: Victorians and visitors with a physical disability



Lawnbowling at the Fitzroy Victoria Bowls Club Disability Sport & Recreation ©

Wheelchair Basketball

Get set for the thrills and spills of wheelchair basketball by joining the Melbourne Wheelchair Basketball Development Program, where you can learn the skills and knowledge of the game in a fun, supportive and social environment.

Wheelchair basketball is managed by Basketball Victoria in partnership with Disability Sport & Recreation Victoria. Programs and competitions are held throughout Victoria. For further information contact Karen Pearce on 203-9837 8067 or karen.pearce@basketballvictoria.com.au.

Venue: Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre, Aughtie Dr, Albert Park, Court 7

When: Sunday afternoons on a fortnightly basis, 1.30-3pm

Suitable for: Children and adults who have a mobility restriction that prevents them from running, jumping and pivoting as an able-bodied player. (People with disabilities/impairments that restrict their mobility including those who do not use a wheelchair for everyday activities can still be involved.)

Blind Football (Soccer)

Until recently, people who are blind or vision-impaired were unable to take part in one of the world's most popular sports: football, or soccer as it is called in Australia. Through a partnership between Blind Sports Victoria (BSV) and Social Goal (https://www.facebook.com/SocialGoalAustralia/info), along with the support of many volunteers, a successful blind and vision-impaired football program for children has been running in Melbourne's north, and at the time of research an adult program was about to start in Docklands. Both programs are the first of their kind in Australia.

In December 2014, BSV is scheduled to host a blind football exhibition match in Docklands, the first step in developing an inclusive blind-football league. The league will allow vision-impaired and sighted players to play together, as all players will be required to wear eye masks.

Blind football is played on a 42m by 22m pitch with a ball that makes a sound to orient players. There are two teams of five: four outfield players and a goalkeeper. Outfield players wear eye shades to equal their sight, but the goalkeeper can be fully or partially sighted.

Dave Connolly from Social Goal adds, 'We're working closely with local clubs, councils and Football Federation Victoria to develop more opportunities for people who are blind or vision-impaired to participate in football...Our ultimate aim is to break down barriers and promote social inclusion.'

Venues: The adult skill development program and exhibition match will be held at Docklands Multipurpose Sports Field, Harbour Esplanade,

between Collins and Bourke Sts. Junior skill development programs will be held in various clubs around Melbourne. Contact BSV for more information

When: BSV conducts Junior Vision-Impaired MiniRoos Programs from March to September. Preston Lions Football Club is currently running the inaugural junior program, with more programs at local clubs across Melbourne to commence in 2015. Contact BSV for more information.

Suitable for: Blind and vision-impaired people, although the Blind Football League, which is currently being developed, will allow vision-impaired and sighted players to play together.

Handcycling

DSR also organises a group that goes handcycling (cycling using a three-wheeled recumbent bike, powered by your arms). Join the group, made up of handcyclists, friends and family, for a ride along Beach Rd and other iconic Melbourne cycling routes, for a distance of anywhere between 35km and 60km. There are two ride groups to cater to different speeds and abilities. You can hire a handcycle from DSR too.

Venue: Meet in South Melbourne; contact DSR (3-9473 0133; info@dsr.org.au) for details

When: Every Tuesday night from 6.30pm.

Suitable for: Victorians and visitors with a physical disability.



Handcyclists on the road Disability Sports & Recreation ©

HOW HANDCYCLING CHANGED MY LIFE

Gary Connor, Handcyclist

In my early 20s I had a workplace accident which resulted in paraplegia. As part of my rehabilitation I was introduced to wheelchair sports and became an active participant in wheelchair basketball and even tried wheelchair tennis. But when my son Pierce learnt to ride a bike, I took up handcycling so that I could be an active father and ride alongside my son. I can still remember that first ride. It was magic. I suddenly found that my disability did not define me and, even better, I could spend quality time with my kids. I have since become an avid handcyclist and have tackled some of Australia's most famous rides, including the Three Peaks Challenge (www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/peaks-challenge/) and Around the Bay in a Day (www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/peaks-challenge/) and Around the Bay in a Day (www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/bupa-around-the-bay/), making lifelong friends along the way.

Wheelchair Rugby

Heavy Rolling

Wheelchair rugby, now played in more than 25 countries around the world, was created in 1976 by five Canadian wheelchair athletes as a sport for people with quadriplegia. It's a mishmash of wheelchair basketball, ice hockey, handball and rugby union, and was introduced to Australia in 1981. It is the only Paralympic contact sport for wheelchair users; indeed, wheelchairs crashing into each other at full speed is an integral part of the game and once you've watched it you will understand why its original name was murderball. Direct physical contact between players, however, is not permitted!

To get a sense of the fierce action of the game, check out the 2005 American documentary *Murderball* about the rivalry between the Canadian and US teams leading up to the 2004 Paralympic Games, or for the Australian team, search for 'Steelers wheelchair rugby' on YouTube.

Paralympic Sport - Go Steelers!

Wheelchair rugby appeared as a demonstration sport at the 1996 Summer Paralympics in Atlanta, and was granted full medal status at the 2000 Summer Paralympics in Sydney. The Steelers, as the Australian team is known, has competed at every Paralympic Games since 2000, winning silver medals in 2000 and 2008, and defeating Canada at the 2012 London Games to win their first gold medal.

The Victorian Comp

The popularity of the sport is huge in Victoria and there's a great depth of talented players who play at local level as well as for the state. In fact, half of the national squad is made up of Victorians. Visitors and locals are strongly encouraged to watch the team play and train.

Venue: Local competition is held at Aqualink Box Hill (03-9898 2099; <u>www.aqualink.com.au</u>; Surrey Dr, Box Hill); Victorian squad training is at the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre (03-9490 7500; <u>www.austin.org.au/royal-talbot-rehabilitation-centre</u>: 1 Yarra Boulevard, Kew)

When: Comp on Mondays; training on Wednesday nights

Suitable for: Wheelchair users with a passion for contact sports.

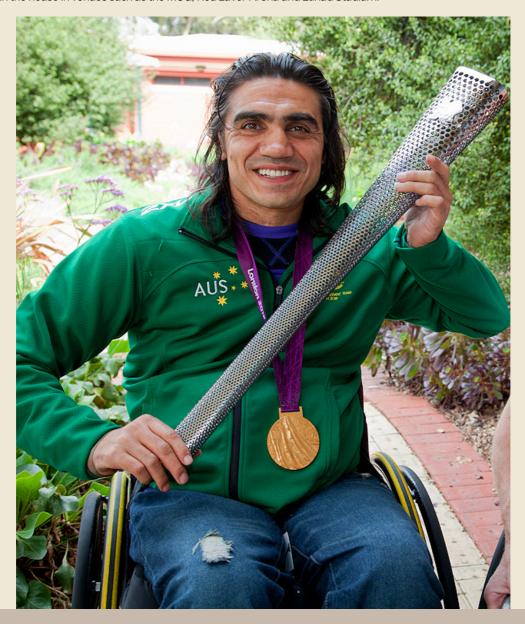
GOING FOR GOLD

Nazim Erdem, wheelchair rugby gold medalist

I've been playing wheelchair rugby since being introduced to the sport while doing my rehabilitation at the Austin Hospital...many years ago! It's a fantastic, exciting game and I love being part of a successful team made up of a great bunch of guys.

I've been fortunate enough to have been selected to play in all four Australian Paralympic wheelchair rugby teams, and I'm hoping to be selected for the team to go to Rio to defend our title in 2016.

It's great being an athlete or a sports fanatic in Melbourne. As the self-proclaimed sports capital of the world, this city has venues that are state-of-the-art and among the world leaders when it comes to accessibility. Excuse the pun, but we wheelchair users have just about the best seats in the house in venues such as the MCG, Rod Laver Arena and Etihad Stadium.



Nazim Erdem ©

Plan Your Trip

Victoria's Accessible Parks

Victoria's excellent and really rather beautiful network of national parks and state forests, soul-stirring mountains and meandering rivers offer endless possibilities to those seeking a little soul revival outdoors. Accessibility to these natural escapes is improving all the time, so get out the door, fill your lungs with mountain air, let the sun warm your back and answer the bellbirds among the mountain ash.

Responsible Bush Exploration

Stay on established trails, avoid cutting corners and stay on hard ground where possible.

Before tackling a long or remote trail, tell someone responsible about your plans and contact them when you return. Consider carrying a personal locator beacon (PLB).

Use designated camping grounds where provided. When bush camping, look for a natural clearing and avoid camping under river red gums, which have a tendency to drop their branches.

Don't feed native animals.

Take all your rubbish out with you - don't burn or bury it.

Avoid polluting lakes and streams – don't wash yourself or your dishes in them, and keep soap and detergent at least 50m away from waterways.

Use toilets where provided - otherwise, bury human waste at least 100m away from waterways (consider taking a hand trowel).

Boil water from waterways for 10 minutes (or purify with a filter or tablets) before drinking it.

Dogs and other pets are not allowed in national parks (guide dogs are the exception).

Use a gas or fuel stove for cooking.

Don't light fires unless necessary – if you do need a fire, keep it small and use only dead, fallen wood in an existing fireplace. Make sure the fire is completely extinguished before moving on. On total-fire-ban days, don't under any circumstances light a fire – that includes fuel stoves.

National & Regional Parks

Victoria boasts loads of accessible outdoor spaces, and **Parks Victoria** (213 19 63; http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/accessibility) has been pouring resources into improving the accessibility of the region's parks. Here are our favourites and what to find there.

Alpine National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/alpine-national-park) Alpine scenery, huge expanse of wilderness; five hours east of Melbourne (400km) via Omeo or four hours northeast of Melbourne via Bright (330km).

Buchan Caves Reserve (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/buchan-caves-reserve) Bushland surrounding limestone caves, freshwater swimming; four hours northwest of Melbourne via Bairnsdale (350km).

Cape Conran National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/cape-conran-coastal-park) Great fishing and endless wild beaches; five hours east of Melbourne via Orbost (400km).

Coolart Wetlands & Homestead (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/coolart-h.a) Coastal trails, birdwatching, historic house; 1.5 hours southeast of Melbourne via Baxter (80km).

Grampians National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/grampians-national-park) Rugged wilderness, wildlife and wildflowers; three hours northwest of Melbourne via Ararat (250km).

Great Otway National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park) Coastal wilderness, great beaches, koalas; three hours southwest of Melbourne via Apollo Bay (200km).

Hepburn Regional Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/hepburn-r.p) Mineral springs, ye olde gold rush relics; 1.5 hours northwest of Melbourne (125km) via Daylesford.

Lerderderg State Park (http://parkweb_vic.gov.au/explore/parks/lerderderg-state-park) Beautiful bushland, wildlife; 1.5 hours west of Melbourne via Bacchus Marsh (75km).

Lysterfield Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/lysterfield-park) Water activities, birdlife and kangaroos; 40 minutes east of Melbourne (40km).

Mornington Peninsula National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/mornington-peninsula-national-park) Epic ocean beaches and coastal cliffs; 1.5 hours south of Melbourne (105km).

Point Nepean National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/point-nepean-national-park) Coastal scenery and historical buildings; 1.5 hours south of Melbourne (90km) via Portsea.

Port Campbell National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/port-campbell-national-park) Expansive coastal cliffs, rock formations and wild beach views; three hours southwest of Melbourne (228km) via Colac or four hours (285km) via Apollo Bay along Great

<u>SPP E-Book</u> 23/12/2014

Ocean Rd.

Serendip Sanctuary (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/serendip-wetlands-education-facility) Incredible birdwatching, wildlife; one hour southwest of Melbourne via Lara (60km).

Wilsons Promontory National Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/wilsons-promontory-national-park) Stunning bushland and coastal scenery; three hours southeast of Melbourne via Leongatha (230km).

MELBOURNE'S BEST ACCESSIBLE PARKS

You don't have to leave the city to experience magnificent green spaces. There are several parks located in metropolitan Melbourne that can be explored on trails suitable for wheelchairs or electric scooters.

Albert Park Lake (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park; Aughtie Dr, Albert Park; 3km from CBD, https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park; Aughtie Dr, Albert Park; 3km from CBD, https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park; Aughtie Dr, Albert Park; 3km from CBD, https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park; Aughtie Dr, Albert Park; 3km from CBD, https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park; Aughtie Dr, Albert Park; 3km from CBD, https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park; Aughtie Dr, Albert Park; 3km from CBD, <a href="https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-parks/albert

Birrarung Marr A good spot to learn about Indigenous culture. This city park also features the Federation Bells.

Braeside Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/braeside-park; Lower Dandenong Rd, Braeside; \$8:30-am-5pm winter, 8:30-6pm spring, 8:30-8pm during daylight saving; Amentone then \$\overline{\omega}\$ 811 (accessible buses weekend only) Great picnic areas, accessible wetland trails, bird life.

Brimbank Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/maribyrnong-valley-parklands: (Keilor Park Dr, Keilor East) Onsite cafe, picnic areas and great accessible playground; brand new all-terrain wheelchair available too. Not easily reached by public transport.

Karkarook Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/karkarook-park/; Warrigal Rd, Heatherton; Amendment Mentone then 903) Accessible trail around lake, fishing and accessible wetland trail.

Wattle Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/wattle-park; Riversdale Rd, Burwood; Holmesglen or Box Hill then 903) Explore dense bushland or enjoy a barbecue beside the playground. Some trails get steep in areas (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/wattle-park; Riversdale Rd, Burwood; Holmesglen or Box Hill then 903) Explore dense bushland or enjoy a barbecue beside the playground. Some trails get steep in areas (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/wattle-park; Riversdale Rd, Burwood; Holmesglen or Box Hill then 903) Explore dense bushland or enjoy a barbecue beside the playground. Some trails get steep in areas (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0006/536073/Wattle-Park-Self-Guided-Nature-and-History-Trail.pdf).

Werribee Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/werribee-park; K Rd, Werribee South; grounds free, mansion adult/child \$9/4.50; grounds 10am-4.30pm all year, mansion 10am-5pm during daylight saving (DST) and weekends all-year, 10am-4 weekdays and non-DST weekends; Werribee then 439) Explore the grounds – including the Victoria State Rose Garden – surrounding the Werribee Mansion stately home (which is only wheelchair-accessible on the ground floor). Werribee Zoo is nearby.

Westerfolds Park (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/yarra-valley-parklands-com;, Fitzsimons Lane, Templestowe; Box Hill then 903 and 902) Beautiful riverside trails, plus kangaroos. There are accessible picnic areas.



Accommodation

In recent years Parks Victoria has implemented a range of initiatives to improve park access and the park experience for visitors with disabilities and

limited mobility. Accessible accommodation has been one of these.

Cabins

Wilsons Promontory National Park

'The Prom' now has two accessible self-contained two-bedroom cabins with fully accessible bathrooms. These cabins are each equipped with single electric high-low beds with back and leg adjustment features. A personal hoist and shower commode chairs for the cabins are available free of charge on request. The cabins are close to the beautiful Loo-Errn Track, which loops through a wetland area along a boardwalk, and is suitable for wheelchairs. Stay on the lookout for echidnas and the Prom's famous wombats. (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/wilsons-promontory-national-park)

Cape Conran National Park

Cape Conran accommodation (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/cape-conran-coastal-park) includes an accessible one-bedroom self-contained cabin, a lodge and a wilderness retreat. The cabin and the lodge come with wheelchair-accessible toilets and showers. The wilderness retreat has an accessible toilet and shower block located nearby. A personal hoist and a shower commode chair are also available for visitors free of charge on request. Use one of the park's all-terrain wheelchairs to access the beach via the boardwalk behind the lodge — a beautiful stretch of sand and sea await!

Camping

Some parks have accessible camping areas, with easy parking next to level camp sites and accessible toilets located close by. There are several camping areas in the **Great Otway National Park** that have accessible sites for those who don't mind a bush toilet and not having a shower. **Buchan Caves Reserve** have accessible camp sites that are equipped with both accessible flushing toilets and hot showers close to the sites. You'll also find accessible campsites, accessible flushing toilets and a nearby accessible hot shower at **Tidal River** at Wilsons Prom.

ACCESSIBLE TRAILS

Many parks have trails that are accessible for visitors who have standard manual wheelchairs or electric chairs/scooters. Parks in regional Victoria that have some accessible trails include Port Campbell National Park, Grampians National Park, Point Nepean National Park, Wilsons Promontory National Park and Serendip Sanctuary. These trails vary in length and in track conditions so visitors should check these with individual parks prior to visiting.

All-Terrain Wheelchairs

For better access around Victoria's parks, manual all-terrain wheelchairs enable visitors to explore the many stunning trails and beaches where standard wheelchairs cannot go. Some places have TrailRiders available, which require several helpers (sometimes called 'sherpas') to guide the rider along tracks. David Stratton's blog http://trailridertales.blogspot.com.au is a great introduction to TrailRiders.

Borrow at the National Park

The following parks have all-terrain wheelchairs for visitors to borrow free of charge. Book and collect your chair at the park office. Wheelchair models vary from park to park, so check the individual park webpage on the Parks Victoria website for further information.

Coolart Wetlands & Homestead

Cape Conran National Park

Grampians National Park

Lysterfield Park

Point Nepean National Park

Wilsons Promontory National Park

Borrow Before You Get There

A number of local shire councils and community organisations also have all-terrain wheelchairs for park visitors. These wheelchairs are not available at the parks themselves, so plan to collect your wheelchair from one of the following.

Daylesford Regional Visitor Information Centre (03-5321 6100) For Lerderderg State Park and Hepburn Regional Park.

Lerderderg Library, Bacchus Marsh (303-5366 7100) For Lerderderg State Park and Hepburn Regional Park

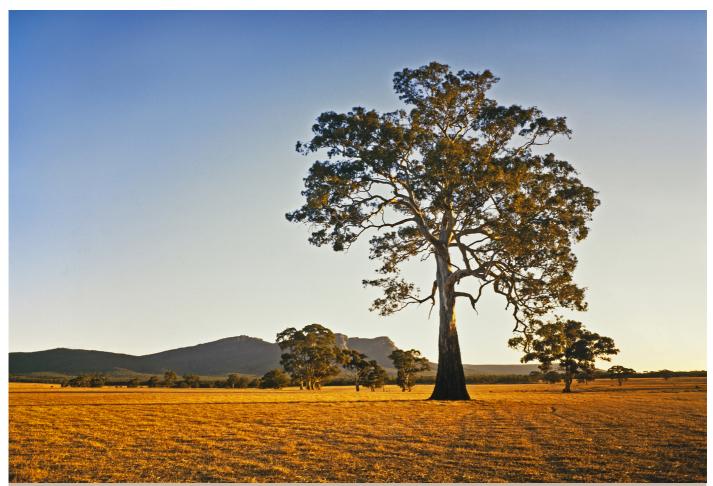
Mornington OzChild (03-5975 7644) For the Mornington Peninsula National Park

Mt Beauty Visitor Information Centre (1800 111 885) For the Alpine National Park.

Surf Coast Sport & Recreation Centre, Torquay (03-5261 4606) For the Great Otway National Park.

Great Ocean Road Visitors Centre (1300 689 297) A TrailRider can be borrowed for free to help visitors explore accessible sections of the Great Ocean Walk

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014



Red river gum at Wartook, near the Grampians Peter Walton Photography / Getty Images ©

WALK IN THE PARK PROGRAM

If you're vision-impaired and would like to experience Melbourne's great outdoors, contact the Walk in the Park program. It's a partnership program between Parks Victoria and Blind Sports Victoria that provides escorted group walks in parks around Melbourne for people who are blind or vision-impaired. Volunteers are trained as park companions to assist vision-impaired people with park orientation and provide a verbal description of surrounding areas. The program also provides group camps in parks. For details, contact Blind Sports Victoria (03-9822 8876; info@blindsports.org.au).

Plan Your Trip

Travel with Children

Melbourne is a fine place to spend time with kids, thanks to interactive museums, sweeping parkland and innovative playgrounds, and there are plenty of kid-friendly attractions outside the city too. The following places are particularly well suited to kids – but some will be better for parents with disabilities who have able-bodied children, and some will suit able-bodied parents who have children with disabilities. As every family knows its own needs best, it's best to phone ahead.

Best Regions for Kids

- * Phillip Island A chocolate factory, koalas, seals and those mighty cute penguins.
- * Great Ocean Road Warrnambool has childhood covered with its annual wheelchair-friendly winter kids festival Fun4Kids (203-5562 4044; www.fun4kids.com.au; various locations), and there are few better spots to view whales and their calves.

Eating Out

Families dining out together is a pretty common sight these days in Victoria, especially in Melbourne. Cafes not serving 'babycinos' (small cups of steamed milk) are few and far between, and a number of restaurants provide papers and pencils for drawing. Many restaurants have a children's menu, and even upscale restaurants can often provide an option for children, if asked.

Entertainment

Music festivals abound in Victoria, and children under 13 often get free entrance if accompanied by a paying adult. The following festivals also accept the Companion Card:

Port Fairy Folk Festival has a children's program.

Queenscliff Music Festival (03-5258 4816; www.qmf.net.au; at the Nov) has a Kids Klub that features kid-friendly acts.

Wangaratta Jazz & Blues (203-5722 8199; wangarattajazz.com) runs free youth jazz workshops.

The towns and the majority of venues for all festival events are wheelchair-friendly, but it would be best to phone ahead to check with specific venues.

Children's Highlights

TRAIN JOURNEYS

Train journeys can be a fun day-trip out of Melbourne for families. Perhaps ironically it's easiest to access these trains by driving to the train stations! The **Puffing Billy** (**GOOGLE MAP** ; **2**03-9757 0700; **www.puffingbilly.com.au**; Old Monbulk Rd, Belgrave; returnadult/child/family \$59/30/119; Belgrave) steam train, which chugs along the Belgrave—Gembrook line in the Dandenongs, has long been a family favourite, while the **Bellarine Peninsula Railway** (MAP GOOGLE MAP ; **2**03-5258 2069; **www.bellarinerailway.com.au**; Queensdiff trainstation; returnadult/child/family \$30/20/70; departs 11am &2.45pm Sun, plus Tue &Thuduring school holidays) running the Queenscliff—Drysdale line regularly sees special visits by Thomas the Tank Engine (and friends). The **Mornington Railway** (**2**1300 767 274; **www.morningtonrailway.org.au**; Mornington trainstation; return adult/child \$16/5) steam train runs most Sundays, and its special kid-friendly days include a Teddy Bears Day Out, and Easter Bunny and Santa specials. All three services have wheelchair-accessible carriages, but phone ahead to ensure that there are enough wheelchair spaces available.

Historic Villages

The following are a good drive out of Melbourne.

Swan Hill's **Pioneer Settlement** (203-5036 2410; www.pioneersettlement.com.au; Monash Dr, Horseshoe Bend; adult/child/family \$27/20.50/74; 9.30am-4pm) has everything from horse-and-carriage rides to a sound-and-light show.

Echuca's historic port (GOOGLE MAP); 203-5481 0500, 1300 942 7371300 942 737; www.portofechuca.org.au; 74 Murray Esplanade; adult/concession/child/family \$14/11/8/37; 9am-5pm, guided tours 11.30am & 1.30pm) is made all the more fun thanks to the frequent long-winded whistles of paddle steamers.

Warrnambool's Flagstaff Hill is a maritime delight with shipwrecks and lighthouses, and its sound-and-light show is fun for older kids.

Ballarat's Sovereign Hill (GOOGLE MAP); 203-5337 1100; www.sovereignhill.com.au; Bradshaw St; adult/student/child/family \$47/37.60/21.40/117.50;

10am-5pm) has an exhilarating evening light show and, by day, sports an authentic gold-rush feel

Note that, being historic villages, terrain can be uneven and, in places, muddy when wet. The majority of attractions, however, are wheelchair-accessible.

Animal Encounters

WITHIN MELBOURNE

The penguin colony that lives around St Kilda Pier shouldn't be missed

Watch sharks cruise around and spot penguins on ice at Sea Life Melbourne Aquarium.

Collingwood Children's Farm brings the country to the city. Kids may even be able to help feed the animals

Australia's oldest zoo, the Royal Melbourne Zoo, houses a large number of native animals plus species from overseas. Don't miss the beautiful butterfly enclosure.

FURTHER AFIELD

Go on safari at Werribee Open Range Zoo.

Koalas are bountiful in the <u>Cape Otway</u> region of the Great Ocean Road and at <u>Tower Hill</u> near Warrnambool. <u>Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary</u> is a great place to see them close-up.

Penguins are plentiful on Phillip Island, and the nightly penguin parade is a delight for all ages

A host of native animals that the kids might have missed seeing in the wild can be found at Healesville Sanctuary.

Southern right whales play offshore from Warrnambool from July to September.

Parks, Garden & Outdoor Spaces

WITHIN MELBOURNE

<u>Birrarung Marr</u>, a park that winds along the Yarra River, is a great place for kids to explore. Within this green space, <u>ArtPlay</u> runs fun creative workshops and has a playground, too.

At the interactive lan Potter Foundation Children's Garden, kids can discover the natural world

Explore Cook's Cottage and the Fairies Tree at Fitzroy Gardens, where you can also see a miniature Tudor Village

On sunny days, the St Kilda Foreshore is the place to be

With old-fashioned rides such as bumper cars, plus more modern gut-churning ones, Luna Park is lots of fun

Learn to sail on Albert Park Lake with Sailability.

See our Accessible Sport chapter for more ideas to keep kids entertained outdoors

For a list of playgrounds with Liberty Swings, visit www.libertyswing.com.au

For an overview of playgrounds in Victoria (including notes on accessibility) visit www.playfulpossum.com

FURTHER AFIELD

Warrnambool's Flagstaff Hill is a maritime delight with shipwrecks and lighthouses, and its sound-and-light show is fun for older kids

Geelong Play Space has been designed for children of all abilities

Rainy-day Activities in Melbourne

The Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) has age-appropriate video games and movies 'on demand'

Melbourne Museum and Scienceworks have fantastic zones for younger kids and great exhibits for older ones

The State Library of Victoria has a terrific Play Pod, and you can also show the kids Ned Kelly's armour here

Circle Melbourne on the wheelchair-accessible Visitor Shuttle.

The Old Melbourne Gaol is both educational and memorable for kids over 10, who can explore the historic jail cells

At the National Sports Museum kids can test their footy, cricket and netball skills after being inspired by the legends of Australian sport.

IMAX offers enthralling 3D movies

Art exhibitions at the NGV International and Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia can be surprisingly child-friendly, with plaques and information aimed at children

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do your kids love to do in Melbourne? Send your feedback and any tips you have on travelling with disabled children to accessmelbourne@lonelyplanet.com.au

Planning

Pretty much everything you'll need is available on the road in Victoria. Pharmacies may close early, so pack basic medications. Note that if your medications are uncommon, they may not be carried by every pharmacy and sometimes need to be pre-ordered. As usual when travelling with particular medical needs, make sure to stock up with essential supplies.

When to Go

Victoria's beach towns are hot, packed and brimful of other families during the summer school holidays. Provided you're OK with cooler and unpredictable weather, travelling in low season (out of school-holiday periods) means life is calmer, accommodation providers and restaurant staff are happy to see you, and prices are rock-bottom

Accommodation

If you're travelling with infants, portacots are often available at an additional cost of \$20 to \$30. Most hotels, however, only have a limited supply, so get in early to reserve one.

In summer, caravan parks are often filled with other families, which is great for kids to socialise. Make sure, however, that you keep your kids under supervision, especially whenever there is unfenced water around.

If you're on a tight budget, YHA hostels have family rooms that sleep three to four, though motels with a double and single bed are usually cheaper. Whatever your budget, 'family room' usually means that you'll all be in the same room—if you'd prefer more space (which may be a mutual feeling if your kids are older), you can often find well-priced apartments with two bedrooms.

Although it's rare, a few regional boutique hotels have a strict 'no children' policy, which is usually made clear at booking stage. When booking rooms through discount websites, make sure you check the 'maximum occupancy'; often the cheapest rooms are for two adults only.

Check the accommodation sections of our Melbourne and Great Ocean Road chapters for recommended wheelchair-accessible places to stay.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

Melbourne

<u>Sights</u>

Activities

Sleeping

Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

Entertainment

Shopping

Melbourne



pop 4,250,000

Why Go?

Stylish, arty Melbourne is a city that's both dynamic and cosmopolitan, and proud of its place as Australia's cultural capital. Its stately gold-rush-era architecture and multicultural make-up reflect the city's recent history, while edgy street art, top museums and sticky-carpeted band venues point to its present-day personality.

Melbourne is best experienced as a local would, with its character largely reliant upon its collection of inner-city neighbourhoods. Despite a long-standing north—south divide (hipster Fitzroy vs flashy South Yarra), there's a coolness about its bars, cafes, restaurants, festivals and people that transcends the borders. Meanwhile, the city centre has reinvented itself with chic laneway eateries and rooftop bars opening in former industrial buildings.

Sport is also crucial to the fabric of the town, taking on something of a religious nature here. Melburnians are passionate about Australian Football League (AFL) football, aka 'footy', cricket and horse racing, and also love their Grand Slam tennis and Formula One car racing.

When to Go

- → Mid-Dec-Mar Balmy nights, Grand Slam tennis and music festivals.
- → Sep-Nov Footy finals fever hits before the horses start cantering during Spring Racing Carnival.
- → Apr-Sep Escape the cold with gallery-hopping, boutique shopping and warm, inviting pubs.

Transport & Practicalities

For information on transport in Melbourne, refer to the Transport chapter.

For other practicalities, including tourist information centres, refer to the **Directory** chapter.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Throughout this chapter, we have included accessibility information for as many places as possible. However, some places were unable to provide such information before our deadline. In those instances, we strongly suggest you call ahead to check whether the places or activities will suit your needs.



MELBOURNE IN...

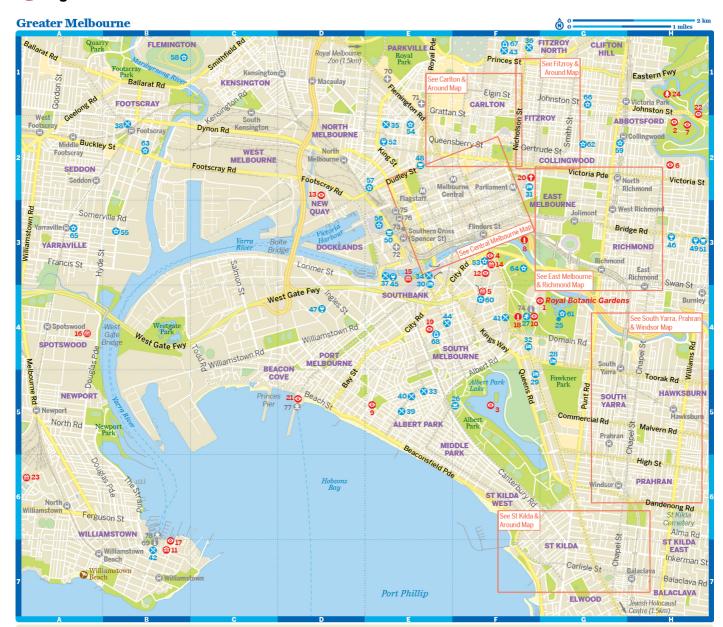
TWO DAYS

Check out the <u>Ian Potter Centre</u>: NGV Australia and <u>ACMI</u> museums, then enjoy lunch at <u>MoVida Aqui</u>. Join a tour to see Melbourne's street art then chill out at a rooftop bar such as <u>Bomba</u>. On day two, head along <u>Birrarung Marr</u> and into the <u>Royal Botanic Gardens</u>, then shop your way to the <u>Queen Vic Market</u>. Catch a tram to St Kilda and check out the action on the beach, then head to <u>Mirka's at Tolarno</u> for dinner.

ONE WEEK

Follow the two-day itinerary and then, on day three, spend a couple of hours at the <u>Melbourne Museum</u>. Head to Fitzroy and Collingwood and shop along Gertrude St before feasting at <u>Cutler & Co</u>. Back in the city centre, explore <u>Chinatown</u> and check out Ned Kelly's armour at the <u>State Library</u> before having dinner and drinks at <u>Cookie</u>. Spend the rest of the week shopping, cafe-hopping and people-watching in busy Prahran and Windsor. In winter, catch a footy game at the <u>MCG</u> before drinks at one of the city's laneway bars, or hit the <u>Tote</u> in Collingwood for live music.

Sights



Greater Melbourne

- Top Sights
- 1 Royal Botanic Gardens G4
- Sights
- 2 Abbotsford Convent H2
- 3 Albert Park Lake F5
- 4 Arts Centre Melbourne F3

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

5 Australian Centre for Contemporary Art F4
6 Carlton & United Breweries H2
7 Collingwood Children's Farm H2
8 Federation Bells F3
9 Gasworks Arts Park E5
HMAS Castlemaine B6
10 Jan Potter Foundation Children's Garden F4
11 Maritime Museum B7
12 Melbourne Recital Centre F3
13 Melbourne Star D2
14 NGV International F3
15 Polly Woodside E3
16 Scienceworks A4
17 Sea Shepherd Australia B7
Seaworks B7
18 Shrine of Remembrance F4
19 South Melbourne Market E4
20 St Patrick's Cathedral F2
21 Station Pier D5
22 Studley Park Boathouse H1
23 Williamstown Railway Museum A6
24 Yarra Bend Park H1
24 Talla Dellu Fair, TT
Activities, Courses & Tours
25 Aboriginal Heritage Walk G4
26 Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre F5
South Melbourne Market E4
27 The Tan F4
Sleeping
28 Albany G4
29 Art Series (The Blackman) F5
30 Crown Metropol E3
31 Park Hyatt F2
Quest Williamstown B7
32 Royce on St Kilda Road F4
© Father
Seating Eating
33 Albert Park Hotel Oyster Bar & Grill E5
Andrew's Burgers E5
34 Atlantic E3
35 Auction Rooms E2
36 Aux Batifolles F1
37 Bangpop E3
38 Footscray Market B2
39 Jock's Ice-Cream E5
Lentil as Anything H2
40 <u>Misuzu's</u> E5
41 Orient East F4
42 Ragusa B7
43 Small Victories F1
Spice Temple E3
44 <u>St Ali</u> E4
S Drinking & Nightlife
45 Boatbuilders Yard E3
<u>Clement</u> E4
46 Collection H3
47 Matilda Bay Brewery D4
Padre Coffee E4
48 Padre Coffee Queen Vic Market E2
49 Slowbeer H3
50 Story E3
51 Touchwood H3
52 Town Hall Hotel E2
A STATE OF THE STA
Entertainment
53 Australian Ballet F3
OF MAGRICULE TO

54 Chamber Made Opera E2
Chunky Move F4
Comic's Lounge E2
55 Commercial Hotel B3
56 Etihad Stadium E3
57 Festival Hall E2
58 Flemington Racecourse B1
Kage Physical Theatre H2
59 Laird G2
60 Malthouse Theatre F4
Melbourne Theatre Company F3
61 Moonlight Cinema G4
Opera Australia F3
62 Peel Hotel G2
63 Reverence Hotel B2
64 Sidney Myer Music Bowl F3
65 Sun Theatre A3
66 The Tote G1
Ch anning
Shopping
67 Lab Perfumery F1
68 Nest E4
NGV Shop at NGV International F3
Shirt & Skirt Market H2
Information
69 Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre B7 70 Royal Children's Hospital E1
70 Royal Melbourne Hospital E1
71 Royal Melbourne Hospital E1 72 Travel Doctor E3
73 Travellers Aid E3
74 Visitor Centre F4
74 VISIOI CEITIE F4
1 Transport
75 Firefly E3
76 <u>SkyBus</u> E3
77 Spirit of Tasmania D5
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Central Melbourne

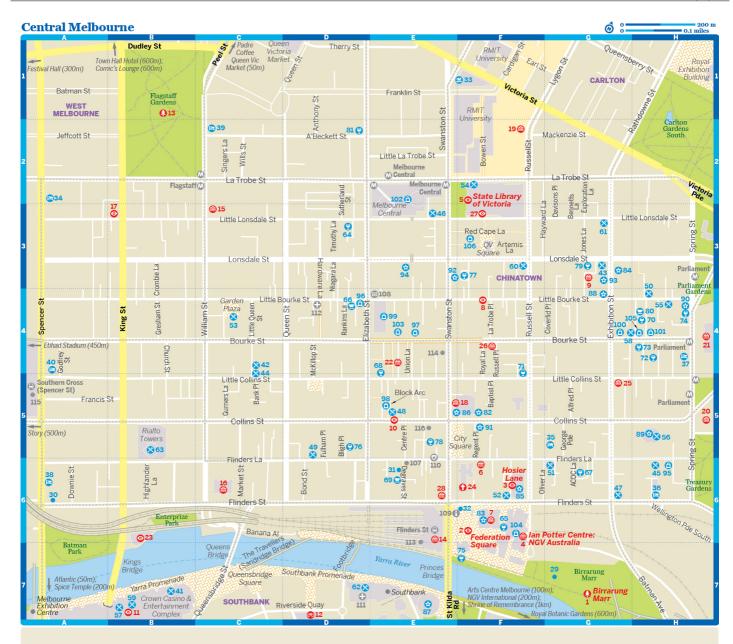
Melbourne's wide main streets and legion of laneways pop and fizz day and night, seven days a week. Museums and art galleries are dotted throughout. The city's 'Little' streets (which run parallel to the main streets and are named accordingly, eg Little Bourke St) have attracted residents and businesses since the 1850s, a decade in which Melbourne's population quadrupled thanks to the gold rush. For a while, city-centre living went out of favour, but it has boomed in the past decade, with some 100,000 people claiming CBD abodes as their own.

There are two 'big ends' of town. Skyscrapers cluster on the east and west ends of the grid – these areas are where the city does business. Southern Cross Station sits to the west, with Docklands Stadium and Docklands beyond. Opposite the central Flinders Street Station, Federation Square (better known as Fed Square) squats beside the Yarra River, and has become a favourite Melbourne gathering place. To the east is the 'top end' of the city, with its monumental gold-rush-era buildings such as Parliament House and the Treasury Building.

Melbourne's city council has created a mobility map

(www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/Documents/CBD_mobmap_11.pdf) available along with other resources from its website (www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/Pages/AccessibleMelbournepublications.aspx). There is also a list of council-provided on-street parking at www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/communityservices/disabilityservices/gettingaround/pages/accessibleparking.aspx There is always a danger that the information in these official guides might be inaccurate; call ahead and check if you have any doubt.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014



Central Melbourne

Top Sights

- 1 Birrarung Marr G7
- 2 Federation Square F6
- 3 Hosier Lane F6
- 4 lan Potter Centre: NGV Australia F6
- 5 State Library of Victoria F2

Sights

- 6 Anna Schwartz Gallery F6
- 7 Australian Centre for the Moving Image F6
- 8 Chinatown F4
- 9 Chinese Museum G3
- 10 Collins Street E5
- 11 Crown Casino & Entertainment Complex B7
- 12 Eureka Skydeck D7
- 13 Flagstaff Gardens B1
- 14 Flinders Street Station E6
- 15 Hellenic Museum C3
- 16 Immigration Museum C6
- 17 Koorie Heritage Trust B3
- 18 Melbourne Town Hall Es
- 19 Old Melbourne Gaol F2
- 20 Old Treasury Building
- 21 Parliament House H4
- 22 Royal Arcade E4

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

23 Sea Life Melbourne Aquarium B6
24 St Paul's Cathedral F6
25 Tolarno Galleries G5
26 West Space F4
27 Wheeler Centre F3
28 Young & Jackson's E6
ZO TOUTY & JACKSOTTS LO
Activities, Courses & Tours
29 ArtPlay G7
30 Bunyip Tours A6
31 Centre for Adult Education E6
32 Greeter Service F6
33 Melbourne City Baths F1
Sleeping Sleeping
34 Atlantis Hotel A2
35 Grand Hyatt Melbourne G5
•
36 Hotel Lindrum H6
37 Hotel Windsor H4
38 Pensione Hotel A6
39 Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens C2
40 Vibe Savoy Hotel A4
Eating
41 Bistro Guillaume B7
42 Bistro Vue C4
43 <u>Bomba</u> G3
44 Café Vue C5
Cookie E3
45 Cumulus Inc. H6
46 Don Don E3
<u>47 Gazi</u> G6
Grossi Florentino Grill G4
48 Hopetoun Tea Rooms E5
49 Huxtaburger D5
50 Longrain H4
51 Meatball & Wine Bar G6
Mesa Verde E3
52 MoVida F6
53 MoVida Agui C4
54 <u>Mr Tulk</u> F2
•
55 Mrs Parma's H4
56 No 35 at Sofitel H5
57 Nobu B7
Paco's Tacos C4
58 Pellegrini's Espresso Bar G4
59 Rockpool Bar & Grill B7
Seamstress G3
60 Stalactites F3
61 Trunk G3
62 Tutto Bene D7
63 Vue de Monde B5
Drinking & Nightlife
64 1000£Bend D3
65 Beer DeLuxe F6
66 Brother Baba Budan D4
67 Cherry G6
68 Chuckle Park E4
69 Degraves Espresso E6
70 Double Happiness H4
Hotel Windsor H4
71 James Squire Brewhouse F4
72 Loop H4
Lui Bar B5
73 Madame Brussels H4
•
74 Melbourne Supper Club H4 New Gold Mountain H4
INEW COULDINOUNTAIN H4

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75 Riverland F7
76 Robot D5
77 Section 8 F3
78 Shebeen E5
79 Sweatshop G3
80 Traveller H4
81 Workshop D2
 Young & Jackson's E6
Entertainment
82 Athenaeum F5
83 Australian Centre for the Moving Image F6
84 Comedy Theatre G3
85 Forum Theatre F6
86 Halftix Melbourne E5
87 Hamer Hall E7
88 Her Majesty's Theatre G4
89 Kino Cinemas H5
Last Laugh at the Comedy Club F5
 Melbourne Opera F5
 Melbourne Symphony Orchestra E7
90 Princess Theatre H4
91 Regent Theatre F5
92 Rooftop Cinema E3
93 Ticketek G3
94 <u>Ticketmaster</u> E3
Toff in Town E3
Shopping
95 Craft Victoria Shop H6
96 Crumpler D4
97 David Jones E4
98 Gewürzhaus E5
99 GPO E4
100 Hill of Content G4
 101 Melbournalia H4
102 Melbourne Central E2
 Metropolis E3
 103 Myer E4
104 NGV Shop at The Ian Potter Centre F6
 Original & Authentic Aboriginal Art G4
105 Paperback Bookshop H4
106 QV F3
Readings F2
  Information
107 City Library E6
108 Melbourne GPO E4
109 Melbourne Visitor Centre E6
110 <u>Police</u> E5
111 Travel Doctor D7
112 Travel Doctor D4
113 Travellers Aid E6
114 Travellers Aid E4
Transport
115 Public Transport Victoria A5
116 Qantas E5
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★Federation Square LANDMARK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.fedsquare.com.au; cnr Flinders & Swanston Sts; (1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72, Flinders St)

While it's taken some time, Melburnians have finally come to embrace Federation Square, accepting it as the congregation place it was meant to be – somewhere to celebrate, protest, watch major sporting events or hang out on its deckchairs. Occupying a prominent city block, 'Fed Square' is far from square: its undulating and patterned forecourt is paved with 460,000 hand-laid cobblestones from the Kimberley region, with sight-lines to Melbourne's iconic landmarks; its buildings are clad in a fractal-patterned reptilian skin.

Within are cultural heavyweights such as the <u>Ian Potter Centre</u>: NGV Australia and the <u>Australian Centre</u> for the <u>Moving Image</u> (ACMI), as well as restaurants and bars. At the square's street junction is the subterranean <u>Melbourne Visitor Centre</u>. Highly recommended free tours of Fed Square depart Monday to Saturday at 11am; spaces are limited, so get here 10 to 15 minutes early. The square has free wi-fi, and there are always free public events going on here, particularly on weekends – as well as free meditation at 12.30pm on Tuesday. Don't miss the jugglers, clowns and acrobats that perform in front of the visitor centre each weekend. It's great street entertainment for a small donation.

FEDERATION SQUARE: NOT FOR EVERYONE...

Fed Square was controversial when it opened in 2002, with opinions ranging from a condescending 'it's a little different, isn't it?' to full-blown 'bring back the Gas & Fuel Buildings that used to be here'. From an accessibility point of view, the square continues to enrage, engage and confuse. Here's some of the feedback we received:

The square's tiling makes it extremely difficult to wheel at the front. Steps also make it difficult to traverse.

The other thing I would like to mention is accessibility in terms of cognitive impairment. The signage is not accessible to someone who can't read. The architecture makes it confusing for people who find it difficult to navigate visual spaces.

The uneven surface in the square itself is very difficult to navigate for those with mobility issues. Whilst the railings are great, and readily accessible for those with use of one hand/arm only, the bumpy flooring is impossible to traverse.

The Big Screen in Fed Square provides a hearing loop. All venues of Federation Square, including St Paul's Court, Swanston Street Forecourt and The Amphitheatre can be accessed by wheelchairs.

Disabled parks in pay car park; nothing on street. Navigation confusing. Horrible bumpy sloping cobblestones. Lighting in toilets dreadful; hard to figure out what is the door. Lift is ridiculously slow; hard to locate and only takes one person in a chair.

Fed Square does have accessible toilets, on the lower level, which you can access via the slow, one-person wheelchair.

For what it's worth, here are the official details: www.fedsquare.com/information/visiting-fed-square/accessibility. You can download a Fed Square walking map (with accessible path marked) at www.fedsquare.com/wp-content/uploads/Fed-Square-Map-2013.pdf

★lan Potter Centre: NGV Australia GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8620 2222; www.ngv.vic.gov.au; Federation Sq; exhibition costs vary; 210am-5pm Tue-Sun; 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72, Flinders St)

Hidden away at the back of Federation Square, the Ian Potter Centre is the other half of the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), set up to showcase its impressive collection of Australian works. Set over three levels, it's a mix of permanent (free) and temporary (ticketed) exhibitions, comprising paintings, decorative arts, photography, prints, sculpture and fashion. There's also a great museum gift shop. Free tours are conducted daily at 11am, noon, 1pm and 2pm.

The Aboriginal permanent exhibition on the ground floor is stunning, and seeks to challenge ideas of the 'authentic'. There are some particularly fine examples of Papunya painting, plus didgeridoos, contemporary sculpture and dot paintings on canvas.

Upstairs there are permanent displays of colonial paintings by artists such as Arthur Streeton and Tom Roberts, including Roberts' famous *Shearing the Rams*. There's also the work of the Heidelberg School impressionists and a fabulous collection of the work of the modernist 'Angry Penguins', including Sir Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, Joy Hester and Albert Tucker. Other prominent artists with works on display include Fred Williams, John Brack and Howard Arkley.

Mobility:
Vision:
Hearing:

Staff:
Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES
Accessible Public Transport:
Companion Card: YES

For a wheelchair user access is fantastic. Completely flat; smooth floors make getting around a breeze. Extra good to go on days of extreme heat or cold due to the temperature controls.

Australian Centre for the Moving Image MUSEUM

(ACMI; MAP COOGLEMAP); ≥03-8663 2200; www.acmi.net.au; Federation Sq; ≥10am-6pm; =1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72, Flinders St)

Managing to educate, enthral and entertain in equal parts, ACMI is a visual feast that pays homage to Australian cinema and TV, offering an insight into the modern-day Australian psyche perhaps like no other museum can. Its floating screens don't discriminate against age, with TV shows, games and movies on-call — making it a great place to waste a day watching TV and not feel guilty about it. Free tours are conducted daily at 11am and 2.30pm

Screenworld is the main focus here, an interactive exhibition that celebrates the work of Australian cinema and TV; its exhibitions, games lab and zoetrope will interest anyone, whether they're clued in about Dexter from *Perfect Match* or not. Upstairs, you'll find the **Australian Mediatheque**, a venue set aside for the viewing of programs from the National Film and Sound Archive and ACMI, the perfect hideaway on a rainy day. Mini-festivals of cinema classics and the occasional Pixar blockbuster are screened throughout the year; also keep an eye out for **Melbourne Cinémathèque** (www.melbournecinematheque.org) screenings.



*Birrarung Marr PARK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); btwn Federation Sq & the Yarra River; 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72, Flinders St)

The three-terraced Birrarung Marr is a welcome addition to Melbourne's patchwork of parks and gardens, featuring grassy knolls, river promenades, a thoughtful planting of indigenous flora and great viewpoints of the city and the river. There's also a scenic route to the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) via the 'talking' William Barak Bridge – listen out for songs, words and sounds representing Melbourne's cultural diversity as you go.

The sculptural Federation Bells (MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.federationbells.com.au; Sells 8.30-9.30am, noon-1pm & 5-6pm) perch on the park's upper level and ring out daily like a robotic orchestra. There are 39 brass bells of various sizes and shapes, all with impressive acoustics, that play specially commissioned contemporary compositions.

As a sign of respect to the Wurundjeri people, the traditional owners of the area (in their language, 'Birrarung Marr' means 'river of mists'), the park features a snaking eel path with Indigenous Australian art, a shield-and-spear sculpture and an audio installation outside ArtPlay that tells the story of contemporary Wurundjeri people.

Other highlights are the 10m-high, three-legged mosaic **Angel**, a vivid abstract sculpture by Deborah Halpern; **Speakers Corner**, featuring original mounds used as soapboxes in the early 20th century; and a dried riverbed lined with ghost gums and palms, giving it a tranquil billlabong feel.

Within an old railway building, ArtPlay (MAP COOGLEMAP); 203-9664 7900; www.artplay.com.au; Wed-Sun 10am-4pm) hosts creative workshops for two- to 13-year-olds, getting them sewing, singing, painting and puppeteering; it features a very cool playground with a Liberty swing out the back.



★Hosier Lane STREET

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; Hosier Ln; 175, 70)

Melbourne's most celebrated laneway for street art, Hosier Lane's cobbled length draws camera-wielding crowds snapping edgy graffiti, stencils and art installations. Subject matter runs to the mostly political and counter-culture, spiced with irreverent humour; pieces change almost daily (not even a work by Banksy is safe here). Be sure to see Rutledge Lane (which horseshoes around Hosier), too.

Cobbled lane so manual wheelchairs might find it tricky.

Flinders Street Station HISTORIC BUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); cnr Flinders & Swanston Sts; (1)

If ever there was a true symbol of the city, Flinders Street Station would have to be it. Built in 1854, it was Melbourne's first railway station, and you'd be hard-pressed to find a Melburnian who hasn't uttered the phrase 'Meet me under the clocks' at one time or another (the popular rendezvous spot is at the front entrance of the station). Stretching along the Yarra, it's a beautiful neoclassical building topped with a striking octagonal dome.

The grand old dame's underground tendrils connect the city's north with its south, with underpasses linked to Southbank via a pedestrian bridge. Free wi-fi here.



Hearing loop and T Switch services are available. For the vision impaired, train information is displayed on boards at each platform, and there are tactile paths through the station. All platforms and trains are wheelchair accessible. For more about using public transport in Melbourne, see the Transport chapter.

St Paul's Cathedral CHURCH

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9653 4333; www.stpaulscathedral.org.au; cnr Flinders & Swanston Sts; 88am-6pm Sun-Fri, to 5pm Sat)

Opposite Federation Sq stands the magnificent Anglican St Paul's Cathedral. Services were celebrated on this site from the city's first days. Built between 1880 and 1891, the present church is the work of distinguished ecclesiastical architect William Butterfield (a case of architecture by proxy, as he did not condescend to visit Melbourne, instead sending drawings from England). It features ornate stained-glass windows made between 1887 and 1890, and holds excellent music programs.

The Cathedral is accessed by a ramp on Flinders Street that leads from the car park on its eastern side. Once in the foyer the Nave is accessed via a wooden ramp on the left of the building. Aisles on the left centre and right allow full access to admire the grandeur of the building. The Sanctuary is accessed by another wooden ramp, again on the left side. From here the magnificent organ, vaulted ceiling and stained glass work can be admired.

Young & Jackson's HISTORIC BUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.youngandjacksons.com.au; cnr Flinders & Swanston Sts; Tourist Shuttle, City Circle, 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72, Flinders St)

Opposite Flinders Street Station is a pub known less for its beer (served up since 1861) than its iconic nude painting of the teenaged *Chloe*, painted by Jules Joseph Lefebvre. Chloe's yearning gaze, cast over her shoulder and out of the frame, was a hit at the Paris Salon of 1875.

The painting caused an outcry in parochial, provincial Melbourne, however, and was removed from display at the National Gallery of Victoria. Eventually purchased by publican and 'art lover' Henry Figsby Young in 1909, *Chloe* found an appreciative audience and permanent home at this pub.

Wheelchair access is from Swanston St. The Main Bar and Long Bar on the ground floor are accessible, and Chloe's Bar and restaurant upstairs is accessible via lift, but the Cider Bar is not. Multiple accessible toilets.

Melbourne Town Hall HISTORIC BUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9658 9658; www.melbourne.vic.gov.au; cnr Collins & Swanston Sts; Stour 11am & 1pm Mon-Fri)

The Melbourne Town Hall has been used as a civic and entertainment venue since 1870. Queen Elizabeth II took tea here in 1954, and the Beatles waved to thousands of screaming fans from the balcony in 1964. Take the free one-hour **tour** to see the Grand Organ (built in 1929, and the largest grand romantic organ in the southern hemisphere), admire the Lord Mayor's chair or tinker on the same piano Paul McCartney did. It's a busy venue during the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

The free tour can cater to groups with accessibility concerns; enquire ahead.

Collins Street STREET

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; btwn Spring & Elizabeth Sts)

The top end of Collins St, aka the 'Paris End', is lined with plane trees, grand buildings and luxe boutiques (hence its moniker). You'll find ornate arcades leading off Collins St. The Block network, comprising Block Pl, Block Arcade and Block Ct, was named after the 19th-century pastime of 'doing the block', which referred to walking the city's fashionable area.

Old Treasury Building MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9651 2233; www.oldtreasurybuilding.org.au; Spring St; 210am-4pm, closed Sat; 112, Parliament)

The fine neoclassical architecture of the Old Treasury (c 1862), designed by JJ Clarke, is a telling mix of hubris and functionality. The basement vaults were built to house the millions of pounds worth of loot that came from the Victorian goldfields and now feature multimedia displays telling stories from the gold rush. Also downstairs is the charmingly redolent reconstruction of the 1920s caretaker's residence, which beautifully reveals what life in Melbourne was like in the early part of last century.

The adjacent Treasury Gardens, to the south of the building, contain the John F Kennedy Memorial.

Wheelchair access is from the rear of the building.

Parliament House HISTORIC BUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥ 03-9651 8568; www.parliament.vic.gov.au; Spring St; Stours 9.30am, 10.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm, 2.30pm, 3.45pm Mon-Fri; City Circle, 86, 96, Reparliament)

The grand steps of Victoria's parliament (c 1856) are often dotted with slow-moving, tulle-wearing brides smiling for the camera, or placard-holding protesters doing the same. The only way to visit inside is on a tour, where you'll see exuberant use of ornamental plasterwork, stencilling and gilt full of gold-rush-era pride and optimism. Building began with the two main chambers: the lower house (now the legislative assembly) and the upper house (now the legislative council).

The library was added in 1860 and Queen's Hall in 1879. Australia's first federal parliament sat here from 1901, before moving to Canberra in 1927. Though they've never been used, gun slits are visible just below the roof, and a dungeon is now the cleaners' tearoom.

Free tours, held when parliament is in recess, take you through both houses and the library. Fascinating design features and the symbolism underlying much of the ornamentation are illuminated by the knowledgable guides. Ask about the mystery of the stolen ceremonial mace that disappeared from the lower house in 1891 - it's rumoured to have ended up in a brothel. Express 20-minute tours run on Monday to Friday at 1pm and 4pm, and architectural tours once a month. Booking is essential.

There's a lift for access and all areas visited by the tours, including the floor of Parliament itself, are accessible by wheelchair.

Chinatown NEIGHBOURHOOD

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Little Bourke St, btwn Spring & Swanston Sts; 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72)

Chinese miners arrived in search of the 'new gold mountain' in the 1850s and settled in this strip of Little Bourke St, now flanked by traditional red archways. The Chinese Museum here does a wonderful job of putting it into context.

Here you'll find an interesting mix of Chinese and Asian restaurants; come here for yum cha (dim sum) or explore its attendant laneways for late-night dumplings or cocktails. Chinatown also hosts the city's vibrant Chinese New Year celebrations in January or February.

Mobility:
Vision:
Hearing:
Staff:
Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: NO

Chinatown is chaotic with very interesting historical and shopping interests. Lanes are small – be careful of vehicles. Paid parking in terrace carparks; minimum \$19. Avoid peak hour for better accessibility. Toilets are in shopping centres.

Chinese Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9662 2888; www.chinesemuseum.com.au; 22 Cohen PI; adult/child \$8/6; 210am-5pm)

This museum has a temple in the basement and five floors of displays, including artefacts from the gold-rush era, dealings under the xenophobic White Australia policy, and the stunning 63m-long, 200kg Millennium Dragon that bends around the building; in full flight it needs eight people to hold up the dragon's head alone.

Mobility:
Vision:
Hearing:
Staff:
Accessible Toilet:YES
Accessible Parking:NO
Accessible Public Transport:
Companion Card:YES

A great place to visit and explore for all abilities. An elevator is available; also ramps. It is quite dark due to the need to preserve the artworks and antiquities. Please call beforehand if you need any assistance.

Royal Arcade HISTORIC BUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.royalarcade.com.au; 335 Bourke St Mall; 486, 96)

This Parisian-style shopping arcade was built between 1869 and 1870 and is Melbourne's oldest; the upper walls retain much of the original 19th-century detail. The black-and-white chequered path leads to the mythological figures of giant brothers Gog and Magog, perched with hammers atop the arched exit to Little Collins St. They've been striking the hour here since 1892. The businesses within are an interesting mix of the classy and the common.

Wheeler Centre ARTS CENTRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9094 7800; www.wheelercentre.com; 176 Little Lonsdale St; Melbourne Central)

This centre is a celebration of Unesco's 2008 acknowledgment of Melbourne as an international City of Literature, with a variety of programs and speakers (usually writers) throughout the year. Its free weekly Lunchbox/Soapbox sessions make for a great lunchtime diversion; check online for details. The centre was set up by Lonely Planet founders Tony and Maureen Wheeler.

See www.wheelercentre.com/about-us/visiting-us for further accessibility information.



Old Melbourne Gaol HISTORICBUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8663 7228; www.oldmelbournegaol.com.au; 337 Russell St; adult/child/family \$25/14/55; 9.30am-5pm; 24, 30, City Circle)

Built in 1841, this forbidding bluestone prison was in operation until 1929. It's now one of Melbourne's most popular museums, where you can tour the tiny, bleak cells. About 135 people were hanged here, including Ned Kelly, Australia's most infamous bushranger, in 1880; one of his death masks is on display.

The dire social conditions that motivated criminals in 19th-century Melbourne are also highlighted, including the era's obsession with phrenology. If you're curious to see how it would feel to be an inmate here, sign up for the **City Watch House Experience**, where you get 'arrested' and thrown in the slammer (more fun than it sounds). During peak times you can visit the courtroom where local gangster Squizzy Taylor stood trial.

You can also join a **ghost hunt** or the **Hangman's night tour** (adult/concession \$38/35); check the website for its schedule. Evening events are not recommended for children under 12.

The jail is partially accessible. Being a heritage-listed building, there are features that are not accessible: ladder stairs to levels 2 and 3 mean the scaffold is not accessible, but it can be seen from ground level, which is fully wheelchair-accessible and contains 80% of the information. The watchtower is not accessible.

★Queen Victoria Market MARKET

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.qvm.com.au; 513 Elizabeth St, Melbourne; 6am-2pm Tue & Thu, to 5pm Fri, to 3pm Sat, 9am-4pm Sun; Tourist Shuttle, 19, 55, 57, 59)

With more than 600 traders, the Vic Market is the largest open-air market in the southern hemisphere and attracts thousands of shoppers. It's where Melburnians sniff out firesh produce among the booming cries of spruiking fishmongers and fruit-and-veg vendors. The wonderful deli hall (with art deco features) is lined with everything from soft cheeses, wines and Polish sausages to Greek dips, truffle oil and kangaroo biltong.

Saturday mornings are particularly buzzing, with marketgoers having breakfast to the sounds and shows of buskers. Clothing and knick-knack stalls dominate on Sundays; they're big on variety, but don't come looking for style. (If you're in the market for sheepskin moccasins or cheap T-shirts, you're in luck.)

On Wednesday evenings from mid-November to March the **Summer Night Market** takes over. It's a lively social event featuring hawker-style food stalls, bars and music and dance performances. There's also **Luna 1878**, a winter night market held each Wednesday evening from July to August

The market has been on this site for more than 130 years; before that, from 1837 to 1854, it was the old Melbourne Cemetery (remarkably, around 9000 bodies remain buried here, from underneath Shed F to the car park leading to Franklin St). There's a small memorial on the corner of Queen and Therry Sts.

A number of tours are run from the market, including heritage, cultural and foodie tours; check the website for details,



Short distance from Melbourne Central Station (head along Elizabeth St) or Flagstaff Station (head along William St); it is easy to get to and great for a look around. Given the age of the building, it is not the greatest for mobility, but that doesn't take away from the experience. Can get very busy on weekends. Download market map from www.qvm.com.au/contact-us.

Hellenic Museum Museum, Architecture

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-8615 9016; www.hellenic.org.au; 280 William St; ≥10am-4pm; ≥55) FREE

Housed in a beautiful Renaissance revival—style building that was formerly the Royal Mint, this small museum is dedicated to Greek immigrants who moved here in the 1950s, and the legacy they've left the city – the third-biggest Greek-speaking city behind Athens and Boston.

Currently undergoing renovation, but will be fully wheelchair-accessible.

Flagstaff Gardens PARK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); William St, btwn La Trobe, Dudley & King Sts; Tourist Shuttle, 24, 30, 55, City Circle, Flagstaff)

Originally known as Burial Hill, these gardens were the site of Melbourne's first cemetery, where eight of the city's early settlers were buried. Today its pleasant open lawns are popular with workers taking a lunchtime break. The gardens contain trees that are well over 100 years old, including Moreton Bay fig trees and a variety of eucalypts, including spotted gums, sugar gums and river red gums. There are plenty of possums about, but don't feed them.

The hill once provided one of the best views out to the bay, so a signalling station was set up here: when a ship was sighted arriving from Britain, a flag was raised on the flagstaff to notify the settlers. The Wurundjeri people also found it significant for the same useful vista, which stretches as far as Mt Macedon.

Access is easiest from the Peel St/Dudley St corner, opposite the Queen Vic Market car park. An accessible toilet is near this corner also, and a terrific adventure playground is also nearby. If you are in the gardens on a Sunday, check out the bike polo competition on the tennis courts; you'll feel exhausted just watching.

Koorie Heritage Trust CULTURAL CENTRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8622 2600; www.koorieheritagetrust.com; 295 King St; gold-coin donation, tours \$15; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri; 24, 30, R

Devoted to southeastern Aboriginal culture, this cultural centre displays interesting artefacts and oral history. Its gallery spaces show a variety of contemporary and traditional work, with a model scar tree at the centre's heart and a permanent chronological display of Victorian Koorie history. Behind the scenes, significant objects are carefully preserved; replicas that can be touched by visitors are used in the displays. It's in the process of relocating, so check the website for details.

The trust also runs highly recommended **tours** to Flagstaff Gardens and along the Yarra, which puts the area into context. Tours are mainly for school groups, but it's normally OK to tag along; call ahead to enquire.

Another reason to visit is its shop, which sells books on Aboriginal culture, CDs, crafts and bush-food supplies.

Wheelchair-accessible, with accessible toilet and lift to 2nd floor. Interactive dreamtime display which can be listened to, but no hearing loop as such.

Immigration Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 213 11 02; www.museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum; 400 Flinders St; adult/child \$10/free; \$210am-5pm; \$\overline{1}270,75\)

The Immigration Museum uses personal and community voices, images and memorabilia to tell the many stories of Australian immigration. It's symbolically housed in the old Customs House, with the restored building alone worth the visit: the **Long Room** is a magnificent piece of Renaissance revival architecture.

After exiting the museum, head across the river via Sandridge Bridge to check out the steel **Travellers sculptures**, which depict the story of arrival that belongs to many Melburnians; *Gayip*, the only sculpture to sit on land rather than on the bridge, represents Indigeneous Australians from the area.

 $See\ \underline{www.museumvictoria.com.au/immigration museum/visiting/accessibility\ for\ accessibility\ details.$

Sea Life Melbourne Aquarium AQUARIUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ✓03-9923 5999; www.melbourneaquarium.com.au; cnr Flinders & King Sts; adult/child/family \$38/22/93; ♥9.30am-6pm, last entry 5pm; 🗓 70, 75)

This aquarium is home to rays, gropers and sharks, all of which cruise around a 2.2-million-litre tank, watched closely by visitors in a see-through tunnel. See the penguins in icy 'Antarctica' or get up close to one of Australia's largest saltwater crocs in the crocodile lair. Divers are thrown to the sharks three times a day. Admission tickets are cheaper online.

Companion Cards accepted. Check out www.melbourneaquarium.com.au/general-info/facilities-and-accessibility for full accessibility details.

St Patrick's Cathedral CHURCH

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9662 2233; www.stpatrickscathedral.org.au; cnr Gisborne St & Cathedral PI; 929am-5pm Mon-Fri; 112)

Head up McArthur St (the extension of Collins St) to see one of the world's largest and finest examples of Gothic Revival architecture. Designed by William Wardell, St Patrick's was named after the patron saint of Ireland, reflecting the local Catholic community's main origin. Building began in 1863 and continued until the spires were added in 1939.

The imposing bluestone exterior and grounds are but a preview of its contents: inside are several tonnes of bells, an organ with 4500 pipes, ornate stained-glass windows and the remains of former archbishops.

Wheelchair-accessible, but no hearing loop.

★State Library of Victoria LIBRARY

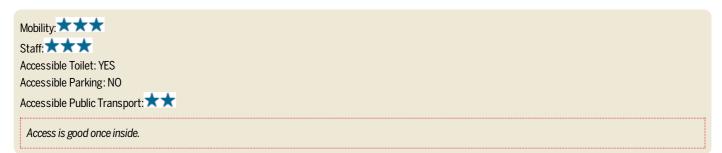
A big player in Melbourne's achievement of being named Unesco City of Literature in 2008, the State Library has been at the forefront of Melbourne's literary scene since it opened in 1854. With more than two million books in its collection, it's a great place to browse. Its epicentre, the octagonal **La Trobe Reading Room**, was completed in 1913; its reinforced-concrete dome was the largest of its kind in the world and its natural light illuminates the ornate plasterwork and the studious Melbourne writers who come here to pen their works.

The library has several exhibitions on display, providing a fascinating insight into Melbourne's history. Its most notable item is **Ned Kelly's armour**, the get-up of Australia's most infamous bushranger: a menacing helmet cobbled together from a plough with a slit cut out for the eyes, and riddled with bullet dents. There's also numerous original Burke and Wills memorabilia and John Batman's controversial land treaty (read: land grab), in which he's believed to have forged signatures of the Wurundjeri people.

Bibliophiles won't want to miss the *Mirror of the World* exhibition, with a weird and wonderful collection of books through the ages, from a 4000-year-old tax receipt and rare first editions to Peter Carey's laptop and Australian comic books (bet you never heard of Panther Man...). There's also a fine collection of Australian paintings, including the apocalyptic bushfire portrayed by William Strutt in his *Black Thursday*, *February 6th*, 1851.

For more information, join a free guided tour to see the library's vast collection. There's free wi-fi and internet, plus video-game consoles and a chess room.

Join locals with a takeaway lunch on the library's grassy lawn, or head to the library's cafe, Mr Tulk (MAP COOGLEMAP); Closed Sun), which is on the La Trobe St side of the building.



STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA - ACCESS ALL AREAS

The State Library is a dream come true for people with a disability. Not only are all public spaces wheelchair-accessible, including its cafe, Mr Tulk, there are also multiple wheelchair-accessible entries and toilets. The services offered for people with disabilities are phenomenal: all staff can help users with special needs to access the collection, and there is a customer service librarian dedicated to assist visitors with disabilities and their carers. There's even a courtesy wheelchair to use within the library – although staff are not available to push you around!

The Assistive Technology Room is full of equipment and software to help those with disabilities access the library's resources. Equipment includes tracking balls, magnifiers, headphones, microphones, alternative keyboards and a ScanR, which scans and reads print and can save to Braille Notes. Computers in the room have the following software: Jaws for Windows, ZoomText, Kurzweil 1000, Dragon Naturally Speaking and UReader. If you want to use the room, call 200 03-8664 7005 in advance or speak to one of the librarians in the Information Centre. People with disabilities also have priority access to one computer with internet access in the Information Centre.

Book rests, magnifying sheets, illuminated magnifiers and magnifying glasses for readers with low vision are available in all reading rooms. In addition, a Smartview black-and-white magnifier for readers with low vision is located in the Redmond Barry Reading Room.

All library events are wheelchair-accessible and Companion Cards are accepted. If you need an Auslan or Relay interpreter, or an audio induction loop, let library staff know when you book. In addition to the permanent audio induction loop in the Village Roadshow Theatrette, the library also provides portable loops on request for those with and without hearing aids. Many events are recorded and the library may be able to provide transcripts in Braille or large print, or even a CD or DVD of the recording. A catalogue of existing audio and video recordings can be found here on the library's website.

There are three disabled parking bays outside Mr Tulk cafe on La Trobe St. A number of buses pass nearby the State Library, but there are no nearby accessible tram stops. Melbourne Central Station is just across the street.

CITY LIBRARY

A fantastic accessible resource for travellers in Melbourne's busy CBD is the City Library (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 29658 9500; 253 Flinders Lane; Mon-Thu 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-6pm, Sat10am-5pm, Sun12pm-5pm; Flinders St). No domed reading rooms and cultural icons here — see the State Library for those — just a great magazine collection, an onsite cafe and helpful staff. Also handy if your scooter or wheelchair needs a recharge. The computer lab features specialised accessible equipment.

INDIGENOUS MELBOURNE

The following provide a fantastic opportunity to learn and interact with Indigenous Australian culture in Melbourne.

Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at the Melbourne Museum

Koorie Heritage Trust

Aboriginal Heritage Walk

Birrarung Marr

<u>Bunjil</u>

Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia

Eating

<u>Charcoal Lane</u>

Media

Melbourne radio station 3KND (Kool n Deadly), 1503AM NITV, a nationwide TV station featuring all-Indigenous content

Southbank & Docklands

Southbank, once a gritty industrial site, sits directly across the Yarra River from Flinders St. Behind it is the city's major arts precinct, comprising the NGV International, the Arts Centre and other organisations such as the Australian Ballet. Back down by the river, the promenade stretches to the Crown Casino & Entertainment Complex, a self-proclaimed 'world of entertainment', and further on to South Wharf, the newest development of bars and restaurants. To the city's west lies the Docklands. The once working wharves of Victoria Harbour have given birth to a mini-city of apartment buildings, offices, restaurants, plazas, public art and parkland. It's early days, but its manufactured sameness has yet to be overwritten with the organic cadences and colour of neighbourhood life.

There is a mobility map of the Docklands area on the city council's website

(www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/Documents/DocklandsMobilityMap1812.pdf). It is a little out of date, but is handy for getting around the stadium area.

NGV International GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8662 1555; www.ngv.vic.gov.au; 180 St Kilda Rd; exhibition costs vary; 10am-5pm Wed-Mon; 5; Tourist Shuttle, 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72) TREE

Beyond the building's much-loved water-wall facade you'll find an expansive collection set over three levels, covering international art that runs from the

ancient to the contemporary. Key works include a Rembrandt, a Tiepolo and a Bonnard. You might also bump into a Monet, a Modigliani, or a Bacon. It's also home to Picasso's *Weeping Woman*, which was the victim of an art heist in 1986. Free 45-minute tours occur hourly from 11am to 2pm, which alternate to take in different parts of the collection.

The gallery also has an excellent decorative arts collection, and fantastic pieces in its Asia galleries from India to Japan. Its international blockbuster shows are huge, and bring with them long queues. The Australian art collection is on display at the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at nearby Federation Sq.

Completed in 1967, the original NGV building itself – Roy Grounds' 'cranky icon' – is one of Australia's most originally controversial but ultimately later respected Modernist masterpieces.

See www.ngv.vic.gov.au/visit/navigate-ngv/all-abilities-access for access details. Don't miss the sculpture garden behind the Great Hall, one of Melbourne's secret, quiet spaces, where you'll often only have Rodin's Balzac for company.

Eureka Skydeck LOOKOUT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.eurekaskydeck.com.au; 7 Riverside Quay; adult/child/family \$18.50/10/42, The Edge extra \$12/8/29; 10am-10pm, last entry 9.30pm; Tourist Shuttle)

Melbourne's tallest building, the 297m-high Eureka Tower was built in 2006, and a wild elevator ride takes you to its 88th floor in less than 40 seconds (check out the photo on the elevator floor if there's time). The 'Edge' – a slightly sadistic glass cube – cantilevers you out of the building, you've got no choice but to look down.

Mobility:

Vision:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

The staff was very accommodating and even allowed my wheelchair to go on The Edge. They laid out a special mat so that the transition from the inside to The Edge would be smooth for my chair to go over.

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art GALLERY

(ACCA; MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9697 9999; www.accaonline.org.au; 111 Sturt St; 210am-5pm Tue & Thu-Sun, 10am-8pm Wed; 111 Sturt Styre Sturt Styre Sturt Styre S

ACCA is one of Australia's most exciting and challenging contemporary galleries, showcasing a range of local and international artists. The building is, fittingly, sculptural, with a rusted exterior evoking the factories that once stood on the site, and a soaring interior designed to house often massive installations. From Flinders Street Station, head across Princes Bridge and along St Kilda Rd. Turn right at Grant St, then left to Sturt St.

See www.accaonline.org.au/visit/accessibility for all accessibility information.

Polly Woodside MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9699 9760; www.pollywoodside.com.au; 2A Clarendon St; adult/child/family \$16/10/43; 10am-4pm Sat & Sun, daily during school holidays; 96, 109, 112)

The *Polly Woodside* is a restored iron-hulled merchant ship (or 'tall ship'), dating from 1885, that now rests in a pen off the Yarra River. A glimpse of the rigging makes for a tiny reminder of what the Yarra would have looked like in the 19th century, dense with ships at anchor.

Only the deck is accessible in a wheelchair and those using gait aids will struggle with stairs. Guide dogs are welcome, but there's no hearing loop. There is no accessible toilet.

Melbourne Recital Centre ARTS CENTRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9699 3333; www.melbournerecital.com.au; cnr Southbank Blvd & Sturt St; box office 9am-5pm Mon-Fri; Tourist Shuttle, 1)

The MRC has won awards for its acoustics; the building may look like a framed piece of giant honeycomb, but it's actually the home (or hive?) of the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and lots of small ensembles. The program ranges from contemporary performances to classical chamber music and *Babar the Elephant*. From Flinders Street Station, cross the Yarra and turn right at Southbank Blvd.



Good access. Entry flat to foyer. Good lift access available to seats. Limited spots for wheelchairs in theatre but OK if you can transfer to a seat. Four 4-hr disabled parks in Dodds St next to venue (ballet car park across in Sturt St but curb cuts difficult).

See www.melbournerecital.com.au/experience/access for full accessibility details.

Arts Centre Melbourne ARTS CENTRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Bookings 1300 182 1831300 182 183; www.artscentremelbourne.com.au; 100 St Kilda Rd; box office 9am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat; Tourist Shuttle, 13, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72, Flinders St)

The Arts Centre is made up of two separate buildings: **Hamer Hall** (the concert hall) and the **theatres building** (under the spire). Both are linked by a series of landscaped walkways. The **George Adams Gallery** and **St Kilda Road Foyer Gallery** are free gallery spaces with changing exhibitions. In the foyer of the theatres building, pick up a self-guided booklet for a tour of art commissioned for the building and including works by Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan and Jeffrey Smart.

The Arts Centre hosts a **craft market** every Sunday from 10am to 4pm. Around 80 artisans sell everything from juggling balls to photographs. Across the way in the Kings Domain is the **Sidney Myer Music Bowl**, a summer venue with a stage that's been graced by everyone from Dame Kiri Te Kanawa to summer dance parties.

Mobility:
Hearing:
Staff:
Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES
Accessible Public Transport:
Companion Card: YES

ACM provides wheelchair access to all theatres as well as from the carpark. Services for the hearing impaired include headphones, as well as captioning and AUSLAN interpretation of certain performances. The staff are most friendly and helpful.

For accessibility details, visit www.artscentremelbourne.com.au/faq

Melbourne Star FERRIS WHEEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8688 9688; www.melbournestar.com; 101 Waterfront Way, Docklands; adult/child/family \$32/19/82; 210am-10pm; City Circle, 70, 86, Southern Cross)

Originally erected in 2009, then disassembled due to structural problems before financial issues delayed it for several more years, the Melbourne Star ferris wheel is finally turning. Joining the London Eye and Singapore Flyer, this giant observation wheel has glass cabins that take you up 120m for 360-degree views of the city, Port Philip Bay and even further afield to Geelong and the Dandenongs. Rides last 30 minutes.

For an extra \$8 you can head back for another ride at night to see the bright lights of the city.

Mobility:

Vision:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Had to stop the lift and get out a portable ramp. So not as smooth as I think it could have been considering the level of engineering that has gone into the process. There is an audio commentary – couldn't see evidence of closed loop system.

Companion Card tickets must be purchased from the ticket office.

DON'T MISS LIBRARY AT THE DOCK

BUNJIL

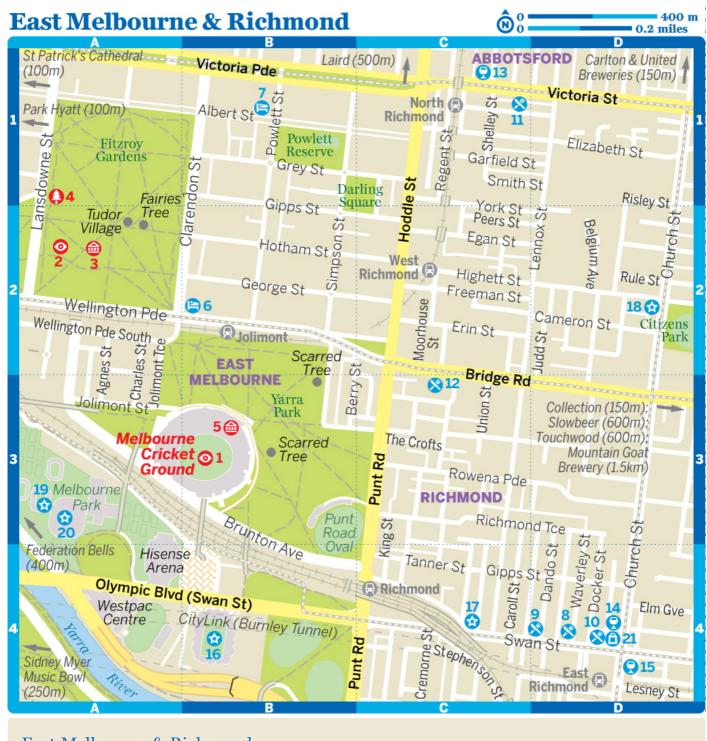
As you drive on one of the many roads surrounding Docklands, or catch a train to or from Southern Cross Station, you can't miss *Eagle*. Let's just say this bird has presence. Local sculptor Bruce Armstrong was inspired by the figure of Bunjil, the Wurundjeri creator spirit. The cast-aluminium bird rests contentedly on a mammoth jarrah perch, confidently surveying all around with a serene, glassy gaze. (Upon its unveiling, one cheeky journalist called the sculpture 'a bulked-up budgerigar'.) He's a reminder of the wordless natural world, scaled to provide a gentle parody of the surrounding cityscape's attempted domination.

East Melbourne & Richmond

East Melbourne's sedate, wide streets are lined with grand double-fronted Victorian terraces, Italianate mansions and art deco apartment blocks. Locals here commute to the city on foot, across the Fitzroy Gardens. During the footy season or when a cricket match is played, the roar of the crowd shatters the calm; you're within lobbing distance of the MCG. Melbourne City Council provides a good mobility map of the city's 'Entertainment Precinct' which covers south of the river to the Botanical Gardens and the various stadiums and playing fields that spread east from the city including the MCG and Rod Laver Arena. Download it at

www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/Documents/Melbourne_entertainment_sporting_precinct_map_2010.pdf. It is relatively accurate; just ignore the pointer showing the Mobility Centre at Fed Square, as those services are now handled by the wonderful Travellers Aid office at Flinders Street station.

Across perpetually clogged Punt Rd/Hoddle St is the suburb of Richmond, which stretches all the way to the Yarra. Once a ragtag collection of workers' cottages inhabited by generations of labourers who toiled in the tanneries, clothing-manufacturing and food-processing industries, it's now a rather genteel suburb, although it retains a fair swag of solid, regular pubs and is home to a thriving Vietnamese community along Victoria St. Running parallel with Victoria St are clothing-outlet-lined Bridge Rd and Swan St, a jumble of restaurants, shops and smart drinking holes. Richmond's main north–south thoroughfare is Church St.



East Melbourne & Richmond

Top Sights

1 Melbourne Cricket Ground B3

Sights

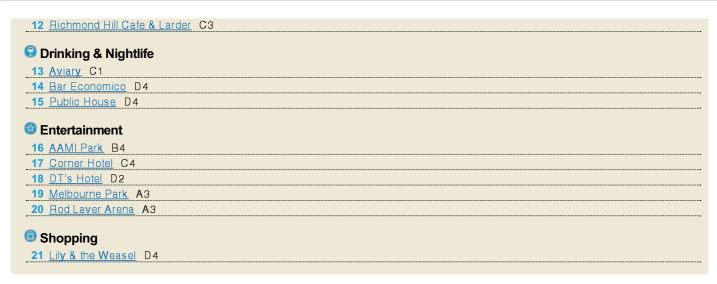
- 2 Conservatory A2
- 3 Cooks' Cottage A2
- 4 Fitzroy Gardens A1
- 5 National Sports Museum B3

Sleeping

- 6 Hilton on the Park B2
- 7 Tribeca Serviced Apartments B1

Eating

- 8 Demitri's Feast D4
- 9 Meatball & Wine Bar D4
- 10 Meatmother D4
- 11 Minh Minh C1



★Melbourne Cricket Ground STADIUM

(MCG; MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9657 8888; www.mcg.org.au; Brunton Ave; tour adult/child/family \$20/10/50; ©tours 10am-3pm; ■Tourist Shuttle, ■ 48, 70, 75, ■Jolimont or Richmond)

With a capacity of 100,000 people, the 'G' is one of the world's great sporting venues, hosting cricket in the summer and AFL footy in the winter – for many Australians it's considered hallowed ground. Make it to a game if you can (highly recommended), but otherwise you can still make your pilgrimage on non-match-day **tours** that take you through the stands, media and coaches' areas, change rooms and out onto the ground (though unfortunately not beyond the boundary).

In 1858 the first game of Aussie Rules football was played where the MCG and its car parks now stand, and in 1877 it was the venue for the first Test cricket match between Australia and England. The MCG was the central stadium for the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and the 2006 Commonwealth Games. It was also used as army barracks during WWII.

The MCG houses the state-of-the-art National Sports Museum

Mobility:

Vision:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: YES

The 'G' is a short distance from Jolimont and Richmond stations. The best way to get there is the path from Federation Square. See www.mcg.org.au/Events/Facilities/Disability%20Access.aspx for accessibility and seating details.

National Sports Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9657 8856; www.nsm.org.au; MCG, Olympic Stand, Gate 3; adult/concession/family \$20/10/50, with MCG tour \$30/15/60; 10am-5pm)

Hidden away in the bowels of the Melbourne Cricket Ground, this museum features five permanent exhibitions focusing on Australia's favourite sports and celebrates historic sporting moments. Kids will love the interactive section where they can test their footy, cricket or netball skills, among other sports

There are some choice sports objects on display: the handwritten notes used to define the rules of Australian Rules football in 1859; a who's who of Aussie baggy green caps (including Don Bradman's) among great cricketing memorabilia; AFL Brownlow medals; olive branches awarded to Edwin Flack, Australia's first Olympian in 1886; and Cathy Freeman's famous Sydney Olympics swift suit. The museum also incorporates the Champions horse-racing gallery.

Accepts Companion Cards. See www.nsm.org.au/Visit%20NSM/Special%20Needs%20Access.aspx for accessibility information.

Fitzroy Gardens PARK

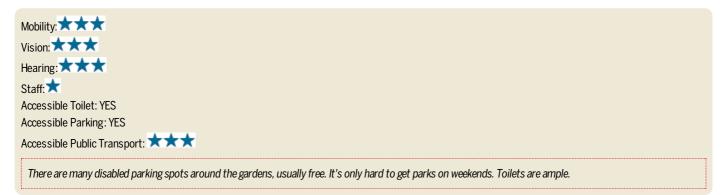
(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.fitzroygardens.com; Wellington Pde, btwn Lansdowne & Albert Sts; Tourist Shuttle, Jolimont)

The city drops away suddenly just east of Spring St, giving way to Melbourne's beautiful backyard, the Fitzroy Gardens. The gardens' stately avenues are lined with English elms, flowerbeds, expansive lawns, strange fountains and a creek.

The highlight is Cooks' Cottage (MAP COOGLEMAP); 203-9419 5766; www.cookscottage.com.au; adult/child/family \$5/2.50/13.50; 9am-5pm), shipped brick-by-brick from Yorkshire and reconstructed in 1934 (the cottage actually belonged to the navigator's parents). It's decorated in mid-18th-century style, with an exhibition about Captain James Cook's eventful, if controversial, voyages to the Southern Ocean.

Nearby is writer Ola Cohn's kooky carved **Fairies Tree**, a 300-year-old stump embellished in 1932 with fairies, pixies, kangaroos, emus and possums. Between Cooks' Cottage and the Fairies Tree is the **Scarred Tree**: now a large stump, it was once stripped of a piece of its bark to make a canoe by Aboriginal people. In the centre of the gardens is a 'model' **Tudor village**. This well-meaning gift was a way of saying thanks for sending food to Britain during WWII.

The delightful 1930s **Conservatory** (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 9am-5pm) is built in a Spanish-mission architectural style and features a range of different floral displays each year. A new visitor centre and cafe was being constructed here at the time of research.



GLOBAL BALLOONING

For two years <u>Global Ballooning</u> has been operating Australia's first disability-friendly hot-air balloon. Global Ballooning's Easy Access Basket, a custom-designed hot-air balloon basket that enables those with limited mobility to float above Melbourne, won a Business and Community Supporting Disability Award at the Victorian Disability Sector Awards, a joint initiative between the Victorian government and National Disability Services, in June 2014. The impetus to design and develop the basket came after the company's director, Kiff Saunders, suffered a serious motorcycle accident, leaving him in a wheelchair for three months and on crutches for a further six. The basket has specially designed seating and seatbelts and a door that allows people to access it without climbing over its edge. Although expensive – the Companion Card isn't accepted – a flight in a hot-air balloon is a truly magical experience.

At 5.30am sharp balloon-goers pile into buses at Richmond's Hilton Hotel. Since the buses are not wheelchair-accessible, I follow in my van to the launch site at Burwood Park. Possessing only head function, with no movement or feeling neck down and unable to breathe unassisted as a result of a car accident when six years old, I am lifted out of my wheelchair by my support worker and Global Ballooning staff onto a bench seat in the balloon's basket.

Before long we lift off and I am high in the sky, agog at four vividly coloured balloons shimmering lazily and leisurely in the morning sun. It's an awe-inspiring vision and I can hardly believe I am witnessing such a magical, floating and colour-saturated sight, so high up in the heavens! Drifting along Burwood Road, Hawthorn, before gradually ascending 1km (2500ft) up into the atmosphere, we pass directly over Melbourne CBD. At the mercy of the wind, my balloon drifts haphazardly over the city's sights. Clusters of differently hued green trees make up Botanical Gardens. We glide over Government House, past the Shrine of Remembrance and across the Yarra River. We float over the MCG and the National Tennis Centre at Melbourne Park and catch a bird's eye view of Flemington Racecourse and beyond. The views are spectacular!

Bringing about an accessible basket was a feat in itself. Airworthiness certification had to be obtained, necessitating an amendment to operating procedures and an exemption from regulations prohibiting the passage of people with disabilities in commercial hot air balloons. Hats off to Melbourne transport injury firm Burt & Davies (who also won a Victorian Disability Sector Award this year), not only for overcoming the myriad legal obstacles, but also for co-sponsoring and co-funding the development of the Easy Access Basket, helping to create the only opportunity in Australia for people with disabilities to experience ballooning.

Far removed from the frantic pace of everyday life beneath me – it was peak hour in the city far below, with bumper-to-bumper traffic, like trails of ants, clogging up the roads – it was as if time had stopped. Everything around me was hushed. All that could be heard was the odd whoosh of my balloon's burners and the gentle swish of swirling currents of air. It was supremely serene, a completely different world. Floods of gentle yellows, reds and blues gradually lit up the heavens above and then the land as the dawn gave way to day. As the sky became brighter and warmer the metropolis revealed itself in its full glory.

The breeze dictated a landing at Royal Park. Descending, the ground appeared to approach rapidly, but it was with only a slight bump that we found ourselves back on terra firma with a feeling of absolute euphoria! What a thrill, what a privilege!

Anthony Bartl

A version of this article first appeared in NewsLink, the newsletter of AQA Victoria, Ltd, and AQA Tasmania.



Watching the sunrise on a Melbourne morning Anthony Bartl / Global Ballooning ©

CONTEMPORARY ART

Several galleries around the city centre will be of particular interest to contemporary art lovers. Once raucously bohemian, **Tolarno Galleries** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 303-9654 6000; www.tolarnogalleries.com; 4th fl, 104 Exhibition St; 103m-5pm Tue-Fri, 1-5pm Sat; 165,95,96) is now a serious, cerebral space, with exhibitions changing monthly; it is accessible via a lift from the foyer to level 4, where the Gallery is situated, but does not have an accessible toilet.

West Space (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9662 3297; www.westspace.org.au; Level 1, 225 Bourke St; 200-6pm Tue-Sat; 486, 95, 96), one of Melbourne's oldest nonprofit, artist-run galleries, has a varied exhibition program in a range of mediums both traditional and modern. West Space has wheelchair access via a ramp in Russell Place, not the main entrance, which has steps. Take the lift to the 1st floor. There is no accessible toilet, but there is a Smart Loo nearby.

Some of the city's most respected contemporary artists can be seen at the Anna Schwartz Gallery (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-9654 6131; www.annaschwartzgallery.com; 185 Flinders Lane; noon-6pm Tue-Fri, 1-5pm Sat), a standard white cube featuring often fiercely conceptual work. The entrance has stairs, but the gallery is accessible by appointment as there is a lift that can be accessed with notice.

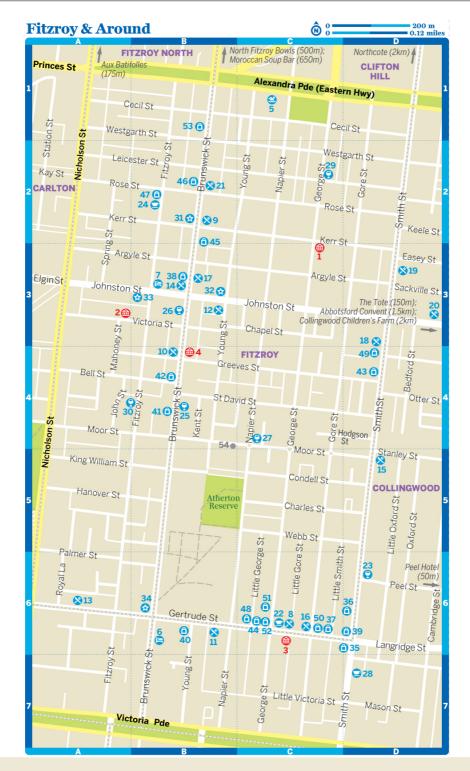
Fitzroy & Around

Fitzroy, Melbourne's first suburb, long had a reputation for vice and squalor. Today, despite a long bout of gentrification, it's still where creative people meet up, though now it's more to 'do' lunch and blog about it before checking out the offerings at 'one-off' boutiques and vintage shops. It's also home to a bunch of art galleries.

Gertrude St, where once grannies feared to tread, is Melbourne's street of the moment. Smith St in Collingwood has some rough edges, though talk is more of its smart restaurants, cafes and boutiques rather than its down-and-out days of old. As the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people, it's still a social spot for Aboriginal people. The streets behind Smith St are home to what were once the southern hemisphere's largest industrial complexes. These former 'satanic mills' are now packed with million-dollar apartments. Beyond Collingwood is similarly industrial Abbotsford, bordered by a scenic stretch of the Yarra River; the Yarra joins Merri Creek at Dights Falls.

Beyond Merri Creek is Northcote, one of Melbourne's fastest gentrifying suburbs, a sprawling neighbourhood of wooden Federation cottages and big backyards. Its sleepy demeanour shifts once the sun goes down and fun-seekers hit High St.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014



Sights 1 Centre for Contemporary Photography C3 2 Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi A3 3 Gertrude Contemporary Art Space C6 4 Sutton Gallery B4 Activities, Courses & Tours 5 Fitzroy Swimming Pool C1 Sleeping 6 Metropole Hotel Apartments B6 7 Tyrian Serviced Apartments B3

8 <u>Añada</u> C6

9 Babka Bakery Cafe B2

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

² E-Book	23/12/
10 Brunswick Street Alimentari B4	
11 Charcoal Lane B6	
12 Commoner B3	
13 Cutler & Co A6	
14 Marios B3	
15 Masak Masak D5	
16 Moon Under Water C6	
17 Pireaus Blues B3	
18 Po' Boy Quarter D3	
19 Robert Burns Hotel D3	
20 The Horn D3	
21 Vegie Bar B2	
Drinking & Nightlife	
22 De Clieu C6	
23 Grace Darling D6	
24 Industry Beans B2	
25 Little Creatures Dining Hall B4	
26 Naked for Satan B3	
27 Napier Hotel C4	
28 Storm in a Teacup D7	
29 The Rose C2	
30 The Standard A4	
31 Evelyn Hotel B2 32 Night Cat B3 33 Old Bar B3 34 Workers Club B6	
Shopping	
35 Aesop D6	
36 Angelucci 20th Century D6	
37 Books for Cooks C6	
38 Brunswick Street Bookstore B3	
39 Crumpler D6	
40 <u>Ess</u> B6	
41 <u>Fat</u> B4	
42 Gorman B4	
43 <u>Hudson</u> D4	
44 Mud Australia C6	
45 Polyester Books B2	
46 Polyester Records B2	
47 Rose Street Artists' Market B2	
48 Signet Bureau C6	
49 Smith Street Bazaar D4	
50 SpaceCraft C6	
51 Third Drawer Down C6	
52 Title C6	
53 Tomorrow Never Knows B1	
Information	
54 Fitzroy Library B4	

Abbotsford Convent HISTORICSITE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9415 3600; www.abbotsfordconvent.com.au; 1 St Heliers St, Abbotsford; tours \$15; 7.30am-10pm; 200, 201, 207, Victoria Park) FREE

The nuns are long gone at this former convent, which dates back to 1861, so don't worry, no one will ask if you've been to Mass lately. Today its rambling collection of ecclesiastic architecture is home to a thriving arts community of galleries, studios, cafes and bars, spread over nearly 7 hectares of riverside land. Tours of the complex are run at 2pm every Sunday.

riverside land. Tours of the complex are run at 2pm every Sunday.

The Slow Food Market is held here every fourth Saturday; the Shirt & Skirt clothes market is held every third Sunday, and during summer there's the popular Supper Market on Friday nights, featuring food stalls and live music. The offbeat Kage Physical Theatre offers modern dance

performances, and the Shadow Electric open-air cinema and bar runs from November to March. Check the website for details.

The Convent Bakery (www.conventbakery.com; <a href="https://www.conven



Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: YES

Two disabled parks: One street non-paying; other in the car park. Usually already taken at any given time. Parking is very congested ie so is access.

The Convent is trying to make the site as accessible as it can; check www.abbotsfordconvent.com.au/visitor-information/universal-access and download an accessibility map, with path gradients marked, from www.abbotsfordconvent.com.au/site/assets/uploaded/f1534738-accessmap.pdf.

Collingwood Children's Farm FARM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.farm.org.au; 18 St Heliers St, Abbotsford; adult/child/family \$8/4/16; \$\infty\$9am-4.30pm; \$\overline{\ov

The inner city melts away at this rustic riverside retreat that's beloved not just by children. There's a range of frolicking farm animals that kids can help feed, as well as rambling gardens and grounds for picnicking on warm days. The farm cafe is open early and can be visited without entering the farm itself. The monthly farmers market (www.mfm.com.au; 18 St Heliers St, Abbotsford; adult/child \$2/free; 8am-1pm, 2nd Saturday of the month), held right by the river, is a local highlight, with everything from rabbits to roses to bottles of organic milk hoisted into shoppers' baskets.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: NO

Access is via ramps, surface is level but it is a farm so will be more difficult to negotiate when wet. Cafe is accessible.

Yarra Bend Park PARK

(MAP GOOGLE MAP); www.parkweb.vic.gov.au; Kew; 200, 201, 207, Victoria Park)

Escape the city without leaving town. About 5km northeast of the city centre, the Yarra River flows through bushland, an area cherished by runners, rowers, cyclists, picnickers and strollers. It's also home to two golf courses. At the end of Boathouse Rd is the <u>Studley Park Boathouse</u>, which has a kiosk and restaurant, barbecue facilities and canoes for hire.

Kane's suspension footbridge takes you across the river, from where you can follow a route to Dights Falls, at the meeting of the Yarra River and Merri Creek. You can also head to the falls along the southern riverbank.

See www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/yarra-bend-park/accessibility for full accessibility details.

Studley Park Boathouse BOATHOUSE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-9853 1972; www.studleyparkboathouse.com.au)

Melbourne's oldest operating boathouse, Studley Park Boathouse dates back to the 1860s, and houses a restaurant, kiosk and cafe. There are also boats, canoes and kayaks available for hire.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES Accessible Parking: YES

A large steep hill makes this an impossible place to get to if using a wheelchair.

Get full accessibility details for the Boathouse and around at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/yarra-bend-park/accessibility/studley-park-boathouse-and-picnic-area

Centre for Contemporary Photography GALLERY

(CCP; MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 1549; www.ccp.org.au; 404 George St, Fitzroy; 211am-6pm Wed-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun; 186) FREE

This not-for-profit centre has a changing schedule of photography exhibitions across a couple of galleries. Shows traverse traditional technique and the highly conceptual. There's a particular fascination with work involving video projection, including a nightly after-hours screening in a window. Also offers photography courses.

Gallery is accessible for wheelchairs.

Gertrude Contemporary Art Space GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9419 3406; www.gertrude.org.au; 200 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; ≥11am-5.30pm Tue-Fri, 11am-4.30pm Sat; 186) FREE

This nonprofit gallery and studio complex has been going strong for nearly 30 years; many of its alumni are now famous artists. The monthly openings are refreshingly come-as-you-are, with crowds often spilling onto the street, two-dollar wine in hand.

Small step at the entrance.

Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9416 4170; www.gabriellepizzi.com.au; 51 Victoria St, Fitzroy; 210am-5pm Wed-Fri, noon-6pm Sat; 11, 96, 112) FREE

Gabrielle Pizzi, one of Australia's most respected dealers of Indigenous art, founded this gallery in the 1980s; her daughter Samantha continues to show contemporary city-based artists, as well as traditional artists from the communities of Balgo Hills, Papunya, Maningrida and the Tiwi Islands.

One low step at the entrance, otherwise OK.

Sutton Gallery GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9416 0727; www.suttongallery.com.au; 254 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; 211am-5pm Tue-Sat; 112) FREE

Housed in a simple, unassuming warehouse space entered off Greeves St, this gallery is known for championing challenging new work.

Small step at the entrance - perhaps 10 cm - and staff will assist if asked.

WORTH A TRIP: HEIDE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Heide GALLERY

(GOOGLE MAP ; ≥03-9850 1500; <u>www.heide.com.au</u>; 7 Templestowe Rd, Bulleen; museum adult/child \$16/free; ≥10am-5pm Tue-Sun; ≥903, Heidelberg)

The former home of arts patrons John and Sunday Reed, Heide is a large public art gallery with wonderful grounds for exploring. It holds regularly changing exhibitions, many of which include works by the artists that called Heide home, including Sidney Nolan and Albert Tucker.

Shannon Bennett's Cafe Vue does the cooking honours (Tuesday to Sunday), and you can eat in, or grab a lunch box or picnic hamper to have by the Yarra. The free tours (2pm) are a great introduction to Melbourne's early painting scene.

It's easiest to get to Heide by car; it's about a 20-minute drive from the city. The museum is signposted off the Eastern Fwy. Comments from our community:

Heide has three buildings. Wheelchair users and stair-challenged people will have issues going up and down from Heide II to Heide I and vice versa. Heide II is accessible only on one floor for wheelchair users and stair-challenged people. Heide III/ Heide I is good for all

The surrounding parkland is very steep in places and paths are unsealed; manual wheelchair users beware in all weathers, power wheelchair users beware in wet weather.

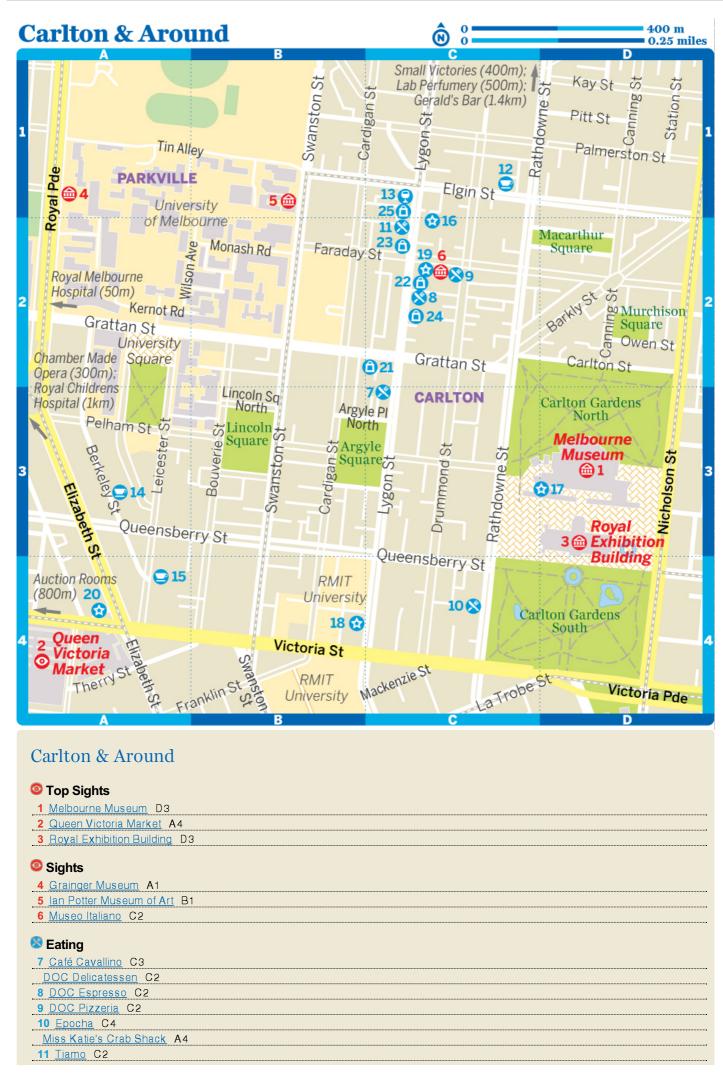
Cafe Vue is accessible but somewhat crowded if you're in a wheelchair.

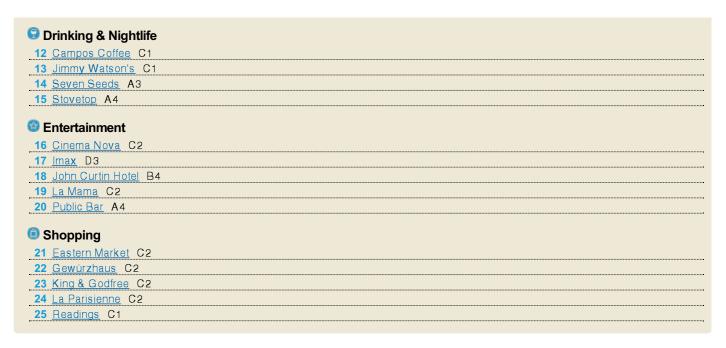
See www.heide.com.au/visit for accessibility details, including maps of the galleries and car parks. There is accessible parking and toilets, and Companion Cards are accepted.

Carlton & Around

Carlton is the traditional home of Melbourne's Italian community, so you'll see the *tricolori* unfurled with characteristic passion come soccer finals and the Grand Prix. The heady mix of intellectual activity, espresso and phenomenal food lured bohemians to the area in the 1950s; by the 1970s it was the centre of the city's burgeoning counterculture scene and has produced some of the city's most legendary theatre, music and literature.

Lygon St reaches out through leafy North Carlton to booming Brunswick. The sprawling University of Melbourne, and its large residential colleges, takes up Carlton's western edge. Here you'll find a vibrant mix of students, long-established families, renovators and newly arrived migrants. The central Brunswick artery, Sydney Rd, is perpetually clogged with traffic and is packed with Middle Eastern restaurants and grocers. Lygon St in East Brunswick just keeps getting more fashionable: it has a cluster of restaurants, homeware stores and bars.





★Melbourne Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 13 11 02; www.museumvictoria.com.au; 11 Nicholson St, Carlton; adult/child & student \$10/free, exhibitions extra; 10am-5pm; Tourist Shuttle, City Circle, 86, 96, Parliament)

This museum provides a grand sweep of Victoria's natural and cultural histories, with exhibitions covering everything from dinosaur fossils and giant squid specimens to the taxidermy hall, a 3D volcano and an open-air forest atrium of Victorian flora. Become immersed in the legend of champion racehorse and national hero Phar Lap in the Marvellous Melbourne exhibition. The excellent **Bunjilaka**, on the ground floor, presents Indigenous Australian stories and history told through objects and Aboriginal voices with state-of-the-art technology. There's also an **IMAX cinema** on-site.

Companion Cards are accepted. See www.museumvictoria.com.au/melbournemuseum/visiting/accessibility for accessibility information.

*Royal Exhibition Building HISTORICBUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 13 11 02; www.museumvictoria.com.au/reb; 9 Nicholson St, Carlton; tours adult/child \$5/3.50; Tourist Shuttle, City Circle, 86, 96, Parliament)

Built for the International Exhibition in 1880, and winning Unesco World Heritage status in 2004, this beautiful Victorian edifice symbolises the glory days of the Industrial Revolution, the British Empire and 19th-century Melbourne's economic supremacy. It was the first building to fly the Australian flag, and Australia's first parliament was held here in 1901; it now hosts everything from trade fairs to car shows, as well as the biennial Melbourne Art Fair. Tours of the building leave from the Melbourne Museum at 2pm.

Mobility: ***

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

See www.museumvictoria.com.au/reb/visiting for details. Wheelchair accessible entrance is on the northern side, opposite the museum. Parking is at the museum car park.

Ian Potter Museum of Art GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au; 800 Swanston St, Carlton; 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun; 6, 8, 72)

Part of **Melbourne University**, the Ian Potter Museum of Art manages the university's extensive art collection, which ranges from antiquities to contemporary Australian work. It's a thoughtfully designed space and always has an exciting exhibition program. Pick up the *Sculpture on Campus* map here for a walking tour around Melbourne Uni's sculptures, set amid heritage-listed buildings.

Contact the gallery prior to visiting as there are some accessibility limitations. See www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au/the-potter/visit-and-contact for details.

Grainger Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ✓03-8344 5270; www.grainger.unimelb.edu.au; Royal Pde, Gate 13, Melbourne Uni, Parkville; ✓21-4.30pm Tue-Fri & Sun, closed Jan;

Percy Grainger's fascinating life is laid bare within this art deco building, in a tribute to one of Australia's great musical exports. Leaving Australia as a nine-year-old, he became an internationally renowned composer and pianist in Europe and the USA, as well a forerunner in experimental music. Exhibits from all points of his extraordinary life are on display, from his sound machines to a collection of fetish whips.

Wheelchair-accessible, with accessible toilet. No hearing loop, but some recordings of Grainger's music can be played by somebody accompanying a vision-impaired visitor.

Royal Melbourne Zoo zoo

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9285 9300; www.zoo.org.au; Elliott Ave, Parkville; adult/child \$30/13.20, children free on weekends/holidays; 9am-5pm; 505, Royal Park)

Established in 1861, this is the oldest zoo in Australia and the third oldest in the world. Today it's one of the city's most popular attractions. Set in spacious, prettily landscaped gardens, the zoo's enclosures aim to simulate the animals' natural habitats. Walkways pass through the enclosures: you can go through the bird aviary, cross a bridge over the lions' park or enter a tropical hothouse full of colourful butterflies.

There's also a large collection of native animals in natural bush settings, a platypus aquarium, fur seals, lions and tigers, plenty of reptiles, and an 'Am I in Asia?' elephant enclosure.

In summer, the zoo hosts **Twilight Concerts**, while **Roar 'n' Snore** (adult/child \$195/145; Sep-May) allows you to camp at the zoo and join the keepers on their morning feeding rounds.

To help plan your visit, go to www.zoo.org.au/melbourne/plan-your-visit/accessibility.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: YES

Guided mobile tours are available in a walking-pace electric vehicle; see the website for details.

Vision-impaired visitors can book a volunteer for a guided tour around the zoo. Some volunteer staff have completed Audio Described training. The volunteers are fabulous and very accommodating and have a wealth of knowledge about the animals. These tours can also be conducted on a buggy.

Guide dogs are allowed within the Zoo, but are restricted from open enclosures such as the Butterfly House, lemurs, the aviary and the kangaroo and emuenclosure.

There are two apps for Melbourne Zoo that are particularly useful for vision-impaired visitors. The apps are mostly accessible with voiceover. The Melbourne Zoo app provides a map that can be slightly enlarged. With voiceover switched on, most of the pictures of animals on the map have an accessible button, which when opened can provide information about the animals. The Act Wild app features zookeeper blogs and video/audio information about different animals.

Museo Italiano MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); №03-9349 9000; www.museoitaliano.com.au; 199 Faraday St, Carlton; ©10am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-5pm Sat)

Telling the story of Melbourne's Italian community, this museum offers a good starting point to put the history of Lygon St into both historical and contemporary context.

Fully accessible with ramp access and accessible toilet.

Ceres ENVIRONMENT PARK

(GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9389 0100; www.ceres.org.au; 8 Lee St, East Brunswick; ≥9am-5pm, market 9am-2pm Wed & Sat, Thu & Fri to 5pm; =96) FREE

Ceres, the name of the Roman goddess of agriculture and fertility, also stands for Centre for Education & Research in Environmental Strategies, a two-decades-old community environment built on a former rubbish tip. Stroll around the permaculture and bushfood nursery before refuelling with an Australian-bush chai tea and cake at the pretty cafe.

There's also a community market where you can buy organic and backyard-produced goodies; the info centre here has a great bookstore on sustainability-related matter.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014



Lovely place, but it's quite a steep hill to the cafe area. Also, in the nursery area, the ground is covered in gravel, so it requires a strong wheelchair user to push through.

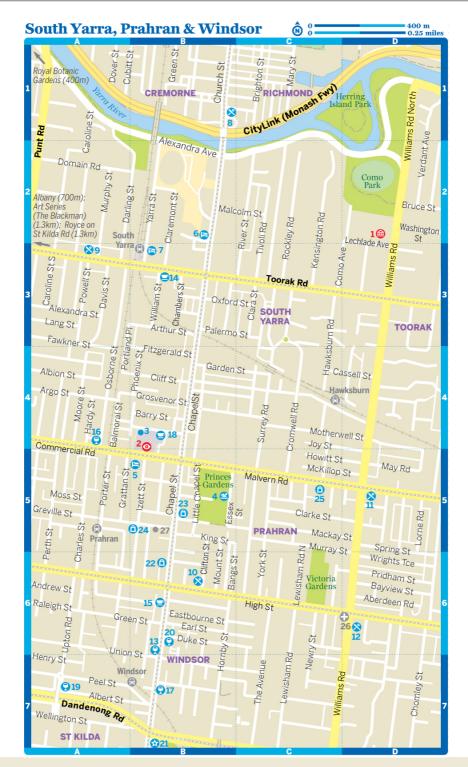
Paths are steep and some are dirt-based so may be tricky to get around in a wheelchair, scooter or walker. There are few tactile tiles and signs for the vision/hearing impaired but staff are very helpful. I suggest a call before visiting to get more details about accessibility. Their website is also very useful. See the website for contact details and download a map from www.ceres.org.au/sites/default/files/CERES_Site_Map.jpg

South Yarra, Prahran & Windsor

These neighbourhoods have always been synonymous with glitz and glamour, with their elevated aspect and large allotments considered prestigious. Access from the city centre to South Yarra was by boat or punt – hence Punt Rd, one of the area's major thoroughfares – before Princes Bridge was built in 1850.

South Yarra's Chapel St strip still parades itself as a must-do fashion destination, but has seen better days: it's been taken over by chain stores, tacky bars and, come sunset, doof-doof cars. But Prahran is still a gutsy and good place, with designer stores, bars and some refreshingly eclectic businesses. Chapel St continues down to Windsor, a hive of fun cafes, bars and shops selling secondhand and vintage wares.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014



South Yarra, Prahran & Windsor Sights Come House D2 Prahran Market B4 Activities, Courses & Tours Essential Ingredient B4 Prahran Aquatic Centre B5 Sleeping Art Series (The Cullen) B5 Art Series (The Olsen) B2 Punthill South Yarra Grand B3 Esting Baby B1 Da Noi A3

10 Huxtaburger B6
11 Valentino D5
12 WoodLand House D6
S Drinking & Nightlife
13 Chapel St Cellars B6
14 Drugstore Espresso B3
15 <u>Dukes</u> B6
16 Kama Bar A4
17 Kid Boston B7
18 Market Lane B4
19 Windsor Castle Hotel A7
20 Yellow Bird B6
Entertainment
© Entertainment 21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 Shopping
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 3 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 3 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6 23 Fat B5
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6 23 Fat B5 24 Greville Records B5
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 3 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6 23 Fat B5
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6 23 Fat B5 24 Greville Records B5
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6 23 Fat B5 24 Greville Records B5 25 Shelley Panton C5
21 Red Stitch Actors Theatre B7 6 Shopping 22 Chapel Street Bazaar B6 23 Fat B5 24 Greville Records B5 25 Shelley Panton C5

*Royal Botanic Gardens GARDENS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; www.rbg.vic.gov.au; Birdwood Ave, South Yarra; 7.30am-sunset, Children's Garden open Wed-Sun, closed mid-Jul-mid-Sep; Tourist Shuttle, 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72)

One of the finest botanic gardens in the world, the Royal Botanic Gardens are one of Melbourne's most glorious attractions. Sprawling beside the Yarra River, the beautifully designed gardens feature a global selection of plantings and specifically endemic Australian flora. Mini-ecosystems, such as a cacti and succulents area, herb garden and an indigenous rainforest, are set amid vast lawns. Take a book, picnic or Frisbee – but most importantly, take your time.

During the summer months, the gardens play host to the **Moonlight Cinema** and theatre performances. Other features include the **Observatory** for tours of the night sky, and the excellent, nature-based **Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden** (MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.rbg.vic.gov.au; Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra; 10am-4pm Wed-Sun, daily during Victorian school holidays; 8), a whimsical and child-scaled place that invites kids and their parents to explore, discover and imagine.

The visitor centre (MAP GCOGLEMAP); Observatory Gate, Birdwood Ave; 99am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5.30pm Sat & Sun) is at the former centre for stargazers. A range of tours departs from here. Choose from a variety of guided tours through assorted horticultural pockets to learn a bit about history, botany and wildlife. Next to the visitor centre, the National Herbarium, established in 1853, contains 1.2 million dried botanical specimens used for identification purposes.

For visitors who can't get enough of gardens, the Royal Botanic Gardens has a recently developed **Australian Garden** (1000 Ballarto Rd, Cranbourne) in the outlying suburb of Cranbourne, which is about a 50-minute drive from the city. The award-winning visitor centre was designed by local architect Kerstin Thompson.

Some steep paths and one set of stairs but very wheelchair accessible otherwise. Grab a map of the gardens (www.rbg.vic.gov.au/documents/Melb-Map-w-Jardin Tan.pdf) and take care during wet weather.

Shrine of Remembrance MONUMENT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.shrine.org.au; Birdwood Ave, South Yarra; 10am-5pm; Tourist Shuttle, 11, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72

Beside St Kilda Rd stands the massive Shrine of Remembrance, built as a memorial to Victorians killed in WWI. It was built between 1928 and 1934, much of it with Depression-relief, or 'susso', labour. Its bombastic classical design is partly based on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, one of the seven ancient wonders of the world. It's visible from the other end of town; planning regulations continue to restrict any building that would obstruct the view of the Shrine from Swanston St as far back as Lonsdale St.

Thousands attend the moving Anzac Day (25 April) dawn service, while the Remembrance Day service at 11am on 11 November commemorates the signing of the 1918 Armistice marking the formal end to WWI. At this precise moment a shaft of light shines through an opening in the ceiling, passing over the Stone of Remembrance and illuminating the word 'love'; on all other days this effect is demonstrated using artificial lighting on the hour. The forecourt, with its cenotaph and eternal flame (lit by Queen Elizabeth II in 1954), was built as a memorial to those who died in WWII, and there are several other specific memorials that surround the Shrine.

The complex is under 24-hour police guard; during opening hours the police are quaintly required to wear uniforms resembling those worn by WWI

light-horsemen. Pick up the self-guided tour brochure, or otherwise join the **free guided tours** daily at 11am and 2pm, often conducted by returned soldiers. The Galleries of Remembrance will open in late 2014 for the Centenary of WWI, telling the story of Australians at war.

The Shrine is undergoing redevelopment and wheelchair access to some sections has been compromised. See www.shrine.org.au/Visit-the-Shrine/Planning-your-visit for details; call ahead to enquire if you are unsure.

Como House HISTORICBUILDING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9827 2500, tour bookings 03-8663 7260; www.comohouse.com.au; cnr Williams Rd & Lechlade Ave, South Yarra; adult/child/family \$15/9/35; \$\infty\$10am-4pm; \$\overline{1}\text{8}\$)

This grand colonial residence overlooking the Yarra was begun in 1840, and has since been faithfully restored by the National Trust. It contains some of the belongings of the Armytage family, the last and longest owners, who lived in the house for 95 years. Opening hours are irregular; there are usually a few showings per month (call ahead for times and bookings), which will allow you to explore its extensive, well-tended grounds, which are faithful to 19th-century landscaping principles and include a croquet lawn and magnificent flower beds.

The Stables of Como (3-9827 6886; www.thestablesofcomo.com.au) cafe, located in the former horse stables, can pack a picnic hamper for you to enjoy on its stately lawns; it also hosts high tea.

Tours are only bookable for groups of 15 or more. Enquire about the level of accessibility when making a booking.

Stables of Como is wheelchair accessible; enter off Lechlade Ave. Outside table most suitable for wheelchairs and gardens can be explored via paths, so best when weather is fine. Open 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm Sun. Book ahead as it gets very busy.

Prahran Market MARKET

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.prahranmarket.com.au; 163 Commercial Rd, Prahran; 7am-5pm Tue, Thu & Sat, to 7pm Fri, 10am-3pm Sun; 72, 78, Prahran)

The Prahran Market has been an institution for more than a century and is one of the finest produce markets in the city, with numerous stalls stocking fresh seafood, deli items, fruits and vegetables. The market is also home to a culinary store, **Essential Ingredient** (**3**03-9827 9047; www.theessentialingredient.com.au); check its website for details of its cooking school, featuring workshops with Melbourne's most lauded chefs.



Accessible Toilet: YES Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Accessible parking available in next door car park. Most of the market is undercover. For a market map, visit www.prahranmarket.com.au/stall-finder

WORTH A TRIP: FOOTSCRAY & THE WEST

The city's remaining working docklands divide the city from the western suburbs, which have long been proudly working class. This has changed in the past 15 years, with many young professional families taking advantage of the area's cute cottages, community feel and its location close to the city centre.

The area's 'capital' is the fabulously unfussy Footscray. Almost half of Footscray's population was born overseas, the majority in Vietnam, Africa, China, Italy and Greece. Footscray's busy train station serves as a transport hub for Melbourne's west and beyond, with numerous bus routes, train lines and regional trains converging on the newly rebuilt station. Accessibility is good via ramps and lifts. Olympic Doughnuts on the Irving St side of the station has been cranking out hot, jam-filled delights for years, and at 80 cents a pop it's an old-school treat in every sense.

The areas around Barkly St and Irving St feature Vietnamese, Ethiopian and Indian restaurants and produce stores, helping cement the area's reputation as 'Foodscray'.

The Footscray Market (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; cnr Hopkins & Leeds St; \$\infty\$7am-4pm Tue, Wed & Sat, to 6pm Thu, to 8pm Fri; \$\overline{\mathbb{H}}\$ Footscray) is testament to the area's diversity, and definitely worth a visit. All manner of fresh produce is sold here, from dirt-cheap fruit and veg to exotic ingredients such as banana flowers. The market is accessible from either Hopkins or Irving St and has an accessible toilet and accessible parking. It does get crazy busy, especially on Saturday mornings.

Head towards the Maribyrnong River from Footscray Station, down Bunbury St, and you'll pass the 'Scray's hippest cafe, Footscray Milking Station (203-90299240; 35 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 35 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 36 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 37 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 37 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 38 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 37 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 37 Bunbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 38 Banbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 38 Banbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 39 Banbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 39 Banbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 39 Banbury St Footscray; 200-90299240; 30 Banbury St Footscray; 200-9029924; 200-9029924; 200-902924

Heading south from Footscray are the fashionable residential neighbourhoods of Seddon and Yarraville. The latter centres on its train station, with a beautifully well-preserved heritage shopping area around Anderson St; it also boasts some good restaurants, bars and cafes. Catch a film at the local **Sun Theatre** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 303-9362 0999; www.suntheatre.com.au; 8 Ballarat St, Yarraville; session times vary; Yarraville), a wheelchair-accessible movie house (though one theatre might be tricky for some chairs; call ahead to check) with Melbourne's best choc-top range. Venture further west still and you'll hit the charming maritime neighbourhood of Williamstown.

The City of Maribyrnong website has some helpful information on its website for visitors – www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_ld=3211 – including a handy list of accessible playgrounds (www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_ld=3211 – including a handy list of accessible playgrounds (www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_ld=1578).

St Kilda & Around

Come to St Kilda for the sea breezes, its seedy history and a bit of good of people-watching. St Kilda was once a playground full of dance halls, with a funpark, an ice-skating rink, theatres, sea baths and gardens. It got divided up (as many good things do) and now its art deco apartments are worth astronomical real-estate prices. There are still mansions dotted around, and its leafy backstreets are worth a look (just keep in mind that its reputation as a red-light district is not unfounded). There's some great punk music history here: the Boys Next Door, fronted by Nick Cave, were based here, and played gloriously chaotic gigs at the George Hotel (then known as the Crystal Ballroom).

On weekends the volume is turned up, the traffic crawls and the street-party atmosphere sets in. It's still a neighbourhood of extreme, and often exhilarating, contrasts: backpacker hostels sit alongside fine-dining restaurants, souvlaki bars are next to designer shops, and rooming houses share main streets with chocolatiers.

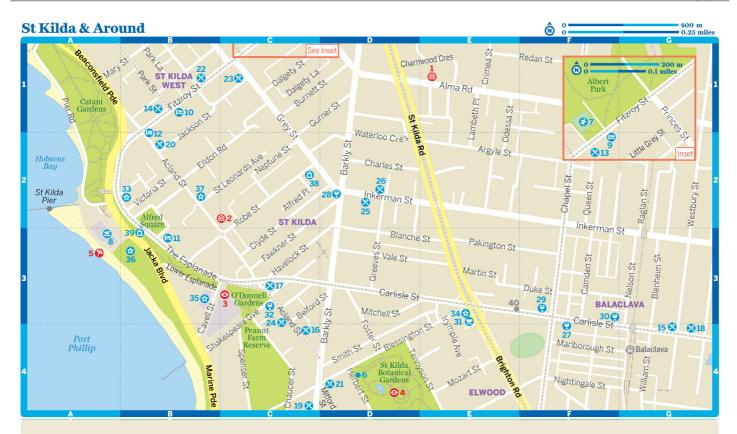
Many long-time locals have turned to Carlisle St's eastern reach in their search for new places to hang out. Traditionally a devout Jewish neighbourhood, it's now known for its wine bars and all-day breakfast cafes.

The local council, the City of Port Phillip, which covers Elwood, St Kilda, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne, has made a real attempt to provide accessibility information about a range of services:

Transport Map (www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/default/FINAL_TravelSmart_Map_Port_Phillip_7x4_WEB.pdf) This large map covers the whole council area with handy smaller maps detailing how to access key areas, complete with accessible tram stops.

Disabled parking map: www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/disabled-parking.htm

Beach map, with toilet facilities marked: www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/City of Port Phillip Map 2013.pdf



St Kilda & Around

Sights

- 1 Jewish Museum of Australia E1
- 2 Linden Arts Centre & Gallery C2
- 3 Luna Park C3
- 4 St Kilda Botanical Gardens D4
- 5 St Kilda Foreshore A3

Activities, Courses & Tours

Aurora Spa Retreat B2

- 6 Port Phillip Eco Centre D4
- 7 St Kilda Bowling Club F1
- 8 St Kilda Sea Baths A3

Sleeping

- 9 Adina Apartment Hotel St Kilda F2
- 10 Hotel Urban B1
- 11 Novotel St Kilda B3
- 12 Prince B2

Eating

- 13 Banff F2
- 14 Barney Allen's B1
- 15 Batch Espresso G4
- 16 Cicciolina C4
- 17 Galleon Cafe C3
- 18 Glick's G4
- 19 | Carusi II C4
- 20 Lau's Family Kitchen B2
- 21 Lentil as Anything D4 22 Mirka's at Tolarno B1
- 23 Miss Jackson C1
- 24 Monarch Cake Shop C3
- 25 Mr Wolf D2
- 26 Newmarket Hotel D2

Drinking & Nightlife

- 27 Carlisle Wine Bar F4
- 28 Hotel Barkly D2



St Kilda Foreshore BEACH

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Jacka Blvd; 🗐 16, 96)

While there are palm-fringed promenades, a parkland strand and a long stretch of sand, St Kilda's seaside appeal is more Brighton, England, than *Baywatch*, despite 20-odd years of glitzy development. The kiosk at the end of **St Kilda Pier** (an exact replica of the original, which burnt down in 2003, a year short of its centenary) is as much about the journey as the destination.

The breakwater near the pier was built in the '50s as a safe harbour for boats competing in the Olympic Games. It's now home to a colony of little penguins that have, incredibly, chosen the city's most crowded suburb in which to reside.

During summer, the Port Phillip Eco Centre (MAP COOGLEMAP); 203-9534 0670; www.ecocentre.com; 55a Blessington St) runs a range of tours, including guided urban wildlife walks and coastal discovery walks, and offers information on the penguin colony. Contact Earthcare St Kilda (www.earthcarestkilda.org.au) to get involved in penguin research.

On the foreshore south of the pier, the Moorish-style <u>St Kilda Sea Baths</u> has a heated indoor saltwater pool, but at \$13 a dip, it's really only attractive on frosty days.

Mobility:

Vision:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Must do in the warmer months. Direct access from Flinders Street is by low-floor tram only. Even the low-floor trams can be tricky for wheelchairs. Train stop otherwise is Balaclava. Once there it is a great place to wander about. Very happening place.

Jewish Museum of Australia MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 03-9834 3600; www.jewishmuseum.com.au; 26 Alma Rd, St Kilda; adult/child/family \$10/5/20; 10am-4pm Tue-Thu, to 5pm Sun, closed Jewish holy days; 3, 67)

Interactive displays tell the history of Australia's Jewish community from the earliest days of European settlement, while permanent exhibitions celebrate Judaism's rich cycle of festivals and holy days. The museum also has a good curatorial reputation for its contemporary art exhibitions. By car, follow St Kilda Rd from St Kilda Junction, then turn left at Alma Rd.

Wheelchair-accessible, with accessible toilet. No hearing loop.

Linden Arts Centre & Gallery GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥ 03-9534 0099; <u>www.lindenarts.org</u>; 26 Acland St, St Kilda; ≥ 1-5pm Tue-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun; 1 16, 96)

Housed in a wrought-iron-clad 1870s mansion, Linden champions the work of emerging artists. The annual Postcard Show, which coincides with the

St Kilda festival in February/March, is a highlight.

Limited access, gravel driveway; entrance via left of verandah; doors 82cm wide; has accessible toilet.

Luna Park AMUSEMENT PARK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9525 5033; www.lunapark.com.au; 18 Lower Esplanade, St Kilda; single ride adult/child \$11/9, unlimited rides \$48/38; 16, 96)

Luna Park opened in 1912 and still retains the feel of an old-style amusement park, with creepy Mr Moon's gaping mouth swallowing you up as you enter. There's a heritage-listed 'scenic railway' (the oldest operating roller coaster in the world) and a beautifully baroque carousel with hand-painted horses, swans and chariots, as well as the full complement of gut-churning rides.

Some restrictions in place for safety reasons. See www.lunapark.com.au/rides/guests-special-needs for accessibility details. Companion Cards are accepted.

St Kilda Botanical Gardens GARDENS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9209 6777; www.portphillip.vic.gov.au; cnr Blessington & Tennyson Sts, St Kilda; sunrise-sunset; 96)

Taking pride of place just metres away from busy Barkly St, the Botanical Gardens are an unexpected haven from the St Kilda hustle. Wide gravel paths invite a leisurely exploration of this green zone, and there are plenty of shady spots to rest on the open lawns. There are local indigenous plants and a subtropical rainforest conservatory to ponder.

Accessible toilets and plenty of seating available; see www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/st_kilda botanic.htm or download the map www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/st_kilda botanic.htm or download the map www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/st_kilda botanic.htm or download the map www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/st_kilda botanic.htm or download the map www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/content-images/St_Kilda Bot Gardens Map %28Copyright%29.pdf).

Jewish Holocaust Centre MUSEUM

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9528 1985; www.jhc.org.au; 13-15 Selwyn St, Elsternwick; by donation; 210am-4pm Mon-Thu, to 2pm Fri, noon-4pm Sun; 67, Elsternwick)

Dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews who lost their lives during the Holocaust, this well-presented museum was set up by survivors as a sobering reminder of the atrocities they endured. Guided tours are available, often led by Holocaust survivors themselves.

Accessible parking is available; see www.jhc.org.au/visit-the-centre.html for details.

MUMA GALLERY

(Monash University Museum of Art; GOOGLEMAP); www.monash.edu.au/muma/; 900 Dandenong Rd, Caulfield East; \$\infty\$10am-5pm Tue-Fri, noon-5pm Sat; \$\overline{\omega}\$3, \$\overline{\omega}\$Caulfield) FREE

Established during the 1960s, MUMA has a collection of more than 1800 artworks, and they're a great representation of Australian contemporary art.

Mobility:

Vision:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

It's one floor; so easy access for all abilities. No accessible parking near but ample parking on Princes Highway.

Download an access map at www.monash.edu/muma/assets/pdfs/muma-location.pdf (MUMA is ground floor building F), or a transport map at www.monash.edu.au/muma/about/location.html.

TRAVELLING BY WHEELCHAIR TO ST KILDA

By Paul Mariager

Paul is an avid Lonely Planet fan who doesn't let using a wheelchair stop him from getting out and about independently.

There are two options when travelling by tram from the Melbourne city centre to St Kilda. The first is to take tram 16. It's best to board the tram at the Arts Precinct (NGV, stop 14); although the Federation Square/Flinders St stop (stop 13) is listed as wheelchair accessible, the gap and rise are both bigger, which some wheelchair users will find more difficult. All other stops listed as accessible on the 16 tram though to St Kilda should present no problems. Once you get to St Kilda there are four accessible stops to choose from: Park St (stop 134), Jacka Blvd (stop 135), The Esplanade (stop 136) and Luna Park (stop 138). Each stop is announced over the tram's speaker system, so just listen out. Be careful: miss Luna Park and you'll be in for a long journey, as there are few accessible stops thereafter!

The other option is tram 96, which passes Southern Cross Station. Both Spencer St (stop 1) and Southern Cross (stop 122) are good for wheelchair access. In St Kilda, the stops are the same as for tram 16 (134, 135, 136 and 138).

Note: On the main Sunday of the St Kilda Festival (usually in February; visit www.stkildafestival.com.au/ for details), tram 16 is NOT recommended as all accessible stops are closed due to street closures. The St Kilda Station stop (132) on the 96 tram route is the closest accessible stop. Alternatively, take the Sandringham train, get off at Balaclava Station and make your way to St Kilda from there.

WORTH A TRIP: WERRIBEE & AROUND

Those en route to the Great Ocean Road, or looking for a short trip outside Melbourne, should consider Werribee, a 30-minute drive down the Princes Hwy heading over the Westgate Bridge.

Most people visit for the Werribee Open Range Zoo (Google MAP); 303-9731 9600; www.zoo.org.au/werribee; K Rd; adult/child \$30/13.20 (free weekends & holidays); 9am-5pm, last entry 3.30pm), an African-safari-style experience run by Melbourne Zoo. It's set over 225 hectares, and admission includes a 45-minute safari tour (by bus) where you'll see grazing rhino, giraffe, antelope and zebra on savannah-like plains. A walking trail goes past enclosures for lowland gorillas, lions, hippos, cheetah and meerkats, among others. The zoo's safari buses are wheelchair accessible, book your place on 303-9731 9601. See www.zoo.org.au/werribee/plan-your-visit/accessibility for all the zoo's accessibility details. If you don't have a car, catch the train from Melbourne to Werribee train station, then bus 439 to the zoo.

A five-minute drive from the zoo is **Shadowfax Winery** (GOOGLE MAP); 203-9731 4420; www.shadowfax.com.au; K Rd; Skitchen noon-3pm, tastings 11am-5pm), with wine tastings and wood-fired pizzas. The carpark is level but unsealed; the winery and restaurant are both wheelchair accessible and there are accessible toilets. Be sure to book on weekends.

If you want to stay the night, the lavish Mansion Hotel & Spa (GOOGLE MAP); 203-9731 4000; www.lancemore.com.au/mansion; rooms from \$229; Spa 9am-5pm Mon-Thu, to 7pm Fri & Sat, from 10am Sun; 20) manages to be both stylish and modern, and has a leisurely country-house ambience. Its spa is a great place to include with relaxation and beauty therapies. There are three fully accessible rooms in the hotel (stepless entry into shower, shower chair and grab rails), which are the same rate as the Heritage rooms.

Down the road is Point Cook, birthplace of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). It's now home to the **RAAF Museum** (**GOOGLE MAP**); www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum/; Point Cook Rd, Point Cook; 10am-3pm Tue-Fri, to 5pm weekends), an essential visit for aviation fans and war buffs. There's plenty of awesome aircraft on display to enthral kids and adults alike, from flimsy box-kite planes to sleek F-111 fighters. There's also a comprehensive display on Australia at war, featuring memorabilia such as shrapnel from the Red Baron's German plane, shot down by Australians in WWI. Aim to visit at 1pm Sunday, Tuesday or Thursday for flight demonstrations, though there's a good chance of seeing activity on its airfield at other times, too. It's located at the RAAF Williams base, so you'll need to bring ID. Accessibility to the museum is good, with only a couple of areas containing stairs.

Also in Point Cook, Cheetham Wetlands is home to about 200 species of migratory and native waterbirds, viewed from an observation tower. July to November is the best time to go, see www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/point-cook-coastal-park/accessibility for accessibility information.

South Melbourne, Port Melbourne & Albert Park

There's something boastful about these suburbs, and it runs along the lines of being close to Melbourne's watery highlights: the bay, the beach and expansive Albert Park Lake. These are upmarket suburbs rejoicing in their peaceful environment (though come Grand Prix time, the noise is ramped up big-time).

Head to South Melbourne for its market, contemporary homeware shops and top cafes (seems there's a coffee competition going on). At nearby Port Melbourne is Station Pier, the passenger terminal for the ferry service between Melbourne and Tasmania.

South Melbourne Market MARKET

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.southmelbournemarket.com.au; cnr Coventry & Cecil Sts, South Melbourne; Sam-4pm Wed, Sat & Sun, to 5pm Fri; 96)

The market's labyrinthine interior is packed to overflowing with an eccentric collection of stalls ranging from old-school to boutique. It's been on this site since 1864 and is a neighbourhood institution, as are its famous dim sins (sold here since 1949). There are plenty of atmospheric eateries and a lively night market on Thursdays from November to mid-December. There's a cooking school here, too – see the website for details.

Accessible parking is available on the roof with lifts down to the market. Both the car park and the market get very busy on weekends. Parking is free for the first two hours. Check out the market map: www.southmelbournemarket.com.au/images/stories/map/smm_market_map.pdf

Albert Park Lake LAKE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; btwn Queens Rd, Fitzroy St, Aughtie Dr & Albert Rd; 96)

Elegant black swans give their inimitable bottoms-up salute as you go along the 5km perimeter of this constructed lake. Lakeside Dr was used as an international motor-racing circuit in the 1950s, and since 1996 the revamped track has been the venue for the **Australian Formula One Grand Prix** each March. Also on the periphery is the **Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre**, with an Olympic-size pool and child-delighting wave machine.



There is no FLAT, paved path circumnavigating the lake. Wheelies are forced away from the shoreline in order to complete the 5 km circuit. Accessibility details are available at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/albert-park/accessibility

Gasworks Arts Park BUILDING

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-8606 4200; www.gasworks.org.au; cnr Graham & Pickles St, Albert Park; tours \$25; tours 10.30am & 2pm Mon-Thu; 10.9)

A taste of gritty Berlin in Melbourne, this former gas plant lay derelict from the 1950s before being developed into an arts precinct with red-brick galleries, a **theatre company** (check website for shows) and an ultra-dog-friendly parkland. You can meet the artists on a guided tour or come for its summer **open-air cinema** or monthly **farmers market** (third Saturday of each month).

See www.gasworks.org.au/access-policy for accessibility information. Companion Cards are accepted.

Station Pier LANDMARK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.portofmelbourne.com; Waterfront PI, Port Melbourne; 109)

Melbourne's main sea passenger terminal, Station Pier has great sentimental associations for many migrants who arrived by ship in the 1950s and '60s, and for servicemen who used it during WWII. It has been in operation since 1854, when the first major railway in Australia ran from here to the city. It's where the *Spirit of Tasmania*, cruise ships and navy vessels dock.

WILLIAMSTOWN & AROUND

A trip over the Westgate Bridge brings you to the seaside suburb of Williamstown, a yacht-filled gem with a historic, salty seafaring atmosphere. It has stunning views of Melbourne and a small beach.

The Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; July 303-9932 4310; www.visithobsonsbay.com.au; cnr Syme St & Nelson Pl) on Gem Pier has plenty of info, and offers free tours on Tuesdays at 2.15pm and Fridays at 11.45am, except in winter. There is an accessible toilet next to the centre in Commonwealth Reserve.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

A science museum that's fun? It's no wonder the interactive Scienceworks (MAP) GOOGLE MAP); 131 102; www.museumvictoria.com.au/scienceworks; 2 Booker St, Spotswood; adult/child \$10/free, Planetarium & Lightning Room additional adult/child \$6/4.50; 10am-4.30pm; Spotswood) is one of Melbourne's most popular attractions for families. It's the kind of place that's all about pushing buttons, lifting flaps and pulling levers, and while it's geared towards kids, it's fun for adults, too (afternoons are best for avoiding school groups). Displays cover the science of sport (kids love the chance to run against Cathy Freeman), household items and the human body. Also here is the Melbourne Planetarium, which recreates the night sky on a 16m-domed ceiling using a high-tech computer and projection system; you can probably guess what the Lightning Room involves. Scienceworks is a 5km drive from the city; if you don't have a car, there's a 10-minute signposted route from Spotswood train station. Like its more grown up cousin, the Melbourne Museum, accessibility at Scienceworks is very good and Companion Cards are accepted. See www.museumvictoria.com.au/scienceworks/visiting/accessibility for more details.

In Williamstown proper, the industrial Seaworks precinct has been redeveloped as a tourist sight, comprising historic boatsheds, a maritime museum (MAP GOOGLE MAP); by donation; 11am-3pm Sun) and exhibition space. It's also the headquarters for Sea Shepherd Australia (MAP GOOGLE MAP); www.seashepherd.org.au), and on weekends tours of its anti-poaching vessels are held from noon to 4.30pm. (When they're out at sea tackling Japanese whalers, it's still worth dropping by to visit the centre for displays and video about their anti-whaling campaign). Seaworks also has a shipbuilding yard, a pirate-themed tavern and Victoria's oldest morgue, which you can visit on a ghost tour (1300 390 119; www.lanternghosttours.com). While the museum itself is on one level, neither the Sea Shepherd nor the ghost tour is accessible for someone in a wheelchair. The only accessible toilet is in the pirate tavern.

Trainspotters should head to the Williamstown Railway Museum (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 1300 220 220; www.arhsvic.org.au/index.php/museum; Champion Rd; adult/child \$6/3; noon-5pm Sat) for a fine collection of old steam locomotives, while WWII buffs can board the HMAS Castlemaine (MAP GOOGLE MAP); www.hmascastlemaine.org.au; Gem Pier; adult/child \$6/3; noon-4pm weekends), a minesweeper active in New Guinea and Northern Australia. Old trains and old ships are tricky to manage for those with mobility issues, however both facilities will do what they can to accommodate visitors of all capabilities; call ahead to make arrangements.

Also noteworthy is Point Gellibrand, the site of Victoria's first white settlement. It's where Victoria's navy was established, and where the Timeball Tower, once used by ships to set their chronometers, was built by convict labour in 1840.

SLEEPING & EATING

On the main strip, Ragusa (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9399 8500; www.ragusarestaurant.com.au; 139 Nelson PI; mains \$17-34; noon-3pm & 6pm-late) is doing good things with its menu of modern Croatian cuisine in a beautiful heritage building; it is wheelchair-accessible and has an accessible toilet. Located within the wheelchair-accessible Williamstown Library, UCAN Cafe (203-9397 2777; www.ucancafe.com.au; 104 Ferguson St; 8.30am-4pm Mon-Fri) serves hearty breakfasts and lunches, with vegetarian and glutenfree options available. It's run by Yooralla and is staffed by people with disabilities.

Quest Williamstown (MAP GOOGLE MAP; 203-9393 5300; www.questwilliamstown.com.au; 1 Syme St; 1BR apt from \$199; <a href="mailto:sold-noise

GETTING THERE & AWAY

A ferry trip is the most popular and undoubtedly the most scenic way to get to Williamstown – a fitting way to arrive, given the area's maritime ambience. Williamstown Ferries (MAP GOOGLE MAP); +61396829555; www.williamstownferries.com.au; one-way Williamstown-Southbank adult/child \$18/9 Return adult/child \$28/14) plies Hobsons Bay daily, stopping at Southgate and visiting a number of sites along the way, including Scienceworks and Docklands. One of the ferries is wheelchair accessible; call ahead before you go.

Otherwise you can catch a train from Flinders St or make the 20-minute drive from Melbourne's city centre.



Handcycling

Melbourne has lots of cycling paths to explore; see the <u>Handcycling</u> section for details.

Lawn Bowls

Formerly the domain of senior citizens, bowling clubs are now inundated by younger types – barefoot, with a cheap beer in one hand and a bowling ball in the other. Disability Sport & Recreation (DSR) runs programs for players with a disability. See the <u>Lawn Bowls</u> section of the Accessible Sport chapter for more information.

North Fitzroy Bowls LAWN BOWLS

(GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9481 3137; www.barefootbowling.com.au; 578 Brunswick St, North Fitzroy; barefoot bowls per person \$15; ≥11am-10pm; 112)

This bowls club, north of Alexandra Parade, has night bowls, barbecues, a beer garden and a bistro with cheap meals. Phone to make a booking, walk-ins are accepted if it's quiet.



Only accessible from the CBD by tram. Nearest train station is Clifton Hill or Parliament. Both a bit of a hike; but a great facility if you make it.

St Kilda Bowling Club LAWN BOWLS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9534 5229; www.stkildabowlingclub.com.au; 66 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; 2hr per person \$20; noon-sunset Tue-Sun; 16, 96)

The only dress code at this popular bowling club is 'shoes off'. First-timers can get some friendly instruction. Great place for a beer.

The clubhouse and bar are both accessible and there is a disabled toilet. Wheelchairs and walkers, however, are generally not allowed onto the bowling green.

Fresh Air & Play Time

The Tan RUNNING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Royal Botanical Gardens, Birdwood Ave; Tourist Shuttle, 8)

A 3.8km-long former horse-exercising track is now the city's most popular running spot; it surrounds the Royal Botanic Gardens and King's Domain, so it's quite scenic.



Short trip from Flinders Street Station. Has some quite steep sections, so for a full lap it requires a power chair, unless you're fit in the manual. Sections close to the Shrine or Yarra are more level. Path is fine gravel so best avoided in wet weather.

Accessible parking is available near the Shrine and at a couple of spots along Birdwood Ave on the south side of the Botanical Gardens.

Royal Park PARK

(btwn Royal Pde & Flemington Rd, Parkville)

In the northwestern section of the park, Trin Warren Tam-boore is a recently established wetlands area, with boardwalks and interpretive signs for spotting native plants and animals.

ArtPlay (MAP) COOGLEMAP; 203-9664 7900; www.artplay.com.au; Wed-Sun 10am-4pm)

This arts centre for children is located in <u>Birrarung Marr</u> and offers free and low-cost creative events, workshops and performances. There's a playground and a cafe onsite.

Fully accessible facility with programs open to people of all capabilities. Call ahead to discuss any special requirements you may have. Cafe is also accessible via outside gravel surface.

Sailing

With about 20 yacht clubs around the shores of Port Phillip, plus Albert Park Lake, Melbourne has some fantastic yachting opportunities. **Discover Sailing** (www.discoversailing.org.au) is a good starting point for sailing centres and courses. Sailability offers additional support and equipment to assist people of all abilities to give sailing a go. Sailability programs are held at **Albert Park Lake** (03-9686 2571; www.sailability.org/au/albert_park/; 3 Aquatic Drive, Albert Park Reserve) and **Docklands Yacht Club** (03-5339 9053; www.sailability.org/au/docklands/; Shed 2, North Wharf Rd, Docklands) as well as other venues throughout Victoria.

Swimming

In summer, do as most Melburnians do and hit the sand at one of the city's metropolitan beaches. St Kilda, Middle Park and Port Melbourne are popular patches, with suburban beaches at Brighton and Sandringham. Public pools are also well-loved.

Fitzroy Swimming Pool SWIMMING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 🗾 03-9205 5180; 160 Alexandra Pde, Fitzroy; adult/child \$5/3; 😪 6am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat & Sun; 🗐 112)

Between laps, locals love catching a few rays up in the bleachers or on the lawn; there are also two toddler pools.



Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES
Accessible Public Transport:

The entry ramp is very steep; ramp access into the pool; hoist access into the pool.

See www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Services/Yarra-Leisure/Fitzroy-Swimming-Pool for more accessibility information.

Melbourne City Baths SWIMMING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9663 5888; www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbournecitybaths; 420 Swanston St, Melbourne; adult/child \$6/3; 6am-10pm Mon-Thu, to 8pm Fri, 8am-6pm Sat & Sun; Melbourne Central)

The City Baths were literally public baths when they first opened in 1860 and were intended to stop people bathing in and drinking from the seriously polluted Yarra River. They now boast the city centre's largest pool (30m), plus you can do your laps in a 1903 heritage-listed building.

In the same building is the **Melbourne Bath House** (**2**03-9539 1111; <u>www.melbournebathhouse.com.au</u>; from \$59; **9**9am-6pm), where you can soak in mineral water treatments in private clawfoot baths.



Accessible Public Transport:

Accessible entry into the centre is from Franklin St (which is on a hill) and through a very heavy door. If in a wheelchair you need help. The accessible changing rooms are excellent and have a hairdryer.

Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre SWIMMING

(MSAC; MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9926 1555; www.msac.com.au; Albert Rd, Albert Park; adult/child \$5.90/4.40; ≤5.30am-10pm, 7am-8pm Sat & Sun; €96, 112)

Has a fantastic indoor 50m pool, wave pool, water slides, spa-sauna-steam room and spacious common areas. Childcare is available.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: YES

See www.msac.com.au/about-msac/access-all-abilities for all accessibility details.

Prahran Aquatic Centre SWIMMING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8290 7140; 41 Essex St, Prahran; adult/child \$6/3; 6am-7.45pm Mon-Fri, to 5pm Sat, 7am-5pm Sun; 72, 78, Prahran) This glam 50m heated outdoor pool is surrounded by a stretch of lawn.

Mobility:

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport: *

The best option if travelling by public transport is probably bus since the two closest train stations are 700m (Prahran) or 1km (Hawksburn) away. Once inside, there are two disabled change rooms and a seated hoist to lower you into the pool.

St Kilda Sea Baths SWIMMING

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9525 4888; www.stkildaseabaths.com.au; 10-18 Jacka Blvd)

South of the pier the Moorish-style **St Kilda Sea Baths** building contains shops, cafes and restaurants, a gym and a pricey 25m saltwater pool (\$13 a dip).

Facility is accessible and the main pool can be entered via ramp and pool wheelchair (provided).

FREE FOR ALL

Throw a Frisbee, read a book, sprawl on the lawn or smell the flowers at one of Melbourne's parks and gardens. Try the <u>Royal Botanic Gardens</u>, <u>St Kilda Botanic Gardens</u> and <u>Birrarung Marr</u>.

Gallery hop: start with some conceptual art at the <u>Australian Centre for Contemporary Art</u>, Australian works at the <u>Ian Potter Centre:</u>
<u>NGV Australia</u> or the varied permanent collection of the <u>NGV International</u>. Then browse the laneway galleries of street art in <u>Hosier Lane</u>.
Browse the <u>Queen Victoria Market</u> and soak up the atmosphere.

Watch a 'movie on demand' at ACMI's Mediatheque.

Read to your heart's content at the <u>State Library of Victoria</u>, see Ned Kelly's armour or attend one of the fascinating free talks at the nearby <u>Wheeler Centre</u>.

Courses

Book a cooking course at the South Melbourne Market (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9209 6887; www.southmelbournemarket.com.au/cooking-school; classes \$55-125), which has everything from standard classes to masterclasses with some of Melbourne's best-known chefs; with Essential Ingredient at the Prahran Market (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9827 9047; www.essentialingredient.com.au; classes \$110-275) for subjects like pizza-making or matching food and wine; or at Queen Victoria Market (\$90-160) for infrequent courses covering everything from home brewing to curing.

Centre for Adult Education COURSE

(CAE; MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9652 0611; www.cae.edu.au; 253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne)

The Centre for Adult Education runs a wide variety of courses from cooking to language to art, as well as plenty of themed tours (such as foodies tours) of the city.



Short distance from Flinders Street Station. Lift to get in is a bit tricky, but once you are on the concourse level everything is fine.

Tours

Melbourne By Foot WALKING TOUR

(20418 394 000; <u>www.melbournebyfoot.com</u>; tours \$35; Flinders St) €

Take a few hours out with Dave and experience a mellow, informative 4km tour that covers laneway art, politics, Melbourne's history and diversity. Tour includes a refreshment break. Highly recommended; book online.

Tour includes some sets of stairs. Private tours available, and they are amenable to tailoring tours for those with access issues, but it's not something they've done before.

Aboriginal Heritage Walk CULTURAL TOUR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9252 2300; www.rbg.vic.gov.au; Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra; adult/child \$25/10; 11am Tue-Fri and 1st Sun of the month; ; Tourist Shuttle, 38)

The Royal Botanic Gardens are on a traditional camping and meeting place of the original Indigenous owners, and this tour takes you through their story – from songlines to plant lore, all in 90 fascinating minutes. The tour departs from the gardens' visitor centre.

Wheelchair users and slow walkers are easily accommodated, but advance notice is required.

Melbourne Street Art Tours WALKING TOUR

(203-9328 5556; www.melbournestreettours.com; tours \$69; \$1.30-5pm Tue, Thu & Sat)

Three-hour tours exploring the street-art side of Melbourne. The tour guides are street artists themselves, so you'll get a good insight into this art form.

Offers fully customised tours and are used to dealing with special-needs clients, such as slow walkers, wheelchair users and the hearing-impaired.

St Kilda Music Walking Tours WALKING TOUR

(SKMWT; www.skmwt.com.au; tours \$40; weekends)

'Take a walk on the wild side' with this rock 'n' roll tour that takes in the infamous bars and landmarks that played starring roles in St Kilda's underground music scene. They're led by St Kilda music icons, including Fred Negro and Fiona Lee Maynard; expect a hilarious and lewd behind-the-scenes tour of what makes St Kilda so great.

Enquire about accessibility via the website's contact form (www.skmwt.com.au/contact.shtml).

Walk to Art WALKING TOUR

(20412 005 901; <u>www.walktoart.com.au</u>; 4hr tour \$108, Fri 2hr tour \$78)

These walking tours take you to galleries and artist-run spaces hidden in Melbourne's buildings and laneways. The tour itinerary, around the city centre and inner neighbourhoods, is always changing, and isn't revealed until the day. The tours operate Wednesday and Saturday (four hours) and there's a Friday express tour (two hours). Tours include an art 'starter pack', and wine and cheese afterwards.

Customised tours are available, but advance notice of any access issues is essential since galleries will have to be selected accordingly and public transport is often taken.

Global Ballooning SCENICFLIGHT

(203-9428 5703, 1800 627 6611800 627 661; www.globalballooning.com.au; from \$440)

Wake up at the crack of dawn to view the city from another angle on this one-hour ride. Read about the company's unique Easy Access Basket in the Global Ballooning feature.

Melbourne Visitor Shuttle (Tourist Shuttle; www.thatsmelbourne.com.au; \$5 daily ticket, children under 10 free; \$\infty\$ 9.30am-4.30pm)

All buses have two wheelchair spaces, and are able to 'kneel' to the curb. No booking is required or possible since buses run every 20 minutes. See www.thatsmelbourne.com.au/visitors/transport/shuttle/Pages/VisitorShuttle.aspx for details, or download the route map at www.thatsmelbourne.com.au/visitors/transport/shuttle/Documents/MVS brochure Oct2013.pdf

Greeter Service WALKING TOUR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9658 9658; Melbourne Visitor Centre, Federation Sq; Flinders St)

Get your bearings on this free two-hour 'orientation tour', which departs Fed Sq daily at 9.30am (bookings required). It's run by the city's volunteer 'greeters'.

Let the operator know of any access issues when you book and they will accommodate you and tailor your tour appropriately.



Airport & Around

Melbourne's closest airport is 25km from the city, with no direct public transport links, so odd-hour flights require taxis, a SkyBus from the city centre or a sleepover. There are three main airport hotels.

Ibis Budget Melbourne Airport HOTEL

(≥03-8336 1811; www.ibis.com; Caldwell Dve, Melbourne Airport; r from \$129; 🕸 🖘)

Basic rooms. The hotel is about 600m from the terminals.

Three accessible rooms, all with one queen-size bed and a single.

Parkroyal HOTEL

(GCOGLEMAP); №03-8347 2000; www.parkroyalhotels.com; Arrival Dve, Melbourne Airport; r from \$260; ₩@🖘)

The Parkroyal has all the bells and whistles plus a direct 'airbridge' access to the terminals.

Several accessible rooms with kingsize beds.

Holiday Inn Melbourne Airport HOTEL

The smart Holiday Inn Melbourne Airport is close to the airport.

A couple of accessible rooms with queen-size beds.

QUEST SERVICED APARTMENTS

A generic, midrange alternative to a hotel is a serviced apartment. The Quest chain (within Australia 1800 334 0331800 334 033; from overseas +61 3 9645 8357+61 3 9645 8357; www.questapartments.com.au/) has a number of locations throughout Melbourne and Victoria, many of which have either fully or partly accessible rooms or suites available. A fully accessible room is one in which the kitchenette is adapted for wheelchair use, as well as being equipped with an accessible bathroom; a partly accessible room is one in which the bathroom has a stepless shower. The following serviced apartments are the most usefully located that are said to have fully accessible rooms/suites: Abbotsford, Brighton, Carlton on Finlay, Chapel St, Lygon St, East St Kilda, Hawthorn, Melbourne Airport and Williamstown. Most of their central locations have partly accessible rooms and/or suites. As always, call ahead to make sure the accommodation will meet your needs.

Central Melbourne

These places will put you in the heart of the action, whether you've come to town and want to shop, party, catch a match or take in some culture.

Atlantis Hotel HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥ 03-9600 2900; <u>www.atlantishotel.com.au</u>; 300 Spencer St; r from \$140; ₩@ 🕏)

Across from Docklands and Southern Cross Station, this place offers two-bedroom suites perfect for families (and they're only \$20 more expensive than the standard room). The low-slung rooms are soothingly neutral, if not super-stylish.

Two types of accessible rooms available, a double with queen-size bed (www.atlantishotel.com.au/rooms/superior-disabled) and a larger room with a queen-size bed and a single. Accessible parking available, accessible breakfast room and helpful staff.

Vibe Savoy Hotel HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥03-9622 8888; www.vibehotels.com.au; 630 Little Collins St; r from \$149; ≥ @ ; Southern Cross)

This lovely heritage building at Collins St's western end (opposite Southern Cross Station) has been given a bold makeover, though some rooms retain subtle period features. It's a concoction of traditional hotel comforts, bright colours and contemporary furnishings.

One accessible room available with queen-size bed.

Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9322 8000; www.radisson.com/melbourneau; 380 William St; r from \$189; 255)

Directly opposite Flagstaff Gardens, this is a great option for those who enjoy a bit of greenery outside their window while being within striking distance of city sightseeing. The rooftop spa is a huge perk.

Four accessible rooms available in a variety of configurations. The restaurant is also accessible.

Pensione Hotel HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9621 3333; <u>www.pensione.com.au</u>; 16 Spencer St; r from $109; ₩@💽; 🗓 96, 109, 112)
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With refreshing honesty, the lovely, boutique Pensione Hotel names some rooms a 'petit double' – but what you don't get in size is more than made up for in spot-on style, room extras and super-reasonable rates.

Currently undergoing renovations, but at least 'a couple' of fully accessible rooms will be available when the fitout is complete. Call ahead to check.

Royce on St Kilda Road BOUTIQUE HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9677 9900; www.roycehotels.com.au; 379 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne; r from $240; ★ @ 〒; 🗓 3, 16, 64, 67, 72)
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Housed in an ornate 1920s hacienda-style building (originally the Rolls Royce showroom), close to Kings Domain on St Kilda Rd, the Royce has a mix of period details and a stylish modern fit-out. Room types do not just differ in size – they also differ in mood.

Full range of accessible rooms available; speak to reception for details.

Hotel Lindrum BOUTIQUE HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLE MAP ; 203-9668 1111; www.hotellindrum.com.au; 26 Flinders St; r from $250; ★ → 1, 70, 75)
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One of the city's most attractive hotels, this was once the snooker hall of the legendary and literally unbeatable Walter Lindrum. Expect rich tones, subtle lighting and tactile fabrics. Spring for a deluxe room and you'll snare either arch or bay windows and marvellous Melbourne views. And yes, there's a billiard table – one of Lindrum's originals, no less.

Two accessible rooms available. The hotel is wheelchair accessible throughout, including the bar and restaurant.

Crown Metropol HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9292 6211; www.crownhotels.com.au; 8 Whiteman St, Crown Casino; rooms from $295; @@\varphi; \( \bar{\pi} \) 96, 109, 112)
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The most boutique of Crown's hotels, where guests have access to the most extraordinary infinity pool in Melbourne, with 270-degree views over the city to the Dandenongs in the distance. The beautifully appointed luxe twin rooms are the least expensive on offer and sleep four.

Seven accessible 'Deluxe King' rooms available with nice views.

Hotel Windsor HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9633 6000; www.thehotelwindsor.com.au; 111 Spring St; r from $175; 🕸 ; Parliament)
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Sparkling chandeliers and a grand piano in the lobby set the scene for this opulent, heritage-listed 1883 building that's one of Australia's most famous and self-consciously grand hotels. It was still awaiting a controversial \$260 million redevelopment at time of research. Adding to its English quaintness is high tea service (MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.thehotelwindsor.com.au; 111 Spring St; Mon-Fri \$69, Sat & Sun \$89; Parliament) and the historic Cricketers Bar, decked out in cricketing memorabilia.

Has some facilities for those with low mobility, but no wheelchair accessible rooms.

Grand Hyatt Melbourne HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 🗷 03-9657 1234; www.melbourne.grand.hyatt.com; 123 Collins St; r from $260; 🕸 @ 🕏; 🗓 11, 31, 48, 109, 112)
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This famous Collins St five-star has more than 500 rooms, many with marble bathrooms, designated workspaces and grand floor-to-ceiling windows looking out to the city centre, Yarra River or the MCG.

Has six accessible 'Grand King' rooms available which can be configured as doubles or twins.

Park Hyatt HOTEL

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( MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9224 1234; <u>www.melbourne.park.hyatt.com</u>; 1 Parliament Sq; r from $355;  11, 31, 109, 112)
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Although it resembles a Californian shopping mall from the outside, the interior understands luxury to be about wood panelling, shiny surfaces and miles of marble. Rooms are elegantly subdued, and most come complete with supersized baths, clever layouts that maximise your chance of seeing natural light, and lovely treetop-level views. There's a lavish indoor pool, plus a great tennis court.

Three accessible 'Park King' rooms available as doubles, with an extra rollaway bed added if required.

East Melbourne

East Melbourne takes you out of the action, yet is still walking distance from the city and offers ready access to the MCG.

Tribeca Serviced Apartments APARTMENT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9926 8200; www.tribecaservicedapartments.com.au; 166 Albert St, East Melbourne; 1-bedroom apt from \$150; 124, 109)

A handy inner-suburb location on the doorstep of Collingwood, East Melbourne and the city, Tribeca's apartments are generic, but get the job done as a comfy, modern base with pay TV, free wi-fi, heated pool and gym.

No fully accessible rooms, but provisions can be made for those with low mobility. Call for details.

Hilton on the Park HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9419 2000; <u>www.hilton.com</u>; 192 Wellington Pde; r from \$260; \$@ ?; \$\oldsymbol{\olds

Three accessible rooms available with other accessible facilities throughout the hotel (www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/victoria/hilton-on-the-park-melbourne-MELHITW/about/amenities.html).

Fitzroy & Around

Vibrant Fitzroy hums with attractions day and night, and is close to the city.

Metropole Hotel Apartments APARTMENT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9411 8100; 44 Brunswick St; apt \$205-285; 86, 112)

If you can forgive the mid-'90s facade that blights this heritage strip at the top of Brunswick St, the Metropole is worth considering for its small outdoor pool and proximity to the city. The rooms are large and well equipped, though the beyond-bland interiors will also require quite some forgiveness.

One accessible double available, with accessible bathroom.

Tyrian Serviced Apartments APARTMENT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥03-9415 1900; <u>www.tyrian.com.au</u>; 91 Johnston St, Fitzroy; r from \$200; ₩@😭; 🗐 112)

These spacious, self-contained modern apartments have a certain Fitzroy celeb appeal, which you'll feel from the moment you walk down the dimmed hallway to reception. Big couches, flat-screen TVs and balconies add to the appeal, and plenty of the neighbourhood restaurants and bars are right at your door.

One fully accessible one-bedroom apartment available, access from carpark via lift.

Carlton & Around

Vibe Hotel Carlton HOTEL

(GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9380 9222; <u>www.vibehotels.com.au</u>; 441 Royal Pde, Parkville; r from \$135; <a>© <a>© <a>; <a>19 <a>19

This early 1960s motel was once noted for its glamorous, high-Californian style; now it's more generic business hotel, but very convenient for parks and the zoo, and the city is a short tram ride away. It's a stone's throw from Brunswick's lively Sydney Rd.

One accessible room available with king-size bed. The restaurant and bar are wheelchair-friendly.

South Yarra, Prahran & Windsor

South of the river, South Yarra has some tremendous boutique and upmarket places set in pretty, tree-lined residential streets.

Punthill South Yarra Grand APARTMENT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ☑1300 731 299; www.punthill.com.au; 7 Yarra St, South Yarra; studio/1-bedroom apt from \$150/176; 晉; ☑8, 78, 79, ☑South Yarra)

It's the little things, like a blackboard and chalk in the kitchen for messages, and individually wrapped liquorice allsorts by the bed, that make this a great choice. The bright rooms have laundry facilities and those with balconies come complete with their own (tin) dog on fake grass.

One accessible apartment available with king-size bed.

Albany BOUTIQUE HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9866 4485; www.thealbany.com.au; cnr Toorak Rd & Millswyn St, South Yarra; r \$100-160; **@** ; ** 8)

Proudly screaming fashion and rock 'n' roll, the Albany gives you the choice between fantastic refurbed rooms in an 1890s Victorian mansion, or cheap LA-style motel rooms which are slightly shabby. There's a candy-pink rooftop pool and great location across from Fawkner Park, between the city and boutique South Yarra.

No wheelchair-accessible rooms, but the ground floor is accessed via ramps and rooms would probably suit those with some mobility.

*Art Series (The Cullen) BOUTIQUE HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 203-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 203-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; 164 Commercial Rd, Prahran; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotels.com.au/cullen; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotelshotels.com.au/cullen; r from \$209; 303-9098 1555; www.artserieshotelshotelshotelshotelshote

The edgiest of the Art Series hotels, this one's decked out by the late grunge-painter Adam Cullen, whose vibrant and often graphic works provide visions of Ned Kelly shooting you from the glam opaque room/bathroom dividers. Rooms are classic boutique – ultra comfy but not big on space.

One accessible room available with a queen-size bed.

Art Series (The Olsen) BOUTIQUE HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9040 1222; www.artserieshotels.com.au/olsen; 637 Chapel St, South Yarra; r from \$299; \$\overline{\mathbb{R}}\$; \$\overline{\ov

You never know who you'll bump into in the lift at this hotel honouring artist John Olsen; it's where international celebs are staying these days, and we think we know why. The staff are attentive. The modern glam foyer is beaut. The open-plan rooms are delightful. Oh, and the hotel's pool juts out over Chapel St.

Mobility: Vision: Hearing: Staff: XX

Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: NO

My standard wheelchair-accessible room had one of the largest bathrooms I've ever seen in a hotel. It was spacious enough to get around easily and the roll-in shower was large as well. They will provide a shower chair if you let them know in advance.

An accessible studio suite is availble on each of the Olsen's 14 floors.

St Kilda

Stay here if you'd like to be close to the beach and only a tram ride from the city centre.

Adina Apartment Hotel St Kilda APARTMENT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9536 0000; 157 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; apt from \$139)

A couple of accessible rooms available, both queen-size bed only.

Prince HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 203-9536 1111; www.theprince.com.au; 2 Acland St; r incl breakfast from \$185; 2

Chic Prince has a dramatic lobby while rooms feature natural materials and a pared-back aesthetic. On-site 'facilities' take in some of the neighbourhood stars — Aurora (MAP COOCLEMAP); 203-9536 1130; www.aurorasparetreat.com; 2 Acland St, St Kilda; 1hr from \$120; 8.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sat, 10am-7pm Sun; 3a, 16, 96, 112) day spa, Circa restaurant, bars and band room— and breakfast is provided by Acland St Cantina downstairs. Be prepared for nightclub noise if you're staying the weekend. Free wi-fi is a bonus.

One accessible 'Superior Room' available.

Hotel Urban HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; <u>www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne</u>; 35-37 Fitzroy St; r from \$149; 203-8530 8888; www.hotelurban.com.au/melbourne

Rooms at Hotel Urban use a lot of blonde wood and white to maximise space, and are simple, light and calming. All rooms are different: some have freestanding in-room spas while others are circular in shape. It also has a small gym.

Several accessible rooms available with queen-size beds.

Novotel St Kilda HOTEL

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9525 5522; <u>www.novotel.com</u>; 14-16 The Esplanade; r from \$200; 3, 67)

Generic and dependable chain hotel in a superb location.

Five accessible rooms available with queen-size beds.

Around St Kilda

Art Series (The Blackman) BOUTIQUE HOTEL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ▶ 1800 278 468, 03-9039 1444; <u>www.artserieshotels.com.au/blackman</u>; 452 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne; r from \$220; ▶ 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72)

While it may not have any original Charles Blackman paintings (though loads of prints and Blackman room decals), it does have superb views – aim for a corner suite for views of Albert Park Lake and the city skyline – and luxurious beds and blackout curtains for a sleep-in.

Four accessible 'Studio Suite Balcony' rooms available with queen-size beds.



Melbourne is a food-obsessed city, and locals are always chasing the latest new craze, be it food trucks, American barbecue or raw food. There are lots of restaurants owned by local and international celebrity chefs here, but you're just as likely to have a great feed at a place run by mere mortals.

JEWELS IN THE CROWN

There are several top-flight dining options in the Crown Casino complex (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 303-9292 8888; www.crowncasino.com.au; 8 Whiteman St; Tourist Shuttle, 96, 109, 112). Well-known stayers include Neil Perry's seafood and steak star, Rockpool Bar & Grill, and global Japanese empire Nobu (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 303-9292 5777; www.noburestaurants.com; Crown Entertainment Complex; dishes \$20-120; noon-2.30pm & 6-10.30pm; 55, Flinders St).

Other good options include:

Atlantic (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; The Riverside at Crown; dishes \$18-105; 200-9698 8888; www.theatlantic.com.au; d

Spice Temple (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-8679 1888; www.spicetemplemelbourne.com; Crown Entertainment Complex; mains \$12-45; Syum cha noon-3pm Thu-Sun, dinner 6pm-late daily; 96, 109, 112) Another Neil Perry hit: fill up on delicious a la carte yum cha.

Bistro Guillaume (MAP) GOOGLE MAP); 303-9292 4751; www.bistroguillaume.com.au; Crown Entertainment Complex; mains \$25-120; noonlate Mon-Fri, noon-3pm & 6pm-late Sat; 55, Flinders St) French bistro food with fine-dining flair.

All restaurants are accessible, with minor exceptions for private dining areas. Make sure to let the staff know of any access needs when booking your table.

Central Melbourne

Restaurants are spread throughout the city, with many hidden down alleys, in arcades or off the 'Little' streets, particularly around Flinders Lane.

Miss Katie's Crab Shack AMERICAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9329 9888; 238 Victoria St, Melbourne; dishes \$8-25; 25-9pm Tue-Sun, from noon Sat; 19, 57, 59)

Set up inside the Public Bar, Miss Katie's shack puts a twist on pub food through her Southern home-style cooking, using fresh produce from the Vic Market across the road and homemade hot sauces. Thank her grandma from Virginia for the signature fried chicken, and her mum from Maryland for the Chesapeake Bay-style blue swimmer crab dishes.

Staff are happy to help any guests up the single, low step at the entrance. Accessible toilet on the premises.

Don Don JAPANESE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 198 Little Lonsdale St; mains \$6-8; \$\infty\$11am-9pm Mon-Sat, to 8.30pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$3, 5, 6, 16, 64, 67, 72, \$\overline{\omega}\$Melbourne Central)

Due to its popularity, Don Don had to move digs to a bigger space, yet it still fills up fast. Grab a big bowl or bento box full of Japanese goodness and wolf it down indoors, or join the masses eating it on the State Library's lawns.

The step to enter and the extreme busyness make this place challenging for anybody with any form of disability!

Huxtaburger BURGERS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Fulham PI, off Flinders Lane; \$\infty\$11.30am-10pm Mon-Sat; \$\overline{\mathbb{H}}\$ Flinders St)

This American-style burger joint is a hipster magnet for its crinkle-cut chips in old-school containers, tasty burgers (veg options available) on glazed brioche buns, and bottled craft beers. Cash only.

Accessible, with no steps to get in, though there's often a queue.

Stalactites GREEK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9663 3316; <u>www.stalactites.com.au</u>; 177-183 Lonsdale St; lamb souvlaki \$10.50; 24hr; 3, 5, 6, 16, 64, 67, 72, Melbourne Central)

What's not to love about a 24-hour 'souva' joint? Especially when it's been doing the best lamb souvlakis in Melbourne for more than 40 years. It's located in the heart of the Greek precinct of Melbourne, and is an absolute institution for a late-night feed.

Accessible ground floor via ramp, no accessible bathrooms.

★MoVida SPANISH

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9663 3038; <u>www.movida.com.au</u>; 1 Hosier Lane; tapas \$4-6, raciones \$8-28; 2noon-late; 170, 75, Flinders St)

MoVida sits in a cobbled laneway emblazoned with one of the world's densest collections of street art – it doesn't get much more Melbourne than this. Line up along the bar, cluster around little window tables or, if you've booked, take a table in the dining area for fantastic Spanish tapas and *raciones*.

MoVida Next Door – yes, right next door – is the perfect place for a pre-show beer and tapas. Also brought to you by MoVida is MoVida Aqui (
MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9663 3038; www.movida.com.au; 1st fl, 500 Bourke St; noon-late Mon-Fri, 6pm-late Sat; 86, 96), a huge, open space with similar tapas menu and chargrilled cooking, while next door is its Mexican offering of Paco's Tacos (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 03-9663 3038; www.pacostacos.com.au; 1st fl, 500 Bourke St; noon-11pm; 86, 96). They've recently opened Bar Pulpo (GOOGLEMAP); www.movida.com.au/airport; Terminal 2 (International), Melbourne Airport; 8am-12.30am) at Melbourne Airport for pre-flight tapas and drinks.

MoVida and MoVida Next Door are both quite cramped and not mobility-friendly. MoVida Aqui is accessible by lift and has accessible bathrooms.

Cumulus Inc MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.cumulusinc.com.au; 45 Flinders Lane; mains \$21-38; \$7am-11pm Mon-Fri, 8am-11pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$City Circle, 48)

One of Melbourne's best for any meal; it gives you that wonderful Andrew McConnell style along with reasonable prices. The focus is on beautiful produce and simple but artful cooking: from breakfasts of sardines and smoked tomato on toast at the marble bar to suppers of freshly shucked *clair de lune* oysters tucked away on the leather banquettes. No reservations, so queues are highly probable.

It has recently opened the wine bar Cumulus Up upstairs; its bar menu is matched with changing regional wines.



There is a side door which bypasses the stairs. Staff are super friendly and helpful. From memory there is a disabled toilet. Easy to get around; best place on Flinders Lane.

Very helpful staff. Need to ask/tap on the window for wheelchair access from street.

Cookie THAI, BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9663 7660; www.cookie.net.au; 1st fl, 252 Swanston St, Curtin House; mains from \$17.50; noon-late; 3, 5, 6, 16, 64, 67, 72)

Part Thai restaurant, part swanky bar, Cookie does both exceptionally well. Its all-Thai kitchen fires up authentic flavours with fusion twists to create some of the best Thai food in town. The bar is unbelievably well stocked with fine whiskies, wines and craft beers, and staff know how to make a serious cocktail.

Take the lift up to the 1st floor. Cookie is wheelchair-friendly and has accessible toilets.

Bomba SPANISH, TAPAS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9077 0451; http://bombabar.com.au; 103 Lonsdale St; tapas \$3.50-8, dishes \$15-32; noon-3pm Mon-Fri, 5pm-late daily; Rarliament)

Reminiscent of a buzzing Spanish bodega, Bomba offers up tasty authentic tapas, *raciones* for the hungrier and Catalan stew and paellas. The wine list is predominantly Spanish, and the vermouth flows freely, as does the cold Estrella – all perfect for enjoying on the rooftop terrace to the backdrop of the St Patrick's Cathedral spire.

Bomba is wheelchair-accessible on the ground floor and a lift can take you to the rooftop. Only the ground floor toilets are accessible.

Pellegrini's Espresso Bar ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9662 1885; 66 Bourke St; mains \$16-18; 8am-11.30pm Mon-Sat, noon-8pm Sun; Reparliament)

The iconic Italian equivalent of a classic '50s diner, Pellegrini's has remained genuinely unchanged for decades. Pick and mix from the variety of homemade pastas and sauces; from the table out the back you can watch it all being thrown together from enormous, ever-simmering pots. In summer, finish with a glass of watermelon granita.

There is a step into this cafe, making it difficult to access in a wheelchair.

Grossi Florentino Grill ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); №03-9662 1811; www.grossiflorentino.com; 80 Bourke St; mains \$18-55; ©lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat; №86, 96)

Taken over by famed Melbourne chef Guy Grossi, Florentino's has long attracted rich faces taking lunchtime breaks. They come here for the authentic regional Italian menu, great produce and metropolitan flair. Next door is the more affordable **Cellar Bar**, a great place to have a quick bowl of pasta and a glass of pinot grigio, as well as breakfast. Service is snappy and professional.

If you're into grand statements (with mains hitting the \$55 mark), upstairs is an opulent fine-dining stalwart.

Not wheelchair-friendly; there are a couple of stairs, but should be OK for those with some mobility.

Gazi GREEK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9207 7444; www.gazirestaurant.com.au; 2 Exhibition St; shared plates from \$10, mains \$23; \$211.30am-11pm; \$48, 70, 75)

The lastest offering from George Calombaris of *MasterChef* fame, this rebadged side project to the fancier Press Club (next door) is set in a cavernous industrial space with a menu inspired by Greek street food. Select from authentic shared starters and gournet mini souvlakis filled with prawn or duck, or go straight to the wood-fire-spit mains. Calombaris also owns the East Brunswick eatery **Hellenic Republic** (**GOOGLEMAP**); **3**03-9381 1222; www.hellenicrepublic.com.au; 434 Lygon St, East Brunswick; mains \$16-30; noon-4pm Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun, 5.30pm-late Mon-Sun; 1, 8).

Wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets. Be sure to call ahead so seating can be arranged in the most accessible parts of the restaurants.

Orient East MALAYSIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); <u>www.orienteast.com.au</u>; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-2pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$17; 6.30am-9pm Mon-Fri, 7am-9pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mains from \$18; 6.30am-9pm & 5-9pm Sat & sun; 348 St Kilda Rd; mai

A convenient lunch spot for sightseeers visiting the Shrine and botanic gardens, Orient East does British-colonial Malay cuisine in a get-up reminiscent of a foreign correspondent cafe circa the 1960s. It serves fantastic hawker-style food, including spicy soft-shell crab buns and yummy laksas.

Entry is via the Seasons hotel, adjoining

Trunk AMERICAN, ITALIAN

(The Diner; MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9663 7994; www.trunktown.com.au; 275 Exhibition St; mains \$18-26; ₹7.30am-10pm Mon-Fri, from 8am Sat & Sun; City Circle, 24, 30)

Trunk turns into a prime city-centre office-worker watering hole on Friday nights, but don't let Bryan from the marketing department put you off. The Italian restaurant's main building is more than 100 years old and was once a synagogue. Next door, Trunk's diner has a busy yet relaxed vibe and serves dude food such as hot dogs, burgers and ribs.

All ground floors are wheelchair-accessible and the venue has accessible toilets.

Meatball & Wine Bar AMERICAN, ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.meatballandwinebar.com.au; 135 Flinders Lane; meatballs \$18; 8am-1am Mon-Fri, from 11am Sat & Sun; City Circle, 70, 75)

Banking on Melbourne's current obsession with American cuisine, this dark, smartly fitted Flinders Lane restaurant serves up the ol' American-Italian classic meatball, from the traditional beef variety to less-conventional fish or even vegetarian 'meat' balls. Choose from a selection of sauces and sides, anything from homemade pasta to creamy polenta. It's opened in Richmond (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 105 Swan St; 105 Swan St; 1070), too.



Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

A couple of stairs to get in to the restaurant. Outside near the heater can be nice (no stairs) with a glass of red and some meatballs. You may be stuck next to smokers if outside.

Mesa Verde MEXICAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ■03-9654 4417; <u>www.mesaverde.net.au</u>; Level 6, 252 Swanston St, Curtin House; tacos from \$6; ⑤5pm-late; 🗓 3, 5, 6, 16, 64, 67, 72)

The latest addition to the wonderful Curtin House complex, Mesa Verde does great Mexican food to a backdrop of Sergio Leone screenings. As well as street-food dishes, there's a selection of 200 tequilas and 40 mezcals, and an exotic selection of salts for margaritas including black truffle. Come for Taco Tuesday specials.

Take the lift to level 6, then it's all wheelchair-friendly with accessible toilets.

Hopetoun Tea Rooms TEAROOM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9650 2777; www.hopetountearooms.com.au; 282 Collins St; dishes \$13-21; 8am-5pm)

Since 1892 patrons have been nibbling pinwheel sandwiches here, taking tea (with pinkies raised) and delicately polishing off a lamington. Hopetoun's venerable status has queues almost stretching out the entrance of Block Arcade. Salivate over the window display while you wait.

There's half a step, which should be easily negotiable in a wheelchair, but staff can get hold of a portable ramp if necessary. The nearest accessible toilet is on the 4th floor; however, within the next few months they are planning to open an accessible bathroom on the ground level of the arcade.



(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9691 3888; www.vuedemonde.com.au; Rialto, 525 Collins St; degustation \$200-250; reservations from noon-2pm Tue-Fri & Sun, 6-9.15pm Mon-Sat; 11, 31, 48, 109, 112, Southern Cross)

Sitting pretty in the old 'observation deck' of the Rialto building, Melbourne's favoured spot for special-occasion dining has views to match its name. Visionary chef Shannon Bennett has moved away from its classic French style to a subtle Modern Australian theme that runs through everything from the decor to the menu.

Stuffy tablecloths are gone and natural Australian elements are in – vases of banksia, handmade kangaroo-hide furniture and cutlery holders carved from Tasmanian stone. Booking ahead is essential.

Remaining at the old barrister's chambers is the cheaper **Bistro Vue** (MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-96913838; 430 Little Collins St; 21am-late Mon-Sat; 86, 96) and Cafe Vue (MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-96913899; 430 Little Collins St; 7am-4pm Mon-Fri; 86, 96). There are also Cafe Vue branches at 401 St Kilda Rd and the Melbourne Airport.

All the Vues are wheelchair accessible and have accessible toilets.

Longrain THAI

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9671 3151; www.longrain.com; 44 Little Bourke St; mains \$31-40; noon-3pm Fri & dinner 6pm-late Mon-Thu, from 5.30pm Fri-Sun; Parliament)

Expect to wait up to two hours (sip a drink and relax, they suggest) before sampling Longrain's fusion-style Thai. The communal tables don't exactly work for a romantic date but they're great for checking out everyone else's meals. Dishes are designed to be shared and feed two; try the yellow curry with roasted pumpkin, fennel and pickled mustard greens, and don't miss the amazing seafood dishes.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilets.

No 35 at Sofite | MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.no35.com.au; Level 35, 25 Collins St, Sofitel; mains from \$31; Slunch & dinner; 11, 48, 109, 112, Parliament)

Melbourne's equivalent of the *Lost in Translation* bar in Tokyo. The views of the city skyline are superb through this restaurant-bar's floor-to-ceiling windows (there are memorable views from its toilets, too). It's a great choice for a special occasion, and you can expect a menu of rich, delicious dishes, such as roasted sea trout and parmesan gnocchi with crab-caviar butter sauce and spinach cream.

There is a set of stairs that you have to go down to get to the restaurant, but there is a special lift that carries wheelchairs down. The lift works great and the staff were attentive to all of my needs.

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

By Nastasia Campanella

Nastasia is a totally blind journalist and newsreader for the ABC and Triple J radio station.

I should state from the outset that I am a Sydney girl. However, regular trips to Melbourne as a child quickly showed me that the city's food scene was a cut above the rest. What I like most is that Melburnians set trends rather than follow them. They were the first in the country to kick off the small bar culture, with little watering holes popping up in science labs, laneways and garages. I think the massive influx of migrants over the years, especially from Europe, has also influenced the cafe and restaurant scene. I love that the art of cooking is appreciated the way it's meant to be, with passion and excitement.

Eating out doesn't have to be a treat in Melbourne. There's places for all kinds of occasions with prices ranging from seriously cheap to the lavishly expensive. It creates a real sense of community, where anyone can enjoy food in any way they like. Whether it's burgers for breakfast, Nutella pizza for lunch, cuttlefish for dinner and cannoli for dessert, the city has something for everyone.

Pei Modern (03-9654 8545; 45 Collins St, Melbourne)

Located in the driveway of the Sofitel Hotel, Pei Modern strikes the right balance between luxury dining and humble bistro. There's huge, plush banquettes, a high ceiling and the timber tables add a simple touch. Pei Modern is the work of Sydney restaurateur Mark Best, and a highlight is the fascinating pairings coming out of his kitchen. Take for example a fabulous silky dish of gnocchi teamed with nettle, also known as *urtica dioica* – an edible plant that I'd never heard of before. The cuttlefish and broad bean combination is another winner. The menu is heavy on the meat dishes, with pork belly, duck and lamb all making an appearance when I last visited. The staff knew everything about their wines and food. Best of all, when they found out I was blind, the staff made every effort to be helpful.

Koko Black Salon (03-9663 5567; 52 Collins St, Melbourne)

The service here is a little sketchy, but if you can get past that, you'll be well rewarded. As the name suggests, this cafe does everything in chocolate. Think hot chocolate as it is meant to be – thick and velvety. And you can be sure it'll come complete with marshmallows. Dessert-wise, the devilish Belgian chocolate mousse is carefully layered with chocolate sauce and chocolate crunchy bits. There's also a selection of handmade truffles in the front counter.

Trotters (03-9347 5657; 400 Lygon St, Carlton)

This place does simple breakfasts to perfection. Of course, you could go for the scrambled eggs on your choice of toast and all the usual sides, but why do that when the brekkie burger is on offer? It's all hands on deck for this one – it's packed with egg, bacon, pesto, aioli and taleggio cheese. Order a house-made hash brown on the side and a mug of chai and you'll have a breakfast worth bragging about. If you need an easily accessible table, management says to call ahead and they'll reserve one for you.

Brunetti (303-9347 2801; 380 Lygon St, Carlton)

This is a fun park for Italian food lovers. When you enter the first thing you notice is the smell of delicious food. Think crisp cannoli being filled with either vanilla custard or ricotta and candied nuts, margherita pizza coming out of the woodfired oven or a bowl of freshly made spaghetti hot off the stove. Good luck choosing what to eat. The whole shop is spread over one level so is very accessible and there's an accessible bathroom in the nearby arcade.

Cumulus Inc

If there's a restaurant worth lining up for, Cumulus Inc is it. Parties of between seven and 14 can make bookings, but anyone else will have to wait and hope for the best. The restaurant is owned by the McConnell Group, which also runs several other top eateries and bars across Melbourne, including Cutler and Co. It's not a restaurant dedicated to fish, but in my opinion, head chef Andrew McConnell works his magic on brilliant seafood dishes for normal fine dining prices. He serves tangy, sweet and spicy vinaigrettes with his oysters. Try anything raw (especially the tuna), or grilled whole fish like the crispy trout.

Southbank, South Wharf & Docklands

Restaurants here come with views, though quality ranges from decent to those simply after the tourist dollar. South Wharf is a recent development that's still finding its feet, but it's worth a look for some interesting dining options right on the river's edge.

Bangpop THAI

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9245 9800; www.bangpop.com.au; 35 South Wharf Promenade; mains \$16-30; noon-10.30pm Mon-Thu, to 11pm Fri & Sat, to 10.30pm Sun; City Circle, 70)

Sitting on the waterfront at South Wharf, Bangpop breathes a bit of colour and vibrancy into the area with its bar made from Lego, bicycles hanging from the ceiling, and dangling neon bulbs. Tasty Thai hawker-style dishes are served at communal cafe tables and accompanied by smoked margaritas.

All areas of the restaurant are on the same level and accessible, plus accessible toilets are available.

Tutto Bene ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP): 03-9696 3334; www.tuttobene.com.au; Midlevel, Southgate; mains \$25-38; @noon-3pm & 6-10pm; 🖳 Flinders St)

Across the Yarra in Southbank is this Italian restaurant that's especially known for its risotto dishes, which range from a simple Venetian *risi* e bisi (rice and peas) to some fabulously luxe options involving truffles or roast quail or aged balsamic. Don't miss its fine house-made gelato.

Restaurant is wheelchair accessible. There is no accessible toilet on the premises but there is one very close by in the Southgate complex.

Rockpool Bar & Grill STEAKHOUSE, MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8648 1900; www.rockpoolmelbourne.com; Crown Entertainment Complex; mains \$20-140; Unnch Sun-Fri, dinner daily; 55,

The Melbourne outpost of Neil Perry's empire offers his signature seafood raw bar, but it's really all about beef, from grass-fed to full-blood wagyu. This darkly masculine space is simple and stylish, as is the menu. The bar offers the same level of food service with the bonus of a rather spectacular drinks menu.

Wheelchair-accessible restaurant; accessible toilet is one floor below via lift.

MEALS ON WHEELS: MELBOURNE'S FOOD TRUCKS

Melbourne has long had an association with food vans. A game of suburban footy isn't complete without someone dishing out hot jam donuts, hot meat pies and hot chips to freezing fans over a truck counter – and what would a trip to the beach be without an ice-cream van playing its tune? But getting quality food from a van is a different matter. Taking the cue from LA's food truck revolution, fabulous food trucks have also begun plying the streets of Melbourne in recent years. Each day the trucks post to let their Twitter and Facebook followers know where they'll be, and hungry folk dutifully respond by turning up street-side for a meal. The trucks usually stop in inner-city suburbs, although the City of Melbourne recently approved a food truck trial in the CBD, with most vans grouped in and around St Kilda Rd on the south side of Princes Bridge. Outside NGV International is probably the most accessible location. See www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/enterprisemelbourne/promote/Documents/Food_Truck_Trial_Sites.pdf for a map of the locations.

Here are some of our favourite Melbourne food trucks (and their Twitter handles) to chase down:

Beatbox Kitchen Gourmet burgers and fries (@BeatboxKitchen)

Cornutopia Mexican street food (@Cornutopia)

GrumbleTumms Aussie bush tucker: croc or emu pies and roo burgers (@GrumbleTumms)

Gumbo Kitchen New Orleans-style po' boys (@Gumbo Kitchen)

Mr Burger As the name suggests (@MrBurgerTruck)

Smokin' Barry's Smoky barbecue meats (@SmokinBarrys)

Also check out www.wherethetruck.at for more food trucks around town.

Richmond

Richmond's main draw is restaurant-packed Victoria St, with its long strip of cheap Vietnamese and Asian eateries.

Minh Minh VIETNAMESE, LAOTIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9427 7891; 94 Victoria St; mains \$10-18; 4-10pm Tue, 11.30am-10.30pm Wed, Thu & Sun, to 11pm Fri & Sat; 109, North Richmond)

Minh Minh specialises in fiery Laotian dishes – the herby green-and-red-chilli beef salad is a favourite – but does all the Vietnamese staples, too.

There's a 10cm step that manual wheelchair users might be able to negotiate; the doorway is also fairly narrow.

Demitri's Feast GREEK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 29428 8659; www.demitrisfeast.com.au; 141 Swan St; mains \$14-16; 37.30am-4.30pm Tue-Fri, from 8am Sat & Sun; 70, East Richmond)

Warning: don't even attempt to get a seat here on a weekend; aim for a quiet weekday, when you'll have the time and space to fully immerse yourself in lunches such as calamari salad with ouzo aioli.

There are steps at the front entrance, but you can access the covered, heated courtyard via a car park down the side street. Even from the rear, there's still a step to negotiate to get into the restaurant proper.

Meatmother AMERICAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ■9041 5393; www.meatmother.com.au; 167 Swan St; lunch trays \$14, dinner trays \$19-23; ●6pm-late Tue, noon-3pm & 6pm-late Wed-Sun; ■70, 78, 79)

Vegetarians beware: this eatery doubles as a shrine to the slaughterhouse, evident in the meat cleavers hanging on the walls and blood-dripping animal skeleton prints. All meat is smoked over oak, from the eight-hour smoked pork sandwich to the beef brisket. Mess up your chops with a dinner meat tray and a side of chipotle slaw and raise your glass of American whiskey to Meatmother.

There's a 10cm step that manual wheelchair users might be able to negotiate; the toilets are upstairs.

Richmond Hill Cafe & Larder CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9421 2808; www.rhcl.com.au; 48-50 Bridge Rd; lunch \$12-26; 8.30am-4.30pm; 75, West Richmond)

Once the domain of well-known cook Stephanie Alexander, it still boasts its lovely cheese room and simple, comforting foods such as cheesy toast. There are breakfast cocktails for the brave.

Cafe and larder are accessible; toilets are up some stairs and are not accessible.

Baby PIZZA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9421 4599; www.babypizza.com.au; 631-633 Church St; mains \$17; ₹7am-11pm; ₹70, 78, ₹East Richmond)

Ignore the porno light feature (you won't notice it if you dine by day) and get into the food and vibe: delicious pizza, the occasional Aussie TV star and many, many trendy folk. It's busy, bold and run by restaurant king Christopher Lucas, so it's quite brilliant. Even for a pizza joint.

Restaurant is accessible with accessible bathrooms; best to call ahead so staff can seat you at the most accessible couple of tables.

Fitzroy & Around

Smith St has developed an astounding amount of great new eateries in the past couple of years, while Gertrude St also packs in some winning options. Brunswick St has a few long-established favourites but the rest is a little hit-and-miss. Further along you'll hit Northcote's High St strip, which is turning into a great dining area.

Po' Boy Quarter AMERICAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥03-9419 2130; 295 Smith St, Fitzroy; rolls \$9.90-12.90; №11.30am-1am; 🗐 86)

The boys behind the Gumbo Kitchen food truck have parked permanently on Smith St with this smart canteen-style eatery. Wolf down one of their rolls of pulled pork, shrimp with Louisiana hot sauce or fried green tomatoes with Cajun slaw while people-watching out front.

There's a ramp to enter and an accessible toilet inside.

Babka Bakery Cafe BAKERY, CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥ 3-9416 0091; 358 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; mains \$10-16; ⊕7am-7pm Tue-Sun; 🗐 112)

From borsch to dumplings, Russian flavours infuse the lovingly prepared breakfast and lunch dishes at Babka. It also has its own bakery, and the heady aroma of cinnamon and freshly baked sourdough bread, pies and cake makes even just a coffee worth queuing for. Otherwise go for the \$8 champagne-cocktail Beryl Sparkles, with vodka and fresh raspberries.

There's a single step to enter and the toilets are difficult to access, but wait staff will make room at a table on request. Probably not suitable for power wheelchair users.

Gringo Vibes MEXICAN

(GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9044 8568; www.gringovibes.com.au; 489 High St, Northcote; 2 tacos from \$11; @noon-10pm Tue-Sun; 186, 🖳 Croxton)

Ignore the name. Gringo Vibes does authentic Mexican, with its fantastic soft-shell corn tortillas, fine tequilas and margarita concoctions. There's a reggae playlist and courtyard seating out the back.

Staff can help with access into the building; no accessible toilet, unfortunately.

Brunswick Street Alimentari CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9416 2001; www.alimentari.com.au; 251 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; dishes \$6-20; 8am-6pm; 112)

Part deli, part fuss-free cafe, popular corner local Alimentari stocks artisan bread, smallgoods and cheeses. There's a range of panini, sandwiches and wraps, and comforting staples such as meatballs with bread.

Access is straight off Brunswick St; no accessible toilet though.

UAE MIDDLE EASTERN

(United Arab Eatery; GOOGLEMAP); 203-9489 0703; 487 High St, Northcote; plates from \$12; \$\infty\$5.30-9.30pm Tue-Sat; \$\bar{\textsf{L}}\\ 86, \$\bar{\textsf{L}}\\ Croxton)\$

Run by a French-trained chef who did her apprenticeship under Stephanie Alexander, cafe-style UAE has delicious Middle Eastern shared plates served with an easy-going attitude. It's big on local produce and everything is homemade, from dips to its cinammon ice cream. Also has a good selection of Lebanese and Turkish beers.

Wheelchair accessible, but toilets are down a narrow passageway and are not accessible.

Añada TAPAS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9415 6101; www.anada.com.au; 197 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; tapas from \$3.50, raciones \$11-23; 5pm-late Mon-Fri, from noon Sat & Sun; 86)

Dishes in this lovely little restaurant are alive with hearty Spanish and Muslim-Mediterranean flavours. It has a great tapas selection, or go for the nine-course banquet (chef's choice) for \$50.

Wheelchair accessible, with accessible toilet facilities.

Charcoal Lane MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9418 3400; www.charcoallane.com.au; 136 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; mains \$28-35; noon-3pm & 6-9pm Tue-Sat; 86)

Housed in an old bluestone former bank, this training restaurant for Indigenous and disadvantaged young people is one of the best places to try native flora and fauna; menu items may include kangaroo burger with bush-tomato chutney and wallaby tartare. Weekend bookings advised. It also holds cooking masterclasses using native ingredients; check the website for details.

Mobility:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Moroccan Soup Bar MOROCCAN, VEGETARIAN

(GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9482 4240; www.moroccansoupbar.com.au; 183 St Georges Rd, North Fitzroy; banquet per person \$20; ≥6-10pm Tue-Sun; ≥1; ≥1

Prepare to queue before being seated by stalwart Hana, who will then go through the vegetarian menu verbally while you sip on mint tea (it's an alcohol-free zone). Best bet is the banquet, which, for three courses, is tremendous value. The sublime chickpea bake is a favourite, driving locals to queue with their own pots and containers for takeaway.

Mobility:
Staff:

Accessible Toilet: NO
Accessible Parking: NO
Accessible Public Transport:

Vegie Bar VEGETARIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9417 6935; www.vegiebar.com.au; 380 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; mains \$14-16; €11am-10.30pm Mon-Fri, from 9am Sat & Sun; ≥1;

Its menu of delicious thin-crust pizzas, tasty curries and seasonal broths is perfectly suited to the cavernous warehouse decor with walls covered in band posters. It also has a fascinating selection of raw food dishes and plenty of vegan choices. Its fresh juices are popular, as are its yummy, cheap and original breakfasts.

Downstairs is accessible, but book ahead as Vegie Bar fills up. Has an accessible toilet.

Marios CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 3343; <u>www.marioscafe.com.au</u>; 303 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; mains \$17-30; 37am-10.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-10.30pm Sun; 112)

Mooching at Marios is part of the Melbourne 101 curriculum. Breakfasts are big and served all day, the service is swift, dishes are simple classic Italian and the coffee is old-school strong.

There is a tiny lip into the front entrance that is easily negotiated, but the toilets are up a couple of significant steps. The cafe is generally so busy that you will be restricted to the front few tables if you're in a wheelchair.

The Horn AFRICAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 4670; www.thehorncafe.com.au; 20 Johnston St, Collingwood; mains from \$17; 6pm-late Wed-Sat, 3pm-10pm Sun; 460)

Straight outta Addis Ababa, the flavours and feel of this Ethiopian restaurant are as authentic as its homemade injera bread (prepared fresh daily). Tear it into your meal using your fingers and wash it down with Ethiopian beer. There's an attractive beer garden and jazz on Thursday evenings. Call to prearrange coffee ceremonies.

Staff can assist wheelchair users over the step at the front door. Bathrooms not fully accessible.

Robert Burns Hotel SPANISH

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.robertburnshotel.com.au; 376 Smith St, Collingwood; mains from \$20; \$5pm-late Mon & Tue, noon-late Wed-Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$86)

Receiving a slick makeover meant the loss of this place's appealing dingy charm, but thankfully the authenticity of the Spanish flavours remain: its seafood paella is still one of Melbourne's best. The \$12 lunch menu is great value.

There are a couple of steps down into the restaurant, making this unsuitable for most wheelchair users despite the fact that the staff are willing to lend a hand if necessary.

Masak Masak MALAYSIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9417 4510; 230 Smith St, Collingwood; dishes \$8-21; ≥11.30am-2.30pm & 6-10pm; 186)

Masak Masak is just one of many new eateries lining Smith St, but it stands out for its Malaysian hawker street food with a twist, along with its bold '80s-looking spray-art walls. The menu is divided into bites, snacks and mains with anything from sticky anchovies and buffalo wings with onion sambal to jellyfish or grilled stingray.

There's a ramped entry, but once inside the tables are a bit close together and it's always crowded. There is an accessible toilet.

Aux Batifolles FRENCH

In the evenings this atmospheric French bistro does all the classics: duck *confit, moules frites* (mussels and French fries), frog legs and steak tartare. Desserts too: crème brûlée and tarte Tatin. During the day it's a fabulous cafe that does homemade baguettes and croissants, and well-priced traditional steaks and chicken dishes for lunch.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: NO
Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Pireaus Blues GREEK

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 0222; www.pireausblues.com.au; 310 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; mains from \$15; ⊗noon-3pm & 5-10pm; 112)

Come for home-style oven-baked Greek dishes inspired by *nonna's* recipes and prepared by third-generation owners. Its chargrilled calamari with feta salsa and homebaked bread is divine. There's traditional music on Monday nights.

There's a step into the restaurant and another to get to the bathroom; staff are willing to assist manual wheelchair users.

Barry CAFE

(GOOGLEMAP); 85 High St, Northcote; breakfasts from \$14; \$\infty 7.30am-3.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$86, \$\overline{\omega}\$Westgarth)

New to Northcote, Barry has the whole cafe thing down pat, with the industrial-chic warehouse interior and communal tables, but its breakfasts are what makes it stand out. Go with the summery Thai coconut sago pudding with mango, or gin-cured trout, or don't-knock-it-till-you-try-it peanut butter and tomatoes on toast sprinkled with more salted peanuts.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Cutler & Co MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9419 4888; www.cutlerandco.com.au; 55 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; mains \$39-47; 9noon-late Fri & Sun, 6pm-late Mon-Thu; 886)

Hyped for all the right reasons, this is another of Andrew McConnell's restaurants and though its decor might be a little over the top, its attentive, informed staff and joy-inducing dishes (roast suckling pig, Earl Grey ice-cream and Moonlight Bay oysters, to name a few) have quickly made this one of Melbourne's best.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Moon Under Water MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 7700; www.buildersarmshotel.com.au; 211 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; 4-course set menu per person \$75; 6-10pm Wed-Sat, noon-3pm & 6-10pm Sun; 86)

Another string to Andrew McConnell's bow is this whitewashed elegant dining room hidden away in the back of the Builders Arms Hotel. The set menu changes weekly and wine pairing comes at \$55 extra per head. Vegetarian menus are available. If you prefer something more casual and à la carte, check out the adjoining bistro with its daily rotisserie menu (suckling pig) from 6pm.

Bookings advised at least two weeks in advance.

The main dining room is inaccessible, as are the bathrooms; however, you can get into the bistro with a wheelchair.

Commoner MODERN BRITISH

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-9415 6876; www.thecommoner.com.au; 122 Johnston St, Fitzroy; mains from \$30, 5-course set menu \$70; noon-3pm Fri-Sun, 6pm-late Wed-Sun; 112)

On a mission to dispel the myth that British food is dull, the Commoner succeeds with a sensational, highly seasonal menu that incorporates classic ingredients into creative dishes. Think pork belly with black pudding, broccoli and anchovy, a side of chicken-skin potatoes, and brown-ale pudding with salted-caramel sauce and cream for dessert. Sunday lunches are all about its wood-fired roast goat or beef.

Mobility: * * *

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport: *

Step at entrance. Make sure when making booking that you ask for a table downstairs.

Estelle MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(GOOGLEMAP); 243 High St, Northcote; from \$25; 6pm-late Tue-Thu, noon-late Fri-Sun; 86, R
Northcote)

Classy establishment where you can enjoy the elegant interior of gleaming tiled floors, or the casual rear courtyard with a classic Northcote backyard feel. The menu spans rich French cuisine to Asian-inspired fish dishes. The five-course tasting menus are popular, matched with wine and starting from \$70.

Better suited to those with some mobility. Access is possible in a wheelchair, but toilets are not accessible. Call ahead.

Carlton & Around

Since the arrival of Mediterranean immigrants in the 1950s, Lygon St has been synonymous with Italian cuisine, albeit with a twist to suit the Australian palate. Avoid its spruikers and keep travelling north past Grattan St; some lovely cafes and restaurants lie here and beyond. The East Brunswick end of Lygon St is doing good things, too.

Small Block CAFE

(GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9381 2244; 130 Lygon St, Brunswick East; mains \$8-12; ⊗ breakfast & lunch; 🗐 1, 8)

With salvaged service-station signage and concrete floors plus warm and efficient service, Small Block acts as a community centre with a neighbourly drop-in-and-stay-awhile vibe. The big, beautiful breakfasts are worth writing home about.



Ray CAFE

(GOOGLEMAP); 🗷 03-9380 8593; 332 Victoria St, Brunswick; meals \$8-19; 😂 7.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm Sat & Sun; 💽; 🗐 19, 🖳 Brunswick)

Its grafittied facade resembles an abandoned house...before opening up to reveal itself as a gleaming cavernous space with exposed-brick walls. It has an inspired menu that reflects Brunswick by mixing Middle Eastern flavours with classic cafe fare, including fantastic breakfasts and burgers.

Wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets.

Sugardough Panificio & Patisserie BAKERY

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9380 4060; www.sugardough.com.au; 163 Lygon St, East Brunswick; mains \$8; \$\infty\$7.30am-5pm Tue-Fri, to 4pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$1, 8)

Sugardough does a roaring trade in homemade pies (including vegetarian ones), homebaked bread and pastries. Mismatched cutlery and cups and saucers make it rather like being at grandma's on family-reunion day.

There's a step to get through the front door, and although you can get in through the back, you'll have to negotiate a cobblestone alley to get there! There's no accessible toilet.

DOC Espresso ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9347 8482; www.docgroup.net; 326 Lygon St, Carlton; mains \$12-20; ₹7.30am-9.30pm Mon-Thu, to 10pm Fri & Sat, 8am-10pm Sun; 205, 1, 8, 96)

Run by third-generation Italians, DOC is bringing authenticity, and breathing new life, back into Lygon St. The espresso bar features homemade pasta specials, Italian microbrewery beers and *aperitivo* time, when you can enjoy a Negroni cocktail with complimentary nibble board (4pm to 7pm) while surrounded by dangling legs of meat and huge wheels of cheese behind glass shelves.

The **deli** (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9347 8482; www.docgroup.net; 326 Lygon St; 9am-8pm) next door does great cheese boards and panini, while around the corner is the original DOC Pizzeria.

The restaurant is accessible in a wheelchair, although there is no accessible toilet.

DOC Pizzeria PIZZA

DOC has jumped on the Milanese-led mozzarella bar trend and serves up the milky white balls – your choice of local cow or imported *buffala* – as entrees, in salads or atop fabulous pizzas. Toppings include creamy broccoli puree and prosciutto, bitter-sweet *cicoria* (chicory) and lemon, and the litmus-test *margherita* gets rave reviews. The buffalo milk gelato is a delight and they do dessert pizzas if you're up for double dough.

Mobility:

Staff: **

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport: **

Not wheelchair accessible - there are three steps at the front with no handrail. Staff are very helpful and will clear the way.

Rumi MIDDLE EASTERN

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9388 8255; www.rumirestaurant.com.au; 116 Lygon St, East Brunswick; mains \$17-23; 26-10pm; 1,8)

A fabulously well-considered place that serves up a mix of traditional Lebanese cooking and contemporary interpretations of old Persian dishes. The *sigara boregi* (cheese and pine-nut pastries) are a local institution, and tasty mains like meatballs are balanced with a large and interesting selection of vegetable dishes (the near-caramelised cauliflower and the broad beans are standouts).

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible bathroom.

Auction Rooms CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9326 7749; www.auctionroomscafe.com.au; 103-107 Errol St, North Melbourne; mains \$14-20; ₹7am-5pm Mon-Fri, from 7.30am Sat & sun; ₹3; 155)

This former auction-house-turned-North-Melbourne-success-story serves up some of Melbourne's best coffee, both espresso and filter, using ever-changing, house-roasted single-origin beans. Then there's the food, with a highly seasonal menu of creative breakfasts and lunches. From Queen Vic Market head west along Victoria St, then right at Errol St.

There's a ramp to get in and there are no steps to the toilets, although they can definitely not be classified as accessible.

Epocha EUROPEAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9036 4949; www.epocha.com.au; 49 Rathdowne St, Carlton; small/large sharing plates from \$14/24; noon-2pm & 5.30-10pm Tue-Sat; City Circle, 24, 30)

Set within a grand Victorian 1884 double-storey terrace, classy Epocha creates an interesting mix of Greek- and English-inspired dishes that's reflective of each of the co-owners' successes in previous restaurants. It all comes together beautifully on the \$68 sharing menu. It also has fantastic cocktails at the upstairs **Hannah's Bar**.

A set of stairs at the entrance make this unsuitable for wheelchair users, particularly because the cocktail bar is up a further flight of stairs.

Bar Idda ITALIAN

(GOOGLEMAP); №03-9380 5339; www.baridda.com.au; 132 Lygon St, East Brunswick; mains \$15-21; 📽 6-10pm Tue-Sat; 🗐 1, 8)

The diner-style table coverings give little clue to the tasty morsels this Sicilian restaurant serves for dinner. Shared plates are the go, and range from pistachio-crumbed lamb loin to vegetarian layered eggplant.

The small step at the entrance can be negotiated (perhaps requiring assistance) by a manual wheelchair user, but circulation space inside is very limited.

Tiamo ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.tiamo.com.au; 303 Lygon St, Carlton; mains \$9-24; 6.30am-11pm; Tourist Shuttle, 1,8)

When you've had enough of pressed, siphoned, Slayer-machined, poured-over, filtered and plunged coffee, head here to one of Lygon St's original Italian cafe-restaurants. There's the laughter and relaxed joie de vivre that only a well-established restaurant can have. Great pastas and pizza, too. Also has the more-upmarket Tiamo 2 next door.

Mobility:

Staff: *

Accessible Toilet: NO
Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Tiamo 1 is not wheelchair accessible. Tiamo 2 is wheelchair accessible but the toilet is inaccessible. Outside dining is possible.

Pope Joan CAFE

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9388 8858; www.popejoan.com.au; 77-79 Nicholson St, East Brunswick; mains \$15; \$27.30am-11pm Mon-Fri, until 5pm Sat & Sun; \$196)

The perfect place to drop in to cure a hangover with its menu of creative comfort food, strong coffee and 'liquid breakfasts' of Bloody Marys and spritzers. In fact, this East Brunswick fave is great any time.

Wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets.

Small Victories CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9347 4064; www.smallvictoriesrestaurant.com.au; 617 Rathdowne St, North Carlton; from \$13; 8am-5pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm Sun; 1,8)

Not your ordinary posh North Carlton cafe, Small Victories is big on DIY, preparing and smoking its own bacon and chorizo, churning its own butter and making pastas from scratch. It rounds it all out with single-origin coffee and craft beers.



Café Cavallino ITALIAN

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9347 5520; www.cafecavallino.com.au; 181 Lygon St, Carlton; pizza from \$17; 211.30am-late Tue-Sun; 181, 8)

Sure, it's your cliched Lygon St Italian trattoria, but it's also a fun, colourful choice with delicious pizzas — and it's where the Ferrari Formula One team dines come Melbourne Grand Prix (hence all the memorabilia on the walls).



Take care as interior has low lighting. Note that bathrooms are down a number of stairs.

A1 Lebanese Bakehouse MIDDLE EASTERN

(GOOGLEMAP); www.allebanesebakery.com.au; 643-645 Sydney Rd, Brunswick; 7am-7pm Sun-Wed, to 9pm Thu-Sat; 19, Anstey)

The place to go for authentic Lebanese pizzas and pies at wallet-friendly prices.



ACCESSIBLE-RESTAURANT WEBSITES

The following websites are useful for researching accessible places to eat and drink.

Eatability (<u>www.eatability.com.au/melbourne/wheelchair/</u>) is a searchable database for wheelchair users and has various filters for restaurants, cafes and bars.

 $table 4u \\ (\underline{www.table 4u.com.au/r/4/1/0/1201/Melbourne-Restaurants-Wheel-Chair-Friendly}) \\ has a useful wheelchair-friendly filter.$

St Kilda & Around

Fitzroy St is a popular eating strip, and you'll find the good, the very good and the downright ugly along its length. Acland St also hums with dining options, as well as its famed cake shops and crowded-in-summer ice-cream stores. Over the Nepean Hwy, Carlisle St has more than its fair share of cute cafes and a couple of restaurants that keep the locals happy.

The City of Port Phillip has put together a handy accessible dining guide covering Bay St (Port Melbourne) and Fitzroy St (St Kilda) with very detailed descriptions of each establishment's accessibility. Download it from www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/accessible-dining-guide-2013-web.pdf and check www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/diningguide.htm for updates and corrections.

Monarch Cake Shop DESSERTS, EUROPEAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9534 2972; www.monarchcakes.com.au; 103 Acland St, St Kilda; slice of cake \$5; 8am-10pm; 96)

St Kilda's Eastern European cake shops have long drawn crowds that come to peer at the sweetly stocked windows. Monarch is a favourite – its *kugelhopf* (marble cake), plum cake and poppy-seed cheesecake can't be beaten. It has been in business since 1934; not much has changed here with its wonderful buttery aromas and old-time atmosphere. Also does good coffee.

The small step at the entrance may be negotiated by a manual wheelchair user, with help if necessary.

Lentil as Anything VEGETARIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.lentilasanything.com; 41 Blessington St, St Kilda; by donation; 211am-9pm; 16, 96)

Choosing from the organic vegetarian menu is easy. Deciding what to pay can be hard. This unique not-for-profit operation serves up tasty vegetarian food and provides training and educational opportunities for marginalised people. Whatever you end up paying for your meal goes towards helping new migrants, refugees, people with disabilities and the long-term unemployed. Also at the Abbotsford Convent (MAP COOGLEMAP); www.lentilasanything.com; 1 St Heliers St, Abbotsford; by donation; \$\infty\$9am-9pm; \$\subseteq\$Victoria Park).

There's a single step into the entrance and no accessible toilet. The Abbotsford Convent branch is wheelchair-accessible.

Glick's BAGFLS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.glicks.com.au; 330A Carlisle St, Balaclava; bagels \$4-10; \$\infty\$5.30am-8pm Mon-Fri & Sun, 7.30pm-midnight Sat; \$\overline{\omega}\$3, 16, 79)

No-frills bakery keeping the local Jewish community happy with bagels baked and boiled in-house and kosher options available. Stick with the classics and try the 'New Yorker' with cream cheese and egg salad.

Entry has level access.

Banff PIZZA, BAR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.banffstkilda.com; 145 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; mains \$9; \$\infty\$8am-10pm; \$\overline{\omega}\$3a, 16)

It's not just the daily happy hour that keeps Banff's Fitzroy St-fronting chairs occupied, it's also the \$9 pizzas (\$5 for lunch).

Entry has level access, no accessible toilets.

Mirka's at Tolarno INTERNATIONAL ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9525 3088; www.mirkatolarnohotel.com; Tolarno Hotel, 42 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; mains \$26-32; 6pm-late; 16, 96, 112)

Murals by beloved artist Mirka Mora grace the walls in this dining room with a history (it's been delighting diners since the early 1960s), part of Tolarno Hotel. Guy Grossi's Italian menu has some rustic classics, like veal saltimbocca, mixed with interesting surprises such as walnut and pear gnocchi with gorgonzola. There's also a four-course sharing menu (\$60).

Accessible restaurant with accessible toilets.

Cicciolina MEDITERRANEAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9525 3333; www.cicciolinastkilda.com.au; 130 Acland St, St Kilda; mains \$17-43; noon-10pm; 16, 96)

This warm room of dark wood, subdued lighting and pencil sketches is a St Kilda institution. The inspired Modern Australian/Mediterranean menu is smart and generous, and the service warm. It takes bookings only for lunch; for dinner eat early or while away your wait in the moody little back bar.

Small step at entrance shouldn't cause any problems for wheelchairs; accessible toilet on premises too.

I Carusi II PIZZA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9593 6033; 231 Barkly St, St Kilda; pizza \$16-21; ≥6-11pm; 16, 96)

Located beyond the Acland St chaos in this nostalgic corner shop, I Carusi pizzas have a particularly tasty dough and follow the less-is-more tenet, with top-quality mozzarella, pecorino and a small range of other toppings. Bookings advised.

Accessible entry; call ahead to check toilet situation.

Mr Wolf PIZZA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 🛂 03-9534 0255; www.mrwolf.com.au; 9-15 Inkerman St, St Kilda; pizza \$20-25; 😤 5pm-late Tue-Sun, from noon Fri-Sun; 🗐 16)

Local celeb chef Karen Martini's casual but stylish space is renowned for its crisp Roma-style pizzas. There's also a great menu of antipasti and pastas that display her flair for matching ingredients.

Accessible entry, no accessible bathroom.

Lau's Family Kitchen CHINESE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8598 9880; www.lauskitchen.com.au; 4 Acland St, St Kilda; mains \$25-38; Sdinner sittings 6pm & 8pm; 16, 96)

The owner's family comes with an absolutely flawless pedigree (father Gilbert Lau is the former owner of famed Flower Drum) and the restaurant is in a lovely leafy location. The mainly Cantonese menu is simple, and dishes are beautifully done (if not particularly exciting), with a few surprises thrown in for more adventurous diners. Make a reservation for one of the two dinner sittings.

Don't let the flight of steps out front deter you: there is a portable ramp and the delightful staff are more than willing to help.

Newmarket Hotel LATIN AMERICAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9537 1777; www.newmarketstkilda.com.au; 34 Inkerman St, St Kilda; meals from \$15; noon-3pm & 6-10.30pm; 3, 67)

In typical St Kilda fashion, this historic pub has received a cosmetic enhancement, though thankfully it's been done tastefully courtesy of a modern refurb by renowned Six Degrees architects. The menu is Latin American—inspired, so expect Mexican street food, wood-barbecued meats and premium steaks. Lunch specials are excellent value, and there's a top-shelf bar, too.

Wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets.

Miss Jackson CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9534 8415; <u>www.missjackson.com.au</u>; 2/19 Grey St, St Kilda; mains from \$15; №7am-4pm Tue-Sun; 16, 96)

Its casual set-up and atmosphere makes it feel a bit like you've been invited around to a friend's house for brunch—a friend with good enough taste to cook things like crab scrambled eggs or panko-crumbed chicken-schnitzel burgers.

There are stairs to get in; there's an outside area that's wheelchair-accessible, weather permitting.

Batch Espresso CAFE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP); 203-9530 3550; 320 Carlisle St, Balaclava; mains \$16; ₹7am-4.30pm; ₹3, 3a, 16, ₹8 Balaclava)

Its walls are decorated with bric-a-brac donated by locals who love the food on offer, friendly service and great New Zealand coffee. Good luck getting a seat during the weekend, though.

The cafe itself is accessible, but you'll have exit and go around the block to get to the toilet.

Barney Allen's MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9525 5477; www.barneyallens.com.au; 14 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; mains from \$16; ≅3pm-1am Mon-Thu, from noon Fri-Sun; 116, 96, 112)

Like its Aussie celebrity-chef owner Iain 'Huey' Hewitson, there's nothing flashy about this long-standing St Kilda local, which instead prefers to keep things simple with a menu of winning, comfort-food Mod Oz dishes, such as panko-and-parmesan-crusted salmon and its juicy Barney Allen burger.

Wheelchair accessible entry, but no accessible toilets.

Galleon Cafe CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 9 Carlisle St, St Kilda; mains from \$10; \$\infty\$7am-5pm; \$\overline{\omega}\$3a, 16, 79)

Friendly folk, a decent amount of elbow room and low-key music make this a cheery place to down a coffee and lunch in busy St Kilda.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Not accessible in a wheelchair. One step at the front.

Footpath dining a possibility.

South Yarra, Prahran & Windsor

It's perpetual peak hour at Chapel St's many cafes. You'll also find a few excellent dining options in Prahran, including on Greville St as well as at the Prahran Market. The Windsor strip keeps things cheap and cheerful.

Huxtaburger BURGERS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 201-209 High St, Prahran; \$\infty\$11.30am-10pm Sun-Thu, to 11pm Fri & Sat; \$\overline{\omega}\$6, 78, 79)

An American-style burger joint that helped bring 'dude food' to Melbourne. Great for when you're craving a burger (or veg burger) and crinkle-cut chips in hip surroundings.

A portable ramp can be brought out to access the restaurant.

Valentino ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9826 8815; www.valentinorestaurant.com.au; 517 Malvern Rd, Hawksburn; pizzas \$20; noon-2pm Fri-Sun, 5.30-10pm Tue-Sun;

Offering Calabrian-style dishes with a lively welcoming atmosphere, Valentino has a wonderful antipasti selection – but its pizzas are the real reason to come here. Great *aperitivi* and wine list, too.

Accessible entry and toilets.

Da Noi ITALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9866 5975; 95 Toorak Rd, South Yarra; mains \$35, 4-course tasting menu \$93; noon-3pm & 6-10pm Mon-Sat; 8, South Yarra)

Da Noi serves up beautiful Sardinian dishes that change daily. The spontaneous kitchen might reinterpret the chef's special three times a night. Just go with it; it's a unique experience and harks back to a different way of dining.

Entry is fine, but since the restaurant is on two levels, advance notice is essentialifyou're in a wheelchair. The bathrooms are inaccessible – there are a couple of stairs.

WoodLand House MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9525 2178; www.woodlandhouse.com.au; 78 Williams Rd, Prahran; tasting menu from \$115; noon-3pm Thu, Fri & Sun, 6.30-9pm Tue-Sat; 6)

Housed in a Victorian terrace of ample proportions, this was the former incarnation of Jacques Reymond, a local pioneer of degustation dining. After 15 years he handed over the reins to two of his sous chefs, who learned everything they know from the man.

The tasting menu has shifted from its original French focus to an innovative Modern Australian direction incorporating quality local produce. Sunday lunch offers a good-value chef's set menu of four courses for \$80.

No access as such but staff can be relied on to lift clients in manual wheelchairs into the dining room. No accessible bathrooms. Call ahead for a consultation.

South Melbourne, Port Melbourne & Albert Park

Andrew's Burgers BURGERS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ✓03-9690 2126; www.andrewshamburgers.com.au; 144 Bridport St, Albert Park; burgers from \$7.50; №11am-3pm & 4.30-9pm Mon-Sat; 🗐1)

Andrew's is a family-run burger institution that's been around since the '50s. Walls are still wood-panelled and now covered with photos of local celebs who, like many, drop in for a classic burger with the lot and a big bag of chips to take away. Veg option available.

You can roll in with a wheelchair, but space is quite tight once inside. There's an outside dining area that's also accessible.

Jock's Ice-Cream ICE CREAM

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 83 Victoria Ave, Albert Park; single cone \$4; noon-8pm Mon-Fri, to 10.30pm Sat & Sun; 11)

For more than a decade, Jock has been scooping up his sorbets and ice creams made on-site to baysiders. Flavours change regularly and may include baked apple, Baci or roast almond. Take-home tubs also available.

There's no step, but the doorway is quite narrow and circulation space inside is tight for someone in a wheelchair.

St Ali CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9689 2990; www.stali.com.au; 12-18 Yarra PI, South Melbourne; dishes \$10-28; \$\infty\$7am-6pm; 112)

A hideaway warehouse conversion where the coffee is carefully sourced and guaranteed to be good. If you can't decide between house blend, speciality, black or white, there's a tasting 'plate' (\$18). Hungry? The corn fritters with poached eggs and haloumi are legendary. Off Clarendon St, between Coventry and York Sts.



Footpath outside has a steep camber and many cut aways. Wheelchair access through large roller door which can be opened if not already open. Can move between tables in a wheelchair.

Misuzu's JAPANESE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥03-9699 9022; 3-7 Victoria Ave, Albert Park; mains \$18-30; ⊗lunch & dinner; 🗐1)

Misuzu's menu includes whopping noodle, rice and curry dishes, tempuras and takeaway options from the neatly displayed sushi bar. Sit outside under lantern-hung trees, or inside surrounded by murals and dark wood.

Accessible entry is OK, but toilets might be tricky; call ahead.

Albert Park Hotel Oyster Bar & Grill SEAFOOD, PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9690 5459; www.thealbertpark.com.au; cnr Montague St & Dundas Pl, Albert Park; mains \$15-30; 1, 96)

With a focus on oysters and seafood as well as bar food, this incarnation of the Albert Park Hotel (thanks again to Six Degrees) is filling seats with its promise of market-priced fish and wood-barbecued 'big fish' served in five different Mediterranean styles.

Wheelchair accessible, with double doors to enter and an accessible toilet.

P Drinking & Nightlife

Melbourne's bars are legendary, from laneway hideaways to brassy corner establishments. The same goes for coffee. Out of the city centre, shopping strips are embedded with shopfront drinking holes: try Fitzroy, Collingwood, Northcote, Prahran and St Kilda. Many inner-city pubs have pushed out the barflies, pulled up the beer-stained carpet, polished the concrete and brought in talented chefs and mixologists, but don't dismiss the character-filled oldies that still exist.

Many of Melbourne's smaller bars and pubs double as live-music venues, and are still great for a beer in the fun, rowdy front bars even if you don't want to catch a gig.

GAY & LESBIAN MELBOURNE

Melbourne's gay and lesbian community is well integrated into the general populace, but clubs and bars are found in distinct locations: north of the river, they're in Abbotsford and Collingwood, while south of the river they're in Prahran and South Yarra. Commercial Rd, which separates Prahran and South Yarra, is home to a couple of gay clubs, cafes and businesses. It's more glamorous than the 'northside', which has a reputation as more down-to-earth and a little less pretentious.

Plenty of Melbourne venues get into the spirit during Midsumma Festival (www.midsumma.org.au; San-Feb). It has a diverse program of cultural, community and sporting events, including the popular Midsumma Carnival at Alexandra Gardens, St Kilda's Pride March and much more. Australia's largest GLBT film festival, the Melbourne Queer Film Festival (www.melbournequeerfilm.com.au), screens more than 100 films from around the world each March.

For more local info, pick up a copy of the free weekly newspaper MCV (Melbourne Community Voice). GLBT-community radio station **JOY 94.9FM** (www.joy.org.au) is another important resource for visitors and locals.

Venues change from year to year, so providing accessibility information is difficult. It's best to check individual venues when they are announced. Some general accessibility information on the Midsumma Festival is available here: www.midsumma.org.au/producer-resources?showall=&start=2.

More detailed and very useful information regarding accessibility for the Melbourne Queer Film Festival – including a request form for Auslan interpreting and audio description services – can be found here: www.melbournefestival.com.au/festival-info/access-information/.

DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE

Kama Bar (MAP) GOOGLE MAP); ≥03-9804 5771; www.facebook.com/kamaclub; 119 Commercial Rd, South Yarra; ≥5pm-late; =172) The former Exchange Hotel, Kama Bar is one of the few remaining gay venues along Commercial Rd, with regular DJs and drag shows.

Laird (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9417 2832; www.lairdhotel.com; 149 Gipps St, Collingwood; 5pm-late; €Collingwood) The Laird's been running its men-only gay hotel for more than 30 years now. It's on the Abbotsford side of Gipps St, which runs off Collingwood's Wellington St.

DT's Hotel (MAP) GOOGLE MAP); 303-9428 5724; www.dtshotel.com.au; 164 Church St, Richmond; 378, 79) This small and intimate gay pub hosts some of Melbourne's best drag shows, retro nights and happy hours.

Peel Hotel (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-9419 4762; www.thepeel.com.au; 113 Wellington St; 9pm-dawn Thu-Sat; 386) One of Melbourne's most famous gay venues, the Peel features a male crowd dancing to house music, retro and commercial dance. It's on Peel St, which runs east off Smith St.

Commercial Hotel (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9689 9354; www.hotelcommercial.com.au; 238 Whitehall St, Yarraville; Thu-Sat; Yarraville) A friendly, low-key pub in Melbourne's inner west that presents drag shows on Saturday nights. From the city centre, follow Footscray Rd and turn left down Whitehall St.

<u>Greyhound Hotel</u> The old Greyhound's had a facelift; expect drag-filled evenings from Thursday to Saturday and a nightclub with a state-of-the-art sound system.

The Laird and Greyhound Hotel are wheelchair-accessible and have an accessible toilet. Access to the Peel Hotel is via a side door, but they don't have an accessible toilet. Phone ahead to check the accessibility of the other venues listed here.

Central Melbourne

Lui Bar COCKTAIL BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; www.vuedemonde.com.au; Level 55, Rialto, 525 Collins St; \$\infty\$5.30pm-midnight Mon, noon-midnight Tue-Fri, 5.30pm-late Sat, noon-evening Sun; \$\overline{11}\$, 31, 48, 109, 112, \$\overline{11}\$Southern Cross)

One of the city's most sophisticated bars, Lui is part of the super sophistacted <u>Vue de Monde</u> restaurant. It offers the chance to sample the views and excellent bar snacks (smoked ocean trout jerky!) without having to include in the whole Vue de Monde dining experience. Suits and jet-setters cram in most nights so get there early (nicely dressed), claim your table and order drinks from the 'pop-up book' menu containing serious drinks like macadamia martinis – vacuum distilled at the bar.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Melbourne Supper Club BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9654 6300; 1st fl, 161 Spring St; ≥5pm-4am Sun-Thu, to 6am Fri & Sat; =95, 96, Reparliament)

Melbourne's own Betty Ford's (the place you go when there's nowhere left to go), the Supper Club is open very late and is a favoured after-work spot for performers and hospitality types. It's entered via an unsigned wooden door, where you can leave your coat before cosying into a chesterfield. Browse the encyclopaedic wine menu and relax; the sommeliers will cater to any liquid desire.

It does good bar food too, including old-school party pies. The upstairs bar **Siglo** has wonderful views and is open to the elements for the cigar smokers, who will delight in its menu of Cuban cigars.

Stairs preclude wheelchair access.

Madame Brussels BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.madamebrussels.com; Level 3, 59-63 Bourke St; noon-lam; 86, 96)

Head here if you've had it with Melbourne-moody places and all that dark wood. Although named for a famous 19th-century brothel owner, it feels like a camp '60s rabbit hole you've fallen into, with much Astroturfery and staff dressed à la the country club. It's just the spot to escape the city and enjoy a jug of Pimms on its wonderful rooftop terrace.

Mobility: Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: NO Accessible Public Transport:

Worth it. There are about five to eight stairs to get up to the lift. Once upstairs staff are friendly and it's easy to move around. There is no accessible toilet but most paraplegics could use the toilet. Go early; find a table and settle in for the night.

Lift access from street. Might have been an accessible toilet downstairs but don't think there was one in the venue.

Sweatshop BAR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.sweatshopbar.com.au; 113 Lonsdale St; Fri & Sat; Parliament)

There's great Cantonese cuisine and bar upstairs at Seamstress (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9663 6363; www.seamstress.com.au; 113 Lonsdale St; mains \$24-35; Sunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat; Reparliament) that's open all week, but weekends it's the New York-like basement dive bar that's worth squashing in for. Quaff American whiskies and craft beers to wash down inventive Asian bar food.

Stairs preclude wheelchair access.

Beer DeLuxe BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.beerdeluxe.com.au; Federation Sq, Melbourne; 11am-11pm Sun-Wed, 11am-1ate Thu-Sat; Tourist Shuttle, City Circle, Flinders St)

In the heart of the city, here you'll find a beer bible in place of a menu, from which you can select from 160 beers from around the world and 12 on tap. There's an attractive beer hall-style beer garden.

Mobility:★★★ Vision: Hearing: ** Staff: ** Accessible Toilet: YES Accessible Parking: NO Accessible Public Transport:

Very close to Flinders Street. Great fun. The most plush accessible toilet around.

Accessible parking at Fed Square.

Brother Baba Budan CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; www.sevenseeds.com.au; 359 Little Bourke St; ♥7am-5pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm Sun; ♠; ♠19, 57, 59)

This small city cafe by Seven Seeds, with just a few seats (most hangin' from the ceiling), does a roaring takeaway coffee trade for the inner-city workers and is a great spot for a mid-shopping caffeine buzz. Don't be put off by queues; service is fast and friendly.

Mobility: Staff: ** Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: NO Accessible Public Transport:

No wheelchair access. One step at front door. Heavy door to open. Very little space but worth visiting. Love this place.

Double Happiness BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9650 4488; www.double-happiness.org; 21 Liverpool St; 4pm-1am Mon-Wed, to 3am Thu & Fri, 6pm-3am Sat, to 1am Sun; 86, 96, AParliament)

This stylish hole-in-the-wall is decked out in Chinese propaganda posters and Mao statues and has an excellent range of Asian-influenced chilli- or

coriander-flavoured cocktails. Upstairs is the bar **New Gold Mountain** (MAP COCCLEMAP); 203-9650 8859; <u>www.newgoldmountain.org</u>; Level 1, 21 Liverpool St; 6pm-late Tue-Thu, to 5am Fri & Sat; 86, 96, Parliament), run by the same owners, with table service.

Wheelchair-accessible entry, no accessible toilet.

Degraves Espresso CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Degraves St; \$\infty 7am-9pm Mon-Fri, 8am-9pm Sat, 8am-6pm Sun; \$\overline{\ove

In atmospheric Degraves St, this institution is a good spot to grab a quick takeaway coffee then wander the laneways.

There is a small step to enter and, once inside, it's pretty crowded.

Shebeen BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.shebeen.com.au; 36 Manchester Lane; 11am-late Mon-Fri, 4pm-late Sat, 4-11pm Sun; 11, 31, 48, 109, 112)

Corrugated-iron walls and awnings give this relaxed bar a canteen-shack feel. Shebeen (the name for illegal drinking bars in South Africa during apartheid) offers a place to have a tipple without feeling too guilty about it -100% of all drink profits go towards a charity partner overseas. Occasionally has live music.

There's wheelchair access to the front and back bars, but not to the music venue downstairs. The staff have a swipecard to access an accessible toilet in the laneway.

Chuckle Park BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.chucklepark.com.au; 322 Little Collins St; noon-lam; 86, 96)

The newest addition to Melbourne's creative bars, Chuckle Park uses a healthy dose of Astroturf to park its '70s caravan bar on in the narrowest of laneways. Hanging plant jars double as swaying lights and indie and rock music create the scene, while the 'in the know' crowd munches on pulled-pork rolls and shares huge jars of cocktails.

Although you can access the bar in a wheelchair, the space is very narrow and the tables very high.

Loop BAR, CLUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥03-9654 0500; <u>www.looponline.com.au</u>; 23 Meyers PI; ≥3pm-late; = 86, 96)

Weekend DJs perform in a project space with large double screen and scattered projectors; find yourself a dark seat or a spot at the bar. It has something on every night, from beats to heartfelt docos.

Level, accessible entrance with accessible toilets

1000£Bend BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.thousandpoundbend.com.au; 361 Little Lonsdale St; 8am-11pm Mon-Wed, 8am-1am Thu, 10am-1am Sat, 10am-11pm Sun; 5; 19, 57, 59)

Breakfast, lunch, dinner and cruisy folk using the free wi-fi – that's not all at this mega warehouse of entertainment. It's also a whopping great venue for art shows and plays.

Mobility:

Vision:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Can't remember what the toilet is like. The place is flat and easy to get around. Staff are helpful; depending on the layout it is usually easy to move around in.

Section 8 BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.section8.com.au; 27-29 Tattersalls Lane; 10am-late Mon-Fri, noon-late Sat & Sun; 3, 5, 6, 16, 64, 67, 72)

Enclosed within a cage full of shipping containers and wooden-pallet seating, Section 8 remains one of the city's hippest bars. It does great hot dogs, including vegan ones.



Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: YES

Close to Melbourne Central station. Very small place; but great inner city vibe.

Cool bar that is accessible and has accessible toilet. Not sure if toilet has hand rails but is very very big. Electric chair users might have some difficulty negotiating their way to the toilet but will get there in the end. Security are very helpful.

Workshop BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9326 4365; www.theworkshopbar.com.au; 413 Elizabeth St; 210am-late Mon-Fri, 1pm-late Sat & Sun; 3; 19, 57, 59, 19 Melbourne Central)

Popular with students and young backpackers from the smattering of nearby hostels, this industrial bar has a lively party atmosphere, with DJs playing mainly hip hop and drum 'n' bass. A good lunch spot, too, with \$7 pizzas eaten on its flora-filled outdoor balcony.

The stairs can be bypassed using a service lift – call ahead to arrange or get a mate to run upstairs to get them to send it down. The toilet is, apparently, accessible.

Robot BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9620 3646; www.robotsushi.com; 12 Bligh PI; 5pm-late Mon-Fri, 8pm-late Sat; Flinders St)

If neo-Tokyo is your thing or you just have a sudden urge for a sushi handroll washed down with an Asahi, check out Robot. It has an all-welcome door policy, big windows that open to the laneway and a cute mezzanine level, and attracts a laid-back young crowd.

Wheelchair-accessible; although there is no accessible toilet on the premises, you can use the one next door.

Riverland BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9662 1771; www.riverlandbar.com; Vaults 1-9 Federation Wharf, under Princes Bridge; 10am-late Mon-Fri, 9am-late Sat & Sun; Flinders St)

Perched below Princes Bridge alongside the Yarra River, this bluestone beauty keeps things simple with good wine, beer on tap and bar snacks that hit the mark: charcuterie, cheese and barbecue sausages. Outside tables are a treat when the weather is kind. Be prepared for rowdiness pre- and post-footy matches at the nearby MCG.

Accessible via lift from street level, accessible throughout the bar and accessible toilets onsite.

Young & Jackson's PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; www.youngandjacksons.com.au; cnr Flinders & Swanston Sts, Melbourne; 👺 11am-late; 🖳 Flinders St)

Opposite Flinders Street station, this historical pub has been serving up beer since 1861 and makes for a popular meeting spot. Lounge on chesterfields in Chloe's Bar or head up to the rooftop cider bar, where nine Australian ciders are on tap, including the house-brewed speciality.

Wheelchair access is from Swanston St. The Main Bar and Long Bar on the ground floor are accessible, and Chloe's Bar and restaurant upstairs via lift, but not the Cider Bar. Multiple accessible toilets.

Cherry BAR, LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.cherrybar.com.au; ACDC Lane; 6pm-3am Tue & Wed, 5pm-5am Thu-Sat, 2-6.30pm Sun; City Circle, 70, 75)

Melbourne's legendary rock 'n' roll bar is still going strong. Located down ACDC Lane (yep, named after the band, who are homegrown heroes), there's often a queue, but once inside a welcoming, slightly anarchic spirit prevails. Live music and DJs play rock 'n' roll seven nights a week, and there's a long-standing soul night on Thursdays.

It's where touring bands choose to hang out post-gig; management made headlines by knocking back Lady Gaga to honour a local band's booking.



Has accessible toilet. Can be very congested at times. Small area for all patrons; licensed for 300 people only! Great venue for good bands and live music!

James Squire Brewhouse BREWERY

Brewery tours free, tasting paddles \$15.



To access the toilet you need to enter from the other bar or go up five to seven stairs. There are also about five stairs to get into the bar. Mobility inside is OK. Bar split over three levels. Finding a seat on the bar level is difficult.

South Wharf & Docklands

Boatbuilders Yard BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9686 5088; 23 South Wharf Promenade, South Wharf; 7am-late; 10ty Circle, 70, 71)

Occupying a slice of South Wharf next to the historic *Polly Woodside* ship, Boatbuilders attracts a mixed crowd of office workers, travellers and Melburnians keen to discover this developing area. It's made up of 'zones' running seamlessly from the indoor cafe/bar to the outdoor barbecue and cider garden, bocce pit and soon-to-come summer gelato bar.

Mobility:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Easy access and has an accessible toilet. Anywhere along the Yarra in the complex is good.

Story CAFE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 700 Bourke St, Docklands; \$\infty\$7am-4.30pm Mon-Fri; \$\overline\$Southern Cross)

Another coffee spot from Dukes, this one does a roaring trade for the Docklands office workers, filling the gap for great coffee in the area. It's a short walk from Southern Cross Station along the Concourse towards Etihad (Docklands) Stadium

Wheel straight in - it's on concourse level.

Richmond

Bar Economico BAR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP); 438 Church St; \$\infty\$5pm-late Wed-Sat, 2pm-late Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$70, 79, \$\overline{\omega}\$East Richmond)

The newspapered front windows might have you turning on your heel, but rest assured you're in the right place. With its menus on ripped cardboard boxes and caged bar, Economico is a kind of Central American dive bar specialising in rum-based cocktails – Wrong Island Iced Tea sums the place up nicely. Buy your drink tickets from the booth first, then redeem them at the bar.

Wheelchair access but no accessible toilet due to small size of bar.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

Public House BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9421 0187; www.publichouse.com.au; 433-435 Church St; Snoon-late Tue-Sun; 70, 79, East Richmond)

Not in any way resembling a public house from any period of history, this great Six Degrees fit-out features their signature blend of found glass and earthy raw and recycled materials. There's imported beer on tap, jugs of Pimms and a short but sweet wine list. DJs set up on weekends and attract a young good-looking crowd ready to, uh, mingle.

Downstairs areas are accessible, with accessible toilets available.

Collection BAR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.thecollectionbar.com.au; 328 Bridge Rd; 4pm-1am Tue-Sun; 48, 75)

Another bar Americana, this swampy New Orleans watering hole has big glass jars of gin and bourbon resting on its polished bar and a menu of Cajun-Creole cooking, including dishes with crocodile (no alligator, sorry), gumbo and crab sandwiches.

There is a single step, which would exclude power wheelchair users, but they've had plenty of manual wheelchair users as guests. Access to the toilet is tight.

Touchwood CAFE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP); www.touchwoodcafe.com; 480 Bridge Rd; \$\infty\$7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 7.30am-4.30pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$48, 75)

A light, airy cafe with plenty of space, both indoors and out, in its courtyard, serving single-origin coffee in a former recycled furniture store (hence: Touchwood).

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Aviary BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.theaviary.com.au; 271 Victoria St; noon-lam; 24, 109)

If you want a nightcap, this atmospheric bluestone inner-city bar has a good range of beers and wines, or good cocktails - including by the jug.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Mountain Goat Brewery BREWERY

(GOOGLEMAP); www.goatbeer.com.au; cnr North & Clark Sts, Richmond; Spm-midnight Wed & Fri; 48, 75, 109, Burnley)

In the backstreets of industrial Richmond, this local microbrewery is set in a massive beer-producing warehouse; enjoy its range of beers (it has \$11 tasting paddles) while nibbling on pizza. There are free brewery tours on Wednesdays. It's tricky to reach: head down Bridge Rd, turn left at Burnley and right at North.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card:NO

One stair into venue. Another to the bar and to the disabled toilets. I think they have a ramp they can bring out. To do the tour you may need to go up a single step twice. Ring staff beforehand; they are accommodating.

Fitzroy & Around

Possessing the highest density of pubs of any suburb in Melbourne, Fitzroy has a big drinking scene. Neighbouring Collingwood and Northcote (along High St) also see a lot of action.

★Naked for Satan BAR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 🗗 03-9416 2238; www.nakedforsatan.com.au; 285 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; 👺 noon-12am Sun-Thu, to 1am Fri & Sat; 🗐 112)

Vibrant, loud and reviving an apparent Brunswick St legend (a man nicknamed Satan who would get down and dirty, naked because of the heat, in an illegal vodka distillery under the shop), this place packs a punch both with its popular *pintxos* (Basque tapas; \$2), huge range of cleverly named

beverages, and unbeatable roof terrace - Naked in the Sky - with wraparound decked balcony.



Naked in the Sky is a must. Just ask the guards downstairs and they will give you access to a lift for upstairs. There is an accessible toilet on the toilet level, but it can sometimes be locked. Staff are friendly and the food/beer/view is to die for.

Joe's Shoe Store BAR

(GOOGLEMAP); 🗾 03-9482 7666; 233 High St, Northcote; 😂 4pm-midnight Tue-Thu, 2pm-midnight Fri-Sun; 🗐 86, 🖳 Northcote)

Someone called Joe will no longer sell you lace-up brogues but this dark, groovy drinking hole keeps the Northcote cool kids well wined and beered. Has backyard seating, and you can order pizza from next-door Pizza Meine Liebe.

Wheelchair-accessible with toilet that may be accessible.

Wesley Anne LIVE MUSIC, BAR

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9482 1333; www.wesleyanne.com.au; 250 High St, Northcote; 4pm-late Mon-Fri, 2pm-late Sat & Sun; 86, Northcote)

This atmospheric pub set up shop in a church mission's house of assembly. What else can you expect when the demon drink wins out against the forces of temperance? Booze, yes, but also interesting food, live music, a big beer garden with space heaters, and a cruisy crowd who often bring their kids along in daylight hours.



Ramp at front is always blocked by poor table and seating arrangements.

De Clieu CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 187 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$7am-5pm Mon-Sat, 8am-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$86)

You'll find locals spilling out the door and perched on the window-sill seats on weekends at this funky cafe (pronounced 'clue') with its polished concrete floors and excellent coffee, courtesy of Seven Seeds. The all-day brunch menu features interesting cafe fare such as miso and broadbean fritters, scrambled tofu and pork-neck roti.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet

Industry Beans CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.industrybeans.com; cnr Fitzroy & Rose Sts, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\overlin

It's all about coffee chemistry at this warehouse cafe tucked in a Fitzroy side street. The coffee guide takes you through the speciality styles on offer (roasted on-site) and helpful staff take the pressure off deciding. Pair your brew with some latte coffee pearls or coffee toffee prepared in the 'lab'. The food menu is ambitious but doesn't always hit the mark.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Napier Hotel PUB

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9419 4240; www.thenapierhotel.com; 210 Napier St, Fitzroy; 3-11pm Mon-Thu, 1pm-1am Fri & Sat, 1-11pm Sun; 86, 112)

The Napier has stood on this corner for over a century; many pots have been pulled as the face of the neighbourhood changed, as demonstrated by the memorabilia of the sadly departed Fitzroy footy team. Worm your way around the central bar to the boisterous dining room for an iconic Bogan Burger.



Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Toilet is not accessible. One big step to get in the front. Once in easy to move around. Have a beer with a parma or roo in front of the fire. Enjoy a true Fitzroy pub. Easy parking near pub.

The Rose PUB

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP); 406 Napier St, Fitzroy; Snoon-midnight Sun-Wed, to 1am Thu-Sat; 86, 112)

A much-loved Fitzroy backstreet local, the Rose has remained true to its roots with cheap counter meals and a non-pretentious crowd here to watch the footy.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet. The upstairs bar is not accessible.

Little Creatures Dining Hall BEER HALL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9417 5500; www.littlecreatures.com.au; 222 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; ⊗8am-late; № 🖘; 🗓 112)

This vast drinking hall is the perfect place to imbibe the produce of one of Australia's most successful microbreweries, and gorge on pizzas.



Fantastic big beer hall. Completely accessible given the modern renovations. Can set yourself up here for a long session.

The staff are super helpful and the place is probably one of the easiest places to get around in Brunswick St. There are ramps and a big accessible toilet. Sadly Fitzroy and Collingwood have poor public transport. Your best bet is probably to catch a bus along Johnson Street.

Grace Darling PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.thegracedarlinghotel.com.au; 114 Smith St, Collingwood; 486)

Adored by Collingwood football fans as the birthplace of the club, the Grace has been given a bit of spit and polish by some well-known Melbourne foodies, and while the chicken parma remains, it is certainly not how you know it (more a terracotta bake of chargrilled chook, ham, slow-roasted tomato and parmesan). It also has live music, mainly aimed at the young indie crowd.

There's a very small step to get in through the front door, but the bathroom is downstairs.

The Standard PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9419 4793; 293 Fitzroy St, Fitzroy; 3-11pm Mon & Tue, noon-11pm Wed-Sat, noon-9pm Sun; 96, 112)

Flaunting a great beer garden, the Standard is anything but its moniker. The Fitzroy backstreet local has down-to-earth bar staff and a truly eclectic crowd enhancing an atmosphere defined by live music, footy on the small screen, and loud and enthusiastic chatter.



Storm in a Teacup CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-9415 9593; www.storminateacup.com.au; 48a Smith St, Collingwood; 210am-6pm Tue-Sun; 7; 286)

With Melbourne's infatuation with fancy coffees, it's great to see a cafe with the same devotion to tea. There's a selection of 40 different types of cuppas on offer, with black, green and white teas from around the world, including several single-origin leaves. It also does food and tea-based cocktails.

Accessible entry, no accessible toilet.

Carlton & Around

Seven Seeds CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.sevenseeds.com.au; 114 Berkeley St, Carlton; 7am-5pm Mon-Sat, 8am-5pm Sun; 119, 59)

The most spacious of the Seven Seeds coffee empire: there's plenty of room to sip a splendid coffee beside the other lucky people who've found this rather out-of-the-way warehouse cafe. Public cuppings are held Wednesday (9am) and Saturday (10am). It also owns the standing-room-only **Traveller** (MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.sevenseeds.com.au; 2/14 Crossley St, Melbourne; param-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat; param-5pm Sat; <a href="mailto:



Accessible Toilet: YES Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Footpath camber and condition is poor. One entrance out of two is accessible. Lots of space inside but pathway to the toilet is a tight squeeze due to seating arrangement and usually requires that you ask people to move their stools.

Campos Coffee CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.camposcoffee.com; 144 Elgin St, Carlton; 7am-4pm Mon-Fri, from 8am Sat; 1, 8)

A Slayer espresso machine, pour-overs, aeropress, siphon, 22-hour cold-drips, onsite roasting, cupping and daily-changing single-origin African, Asia and Latin American coffees – Campos has it all covered for the modern-day caffeine freak.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Jimmy Watson's WINE BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9347 3985; www.jimmywatsons.com.au; 333 Lygon St, Carlton; 112m-11pm; 11, 8)

Keep it tidy at Watson's wine bar with something nice by the glass, or go a bottle of dry and dry (vermouth and ginger ale) and settle in for the afternoon and evening. If this Robyn Boyd–designed stunning midcentury building had ears, there'd be a few generations of writers, students and academics in trouble.

Accessible entry and staff can aid access to other areas via ramp. No accessible toilet.

Mr Wilkinson BAR

(GOOGLEMAP); 295 Lygon St, East Brunswick; \$\times 4pm-1am Mon & Wed-Fri, 2pm-1am Sat & Sun; □1, 8)

The owners decked this place out themselves in recycled timber, and now concentrate on keeping things mellow and their customers well watered. It's a great place for a natter to the bar staff.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Alderman WINEBAR

(GOOGLEMAP); 134 Lygon St, East Brunswick; \$\infty\$5pm-late Tue-Fri, 2pm-late Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\Omega}\$; \$\overline{\Omega}\$1, 8)

A classic East Brunswick local, the Alderman has an inviting traditional heavy wooden bar, open fireplace, good beer selection and cocktails by the jug. There's a small courtyard and you can order from restaurant Bar Idda next door.

Town Hall Hotel PUB, LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9328 1983; www.townhallhotelnorthmelbourne.com.au; 33 Errol St, North Melbourne; 4pm-lam Mon-Thu, noon-lam Fri & Sat, noon-11pm Sun; 57)

The Town Hall is an unfussy local. Live music is staged free in the front room from Thursday to Saturday, otherwise they'll be spinning some classic vinyl. There's a beer garden and pub meals, too. From the Queen Vic Market head west along Victoria St, then right at Errol St.

Entry can be arranged through the beer garden; although there is a small step they've had both power and manual wheelchairs inside. There is, however, no accessible toilet.

Stovetop CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.stovetop.com.au; 100 Leicester St, Carlton; 7am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Sat & Sun; 7; 19, 57, 59)

Just up from the Vic Market, Stovetop lives up to its name by preparing and serving its house blend and single-origins in stovetop espresso makers. Order from its bar set on 1970s Besser concrete blocks, and grab a gourmet sausage roll, gruyere cheese toastie with chutney or baked duck eggs for brekkie.

Wheelchair-accessible; toilet can be accessed via the lift.

Gerald's Bar WINE BAR

(GOOGLEMAP); 386 Rathdowne St, North Carlton; \$\infty\$5-11pm Mon-Sat; \$\overline{\omega}\$253, \$\overline{\omega}\$1, 8)

Wine by the glass is democratically selected at Gerald's, and they spin some fine vintage vinyl from behind the curved wooden bar. Gerald himself is out the back preparing to feed you whatever he feels like on the day: perhaps goat curry, seared calamari, meatballs or trifle.



Brunswick East Project CAFE

(GOOGLEMAP); №03-9381 1881; www.padrecoffee.com.au; 483 Lygon St, East Brunswick; 🕏 7am-4pm Mon-Sat, 8am-4pm Sun; 🗐 1, 8)

Another big player in Melbourne's coffee movement, this East Brunswick warehouse-style cafe is the original roaster for Padre Coffee and brews its premium single-origins and blends. Also has Padre Coffee stalls at the Queen Victoria Market (MAP GOOGLEMAP); String Bean Alley, M Shed near Peel St; 7am-2pm Tue & Thu, to 4pm Fri-Sun; 55) and South Melbourne Market.

Accessible entry and toilet.

Retreat BAR, LIVE MUSIC

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9380 4090; www.retreathotelbrunswick.com.au; 280 Sydney Rd, Brunswick; noon-late; 19, Brunswick)

This pub is so big as to be a tad overwhelming. Find your habitat – garden backyard, grungy band room or intimate front bar – and relax. Sundays are very popular with locals who like to laze on the (fake) grass, and there's live music on most nights.

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Mobility:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:
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Close to Jewell Station; otherwise tram out the front. Steps to get inside are a downer, but there is an accessible rear entrance to the beer garden.

Brunswick Green BAR

(COOCLEMAP ; 313 Sydney Rd, Brunswick; \$\infty\$4pm-midnight Tue-Thu, 2pm-1am Fri & Sat, to 11pm Sun; \$\overline{\text{Lin}}\$19, \$\overline{\text{B}}\$Brunswick)

A cool Brunswick local with bohemian front bar, comfy sharehouse-style lounge and backyard beer garden. Wednesday nights feature the popular Variety Collective performers.



Close to Brunswick and Jewell station, but dirty great step to get in! They have a ramp which they bring out. Accessible toilet at the back.

BARS & BREWERIES FOR BEER SNOBS

Until recently, thirsty Melburnians were given the choice of only two or three mainstream beers on tap (and perhaps an interstate lager if one was feeling adventurous). But the past few years have seen the emergence of microbreweries and craft-beer bars – primed to meet the demands of beer geeks who treat their drinking more seriously.

The two biggest events on the Melbourne beer calendar are Good Beer Week (www.goodbeerweek.com.au) and the Great Australasian Beer SpecTAPular (www.gabsfestival.com.au); both held in May, they showcase local, national and foreign craft beers.

Aussie Brewery Tours (J300 787 039; www.aussiebrewerytours.com.au; incl transport, lunch and tastings \$150) will help you get around with a tour of several inner-city breweries and iconic pubs.

The following microbreweries in Melbourne produce their beer on-site and have a bar for sampling the goods:

Mountain Goat Brewery In Richmond's industrial backstreets, this brewery offers free tours on Wednesdays. Head down Bridge Rd, turn left at Burnley St and right at North St.

Temple Brewery (GOOGLE MAP ; 203-9380 8999; www.templebrewing.com.au/; 122 Weston St, Brunswick East; 5.30-11pm Mon-Thu, noon-11pm Fri & Sat, noon-9pm Sun; 1,8) Try a seasonal craft brew at this classy brewery with a brasserie.

Matilda Bay Brewery Great selections of beers brewed on-site. Free tours on Saturdays.

<u>James Squire Brewhouse@Portland Hotel</u> Brewery tours on demand (though avoid the lunch and dinner rush) of this much-loved beer producer.

Carlton & United Breweries (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 303-9420 6800; www.carltonbrewhouse.com.au; cnr Nelson & Thompson Sts, Abbotsford; tours adult/concession \$25/20; 109) Certainly not craft beer, but a must for beer lovers.

Some bars worth checking out for their speciality beers include:

Local Taphouse (MAP GOOGLE MAP); www.thelocal.com.au; 184 Carlisle St, St Kilda; noon-late; 16, 78, Balaclava) One of St Kilda's finest establishments for craft beer.

Chapel St Cellars (MAP GOOGLE MAP); www.chapelstcellars.com.au; 89 Chapel St, Windsor; 4pm-late Mon-Thu, 2-11pm Fri-Sun; 78, 79, Windsor) This no-frills bottleshop-bar keeps things real in Chapel St. Grab a boutique beer from the fridge at cost price (\$5 corkage for bottled wine) and take a seat at one of the laminex tables. Also has craft beers on tap (takeaway fill-ups available) and BYO food.

Mrs Parma's (MAP GOOGLE MAP); www.mrsparmas.com.au; 25 Little Bourke St, Melbourne; chicken parma \$25; \$\infty\$11am-late Mon-Fri, noon-late Sat & Sun; Parliament) A huge selection of Victorian craft beers to accompany its 15 different kinds of chicken parmas.

Slowbeer (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-9421 3838; 468 Bridge Rd, Richmond; 2-8pm Mon-Wed, noon-9pm Thurs-Sat, noon-8pm Sun; 48, 75) Part craft-beer bottleshop, part bar, Slowbeer is a great place for a casual afternoon brew. Buy a beer and enjoy it in-store (corkage fees apply) or get a takeaway growler (old-style 1.89L reusable bottle) filled with your choice of tap beer.

Alehouse Project (GOOGLE MAP); 203-9387 1218; www.thealehouseproject.com.au; 98-100 Lygon St, East Brunswick; 3pm-late Tue-Fri, noon-late Sat & Sun; ; 1,8) Brunswick bar for beer snobs to convene and compare notes, or just rock up to booze on 12 craft beers on tap. Has a mix of beer-hall-style seating and used couches, a courtyard, and sports on the plasma.

Beer DeLuxe This Fed Sq joint has a beer bible in place of a menu, with 160 selections in an attractive hall-style beer garden. Note that not all of these venues are fully accesible; phone ahead to check.

South Yarra, Prahran & Windsor

South Yarra and Windsor may be within walking distance of each other, but they're a world away in terms of their bar scenes. Windsor has artfully grungy, loungey local drinking spots; South Yarra is all about shouting over the music while clutching a lurid-coloured drink. Not-so-precious Prahran is somewhere in the middle.

Yellow Bird BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9533 8983; www.yellowbird.com.au; 122 Chapel St, Windsor; 27.30am-late; 78, 79, Windsor)

Keeps Windsor's cool kids happy with all-day drinks (including an evil coffee, sugar and beer shot) and diner-style food. Owned by the drummer from Aussie band Something for Kate, the rock 'n' roll ambience is genuine, with a passing cast of musos and a fantastic playlist of underground bands.

There is a small step into the entrance, but a large step into the bathroom.

Market Lane CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.marketlane.com.au; Prahran Market, 163 Commercial Rd; 72m-5pm Tue-Sat, 8am-5pm Sun; 72, 78, 79)

Market Lane is the perfect pick-me-up after poring over gournet goodies at the Prahran Market. All coffee roasting is done on site, producing some of

the best brews in the city. Come on Fridays and Saturdays for the free cuppings (tastings) from 10am to 11am.

Mobility:
Staff:
Accessible Toilet: NO
Accessible Parking: YES
Accessible Public Transport:

Windsor Castle Hotel PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 89 Albert St, Windsor; \$\times 3pm-late Mon-Thu, noon-late Fri & Sun; \$\overline{\omega} 5, 64, \$\overline{\omega} \windsor)\$

This backstreet art deco building is full of cosy nooks, sunken pits, fireplaces and flocked wallpaper, which all make the Windsor Castle extremely attractive – but it's the tiki-themed beer garden that makes it *great*.

There's a step to get in which manual wheelchairs might negotiate if staff open the doors fully.

Dukes CAFE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP); www.dukescoffee.com.au; 169 Chapel St, Windsor; 7am-4pm Mon-Sat, 8am-4pm Sun; 6, 78, 79)

Exposed brick and wood beams give this Windsor cafe a warm feel and the perfect ambience for downing one of its coffees, expertly made from its own beans roasted on-site.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet. Circulation space may be a little tight.

Kid Boston BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.kidboston.com.au; 44 Chapel St, Windsor; \$\infty\$5pm-late Mon-Fri, 3pm-late Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$78, 79, \$\overline{\omega}\$Windsor)

The best cocktails this side of the river. This tiny Windsor newbie has arrived in style, with top-shelf martinis, highballs, sours and aperitifs to go with a delicious menu of bar food.

There is a small step to get in, but two steps up to the bathroom.

Drugstore Espresso CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.drugstoreespresso.com.au; 194 Toorak Rd, South Yarra; \$\infty\$7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\oldsymbol{\o

Just the place to re-energise from a bout of Chapel St shopping fatigue, with twice-weekly-changing single-origin coffees and a selection of hearty-sized sandwiches and wagyu beef burgers.

There are four tables out the front which are wheelchair-accessible, but the upstairs part of the cafe is not.

South Melbourne & Port Melbourne

Clement CAFE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; South Melbourne Market, 116-136 Cecil St, South Melbourne; \$\infty\$7am-5pm; \$\overline{\omega}\$96)

There's a buzz about this tiny cafe on the perimeter of the South Melbourne Market, not only for its expertly crafted brew but also for the homemade salted caramel or jam and custard donuts. Grab a streetside spot or get a takeaway cup and explore the market.

A tiny place with outside tables so fine to visit in a wheelchair. There are two accessible toilets in South Melbourne Market.

Padre Coffee CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.padrecoffee.com.au; Shop 33, South Melbourne Market; \$\infty\$7am-4pm Wed, Sat & Sun, 7am-5pm Fri; \$\overline{\omega}\$96)

Offers a perfect (and popular) caffeine-enhanced respite from mad market shopping.

Another tiny place, which will be challenging for wheelchair users.

Matilda Bay Brewery BREWERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9673 4545; www.matildabay.com.au; 89 Bertie St, Port Melbourne; 11.30am-10pm Tue-Thu, to 11pm Fri & Sat; 109)

Great selection of beers brewed onsite which you can sample among its production equipment. Free tours on Saturdays.

Mobility:★★★

Accessible Toilet: YES Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: NO

Accessible lift into the bar and one of my favourite accessible toilet signs. The guy is leaning forward in a racing position. :) Will need to take a taxi to venue. Very easy to get around in.

OPEN-AIR DRINKING

Melbourne may be home to some of the coolest bars hidden down rotten-cabbage-leaf-strewn city alleyways, but when the summer sun beats down and the evenings are long and cool, it's time for some fresh air and natural light. Whether it's riding an elevator to a secret rooftop or chugging jugs of ale at a beer garden, Melbourne has some top open-air drinking spots. Some of our favourites:

Rooftop Bars

Naked for Satan

Bomba

Madame Brussels

Outdoor Bars & Beer Gardens

The Standard

Windsor Castle

Riverland

Boatbuilders Yard

The Retreat

Vineyard

St Kilda & Around

Carlisle Wine Bar WINE BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-9531 3222; www.carlislewinebar.com.au; 137 Carlisle St, Balaclava; 3pm-lam Mon-Fri, 1lam-lam Sat & Sun; 3, 16, 8 Balaclava)

Locals love this often rowdy, wine-worshiping former butcher's shop. The staff will treat you like a regular and find you a glass of something special, or effortlessly throw together a cocktail amid the weekend rush. The rustic Italian food is good, too. Carlisle St runs east off St Kilda Rd.

Wheelchair accessible with an accessible toilet.

Pause Bar BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9537 0511; www.pausebar.com.au; 268 Carlisle St, Balaclava; 4pm-lam Mon-Fri, noon-lam Sat & Sun; 3, 16, 79, 8 Balaclava)

Pause has been around for more than a decade and draws a loyal local crowd who like to settle into the dim North African-inspired bar for cocktails (two for \$22!) and meze. Also has live music on Thursday and Friday nights and Sunday afternoons.

Wheelchair accessible, no accessible toilet onsite.

Republica BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.republica.net.au; 10-18 Jacka Blvd, St Kilda Sea Baths, St Kilda; 11.30am-1am Mon-Fri, 9am-1am Sat & Sun; 31.30am-1am Mon-Fri, 9am-1am Sat & Sun;

Opening right up to St Kilda Beach, Republica is the closest you'll get to a beach bar in Melbourne. It's a great spot for a sunset beer or cocktail, but you can also start the day here by the sea with breakfast and coffee.

Wheelchair accessible; accessible toilets not on premises but nearby on the St Kilda foreshore.

St Kilda Bowling Club PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.stkildasportsclub.com.au; 66 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; noon-11pm Sun-Thu, to 1am Fri & Sat; 16, 96, 112)

This fabulously intact old clubhouse is tucked behind a neatly trimmed hedge and a splendid bowling green. The long bar serves drinks at 'club prices' (ie cheap) and you'll be joined by St Kilda's hippest on Sunday afternoons. Kick off your shoes, roll a few bowls, knock back beers and watch the sun go down along with your bowling accuracy.

The clubhouse and bar are both accessible and there is an accessible toilet. Wheelchairs and walkers are generally not allowed onto the bowling green.

Hotel Barkly PUB

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9525 3354; www.hotelbarkly.com; 109 Barkly St, St Kilda; 16, 67, 79)

The street-level public bar is the place to go if you're up for sinking a few pints, wiggling to whatever comes on the jukebox and snogging a stranger before last drinks are called. The rooftop bar feigns a bit of class, but things get messy up there, too. Worth it for the spectacular sunset views across St Kilda, though.

Ground level areas are all accessible, onsite accessible toilets.

Vineyard BAR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP); www.thevineyard.com.au; 71a Acland St, St Kilda; 10.30am-3.30am Mon-Fri, 10am-3.30am Sat & Sun; 3a, 16, 96)

An old favourite, the Vineyard has the perfect corner position and a courtyard barbecue that attracts crowds of backpackers and scantily clad young locals who enjoy themselves so much they drown out the neighbouring roller coaster. Sunday afternoon sessions are big here.

Entry is level with the street so shouldn't be a problem, nearest accessible toilet is next door in Shakespeare Grove (go with a friend!). Does get very packed, so go early for a spot.

St Kilda Dispensary CAFE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 13 Brighton Rd, St Kilda; \$\infty\$7am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Sat & Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$16, 67, 79)

What was once the first dispensary in the southern hemisphere during the 1940s, this cafe keeps with the medical theme with tiled counters, test tubes and beakers and a menu that prescribes the good stuff organic coffees, breakfast rolls and tuna melts. Cash only.

There's a fairly steep slope to the entrance, but no step; the toilet is not particularly accessible.



Entertainment

Cinemas

Cinema multiplexes are spread throughout central Melbourne, and there are quite a few treasured independent cinemas in both the city centre and surrounding suburbs. Outdoor cinemas are popular in the summer. Don't forget to grab a choc-top (that's an ice-cream cone dipped in chocolate).

Australian Centre for the Moving Image CINEMA

(ACMI; MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9663 2583; www.acmi.net.au; Federation Sq. Melbourne; 1, 48, 70, 72, 75, Flinders St)

ACMI's cinemas screen a diverse range of films. It programs regular events and festivals, as well as screening one-offs.



Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: NO

Entry/exit is from Fed Sq not Flinders St, parking available at Fed Sq carpark. See www.acmi.net.au/access.htm for access info.

Cinema Nova CINEMA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9347 5331; www.cinemanova.com.au; 380 Lygon St, Carlton; ■Tourist Shuttle, ■1, 8)

The latest in art house, docos and foreign films. Cheap Monday screenings.



Wheelchair access very confusing. Ticket purchase on ground floor and you must queue. Cinema up an escalator. Wheelchair access: find centre's lift to 3rd floor (back at car park) and then look for the entry at rear of cinemas. Otherwise only stairs down when exiting cinema.

Details of how to access the various cinemas are available here www.cinemanova.com.au/help/fags/4162#g4162.

Rooftop Cinema CINEMA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.rooftopcinema.com.au; Level 6, Curtin House, 252 Swanston St, Melbourne; Melbourne Central)

This rooftop bar sits at dizzying heights on top of the happening Curtin House. In summer it transforms into an outdoor cinema with striped deckchairs and a calendar of new and classic favourite flicks.



No access at all for wheelchairs!

There is a lift to the top floor but you will need to take the stairs to the roof. Easy to move around once up there. No accessible toilet. Go to Cookie (bar/restaurant within the same building) instead.

Kino Cinemas CINEMA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 303-9650 2100; www.palacecinemas.com.au; Collins Place, 45 Collins St, Melbourne; 11, 31, 48, 109, 112)

The Kino screens art house films in its comfy licensed cinemas. Monday is discount day.



Can be tricky to find, it's in the lower floor below the Sofitel. Closest train station is Parliament. All cinemas are wheelchair accessible, but seating options in three of these aren't very good. Call ahead to check which cinema your film is showing in.

Imax CINEMA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9663 5454; www.imaxmelbourne.com.au; Melbourne Museum, Rathdowne St, Carlton; Tourist Shuttle, 686, 96)

Animal and adventure films in 3D screen on a grand scale here, with movies made especially for these giant screens.



You cannot book accessible seating. Seating options are limited for wheelchair users.

Check www.imaxmelbourne.com.au/about imax/accessibility for full accessibility details including audio description and captioning availability.

Moonlight Cinema CINEMA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.moonlight.com.au; Gate D, Birdwood Ave, Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne; 38)

Melbourne's original outdoor cinema, with the option of 'Gold Grass' tickets that include a glass of wine and a reserved bean-bag bed.

No problem with seating as you will be bringing your own if you're a wheelchair user! However, you'll have to roll over grass, which will be tough in a manual wheelchair and particularly difficult for all wheelchair users after wet weather. Carers go free. There is limited parking and public transport is far from ideal: it's either a minimum 700m from Richmond station or about the same distance from buses that go down St Kilda Rd.

St Kilda Open Air Cinema CINEMA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.openaircinemas.com.au; South Beach Reserve, Jacka Blvd, St Kilda; Dec 1-22; 179, 96)

Cult classics by the sea. Rents out blankets, deckchairs (\$4) and bean-bag lounges (\$7).

Wheelchair-accessible. Email hello@openaircinemas.com.au if you need assistance.

CURTAINS UP

Blockbuster musicals have the good fortune of playing in Melbourne's graceful old city-centre theatres:

Athenaeum (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9650 1500; www.athenaeumtheatre.com.au; 188 Collins St; 11, 31, 48, 112) The old dame dates back to the 1830s, with the Greek goddess of wisdom, Athena, sitting atop the facade, imbuing the theatre with classical gravitas. The theatre now hosts Melbourne Opera performances and the International Comedy Festival. Also has a Ticketmaster box office.

Comedy Theatre (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-9299 9800; www.marrinertheatres.com.au; 240 Exhibition St; 46, 96) This midsize 1920s Spanish-style venue is dedicated to comedy, theatre and musicals.

Her Majesty's Theatre (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-8643 3300; www.hmt.com.au; 219 Exhibition St; 86, 96) On the outside Her Maj is redbrick Second Empire; on the inside it's 1930s Moderne. It's been the home of musicals and comedy since 1880 and is still going strong.

Princess Theatre (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; ☐ Ticketmaster 1300 111 0111300 111 0111300 111 0111; www.marrinertheatres.com.au; 163 Spring St; ☐ 86, 96) This gilded Second Empire beauty has a long and colourful history. It's reputed to have a resident ghost — that of singer Federici, who died as he descended through the stage trap in 1888 after playing Mephistopheles in the opera Faust. These days, shows range from Phantom of the Opera to Mary Poppins.

Regent Theatre (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9299 9500; www.marrinertheatres.com.au; 191 Collins St; 11, 31, 48, 112) The opulent Regent, a rococo picture palace, was considered one of the most lavish theatres of its kind when it was built in 1929 with the advent of the talkies. Today it's used for blockbuster stage shows – still a fabulous opportunity to experience its elegant grandeur.

All the above venues are wheelchair-accessible. If using a Companion Card, make sure to book directly with the venue.

Theatre

Melbourne's theatre district is not limited to the city centre, with individual companies and theatres spread across town. Tickets start at about \$20 for independent productions and \$30 for mainstream theatre. Try Halftix Melbourne for cheap tickets to the theatre, to be purchased in person on the day, with cash.

La Mama THEATRE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9347 6948; www.lamama.com.au; 205 Faraday St, Carlton; 1, 8)

La Mama is historically significant in Melbourne's theatre scene. This tiny, intimate forum produces new Australian works and experimental theatre, and has a reputation for developing emerging playwrights. It's a ramshackle building with an open-air bar. Shows also run at its larger **Courthouse Theatre** on 349 Drummond St, Carlton, so check tickets carefully for the correct location.

Wheelchair-accessible and accepts Companion Card, but advance notice is preferred for wheelchair-users.

Malthouse Theatre THEATRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9685 5111; www.malthousetheatre.com.au; 113 Sturt St, Southbank; 11)

The Malthouse Theatre Company often produces the most exciting theatre in Melbourne. Dedicated to promoting Australian works, the company has been housed in the atmospheric Malthouse Theatre since 1990 (when it was known as the Playbox). From Flinders Street Station head across Princes Bridge and along St Kilda Rd. Turn right at Grant St, then left into Sturt St.

Not all theatres are wheelchair accessible; call ahead to check and helpful staff will advise. Accessible toilet available.

Melbourne Theatre Company THEATRE

(MTC; MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-8688 0800; www.mtc.com.au; 140 Southbank Blvd, Southbank; 11)

Melbourne's major theatrical company stages about 15 productions each year, ranging from contemporary and modern (including many new Australian works) to Shakespearean and other classics. Performances take place in a brand-new, award-winning venue in Southbank.

Fully accessible and accepts Companion Card; see www.mtc.com.au/your-visit/access for details. Accessible parking nearby.

Red Stitch Actors Theatre THEATRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9533 8082; www.redstitch.net; Rear, 2 Chapel St, Windsor; 5, 64, 78, 79, Windsor)

This independent company of actors stages new international works that are often premieres in Australia. The tiny black-box theatre, opposite the Astor Cinema and down the end of the driveway, is a cosy, intimate space.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet; accepts Companion Card.

Theatreworks THEATRE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9534 3388; www.theatreworks.org.au; 14 Acland St, St Kilda; 164)

Theatreworks is a quality community theatre dedicated to supporting a range of arts practitioners. There's a bar for pre-show drinks.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet; accepts Companion Card. Fares on accessible parking bay in St Leonards Ave.

Comedy

Held in March and April, the Melbourne International Comedy Festival (www.comedyfestival.com.au; Melbourne Town Hall; Mar-Apr) is a huge event, but you don't need to wait until then to have a laugh in Melbourne.

Last Laugh at the Comedy Club COMEDY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9650 1977; www.thecomedyclub.com.au; Athenaeum Theatre, 188 Collins St, Melbourne; show \$25; Fri & Sat; 1, 72, 112, Flinders St)

The Last Laugh is open Friday and Saturday nights year-round, with additional evenings in summer. Come here for professional stand-up acts, featuring local and international artists. Dinner and show packages (\$55) are available – bookings recommended. The club is also a venue for acts during the Comedy Festival.

The Athenaeum is wheelchair accessible and has accessible bathrooms.

Comic's Lounge COMEDY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9348 9488; www.thecomicslounge.com.au; 26 Errol St, North Melbourne; 57)

There is stand-up every night of the week here. Admission prices vary, but are usually between \$15 and \$25. Dinner and show nights are popular and feature Melbourne's best-known comedians (many of whom also host radio shows). Tuesday is a kind of open-mic night, where aspiring comics have their eight minutes of fame (or shame).

Access is via goods lift at the rear of the building, lift has 150kg limit so would not be suitable for motorised wheelchairs. Accessible toilets onsite.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

TICKETS

Tickets for concerts, theatre, comedy and other events are usually available from one of the agencies listed:

Halftix (MAP GOOGLE MAP; Www.halftixmelbourne.com; Melbourne Town Hall, 90-120 Swanston St, Melbourne; 10am-2pm Mon, 11am-6pm Tue-Fri,

10am-4pm Sat; Flinders St)

Moshtix (www.moshtix.com.au)

Ticketek (MAP GOOGLE MAP ; http://premier.ticketek.com.au)

Ticketmaster (MAP GOOGLE MAP; www.ticketmaster.com.au)

Live Music

Check daily papers and weekly street magazines Beat (www.beat.com.au) and The Music (www.themusic.com.au) for gig info. Radio station 3RRR (102.7FM) broadcasts a gig guide at 7pm each evening and puts it online at www.trr.org.au.

Online Mess+Noise (<u>www.messandnoise.com</u>) is an Australian-focussed music website, with an informed, irreverent chat forum FasterLouder (<u>www.fasterlouder.com.au</u>) also has a gig guide and music news.

Esplanade Hotel LIVE MUSIC

(The Espy; MAP COOGLE MAP ; 203-9534 0211; www.espy.com.au; 11 The Esplanade, St Kilda; 2noon-1am Sun-Wed, to 3am Thu-Sat; 16, 96)

Rock-pigs rejoice. The Espy remains gloriously shabby and welcoming to all. A mix of local and international bands play nightly – everything from rock 'n' roll to hip hop – either in the legendary Gershwin Room, the front bar or down in the basement.

Even if you're not here for a gig, come for front-row views of the pink-stained St Kilda sunset. The Espy does good pub food and the heritage-listed building itself is stunning.

Wheelchair-accessible venue, but the toilet isn't accessible.

The Tote LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9419 5320; www.thetotehotel.com; cnr Johnston & Wellington Sts, Collingwood; 4pm-late Tue-Sun; 86)

One of Melbourne's most iconic live-music venues, not only does this divey Collingwood pub have a great roster of local and international underground bands, but one of the best jukeboxes in the universe. Its temporary closure in 2010 brought Melbourne to a stop, literally – people protested on the city-centre streets against the liquor licensing laws that were blamed for the closure.

Mobility:

Staff: *

Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Accessible toilet part of current renovations; call ahead to check. Downstairs all on one level, but it does get packed (and rockin!)

Corner Hotel LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9427 9198; www.cornerhotel.com; 57 Swan St, Richmond; 4pm-late Tue & Wed, noon-late Thu-Sun; 70, Richmond)

The band room here is one of Melbourne's most popular midsized venues and has seen plenty of loud and live action over the years, from Dinosaur Jr to the Buzzcocks. If your ears need a break, there's a friendly front bar. The rooftop has city views, but gets superpacked, and often with a different crowd from the music fans below.

Mobility:★★

Staff:★★★

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Staff super helpful. Entry OK for wheelchair – no step. But no access to beer garden. Staff offer assistance (seat) and alternate entry to band room if needed. Don't think there was an accessible toilet though. No accessible parking nearby.

If you arrive early enough for a gig, the staff will make sure that you get a space right in front of the stage!

Call ahead on 🖊 03-9427 7300 to discuss any extra requirements you might have.

Northcote Social Club LIVE MUSIC

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-9489 3917; www.northcotesocialclub.com; 301 High St, Northcote; Mon & Tue 4pm-late, Wed-Sun noon-late; 86, Northcote)

The stage at this inner-north local has seen plenty of international folks just one album out from star status. Its homegrown line-up is also notable. If you're just after a drink, the front bar buzzes every night of the week, and there's a large deck out the back for lazy afternoons.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Companion Card: YES

Close to Northcote station; otherwise tram at the front door. The best band room in Melbourne.

Old Bar LIVE MUSIC, PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; ≥03-9417 4155; <u>www.theoldbar.com.au</u>; 74-76 Johnston St, Fitzroy; 🔁; 🗐 96, 112)

With live bands seven days a week and a licence till 3am, the Old Bar's another reason why Melbourne is the rock 'n' roll capital of Australia. It gets great local bands and a few internationals playing in its grungy band room with a house-party vibe.

Access at entry no problem, no accessible toilet though.

Prince Bandroom LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9536 1168; www.princebandroom.com.au; 29 Fitzroy St, St Kilda; 16, 96, 112)

The Prince is a much-loved St Kilda venue, with quality international and local rock, indie, DJs and hip-hop bands having graced its stage. Its leafy balcony and raucous downstairs bar are added attractions. These days it leans more towards dance and electropop acts.

Accessible bandroom with accessible toilets.

Public Bar LIVE MUSIC, PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9329 9888; www.thepublicbar.com.au; 238 Victoria St, Melbourne; 2pm-late Tue-Fri, noon-late Sat & Sun; 19, 55, 57)

This old live-music stalwart has recently been given a new lease of life, and is doing a magnificent job supporting live music with a solid line-up of rock 'n' roll Thursday to Sunday. Also has trivia on Tuesday and comedy Wednesday, and food from Miss Katie's Crab Shack.

There's a single step to negotiate at the entrance, which manual wheelchairs might manage, and a toilet on the same level (not 'accessible').

John Curtin Hotel LIVE MUSIC, PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9663 6350; www.johncurtinhotel.com; 29 Lygon St, Carlton; 1, 3, 8, 64, 72)

Popular with uni students, the John Curtin is a great pub for a beer; it also hosts some great local indie and rock bands upstairs most nights.

All downstairs areas are accessible with accessible toilets available.

Reverence Hotel LIVE MUSIC, PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9687 2111; www.reverencehotel.com; 28 Napier St, Footscray; Footscray)

Rising from the ashes of the much-loved Arthouse, the Reverence takes over as one of the city's best punk and metal venues, located in industrial Footscray (just up the road from Lonely Planet HQ). Shows a mix of Australian and internationals, from new- to old-school bands. It also does a great menu of Mexican food.

Entrance is accessible over very small step; some internal stairs mean not all areas accessible to wheelchairs. No accessible toilet.

Evelyn Hotel LIVE MUSIC, PUB

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9419 5500; <u>www.evelynhotel.com</u>; 351 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; ≥12.30pm-1.30am; 112)

Playing mostly local acts, the Evelyn also pulls the occasional international performer. The Ev doesn't discriminate by genre: if it's quality, it gets a look-in here.

Wheelchair accessible with accesible toilets.

GH Hotel GAY VENUE, NIGHTCLUB

(Greyhound Hotel; MAP COOGLEMAP); 203-9534 4189; www.ghhotel.com.au; cnr Carlisle St & Brighton Rd, St Kilda; 16, 67, 79)

On Saturday nights this grotty local boozer with tonnes of rough-round-the-edges charm has drag shows. Other nights you can expect live music and cheap unpretentious drinks.

Mobility:
Staff:
Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: NO
Accessible Public Transport:
Companion Card: YES

Workers Club LIVE MUSIC, PUB

Very good accessible toilet.

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9415 6558; www.theworkersclub.com.au; cnr Brunswick & Gertrude Sts, Fitzroy; 4pm-late Sun-Wed, noon-late Thu-Sat; 686, 112)

The former Rob Roy has been decked out in all-retro decor and offers six nights of live music. The front bar serves up cocktails in jugs and offers cheapish mains of the rib-eye or salmon type.

Small step at entry, toilets are accessible.

Palais Theatre CONCERT VENUE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-9525 3240, tickets 13 61 00; www.palaistheatre.net.au; Lower Esplanade, St Kilda; 3a, 16, 79, 96)

Standing gracefully next to Luna Park, the heritage-listed Palais (c 1927) is a St Kilda icon. Not only is the theatre a beautiful old space, but it also stages some pretty special performances, from international bands to big-name comedians.

Wheelchair-accessible and accepts Companion Card. Wheelchairs are positioned at the end of the row after the first gangway in the stalls. The accessible toilet is just outside(!) the front door – you'll need to ask for a key.

Night Cat LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-9417 0090; www.thenightcat.com.au; 141 Johnston St, Fitzroy; 9pm-3am Fri-Sat, 7pm-3am Sun; 112)

The Night Cat is a barn-sized space that saw the birth of the upside-down lampshade aesthetic in the mid-'90s. There are two bars, a stage and a black-and-white chequered dance floor that sees lots of action. Music is generally in the Latin, jazz or funk vein.

All on one level, but no accessible toilet.

Festival Hall CONCERT VENUE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 203-9329 9699; www.festivalhall.com.au; 300 Dudley St, West Melbourne; 24, 30, 34, 70, North Melbourne)

This former boxing stadium – aka 'Festering Hall' (especially on hot summer nights) – is a fave for live international acts. The Beatles played here in 1964.



Wheelchair access tickets must be purchased directly from the venue; call ahead for details. See www.festivalhall.com.au/index.php/page/generalinformation for more information.

Toff in Town LIVE MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9639 8770; www.thetoffintown.com; Level 2, Curtin House, 252 Swanston St; 5pm-late Sun-Thu, 3pm-late Fri)

An atmospheric venue well suited to cabaret, the Toffalso works for intimate gigs by rock gods, avant-folksters or dance-hall queens. The moody bar next door serves post-set drinks of the French wine and cocktail variety.

There is a tiny lift to enable a wheelchair-users to get into the venue, but no accessible toilet.

Forum Theatre CONCERT VENUE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); Itickets 13 61 00; www.marrinertheatres.com.au; 150-152 Flinders St; Flinders St)

One of the city's most atmospheric live music venues, the Forum does double duty as a cinema during the Melbourne International Film Festival. The Moorish exterior houses an equally interesting interior, with the southern night sky rendered on the domed ceiling.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet. Accepts Companion Card, but only if you book directly with the theatre. There's a step down to the area in front of the stage, but staff will put a portable ramp down on request. It's also possible, if you are able to transfer, to seat yourself in one of the booths overlooking the dancefloor.

Hamer Hall CONCERT VENUE

(Melbourne Concert Hall; MAP GOOGLEMAP); 1300 182 183; www.artscentremelbourne.com.au; Arts Centre Melbourne, 100 St Kilda Rd; 1, 3, 16, 64, 72,

Having recently undergone a multi-million-dollar redevelopment, this concert hall is well known for its excellent acoustics, with a decor inspired by Australia's mineral and gemstone deposits.

Mobility: ***

Staff: ***

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport: **

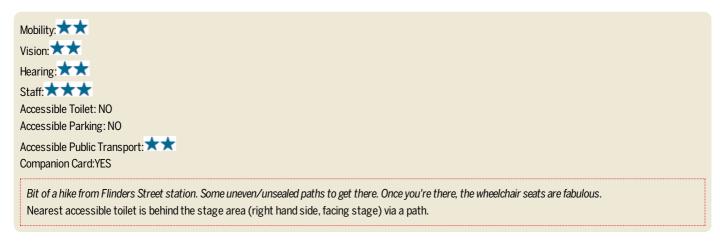
Companion Card: YES

This is an outstanding facility with wheelchair spots beside usual seating on each level. I have found the booking process to be very easy and the staff exceptionally helpful.

Sidney Myer Music Bowl CONCERT VENUE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 21300 182 183; www.artscentremelbourne.com.au; Linlithgow Ave, King Domain Gardens; 11, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72)

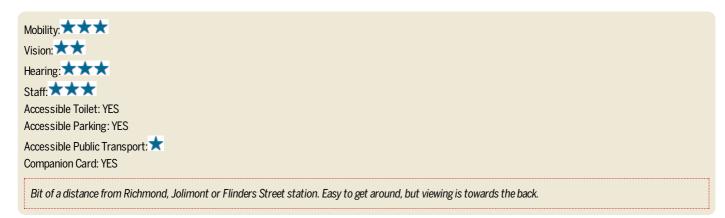
This beautiful amphitheatre in the park is used for a variety of outdoor events, from the **Tropfest** film festival to gigs by the likes of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Opera in the Bowl or the New Year's Day rave **Summerdayze**.



Rod Laver Arena CONCERT VENUE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; Utickets 132 849; www.mopt.com.au; Batman Ave, Richmond; @; 170)

A giant, versatile space used for headline international concerts and the Australian Open tennis, with a huge sunroof. Not the most atmospheric of venues, but then it's all about the spectacle. Ditto for the nearby Hisense Arena.



Dance

Melbourne's classical-dance and ballet scene has companies specialising in both traditional ballet performances and genre-busting modern pieces.

Australian Ballet BALLET

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 21300 369 741; www.australianballet.com.au; 2 Kavanagh St, Melbourne; 11)

Based in Melbourne and now more than 40 years old, the Australian Ballet performs traditional and new works at the State Theatre in the Arts Centre. You can take an hour-long Australian Ballet Centre Tour (\$18; bookings essential) that includes a visit to the production and wardrobe departments as well as the studios of both the company and the school.

Both the venue and the tour are wheelchair-friendly.

Chunky Move DANCE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9645 5188; www.chunkymove.com; 111 Sturt St, Melbourne; 11)

This partially government-funded contemporary dance company performs internationally acclaimed pop-inspired pieces at its sexy venue behind the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. It also runs a variety of dance, yoga and pilates classes; check the website. From Flinders Street Station go across Princes Bridge and along St Kilda Rd. Turn right at Grant St then left into Sturt St.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet; accepts Companion Card.

Kage Physical Theatre DANCE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 6700; www.kagephysicaltheatre.com; Abbotsford Convent, 1 St Heliers St, Abbotsford; 200, 207, Collingwood)

This modern dance company works between theatre and dance. This is witty and innovative stuff, well worth a look if you're not after a straight narrative. Check the website for performance details.

See Convent review for accessibility details.

Classical Music

The following groups are a few of the city's main players, who perform at various venues across town. Check their websites or the local press for venues and concert dates. Melbourne is also home to small, independent and often very innovative classical groups. Check the *Age* newspaper for listings.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra ORCHESTRA

(MSO; MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9929 9600; www.mso.com.au)

The MSO has a broad reach: while not afraid to be populist (it's done sell-out performances with both Burt Bacharach and the Whitlams), it can also do edgy – such as performing with Kiss – along with its performances of the great masterworks of symphony. It performs regularly at venues around the city, including Melbourne Town Hall, the Recital Centre and Hamer Hall. Also runs a summer series of free concerts at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

Musica Viva ORCHESTRA

(www.musicaviva.com.au)

National group Musica Viva stages 'Coffee Concerts' - morning-tea tunes (chamber music) - five times a year at the Melbourne Recital Centre.

Opera

Melbourne has nurtured internationally acclaimed opera singers and continues to stage world-class productions. People do dress up for a night at the opera, especially for opening and weekend nights of Opera Australia, but no one will raise an eyebrow if you don't.

Chamber Made Opera OPERA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9090 7095; www.chambermadeopera.com; Arts House, Meat Market, 44 Courtney St, North Melbourne; 55, 59)

Founded in 1988, Chamber Made Opera showcases contemporary music and music-based performance art. Some performances are free.

Melbourne Opera OPERA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9614 4188; www.melbourneopera.com)

A not-for-profit company that performs a classic repertoire in the stunning, wheelchair-accessible Athenaeum. Prices are deliberately kept affordable.

Opera Australia OPERA

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9685 3700; www.opera.org.au; cnr Fawkner & Fanning Streets, Southbank)

The national opera company performs with some regularity at the Arts Centre Melbourne.

Victorian Opera OPERA

(203-9001 6400; www.victorianopera.com.au)

Dedicated to innovation and accessibility, its program pleasingly doesn't always play it safe.

MCG DREAMING

Where did Australian Rules football come from? There's plenty of evidence to suggest that Aboriginal men and women played a form of football (called 'marngrook') prior to white settlement. Did they play it at the MCG site pre-settlement? The MCG has two scar trees from which bark was removed by Aboriginal people to make canoes. These reminders make it clear that Melbourne's footy fans (and perhaps players) were not the first to gather at the site of the MCG – or the Melbourne Corroboree Ground, as some Indigenous Australians like to call it.

Sport

Melbourne is a sport-obsessed city. From March to October it's all about AFL footy, while rugby league, union and soccer (football) are also very popular. In summer, cricket dominates.

Melbourne Cricket Ground SPECTATOR SPORT

(203-9657 8888; www.mcg.org.au; 8)

Melbourne's sporting mecca, the 'G' hosts cricket in the summer and AFL footy in the winter. Attendance is a rite of passage for many locals. See <u>Melbourne Cricket Ground</u> for more information.

Etihad Stadium SPORTS STADIUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8625 7700, tours 03-8625 7277; www.etihadstadium.com.au; Bourke St, Docklands; tours adult/child/concession/family \$15/8/12/39; 270, 75, 86, 96, 109, 112. Southern Cross)

Both comfortable and easy to access, this Docklands stadium seats 52,000 for regular AFL games and the odd one-day cricket match and rugby union test, with the advantage of a retractable roof to keep spectators dry. Also runs tours for sporting tragics.



On the doorstep of Southern Cross station. Rug up because it is mostly cold and windy! Wheelchair seating is at the rear of the stands so the cold and wind is with you all the time. The views, however, are great from the corners of the ground, particularly on Level 2.

AAMI Park SOCCER, RUGBY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9286 1600; www.aamipark.com.au; Olympic Blvd, Richmond; tickets from \$30; \$\leftar{1}{2}70, \leftar{1}{2}Richmond)

Across from Rod Laver Arena at Melbourne Park, AAMI Park is the home of Melbourne's soccer and rugby teams. Its rectangular pitch is enclosed within a striking honeycombed-bioframe stadium, with a capacity of 30,000.

From October to May, catch both Melbourne Victory or Melbourne Heart in the A-League soccer; from March to September there's rubgy league, with Melbourne Storm playing in the NRL. It also hosts Melbourne Rebels in the Super Rugby league from February to August.



Bit of a distance from Flinders Street, Richmond and Jolimont stations. Once you're there it is great. Closest viewing you'll get at an outdoor stadium in Melbourne.

Melbourne Park TENNIS, BASKETBALL

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9286 1600; www.mopt.com.au; Batman Ave, Richmond; tours adult/child/family \$15/7/35; 48, 70, 75, Algorithms Johnson

Home to the **Australian Open** tennis Grand Slam held in January, Melbourne Park precinct has 34 courts including its centrepiece **Rod Laver Arena**. You can take a tour to the dressing rooms, VIP areas and superboxes. Its indoor court hire ranges from \$36 to \$42, and outdoor courts cost between \$28 and \$36, plus racquet hire.

As well as tennis, **Hisense Arena** is also home to the Melbourne Tigers basketball team in the NBL (National Basketball League), and the Melbourne Vixens netball team. Nearby **Olympic Park** hosts athletics.

Mobility:

Hearing:

Staff:

Accessible Toilet: YES

Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Bit of a distance from Richmond, Jolimont and Flinders Street stations. Once you're there getting around is fine and there are wheelchair viewing spots at every court. There are no public air-conditioned areas, so in extreme heat it is best avoided.

Great place, but no hand rails to hold on to inside Melbourne Park.

Check www.mopt.com.au/arriving-and-access/accessibility-info for accessibility details for Melbourne Park and the adjacent Olympic Park area.

Flemington Racecourse HORSE RACING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 21300 727 575; www.vrc.net.au; 400 Epsom Rd, Flemington; 57, Flemington Racecourse)

Home of the Victoria Racing Club, Flemington has regular horserace meets, climaxing with the Spring Racing Carnival (including the Melbourne Cup) from October to November.



On the event days it can get very crowded. Viewing is therefore impacted as there is no raised ground for viewing (unless you're in the grandstand).

Check www.melbournecup.com/whats-on/plan-your-visit/visiting-flemington for a range of various maps of the track. Crowds can be huge and very 'lively' so take care. Attend a raceday outside Cup week and the crowds will be much smaller and accessibility better. Try the Turnbull Stakes in early October or the Australia Cup in mid-March for great racing without the hordes.



Shopping

Melbourne is a city of passionate, dedicated retailers catering to a broad range of tastes, whims and lifestyles. From boutique-filled city laneways to suburban shopping streets and malls, you'll find plenty of places to offload your cash and pick up something unique.

Central Melbourne

Melbourne's city centre lets you experience big-city department-store bustle as well as the thrill of finding intriguing individual shops tucked down alleys and hidden up (or down) flights of stairs. The city's main department stores, **Myer** and **David Jones**, are both on the Bourke St Mall and stock a good range of high-end local designers such as Collette Dinnigan (David Jones) and TL Wood (Myer), along with well-known international labels. There's a new breed of 'mini-malls' that have the convenience of lots of shops under one roof, while still retaining varying amounts of character. These include **QV**, **Emporium** and **Melbourne Central**.

★Craft Victoria Shop CRAFT, DESIGN

(Craft Victoria; MAP COOGLEMAP); 203-9650 7775; www.craft.org.au; 31 Flinders Lane; 210am-5pm Mon-Sat; 21city Circle, 70, 75)

This retail arm of Craft Victoria showcases the best of handmade, with goods mainly created by local Victorian artists. Its range of jewellery, textiles, accessories, glass and ceramics bridges the art/craft divide and makes for some wonderful mementos of Melbourne. There are also a few galleries with changing exhibitions; admission is free. Craft Victoria also runs the accessible **New Craft** market from 9am to 4pm on the first Sunday of each month at <u>Queen Victoria Market</u>.



Entry to Craft Victoria Shop by flight of stairs only. The building is not accessible by wheelchair. The market is accessible but the range of goods on offer is different from what's at the shop.

NGV Shop at NGV International ART

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-8620 2243; www.ngv.vic.gov.au; 180 St Kilda Rd; 210am-5pm Wed-Mon)

Although not of the same calibre as the great museum shops of the world (OK, London's V&A or New York's Met), this stylish retail space offers some well-designed and thoughtful show-based merchandise, specially mixed CDs, an obligatory but beautifully produced range of posters, as well as an erudite collection of books and arty toys for kids. Also at **Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia**.



Original & Authentic Aboriginal Art ARTS & CRAFTS

(MAP) COOGLEMAP; 203-9663 5133; www.originalandauthenticaboriginalart.com; 90 Bourke St; ♥11am-6pm; 186, 96)

Open for 25 years, this centrally located gallery has a good relationship with its Indigenous artists across Australia and offers stunning and affordable pieces, all with artist profiles.

Big step at the entrance.

Metropolis BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9663 2015; www.metropolisbookshop.com.au; Level 3, Curtin House, 252 Swanston St; 11, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67, 72)

Lovely bookish eyrie with a focus on art, architecture, fashion and film

Accessible via lift.

Paperback Bookshop BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9662 1396; www.paperbackbooks.com.au; 60 Bourke St; ≥9.30am-10pm Mon-Thu, to 11.30pm Fri, 11am-11.30pm Sat, noon-7pm Sun; ≥86, 96)

A small space jam-packed with carefully selected titles, including a good selection of Australian literature - great when you need a novel fast.

Level entry with street, helpful staff.

GPO SHOPPING CENTRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9663 0066; <u>www.melbournesgpo.com</u>; cnr Elizabeth St & Bourke St Mall; 210am-6pm Mon-Thu & Sat, to 8pm Fri, 11am-5pm Sun; 219. 57. 59. 86. 96)

This was once simply somewhere you went to buy a stamp, but a postfire restoration has made for an atmospheric place to shop along its gallerias. It now hosts a three-storey concept store for European behemoth H&M.

Mobility: ***

Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Companies Cords

Companion Card:

Disabled and general public toilets are no longer accessible. It has two accessible ramps: one from Elizabeth St (near the Lt Bourke St end) and another ramp from Lt Bourke St with automatic door entry. Lift inside to get to 2nd floor.

Closest accessible toilet is in the Walk Arcade, off the Bourke St Mall.

NGV Shop at The Ian Potter Centre BOOKS, GIFTS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; www.ngv.vic.gov.au; Federation Sq; Flinders St)

This gallery shop has a wide range of international design magazines, a kids section and the usual gallery standards. Also at NGV International.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: YES
Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

Melbournalia GIFTS, SOUVENIRS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.melbournalia.com.au; Shop 5, 50 Bourke St; 210am-6pm Mon-Thu, 10am-8pm Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun; 486, 96)

A pop-up store turned permanent, this is the place to stock up on interesting souvenirs by local designers – from tram tote bags and city-rooftop honey to prints of the city's icons and great books on Melbourne.

Easy accessible entry right off Bourke St.

Hill of Content BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9662 9472; www.hillofcontentbookshop.com; 86 Bourke St; 9am-6pm Mon-Thu, to 8pm Fri, 10am-6pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; 46, 96)

Melbourne's oldest bookshop (established 1922) has a range of general titles and an extensive stock of books on arts, classics and poetry.

Ground floor is accessible.

QV SHOPPING CENTRE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.qv.com.au; onr Lonsdale & Russell Sts; Melbourne Central)

Taking up a whole city block, this development is on the site of the old Queen Victoria Women's Hospital and is both a parody of and homage to the city itself, with artificial laneways and arcades. It houses supermarkets, a food court, a good range of boutiques and designers, and beaut-smelling body-product stores.

Centre is accessible, with lift access to upper floors. Accessible toilet is on level 1 near food court. Check the map (www.qv.com.au/Centre-Info/Map.html), although it is light on for detail.

Melbourne Central SHOPPING CENTRE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9922 1100; www.melbournecentral.com.au; cnr Elizabeth & La Trobe Sts)

This shopping centre complex (with 300 stores, a cinema complex, bars and eateries) subsumed a number of Melbourne's arcades and alleyways when it was built. It also houses a lead **shot tower** dating from 1889. The old brick chimney props incongruously beneath a great glass pyramid, a staid structure in a fast-moving retail environment. Ironically, the centre's most recent redevelopment re-created the alleyways and arcades over which it was built only a decade or so before. New lanes, made to look old with bluestones, create café and retail precincts. It can be fiendishly noisy, confusing and characterless, but the scores of students who shop, eat and socialise here don't seem to mind.

Accessible pedestrian bridges connect Melbourne Central to Emporium Melbourne (03-8609 8221; www.emporiummelbourne.com.au; 287 Lonsdale St), the city's newest mall. Emporium features mostly upmarket clothing and lifestyle stores and a surprisingly good food court. It's also home to Japanese clothing giant Uniqlo. Emporium connects to the city's two major department stores — Myer (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 03-9661 1111; 314 Bourke St) and David Jones (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 03-9643 2222; 310 Bourke St). Each stocks a range of local and international brands. The Myer Christmas windows in Bourke St are an institution, with locals and tourists queuing for hours to see the display, which changes each year.

Melbourne Central, Emporium, Myer and David Jones are wheelchair accessible, with lifts throughout. Some shops in the malls are too crammed with goods to be fully accessible.

For vision-impaired people, Emporium has information boards that have good contrast and large print text. The screen can be enlarged. Unfortunately, there's no audio available. It is possible to type in a shop name or location of toilets, and the map will give you directions to the destination. These information boards are generally located near escalators.

Fitzroy & Around

Gertrude St has become one of Melbourne's most unique shopping strips. Smith St is decidedly vintage, with small boutique stores, though its northern end, beyond Johnston St, is jam-packed with clearance stores. Brunswick St is a mixed bag but it does have some good boutique designers from Johnston St to Gertrude St. Northcote's High St has an interesting collection of homewares, vintage and young designer shops, too.

*Third Drawer Down DESIGN

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.thirddrawerdown.com; 93 George St, Fitzroy; 11am-5pm Mon-Sat; 86)

It all started with their signature tea-towel designs (now found in MOMA in New York) at this 'museum of art souvenirs'. Third Drawer Down makes life beautifully unusual by stocking absurdist pieces with a sense of humour, as well as high-end art by well-known designers.

Giant corn cob stools and Rubik's cube salt grinders sit next to Rob Ryan's ceramic plates and scarves by T Wei Wei. There's a fake novelty convenience store in the back where you can pick up vegan foie gras and pizza cushions. It also has a small shop at <u>CCP</u>.

Mobility: Staff: Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: YES

Accessible Public Transport:

There is an accessible park out the front of the shop. The footpath condition is poor. The shop is accessible.

Mud Australia CERAMICS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; www.mudaustralia.com; 181 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 11am-6pm Sat, noon-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$86)

You'll find some of the most aesthetically beautiful – as well as functional – porcelainware from Australian-designed Mud. Coffee mugs, milk jugs, salad bowls and serving plates come in muted pastel colours with a raw matte finish. Prices start from \$20 per piece.



Crumpler ACCESSORIES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 5338; www.crumpler.com; 87 Smith St, cnr Gertrude St, Fitzroy; ≥10am-6pm Mon-Sat, to 5pm Sun; 186)

Known for its bike-courier bags and bright designs, Crumpler was founded in Melbourne in 1992 by two former couriers looking for a bag they could hold their beer in while cycling home. Its durable, practical designs now extend to bags for cameras, laptops and iPads, and can be found around the world.

If you're after something more specific, hop next door to the custom store where you can have a bespoke bag whipped up in your choice of colours. There's also a branch in the **city** (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9600 3799; www.crumpler.com; 355 Little Bourke St, Melbourne; 210am-6pm, until 8pm Fri).



Little Bourke St store has two steps at entry; a handrail on the second. Friendly, helpful staff. Cnr Gertrude and Smith St store has a single large step at entrance and unfriendly staff.

Gorman CLOTHING, ACCESSORIES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.gormanshop.com.au; 235 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$10am-6pm Mon-Thu & Sat, to 7pm Fri, 11am-5pm Sun; 112)

Lisa Gorman makes everyday clothes that are far from ordinary: boyish but sexy, short shapes are cut from exquisite fabrics; pretty cardigans are coupled with relaxed, organic T-shirts. You can find other branches elsewhere around town.

This branch is wheelchair-accessible.

Aesop BEAUTY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.aesop.com; 242 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$11am-5pm Mon & Sun, 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat; \$\overline{\overli

This homegrown empire specialises in citrus-and-botanical-based aromatic balms, hair masques, scents, cleansers and oils in beautifully simple packaging, for both men and women. There are plenty of branches around town (and plenty of opportunities to sample the products in most of Melbourne's cafe bathrooms).

There's a small bump at the entrance, which should be negotiable in a wheelchair. However, since this shop is small and the building old, you'd probably be better off in one of the city-centre stores (Emporium, Myer, David Jones or Collins Street); see www.aesop.com/au/ustorelocator/location/map/?shipping=true.

Smith Street Bazaar VINTAGE, HOMEWARES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 305 Smith St, Collingwood; Snoon-6pm Mon, 11am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10.30am-5pm Sat & Sun; 186)

A great place to find mid-century furniture (such as the occasional Grant Featherston chair), Danish pottery, lamps of all shades and sizes, and vintage clothing and shoes. Best of all, it's well organised.

Part of the store close to Smith St is accessible to wheelchairs; stairs lead up to a second area. Staff can bring items down for customers to view. Call ahead on 203-9419 4889 for more details.

Angelucci 20th Century VINTAGE, HOMEWARES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9415 8001; www.angelucci.net.au; 113 Smith St, Fitzroy; 210am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; 686)

Specialising in furniture from the 1950s and '60s, Dean Angelucci's store is well known for its treasures. There are smaller pieces such as lighting and ceramics as well as the best-of-the-bunch sofas and sideboards.

Access is easy off the street, though the store can be cluttered.

Shirt & Skirt Market CLOTHING, CRAFTS

(MAP GOOGLE MAP ; www.shirtandskirtmarkets.com.au; Abbotsford Convent, 1 St Heliers St, Abbotsford; 10am-4pm 3rd Sun of the month; Collingwood)

Buy limited-run clothes and accessories, for both adults and kids, from emerging designers. The Convent makes for leisurely outdoor browsing. Check the website for regular stallholder details. To get here, head east down Johnson St, turn right at Clarke St, then left.

See Convent review for accessibility details.

Hudson FASHION, ACCESSORIES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 291 Smith St, Fitzroy; №11am-5.30pm; 🗓 86)

The St Kilda stalwart has set up shop on Smith St, showcasing its range of quirky handpicked items – mainly from Japan as well as Europe and some local designers. Think geometric jewellery, Post-it notes in the shape of tennis socks, clothing and accessories.

There's a single step that a manual wheelchair user may be able to negotiate, with or without help.

ESS CLOTHING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.ess-laboratory.com; 114 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; 115 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; 115

Japanese design duo Hoshika Oshimi and her sound-artist collaborative partner, Tatsuyoshi Kawabata, have created waves in Melbourne since Hoshika established Ess Laboratory in 2001. The National Gallery of Victoria has Ess designs in its gallery collection, but don't let that stop you claiming one for yourself.

There's a single step that a manual wheelchair user may be able to negotiate, with or without help.

Books for Cooks BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; www.booksforcooks.com.au; 233-235 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$10am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\ov

The breadth of this shop's new and secondhand collection is astounding, ranging from obscure gastronomic histories and books on Indigenous and bush-tucker recipes to the latest celeb-chef how-to. Extremely knowledgable staff will help you find whatever you're after.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

The shop is on a hill which makes getting there difficult in a wheelchair. There is very little room, often with books on the floor, making wheelchair access only available at the very front. You cannot reach most books from a wheelchair.

Polyester Books BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9419 5223; www.polyester.com.au; 330 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; 10am-6pm, to 9pm Fri & Sat; 112)

This unapologetic bookstore specialises in 'seriously weird shit', including literature, magazines and DVDs on topics ranging from satanic cult sex to underground comics and everything in between. It also stocks a great selection of music biographies and small-press zines.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Polyester Records Music

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; 387 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$10am-9pm; 112)

This great record store has been selling Melburnians independent music from around the world for decades, and also sells tickets for gigs.

Very low step at entrance, staff ready to help out if required.

Brunswick Street Bookstore BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9416 1030; www.brunswickstreetbookstore.com; 305 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; 10am-10pm Sun-Thu, to 11pm Fri & Sat; 112) Lovely store with knowledgable staff and a good selection of children's books.

Mobility: ★
Staff: ★
Accessible Toilet: NO
Accessible Parking: No
Accessible Public Transport: ★

SpaceCraft HOMEWARES, FASHION

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.spacecraftaustralia.com; 255 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$11am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$86)

An excellent place to find a made-in-Melbourne souvenir that won't end up at the back of the cupboard. Textile artist Stewart Russell's botanical and architectural designs adorn everything from stools to socks to bed linens.

Entry easy off Gertrude St, some internal stairs. Staff can help customers check out items not easily accessed.

Rose Street Artists' Market MARKET

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.rosestmarket.com.au; 60 Rose St, Fitzroy; 11am-5pm Sat; 112)

One of Melbourne's most popular art-and-craft markets showcasing the best of local designers just a stone's throw from Brunswick St. Here you'll find up to 70 stalls selling matte silver jewellery, clothing, milk-bottle ceramics, iconic Melbourne screen prints, wild fig candles and ugly-cute toys.

Access is OK for wheelchairs.

Signet Bureau CLOTHING, SHOES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9415 7470; www.thesignetbureau.com; 165 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; 210am-6pm Mon-Sat, noon-5pm Sun; 186)

This is a collaboration between cobblers Preston Zly and Munk, and also features designs by Robyn Black and MM Söhn. Go there for the amazing displays as well as for shoes, clothes and accessories.

Access is OK for wheelchairs.

Tomorrow Never Knows FASHION, ACCESSORIES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.tomorrowneverknows.com.au; 415 Brunswick St, Fitzroy; \$\infty\$11am-6pm Mon-Sat, noon-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$86)

From the quirky T-shirts and geometric print blouses to leather belts and very Melbourne sunglasses, you'll spot something here to remind you of, well, here. Stocks all local designers, with 90% of the stock made in Melbourne.

Level entry off Brunswick St, heavy door.

Title MUSIC, BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9417 4477; www.titlespace.com; 183 Gertrude St, Fitzroy; 210am-6pm Mon-Sat, to 5pm Sun; 486)

Equal part book-, music- and DVD store, all sourced with superb taste, from local-release vinyl, Penguin classics and art books to cult/underground film.

Entrance is level with Smith St. Helpful staff.

MELBOURNE'S BEST MARKETS

Art, Craft & Design

Rose St Artists' Market

St Kilda Esplanade Sunday Market

Luna 1878 Winter Night Market and the Summer Night Market at Queen Victoria Market

Sunday Market (www.artscentremelbourne.com.au/your-visit/sunday-market for details) Held on St Kilda Rd, in front of the Arts Centre, from 10am to 4pm every Sunday. Good for classy souvenirs.

Big Design Market (www.thebigdesignmarket.com) Annual event showcasing local independent designs.

Clothing & Accessories

Shirt & Skirt Markets

Camberwell Sunday Market

Take 2 Markets (<u>www.take2markets.com.au</u>) offers secondhand and vintage clothes. Dates and venues vary (so not all will be accessible).

A Plus Market (<u>www.aplusmarkets.com</u>) specialises in new and secondhand plus-sized clothing. Dates and venues vary (so not all will be accessible).

Food

Prahran Market

South Melbourne Market

Queen Victoria Market

Footscray Market

Carlton & Around

Readings BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.readings.com.au; 309 Lygon St, Carlton; 8am-11pm Mon-Fri, 9am-11pm Sat, 9am-9pm Sun; 🔲 Tourist Shuttle, 🗐 1, 8)

A browse around this defiantly prospering indie bookshop can occupy an entire afternoon if you're so inclined. There's a dangerously loaded (and good-value) specials table, switched-on staff and everyone from Lacan to *Charlie & Lola* on the shelves. Its exterior 'housemate wanted' board is legendary. Also in <u>St Kilda</u> and the <u>city centre</u> (MAP GOOGLEMAP); State Library of Victoria, cnr La Trobe & Swanston Sts; Melbourne Central).

Mobility: **

Staff: **

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

King & Godfree FOOD & WINE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-9347 1619; 293-297 Lygon St; ≤9am-9pm Mon-Sat, 11am-7pm Sun; 116)

This cheerful wine shop and deli has been keeping Carlton cellars well stocked for years. It has a particularly good range of Victorian wines and also some stellar Italian drops. Staff are always happy to help.

Accessible entry.

Gewürzhaus FOOD

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.gewurzhaus.com.au; 342 Lygon St, Carlton; 10am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; 1, 8)

Set up by two enterprising young German girls, this store is a chef's dream with its displays of spices from around the world, including Indigenous Australian blends, flavoured salts and sugars. It has high-quality cooking accessories and gifts, and cooking classes, too. There's a city store inside the Block Arcade (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 282 Collins St, Melbourne; 19, 57, 59).

Mobility: Staff: Accessible Toilet: NO
Accessible Parking: NO
Accessible Public Transport:

Lab Perfumery BEAUTY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP; www.thelabperfumery.com.au; 360 Rathdowne St, North Carlton; 200310am-5pm Sun-Tue, to 6pm Wed-Sat; 1, 8)

Feeling right at home along this boutique stretch of Rathdowne St, the Lab has an interesting range of organic, Australian-made skincare products, fragrances and beauty kits. Stocks products for men, too.

There is a very small step at the entrance, which could prove a barrier to entry for wheelchair users.

La Parisienne FOOD

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 🛂 03-9349 1852; 290 Lygon St, Carlton; 😌 9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, from 10am Sun; 🗐 1, 8, 16)

A French interloper in this most Italian of streets, La Parisienne specialises in smallgoods and take-home dishes that are authentically Gallic. Boudin blanc and noir (white and dark pork sausage), duck confit and its famous pâtés and terrines will not disappoint. It also does a nice range of bread and little pies that are perfect for picnic provisions, and keeps a range of evocatively packaged pantry items.

Step at the entrance.

Eastern Market CLOTHING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9348 0890; www.easternmarket.com.au; 107 Grattan St, Carlton; \$\infty\$11am-6pm Mon-Sat; \$\overline{\omega}\$1, 8, 16)

Fashion-maven territory with a deconstructed Euro-Tokyo edge. The space is itself an attraction: it's a 19th-century chapel with the owner's inimitable additions. Women's clothes only.

There are several steps into this shop. However, the city branch (49639 7999; Shop 5, 1 Little Collins St), which stocks both men's and women's clothes, can be accessed in a wheelchair via McGraths Lane. (Note, however, that the shop is on a split-level.)

South Yarra, Prahran & Windsor

Chapel St's South Yarra strip has both chains and smaller designer boutiques, but head into Prahran and Windsor to find a far more eclectic mix. Cute Greville St runs off Chapel, and has a good smattering of shopping opportunities, too.

Chapel Street Bazaar VINTAGE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 203-9521 3174; 217-223 Chapel St, Prahran; 210am-6pm; 178, 79, 1 Prahran)

Calling this a 'permanent undercover collection of market stalls' won't give you any clue to what's tucked away here. This old arcade is a retroobsessive riot. It doesn't matter if Italian art glass, vintage furniture or Noddy egg cups are your thing, you'll find it here. There's a mix of cluttered mayhem and well-organised boutiquey stalls.

Mobility:

Accessible Toilet: NO

Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

Wheelchair access to the market is good but not to individual shops as pathways are often blocked by overflowing goods on the floor, or the doorways are too small.

Shelley Panton HOMEWARES, GIFTS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; http://shop.shelleypanton.com; 440 Malvern Rd, Prahran; 99am-7pm Mon-Wed & Fri, to 9pm Thu, 10am-5.30pm Sat & Sun; 172)

Potter Shelley Panton has recently set up this beautiful store, stocking her own local wares alongside other local designers' work and imported goodies from around the world. Pick up some eco-friendly bamboo dinnerware, copper pendant lighting or Indian loom rugs.

Two small steps at the entrance mean that only manual wheelchair-users would have a chance of getting in.

Camberwell Sunday Market MARKET

(GOOGLEMAP); www.sundaymarket.com.au; Station St, Camberwell; by donation; 6am-12.30pm Sun; 70, 72, 75, Camberwell)

Filled with secondhand and handcrafted goods, this is where Melburnians come to offload their unwanted items and where antique hunters come to find them. It's great for finding pre-loved (often rarely worn) items of clothing, restocking a bookcase and finding unusual curios. It's behind the corner of Burke and Riversdale Rds.

Entry is at street level, surface slopes gently, shouldn't be a problem. Closest accessible public toilet is across Burke Rd at the Well Shopping Centre. It can be crowded and some of the stalls will be difficult to browse from a wheelchair.

Fat FASHION, ACCESSORIES

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.fatstores.com.au; 272 Chapel St, Prahran; \$\infty\$10am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$78, 79, \$\overline{\omega}\$Prahran)

The Fat empire has changed the way Melbourne dresses, catapulting a fresh generation of designers into the city's consciousness, including Claude Maus, Dr Denim, Kloke and Status Anxiety. There's another branch in Fitzroy (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 209 Brunswick St; 112) and one in the city (3-9662 3332; The Strand, Shop T21, 250 Elizabeth St).



Accessible Toilet: NO Accessible Parking: NO

Accessible Public Transport:

New city store has a 4-inch step making it inaccessible for wheelchairs. Staff are smiley but bewildered by difference!

Greville Records MUSIC

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.grevillerecords.com.au; 152 Greville St, Prahran; 210am-6pm Mon-Sat, to 7pm Fri, noon-5pm Sun; 78, 79)

One of the last bastions of the 'old' Greville St, this fabulous music shop has such a loyal following that the great Neil Young invited the owners on stage during a Melbourne concert. It's now very much geared towards vinyl.

All are welcome at Greville Records, entry is easy off the street but store can be full of stock so is a little cramped. Back area of store is reached via stairs, but staff can help out.

St Kilda

As you'd expect from a suburb so dedicated to leisure, St Kilda has a slew of interesting boutiques and a rising number of antique and industrial stores.

Readings BOOKS

Excellent range of books, with a large section devoted to children's books, a focus on independent publishers, and a handpicked collection of books about Melbourne. Also stocks magazines, CDs, vinyl and DVDs. Occasionally holds free in-store events such as live music and author talks. There's another branch in Carlton and one at the State Library.

Ramp access at the front, helpful staff. Circulation space at all locations is tight, to say the least!

Esplanade Market MARKET

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; www.esplanademarket.com; btwn Cavell & Fitzroy Sts; \$\infty\$10am-5pm Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$96)

Fancy shopping by the seaside? Well, here's the place, with a kilometre of trestle tables joined end-to-end carrying individually crafted products, from toys and organic soaps to large metal sculptures of fishy creatures.

All on street level. Gets crowded.

Bookhouse BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.bookhousestkilda.com.au; 52 Robe St; \$\infty\$10am-6pm Wed-Sun; \$\overline{\omega}\$3, 67)

A much-loved local, Bookhouse recently relocated from Fitzroy St to this quiet backstreet shop, where you might find a quality copy of a Chomsky, Kerouac or beautiful coffee-table book on the shelves, as well as a great selection of Australiana and Melbourne-specific titles.

There's a single step that manual wheelchair users, possibly with help, might be able to negotiate.

South Melbourne

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

With its mix of clothing, homewares and gournet goodies, <u>South Melbourne Market</u> is the obvious drawcard for shopaholics. The SO:ME space (<u>www.somespace.com.au/blog/</u>) features stalls selling unique goods by emerging and established local designers – head here if you want the latest cool thing before everybody else has one.

Nest HOMEWARES

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-9699 8277; www.nesthomewares.com.au; 289 Coventry St; 96, 112)

This light, bright homewares store stocks SpaceCraft screen-printed textiles as well as Aesop skincare. It does its own range of cotton-knit 'comfort wear' that's way too nice to hide at home in. Staff are delightful. From South Melbourne Market head along Coventry St.

Step at the front entry.

Richmond

Bridge Rd is a well-known shopping precinct for its clearance stores and factory outlets. Swan St has a few good homewares and design stores.

Lily & the Weasel HOMEWARES, GIFTS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.lilyandtheweasel.com.au; 173 Swan St; \$\infty\$11am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 11am-4pm Sun; \$\overline{\mathbb{L}}\$70, 78)

Lily & the Weasel stocks a mix of beautiful things from around the globe alongside stuff from local designers. Screenprints of iconic Richmond landmarks make for great souvenirs, as do wooden children's toys, Otto & Spike scarves and Robert Gordon ceramics.

Entry level with Swan St.

There's a seated hoist into the main pool—ask for the lifeguards assistance. MSAC also has two state-of-the-art hydrotherapy pools custom built for rehabilitation, both with disability access and heated to 32°-34°. Call or see www.msac.com.au/aquatics/hydrotherapy for details.

FURTHER AFIELD: PHILLIP ISLAND

Famous for the Penguin Parade and Motorcycle Grand Prix racing circuit, Phillip Island attracts a curious mix of surfers, petrolheads and international tourists making a beeline for those little penguins.

At its heart, Phillip Island is still a farming community, but nature has conspired to turn it into one of Victoria's hottest tourist destinations. Apart from the nightly waddling of the penguins, there's a large seal colony, abundant bird life around the Rhyll wetlands and a koala colony. The rugged south coast has some fabulous surf beaches and the swell of tourists – the holiday population jumps to around 40,000 over summer – means there's a swag of family attractions, plenty of accommodation, and a buzzing if unexciting cafe and restaurant scene in the island's capital, Cowes. Visit in winter, though, and you'll find a very quiet place where the local population of farmers, surfers and hippies go about their business.

'The Island', as it's locally known, is only about 100 sq km – it's just a 15-minute drive from Cowes to the Penguin Parade or Grand Prix circuit. It's linked to the mainland by a bridge across the Narrows from San Remo to Newhaven. Cowes runs along the island's north coast, while Rhyll, 7km to the east, occupies a promontory that juts out from the island's northeast corner. Cape Woolamai, 14km southeast of Cowes, is a long finger of land that extends out into the ocean from the island's far southeast, south of Newhaven.

The Boonwurrung people are the traditional inhabitants of the island, though what they'd have made of coachloads of Penguin Parade tourists and biker gangs making their way over the San Remo bridge is anyone's guess.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

The big four wildlife attractions on Phillip Island have all made great efforts to create fully accessible facilities for all visitors (with thanks to Bill Forrester for accessibility tips):

Roll along the tree-top boardwalks at the **Koala Conservation Centre** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-5951 2800; www.penguins.org.au; 1810 Phillip Island Rd, Cowes; adult/child/family \$11.30/5.65/28.25; 10am-5pm, extended hours in summer); the cafe at the visitors centre has accessible seating and disabled toilet facilities.

Explore farm-life and the coastal paths of Churchill Island (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-5956 7214; www.penguins.org.au; Phillip Island Rd, Newhaven; adult/child/family \$11.30/5.65/28.25; 210am-5pm). For an old settlement, this farm is remarkably accessible, with well graded paths allowing wheelchair access to all but one of the historic buildings, the cellar.

Take the wheelchair-accessible boardwalks at the **Nobbies** (MAP GOOGLE MAP) and face up to the sights (and smells) of the resident seal colony, plus spectacular views of the rugged coastline and the famous Blowhole.

And don't miss the island's waddling superstars, the penguins, as they saunter up the beach every evening; the wheelchair viewing area gives an incredible view of the **Penguin Parade** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 03-5951 2800; www.penguins.org.au; Summerland Beach; adult/child/family \$23.80/11.90/59.50; 10am-dusk, penguins arrive at sunset). For those who feel the cold or have difficulty with temperature regulation, make a booking for the Skybox, an enclosed elevated viewing tower between the two stands of the Penguin Parade (note, the Skybox has only a normal door width).

For detailed accessibility information about the island's main attractions, visit www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/Community/Accessibility/Disability/Access Information

SLEEPING

Some accessible accommodation options on the island, recommended and reviewed by Yooralla:

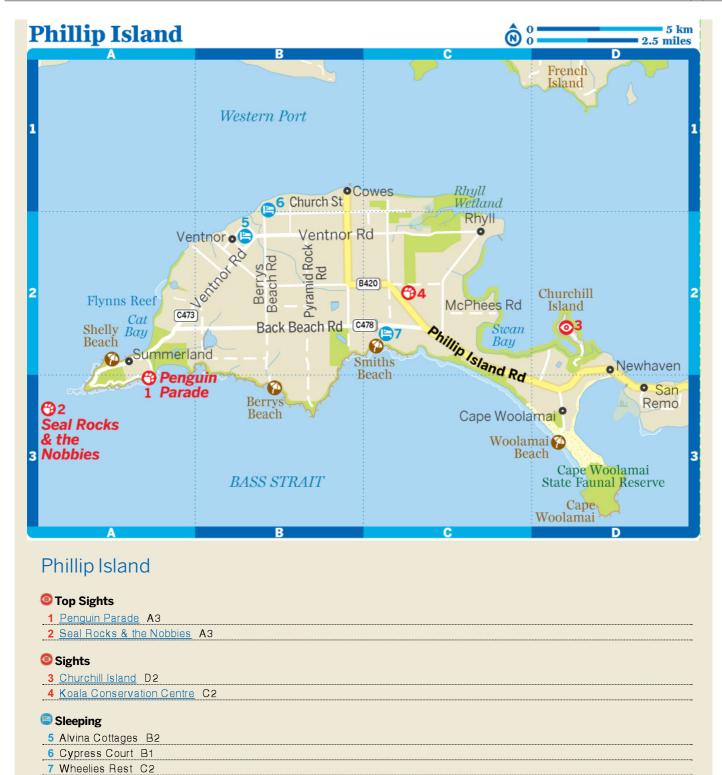
Alvina Cottages (03-5956 8416; <u>www.alvina.com.au</u>; 422 Ventnor Rd, Ventnor; from \$160-250) In a good location, with farm animals to look at, and horse rides and play equipment on offer. The owners are willing to change room configurations.

Cypress Court (Cowes; www.stayz.com.au/accommodation/vic/phillip-island-gippsland/cowes/25756; from \$295) A modern, cosy place. Contact the owner through the website for details.

Wheelies Rest (03-9320 9550; <u>www.wheeliesrest.org</u>; 172 Smith's Beach Rd, Cowes; from \$400 for 2 nights) Ideal for wheelchair users and small groups. Good space, with good access and great facilities.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

About 140km from Melbourne, Phillip Island can only be accessed by car across the bridge between San Remo and Newhaven. From Melbourne take the Monash Fwy (M1) and exit at Pakenham, joining the South Gippsland Hwy at Koo Wee Rup.



FURTHER AFIELD: DANDENONGS & HEALESVILLE

If you need a break from the big smoke, there are plenty of accessible attractions to the east of the city.

In the Dandenong Ranges, you'll find the accessible Margaret Lester Trail

(<u>www.travability.trave</u>l/Australia/melbourne/dandenon_ranges.html) through the remnant rainforest. There are plenty of spots for Devonshire tea in Olinda and Sassafras, and the drive through the area is magical. The Dandenongs are around 50km from the CBD along the M3 toll road.

Healesville Sanctuary (GOOGLE MAP); 03-5957 2800; www.zoo.org.au/healesville; Badger Creek Rd, Healesville; adult/child/family \$30/13.20/68.50; 9am-5pm; 685, 686) is another of the Zoos Victoria locations, along with the Royal Melbourne Zoo and Werribee Open Range Zoo. It's the perfect place to get up close and personal with some cute local wildlife. Set in beautiful bushland, Healesville is home to a huge array of Australian animals, including dingoes, platypus, wombats and tree kangaroos. Don't miss the twice-daily Spirits of the Sky show for unforgettable encounters with birds of prey. Wheelchair hire is available. Healesville is 65km from Melbourne's CBD along the M3. For information on accessibility, visit www.zoo.org.au/healesville/plan-your-visit/accessibility.

SPP E-Book 23/12/201-

Geelong, Great Ocean Road & the Bellarine Peninsula

Sights & Activities
Eating & Drinking
Getting There & Away
<u>Queenscliff</u>
Sights & Activities
<u>Portarlington</u>
Point Lonsdale
Ocean Grove
Barwon Heads
<u>Torquay</u>
Sights & Activities
Torquay to Anglesea
<u>Anglesea</u>
Sights & Activities
Eating
Aireys Inlet & Around
<u>Fairhaven</u>
<u>Lorne</u>
Activities & Shopping
<u>Eating</u>
Wye River
Sleeping
Eating & Drinking
Apollo Bay
Apollo Bay TrailRider
Apollo Bay to Cape Otway
<u>Cape Otway</u>
Blanket Bay
<u>Melba Gully</u>
<u>Triplet Falls</u>
Cape Otway to Port Campbell National Park
Port Campbell National Park
Port Campbell

<u>SPP E-Book</u> 23/12/2014

<u>Warrnambool</u>

Sights & Activities

Eating & Drinking

Tower Hill Reserve

Port Fairy

Eating & Drinking

Geelong, Great Ocean Road & the Bellarine Peninsula



Why Go?

The Great Ocean Road (B100) is one of Australia's most famous road-touring routes. It takes travellers past world-class surfing breaks, through pockets of rainforest and calm seaside towns, and under koala-filled tree canopies. It shows off heathlands, dairy farms and sheer limestone cliffs, and gets you up close and personal with the crashing waves of the Southern Ocean.

Hunt out the isolated beaches and lighthouses in between the towns and the thick eucalypt forests in the Otway hinterlands to really escape the crowds. Rather than heading straight to the Great Ocean Road, a fork in the road in Geelong allows you to take the long, leisurely way there via the Bellarine Peninsula, which allows you to visit charming coastal towns and wineries en route.

Day-tripping tourists from Melbourne rush into and out of the area in fewer than 12 hours, but, in a perfect world, you'd spend a couple of weeks here.

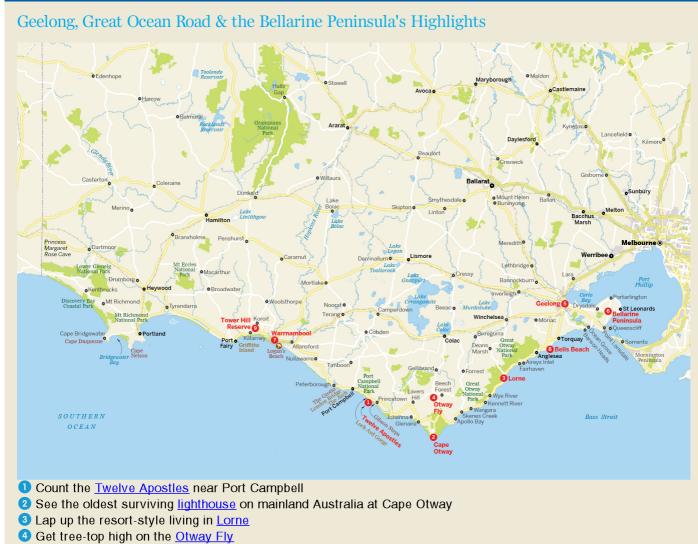
Although travellers with special access needs can visit this part of Victoria by public transport, it really is much easier if you've got your own car. See the Transport chapter for <u>car hire</u> options and <u>tours</u>.

When to Go

- → Mar Chill out to folk and roots tunes from around the globe at the hugely popular and highly accessible Port Fairy Folk Festival.
- **▶ Easter (Mar/Apr)** Head to Bells Beach during the Rip Curl Pro to witness spectacular surfing action from the wheelchair-accessible viewing platform.
- → Jul Visit coastal towns mid-winter for bright seascapes, cosy cafes and whale watching.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Throughout this chapter, we have included accessibility information for as many places as possible. However, some places were unable to provide such information before our deadline. In those instances, we strongly suggest you call ahead to check whether the places or activities will suit your needs.



- 5 Enjoy the scenery of Geelong's waterfront
- Sample cold-climate pinots at wineries along the Bellarine Peninsula
- Keep a lookout for <u>whales</u> off the coast of Warrnambool
- Watch the waves at Bells Beach
- Get a feel for life in a volcano and check out wildlife at <u>Tower Hill Reserve</u>

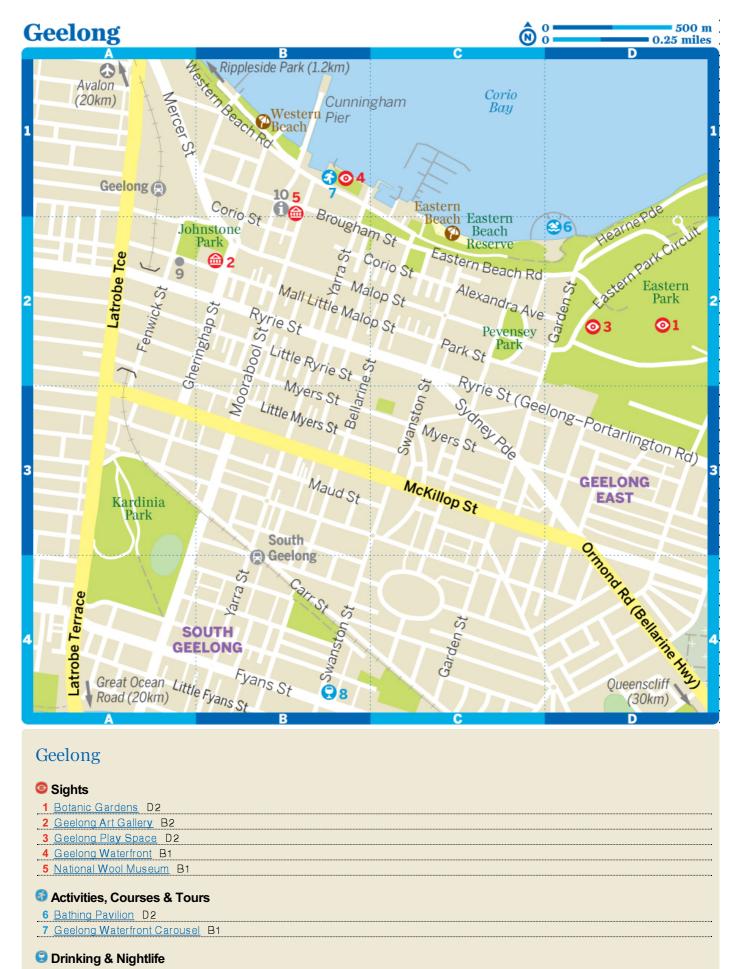
GEELONG

pop 216,000

Geelong is Victoria's second largest centre, a proud, industrial town with an interesting history and pockets of charm. While Melbourne loves to deride its little cousin as a boring backwater, in reality it's worth veering off the main thoroughfares to really get to know what makes the town tick. There are lots of reasons to make a stop here, but if you're short on time a new bypass means you can skip the city and head straight to the Great Ocean Road.

The Wathaurung people – the original inhabitants of Geelong – called the area Jillong. Today the town is centered on the sparkling Corio Bay waterfront and its city centre, where heritage buildings from the boom days of the wool industry and the gold-rush era have been converted into swanky restaurants and bars. It's also a footy-mad town, passionate about its AFL team, the Cats.

As well as being a gateway to the Bellarine Peninsula and Great Ocean Road, it's also a laid-back alternative to staying in Melbourne, only an hour away.



8 Little Creatures Brewery B4

10 National Wool Museum Visitors Centre B1

InformationGeelong Library A2

Sights & Activities

Geelong Waterfront WATERFRONT

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 😭)

Geelong's centerpiece is its sparkling waterfront precinct that looks out to the yachts bobbing on Corio Bay. It's a great place to stroll with plenty of restaurants set on scenic piers, plus historical landmarks, sculptures, swimming areas, playgrounds and grassy sections ideal for picnics. Most notable of the public sculptures adorning the foreshore are Jan Mitchell's **Baywalk Bollards**, which comprise 104 painted wooden figures ranging from lifesavers to bathing beauties; pick up a walking map of the bollards from the tourist office.

Adding to the (wheelchair-friendly) boardwalk atmosphere is the ornate, hand-carved 19th-century carousel (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5224 1547; Geelong Waterfront; adult/child \$4.40/3.90; 210.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, to 8pm Sat, to 6pm Sun), fully restored and housed within a glass pavilion.

In summer you can cool off at popular **Eastern Beach** (GOOGLEMAP), which features a sandy beach and **art deco bathing pavilion** (MAP GOOGLEMAP) with classic European-style enclosed bay swimming, complete with diving boards, sunbathing area and toddler pool.

Walking and jogging trails extend from Rippleside Park (Bell Pde) right up the hill to Limeburners Point.

There are accessible parking spots and toilets available; a beach wheelchair can be booked and picked up from the **Royal Geelong Yacht Club** (03-5229 3705; info@rgyc.com.au) at the western end of Eastern Beach.

At the time of writing the mobility lift for the carousel was awaiting repairs; it should be fixed in time for summer 2014/15. Check www.facebook.com/TheCarouselGeelong for updates.

Geelong Art Gallery GALLERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; www.geelonggallery.org.au; Little Malop St; \$\infty\$10am-5pm) FREE

With more than 4000 works in its collection this excellent gallery has celebrated Australian paintings such as Eugene von Guérard's *View of Geelong* and Frederick McCubbin's 1890 *A Bush Burial*. Also exhibits contemporary works and has free tours Saturday at 2pm.

Lift provides access to both floors; there's a wheelchair-accessible toilet.

Botanic Gardens GARDENS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-5272 4379; www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg; cnr Podbury & Eastern Park Drs; ⊗7.30am-5pm) FREE

The 1851 Botanic Gardens are a peaceful place for a stroll or picnic. The '21st-century' garden at the entrance features indigenous plants from across Australia. It houses the great and ultra-kid-friendly **Geolong Play Space** (MAP GOOGLEMAP).

Accessible toilets; there's a handy map on the website.

Geelong Play Space is a wonderful area for children of all abilities, and a great spot for a picnic. There is a Liberty Swing; pick up the key from the <u>National Wool Museum</u> or the beachfront carousel (03-5224 1547).

National Wool Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5272 4701; www.geelongaustralia.com.au/nwm; 26 Moorabool St; adult/child/family \$7.50/4/25; 9.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, from 10am Sat & Sun)

More interesting than it may sound, this museum showcases the importance that the wool industry had in shaping Geelong economically, socially and architecturally; many of the grand buildings in the area are former wool-store buildings, including the museum's 1872 bluestone building. There's a sock-making machine and a massive 1910 Axminster carpet loom that gets chugging on weekends.

Accessible parking out the front; there are ramps to each level and accessible toilet facilities.

X Eating & Drinking

★Little Creatures Brewery BREWERY, BAR

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.littlecreatures.com.au; cnr Fyans & Swanston Sts; 11am-5pm Mon-Tue, to 9pm Wed-Fri, 8am-9pm Sat, 8am-5pm Sun; 15)

Geelong is the newest addition to the growing Little Creatures beer empire. Within an old red-brick wool mill and kitted out in an industrial warehouse feel, this is a cracking place to sample their brews with a thin-crust pizza (from \$17). Tours of the brewery operate a few times a day and include free tastings. Kids will love the sandboxes and room to run around.

The canteen is a bit of a hike from the car park but is fully accessible, including toilet facilities.

GIVE US MORE!

In this section, we struggled to find great places to stay and eat that are accessible for travellers with disabilities. Do you know anywhere that we've missed? Send your suggestions to accessmelbourne@lonelyplanet.com.au



f Information

Pick up a copy of What's On for the local happenings in the area.

Geelong Library (MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.grlc.vic.gov.au; 30-38 Little Malop St; 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri; 1) Free wi-fi and internet. Plans to relocate across the road in 2015.

→ Greater Geelong City Council (www.geelongaustralia.com.au/community/accessibility) Has some handy accessibility info on its website.

National Wool Museum Visitors Centre (MAP COOGLEMAP); www.visitgreatoceanroad.org.au; 26 Moorabool St; 9am-5pm; Brochures on Geelong, Bellarine Peninsula and the Otways, as well as free wi-fi. There is also a visitor centre on the Geelong Rd near Little River at the service station for those heading directly to the Great Ocean Road.



Getting There & Away

RI IS

Avalon Airport Shuttle (203-5278 8788; www.avalonairportshuttle.com.au) Meets all flights at Avalon Airport and goes to Geelong (\$17, 35 minutes) and along the Great Ocean Road to Lorne (\$70, 13/4 hours).

McHarry's Buslines (03-5223 2111; www.mcharrys.com.au) Runs frequent buses from Geelong station to Torquay (\$3.70) and towns throughout the Bellarine Peninsula (\$3.50). Not all services are accessible (especially during school holidays), so be sure to call ahead, or consult the online timetables before you book.

V/Line (1800 800 007; www.vline.com.au) Runs buses from Geelong station to Apollo Bay (\$16.40, 2½ hours, four daily) via Torquay (\$3.60, 25 minutes), Anglesea (\$5.40, 45 minutes), Lorne (\$10, 1½ hours) and Wye River (\$12.40, two hours). On Monday, Wednesday and Friday a bus continues to Port Campbell (\$28.60, five hours) and Warrnambool (\$32.20, 6½ hours), with bus transfer at Apollo Bay. The train is a much quicker and cheaper option for those heading direct to Warrnambool. V/Line also runs to Ballarat (\$8.80, 1½ hours, three or four daily).

CAR

The 25km Geelong Ring Road runs from Corio to Waurn Ponds, bypassing Geelong entirely. To get to Geelong city, be careful not to miss the Princes Hwy (M1) from the left lanes. For Geelong's waterfront, take Bell Parade and follow the Esplanade along the bay.

ΤΔΧΙ

Geelong Taxi Network (2131008)

TRAIN

SERENDIP SANCTUARY

Just before you reach Geelong (assuming you're coming from Melbourne) is the small township of Lara, home to the accessible Serendip Sanctuary (03-5283 8000; http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/serendip-wetlands-education-facility: 100 Windermere Rd, Lara). The birdwatching is incredible, with over 150 species present, including the magical brolga. Large mobs of kangaroos also call the sanctuary home.

BELLARINE PENINSULA

For decades, Melburnians have been coming to the Bellarine Peninsula for its seaside village ambience. It has a good mix of family and surf beaches, diving and snorkelling, historic towns and relaxed wineries.

This stretch of coast not only joins up with the Great Ocean Road, but is also a short ferry trip over to the Mornington Peninsula.

The larger settlements on the peninsula are historic Queenscliff, Point Lonsdale, Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove. But some of the smaller spots have much to offer visitors too, whether it's birdwatching at St Leonard's, scarfing mussels at Portarlington or checking your head at Indented Head.

ACCESSIBLE ACCOMMODATION: BELLARINE PENINSULA

Foottloose Beach House (0418 315 548; <u>www.foottloose.com.au</u>, angela@foottloose.com.au; 9 Simson St, Portarlington) Two-bedroom beach house with fully accessible facilities; located very close to the beach, 20 minutes' drive from Torquay.

Seahaven Village (03-5254 1066, 0417 543 3360417 543 336; <u>www.seahavenvillage.com.au</u>, info@seahavenvillage.com.au; 3 Geelong Rd, Barwon Heads) Has an accessible two-room cabin, and a single-room unit in beautiful, laid-back Barwon Heads.

Riverside Ocean Grove (03-5256 2555; www.riversideoceangrove.com.au; 64-78 Wallington Rd, Ocean Grove) All units are on the ground floor; although bathrooms are equipped with handrails they're probably not suitable for those requiring a high level of support. Check with owners for details.

Four Points by Sheraton Geelong (03-5223 1377; www.fourpointsgeelong.com; 10-14 Eastern Beach Rd, Geelong) Wheelchair accessible rooms available in this prime location.

Mercure Hotel Geelong (03-5223 6200; www.mercuregeelong.com.au; cnr Gheringhap & Myers Street, Geelong) One wheelchair-accessible room: be sure to book well in advance.

Getting There & Away

Bus

McHarry's Buslines (203-5223 2111; www.mcharrys.com.au) Connects Geelong with Barwon Heads (30 minutes), Ocean Grove (45 minutes), Portarlington (45 minutes), Point Lonsdale (55 minutes) and Queenscliff (one hour). A two-hour ticket costs \$3.70, full-day is \$7.10. Myki cards accepted.

Car

From Melbourne, the Bellarine Peninsula is easily accessible via the Princes Fwy (M1) to Geelong. Rather than taking the Geelong bypass, head through Geelong to the Bellarine Hwy (B110), which links up to Torquay and the Great Ocean Road.

Ferry

Queenscliff—Sorrento Ferry (303-5258 3244; www.searoad.com.au; one-way foot passenger adult/child \$10/8, 2 adults & car \$69; hourly 7am-6pm) Runs between Queenscliff and Sorrento (40 minutes); till 7pm peak times.

A large wheelchair-accessible lift can take passengers from the vehicle deck to the main lounge, which is easily navigated by wheelchair users. The cafe counter is centrally located with large open areas around it. Access to the outside observation deck at the bow is through two sets of doors, both with ample clearance for a wheelchair. The deck area itself is large and open and affords a great view of the journey and Port Phillip Heads in good weather. There's also a smaller deck area at the rear of the ferry, accessed through a wide single door.

There's a large accessible toilet – fully equipped with high toilet seat, hand rails, rubbish disposal and mirrors – at the rear of the ferry.

EATING OUT WITH WHEELS

Eating Out With Wheels is a guide to wheelchair-accessible eateries in Victorian country cities and towns. It's updated biannually. To download a PDF of the guide, visit http://users.tpg.com.au/pjury/eowwcct/

Queenscliff

Historic Queenscliff is a lovely spot, popular with day-tripping and overnighting Melburnians who come for fine food and wine, boutique shopping and leisurely walks along the beach. The views across the Port Phillip Heads and Bass Strait are glorious, and a new observation tower by the ferry terminal shows off the town and surrounds beautifully.

Queenscliff was established for the pilots who, to this day, steer ships through the treacherous Port Phillip Heads. Known as 'the Rip', this is one of the most dangerous seaways in the world. In the 1850s Queenscliff was a favoured settlement for diggers who'd struck it rich on the goldfields, and wealthy Melburnians and the Western District's squattocracy flocked to the town. Extravagant hotels and guesthouses from the era still operate today, giving Queenscliff a historic charm and grandness.

The main drag, Hesse St, runs parallel to Gellibrand St. King St takes you to Point Lonsdale, and the ferry terminal is on Larkin Pde.

Don't miss **Queenscliff Pier** (Weeroona Pde & Symonds St), a great spot for a picnic, some fishing or just contemplating the wind and waves. It can get wet and windy, but that's its charm. Access is good from the carpark onto the pier.



Sights & Activities

Fort Queenscliff HISTORICSITE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 303-5258 1488, for mid-week tours 0403 193 3110403 193 311; www.fortqueenscliff.com.au; cnr Gellibrand & King Sts; adult/child/family \$10/5/25; tours 1pm Mon-Fri, 1pm & 3pm Sat & Sun)

Queensliff's fort was first used as a coastal defence in 1882 to protect Melbourne from a feared Russian invasion. It remained a base until 1946, before being used as Army Staff College until late 2012; today it functions as the defence archive centre. The 30-minute guided tours take in the military museum, magazine, cells and the twin lighthouses. There are also midweek tours at 1pm. Bring ID for entry.

Accessibility is good for the museum and most of the gun emplacements but not so good for the underground areas.

Queenscliff Maritime Museum MUSEUM

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5258 3440; www.maritimequeenscliffe.org.au; 2 Wharf St; adult/child \$7/5; 210.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 1.30-4.30pm Sat &

Sun)

Home to the last lifeboat to serve the Rip, this recommended museum has displays on the pilot boat process, shipwrecks, lighthouses and steamships. Don't miss the historic 1895 boatshed with its paintings that served as a record of passing ships in the bay.

Accessible throughout with accessible toilet facilities.

Observation Tower LANDMARK

(MAP GOOGLE MAP); Larkin Pde, Queenscliff Harbour) FREE

Check out the 360-degree views from this hard-to-miss, and aptly named, tower.

Has lift access for wheelchairs or patrons with low mobility.

Marine & Freshwater Discovery Centre AQUARIUM

(GOOGLEMAP); 203-5258 3344; www.depi.vic.gov.au/fishing-and-hunting/marine-and-freshwater-discovery-centre; 2a Bellarine Hwy; adult/child \$8/5; 11am-3pm Mon-Fri)

While this education centre is primarily aimed at school children, it's still worth popping in to have a gawk at what local species live under the sea, with tanks containing the highly deadly blue ring octopus, seahorses, fish and a touch pool where you can handle slimy creatures.

Not all programs here are wheelchair accessible, but the centre itself is; call ahead for details.

- **f** Information
- → Queenscliff Library (03-5258 2017; www.grlc.vic.gov.au/branch/queenscliff-library; 55 Hesse St, Queenscliff, 1.30-5pm Mon & Tue, 10am-5pm Wed-Fri, 9.30am-12pm Sat, closed Sun) Accessible, with a scooter recharge point and free internet.

Queenscliff Visitors Centre (MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5258 4843; www.queenscliffe.vic.gov.au; 55 Hesse St; 9am-5pm)

BELLARINE TASTE TRAIL

The Bellarine/Geelong area has more than 50 wineries (www.winegeelong.com.au), and is known for its cool-climate pinot, shiraz and chardonnay. Combine a winery hop with the **Bellarine Taste Trail** (www.thebellarinetastetrail.com.au), and you've got yourself a fantastic day out.

If you don't have your own wheels, For the Love of Grape (0408 388 332; www.fortheloveofgrape.com.au/bellarine-wine-tours; half-/full-day tours from Geelong \$65/125) and Beacon Tours (03-5258 1672; www.beacontours.com.au; \$137) offer winery tours (although neither has a wheelchair-accessible vehicle); otherwise visit during Toast to the Coast (www.toasttothecoast.com.au; tickets \$40; wearly Nov) festival in November.

Most listings here are open daily during summer and on weekends; at other times call ahead.

Jack Rabbit (203-5251 2223; www.jackrabbitvineyard.com.au; 85 McAdams Lane, Bellarine; onon-3pm daily, from 6pm Fri & Sat) This is a boutique winery with spectacular bay views; the restaurant specialises in local produce. Enjoy on the outdoor decking or indoors by the fire

Both the cafe and restaurant are wheelchair accessible and a wheelchair-accessible toilet is available.

Banks Road (03-5258 3777; www.banksroad.com.au; 600 Banks Rd, Marcus Hill; 11am-5pm Fri-Sun) Enjoy the wine looking out to open-air sculptures in a pastoral setting shared with the outstanding Bistro at Banks French restaurant.

There's a steepish gravel path from the car park to the restaurant, but patrons can be dropped off near the door; there's a small step of 60mm into the restaurant; wheelchair-accessible toilet.

Scotchmans Hill (303-5251 3176; www.scotchmans.com.au; 190 Scotchmans Rd, Drysdale; 121am-4.30pm) This is a large-scale winery with a beautiful lush setting; also has the Hill Winery outside Geelong, which hosts A Day on the Green gigs, featuring artists such as Neil Young and Crazy Horse.

Accessible with accessible toilet.

Oakdene (03-5256 3886; www.oakdene.com.au; 255 Grubb Rd, Wallington; cellar door 10am-4pm) Set in a quirky upside down barn and surrounded by eclectic arty objects, this is a vineyard with a difference. Also on offer are fine dining and casual eating.

The restaurant is wheelchair accessible and has an accessible toilet; the wine cellar has a small step

Elk Horn Roadhouse (3-250 6056; www.elkhornroadhouse.com.au; 420a Wallington Rd, Wallington; 8am-5pm; 1 Just outside Ocean Grove, this rustic roadside cafe prides itself on gourmet homemade produce, best sampled in its tasting plates (\$19). It also sells bottled relishes.

Accessible with accessible toilet.

Terindah Estate (203-5251 5536; <u>www.terindahestate.com</u>; 90 McAdams Lane, Bellarine; №10am-4pm) Across from Jack Rabbit, Terindah winery boasts incredible views and fine dining in its glasshouse shed.

Accessible with accessible toilet.

McGlashan's Wallington Estate (203-5250 5760; www.mcglashans.com.au; 225 Swan Bay Rd, Wallington; 211am-5pm Sat & Sun) An unpretentious winery with tastings in a large barn covered in memorabilia, McGlashan's also offers delicious seafood platters featuring abalone.

Accessible with accessible toilet.

Tuckerberry Hill (203-5251 3468; 35 Becks Rd, Drysdale; 9am-5pm Sat & Sun) Pick your own blueberries, or sample blueberry muffins, pancakes or shakes in the cafe.

Open mid-October till late-May, accessible with accessible toilet.

Drysdale Cheeses (20437 816 374; www.drysdalecheeses.com; 2140 Portarlington Rd, Bellarine; 21-4pm first Sun of the month) Taste awardwinning goats cheese and yoghurts on the first Sunday of each month.

Wheelchair accessible if it hasn't been raining and isn't muddy; ie dirt paths not gravel. There's no accessible toilet.

Manzanillo Olive Grove (203-5251 3621; Whitcombes Rd, Drysdale; 11am-4.30pm Sat & Sun) Dunk bread into samples of cold pressed extra virgin and chilli-infused olive oils.

Although you can drive to the door, there's a small step to negotiate once you're there. There's no accessible toilet.

Portarlington

This classic seaside town is where the locals go for their summer holidays. The north-facing beach gets the sun all day and there are great views from the pier, where fresh mussels (the local speciality) can be bought straight off the boat. The fishing is great too. If you are pleasuring your palate along the Bellarine Taste Trail, Portarlington makes a relaxing base to digest and recover. And if you're passing through in January, be sure to join the hordes at the annual **Mussel Festival** (www.portmusselfestival.com).

The main shopping area is along Newcombe St; there's an IGA supermarket and a few cafes for picnic supplies.

Portarlington is about 30 minutes drive from Geelong; McHarry's buses run from Geelong Railway Station to Portarlington (45 minutes).

Point Lonsdale

Point Lonsdale, 5km southwest of Queenscliff, is a laid-back community with cafes and an operational 1902 **lighthouse**. From the foreshore car park you can head to the **Rip View lookout** to watch ships entering the Rip, to **Point Lonsdale Pier** and to the lighthouse. There's good surf off the rocky beach below the car park.

Below the lighthouse is **Buckley's Cave**, where William Buckley lived with indigenous people for 32 years after he escaped the Sorrento convict settlement.

The area and lookout around Point Lonsdale Lighthouse (0019 513 007; www.maritimequeenscliffe.org.au; adult/child \$7/5; 9.30am-1pm

Sun) are wheelchair accessible, but the lighthouse itself is not.

Point Lonsdale Rd has a small supermarket and some good spots to whet your whistle.

Point Lonsdale is connected to Queenscliff and other towns in the area and to Geelong by bus; see McHarry's for details. It's about a 30 minute drive from Geelong.

YOU'VE GOT BUCKLEY'S CHANCE

As you tour this stretch of coast from the Bellarine Peninsula to the Great Ocean Road, give thought to the indigenous Wathaurung who inhabited the area from Geelong to Aireys Inlet.

One of the best insights to their lives is told through the remarkable story of William Buckley, an escaped convict who lived with the Wathaurung people for 32 years. They accepted this 'wild white man' as one of their own, living, hunting and camping together through Point Lonsdale, Torquay, Pt Addis, Anglesea and Aireys Inlet, all detailed in his autobiography *The Life and Adventures of William Buckley*.

His story lends its name to the colloqualism 'you got Buckley's chance' – meaning you've got little to no chance – entrenched in the Australian vernacular as a tribute to Buckley's survival against the odds.

Ocean Grove

Ocean Grove, 3km northeast of Barwon Heads and 12km west of Queenscliff, is the big smoke of the Bellarine Peninsula, where folks come for their supermarket and department-store shopping. There are some good surf breaks around here and family-friendly beaches. The Terrace is the main commercial strip.

Summer or winter, nothing beats a pie and Rolling Pin Pies and Cakes (www.rollingpin.com.au; 12 Park Lane; pies \$5; \$7.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 7.30am-2.30pm Sat, 9am-2.30pm Sun) in downtown Ocean Grove makes some of the best in Australia. They also have a shop in Queenscliff (40 Hesse St). Buy one to take away and have a picnic.

The **Ocean Grove Library** (03-5255 4218; <u>www.grlc.vic.gov.au/branch/ocean-grove-library</u>; cnr Presidents Ave & The Avenue; 10am-6pm Mon, Wed-Fri, 10am-8pm Tue, 9.30am-5pm Sat, closed Sun) is a good accessible resource.

If you're in the area in February or March and fancy catching a wave or two, check out the <u>Ocean Grove branch</u> of the **Disabled Surfers Association** (<u>www.disabledsurfers.org/vic/ocean-grove-branch</u>).

Ocean Grove is about 25 minutes' drive from Geelong, McHarry's operates buses along this route.

Barwon Heads

At the mouth of the broad Barwon River, Barwon Heads is a haven of sheltered beaches, surf shops, tidal river flats and holiday-makers. A visit to **Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary** (203-5254 2484; www.jirrahlinga.com.au; Taits Rd; adult/child \$18/10; 29am-5pm) is a great chance to get up close to the nation's cutest leaf-chewers. It's fully wheelchair accessible and accepts the Companion Card. Frank Ellis Reserve (near Barwon River) has a good playground and public barbecues; head to Hitchcock Ave for refreshments and picnic supplies.

McHarry's operates a bus service between Geelong and Barwon Heads; if you've got your own car, it's about a 25-minute drive from Geelong to Barwon Heads.

GREAT OCEAN ROAD

SURF COAST

Facing the Southern Ocean in all its glory is this stretch of Victoria's coastline, covering Torquay, Anglesea, Lorne and Apollo Bay. Marking the start of the Great Ocean Road, this wild reach of ripping swells and laidback sandy little towns is a wonderful place to recharge the spirits, whether in the summer sun (when the crowds are up) or through the quieter winter months. And be sure to explore the hinterland as well – away from the waves there are waterfalls, winemakers and more.

The Surf Coast Shire (03-5261 0600; info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au) has assembled an online guide to accessible activities in the area (www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/ My Community/ Aged Family Services/ Aged and Disability Services/ Access Maps All Abilities Guide).

Public transport routes (mainly bus) do operate in this area, but getting around by car is much easier. See the Transport chapter for <u>car hire</u> and <u>tours</u>.

ACCESSIBLE ACCOMMODATION: SURF COAST

Fisheye 9 (30-5237 1292; www.fisheye9.com, bookings@fisheye9.com; 9 Old Coach Rd, Skenes Creek) Accessible cottage located near a great beach and close to Apollo Bay.

Countrywide Cottages (03-5288 7399; <u>www.countrywidecottages.com.au</u>, stay@countrywidecottages.com.au; 1205 Deans Marsh Rd, Bambra) One fully accessible, pet-friendly cottage in a beautiful bush setting, 25 minutes north of Lorne.

Murahnyi Break (0421 120 732; murahnyibreak@gmail.com; 145 Southbeach Rd, Torquay) Single bedroom with queen-size bed, accessible entrance and bathroom.

Roadknight Cottages (0415 970 238; www.roadknightcottages.com.au; 164-170 Great Ocean Rd, Anglesea) One accessible cottage (among a group of eight) set in gardens close to beautiful Point Roadknight Beach.

Lorne Coachman Inn (03-5289 2244; www.lornecoachmaninn.com.au; cnr Deans Marsh Rd & Great Ocean Rd) One accessible room with wheelchair-accessible bathroom facilities right in the heart of Lorne.

Anglesea Beachfront Family Caravan Park (303-5263 1583; www.angleseabeachfront.com.au; 35 Cameron Rd, Anglesea) One special-needs cottage, with fully accessible bathroom. Reception, games room and spa area are also wheelchair accessible. The grounds are relatively flat and picnic areas are concreted over, so are also generally accessible. At least one of the picnic tables has space at the end for a wheelchair to roll under.

Torquay

In the 1960s and '70s, Torquay was just another sleepy seaside town. Back then surfing in Australia was a decidedly counter-cultural pursuit, and its devotees were crusty hippy drop-outs living in clapped-out Kombis, smoking pot and making off with your daughters. Since then surfing has become unabashedly mainstream, a huge transglobal business. The town's proximity to world-famous Bells Beach and status as home of two iconic surf brands – Ripcurl and Quiksilver, both initially wetsuit makers – ensures Torquay is the undisputed capital of Australian surfing.

Sights & Activities

Torquay's **beaches** lure everyone from kids in floaties to backpacker surf-school pupils. **Fisherman's Beach**, protected from ocean swells, is the family favourite. Ringed by shady pines and sloping lawns, the **Front Beach** beckons lazy burns, while surf lifesavers patrol the frothing **Back Beach** during summer. Famous surf beaches include nearby Jan Juc, Winki Pop and, of course, Bells Beach. **Torquay Foreshore** has a great playground with a Liberty Swing; it's right on the beach at the end of Zeally Bay Rd.

Surf World Museum MUSEUM

(www.surfworld.com.au; Surf City Plaza; adult/child/family \$12/8/30; \$9am-5pm)

The perfect starting point for those embarking on a surfing safari, this well-curated museum pays homage to Australian surfing; from Simon Anderson's ground-breaking 1981 thruster to Mark Richard's board collection and, most notably, Australia's Surfing Hall of Fame. It's full of great memorabilia (including Duke Kahanamoku's wooden longboard), videos and displays on surfing culture in the 1960s to '80s.

Wheelchair access is via the footpath next to Beach Road.

TRAILRIDER, SURF COAST-STYLE

You can book access to the Shire's TrailRider All-Terrain wheelchair on 203-5261 4606 or email surfcoastsrc@surfcoast.vic.gov.au. It can be picked up from the Surf Coast Sport & Recreation Centre (Beach Rd, Torquay; next to the Tourist Information Centre and Surf World Museum). A Hippocampe beach wheelchair is also available from the Anglesea Recreation Camp (203-5263 1512; email anglesea@ymca.org.au).

1 Information

→ Torquay Library (03-5261 3049; www.grlc.vic.gov.au/branch/torquay-library; next to Tourist Information Centre Beach Rd, Torquay; 10am-5.30pm Mon-Wed & Fri, 10am-8pm Thu, 10am-1pm Sat, 1.30-4pm Sun) Wheelchair accessible.

Torquay Visitor Information Centre (www.greatoceanroad.org; Surf City Plaza, Beach Rd; №9am-5pm)

Getting There & Away

Torquay is 15 minutes south of Geelong on the B100.

BUS

McHarry's Buslines (203-5223 2111; www.mcharrys.com.au) Hourly from 9am to 8pm (around 5pm weekends) from Geelong to Torquay (\$3.70, 30 minutes), arriving and departing Torquay from the corner of Pearl and Boston Sts (behind the Gilbert St shopping centre).

V/Line (1800 800 007; www.vline.com.au) Four times daily Monday to Friday (two on weekends) from Geelong to Torquay (\$3.60, 25 minutes).

SURF COAST WALK

Stretching along this epic coastline is a walking track to match, imaginatively named the Surf Coast Walk, winding from Point Impossible (don't be put off!) near Torquay to Fairhaven, just beyond Aireys Inlet. The only officially accessible sections are along the concrete paths in Torquay and Anglesea, but several other sections of the walk are on hard gravel surfaces, step free and without steep gradients. And if you can get your hands on the TrailRider and some hearty helpers, you can take in some of the Coast's most spectacular trails and lookouts. Download the map from www.visitgreatoceanroad.org.au/surfcoastwalk.

Torquay to Anglesea

About 7km from Torquay is **Bells Beach** (**GOOGLEMAP**); Great Ocean Rd). The powerful point break at Bells is part of international surfing folklore (it's here, in name only, that Keanu Reeves and Patrick Swayze had their ultimate showdown in the film *Point Break*). It's notoriously inconsistent, but when the long right-hander is working it's one of the longest rides in the country. Since 1973, Bells has hosted the Rip Curl Pro (http://www.ripcurl.com.au/?aboutbells) every Easter – the glamour event on the world-championship ASP World Tour. There's a wheelchair-accessible viewing platform about halfway up the hill. (If you're a manual wheelchair, you may need a push!) The Rip Curl Pro regularly decamps to Johanna, two hours west, when fickle Bells isn't working.

Nine kilometres southwest of Torquay is the turn-off to spectacular **Point Addis** (3km after the turn-off). It's a vast sweep of pristine 'clothing optional' beach that attracts surfers, hang-gliders and swimmers. At Point Addis there's a signposted Koorie Cultural Walk, a 1km circuit trail to the beach through the Ironbark Basin nature reserve.

The Surf Coast Walk takes walkers along coastlines and through the hinterland from Point Impossible to Fairhaven and can be done in stages – the full route is 44km. Pick up the Surf Coast Walk map from visitor centres.

TOROUAY DAY TRIP

By Paul Mariager

Paul is a Lonely Planet fan and Melbourne local who doesn't let using a wheelchair stop him from getting out and about.

My trip to Torquay began with a V/Line train (www.vline.com.au) from Southern Cross Station. For a civilised start, there are trains at 9am, 10am and 11am to Geelong each day that connect with buses to Torquay. You can change at either Geelong or Marshall Stations – check the PTV journey planner (http://ptv.vic.gov.au) for times and connections that suit you.

Make sure you get to the V/Line platform 15 minutes or so prior to departure and park yourself outside the door with the wheelchair symbol on it. The conductor will (eventually) see you and assist you to board with a portable ramp. Make sure you tell them which station you want to get off at as they'll need to assist you again with the portable ramp. I got off at Geelong for a connecting bus (74 bus to Jan Juc, although 73 and 72 are also possible). The waiting time between getting off the train and getting on the bus is about 10 minutes. As with the train, make yourself visible at the bus stop for the driver and when they assist with the ramp, tell them where you want to get off. (This is standard practice for all train and bus travel across the state.)

I got off the bus at the Torquay police station stop, which is on the Surf Coast Hwy. Arriving at 11.45am, the first thing on the cards was lunch! No more than 100m away from the bus stop is Bomboras (03-5264 7881; www.bomboras.com.au; Shop 2/108-110 Surf Coast Hwy, Torquay), which is wheelchair-accessible both inside and out. Those with thermoregulation challenges will be pleased to know that there's air conditioning and heating inside, but unfortunately there's no accessible toilet.

After lunch I crossed the Surf Coast Hwy at the crossing just outside Bomboras for some shopping at the surf brand outlets. All the major surf retailers are there – Ripcurl, Quicksilver, Roxy, Billabong – almost all of which are fully wheelchair-accessible and have heating/air conditioning. The adjacent car park has accessible parking spaces.

Once I'd finished shopping, it was on to <u>Surf World Museum</u>, which is located just behind the outlet strip. Access is via the footpath next to Beach Road. Surf World Museum is fully wheelchair-accessible and has an accessible toilet. There is heating, but no air conditioning and reportedly it can be very hot and stuffy on extremely hot days (35°C and above). Surf World also has accessible parking close by.

After seeing all there was to see at Surfworld, it was off to see the actual surf! I crossed back over the Surf Coast Hwy and made my way down Zeally Bay Rd, which is one of the few roads with a sealed footpath all the way to the Esplanade. I crossed the Esplanade at Gilbert St and joined the Torquay Promenade, a flat, sealed walking path that hugs the Torquay Front Beach all the way along to Point Danger. On this path you will pass two public toilet blocks, the second of which has an accessible toilet.

Front Beach is spacious and more protected from the wind – a good spot to sit and take in the sea. However for a grander view, albeit more exposed to the elements, stay on the Promenade all the way to Point Danger, which gives great views of the coastline. There's a car park at Point Danger with accessible parking bays. From here the Promenade path continues to Torquay Back Beach. The path intersects a car park (again with accessible parking available) and has one steeper section, but once this is passed, Torquay Back Beach again offers great views and a bit more surf action. There is also a public toilet block with an accessible toilet just off the Promenade at Torquay Back Beach. The wheelchair-accessible Promenade walk finishes up at the Surf Lifesaving Club. The accessible path takes you to Surf Beach Drive next to the caravan park, which in turn takes you to Bell St, home to shops and cafes and also the bus stop for getting back to Geelong.

Before heading back to Geelong I took the 74 bus from Bell St further along the coast to Jan Juc. (The 74 bus generally runs each hour throughout the day.) Again, tell the driver that you'd like to get off the bus at Sunset Strip. Be aware that Jan Juc is quite hilly compared to Torquay, so getting around in a wheelchair or with limited mobility is more challenging. From the bus stop it is a short trip up a hill to the Jan Juc shopping precinct, home to a few cafes, bars, a pub and a great fish-and-chip shop. There is also accessible parking available. From the shops there is an unsealed but navigable path to the Bird Rock Lookout, which gives you a fantastic view down the Jan Juc coast. On a clear day you can see clear across to Sorrento.

Get the bus from the stop on Sunset Strip to take you back to Geelong Station. Keep an eye on the time as the last bus leaves at 6.24pm outside the peak summer months, when later buses are available. As with the trip down, there isn't too long a wait between getting off the bus and the arrival of the Melbourne-bound train. Geelong Station is close to the Geelong waterfront, however, so you could consider staying in Geelong for dinner and drinks as the last train from Geelong to Melbourne does not depart Geelong Station until 10.27pm.

All in all, there are loads of accessible things to see and do in a day trip to Torquay day, but my highlights would have to be the Promenade walk (either Back or Front Beach) and the Bird Rock Lookout at Jan Juc. Some take away fish and chips in Jan Juc and you're in paradise!

Please note all times quoted are for a Saturday and it is obviously always best to check current timetables for the day of your own travel.

Anglesea

Mix sheer orange cliffs falling into the ocean with hilly, tree-filled 'burbs and a population that booms in summer and you've got Anglesea.

Sharing fish and chips with seagulls by the Anglesea River is a decades-long family tradition for many, and caravan parks burst at their seams come school holidays. Life hits the fast lane during January when the wide riverbank is taken over by a Sunday market.

Sights & Activities

Main Beach is the ideal spot to watch the waves, while sheltered Point Roadknight Beach is good for families, but not very accessible for wheelchair users. The Anglesea heathlands have a huge diversity of flora and fauna, particularly the wild orchids, with around 100 varieties found around September.



McGain's Cafe CAFE

(≥03-5263 3841; 1 Simmons Ct; dishes from \$7; ≥8.30am-4pm; ¬)

Snack among the foliage at this lovely sunlit cafe in an atrium-like nursery setting. The menu is largely organic using produce from the attached foodstore. It's left off the Great Ocean Road before you hit the Anglesea shops.

Wheelchair accessible, accessible toilet.

Bakery Cafe BAKERY

(Anglesea Shopping Centre; pies \$5; \$\infty\$6am-4.30pm)

Delicious pies, including its signature prawn-and-scallop, and even brekkie pies are available.

Entry straight off the footpath.



The shopping strip has accessible parking. The supermarket is behind the row of shops.

Visitor Centre (16/87 Great Ocean Rd; \$\infty\$9am-5pm) On the river, this small information centre is the first point of contact for many visitors along the Great Ocean Road, with useful info and maps.

Getting There & Away

The new Geelong bypass has reduced the time it takes to drive from Melbourne to Anglesea to around 75 minutes.

GREAT OCEAN ROAD DAY TRIP

By Cory Lee Woodard

Cory Lee is a self-confessed travel addict whose life goal is to visit every continent despite the fact that he's a wheelchair user. He maintains a blog to highlight the accessible and not-so-accessible experiences he enjoys.

When deciding where to visit in Australia, I knew that Sydney was an absolute must, but where else should I go? Despite it being famous for graffitied alleyways and its vibrant cafe culture, I chose Melbourne mainly because I wanted to experience the stunning Great Ocean Road, and particularly its highlight, the Twelve Apostles.

About 90 minutes outside Melbourne, the Great Ocean Road began. Suddenly, the view to our left was beautiful, with waves upon waves crashing against the shore as the road hugged the coastline. The road continued to twist and turn for a couple more hours, but the spectacular views rarely let up. With the Great Ocean Road being so curvy, if you suffer from motion sickness, consider taking medication; if you have trouble staying upright in your wheelchair around sharp turns, you may want to strap yourself in with extra

At one point, we saw a koala relaxing in a tree right by the road and a little while later we spotted a mob of kangaroos near a golf course. We saw these Aussie animals during our visit to Taronga Zoo in Sydney, but it was more authentic and special to see them in their natural environment away from the hordes of tourists and flashing cameras.

Just as I thought my stomach could take no more, we arrived at the Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre. Hallelujah!! As we made our way through the centre and down to the walkway toward the Twelve Apostles viewing area, a sense of excitement came over me – had been looking forward to this moment for months and it was finally happening! It was a five-minute walk to the viewing area, but it was completely paved so it was very easy to get there with my chair. (One thing I didn't like, however, was the warning sign that said we might see snakes, snakes being by far my biggest fear!) When the Twelve Apostles came into view, it was literally breathtaking. I know that's a word that's often overused, but it is true in this instance. I can truly compare this experience to my amazement when I first saw Niagara Falls

The Twelve Apostles are huge limestone stacks that were formed approximately 20 million years ago as the sea gradually eroded the limestone cliffs. They have continued to erode and now there are only eight apostles remaining, of which I saw only six. If you want to see them you'd better hurry before they are all gone – you may only have a couple of million years, but you never really know... Anyway, this will give you a good excuse to visit sooner rather than later!

On our way back to Melbourne we stopped in Geelong, Victoria's second-largest city. We got out and promenaded along the waterfront where there was a yacht club, a Ferris wheel and several wooden statues, known as bollards, depicting the history of Geelong. Some of these bollards were kind of weird, but it was fun to look at them all and learn what relevance they had to Geelong.

Twelve hours after we started, we were back at our hotel. We were absolutely exhausted, but loved every minute of our long day along the Great Ocean Road. It's one of the favourite tours that I've ever done and I still reminisce about it frequently. If you're trying to decide what to do while in Australia, the Great Ocean Road should be at the top of your list.

A version of this article appeared first on http://curbfreewithcorylee.com.



Cory and his mum on the Great Ocean Rd Cory Lee Woodard ©

Aireys Inlet & Around

Aireys Inlet is midway between Anglesea and Lorne, and is home to glorious stretches of beach, including **Fairhaven** and **Moggs Creek**. Nothing beats spending time on Fairhaven beach, whether in winter or summer. In Aireys itself, the beaches are backed by tall, volcanic cliffs, with tidal rock pools along the foreshore just below the lighthouse. A Surf Life Saving Club patrols the beach at Fairhaven during summer.

Established in 1904, Aireys Pub (3-5289 6804; www.aireyspub.com.au; 45 Great Ocean Rd; noon-late;) is a survivor, twice burning to the ground before closing its doors in 2011 only to be rescued by a bunch of locals who chipped in to save it. Now it's better than ever, with a fantastic kitchen, roaring fire, sprawling beer garden, live music and its very own Aireys draught beer. It's fully wheelchair accessible and has an accessible toilet. Aireys is about 17km from Anglesea, and 19km from Lorne; McHarry's operates buses along this route.

Fairhaven

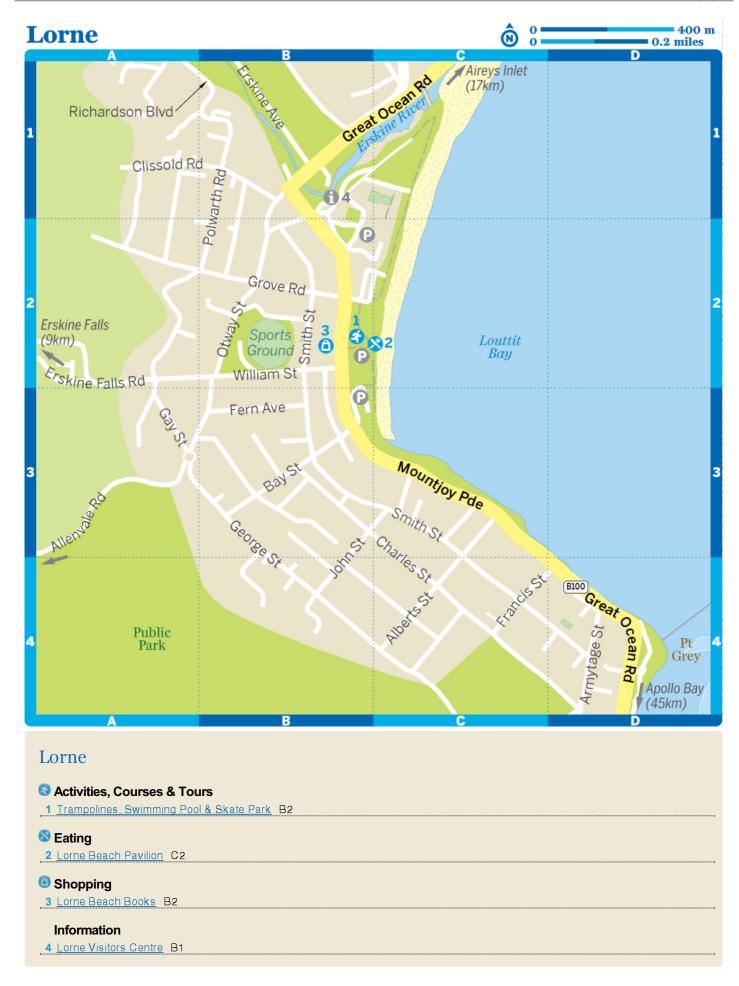
A small gathering of holiday homes just past Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven has a superb stretch of beach and some seriously impressive architecture amongst the cliff-top hinterland. Don't miss the 'Pole House', as you head towards Lorne, a (recently rebuilt) local landmark.

The newly rebuilt and fully wheelchair-accessible Fairhaven Surf Life Saving Club (www.fairhavenslsc.org; from 4pm daily Jan, Fri-Sun Feb-Easter) runs a bar and bistro from January from its commanding dune location overlooking Fairhaven beach; a glorious spot for sunset.

Lorne

Lorne has an incredible natural beauty, something you see vividly as you drive into town from Aireys Inlet. Old, tall gumtrees line its hilly streets, and Loutit Bay gleams irresistibly.

It gets busy; in summer you'll be competing with day-trippers for restaurant seats and lattes, but, thronged by tourists or not, Lorne is a lovely place to hang out. The beach is easily accessible, especially if you have a beach wheelchair.



Activities & Shopping

Lorne Sea Baths SWIMMING

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5289 2077; http://lorneseabaths.com.au; Lorne Foreshore, 81 Mountjoy Pde; from \$5, depending on activity; 10am-5pm mid-

April-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-mid-April)

Aka the Lorne Sea Baths, this ocean-side complex is home to a large outdoor swimming pool, a gymnasium, trampolines and a range of other activities usually tagged as 'family furi'. It also offers 'salt therapy', which involves inhaling a salty mist in a 'tranquil environment'. Just 50m away you can replicate this experience for free, sitting on the beach and getting a lungful of beautiful Bass Strait air.

Not all activities are fully accessible; phone ahead to check.

Lorne Beach Books BOOKS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.lornebeachbooks.com.au; 108a Mountjoy Pde; 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 9am-4pm Sun)

An independent book shop with a fun, quirky selection.

Great bookshop, with a wheelchair-accessible entry but limited room inside. Helpful staff.



Lorne Beach Pavilion MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-5289 2882; www.lornebeachpavilion.com.au; 81 Mountjoy Pde; mains \$18-36; 8am-9pm)

With its unbeatable spot on the foreshore, here life's literally a beach, especially with a cold beer in hand. Come at happy hour for 1kg of mussels for \$10 and two-for-one cocktails. Cafe-style breakfasts and lunches are tasty, while a more upmarket Modern Australian menu is on for dinner.

Wheelchair accessible, with an accessible toilet and accessible parking.



Lorne Visitors Centre (MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 21300 891152; www.visitgreatoceanroad.org.au/lorne; 15 Mountjoy Pde; 29am-5pm; 39 Stacks of information (including walking maps), helpful staff, fishing licences, bus tickets and accommodation booking service. Has internet access and free wi-fi.



V/Line buses pass through daily from Geelong (\$10,11/2 hours) en route to Apollo Bay (\$5.40, one hour).

Wye River

The Great Ocean Road snakes spectacularly around the cliff-side from Cumberland River before reaching this little town with big ideas. Nestled discretely in the pretty (steep) hillsides are some modest holiday houses and a few grander steel-and-glass pole-frame structures built on the 'challenging' housing sites.

Wye River is 53km from Angelsea, and 30km from Apollo Bay; McHarry's operates buses along this route. The beach here is not accessible with a regular wheelchair.

| Sleeping

Big4 Wye River Holiday Park CAMPGROUND

(www.big4wyeriver.com.au; 25 Great Ocean Rd; unpowered/powered sites from \$36/40, cabins from \$100; @)

A couple of cabins have ramps, but none is rated as wheelchair accessible. However, there is a large change room and accessible toilets on site and the games room is wheelchair accessible.





(www.thewyegeneral.com; 35 Great Ocean Rd; mains \$15-26; \$\infty\$8am-5pm Mon-Sat, to 4pm Sun)

This cafe has marched into town and there's nothing general about it. From fantastic burgers, homemade sourdough to perfect coffee, this smart indoor-outdoor joint has polished concrete floors, timber features and a sophisticated retro ambience that will impress.

Wheelchair accessible with an accessible toilet. Operates on a smaller scale during the winter months.

Wye Beach Hotel PUB FOOD

(203-5289 0240; www.wyebeachhotel.com.au; 19 Great Ocean Rd; mains \$18-30; \$11am-11pm Mon-Fri, to late Sat; \$\overline{\omega}\$

People come here for pub food on a verandah with some of the most stunning views of the coast. The hotel also has comfortable motel-style double rooms with great views. Rooms are well priced midweek.

No wheelchair accessible accommodation, but the bar and club areas are accessible and there's an accessible toilet.

Apollo Bay

One of the larger towns along the Great Ocean Road, Apollo Bay has a tight-knit community of fisherfolk, artists, musicians and sea-changers.

Majestic rolling hills provide a postcard backdrop to the town, while broad, white-sand beaches dominate the foreground. It's also an ideal base for exploring magical Cape Otway and Otway National Park. It has some of the best restaurants along the coast and two lively pubs.

A community market (www.apollobay.com/market_place; 9am-1pm Sat) is held on Sundays along the main strip.

Check out the **Great Ocean Road Visitors Centre** (COOGLEMAP); 21300 689 297; 100 Great Ocean Rd; 9am-5pm; 3), a modern tourist office with heaps of info and an 'ecocentre' with displays. There's free wi-fi and staff can arrange bookings for bus tickets.

Apollo Bay is linked to other towns along the coast by McHarry's buses; it's 80km from Anglesea along the Great Ocean Rd.

GIVE US MORE!

In this section, we struggled to find great places to stay and eat that are accessible for travellers with disabilities. Do you know anywhere that we've missed? Send your suggestions to accessmelbourne@lonelyplanet.com.au

Apollo Bay TrailRider

A TrailRider can be borrowed for free from the <u>Great Ocean Road Visitors Centre</u> - it's available to help visitors explore accessible sections of the Great Ocean Walk and other trails in the area. Contact the visitors centre for more information.

GREAT OCEAN WALK

The superb multiday **Great Ocean Walk** (www.greatoceanwalk.com.au) starts at Apollo Bay and runs all the way to the Twelve Apostles. It takes you through changing landscapes along spectacular clifftops, deserted beaches and forested Otway National Park.

Only some sections of the Great Ocean Walk are accessible for visitors with mobility limitations.

These sections vary in level of accessibility and their suitability depends on the type of mobility equipment used. Many sections of the Great Ocean Walk are completely unsuitable for wheelchair-users due to steepness and steps; other sections of the walk are unsuitable due to sand, river crossings and tides.

The most accessible sections of the Great Ocean Walk are as follows. Note that visitors to the Great Ocean Walk are required to travel in an east-west direction.

APOLLO BAY VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE TO MARENGO CARAVAN PARK

You'll be able to tackle this 3km trail in a conventional manual wheelchair, electric scooter or wheelchair or all-terrain wheelchair in about an hour. There are accessible toilets and parking at the Apollo Bay Visitor Information Centre.

The first section of the walk from the Apollo Bay Visitor Centre to the Apollo Bay Golf Club car park goes through the town reserve on a compacted gravel path. Go through the car park and cross the Great Ocean Road. There are a couple of inclines on this section (no more than 1:14 gradient). Once across the road, the Great Ocean Walk path disappears briefly, so follow the road nature strip (lawn on a compacted sand base) on the left side of the Great Ocean Road. The walk follows alongside the Great Ocean Road down to Marengo, with a combination of crushed gravel and concrete surfaces.

For more information, including images of the path itself, go to <a href="www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/great-ocean-walk/apollo-bay-visitor-information-centre-to-marengo-caravan-park-accessibility-information-centre-to-marengo-ce

CAPE OTWAY LIGHTHOUSE CAR PARK TO AIRE RIVER CAMP GROUND

You'll need an all-terrain wheelchair (ie a TrailRider with a minimum of three or four fit adult sherpas because of hilly and sandy sections) to complete this 9.6km section of the Great Ocean Walk in about four hours. The nearest TrailRider chair for the Great Ocean Walk is at the Surf Coast Sport and Recreation Centre, Beach Road, Torquay (next to the Visitor Information Centre and Surf World Museum). Call 30-5261 4606 or go to

http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/My Community/Aged Family Services/Aged and Disability Services/TrailRider All-Terrain Wheelchair to check availability and make bookings.

This section of the walk starts at the west end of the lighthouse car park, where you'll find an accessible toilet. The track surface is initially grass/dirt with a compacted dirt base. The steps near the lighthouse cemetery can be avoided by taking a short vehicle track to the left for approximately 100m before rejoining the main Great Ocean Walk path.

The path is 1.2m to 1.5m wide throughout this section and is generally flat except for some small hills. Some short sections have loose sand which makes it harder for pulling/pushing the chair; other sections have a sandstone surface, which is ideal for all-terrain wheelchairs.

There is a short timber boardwalk about halfway along the route that has an uneven surface, making the ride a little bumpy in a chair – take it slowly! Beach access (eg to Rainbow Falls) is a problem due to loose sand, steep gradients and steps. However, the path takes you along cliff tops with spectacular views of the coastline. The Escarpment Lookout, which has a rest bench and amazing views of Aire River and the surrounding coastline, is accessible by all-terrain wheelchair.

After the Escarpment Lookout, the path takes you through an area with trees on a grassed/soil track surface. The descent to the banks of the Aire River is rather sandy, and there's four-wheel drive track with a loose sandy surface alongside the river itself. The bridge to cross the Aire River has a smooth surface suitable for wheelchairs. The walk then takes you past the Aire River Day Visitor Area and the Aire River West Camp Ground, where there's an accessible toilet and ample space to park.

For more information, including images of the path, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/great-ocean-walk/apollo-bay-to-marengo

GIBSON STEPS TO TWELVE APOSTLES VISITOR CENTRE

This 1km section, which should take about 30 minutes to complete, is suitable for standard manual wheelchairs, electric scooters and wheelchairs, and all-terrain wheelchairs. Start at the Gibson Steps car park, which has designated accessible parking bays, and follow the compacted gravel path; note that some sections are covered with looser gravel, which may cause difficulty for small wheels on wheelchairs. Nowhere is the gradient steeper than 1:14. The walk finishes at the rear entrance of the Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre, where you will find accessible parking and toilets.

For more information, including pictures of the path, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/great-ocean-walk/gibson-steps-to-twelve-apostles-visitor-centre

Apollo Bay to Cape Otway

Head 6km southwest of Apollo Bay along the Great Ocean Rd to the signposted **Shelly Beach** turn-off. It's an unsealed road. There are toilets and wood barbecues in the reserve.

The narrow **Barham River Road Scenic Drive** from Apollo Bay runs a delightful 12km past tumbling grassy hills, sheep and stands of colossal eucalypts. Before returning, pull into the aptly named **Paradise Valley** picnic area. Seventeen kilometres past Apollo Bay is **Maits Rest Rainforest Boardwalk**, an easy 20-minute rainforest-gully walk.

Maits Rest is wheelchair accessible, but care should be taken; some sections are steeper than others. It can also get crowded with tour buses, so try to arrive early in the morning or take a torch and visit at dusk, when the forest is alive with birds and screeching yellow-tail gliders. There is no accessible toilet.

Paradise Valley picnic area can get muddy but accessibility is good during the drier months. Probably not suitable for those requiring high-level assistance.

Shelly Beach Access Info

There are better choices of beach to visit if you are a wheelchair user. The car park is relatively flat with a surface of compacted small crushed rock and the nearby picnic area is accessible via a similar surface, but the picnic tables have limited space at each end for wheelchairs. There's an accessible toilet about 25m from the car park down a path with a gradient of about 1:14 in some sections.

The path from the picnic area down to Shelly beach is very steep in sections and has steps, making it unsuitable for wheelchairs.

For more information, including pictures of terrain and toilet facilities, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/shelly-beach

Cape Otway

Cape Otway is the second most southerly point of mainland Australia (after Wilsons Promontory) and one of the wettest parts of the state. This coastline is particularly beautiful and rugged and was historically treacherous for passing ships. The turn-off for Lighthouse Rd, which leads 12km down to the lighthouse, is 21km from Apollo Bay.

Cape Otway Lightstation LIGHTHOUSE

(GCOGLEMAP); №03-5237 9240; www.lightstation.com; Lighthouse Rd; adult/child/family \$18.50/7.50/46.50; \$\text{\$\text{\$\text{\$\cong}\$} 9am-5pm}\$)

Cape Otway lighthouse is the oldest surviving lighthouse on mainland Australia and was built in 1848 by more than 40 stonemasons without mortar or cement. The **Telegraph Station** has fascinating displays on the 250km undersea telegraph cable link with Tasmania laid in 1859. It's a sprawling complex with plenty to see, from Aboriginal cultural sites to WWII bunkers.

There's designated accessible parking near the entrance to the precinct. The accessible toilet (no mains power) is outside the lighthouse precinct, down a short path leading from the car park. There's a short, sealed path to the precinct entry via the souvenir shop, which has wheelchair-accessible double doors. If the exit to the precinct area from the shop is too narrow (around 760mm), ask for the service vehicle entrance to be opened.

The path leading to the historic buildings and other attractions is not consistently accessible, but visitors with mobility limitations can get special permission to take their vehicle into the precinct using the service road for access to the lighthouse accommodation, the Telegraph Station and Lighthouse Cafe. From there, there's a sealed path (c900mm wide; gradient c1:14) to the bottom of the lighthouse and views of the coastline.

The cafe itself has narrow entrances and limited room inside for manoeuvrability. There are a few small steps but a mobile ramp is available on request. The outside tables are more accessible for wheelchairs, weather permitting.

The Telegraph Station is several hundred metres away, much of which is over grass, making access difficult for manual wheelchairs. Once at the Telegraph Station building, there's a small ramp to the verandah, which goes right around the outside of the building. The main entrance to the building is about 800mm wide; once inside there's adequate room for manoeuvrability throughout the rooms.

Unfortunately, most of the accommodation is not wheelchair accessible. The Manager's House is the most accessible accommodation on site but does not have a fully wheelchair-accessible bathroom.

Other visitor attractions located on the precinct are not wheelchair accessible.

For more information, including pictures of terrain and toilet facilities, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/cape-otway-lightstation2/cape-otway-lighthouse

Blanket Bay

Blanket Bay (1213 19 63; www.parkweb.vic.gov.au; sites from \$20) is one of those 'secret' camp grounds that Melburnians love to lay claim to discovering. It's serene (depending on your neighbours) and the nearby beach is beautiful. It's not really a secret; in fact it's so popular during summer and Easter holidays that sites must be won by ballot (held August to October).

The campsites closest to the beach are best for those with access needs as they are on flat ground and close to toilet facilities and taps, accessed via the campground service road or a level, compacted gravel path. You can park very close to these campsites on level ground with a compacted gravel surface.

Access to the beach from the campsites is via two paths with many steps, but there's access to the beach for wheelchairs and strollers via the boat ramp located not far from the campground.

For more information, including pictures of terrain and toilet facilities, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/blanket-bay

DETOUR: THE OTWAY FLY

Twenty kilometres inland from the logging town of Lavers Hill on the Colac Rd (C155) is the popular Otway Fly (03-5235 9200; www.otwayfly.com; 360 Phillips Track; adult/child \$22.50/9; 9am-5pm, last entry 4pm). It's an elevated steel walkway suspended among the forest canopy, and includes a swaying lookout tower, 50m above the forest floor. Kids will enjoy the 'prehistoric path' loaded with dinosaurs.

There's a 500m compacted gravel path downhill from the Visitor Centre to the Treetop Walk, manageable in a manual wheelchair if you're fit and strong or have someone to assist you. Power wheelchair users shouldn't have a problem. The 600m Treetop Walk itself, including the cantilevered section, is flat and wheelchair accessible. For those with mobility limitations, there's a shuttle service every 30min.

On the corner just before the Fly, pop into Otway NouriShed (003-5235 9226; www.otwaynourished.com; 3810 Colac-Lavers Hill Rd; mains \$8-20; 10am-6pm), an old potato shed converted into a rustic cafe serving meals and fairtrade coffee. Otway Nourished is wheelchair accessible, but the path is loose-pebbled and could be tough going for manual wheelchair users. There's a wheelchair-accessible toilet outside.

Further afield towards Colac past Gellibrand is the Otway Estate (03-5233 8400; www.otwayestate.com.au; 10-30 Hoveys Rd) brewery, which produces Prickly Moses beer plus cider and wine; call ahead to check whether it's open. It has accommodation in self-contained cottages from \$200. Otway Estate is wheelchair accessible (however the accommodation is not), but is only open Friday to Sunday.

Melba Gully

Seven kilometres southwest of Lavers Hill is Melba Gully, with a rainforest nature walk under a canopy of blackwoods and myrtle beeches, ferns and 300-year-old 'Big Tree', a messmate eucalypt. After dark, glow-worms glimmer in the park.

There is an accessible toilet at the carpark, but the trails aren't accessible. And for those with some mobility, take care on the trails; it gets wet here.

Triplet Falls

Along the same road as the **Otway Fly** is Triplet Falls, which passes a historic timber site and, for able-bodied people, is worth the 900m hike. The Beauchamp and Hopetoun Falls are just past Beech Forest, down the Aire Valley Rd, and are also worth the trip.

The main drawcard to this iconic, ancient rainforest site in the Great Otway National Park, the Triplet Falls Walk, is unsuitable for people with limited mobility due to steps. Although there is access to a 'viewing' area, the falls themselves cannot be seen from there because vegetation is too thick!

There are two disabled parking bays in the compacted crushed-rock car park on reasonably level ground. Although there is a gravel path leading to the picnic area, the gradient can reach about 1:14 and the picnic tables themselves have no extended table ends for wheelchair access. The accessible toilet is very close to the car park.

For more information, including pictures of terrain and toilet facilities, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/triplet-falls

Cape Otway to Port Campbell National Park

After Cape Otway, the Great Ocean Road levels out and enters the fertile Horden Vale flats, returning briefly to the coast at tiny Glenaire. Six kilometres north of Glenaire, a 5km detour goes to the wild, thrashing, and often massive surf of **Johanna Beach** (forget swimming). The world-famous Rip Curl Pro surfing competition relocates here when Bells Beach isn't working.

Johanna is not the beach to go to if you're in a wheelchair! There's a significant cross slope in the car park. There is an accessible toilet, but it's up quite a steep slope, as is the information shelter.

Neither the Johanna Beach Lookout nor Johanna Beach itself is wheelchair-accessible. The campsites located close to Johanna Beach are on undulating grassland, making them unsuitable for wheelchair access, and there are no designated paths leading to the toilets (even though one of them is 'accessible'!).

For more information, including pictures of terrain and toilet facilities, go to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/great-otway-national-park/accessibility/johanna-beach2

SHIPWRECK COAST

In the era of sailing ships, Victoria's beautiful and rugged southwest coastline was one of the most treacherous on Earth. Between the 1830s and 1930s, more than 200 ships were torn asunder along the so-called Shipwreck Coast between Cape Otway and Port Fairy. From the early 1850s to late 1880s, Victoria's gold rush and subsequent economic boom brought countless shiploads of prospectors and hopefuls from Europe, North America and China. After spending months at sea, many vessels (and lives) were lost on the final 'home straight'. The lighthouses along this coast – at Aireys Inlet, Cape Otway, Port Fairy and Warrnambool – are still operating.

You'll find shipwreck museums, memorial plaques and anchors that the tell the story of wrecks along this coast. The most famous is that of the iron-hulled clipper Loch Ard, which foundered off Mutton Bird Island (near Port Campbell) at 4am on the final night of its long voyage from England in 1878. Of 37 crew and 19 passengers on board, only two survived. Eva Carmichael, a nonswimmer, clung to wreckage and was washed into a gorge (since renamed **Loch Ard Gorge**), where apprentice officer Tom Pearce rescued her. Eva and Tom were both 19 years old, leading to speculation in the press about a romance, but nothing actually happened – they never saw each other again and Eva soon returned to Ireland (this time, perhaps not surprisingly, via steamship).

Port Campbell National Park

The road levels out after leaving the Otways and enters narrow, flat scrubby escarpment lands that fall away to sheer, 70m cliffs along the coast between Princetown and Peterborough – a distinct change of scene. This is Port Campbell National Park, home to the Twelve Apostles, and the most famous and most photographed stretch of the Great Ocean Road. For eons, waves and tides have crashed against the soft limestone rock, eroding, undercutting and carving out a fascinating series of rock stacks, gorges, arches and blowholes.

None of the beaches along this stretch are suitable for swimming because of strong currents and undertows.

For accessibility information check www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/port-campbell-national-park/accessibility

There is also a handy access guide to the Twelve Apostles and surrounds at http://visit12apostles.com.au.web.ascet.co/welcome-navigation/access/



(Great Ocean Rd; Svisitor centre 9am-5pm)

The most iconic sight and enduring image for most visitors to the Great Ocean Road, the Twelve Apostles provide a fitting climax to the journey. Jutting out from the ocean in spectacular fashion, these rocky stacks stand like they've been abandoned to the ocean by the retreating headland. Today only seven apostles can be seen from a network of viewing platforms connected via timber boardwalks around the clifflops.

There's pedestrian access to the viewing platforms from the car park at the 12 Apostles Visitor Centre (it's more of a kiosk-and-toilets facility than an info centre) via a tunnel beneath the Great Ocean Road.

The best time to visit is sunset, not only for optimum photography opportunities and to beat the tour buses, but to see **little penguins** returning from ashore. Sightings vary, but generally they arrive 20 to 40 minutes after sunset. You'll need binoculars, which can be borrowed from the <u>Port Campbell Visitor Centre</u>.

For access information about the Twelve Apostles see http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/twelve-apostles-marine-national-park/accessibility/twelve-apostles

HOW MANY APOSTLES?

The Twelve Apostles are not 12 in number, and, from all records, never have been. From the viewing platform you can clearly count seven Apostles, but maybe some obscure others? We consulted widely with Parks Victoria officers, tourist office staff and even the cleaner at the lookout, but it's still not clear. Locals tend to say 'It depends where you look from', which really is true.

The Apostles are called 'stacks' in geologic lingo, and the rock formations were originally called the 'Sow and Piglets'. Someone in the '60s (nobody can recall who) thought they might attract some tourists with a more venerable name, so they were renamed 'the Apostles'. Since apostles tend to come by the dozen, the number 12 was added sometime later. The two stacks on the eastern (Otway) side of the viewing platform are not technically Apostles – they're Gog and Magog (picking up on the religious nomenclature yet?).

The soft limestone cliffs are dynamic and changeable, constantly eroded by the unceasing waves – one 70m-high stack collapsed into the sea in July 2005 and the Island Archway lost its archway in June 2009. If you look carefully at how the waves lick around the pointy part of the cliff base, you can see a new Apostle being born. The labour lasts many thousands of years.

Port Campbell

This small, laid-back coastal town was named after Scottish Captain Alexander Campbell, a whaler who took refuge here on trading voyages between Tasmania and Port Fairy. It's a friendly spot with some great budget accommodation options, which make for an ideal spot to debrief after the Twelve Apostles. Its tiny bay has a lovely sandy beach, the only safe place for swimming along this tempestuous stretch of coast.

Port Campbell Visitor Centre (21300 137 255; www.visit12apostles.com.au; 26 Morris St; 9am-5pm) has stacks of regional information and interesting shipwreck displays – the anchor from the Loch Ard is out the front. Provides free use of binoculars and GPS equipment.

Locals often gather at Port Campbell Hotel (40 Lord St; 11am-1am Mon-Sat, noon-11pm Sun) for a beer and a feed; the kitchen closes at 8.30pm.

Watch flotsam wash up on the beach from 12 Rocks Cafe Bar (19 Lord St; mains \$20-36; 9.30am-11pm), a busy eatery that has perfect beachfront views. Try a local Otways beer with a pasta or seafood main, or just duck in for a coffee.



V/Line buses leave Geelong on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and travel through Port Campbell (\$28.60, five hours) and onto Warmambool (\$6.80, 1 hour 20 minutes).

12 APOSTLES GOURMET TRAIL

Head inland to the Corangamite hinterland on the 12 Apostles Gourmet Trail (www.visit12apostles.com.au) to taste cheeses, chocolate, wine, whiskies and ice cream among other gourmet regional produce.

Start at Timboon, an ex-logging town 15km from Point Campbell. It's home to Timboon Railway Shed Distillery (203-5598 3555; www.timboondistillery.com; Bailey St; meals \$13-20; 10am-5pm, from 6pm Fri), a historic railway shed converted into a vibrant cafe. Inspired by Timboon's illegal 19th-century whisky trade, here single-malts and spirits are produced onsite. Watch the distillery process, sample a few whiskies and vodkas, and nab some keepsakes. The restaurant is big on local produce, and they make their own ice cream and pizzas. The distillery is wheelchair accessible and has an accessible bathroom.

Still in Timboon, Whiskey Creek Tours (20434 509 693; www.newflutes.com/whiskeytales/tours.html), run by the grandaughter of a notorious moonshiner, offers a fascinating backstory to Timboon's illegal whisky industry.

Up the road you can pick your own strawberries and blackberries at Berry World (203-5598 3240; www.berryworld.com.au; Egan St, Timboon; 210am-4pm Tue-Sun Nov-Apr) between November and April. Check http://visit12apostles.com.au/businesses/detail/berryworld for access information.

Further along, French cheesemakers L'Artisan Cheese (03-5598 3244; www.lartisancheese.com.au; 23 Ford & Fells Rd, Timboon; 11am-5pm daily Oct-Apr, 11am-4pm Thu-Sun May-Jul) do free tastings or platters of wonderful pungent rind cheeses, and it is tres accessible with an accessible toilet. Apostle Whey Cheese (03-5598 7367; www.apostlewheycheese.com.au; 9 Gallum Rd, Cooriemungle; 10am-5pm) offers tastings of delectable award-winning blue cheeses, bries and gumtree-smoked cheddar on its dairy farm. Midweek you can watch cheesemaking in action. It is accessible with an accessible toilet.

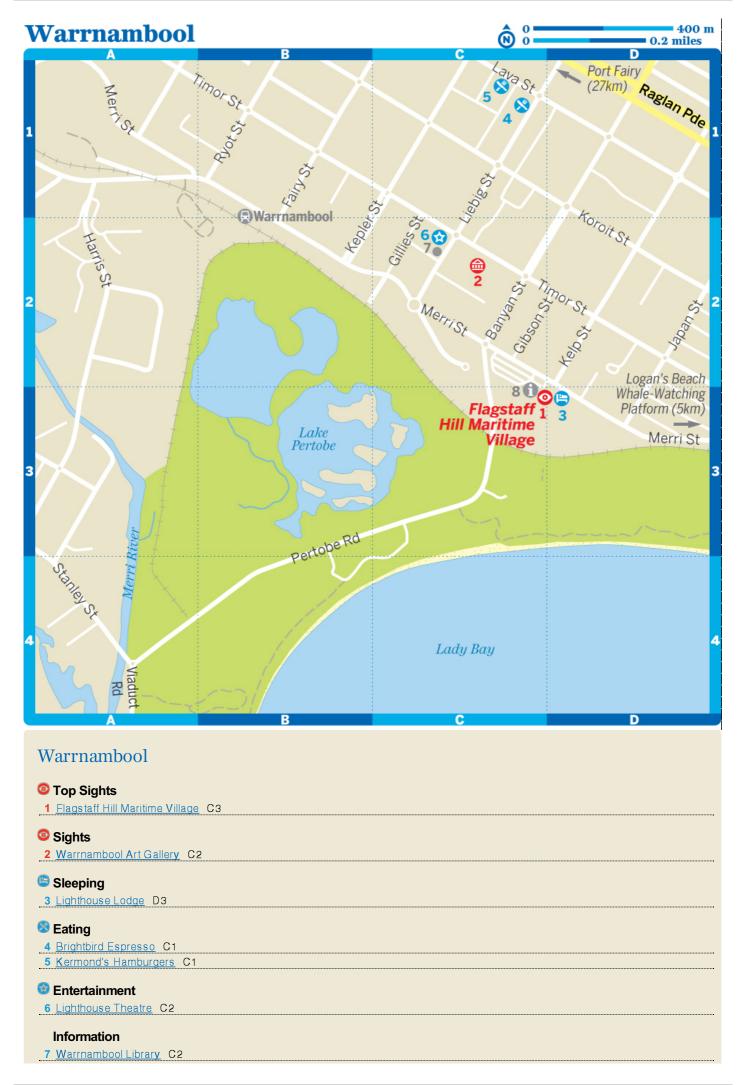
The day wouldn't be complete without wine and chocolate. Newtons Ridge Estate (№ 0407 878 213, 03-5598 7394; www.newtonsridgeestate.com.au; 1170 Cooriemungle Rd, Timboon; 1120 Timboo

No doubt after this you'll feel a little bloated, so luckily the Camperdown–Timboon Rail Trail offers a 34km track for cyclists and walkers, following the historic railway line. You can hire mountain bikes from Crater to Coast (0438 407 777; www.timboonbikehireandtaxis.com; bike hire half-/full day \$25/40, car tour per hour \$50), which also offers gourmet trails tours in the owner's '80s Jaguar. Note that this is not one of the rail trails suitable for wheelchair access.

Warrnambool

Warmambool was originally a whaling and sealing station – now it's booming as a major regional commercial and whale-watching centre. Its historic buildings, waterways and tree-lined streets are attractive, and there's a large population of students who attend the local campus of Deakin University. The major housing and commercial development around the fringes of the city looks much like city suburbs anywhere in Australia, but the regions around the waterfront have largely retained their considerable historic charm.

Warrnambool City Council has made a great effort in recent years to improve accessibility; see http://visitwarrnambool.com.au/visitor-information/mobility-access/ for details.



8 Warrnambool Visitors Centre C3

Sights & Activities

★Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village HISTORICSITE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5559 4600; www.flagstaffhill.com; 89 Merri St; adult/child/concession/family \$16/6.50/12.50/39; \$\infty\$9am-5pm)

The world-class Flagstaff Hill precinct is of equal interest for its shipwreck museum, heritage-listed lighthouses and garrison as it is for its reproduction of a historical Victorian port town. It also has the nightly **Shipwrecked** (adult/child/family \$26/14/67), an engaging 70-minute sound-and-laser show telling the story of the *Loch Ard's* plunge.

The **shipwreck museum** is a definitive stop for anyone interested in the story of the 200 vessels that succumbed along this stretch of coast, today known as the Shipwreck Coast. Also here are two historical (and still operational) lighthouses and the original flagstaff stand. The cannons and fortifications were built in 1887 to withstand the perceived threat of Russian invasion.

The village is modelled on a pioneer-era Australian coastal port, with ye olde shops such as blacksmiths, candlemakers and shipbuilders. **Stella Maris Tearooms** (Devonshire tea \$8.50; \$\infty\$11.30am-3pm) offers Devonshire tea, and you can also stay **overnight** (MAP) **GOOGLEMAP**; www.lighthouselodge.com.au; Flagstaff Hill; d/house from \$155/375; \$\infty\$15] in comfortable or budget lodging.

Most venues are wheelchair-accessible, but as with all historic towns, beware of cobblestones, and unpaved areas in wet weather. There's also a wheelchair-accessible minibus – phone ahead to book your space. The Lighthouse Lodge has one accessible room for overnight guests.

Warrnambool Art Gallery GALLERY

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-5559 4949; www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au; 165 Timor St; 210am-5pm Mon-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun)

Small but worthwhile collection of rotating permanent artworks by prominent Australian painters, as well temporary exhibits.

Wheelchair-accessible with accessible toilet.

Cheese World FACTORY

(GOOGLEMAP); www.cheeseworld.com.au; Great Ocean Rd, Allansford; 9.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat & Sun) FREE

On the outskirts of town in the dairy township of Allansford, Cheese World is run by the Warrnambool Cheese & Butter factory, whose processing plant across the road has been in business since 1888. Here you can sample cheeses, visit its dairy farm museum (surprisingly worthwhile) and get one of its famous creamy milkshakes from the cafe.

Wheelchair accessible with accessible toilet.

Lighthouse Theatre THEATRE

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 203-5559 4999; www.lighthousetheatre.com.au; cnr Liebig & Timor Sts)

This is a major venue for live theatre, ballet and music.

Wheelchair accessible, accessible toilet and hearing loop covers most of the performance space.

BEACH WHEELCHAIRS IN THE 'BOOL

Warrnambool has two beach wheelchairs available for free hire. An Aussie Beach Wheelchair can be accessed from the Warrnambool Foreshore Pavilion Kiosk, and the Warrnambool Surf Life Saving Club (0411 863 093; 10am-6pm Mon-Sun) can let you take their Beach Trekker for a spin. See http://www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au/beach-wheelchairs for more information.

X Eating & Drinking

Kermond's Hamburgers BURGERS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; **2**03-5562 4854; 151 Lava St; burgers \$8; **3**9am-9.30pm)

Likely not much has changed at this burger joint since it opened in 1949, with Laminex tables, wood-panelled walls and classic milkshakes served in stainless steel tumblers. Its burgers are an institution.

Brightbird Espresso CAFE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); www.brightbird.com.au; 157 Liebig St; mains \$8-17; \$7.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-2pm Sat)

Polished concrete floors, dangling light bulbs and single-origin coffees brewed by tattooed baristas brings a slice of inner-city Melbourne to the 'bool.

All-day breakfasts encompass creative dishes to egg-and-bacon rolls.



Warrnambool Library (MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 25 Liebig St; S9.30am-5pm Mon & Tue, to 6pm Wed-Fri, 10am-noon Sat; S) Offers free internet and wi-fi access.

Warrnambool Visitors Centre (MAP GOOGLEMAP); ☑1800 637 725; www.visitwarrnambool.com.au; Merri St; ☑9am-5pm) For the latest on whale sightings. Also stocks maps.

WHALE-WATCHING IN THE 'BOOL

In the 19th century Warrnambool's whale industry involved hunting them with harpoons. These days they're a major tourist attraction, with crowds gathering to see them frolick offshore on their migration between May and September. Southern right whales (named due to being the 'right' whales to hunt) are the most common visitor, heading from Antartica to these more temperate waters.

Although whales can be seen between Portland and Anglesea, undoubtedly the best place to see them is at Warrnambool's **Logan's Beach Whale-Watching Platform**, the beach they use as a nursery. Sightings aren't guaranteed but you've got a very good chance of spotting them breaching and slapping their tails about as they nurse their calves in the waters. Call ahead to the <u>visitors centre</u> to check if the whales are about, or visit <u>www.visitwarrnambool.com.au</u> for the latest sightings.

f Getting There & Away

Warrnambool is an hour's drive west of Port Campbell on the B100.

RUS

Three buses a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) travel from Geelong along the Great Ocean Road to Warrnambool (\$32.20, 61/2 hours).

V/Line (21800 800 007; www.vline.com.au; Merri St) and **Warrnambool Bus Lines** (203-5562 1866; www.transitsw.com.au) run buses to Port Fairy (\$4.20, 35 minutes), with V/Line continuing on to Portland (\$11, 1½ hours).

Christians Bus Co (203-5562 9432; www.christiansbus.com.au) also runs services on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday to Port Fairy (\$4, departing 7.45am), continuing to Halls Gap (\$25, 3½ hours) and Ararat (\$29.20, four hours).

TRAIN

V/Line trains run to Melbourne (\$31, 31/4 hours, three or four daily) via Geelong (\$22.20, 21/2 hours).

Tower Hill Reserve

Tower Hill, 15km west of Warmambool, is a vast caldera born in a volcanic eruption 35,000 years ago. Aboriginal artefacts unearthed in the volcanic ash show that indigenous people lived in the area at the time and, today, the Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Cooperative operates the Tower Hill Natural History Centre (303-5565 9202; www.worngundidj.org.au; walks adult/child \$18.95/8.80; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, Sun & public holidays). The centre is housed within the UFO-like building designed by renowned Australian architect Robin Boyd in 1962. Bush walks led by Indigenous guides depart daily at 11am and include boomerang-throwing and bush-tucker demonstrations. The centre also sells handicrafts, artwork and accessories designed by the local Worn Gundidj community.

Parks Victoria manages the park and it's one of the few places where you'll spot wild emus, kangaroos and koalas hanging out together. It's also home to over 200 species of bird, with its wetland habitat attracting both resident and migratory birds.

There are excellent day walks, including the steep 30-minute **Peak Climb** with spectacular 360-degree views. After a century of deforestation and environmental degradation, a detailed 1855 painting of Tower Hill by Eugene von Guérard (now exhibited in the Warmambool Art Gallery) was used to identify species in a replanting program, over 300,000 trees have been replanted since 1961.

If you've been searching for an accessible extinct volcano crater, **Tower Hill** is the one. See http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/tower-hill-w.r/accessibility for details.

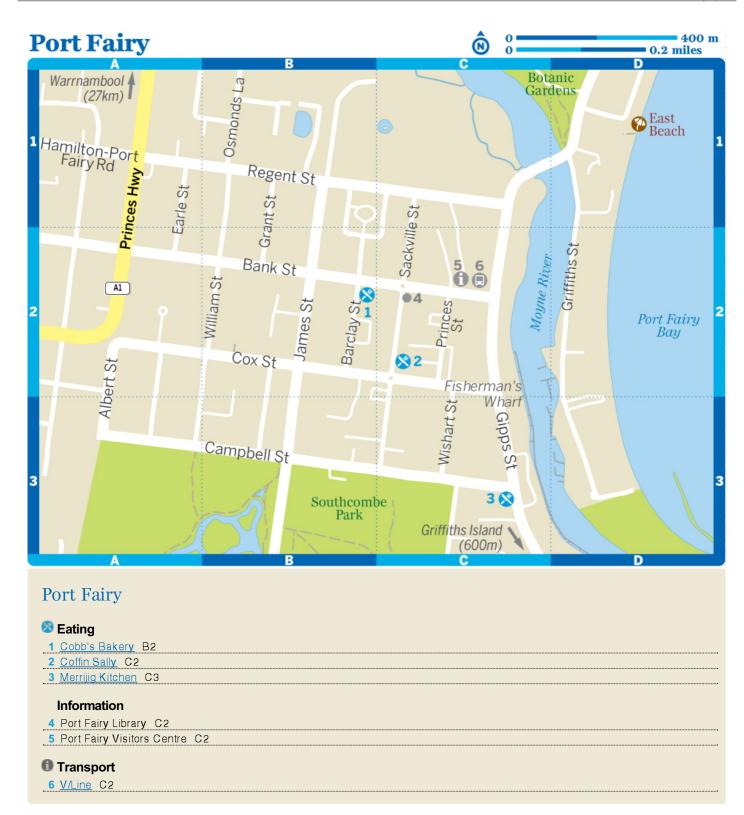
ROBIN BOYD

The UFO-like building housing the Tower Hill Natural History Centre was designed by renowned Australian architect Robin Boyd (1919–71) in 1962. While his post-war buildings dot Victoria's landscape, they're usually in the hands of private owners – this one is an exception. Feel the coolness created by using thick walls, and check out the interesting beam-supported ceiling, volcano-like roof and extra-large eaves.

Port Fairy

Settled in 1833 as a whaling and sealing station, Port Fairy retains its historic 19th-century charm with a relaxed, salty feel, heritage bluestone and sandstone buildings, whitewashed cottages, colourful fishing boats and wide tree-lined streets. It has a rich and sometimes gloomy heritage that enraptures local history buffs. In 2012 it was voted the world's most liveable community, and for most visitors it's not hard to see why.

Australia's premier folk-music festival, **Port Fairy Folk Festival** (www.portfairyfolkfestival.com; tickets \$75-210; Mar) is held on the Labour Day long weekend in March. It includes an excellent mix of international and national acts, while the streets are abuzz with buskers. Accommodation can book out a year in advance. Victorian Companion cards are accepted and accessibility across the venue is good; see www.portfairyfolkfestival.com/? page_id=316 for details.



X Eating & Drinking

Pantry Door at Basalt CAFE

(GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-5568 7442; 1131 Princes Hwy, Killarney; mains \$12-25; ≥9am-4pm Thu-Mon; <a>®)

Just outside Port Fairy in the township of Killarney, this bluestone homestead cafe focuses on seasonal local produce and has an outdoor decking among fruit trees. Next door is **Basalt Wines** (www.basaltwines.com), a family-run biodynamic winery that does tastings in its shed.

Cobb's Bakery BAKERY

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); ≥03-5568 1713; 25 Bank St; pies \$6; ≥7am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 4.30pm Sat & Sun)

Great selection of homemade pies including curried scallop and bolognaise.

Coffin Sally PIZZA

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 33 Sackville St; pizzas \$9-19; \$24-10pm)

Located within a former undertakers (relax, it was 100 years ago), traditional thin-crust pizzas are cooked in an open kitchen and wolfed down on streetside stools or in the dimly lit dining nooks out back next to an open fire.

★ Merrijig Kitchen MODERN AUSTRALIAN

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-5568 2324; www.merrijiginn.com; 1 Campbell St; mains \$30-38; 6-9pm Thu-Mon; 6)

One of coastal Victoria's most atmospheric restaurants. Warm yourself by the open fire and enjoy superb dining with a menu that changes according to what's in season. Delectable food with great service.

Moyne Shire Accessibility Maps Moyne Shire, which covers Port Fairy and a bunch of other coastal spots and some interesting towns in the hinterland, has produced some handy mobility maps: www.moyne.vic.gov.au/Files/Mobility Maps Booklet 2012.pdf



Getting There & Away

CAR

Port Fairy is 20 minutes west of Warrnambool on the A1.

TRAIN

V/Line (MAP GOOGLEMAP); №1800 800 007; www.vline.com.au) bus run three times daily on weekdays (twice on Saturday and once on Sunday) to Portland (\$7.80, 55 minutes) and Warmambool (\$4.20, 35 minutes). Christian's Bus Co connects Port Fairy with Halls Gap (\$21.60, 2½ hours) and Ararat (\$27.20, 3¼ hours) Tuesday, Friday and Sunday at around 8am

ACCESSIBLE ACCOMMODATION: SHIPWRECK COAST

Seatree Cottages (0429 631 464; www.seatree.com.au, ronald_kintscher@yahoo.com; 5745 Great Ocean Road, Yuulong) Two cottages, one with spa, in a wonderful setting about 20km from Johanna Beach and close by the Twelve Apostles.

The Boomerangs (03-5237 4213; <u>www.theboomerangs.com.au</u>, booking @theboomerangs.com; 3185 Great Ocean Rd, Johanna) Deluxe boomerang-shaped cottages with great views and beautiful gardens.

Daysy Hill Country Cottages (03-5598 6226; www.daysyhillcottages.com.au, daysyhill@bigpond.com; 2585 Cobden-Port Campbell Road, Port Campbell) A single accessible cottage among several set on an expansive property just minutes from the Apostles. Not suitable for those requiring a high level of support.

Cape Otway Ocean Lodge (03-5237 9272; www.capeotwayoceanlodge.com, cool@harboursat.com.au; 150 Bracks Access, Cape Otway) Bring your entire extended family! Sleeps up to 100, mainly in bunks, has no steps; accessible bathrooms, a great location and wildlife.

Melbourne & Victoria Today

Melbourne may be a great place to live (and to visit), but maintaining its place at the top of the world and national liveability tree involves confronting the major issues of rising costs, urban planning and environmental sustainability. But of course Victoria is about more than just Melbourne and regional Victorians have a different take on how those important questions are to be answered in the future.

Melbourne's Liveability

Melbourne consistently ranks as one of the most liveable cities on earth. In 2013, and not for the first time, Melbourne basked in the title of the World's Most Liveable City according to the prestigious *Economist* Intelligence Unit. In the same year, *Monocle*'s quality of life index put Melbourne in a still-rather-enviable second (behind Copenhagen). So what makes Melbourne so good?

Melbourne always ranks highly when it comes to infrastructure and safety, while *Monocle*'s criteria takes in public transport, urban design and tolerance. And although the state (and Australia in general) hasn't been immune to the global financial crisis, Victoria has consistently recorded growth rates that are the envy of the industrialised world.

But the city does have some chinks in its armour. Perhaps Melbourne just couldn't win *Monocle*'s #1 ranking because climate and sunshine are among their criteria – Melbourne weather can be glorious, but it can also be wet, windy and changeable at a moment's notice. And then there's the spiralling cost of living. Salaries have largely kept pace, but everything from restaurant meals to hotel rooms have soared in recent years. To see what we mean, stop by a real estate auction and watch the prices climb ever higher.

City Limits

Urban planning stands at the centre of public debate in Melbourne, not least because Melbourne's population is expected to almost double to eight million by 2050. All around its outer limits, new suburbs appear, often before transport infrastructure and other essential services are in place. And with inner Melbourne already out of reach for low-income home buyers and renters, these questions grow in importance with every passing year.

In the heart of the city, it's no less complicated. A decade ago, the shift to higher-density living saw the rise of the Docklands precinct and inner-city apartment complexes. Success, however, has been partial at best. A lack of after-hours life and a failure to develop the necessary services for those who remain in the centre after the sun sets continue to plague area development.

Connecting the two extremes of Melbourne's human geography could be one of its most controversial projects in a generation. The Liberal–National Party Coalition of Premier Denis Napthine is pushing ahead with construction of the East West Link, an 18km-long, mostly underground freeway that will connect Melbourne's eastern suburbs with the west. With the loss of parkland in Royal Park, projected increases in traffic elsewhere and with no concomitant rise in public transport spending, many wonder whether the project (the first stage of which is due to be completed by 2019) will create more problems than it solves.

City-Rural Divide?

Country Victoria is so much more than a venue for a food-lover's passions or a tree-changer's escape. It's also a pillar of the state's economy and the place where many of the state's most pressing environmental issues are being confronted.

The brown-coal power plants of Gippsland's Latrobe Valley may be a blight on the environment – the Hazelwood Power Station is the most polluting in the country – but they also supply 85% of the state's electricity. Victoria is Australia's most cleared state, with the highest number of threatened species. There's also an ongoing debate over whether grazing or logging should be allowed in national parks: the conservative government is generally in favour, predominantly city-based environmentalists less so. And then there are the water shortages in the state's north and wider Murray–Darling River Basin.

In country Victoria, these issues are very often seen primarily in terms of farmers' rights and important sources of employment for vulnerable communities. In the cities, they're environmental issues of wider global significance. And this city—rural divide is reflected, in part, in the state's political landscape: rural electorates are dominated by conservative independents or the National Party (which has its roots in rural farming communities), while the inner-city seat of Melbourne is the only lower-house seat in the country to be held by the Greens, whose federal MP Adam Bandt increased his majority at the 2013 election.

Top Films

The Castle (1997) Cult-comedy classic set in a working-class Melbourne suburb.

On the Beach (1957) Apocalypse Now-ish.

Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975) Elliptical, sensual classic.

Dogs in Space (1986) Chaotic chronicle of the city's punk past.

Animal Kingdom (2010) Menacing, moody crime-family thriller.

Red Hill (2010) 'Revisionist' Western/cop-thriller genre mash-up, set in breathtaking East Gippsland.

Top Playlist

'Carlton (Lygon Street Limbo)', Skyhooks

'Shivers', Boys Next Door

'Beautiful People', Australian Crawl

'Leaps and Bounds', Paul Kelly

'Under the Sun', Hunters & Collectors

Famous Victorians

Mary MacKillop

Dame Nellie Melba

Barry Humphries

Nick Cave

Kylie Minogue

Julia Gillard

Julian Assange

Population

5.74 MILLION

Average Weekly Earnings \$1338

Unemployment Rate 5.8%

Area of Victoria 227,415 SQ KM

Area of Greater Melbourne $8806 \, SQ \, KM$

Highest Mountain MT BOGONG (1986M)

History

Victoria's history is one of Australia's more picaresque tales. It begins with geological upheaval and flourishing Indigenous cultures, but the unravelling of the latter that followed the European discovery of Australia in 1770 is a story of profound tragedy. The fraught and stop-start settlement of the state finally took hold with the discovery of gold in the mid-19th century – a find that thrust Victoria into the modern era, laying the foundation stones for the state's democracy, prosperity and multicultural make-up.

TIMELINE

80 million years ago

The Australian continent breaks away from Antarctica to form its own land mass.

50.000 BC

The first humans colonise southeastern Australia. The people of the Kulin Nation live in the catchment of the Yarra River; various other tribes, speaking 38 dialects among them, are spread throughout Victoria.

1770

Lieutenant Zachary Hicks becomes the first European to lay eyes on the Eastern Australian shoreline. Captain Cook will later name the spot in far-east Gippsland, 'Point Hicks'.

1803

Victoria's first European settlement is at Sorrento. It is an unmitigated disaster, with no fresh water to be found; the settlers abandon the site after six months and relocate to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania).

1834

Portland pioneer Edward Henty, his family and a flock of sheep arrive from Van Diemen's Land, marking the first permanent European settlement in the region that will become Victoria.

1835

John Batman meets with a group of local Aboriginal people and trades a casket of blankets, mirrors, scissors, handkerchiefs and other assorted curios for around 2400 sq km of land.

1837

The military surveyor Robert Hoddle draws up plans for the city of Melbourne, laying out a geometric grid of broad streets in a rectangular pattern on the northern side of the Yarra River.

1838

The Melbourne Advertiser, Melbourne's first newspaper, is first published, with 10 weekly handwritten editions; in 1839 it rolls off the presses daily as the Port Phillip Patriot & Melbourne Advertiser.

1851

Victoria separates from the colony of New South Wales (NSW). Gold is discovered in central Victoria and the world's richest gold rush is on.

1854

Gold miners rebel over unfair licences and conditions, raising the Southern Cross flag at the Eureka Stockade. Brutally suppressed by soldiers and police, their actions enter into Australia's nation-building mythology.

1854

Australia's first significant rail line, from Melbourne Terminus on Flinders St, across the Yarra, to Station Pier in Port Melbourne, opens.

1856-60

Stonemasons building the University of Melbourne strike and the struggle for a shorter working day begins; the subsequent 'eight-hour day' campaign transforms Victorian working conditions.

1858

The Melbourne Football Club is formed. Australian Rules football's first recorded match takes place between Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar

School. 1859 Thomas Austin releases rabbits onto his property at Winchelsea, west of Melbourne, beginning a rabbit infestation that will spread across the southern part of Australia and continue to this day.

1880

The International Exhibition is held at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne's Carlton Gardens. Over a million visitors come to see the fruits of the Empire.

1883-85

The railway line linking Sydney and Melbourne opens in 1883, followed two years later by Melbourne's first cable-tram service, running from the city centre to Richmond.

1883

Yarra Falls, a rock bridge spanning the Yarra at Customs House that divided fresh water from salt and was used as a crossing, is removed by explosives.

1884

HV McKay's invention of the Sunshine stripper harvester in Ballarat makes leaps and bounds in the efficient harvest of cereal crops, putting Australia on the map as a leading exporter of grain.

1901

Australia's collection of colonies become a nation. The Federation's first parliament is held at the Royal Exhibition Building; parliament will sit in Melbourne for the next 27 years.

1923

Vegemite, a savoury sandwich spread and Australia's most enduring culinary quirk, is invented in Melbourne, using autolysis to break down yeast cells from waste provided by Carlton & United Breweries.

1925

The first Australian-built Ford Model Ts roll off an improvised production line in a disused wool store in Geelong.

1928

Australia's first set of traffic lights begin operation at the junction of Collins and Swanston Sts in Melbourne.

1930

A plucky young chestnut gelding called Phar Lap wins the Melbourne Cup. His winning streak endears him to the nation and he remains one of the most popular exhibits in the Melbourne Museum.

1953

The first Italian Gaggia espresso machine is imported to Melbourne. Soon University Cafe in Carlton, Pellegrini's in the city and Don Camillo in North Melbourne are serving the city's first cappuccinos.

Melbourne hosts the summer Olympic Games. Despite this mark of sporting bonhomie, the event is marked with political unrest due to the Suez crisis and the Soviet invasion of Hungary.

1964

The Beatles visit Melbourne, staying in the since demolished Southern Cross Hotel on Bourke St and creating city-wide 'youthquake' hysteria.

1967

Prime Minister Harold Holt disappears while swimming at Cheviot Beach near Portsea on the Mornington Peninsula; his body is never recovered.

1970

Melbourne's West Gate Bridge collapses during construction, killing 35 workers; the impact and explosion that follows is heard over 20km away. Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport opens in the same year.

1977

The Centenary Test, commemorating the first cricket test match between Australia and England, is played at the MCG. Amazingly, Australia triumphs by

the same margin as the original: 45 runs.

1982-84

The Victorian Arts Centre, built to the design of Roy Grounds, opens in stages at the site now known as Southbank after a construction period of some 11 years.

1988

The Australian Tennis Open moves from Kooyong to the hard-court venues of Melbourne Park. Attendance jumps by 90%, to well over 250,000 spectators.

1992

Southgate shopping centre, built on a former industrial site, opens, connecting the Arts Centre with the city and marking the start of massive redevelopment of Melbourne's waterfront spaces.

2002

Federation Square opens – a year late for the centenary of federation – amid controversy about its final design and cost (\$440 million), but to public praise.

2006

With the failure of late winter and spring rainfalls and the second-driest conditions since 1900, water restrictions are introduced across Victoria.

2006

Melbourne hosts the Commonwealth Games, the largest sporting event ever to be held in the city: in numbers of teams, athletes and events it eclipses the 1956 Olympics.

2009

Victoria records its hottest temperatures on record. The Black Saturday bushfires that follow leave 173 people dead, more than 2000 homes destroyed and 4500 sq km burned out.

2010

Adam Bandt becomes the first member of the Greens Party to be elected to the federal House of Representatives in a general election. He retains the inner-city seat of Melbourne in the 2013 election.

2010

The conservative Liberal-National Party coalition return to power in the Victorian state parliament, after eleven years in the political wilderness.

2011

Victoria is devastated by the worst 'flood events' in its recorded history, with the central and northern parts of the state worst hit, including the towns of Horsham, Shepparton and Swan Hill.

Estimates suggest that before the Europeans arrived, Victoria's Aboriginal population was between 60,000 and 100,000; by the late 1840s it had dropped to 15,000. By 1860 scarcely 2000 Aboriginal people survived.

Creation Stories

A mere 120 million years ago, Australia broke away from the vast super-continent known as Gondwana, followed 40 million years later by another epic geological event – the separation of Australia from Antarctica. In prehistoric times, far lower sea levels exposed a land bridge between what is now Tasmania and Victoria. It was not until 10,000 years ago, with the rising sea levels that accompanied the end of the last Ice Age, that Victoria took on its current form as the southernmost extent of the Australian mainland.

Victoria's human history begins somewhat later: the earliest records of Australia's Indigenous people inhabiting the land date back around 52,000 years. At the time, they hunted the giant marsupials that once roamed Victoria and Australia, among them a species of wombat the size of a rhinoceros and possibly even a giant platypus as long as a metre.

The oral history of Indigenous Australians has its own version of Victoria's prehistory. For the Wurundjeri people, who lived in the catchment of the Yarra River where Melbourne is today, the land and the people were created in the Dreaming by the spirit Bunjil—'the great one, old head-man, eagle hawk'—who continues to watch over all from Tharangalk-bek, the home of the spirits in the sky.

Indigenous Victoria

Victoria's Indigenous peoples lived in some 38 different dialect groups that spoke 10 separate languages. These groups, some matrilineal, others patrilineal, were further divided into clans and sub-clans, each with its own complex system of customs and laws, and each claiming custodianship of a distinct area of land. Despite this, the British considered the continent to be terra nullius – 'a land belonging to no one'.

The Wurundjeri were a tribe of the Woiwurrung, one of five distinct language groups belonging to southern Victoria's Kulin Nation. They often traded and celebrated with their coastal counterparts, the Boonwurrung, among the towering red gums, tea trees and ferns of the river's edge, as well as with other Kulin clans from the north and west.

As the flood-prone rivers and creeks broke their banks in winter, bark shelters were built north in the ranges. Possums were hunted for their meat and skinned to make calf-length cloaks. During the summer, camps were made along the Yarra and Maribymong Rivers and Merri Creek. Food – game, grubs, seafood, native greens and roots – was plentiful. Wurundjeri men and women were compelled to marry out of the tribe, requiring complex forms of diplomacy. Ceremonies and bouts of ritual combat were frequent.

Indigenous Victoria
Koorie Heritage Trust, Melbourne
Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Melbourne Museum
Brambuk Cultural Centre, Halls Gap
Harry Nanya Tours, Mildura
Kirrit Barreet, Ballarat
Tower Hill Natural History Centre, Warrnambool
Krowathunkoolong Keeping Place, Bairnsdale
Cape Conran Coastal Park

Colonial Arrivals

Close to sunrise on 19 April 1770, Lt Zachary Hicks, on watch duty on board the *Endeavour*, spied a series of low sand hills. He immediately called his commander, Captain Cook. Although they didn't know at the time whether it was an island or part of the mainland, it would later prove to be the first European sighting of Australia's east coast (although Dutch seamen had been intermittently exploring the west coast for more than a century). Point Cook is now part of Croajingolong National Park, between Cape Conran Coastal Park and Mallacoota. In 1788, the first colony was established at Sydney Cove in New South Wales (NSW).

The first European settlement in Victoria in 1803 didn't have an auspicious start. With a missed mail-ship communiqué and a notoriously supercilious British government calling the shots, Surveyor-General Charles Grimes' recommendation – that the best place to found a southern settlement would be by the banks of the 'Freshwater River' (aka the Yarra) – went unheeded. The alternative, Sorrento, on what is now the Mornington Peninsula, was an unmitigated disaster from the beginning; as Lt David Collins pointed out to his superiors, you can't survive long without drinkable water. The colony moved to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), but one extremely tenacious convict escapee, William Buckley, was left behind; he was still on the lam when John Batman turned up a few decades later.

After the failed Sorrento colony it was 20-odd years before explorers made their way overland to Port Phillip and another decade before a settlement was founded on the southwest coast at Portland. Around the same time, in the early 1830s, the Surveyor-General of NSW, Major Thomas Mitchell, crossed the Murray River (then called the Hume) near Swan Hill and travelled southwest. He was delighted to find the rich volcanic plains of the Western District. His glowing reports of such fertile country included him dubbing the area 'Australia Felix' (fortunate Australia) and encouraged pastoralists to venture into the area with large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle.

It was not until 1835, when Australian-born entrepreneur John Batman sailed from Van Diemen's Land to arrive in what we now know as Victoria, that the process of settling the area began in earnest. He would later write of travelling through 'beautiful land...rather sandy, but the sand black and rich, covered with kangaroo grass about ten inches high and as green as a field of wheat'. He noted stone dams for catching fish built across creeks, trees that bore the deep scars of bark harvesting and women bearing wooden water containers and woven bags holding stone tools. However, the Indigenous people's profound spiritual relationship with the land and intimate knowledge of story, ceremony and season would be irrevocably damaged within a few short years.

As European settlement fanned out through Victoria, and the city of Melbourne transformed from pastoral outpost to a heaving, gold-flushed metropolis in scarcely 30 years, the cumulative effects of dispossession, alcohol and increasing acts of organised violence resulted in a shocking decline in Victoria's Indigenous population. From the earliest days, the colonial authorities evicted Aboriginal people from their traditional homes. By the early 1860s the Board for the Protection of Aborigines had begun to gather together surviving Aboriginal people in reserves run by Christian missionaries at Ebenezer, Framlingham, Lake Condah, Lake Tyers, Ramahyuck and Coranderrk. These reserves developed into self-sufficient farming communities and gave their residents a measure of 'independence' (along with twice-daily prayers and new boots at Christmas), but at the same time inflicted irreversible damage.

Around 25,000 people in Victoria have Aboriginal heritage, including about 15,000 in Melbourne and 5000 in the Shepparton region.

Various kings, queens and assorted contemporary bigwigs (including Governor Bourke himself) got the nod in the naming of Melbourne's streets.

The Birth of Melbourne

'Modern' Melbourne's story begins in the 1830s. John Batman, an ambitious grazier from Van Diemen's Land, sailed into Port Phillip Bay in mid-1835 with an illegal contract of sale. (Britain's colonial claims of terra nullius relied on the fiction that the original inhabitants did not own the land on which they lived and hence could not sell it.) He sought out some tribal elders and on a tributary of the Yarra – it's been speculated that it was the Merri Creek, in today's Northcote – found some 'fine-looking' men, with whom he exchanged blankets, scissors, mirrors and handkerchiefs for over half a million acres (2400 sq km) of land surrounding Port Phillip.

Despite the fact that the Aboriginal people from Sydney who were accompanying Batman couldn't speak a word of the local language and vice versa, Batman brokered the deal and signatures were gathered from the 'local chiefs' (all suspiciously called Jika-Jika and with remarkably similar

penmanship). He noted a low, rocky falls several miles up the Yarra, where the Queens Bridge is today. Upstream fresh water made it a perfect place for, as Batman described it, 'a village'. Batman then returned to Van Diemen's Land to ramp up the Port Phillip Association.

It's at this point that the historical narrative becomes as turbid as the Yarra itself. Before Batman could get back to his new settlement of Bearbrass (along with 'Yarra', another cocksure misappropriation of the local dialect), John Pascoe Fawkner, a Launceston publican and childhood veteran of the failed Sorrento colony, got wind of the spectacular opportunity at hand. He promptly sent off a small contingent of settlers aboard the schooner *Enterprize*, who, upon arrival, started building huts and establishing a garden. On Batman's return there were words, and later furious bidding wars over allotments of land. Historians regard the two in various ways, but Fawkner's foremost place in Victoria's story was sealed by the fact he outlived the syphilitic Batman by several decades. Despite the bickering, hubris and greed of the founders, the settlement grew quickly; around a year later, almost 200 brave souls (and some tens of thousands of sheep) had thrown their lot in with the new colony.

New South Wales wasn't happy. Governor Bourke dispatched Captain William Lonsdale south in 1836, quashing any notion of ownership by the Port Phillip Association. Surveyors were sent for and the task of drawing up plans for a city began. Robert Hoddle, the surveyor in charge, arrived with the governor in March 1837, and was horrified by the lack of order, both that of his unruly staff—who had absconded up river to get drunk or shoot kangaroos one too many times—and the antipodean topography itself. For Hoddle, it was all about straight lines; his grid, demarcated by the Yarra and what was once a 'hillock' where Southern Cross Station now lies, is Melbourne's defining feature. Land sales commenced almost immediately, and so the surveying continued, but with little Romantic notion of exploration or discovery. It was, by all accounts, a real-estate feeding frenzy. The British were well served by their terra nullius concept, as returns on investment were fabulous. The rouseabout 'Bearbrass' was upgraded to the rather more distinguished 'Melbourne', after the serving British prime minister.

During these years, the earliest provincial towns were also established along Victoria's coast, around the original settlement of Portland to the southwest and Port Albert to the southeast. Early inland towns rose up around self-sufficient communities of sheep stations, which at this stage were still the main source of Victoria's fast-increasing fortunes. This, however, was soon to change.

Chinese migrants founded Melbourne's Chinatown in Little Bourke St in 1851, making it the longest continuous Chinese settlement in any Western country.

Golden Years

In 1840, a local landowner described the fledgling city of Melbourne as 'a goldfield without the gold'. Indeed, with a steady stream of immigrants and confidence-building prosperity, there had been growing calls for separation from convict-ridden, rowdy New South Wales. By the end of 1850, the newly minted colony of Victoria had got its wish to go it alone. This quickly seemed like a cruel stroke of fate: gold was discovered near Bathurst in New South Wales in early 1851, sparking a mass exodus. Pastoral riches or not, there was every chance that without a viable labour force (many had already succumbed to the siren call of California) the colony would wither and die.

Melbourne jewellers had for some time been doing a clandestine trade with shepherds who came to town with small gold nuggets secreted in their kerchiefs. Wary of the consequences of a gold rush on civic order, but with few other options, the city's leading men declared that gold must indeed be found. As was the Victorian way, a committee was formed and a reward was offered. Slim pickings were discovered in the Pyrenees and Warrandyte, before a cluey Californian veteran looked north to Clunes. Just over a ridge, in what was to become Ballarat, was the proverbial pot at the end of the rainbow. It wasn't long before miners were hauling 27kg of the magic mineral into Geelong at a time, and the rush was well and truly on.

The news spread around the world and brought hopefuls from Britain, Ireland, China, Germany, Italy, the US and the Caribbean. By August 1852, 15,000 new arrivals were disembarking in Melbourne each month. Crews jumped ship and hotfooted it to the diggings, stranding ships at anchor. Chaos reigned. Everyone needed a place to stay, even if only for a night or two, and when there was no room at the inn, stables were let for exorbitant amounts. Wives and children were often dumped in town while husbands continued on to the diggings. Governor La Trobe despaired of his grand civic vision, as shanties and eventually a complete tent village sprung up. Canvas Town, on the south side of the Yarra, housed over 8000 people.

Catherine Spence, a journalist and social reformer, visited Melbourne at the height of the hysteria and primly observed 'this convulsion has unfixed everything. Religion is neglected, education despised...everyone is engrossed with the simple object of making money in a very short time.' The 567,000kg of gold found between 1851 and 1860 represented a third of the world's total. That said, relatively few diggers struck it lucky. The licensing system favoured large holdings, policing was harsh and scratching out a living proved so difficult for many that dissent became as common as hope had been a few years before.

For some, 1852 was indeed a golden year, but by 1854, simmering tensions exploded in Ballarat.

Gold Rush Sights
Sovereign Hill, Ballarat
Central Deborah Gold Mine, Bendigo
Central Market, Castlemaine
Walhalla
Maldon
Beechworth

Growing Inequalities

As the easily won gold began to run out, Victorian diggers despaired of ever striking it rich, and the inequality between themselves and the privileged few who held the land that they worked stoked a fire of dissent.

Men joined together in teams and worked cold, wet, deep shafts. Every miner, whether or not gold was found, had to pay a licence fee of 30 shillings a month. This was collected by policemen who had the power to chain those who couldn't pay to a tree, often leaving them there until their case was heard.

In September 1854, Governor Hotham ordered that the hated licence hunts be carried out twice a week. A month later a miner was murdered near the Ballarat Hotel after an argument with the owner, James Bentley. When Bentley was found not guilty by a magistrate (who happened to be his

business associate), miners rioted and burned the hotel down. Though Bentley was retried and found guilty, the rioting miners were also jailed, which enraged the miners.

The Ballarat Reform League was born. They called for the abolition of licence fees and for democratic reform, including the miners' rights to vote (universal suffrage was yet to exist) and greater opportunity to purchase land.

By 1840, when the young Queen Victoria took the throne, Melbourne had 10,000 (occasionally upstanding) citizens and was looking decidedly like a city.

The Eureka Stockade: Victoria's Rebellion

On 29 November about 800 miners tossed their licences into a bonfire during a mass meeting, then, led by Irishman Peter Lalor, built a stockade at Eureka, where they prepared to fight for their rights. A veteran of Italy's independence struggle named Raffaello Carboni called on the crowd, 'irrespective of nationality, religion and colour', to salute the Southern Cross as the 'refuge of all the oppressed from all the countries on earth'.

On 3 December the government ordered troopers (the mounted colonial police) to attack the stockade. There were only 150 miners within the makeshift barricades and the fight lasted a short but devastating 20 minutes, leaving 25 miners and four troopers dead.

Though the rebellion was short-lived, the miners won the sympathy and support of many Victorians. The government deemed it wise to acquit the leaders of the charge of high treason. It's interesting to note that only four of the miners were Australian-born: the others hailed from Ireland, Britain, Italy, Corsica, Greece, Germany, Russia, Holland, France, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, the US, Canada and the West Indies.

The licence fee was abolished and replaced by a Miners' Right, which cost one pound a year. This gave miners the right to search for gold; to fence in, cultivate and build a dwelling on a piece of land; and to vote for members of the Legislative Assembly. The rebel miner Peter Lalor became a member of parliament some years later. Eureka remains a powerful symbol in Australian culture, standing as it does for the treasured notions of workers' rights, democracy and 'a fair go for all'.

Goldfield brotherhood in 1854, sadly, had its limits. The 40,000 miners who arrived from southern China to try their luck on 'the new gold mountain' were often a target of individual violence and systemic prejudice. Still, the Chinese community persevered, and it has to this day been a strong and enduring presence in the city of Melbourne and throughout regional Victoria.

Over 90% of Australia's \$100 million gold haul in the 1850s was found in Victoria.

OUR NED

Victorian bushranger Ned Kelly (1854–80) became a national legend when he and his gang donned homemade armour in an attempt to deflect the bullets of several dozen members of the constabulary. Kelly's story, set among the hills, valleys and plains of northeastern Victoria, has a Robin Hood–like quality, as well as the whiff of an Irish rebel song.

Kelly's passionate, articulate letters, handed to hostages while he was robbing banks, paint a vivid picture of the harsh injustice of his time, as well as his lyrical intelligence. These, as well as his ability to evade capture for so long, led to public outrage when he was sentenced to death and finally hanged at the Old Melbourne Gaol in 1880.

The enduring popularity of the Kelly legend is evident in the mass of historical and fictional accounts that continue to be written to this day. His life has also inspired a long string of films, from the world's first feature film, *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906), to two more recent versions, both simply called *Ned Kelly*, with the first starring Mick Jagger (1970) and the second, the late Heath Ledger (2003). A series of paintings by Sidney Nolan featuring Kelly in his armour are among Australia's most recognisable artworks. In 2001, Australian novelist Peter Carey won the Man Booker Prize for his *True History of the Kelly Gang*.

Boom & Crash

Gold brought undreamt-of riches and a seemingly endless supply of labour to Victoria. Melbourne became 'Marvellous Melbourne', one of the world's most beautiful Victorian-era cities, known for its elegance – as well as its extravagance. Grand expressions of its confidence include the University of Melbourne, Parliament House, the State Library and the Victorian Mint. Magnificent public parks and gardens were planted both in the city and in towns across the state. By the 1880s, Melbourne had become Australia's financial, industrial and cultural hub. The 'Paris of the Antipodes' claim was invoked: the city was flush with stylish arcades, and grand homes were decorated with ornate iron balconies. The city spread eastwards and northwards over the surrounding flat grasslands and southwards along Port Phillip Bay. A public transport system of cable trams and railways spread into the growing suburbs.

Regional cities, especially those servicing the goldfields, such as Ballarat, Bendigo and Beechworth, also reaped the rewards of sudden prosperity, leaving a legacy of magnificent Victorian architecture throughout the state. 'Selection Acts' enabled many settlers and frustrated miners to take up small farm lots (selections). Although a seemingly reformist, democratic move, these farms were often too small to forge a real living from and life in the bush proved tough. Grinding poverty and the heavy hand of the law led to some settlers turning to bushranging (rural armed robberies of money or livestock), variously considered a life of crime and/or an act of subversion against British rule, depending on which side of the economic and religious divide you were on.

In 1880 (and again in 1888) Melbourne hosted an International Exhibition, pulling well over a million visitors. The Royal Exhibition Building was constructed for this event; Melbourne's soaring paean to Empire and the industrial revolution is one of the few 19th-century exhibition spaces of its kind still standing.

This flamboyant boast to the world was, however, to be Marvellous Melbourne's swansong. In 1889, after years of unsustainable speculation, the property market collapsed and the decades that followed were marked by severe economic depression.

Kelly Gang Haunts Glenrowan Warby Range State Park Beechworth Old Melbourne Gaol

A Difficult Half-Century

Despite the symbolic honour of becoming the new nation's temporary capital in 1901, Melbourne's fortunes didn't really until after WWI, and by then its 'first city' status had been long lost to Sydney. When WWI broke out, large numbers of young men from throughout Victoria fought in the trenches of Europe and the Middle East, with enormous losses.

There was a renewed spirit of expansion and construction in Victoria in the 1920s, but this came to a grinding halt with another economic disaster, the Great Depression (in 1931 almost a third of breadwinners were unemployed). When war broke out once again in 1939, Melbourne became the heart of the nation's wartime efforts, and later the centre for US operations in the Pacific. It was boom time again, though no time for celebration.

While the state's Victorian heritage did not fare well during the postwar construction boom—when Melbourne hosted the Olympic Games in 1956, hectares of historic buildings were bulldozed with abandon; this continued apace during the new boom days of the 1980s as well—significant parts of the city and many goldfield towns still echo with Victorian ambition and aspiration.

The Welcome Stranger, discovered in 1869 a few centimetres under the ground in the central Victorian town of Moliagul, was, at 72kg, the largest alluvial gold nugget ever found. At the time of its unearthing there were no scales capable of weighing a nugget of its size.

Melbourne's Multicultural Midcentury

In 1901, one of the first things the newly created Australian government did was to pass legislation with the express wish to protect its security and assert its sense of identity as a member of the British Empire. The so-called White Australia policy restricted the entry of non-Europeans, and was followed a couple of years later by the Commonwealth Naturalisation Act, which excluded all non-Europeans from attaining citizenship, and limited both citizen's and non-citizen's ability to bring even immediate family to Australia. This subsequent piece of legislation was particularly devastating to Victoria's Chinese community, who maintained strong family and business ties with China. Victoria's early history of diversity came to an abrupt end.

Although the state's loyalties and most of its legal and cultural ties to Britain remained firm, the 1920s did herald change, as small Italian and Greek communities settled in both the city and the state's agricultural heartland, part of a renewed spirit of expansion and construction at the time. They set about establishing food production companies, cafes, restaurants, fish-and-chip shops, delis and grocers; the efforts of these small business pioneers were to prove an inspiration for a new generation of migrants in the 1940s and '50s.

Close to a million non-British immigrants arrived in Australia during the 20 years after WWII; at first Jewish refugees from Eastern and Central Europe, then larger numbers from Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Lebanon. With the demise of the blatantly racist White Australia policy in early 1973, many migrants from Southeast Asia also settled in Victoria. These postwar migrants also embraced the opportunity to set up small businesses, adding a vibrancy and character to their new neighbourhoods, such as Carlton, Collingwood, Richmond, Brunswick and Footscray. Melbourne's cultural life was transformed by these communities, and diversity gradually became an accepted, and treasured, way of life.

MULTICULTURAL STATE

Victoria's multicultural past continues to diversify. Around one out of every four Victorians was born overseas and Melbourne is home to people from, at last count, 180 countries. Together they speak 233 languages and dialects, and adhere to 116 religions. The largest group of foreign-born residents comes from the UK, more than double that of any other country. The other main source countries are Italy, Vietnam, China, New Zealand, Greece and India.

During Melbourne's years as the capital, the city's population of just over half a million people was the largest in Australia, and in the British Empire it was second in size only to London.

Political & Social Machinations

Victoria's historical reputation as something of a conservative counterpoint to the more radical politics of racy Sydney was born as far back as the 19th century, when the money that flooded the state during the gold-rush years established Victoria as one of the wealthiest places in Australia. Family dynasties grew up and the powerful families that controlled the business and political levers of the state made Melbourne one of the most powerful cities in the country – hence its choice as the nation's temporary capital from 1901. By the middle of the 20th century, Melbourne was a conservative city, the seat of the state's old-money families and still Australia's economic capital. This history is reflected in the fact that conservative political forces – the Liberal Party, usually in coalition with the predominantly rural National Party – held power in Victoria from 1955 to 1982.

But things were changing. During the early 1970s, a burgeoning counterculture's experiments with radical theatre, drugs and rock 'n' roll rang out through the Melbourne suburb of Carlton. By the later years of that decade, Melbourne's reputation as a prim 'establishment' city was further challenged by the emergence of a frantically subversive art, music, film and fashion scene that launched bands like the Birthday Party onto the world stage. During the real-estate boom of the 1980s, a wave of glamorous shops, nightclubs and restaurants made way for Melbourne's emergence as Australia's capital of cool. Changes to the licensing laws in the 1990s saw a huge growth of small bars, cafes and venues — and the birth of the laneway phenomenon.

These changes were reflected in the political arena. A left-centre Labour Party government governed for ten years from 1982, and it was during this period that Victoria's reputation as a seat for progessive politics and as a centre for the arts was born. In 1992, Liberal Party premier Jeff Kennett won

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a landslide victory in statewide elections. Although from the conservative side of politics, Mr Kennett pursued a quite radical agenda, modernising many government institutions but alienating large sections of the community (particularly when it came to school reforms) in the process. An unexpected victory for the Labour Party in 1999 ushered in a decade of left-of-centre rule – a significant part of their success was their surprisingly good electoral results in regional Victoria. The latest twist came in December 2010, when a Liberal–National Party coalition came to government. They remained in power at the time of writing, with the next elections due in 2014.

Tom Roberts' painting *Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia by HRH The Duke of Cornwall and York, May 9, 1901* includes 250 recognisable portraits of well-known figures present at the Exhibition Building ceremony. It is on display in Canberra's Parliament House.

Food & Drink

Victoria's food and drink scene is one of almost limitless choice, with a constant flow of new ideas and new tastes. While Melbourne doesn't have the deeply ingrained traditions and profound self-confidence of, say, Paris or Tokyo, it has an exuberant culinary culture and a talent for innovation and adaptation – and a constantly evolving scene where new cafes, bars and restaurants open on a weekly basis.

Gourmet Towns
Kyneton
Milawa
Beechworth
Red Hill
Mildura

NO RESERVATIONS

A recent trend in Melbourne's fine-dining scene has many of the city's hottest restaurants (MoVida, Mamasita, Longrain and Chin Chin, to name a few) taking the innovative approach of a 'no bookings' policy. The move has received its share of love and criticism but is mostly aimed at delivering more flexibility and spontaneity. Most places will take your number and call once a spot has opened so you're not awkwardly hanging around waiting – or else people make a drink at the bar or a pre-dinner stroll part of their night out.

From Fine Dining to Small Plates

At the top of the city's food chain, fine dining thrives. While many Melbourne chess experiment widely, mixing and matching techniques and ingredients, you'll rarely find chess doing fusion for fusion's sake. There's too much respect for providence and context. You'll instead find menus that rove across regions and riff on influences. Modern Australian cuisine is a search to find a nation's own unique food and is hard to define. Some restaurants incorporate native ingredients, such as Shannon Bennett at Vue de Monde, Ben Shewry at Attica and Fitzroy's Charcoal Lane, while other chess incorporate both modern Mediterranean and Asian ideas and flavours to greater or lesser degrees: Andrew McConnell at Fitzroy's Cutler & Co, St Kilda's Golden Fields and the city centre's Cumulus Inc manage to create a particularly thoughtful version of this style.

There's a long tradition of posh Italian dining in the city and it's often exemplary, with chefs such as Guy Grossi at Grossi Florentino. Mediterranean is also done with high-end flair and a modern sensibility by chefs such as Frank Camorra at MoVida and George Calombaris at Press Club and Gazi.

More recently, the city has been taken over by a growing fleet of Mexican restaurants ranging from upmarket chic to cheap and cheerful, many of them great-tasting and authentic. Mamasita is one of the long-standing originals to kick it all off and is still the best. The other dining trend popping up around town is the advent of food from the USA, ranging from Southern-style cooking to diner and deli fare, as well as 'dude food' where pulled pork features heavily.

Regional Victoria also has several 'destination' restaurants. Some fit the stereotype of hearty country fare, such as the 'agriturismo'-styled Sardinian cuisine at the Tea Rooms at Yarck. Others, such as acclaimed chef Dan Hunter's Brae at Birregurra (in the Otways), surprise with sophistication and creativity.

Given that there's always so much to try, city dwellers love to eat out often, rather than saving up restaurants for celebratory big nights out. Melbourne really comes into its own when it comes to a casual, grazing style of dining. Small and large plates override the rigid three-course chronology, but an informal menu and more modest price tag doesn't mean high-quality produce or attention to detail are sacrificed.

In a similar manner, bar food is no longer seen as a mere consort to booze, but something that makes for an equal marriage of tastes and experiences. This kind of 'smart casual' eating out is an easy way to join the locals, and also a great way to sample widely without the price shock of fine dining. Pub grub is also a big part of Melbourne's eating-out repertoire, and ranges from a number of upmarket gastropub restaurants to basic counter-meal service, with nostalgic dishes such as bangers and mash (sausage and mashed potatoes), steaks, parmas (chicken parmigiana), roasts and curries

There's no shortage of informal food that's cooked with love and is great value for money. Cafes often serve heartier dishes at lunchtime, and casual venues with wine licences are not uncommon. Look for authentic dishes from a smattering of cuisines from across the globe. A steaming bowl of *pho* (Vietnamese soup), a square of spanakopita (spinach and feta pie), a teriyaki salmon *maki* (hand roll) or a provolone and prosciutto *piadina* (Italian flatbread) will probably leave you change from \$10 – and without doubt about Melbourne's status as a great food city.

THE GHOSTS OF DINNERS PAST

The site of Melbourne was known for its edible delights long before John Batman set eyes on the natural falls of the Yarra. The Wurundjeri thrived because of the area's incredible bounty: the wetlands that spread south of the Yarra were teeming with life, and the river itself brimmed with fish, eels and shellfish. Depending on the season, Indigenous 'Melburnians' would have eaten roast kangaroo, waterfowl, fish and eel, as well as greens, grubs, yam daisies and a sweet cordial concocted from banksia blossoms.

The first Europeans didn't stop to notice the veritable native feast they had stumbled upon, but instead quickly went about planting European crops and tending large flocks of sheep. Although many new arrivals were astounded by the ready supply of fresh food – especially the Irish, who were escaping the famine of the 1840s – the early settlers dined mainly on mutton, bread and butter, tea, beer and rum. (Though it's hard to imagine that those familiar with the gentle art of poaching didn't help themselves to ducks and geese.)

The Wine Map of Victoria by Max Allen is a great visual guide to the topography, climate and most widely-planted grape varieties of the state; it also details 900-plus cellar doors, wineries and vineyards.

Dishing Up Diversity

Take 140 cultures, mix and let simmer for a few decades. While the recipe might not be quite that simple, Victoria's culinary habits are truly multicultural. Many Melburnians have grown up with at least one other culinary heritage besides the rather grim Anglo-Australian fare of the mid-20th century – plus they're generally also inveterate travellers, which makes for a city of adventurous, if often highly critical, palates.

'Mod Oz' cooking is a loose term that describes a mix of British, European, Asian and Middle Eastern techniques and ingredients, with a seasonal, fresh-produce-driven philosophy similar to Californian cuisine. There's a base of borrowed traditions, yes, but its style and attitude is unique. The Melbourne manifestation (and the state's culinary offerings in general) tends more towards European and Mediterranean tastes, rather than Sydney's firmly Pacific Rim take on the cuisine. This is both a product of the city's very untropical climate – with four distinct seasons and strongly demarked seasonal crops – and also due to the strong impact that Melbourne's Italian, Greek, Eastern European and Middle Eastern communities had on the city from the 1950s on. But that's not to say that you won't find wonderful Asian cooking and a host of varied Asian influences as the city continues to absorb and reinvent these traditions, too.

Melbourne has long been a diverse city, but apart from the long-standing influence of the Chinese community via numerous restaurants and importing business, tastes didn't really begin to shift from the Anglo-Celtic basics until the postwar period. As well as importing the goods they couldn't do without, such as olive oil, the city's southern and eastern European migrants set to producing coffee, bread, cheeses and small goods, which gradually found their way from specialist delis into mainstream supermarkets. These communities also helped shape the agricultural traditions of the state, bringing new crops and production methods to a land that often resembled the parts of the Mediterranean they had left behind. The Vietnamese, Lebanese and Turkish migrants that followed in the 1970s also had a lasting impact on the way Victorians eat. Many of the state's culinary leading lights and rising stars are the children or grandchildren of these first-generation migrants (or are migrants themselves): Guy Grossi, Greg Malouf, Karen Martini, Con Christopoulos, George Calombaris, Rita Macali, Joseph Abboud, Shane Delia, Rosa Mitchell and Pietro Porcu, to name just a few.

While Victoria's eating habits have absorbed and incorporated a range of cuisines, creating something new in the process, many of the original inspirations are represented in kitchens across the city, and are constantly joined by those catering to its newest arrivals. Melbourne's ethnic restaurants, once clustered in tight community hubs, now flourish all over the city, though there are still loosely dedicated zones. Richmond's Victoria Street is packed with Vietnamese restaurants and provedores while the western suburb of Footscray draws those looking for the most authentic Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian food, as well as great East African and Indian restaurants. Lygon Street, Carlton, has long been home to simple red-sauce Italian cooking – with notable innovators such as D.O.C – and its coffee and Italian delis are excellent. Chinatown, in the city centre, is home to Flower Drum, one of Australia's most renowned restaurants of any culinary persuasion, and there are places doing regional cuisines such as Sichuanand Beijing-style dumplings up every other laneway. You'll find Japanese *izakayas* and Korean restaurants here, too. Just to the north, Lonsdale Street has a handful of Greek taverns and bars. The northern suburb of Brunswick has a number of wonderful Middle Eastern bakers and grocers as well as cafes and restaurants. A large international student population has seen many Indian, Malaysian and Indonesian places spring up in the city and around the various university campuses, serving inexpensive and fabulously authentic dishes.

VEG OUT

Vegetarians and vegans (and even raw-food enthusiasts) will have no trouble finding restaurants that cater specifically to them in Melbourne, particularly in neighbourhoods such as Fitzroy and St Kilda.

There will also be at least a couple of dishes on most restaurant menus that will please, and few restaurateurs will look askance at special requests. Many fine-dining restaurants (Vue de Monde, Attica, Moon Under Water, etc) offer vegetarian degustation tasting menus, and with advance warning these can usually be made dairy-free.

Most Asian and Indian restaurants will have large meatless menus, but with Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai cooking you'll need to be clear that you don't want the common additives of oyster or fish sauce. Casual Japanese places also have many vegetarian options, though similarly you'll need to ask if they can prepare your dish with *dashi* (stock) that hasn't been made with bonito fish (ask if they have mushroom or seaweed *dashi* instead).

Cafes & Coffee Culture

Cafes are an integral part of daily Victorian life. Many city-dwellers are up early so they can catch up with colleagues or just the newspaper over a latte and a slice of sourdough before the workday begins, and weekends see cafes across the state fill (queues are not uncommon) with those looking for a long, leisurely, blow-out breakfast. Cafes also fill mid-morning with those out for a 'morning tea' coffee run, or freelancers conducting meetings or working quietly in a corner. This will then be repeated mid-afternoon, with a roaring lunch trade in between.

While socialising is a big part of this ritual, the coffee itself is definitely not an afterthought. Melbourne's coffee is far superior to what you'll get in London or Los Angeles, and often tops what you'll find in Italy. Bigger towns throughout the state are also not far behind. Neighbourhood cafes have begun to attract the kind of tribal devotion reserved for AFL teams. Soy milk is polarising; some purist cafes refuse to offer it, along with 'skinny' (skim) milk, while it forms a large part of many others' trade. Flavoured coffee? Forget about it. Yes, big chains such as Starbucks have sprung up, but an attempt to settle in the cafe heartland of Lygon Street didn't last long – why would you need a cookie-cutter multinational to tell you how it's done when Melbourne's been getting the *crema* correct for well over 20 years?

The cafe tradition goes back to the early years of last century, with the arrival of Victoria's first wave of Italian and Greek migrants, but really took off post-WWII when large numbers of Italians settled in the inner city and the first Gaggia and La Cimbali espresso machines were imported under licence in 1953. Bourke Street's Pellegrini's is an ever-enchanting survivor of this generation. The brew in their signature Duralex glasses may be unremarkable by today's standards, but the Italian brio, urban bonhomie and original decor are as authentic as it gets. Melbourne *torrefazione* (Italian coffee roasters) such as Genovese and Grinders also date back to this era, and their bean blends now fuel cafes all over the country. Other local roasters include Atomic, Jasper and Gravity, and Castlemaine's Coffee Basics.

While these original family-run roasters have prospered and become household names, Melbourne is now firmly in the grip of coffee's third wave. Coffee talk now runs to terroir, and single-origin beans, premium small-batch roasts and alternative brewing methods such as siphon, pour-over, filter and cold-drip have taken coffee appreciation to a new level. Part of a global network that includes Chicago's Intelligentsia and Oslo's Tim Wendelboe, Melbourne is in an era of extreme coffee excellence.

Third-wave pioneer Mark Dundon owns Seven Seeds – part cafe, part retail outlet and part instructional facility, set in a warehouse conversion that wins in both the sustainability and style stakes. He also runs city cafes Brother Baba Budan and Traveller. Salvatore Malatesta took over South Melbourne's legendary St Ali from Dundon, and now also runs a stable of other cafes. Other third-wavers doing great things include Market Lane at Prahran Market, Lygon St's Brunswick East Project, Dukes in Windsor, Monk Bodhi Dharma in East St Kilda, Auction Rooms in North Melbourne and Proud Mary in Collingwood.

HOLD THE COFFEE

Tea and hot chocolate, although still lurking in coffee's deep shadow, are having something of a renaissance. Many Asian restaurants now offer artisanal teas and tisanes, and city hotels like the Windsor and the Langham book out for their traditional high-teas. Hot chocolate is also a focus; the city's bourgeoning epicurean chocolate scene has a number of chocolatiers serving up ambrosial chocolate made in the Belgian, French or Italian style.

Cellar-Door Dining
Max's at Red Hill Estate, Mornington Peninsula
Salix at Willow Creek Vineyard, Mornington Peninsula
Oakridge, Yarra Valley
Port Phillip Estate, Mornington Peninsula
La Baracca at T'Gallant, Mornington Peninsula
Merricks General Wine Store, Mornington Peninsula
Jack Rabbit Winery, Bellarine Peninsula

Eating Local

Over the last decade, the organic and local food movement has gone from strength to strength in Victoria. Shopping at weekly markets and small grocers is a lifestyle choice that's embraced by many, and the Slow Food movement has a strong presence state-wide – news and events can be found at www.slowfoodaustralia.com.au/tag/victoria – as well as a monthly market at the Abbotsford Convent on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Queen Victoria Market in the city centre, and its suburban counterparts in South Melbourne and Prahran, are beloved by locals for their fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and fish, and their groaning deli counters, not to mention a catch up with friends. There's also a weekly rota of inner-city farmers markets (see www.mfm.com.au) at Collingwood Children's Farm, Veg Out in St Kilda, and South Melbourne's Gasworks, which bring local artisan producers and fresh, often organic, produce to town. They make for a pleasant Saturday morning coffee spot and food-related stroll.

A huge number of outer suburbs and regional towns also hold community markets, selling local produce as well as crafts and secondhand goods; a comprehensive list can be found at the Australian Farmers Market Association (www.farmersmarkets.org.au). The monthly markets at Red Hill, on the Mornington Peninsula, and St Andrews (www.standrewsmarket.com.au), around 40 minutes' drive north of Melbourne, are veterans of the scene and incredibly popular. Both are held in atmospheric, bush-ringed settings – the bellbird soundtrack is complimentary, no purchase required.

Food tourism is big news right throughout Victoria, with much of the action centred on wine-growing districts such as the Mornington and Bellarine Peninsulas and the Yarra Valley. The Goldfields-area spa towns of Kyneton, Trentham, Daylesford and Castlemaine, and alpine Mansfield, are home to ever-increasing numbers of provedores and cafes offering local produce. The Milawa Gournet Region – the first to be given such a title in Australia – is unsurprisingly one of the state's richest; the foodie trail here also takes in the surrounding towns of Oxley and Beechworth. Out along the Murray, Mildura is also a destination for its produce and restaurants.

Victorian Vino

Bacchus appears to have smiled upon the state of Victoria. Its small size belies the variety of its climates, which makes for a splendidly diverse wine scene, with around 900 vineyards spread over 21 growing regions. Melbourne itself is surrounded by five of these – the Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula, Macedon Ranges, Geelong and Sunbury – all with distinct climates and soils. Wine-region weekends away and grape-grazing festivals are popular with Victorians, and with many of the regions close to favourite beach resorts or ski fields, they also provide a gournet backdrop to seasonal holidays. Whether it's for confidently working your way through a Melbourne wine list or for creating a cellar-Ídoor itinerary, understanding what's what only makes the tasting sweeter.

Beginning at Melbourne's suburban fringe, the Yarra Valley is a patchwork of vines, and it's here that you'll find the glamorous big boys of the industry, Chateau Yering and Domain Chandon. These glistening temples to the grape absorb the tour-bus bustle surprisingly well, with a rota of produce markets and entertainment, as well as striking architecture, making up for the high traffic. The area still has its share of rustic tin sheds where it's just you and the winemaker if that's more your style. Fruity, unwooded pinot noirs, peachy chardonnay and crisp sparklings are the darlings here, but there's plenty of experimentation with other grapes, too.

A little further afield in Melbourne's southeast is the rarefied rusticity of the Mornington Peninsula. The hills and valleys of this favourite beach destination hide an embarrassment of riches in terms of small-scale viticulture – there's literally a winemaker around every bend (not to mention symbiotic cellar door, restaurant, gournet provedore and shop selling French plinsolls). Mornington vignerons are a tenacious, innovative lot, who coax the most out of the volcanic soil and capricious, often chilly, maritime climate to produce beautiful, early ripening pinot noirs; subtle, honeyed chardonnay; and pinot gris, as well as fragrant Italian varietals such as arneis and pinot grigio, possibly Australia's best. The vineyards of the Bellarine Peninsula, on the opposite coast, have gained a following of their own, and their delicate maritime-climate aromatic whites are getting a lot of attention.

In Victoria's northeast, wine has been continuously produced since the thirsty days of the gold rush, with Brown Brothers making both fortified and

table wines right through the 20th century. Northern Italian farmers also made a big contribution to this region's development. They noted similarities in the landscape and introduced grapes from their home regions that took to the local terroir. Today, the gloriously diverse geography, climate and soil, from the flats around Milawa to the high country of Beechworth and the cool, wet King Valley see a huge variety of wines produced. Rieslings, sauvignon blancs and sparklings (including an Italian-styled prosecco) shine in the King Valley, along with the complex, tightly structured chardonnay and spicy shiraz of Beechworth and Milawa's fortifieds, cabernet merlots, sangiovese, nebbiolos and pinot grigios. To the west of here, Rutherglen is also a pioneer, well known for its fortifieds and unctuous stickies. Big — well, absolutely huge — reds do well here too, but it's the long-cellared muscats and tokays (aka liquid Christmas-pud) that keep the faithful coming back.

Other less-visited regions include the Pyrenees, known for its French-influenced sparklings and, somewhat surprisingly, its absolutely Aussie big, ripe reds; Macedon, which produces crisp, cold-climate sparklings and minerally European-style chardonnay, riesling and sauvignon blancs; the Goulburn Valley's Ngambie and Shepparton, for marsanne, viognier and Rhône Valley reds, some of which are grown from original vines imported from France in the 1850s; and the Grampians for reds, such as cabernet and dolcetto, as well as an unforgettable sparkling shiraz.

Best Victorian Varietals

Pinot gris

Chardonnay

Viognier

Arneis

Savagnin

Marsanne

Pinot noir

Shiraz

Gamay

Durif

Tokay

MELBOURNE CHEFS TO TAKE AWAY

Take home the recipes of some of Melbourne's most loved and respected chefs:

MoVida: Spanish Culinary Adventures (Frank Camorra & Richard Cornish of MoVida)

The Press Club: Modern Greek Cookery (George Calombaris of the Press Club, Gazi, Hellenic Republic and more)

Origin (Ben Shewry of Attica)

My French Vue: Bistro Cooking at Home (Shannon Bennett of Vue de Monde)

 $\textit{The Cook's Companion} \ (\text{Stephanie Alexander}) - \text{Although she no longer graces the city's stoves on a regular basis, this is one of the cook's companion of the cook's cook of the cook of$

Australia's most well-thumbed cookbooks.

Chin Chin (Benjamin Cooper of Chin Chin)

Fashion & Shopping

Melbourne's reputation as a shopping mecca is, we are pleased to announce, utterly justifiable. Passionate retailers roam widely in search of the world's best as well as showcasing abundant local design talent. Fashion plays a huge part in Melbourne's self-image. Whether strictly suited or ultraglam, casual, creative or subversive, Melburnians of both sexes love to look good.

City Style

Ask any fashionista in Melbourne their favourite time of year and they'll invariably say it's winter – and usually for the fashion opportunities that crisp, cold days deliver. While Melbourne designers do produce swimwear (Gorman, Zoe Elizabeth and We Are Handsome's retro offerings are local favourites), it's during the autumn—winter season of the fashion cycle that the city comes into its own. Temperatures only have to drop a few degrees for boots and jackets to emerge, and unpredictable summers see many a cardigan or lightweight scarf thrown in the mix.

There are no shortages of places to shop in Melbourne. City laneways and Victorian shopping streets have long provided reasonably priced rental spaces that encourage creativity rather than conformity in shop owners; their vision contributes much to the city's eclectic identity and character. Yes, the chains and big global designers are all well represented, and there are suburban malls aplenty (including Chadstone, known as Chaddy, the largest in the southern hemisphere and Victoria's oldest; www.chadstoneshopping.com.au), but the city and surrounds offer a host of alternatives.

Buoyed by a culture of small shops and an adventurous-minded public, young designers flourish. Rather than adhering to the established studio's hierarchies, many start their own labels straight out of design school, giving the scene an amazing energy and vitality.

Discount factory outlets can be found aplenty in Bridge Rd, Richmond; the lower end of Smith St, Collingwood; or at South Wharf, but savvy Melbourne fashionistas prefer designer-specific sample sales, discovered via word-or-mouth or mailing lists – check out Missy Confidential (www.missyconfidential.com.au).

Melbourne Black

One constant in Melbourne fashion is colour, or lack of it. You'll not go long without hearing mention of 'Melbourne black', and it's true that inky shades are worn not just during the cold months but right through the hottest days of summer. Perhaps it's because black somehow suits the soft light and often grey days, or maybe it's the subliminal influence of the city's moody bluestone. Some muse that it's the long-lingering fallout of the explosive 1980s postpunk scene or southern European immigration. The fact remains that black clothes sell far better here than in any other city in the country. In Melbourne, black is always the new black.

WHERE TO SHOP?

The city has national and international chains spread out over Bourke, Swanston and Collins Sts, as well as the city malls of Melbourne Central, QV, GPO, Australia on Collins St, Spencer St and South Wharf. Smaller retailers and design workshops inhabit the laneways as well as the vertical villages of Curtin House and the Nicholas Building. Flinders Lane and the arcades and laneways that feed into it are particularly blessed. A strip of Little Collins heading north from Swanston is dedicated to sartorially savvy gentlemen, while the length of leafy Collins St is lined with luxury retailers.

Chapel St, South Yarra, has all the chains and classic Australian names, as well as some edgier designers once you hit Prahran. Up the hill, head to Hawksburn Village or High St, Armadale, for fashion-forward labels, super stylish children's clothes and homewares. You'll find streetwear in Greville St, Prahran, and in Windsor; the latter is also good for vintage shopping.

In the north, Lygon St, Carlton, has some great small shops specialising in European tailoring and local talent. Brunswick St, Fitzroy, has streetwear and vintage shops, and pulses with the energy of young designers, particularly in stores such as the legendary Fat. Gertrude St, Fitzroy, mixes vintage with many of the city's most sought-after innovators, as well as some up-and-coming menswear names, art-supply shops and vintage furniture.

Local Talent

Melbourne's designers are known for their tailoring, luxury fabrics, innovation and blending of global elements, all underscored with a fuss-free Australian sensibility. Those to watch out for include the evergreen Scanlan & Theodore for smart, lyrical elegance; Tony Maticevski and Martin Grant for demi-couture and dark reworkings of the classics; Ess Hoshika, Dhini and Munk for conceptual, deconstructed pieces; Anna Thomas and Vixen for the luxuriously grown-up; Gorman, Arabella Ramsay, Búl and Obüs for hipster cheek with a delightfully feminine twist; Alpha 60, Kloke, Schwipe and Claude Maus for clever, urban pieces; and finally, scene stalwarts Bettina Liano for straight-ahead glamour and Alannah Hill for the original girly-girl layers. For flattering and form-fitting jeans, you can't go past Fitzroy's Nobody Denim Millinery is also a local speciality, due to the fondness for racing carnivals, with names such as Richard Nylon, Melissa Jackson and Louise Macdonald.

Top Local Designers
Third Drawer Down
Craft Victoria
Obüs
Crumpler
Gorman

Crafts

Melbourne's penchant for small-scale design goes one further with a bubbling subculture that sells through markets and online. Craft Victoria is the grand old (if eternally cool) dame of the scene, with a commitment to showing and selling work that, as board member Pene Durston says, demonstrates 'the importance of the 'hand' in the production of work, and the high level of skill invested by makers in their craft'. Thread Den, in North Melbourne, combines a craft, DIY and vintage ethos with classes augmenting their retail offerings. The Nicholas Building (thenicholasbuilding blogspot.com), at the corner of Swanston St and Flinders Lane, is the city's most concentrated artisan hub, with both small shops (such as Buttonmania and L'uccello) as well as much-coveted studios and workshops.

To Market, To Market

Melbourne's unpredictable weather hasn't deterred its entrepreneurial spirit, with many markets being held in all-weather venues. The twice-yearly Melbourne Design Market (www.melbournedesignmarket.com.au) is huge, attracting around 10,000 visitors. It showcases 'design-led' stallholders and has a rigorous selection process that keeps quality high. Fitzroy's Rose St Market (www.rosestmarket.com.au) and the Skirts & Shirts Market (www.rosestmarket.com.au) and the Skirts & Shirts Market (www.www.rosestmarket.com.

Vintage style, a persisting global trend, has long flourished in Melbourne, both in the retailing and wearing of vintage pieces and in a general sensibility that pays heed to retro cuts and traditional tailoring. Vintage devotees should head to the city's arcades, and look for shops in Prahran, Windsor, Fitzroy, Collingwood, Brunswick and Northcote.

The Arts

Long regarded as the culture capital of Australia, Melbourne has always been a city for artists and art lovers. Its thriving live-music scene, strong community of street artists, and passion for literature, theatre and visual arts all provide a vibrant, creative backdrop fundamental to the fabric of the city. Art in Melbourne is highly accessible, both for the number of its art spaces as well as its appeal to a broad audience.

Flinders Lane has the densest concentration of commercial galleries in Australia, with many more dotted throughout the city and inner suburbs. Art Almanac (www.art-almanac.com.au) has comprehensive listings, with good regional coverage as well.

Visual Arts

Melbourne's visual-arts scene thrives and grows in myriad places: tucked away in basement galleries, exhibited in edgy spaces, stencilled on unmarked laneway walls, flaunting in world-class museums and sneaking up on you in parks and gardens.

Painting

Melbourne and Victoria's visual arts culture began in the traditions of the Kulin Nation tribes, and ancestral design inspires contemporary Victorian Indigenous artists to this day. The late 19th-century artwork of Wurundjeri elder William Barak depicts ceremonial gatherings, several of which are displayed in the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia. Prominent contemporary Koorie artists in Victoria include Vicki Couzens, Esther Kirby, Mandy Nicholson and Trevor 'Turbo' Brown, who paint upon a mix of traditional artefacts, possum-skin cloaks and emu eggs, as well as canvas (note: there are no dots in Indigenous Victorian art). In Melbourne, the Koorie Heritage Trust and Melbourne Museum's Bunjilaka Aboriginal Centre all provide an intimate picture of Victorian Aboriginal culture.

Early Europeans who visited the fledgling colony of Melbourne presented a very different experience of Australia. The Vienna-born Eugène von Guérard is one of Australia's most well-known colonial artists from the 1850s; his vast works include panoramic landscapes of early Geelong, the Otways, Gippsland and the Western District region, all depicted as colonial jewels with bucolic pastures and abundant forests.

In the late 19th century a new generation of Australian-born artists emerged, forming the Heidelberg School (aka the Australian Impressionists). Artists Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and Frederick McCubbin are fondly remembered for defining a more 'Australian' vision of the landscape and depicting the harshness in the beauty of the Victorian bush. They also created a heroic national iconography, ranging from the shearing of sheep to visions of a wide brown land.

The early- to mid-20th century saw the rise to prominence of a number of modernist painters, including internationally acclaimed Melbourne artists Sidney Nolan, John Brack, Charles Blackman, Fred Williams and Russell Drysdale. Heide, the Melbourne home of arts patrons John and Sunday Reed, played a pivotal role in the development of Australian modernism; Nolan's famous *Ned Kelly* series is said to have been painted at the Reeds' dining-room table. The Reeds nurtured an artistic community that included Nolan, Albert Tucker, Arthur Boyd, Joy Hester, John Perceval and Danila Vassilieff, who utilised styles incorporating elements of Surrealism and Expressionism. Their property has since been turned into the Heide Museum of Modern Art, which has an impressive collection of modern and contemporary Australian art exhibited in three galleries and scattered throughout the tranquil gardens.

Other well-known Melbourne painters of the 20th century include French expatriate Mirka Mora (b 1928), known for her colourful, bohemian paintings; she and her art-dealer husband Georges (founder of Tolarno Galleries) were hugely influential upon both Melbourne's art and cultural scenes. The late Howard Arkley (1955–99) is as Melbourne as they come: his airbrush technique produced fluorescent pieces that pay homage to suburbia, as well as his well-known portrait of Melbourne-raised musician Nick Cave.

Regional Art Galleries
Bendigo Art Gallery
Art Gallery of Ballarat
Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery
TarraWarra Museum of Art, Yarra Valley
Geelong Art Gallery

Contemporary Art

Between the commercial, public and artist-run galleries there is much to discover in Melbourne's contemporary arts scene. A good place to tap in is Gertrude Contemporary Art Space, which hosts exhibitions by emerging artists and fosters innovative and challenging new works. The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) also hosts cutting-edge programs of exhibitions as well as developing large-scale projects with Australian (and international) artists. The Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) exhibits film and multimedia works by contemporary artists, and the Centre for Contemporary Photography has a strong photo- and film-based program.

Street Art

With its growing reputation for street art, Melbourne's urban landscape is a beacon for visitors from all around the world. Dozens of laneway walls provide an outdoor canvas for paste-up, mural and stencil art.

Local street artists of note include ghostpatrol, miso, Tai Snaith and Ha-Ha (the latter for his iconic Ned Kelly images – move aside, Sidney Nolan).

Many of these locals are represented in the documentaries *Rash* (2005) and the more recent *Children of the Iron Snake* (2013), which get behind the scenes of Melbourne's street art phenomenon.

Melbourne's scene was helped by the legacy of renowned international street artists such as Keith Haring (1958–1990), the New York graffiti artist who visited in 1984. He was commissioned to paint large-scale murals at NGV International and what was then the Collingwood Technical School on Johnston St; the latter work still exists today (visible next door to the Tote music club).

The city's street-art scene received further recognition through Banksy, who stenciled extensively during a visit in 2003. While several of his works remain, many have unfortunately disappeared (some accidentally painted over by unsuspecting workers). Other prominent international street artists to contribute work to Melbourne's streets include Blek le Rat (France), Shepard Fairey (USA) and Invader (France).

City Centre Street Art Hosier/Rutledge Lane Caledonian Lane Blender Lane Union Lane Croft Lane

Literature

It may seem at first glance that in Melbourne and Victoria words and stories are relegated to the wings while sport and socialising take centre stage, but scratch the surface and you'll find they're home to writers of all descriptions, independent booksellers, a prosperous publishing industry and a thriving culture of reading and discourse on the written word. Melbourne nourishes literary types with its tempestuous weather, rich range of cultures and identities, wines bars and moody architecture.

Melbourne's wordy reputation was formally recognised with its designation as a Unesco City of Literature (in 2008) and the birth of the Wheeler Centre (www.wheelercentre.com), Australia's first centre for 'Books, Writing and Ideas'. Located within a newly renovated wing of the State Library of Victoria (www.slv.vic.gov.au), it's home to several literary organisations and hosts a rich program of talks and events designed to 'get Melburnians thinking'.

Literary publishing companies Black Inc, Scribe, Text and Penguin are based here, and the city produces a host of magazines, journals and websites that highlight literature and intellectual life, including the *Australian Book Review, Meanjin*, Black Inc's series of 'Best' anthologies and the *Quarterly Essay*, and the short-fiction collection *Sleepers Almanac*. The City Library in Flinders Lane has an entire section dedicated to books on Melbourne.

Has there been a great Victorian novel? Melbourne has certainly provided a variety of memorable backdrops for literary works, from the 19th-century cult crime fiction of *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* (Fergus Hume; 1886) to Peter Temple's *The Broken Shore* (2005), which is also partly based in western Victoria. Christos Tsiolkas' *The Slap* (2008) is set in the backyards of the inner north, where post-war migrant families settled in Melbourne. Helen Garner's *Monkey Grip* takes readers on a journey through drugs, love and music in urban Melbourne in 1970s, while *Utopian Man* by Lisa Lang tells the story of the late-19th-century days of 'Marvellous Melbourne' and E.W Cole's Book Arcade. Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang*, set in the central Victorian haunts of Australia's most famous bushrangers, took both the Man Booker and Commonwealth Writers' Prize when it was published in 2001; despite Victoria's largely urban, multicultural population, it just may be a novel with a historical – even mythological – bush setting that can claim the 'great' title.

On the non-fiction front, Jill and Jeff Sparrow's *Radical Melbourne* (2001) looks at Melbourne's counter-culture and its secret history. Germaine Greer, another radical Melburnian, is best known for her work *The Female Eunuch* (1971), an international best seller hailed for its contribution to feminism.

Notable books on Indigenous culture include *When the Wattle Blooms* (Shirley W Wiencke; 1984), about William Barak, a notable Wurundjeri elder; *Aboriginal Melbourne; the Lost Land of the Kulin People* (1994) by Gary Presland and *The Melbourne Dreaming: A Guide to the Aboriginal Places of Melbourne* (1997) by Meyer Eidelson. *The Life and Adventures of William Buckley* (John Morgan; 1852) – a fascinating account of escaped convict William Buckley and the 32 years he spent living with the Wathaurung people – still offers one of the best insights to this Indigenous group's way of life.

Bookish Melbourne
State Library of Victoria
Wheeler Centre
Readings
Hill of Content
Melbourne Writers Festival

LIVE-MUSIC VENUES

Despite the ongoing threat of music venues being closed down due to noise complaints by some inner-city residents, Melbourne still has a plethora of great venues spread throughout the city and inner suburbs. Some of the city's favourite pubs and drinking dens double as band venues: the best spots to catch a beer and a gig include the Tote in Collingwood, the Espy (Esplanade Hotel) in St Kilda, the Northcote Social Club and Richmond's Corner Hotel.

Though it prides itself as a city dedicated to smaller, independent live-music spaces, Melbourne also has its fair share of major stadiums and arenas. You'll find big-name acts selling out venues like Rod Laver Arena, Festival Hall, Sidney Myer Music Bowl and the Forum.

Music

Melbourne's cultural image has involved music since producing two of the most enduringly fascinating talents of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Opera diva Dame Nellie Melba was an international star who lived overseas for many years, but retained a sentimental attachment to her home town (hence the name). Percy Grainger, whose innovative compositions and performances prefigured many forms of 20th-century music, was born and brought up in Melbourne. Grainger's eccentric genius extended beyond music to the design of clothing and objects; he was also known for his transgressive sex life. His life story is all on display at the Percy Grainger Museum in Parkville.

More recently, Melbourne's live-music scene exploded in the mid-1960s with a band called the Loved Ones, who broke the imitative mould of American '50s rock 'n' roll. The early 1970s saw groups such as AC/DC, Skyhooks and Daddy Cool capture the experience of ordinary Melbourne life in their lyrics for the first time. By the end of that decade punk had descended; Melbourne's grey weather and grimy backstreets had a natural synergy with the genre, providing a more arty, post-punk sound. Nick Cave's Boys Next Door and the so-called 'Little Bands' shrieked their way through gigs at St Kilda's Crystal Ballroom (now the George Hotel), a venue whose dilapidated splendour was straight out of central casting. Bands and performers that grew out of (and beyond) this scene included the Birthday Party (evolving into Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds), Young Charlatans, Sports, the Models, Dead Can Dance, the Johnnys, X, Primitive Calculators, Sacred Cowboys, the Wreckery, Hugo Race, Crime & City Solution and the Moodists.

The '80s pub-rock scene also gave birth to Crowded House, Paul Kelly, Hunters & Collectors and Australian Crawl, while the '90s and 2000s punk/grunge era saw the likes of the Cosmic Psychos, the Meanies, Powder Monkeys, the Dirty Three, Magic Dirt and Eddy Current Suppression Ring carry the torch passed on from their late-'70s predecessors. Other of Melbourne's international success stories include the Seekers, Air Supply, Olivia Newton-John and Little River Band, along with Kylie Minogue, Gotye, Jet and the Temper Trap.

Melbourne's live-music scene has had a rough run of late; residents moving into new apartment buildings near established venues have certainly had their voices heard, and as a result some clubs have been forced to close, or reduce the volume. The Tote in Collingwood was an apparent victim of new liquor licensing laws requiring even small venues to have a security presence; when it closed, Melbourne's music lovers weren't happy. Around 20,000 people rallied in Melbourne's city centre, resulting in the future of live-music venues becoming an issue in the 2010 state elections. SLAM (Save Live Australia's Music), an advocate action group, successfully lobbied for numerous law changes. There was a happy ending the Tote got new owners and the music there continues, while other venues were granted seven-day 3am licenses.

Despite the liquor license issues, Melbourne is still the live-music capital of Australia, and draws musicians from around the country. Current buzz bands include the Drones, the Twerps, UV Race and King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard. For a city so very far away, Melbourne is also blessed with a large number of international touring acts each year – pickings are particularly rich during the summer festival season.

The city also has a healthy club and dance music scene. The mega-clubs of the '80s gave way to a more fluid dance-party culture revolving around techno and other electronic styles. The 'doof' was born: these festivals, often held in bushland settings over several days, peaked in the late '90s, though they still have their devotees. Legendary laneway club Honkytonks took its musical responsibility very seriously, nurturing local DJ talent (and a generation of club kids) through the early years of this century. Since its demise, other venues have sprung up to fill the gap. Local electronic/synthpop artists who have crossed into the mainstream include Cut Copy, the Avalanches and DJ Digital Primate.

Australian hip-hop is well represented in Victoria, with locals such as True Live and DJ Peril. Hip-hop has also proven enormously popular with young Aboriginal and Islander musicians (*All You Mob* is an excellent compilation CD of Indigenous artists). Other modern Indigenous musicians, such as Archie Roach, create unique styles by incorporating traditional instruments into modern rock and folk formats.

Jazz also has a dedicated local audience and a large number of respected musicians who are known for improvising, as well as crossing genres into world and experimental electronica. The heart of the scene is the long-running Bennetts Lane, an archetypal down-an-alley jazz club if ever there was one. Its Sunday sessions are legendary, and the venue draws a local crowd that knows its hard bop from its bebop. International and local talent also pull respectable numbers for gigs at the Melbourne International Jazz Festival and the Wangaratta Jazz Festival.

Ninety years after Nellie Melba was made a dame, classical music still has a strong presence in Melbourne. The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, based at the Arts Centre's recently renovated Hamer Hall, performs works drawn from across the classical spectrum, from the popular to challenging contemporary composition. The all-acoustic Melbourne Recital Centre (the only venue of its type in Australia), which opened in 2009 to rave reviews, hosts around 250 concerts a year.

Melbourne Music Festivals
Big Day Out (Jan)
Laneway (Feb)
Future Music Festival (Mar)
Brunswick Music Festival (Mar)
Melbourne Music Week (Nov)

Cinema & Television

Although Sydney might be considered the centre of the Australian film industry, new production facilities at Docklands, slightly lower costs for film production and generous government subsidies has seen Melbourne wield its movie-making muscle. And Melbourne does looks gorgeous on the big screen. Film-makers tend to eschew the stately and urbane and highlight the city's complexity, from the winsomely suburban to the melancholic and gritty.

Film culture is nurtured in Victoria through local funding projects, tertiary education and exhibition. Funding for features, documentaries, shorts, digital media and game content is provided by Film Victoria (www.film.vic.gov.au), which also provides mentoring schemes. Federation Square has consolidated a big part of Melbourne's screen culture, housing the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) television channel.

The prominence of film in Melbourne is evident in the number of film festivals the city hosts. Apart from the main Melbourne International Film Festival (www.muff.com.au), there's everything from the Melbourne Underground Film Festival (www.muff.com.au) to shorts at the St Kilda Film Festival (www.muff.com.au) and the Sydney-import Tropfest (www.tropfest.com.au). Other film-festival genres include foreign-made, seniors, hip-hop, queer and documentary.

Some well-known Australian films shot in Melbourne and regional Victoria include *Mad Max*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Chopper*, *Romper Stomper*, *Animal Kingdom*, and *The Man from Snowy River*, while international films include *Where the Wild Things Are*, *Ghost Rider*, *Jackie Chan's First Strike* and *Salaam Namaste*.

There's an enduring affection for police drama and comedy shows on Australian TV, and many of these have emanated from Melbourne. The barely fictionalised Melbourne-organised-crime series *Underbelly* didn't initially make it to air in the city in which it was set – not because of its tits-and-arse overload but because a court decided that its plot lines could prejudice concurrent court proceedings. Other made-in-Melbourne TV series to hit the small screen include *Prisoner*, *The Secret Life of Us*, *Rush*, *Offspring* and *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, all shot in various parts of town, such as Fitzroy, Collingwood and the city's western waterfront. Beloved local comedy includes *Kath & Kim*, a hilarious piss-take of nouveau-riche suburban habits – very much in the mould of Melbourne's favourite aunty, Dame Edna Everage from Moonee Ponds (among Barry Humphries' other alter egos). And, of course, there's the never-ending froth of soap opera *Neighbours*. In regional Victoria, TV drama *Sea Change* was filmed on location at Barwon Heads on the Bellarine Peninsula.

DOCUMENTING MELBOURNE'S PUNK SCENE

The following provide a great overview of Melbourne's punk scene:

We're Living on Dog Food (2009) Doco directed by Richard Lowenstein

Dogs in Space (1986) Feature film also by Richard Lowenstein, starring INXS' Michael Hutchence

The Ballroom: The Melbourne Punk & Post Punk Scene (2011) Fantastic memoir by Dolores San Miguel recalling St Kilda's colourful punk history at the Crystal Ballroom.

Theatre

Melbourne's longstanding theatrical heritage is evident in the city's legacy of Victorian-era theatres such as the Princess and Athenaeum. While the blockbusters pack out these grand dames, Melbourne's theatre scene encompasses a wide spectrum of genres.

Melbourne's most high-profile professional theatre company, the Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC; www.mtc.com.au), is also Australia's oldest, and stages up to a dozen performances year-round at both the Arts Centre and its own purpose-built theatre located nearby. Productions are usually firmly focused on satisfying the company's 20,000-strong middle-market subscriber base, though with a new director this may change. Expect works by Australians such as David Williamson, locals Hannie Rayson and Joanna Murray-Smith, and well-known international playwrights.

The Malthouse Theatre (www.malthousetheatre.com.au) is dedicated to performing contemporary Australian works and nurturing emerging writers, and is known for relevance, audacity and artistic daring under its artistic director, Marion Potts.

Victoria also has a number of thriving progressive fringe-theatre companies, including Wodonga's HotHouse, Black Lung, Mutation Theatre and Hayloft, which stage residencies in traditional theatre settings and as well as pop up in unusual places.

Humble in size, Carlton's La Mama (www.lamama.com.au) has a huge place in the heart of the city's theatre scene. Founded in 1967, it is, as its name might suggest, the mother of independent theatre in Melbourne, and helped forge the careers of David Williamson, Jack Hibberd, Barry Dickens and Graeme Blundell.

Music Festivals in Regional Victoria
Apollo Bay Music Festival (Feb/Mar)
Golden Plains (Mar)
Port Fairy Folk Festival (Mar)
Wangaratta Jazz Festival (Oct/Nov)
Queenscliff Music Festival (Nov)
Falls Festival (Dec)
Meredith Music Festival (Dec)

Dance

The Australian Ballet (www.australianballet.com.au) is the national ballet company and considered one of the finest in the world. It performs regularly at Melbourne's Arts Centre, with a program of classical and modern ballets.

Victoria's flagship contemporary dance company, Chunky Move (www.chunkymove.com), is a tidy package of bold – often confronting – choreography, pop-culture concepts, technically brilliant dancers, sleek design and smart marketing. The artistic director and choreographer who founded the company in 1995, Gideon Obarzanek, moved on in 2012, and was succeeded by acclaimed Dutch choreographer Anouk van Dijk.

Kage Physical Theatre is a modern dance company producing innovative, challenging, humorous and highly entertaining performances. The company became a resident at the Abbotsford Convent in 2010 and is a partnership between Kate Denborough and Gerard Van Dyck, who met while studying a Bachelor of Dance at the Victorian College of Arts.

Melbourne is also home to a few other acclaimed contemporary choreographers. Lucy Guerin has a small, eponymous company that has attracted high praise from the *New Yorker* magazine's Joan Acocella. Shelley Lasica locates her work in non-theatre spaces, collaborating with visual artists and architects; her works blur the lines between dance and performance art.

Beat Magazine (www.beat.com.au) and Fasterlouder (www.fasterlouder.com.au) have weekly, all-genre gig guides; Mess+Noise (www.messandnoise.com) is a great forum for local indie/rock news and happenings. The 3MBS arts diary (www.3mbs.org.au/arts.html) is an invaluable resource for what's going on in classical music.

Architecture & Urban Planning

For a planned city, and a relatively youthful one, Melbourne's streetscapes are richly textured. Long considered one of the world's most lovely Victorian-era cities, Melbourne captures the confident spirit of that age, with exuberantly embellished Second Empire institutions and hulking former factories that would do Manchester proud. Flinders St Station and the original Queen Victoria Hospital (now part of the QV shopping centre) herald in the Federation era, when a new Australian identity was being fashioned from the fetching combination of red brick and ornate wood. Look down Swanston St from Lonsdale and you'll catch a glimpse of a mini-Manhattan – Melbourne's between-the-wars optimism is captured in its string of stunning (if somewhat stunted) art deco skyscrapers, such as the Manchester Unity Building. Walter Burley Griffin worked in the city at this time too, creating the ornate, organic Newman College in the University of Melbourne and the mesmerising ode to the metropolitan, the Capitol Theatre, now a part-time cinema and university lecture hall.

By mid-century, Modernist architects sought new ways to connect with the local landscape as well as honouring the movement's internationalist roots; the most prominent, Roy Grounds, designed the Arts Centre and the original NGV Australia on St Kilda Rd. Others include Robin Boyd, Kevin Borland and Alistair Knox, but their work is mostly residential so is rarely open to the public. You can, however, visit a beautiful Boyd building anytime: Jimmy Watson's Wine Bar in Carlton. Melbourne also had its own mid-century furniture design stars, Grant and Mary Featherston; their iconic Contour chair of 1951 is highly prized by collectors, as are their '70s modular sofas.

The 1990s saw a flurry of public building works: Melbourne's architects fell in love with technology and designed with unorthodox shapes, vibrant colours, tactile surfaces and sleek structural features. Denton Corker Marshall's Melbourne Museum, Melbourne Exhibition & Convention Centre, Bolte Bridge, and the CityLink sound tunnel are emblematic of this period. Federation Square, one of the last of these major projects, continues to polarise opinion. Despite its detractors, its cobbled, inscribed piazza has become the city's chosen site for celebration and protest, surely the best compliment a populace can pay to an architect. Ashton Raggatt McDougall's Melbourne Recital Centre is a recent architectural prize winner, with an interior that is, according to Melbourne University's Philip Goad, 'like a beautiful violin'.

Melbourne's architectural energy today most often comes not from the monumental but from what goes on in between the new and the old, the towering and the tiny. It's also literally about energy – sustainable practice, in the inner city at least, has become all but de rigueur. Mid-careerists such as Six Degrees, Elenberg Fraser and Kerstin Thompson create witty, inventive and challenging buildings and interiors that see raw or reimagined spaces spring to life.

Melbourne is a 'must-see' destination for many British travellers primarily because it's home to the TV program *Neighbours*. Pin Oak Ct in Vermont South is the suburban street that has been the show's legendary 'Ramsay Street' for more than 20 years.

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

Directory A-Z

Accommodation

Business Hours

Companion Cards

Customs Regulations

Dangers & Annoyances

Electricity

Embassies & Consulates

Emergencies

Food

Gay & Lesbian Travellers

Health

Internet Access

Legal Matters

Medical Services

Money

Post

Public Holidays

Public Toilets

Safe Travel

Telephone

Tourist Information

Visas

Websites

Women Travellers

Directory A–Z

PRACTICALITIES

- DVD: Region 4
- → Electricity: Power supply is 240V 50Hz.
- →Emergency: 2000
- Newspapers: The Age (www.theage.com.au) covers local, national and international news. The Herald Sun (www.heraldsun.com.au) is a big-selling tabloid strong on sport, especially AFL.
- Radio & TV: The Australian Broadcasting Commission (www.abc.net.au) is the national TV and radio broadcaster; commercial TV networks Seven, Nine, Ten and SBS all have more than one digital channel.
- → Weights & Measures: Australia uses the metric system.

BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodation reviews by Lonely Planet authors, check out http://lonelyplanet.com/hotels/. You'll find independent reviews, as well as recommendations on the best places to stay. Best of all, you can book online.

Accommodation

Accommodation across the state ranges from camping and caravan parks to youth hostels, motels, boutique B&Bs, hotels and resorts. Not all are wheelchair accessible. Many tourist offices offer a free accommodation booking service; check out the comprehensive *Accommodation Guide* published by the **RACV** (137228; www.racv.com.au).

Accommodation prices tend to be seasonal, especially along the coast. Peak times are the Christmas school holidays (from mid-December to the end of January) and the Easter long weekend, when you'll need to book well in advance and prices skyrocket at popular beach resorts. Winter (June to August) is the cheapest time to travel around most of the state — except at the ski resorts, where July and August is peak season. Accommodation prices in Melbourne are generally steady all year, but peak for major events such as the Australian Open (January), the Grand Prix (March), AFL finals (September) and the Spring Racing Carnival (November). Midrange to deluxe hotels publish 'rack rates', but always ask for current specials.

PRICE RANGES

Price ranges for accommodation in our reviews are rated with a \$ symbol, indicating the price of a standard double room.

- →\$ under \$100
- →\$\$ \$100 to \$200
- →\$\$\$ over \$200

Apartments & Holiday Rental Accommodation

Most common along the coast and at ski resorts, holiday rental accommodation is generally self-contained, with a kitchen, one or two bedrooms and parking. Holiday houses along the coast are usually just that – an entire house that you can rent for a week or longer, ideal for families or groups. Check for accessibility before you book, as not all places will cater to your needs.

- → Holiday Great Ocean Road (🛂 03-5237 1098; www.holidaygor.com.au; studios from \$190, 2-bed cottage from \$250)
- → Holiday Rentals (www.holidayrentals.com.au)
- Holiday Shacks (www.holidayshacks.com.au)
- → Stayz (www.stayz.com.au)

B&Bs & Guesthouses

This rapidly growing segment of the accommodation market generally means staying in someone's home or in a purpose-built addition to a home, but increasingly B&Bs are self-contained cottages. It could be a grand historic home, secluded farmhouse, restored miners' cottage or beachside bungalow. In the English tradition, a big cooked breakfast is part of the deal. Rates are usually midrange (from \$80 to \$180 for a double) but can be much higher depending on the location and level of luxury. In many places, a minimum two-night stay is required. Some B&Bs, such as the ones included in this ebook, are wheelchair accessible; if in doubt, phone ahead and check.

Booking can be made online through Tourism Victoria, or check these sites

- ▶ Bed & Breakfast (<u>www.bedandbreakfast.com.au</u>)
- ⇒ Beds & Breakfasts (<u>www.bedsandbreakfasts.com.au</u>)
- → Great Places to Stay (<u>www.greatplacestostay.com.au</u>)

Camping & Caravanning

Camping holidays are experiencing a resurgence in popularity in Victoria, with some outstanding national park camping grounds and privately run caravan parks to choose from. Some national parks have accessible camp sites; see the <u>Victoria's Accessible Parks</u> chapter for details. The only place that camping or caravanning isn't viable is central Melbourne.

At commercial caravan parks, expect to pay at least \$25/30 for an unpowered/powered site for two people, and from \$70 to \$150 for a cabin or unit, depending on the size and facilities. These rates will almost certainly double at coastal areas and popular holiday spots during school holidays. **Parks Victoria** (www.parkweb.vic.gov.au) camping grounds range from free to \$28, and you can usually have up to six people and one vehicle per site. These should be booked in advance, but often a ranger will come in and collect your money. For the most popular sites, such as Wilsons Prom and Cape Otway, a ballot is held over the Christmas and Easter holiday periods. Free camping is available in many places — check with Parks Victoria. There are also a couple of free campgrounds scattered around the Otways.

Hostels

Most of Victoria's backpacker hostels are in Melbourne and the most popular regional centres, such as along the Great Ocean Rd. There are nine **YHA hostels** (www.yha.com.au) in the state, and quite a few more independent backpackers. Expect to pay \$23 to \$30 for a dorm bed and from \$70 for a private double. Phone ahead to ask about wheelchair-accessible rooms and bathrooms.

Hotels & Motels

Motels are the most common type of accommodation around the state and are popular with travellers looking for central, no-frills accommodation. Motels usually have studios and family apartments from \$100 to \$200, with TV, en suite bathroom, air-conditioning, tea- and coffee-making facilities and usually a pool and barbecue area.

In Melbourne and large provincial centres, hotels are usually aimed at business and luxury travellers – centrally located, with business centres and restaurants attached. For a standard double room in a top-end hotel, expect to pay upwards of \$250, midrange around \$150 and for budget doubles from \$90.

In country towns, a hotel refers to the local pub, which may have refurbished rooms upstairs, usually with shared facilities down the hall. These are often a good budget option, with rooms under \$90, and you're sure to rub shoulders with a few locals down in the bar.

Not all hotels and motels have wheelchair accessible rooms; some have suitable rooms, but inaccessible bathrooms. Enquire when making a booking, and make your needs known.

ACCESSIBLE-ACCOMMODATION WEBSITES

The following websites are useful for researching accessible accommodation throughout Australia.

<u>→www.scia.org.au/publications/rollawayz</u>

Download this Google Earth file created by Spinal Cord Injuries Australia showing wheelchair-accessible accommodation Australia-wide.

<u>→www.australiaforall.com</u>

Despite its somewhat outdated interface, this is a great resource for accessible accommodation Australia-wide. All accommodation providers have answered an extensive audit questionnaire and supplied a photograph of the accommodation's bathroom facilities.

Business Hours

Business	Opening Hours
Banks	9.30am-4pm Mon-Thu, to 5pm Fri
Post offices	9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat
Tourist offices	9am-5pm daily
Shopping centres	9am-5.30pm, often to 9pm Thu & Fri
Restaurants	lunch noon-3pm, dinner 6-10pm
Cafes	breakfast 8am-11am (later on weekends), all-day lunch
Pubs	11am-1am
Bars & clubs	4pm-late (between 2am and 5am)

Companion Cards

A Companion Card is issued to people with a significant permanent disability who can demonstrate that they are unable to access activities and venues without support. Present it when booking or purchasing a ticket, provided the cardholder requires support in order to participate in that particular activity. (In our experience the burden of proof is not high.) Participating organisations (affiliates), including public transport services, will issue the cardholder with a second ticket for their companion at no charge.

The National Companion Card Scheme brings together State and Territory Companion Card programs so interstate visitors who hold a Companion Card will be able to use it in Victoria.

Whether or not an organisation is a registered affiliate of the Companion Card program, they still need to comply with the disability antidiscrimination legislation. It may be worth mentioning this to anyone who refuses to accept your card, or if you are the holder of a card from overseas that gives you similar entitlements (even though there do not appear to be reciprocal agreements in place).

For more information, including a list of the 4200 affiliates nationwide (a growing list, so it's never up to date), go to www.vic.companioncard.org.au.

Customs Regulations

For detailed information on customs and quarantine regulations, contact the **Australian Customs & Border Protection Service** (202-6275 6666, 1300 363 2631300 363 263; www.customs.gov.au) and the **Department of Agriculture**, **Fisheries & Forestry** (202-6272 3933; www.daff.gov.au).

When entering Australia you can bring most articles in free of duty provided that customs is satisfied they are for personal use and that

you'll be taking them with you when you leave. Duty-free quotas per person (note the unusually low figure for cigarettes):

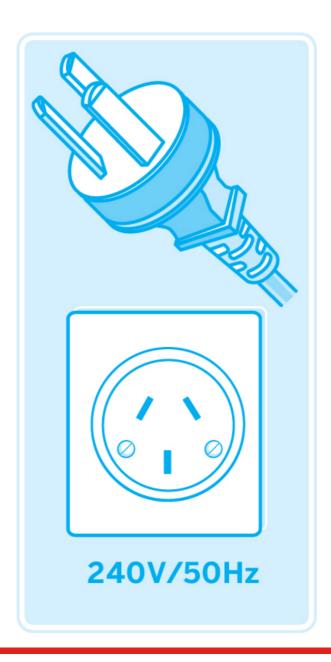
- → Alcohol 2.25L (over the age of 18)
- → Cigarettes 50 cigarettes (over the age of 18)
- → Dutiable goods Up to the value of \$900 (\$450 for people under 18)

Narcotics, of course, are illegal, and customs inspectors and their highly trained hounds are diligent in sniffing them out. Quarantine regulations are strict, so you *must* declare all goods of animal or vegetable origin – wooden spoons, straw hats, the lot. Fresh food (meat, cheese, fruit, vegetables etc) and flowers are prohibited. There are disposal bins located in airports where you can dump any questionable items if you don't want to bother with an inspection. You must declare currency in excess of \$10,000 (including foreign currency).

Dangers & Annoyances

There are occasional reports of alcohol-fuelled violence in some parts of Melbourne's city centre late on weekend nights – King St in particular.

Electricity



Embassies & Consulates

Most embassies are in Canberra (ACT) or Sydney, but some countries maintain consulates (or, more often, honorary consulates) in Melbourne. Check the embassy's website for more details.

Canadian Embassy EMBASSY

(COOGLEMAP); 202-6270 4000; www.australia.gc.ca; Commonwealth Ave, Yarralumla, ACT)

Dutch Embassy EMBASSY

(202-6220 9400; <u>www.netherlands.org.au</u>; 120 Empire Circuit, Yarralumla, ACT)

French Embassy EMBASSY

(COOGLEMAP); №02-6216 0100; <u>www.ambafrance-au.org</u>; 6 Perth Ave, Yarralumla, ACT)

German Embassy EMBASSY

(GOOGLEMAP); 202-6270 1911; www.canberra.diplo.de; 119 Empire Circuit, Yarralumla, ACT)

Irish Embassy EMBASSY

(GOOGLEMAP); 202-6214 0000; www.embassyofireland.au.com; 20 Arkana St, Yarralumla, ACT)

New Zealand Consulate CONSULATE

(208-93641700; www.nzembassy.com; 1 Sleat Rd, Applecross)

UK EmbassyEMBASSY

(GOOGLEMAP); 202-6270 6666; www.ukinaustralia.fco.gov.uk; Commonwealth Ave, Yarralumla, ACT)

US Embassy EMBASSY

(GOOGLEMAP); 202-62145600; canberra.usembassy.gov; 1 Moonah PI, Yarralumla, ACT)

Emergencies

For police, ambulance or fire emergencies, dial 000

Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA; ≥1800 806 2921800 806 292)

Poisons Information Centre (2131126)

Police (MAP) GOOGLE MAP) There's a centrally located police station at 228 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

Translating & Interpreting Service (2131450) Available 24 hours.

Food

For an overview of Melbourne and Victoria's culinary scene, see the Food & Drink chapter

FOOD PRICE RANGES

The following price ranges, used throughout this book, refer to a standard main course meal.

- →\$ less than \$15
- →\$\$ \$15 to \$32
- →\$\$\$ more than \$32

Gay & Lesbian Travellers

Homosexuality is legal and the age of consent is 17. The straight community's attitude towards gays and lesbians is, on the whole, open-minded and accepting.

The gay scene in Victoria is squarely based in Melbourne, where there are exclusive venues and accommodation options. Around the state, places such as Daylesford and Hepburn Springs, Phillip Island and the Mornington Peninsula have a strong gay presence and accommodation catering for gays and lesbians. Melbourne's Midsumma Festival in January is the state's biggest GLBQT festival and incorporates the annual pride march. Daylesford's ChillOut Festival (www.chilloutfestival.com.au) in March is the biggest gay and lesbian event in regional Victoria.

Health

Few travellers to Victoria will experience anything worse than a bad hangover, but if you do fall ill the standard of hospitals and health care is high. Tap water is safe to drink throughout the state.

Health Care

Australia's Medicare system (www.medicareaustralia.gov.au) covers Australian residents for some health-care costs and emergency care (with reciprocity for citizens of New Zealand, Belgium, UK, Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Italy, Malta and Ireland). Melbourne and the major provincial centres have high-quality hospitals.

Insurance

While the standard of health care in Australia is high and is not overly expensive by international standards, travel insurance should be considered essential for international travellers.

Vaccinations

Proof of yellow-fever vaccination is required only from travellers entering Australia within six days of having stayed overnight or longer in a yellow fever—infected country. No specific vaccinations are required to travel in Victoria.

Internet Access

In Melbourne, wi-fi is available free at central city spots such as Federation Sq, Flinders Street Station, Crown Casino and the State Library. Most accommodation options have wi-fi and computer terminals, costing anything from free to \$10 per hour. Many cafes and bars also offer wi-fi access.

If you don't have a laptop or smart phone, there are plenty of libraries around Melbourne with terminals, though you'll need to bring ID to sign up and prebooking is recommended. Locations with free internet include City Library, St Kilda Library (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 29209 6655; Www.library.portphillip.vic.gov.au; 150 Carlisle St; 3, 3a, 16). Fitzroy Library (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 21300 695 427; 128 Moor St; 1112) and Prahran Library (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 28290 3344; 180 Greville St; 78). Otherwise there are plenty of internet cafes for around \$2 per hour. In regional Victoria, you'll find free internet access at the local library, and sometimes at the tourist office. Most caravan parks, hotels and motels offer wi-fi these days (sometimes free).

Legal Matters

Most travellers won't have any contact with the Victorian police or any other part of the legal system. Those who do are likely to experience these while driving. There is a significant police presence on Victoria's roads, and they have the power to stop your car and ask to see your licence (you're required by law to carry it), to check your vehicle for road-worthiness, and also to insist that you take a breath test for alcohol. The blood alcohol limit is 0.05%.

If you are arrested, it's your right to telephone a friend, relative or lawyer before any formal questioning begins.

Medical Services

Visitors from Belgium, Finland, Italy, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Slovenia, Sweden and the UK have reciprocal health-care agreements with Australia and can access cheaper health services through Medicare. In an emergency, call 2000.

Mulqueeny Midnight Pharmacy (MAP) GOOGLE MAP; 203-9510 3977; 416 High St, cnr Williams Rd, Windsor; €9am-midnight; 6) Late-night pharmacy.

Royal Children's Hospital (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9345 5522; www.rch.org.au; cnr Flemington Rd & Gatehouse St, Parkville)

Royal Melbourne Hospital (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9342 7000; www.rmh.mh.org.au; cnr Grattan St & Royal Pde, Parkville; 19, 59) Public hospital with an emergency department.

Tambassis Pharmacy (GOOGLE MAP); 203-9387 8830; cnr Brunswick & Sydney Rds, Brunswick; Sam-midnight; 19) Late-night pharmacy.

Travel Doctor (TVMC; MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9935 8100; www.traveldoctor.com.au; Level 2, 393 Little Bourke St, Melbourne; 9am-5pm Mon, Wed, Fri, to 8.30pm Tue & Thu, to 1pm Sat; 19, 57, 59) Specialises in vaccinations and health advice for overseas trips. Also at Docklands (TVMC; MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-8622 6333; Level 4, 700 Collins St, Melbourne; 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri; 11, 31, 48, Southern Cross) and Southgate (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9690 1433; 3 Southgate Ave, Southbank; 8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri).

Money

The Australian dollar is made up of 100 cents. There are 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1 and \$2 coins, and \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 notes.

ATMs

There are ATMs throughout the city centre and in the surrounding suburbs. Most bank branches have 24-hour ATMs and will accept debit cards linked to international network systems, such as Cirrus, Maestro, Visa and MasterCard. Most banks charge a fee (around \$2 or 3%) for the privilege of using their ATM if you don't have an account with them. Almost all retail outlets have Eftpos, which allows you to pay for purchases electronically without a fee.

Changing Money

Change foreign currency at most larger banks or foreign-exchange booths in the city and at Melbourne Airport's international terminal. Most large hotels will also change currency (or travellers cheques) for their guests, but the rate might not be as good as from other outlets. There are a number of foreign-exchange offices on Swanston St in the city.

Credit Cards

The most commonly accepted credit cards are Visa and MasterCard, and to a lesser extent American Express and Diners Club. For lost or stolen card services call the following:

- → American Express (1300 132 639; <u>www.americanexpress.com.au</u>)
- **→ Diners Club** (≥1300 360 060)
- MasterCard (≥1800 120 113; www.mastercard.com.au)
- → Visa (1800 450 346)

Tipping

Tipping isn't obligatory in Australia and you'll rarely be made to feel uncomfortable if you don't tip. That said, tips are always appreciated, especially where the service has been notable, in which case 5% to 10% is ample in restaurants. For hotel porters, \$5 should suffice. Tipping is less common in regional or country towns in Victoria, although a little rounding up never goes astray.

Post

Australia Post (0.3-8847 9045, 13 76 78; www.auspost.com.au) divides international destinations into two zones: Asia-Pacific and the rest of the world. Airmail letters cost \$1.85 and \$2.60, respectively. Postage for postcards (\$2.60) is the same to any country. Stamps can be

purchased at post offices, newsagents and some small grocery or general stores

Poste restante is available at **Melbourne GPO** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 213 13 18; <u>www.auspost.com.au</u>; 250 Elizabeth St, cnr Little Bourke St, Melbourne; 8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat; 19, 57, 59).

Public Holidays

Victoria observes the following nine public holidays:

New Year's Day 1 January Australia Day 26 January

Labour Day First or second Monday in March

Easter Good Friday and Easter Monday in March/April

Anzac Day 25 April

Queen's Birthday Second Monday in June **Melbourne Cup Day** First Tuesday in November

Christmas Day 25 December **Boxing Day** 26 December

Public Toilets

Throughout this ebook, where possible, we have noted the locations of wheelchair-accessible toilets. A great resource is the government-funded interactive map of accessible public toilets: https://toiletmap.gov.au/Find

Safe Travel

Australia is a relatively safe place to travel by world standards – crime- and war-wise at any rate – but natural disasters have been wreaking havoc of late. Bushfires, floods and cyclones regularly decimate parts of most states and territories, but if you pay attention to warnings from local authorities and don't venture into affected areas, you should be fine.

Animal Bites & Stings

FLIES & MOSQUITOES

For four to six months of the year, you'll have to cope with those two banes of the Australian outdoors: the fly and the mosquito ('mozzie'). Flies aren't too bad in the city but they start getting out of hand in the country, and the further out you go, the more numerous and persistent they seem to be. Widely available repellents such as Aerogard and Rid may help to deter the little bastards, but don't count on it.

Mozzies are a problem in summer, particularly for campers near water. Try to keep your arms and legs covered as soon as the sun goes down and use insect repellent liberally.

SNAKES & SPIDERS

Snakes and spiders, some venomous, are quite common in the Victoria bush, but the risk of getting bitten is very low. Snakes are usually quite timid in nature, and in most instances will move away if disturbed. Wear boots and socks to cover the ankles when exploring the bush in summer.

If bitten, a pressure bandage and immobilisation is the best course of action while awaiting medical care. All snake bites can be treated with antivenom. Spiders to watch out for are the redback and white-tail varieties.

TICKS & LEECHES

The common bush-tick (found in the forest and scrub country all along Australia's east coast) can be dangerous if left lodged in the skin, as the toxin excreted by the tick can cause partial paralysis and, in theory, death, although this is extremely rare. Check your body for lumps every night if you're staying in tick-infested areas. Remove the tick by dousing it with methylated spirits or kerosene and levering it out, but make sure you remove it intact.

Leeches are common, but while they will suck your blood, they are not dangerous and are easily removed by the application of salt or heat.

Environmental Hazards

Bushfires happen every year in Victoria. In hot, dry and windy weather, be extremely careful with any naked flame – cigarette butts thrown out of car windows have started many fires. On a 'total fire ban' day it's forbidden even to use a camping stove in the open. Locals will not be amused if they catch you breaking this particular law; they'll happily turn you in to the authorities, and the penalties are severe.

If you're planning to explore bushland, you should seek local advice before setting out – be careful if a total fire ban is in place, or delay your trip. If you're out in the bush and you see smoke, even a long way away, take it seriously – bushfires move very quickly and change direction with the wind. Go to the nearest open space, downhill if possible. A forested ridge is the most dangerous place to be.

Take heed of the weather forecast if you're heading out to the bush for a day, and be even more careful if you plan to camp there overnight. More people who camp in the bush actually die of cold than in bushfires. Even in summer, temperatures can drop below freezing at night in the mountains and Victorian weather is notoriously changeable. Exposure in even moderately cool temperatures can sometimes result in hypothermia. Always take suitable spare clothing and adequate water and carbohydrates, and let someone else know where you're going.

Swimming

Popular Victorian beaches are patrolled by surf lifesavers in summer, with patrolled areas marked off by a pair of red and yellow flags Always swim between the flags if possible.

Victoria's ocean beaches often have treacherous waves and rips. Even if you're a competent swimmer, you should exercise extreme caution and avoid the water altogether in high surf. If you happen to get caught in a rip when swimming and are being taken out to sea, try not to panic. Raise one arm until you have been spotted, and then swim parallel to the shore — don't try to swim back against the rip.

A number of people are also paralysed every year in rivers and lakes and from piers by diving into shallow water and hitting a sandbar or submerged log; always check the depth of the water before you leap.

SUNBURN & SKIN CANCER

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Don't be fooled by Victoria's variable weather and cloudy days – UV exposure here is as dangerous as anywhere in the country. If you're going out in the summer sun, particularly at the beach, use 50-plus water-resistant sunscreen and wear a hat, sunglasses and shirt as much as possible. Do the same for your kids' sensitive skin.

Telephone

The increasingly elusive public payphone is either coin- or card-operated; local calls are unlimited and cost 50c, calls to mobile phones are timed and attract higher charges. Some accept credit cards; many don't work at all.

- ⇒area code 🗷03 The area code does not need to be dialled when calling from within Victoria
- → country code 261
- international access code (for dialling out) 20011
- →toll-free 21800; 21300 numbers are the cost of a local call.

Mobile Phones

All Australian mobile phone numbers have four-digit prefixes beginning with 204. Australia's digital network is compatible with GSM 900 and 1800 handsets. Quad-based US phones will also work. Prepaid SIM cards are available from a range of telecommunications providers:

Dodo (213 36 36; <u>www.dodo.com</u>)

Optus (1800 780 219; <u>www.optus.com.au</u>)

Telstra (13 22 00; <u>www.telstra.com.au</u>)

Virgin (21300 555 100; www.virginmobile.com.au)

Vodafone (21300 650 410; www.vodafone.com.au)

Phonecards

There's a wide range of local and international phone-cards available from most newsagents and post offices for a fixed dollar value (usually \$5 to \$50). These can be used with any public or private phone by dialling a toll-free access number and then the PIN number on the card.

Tourist Information

Regional centres throughout the state will usually have a visitors centre or tourist information booth in a central location. These are listed throughout this ebook. The following are particularly useful for travellers with disabilities.

City of Melbourne TOURIST INFORMATION

(www.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

Online mobility map and information for people with disabilities

Melbourne Visitor Centre

TOURIST INFORMATION

(MVC; MAP GOOGLEMAP); 203-9658 9658; www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/touristinformation; Federation Sq; €9am-6pm; €1; ■ Flinders St)

Located at Federation Square, the centre has comprehensive tourist information on Melbourne and regional Victoria, including excellent resources for mobility-impaired travellers, and a travel desk for accommodation and tour bookings. There are power sockets for recharging phones, too. There's also a booth on the Bourke St Mall (mostly for shopping and basic enquiries) and City Ambassadors (dressed in red) wandering around the city, who can help with info and directions.

National Information Communication & Awareness Network

TOURIST INFORMATION

(Nican; ATTY 1800 806 769, TTY 02-6241 1220; www.nican.com.au)

Australia-wide directory providing information on access, accommodation, sporting and recreational activities, transport and specialist tour operators.

Parks Victoria TOURIST INFORMATION

(www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

Victoria's national parks service has a comprehensive website packed with park information; national park camping grounds must be booked through Parks Victoria.

Tourism Victoria Tourism Victoria Tourism Victoria

(213 28 42; www.visitvictoria.com.au)

The state tourism body has a thorough website and phone service. Its online travel planner offers maps, travel ideas and a route planner.

Travellers Aid DISABILITY SERVICES

(www.travellersaid.org.au)

These centres, in the **city** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); **2**03-9654 2600; <u>www.travellersaid.org.au</u>; Level 3, 225 Bourke St) and at **Flinders Street Station** (MAP GOOGLE MAP); **2**03-9610 2030; <u>www.travellersaid.org.au</u>/flinders-street; Main Concourse, Flinders St Station; Sun-Thu 8am-8pm, Fri-Sat

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

8am-10pm) and Southern Cross Station (MAP GOOGLE MAP); 203-9670 2072; www.travellersaid.org.au/southern-cross; Lower Concourse, Southern Cross Station; Mon-Sun 7am-10pm), are particularly helpful to those with special needs and offer a variety of facilities to travellers, including showers, baby-change facilities, toilets, lounge area, public telephone, lockers, stroller and wheelchair hire, and ironing facilities.

VicDeaf TOURIST INFORMATION

(203-9657 8111; <u>www.vicdeaf.com.au</u>)

Auslan interpreter service available.

VicRoads GOVERNMENT

(2131171; www.vicroads.vic.gov.au)

Supplies parking permits for disabled drivers.

Vision Australia TOURIST INFORMATION

(21300 847 466; www.visionaustralia.org.au)

The Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind has become part of this national organisation.

RESOURCES FOR TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Attendant Care Agencies

There are literally dozens of agencies in Melbourne (and larger towns/cities in Victoria) that supply attendant care. We certainly couldn't recommend any particular agency as needs and expectations, as well as service delivery, vary so widely. Many of the Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) listed below either offer attendant care services themselves or will recommend agencies suited to your needs. The Victorian Transport Accident Commission, which compensates victims of traffic accidents, publishes a list of approved agencies, with contact details, on its website: <a href="www.tac.vic.gov.au/providers/fees-and-policies/policy/attendant-care/choosing-an-attendant-care-agency/2/choosing-an-attendant-car

Continence & Medical Supplies

- → Independence Australia (www.independenceaustralia.com) Supplies a broad range of services for disabled and aged clients, including attendant care, and equipment, including a full range of continence supplies. Probably Melbourne's largest supplier.
- → White Cross (<u>www.whitecross.com.au</u>) Geelong-based organisation that operates throughout Victoria, supplying continence supplies and hiring out a wide range of bathroom and bedroom equipment and mobility aids.

Disabled People's Organisations

The following organisations' websites list upcoming events, and feature the latest news and how to access support services for your particular disability. Check out the organisations listed in the Accessible Sport chapter, too.

- AQA (www.aqavic.org.au) Offering support and advice, as well as a well-established attendant care service, to the spinal-cord injury community in Victoria; the associated Spinal Hub website (www.spinalhub.com.au) is a good resource.
- Cerebral Palsy Australia (www.cpaustralia.com.au) The national body supporting people with cerebral palsy.
- → Deaf Victoria (<u>www.deafvictoria.org.au</u>) Government-funded advocacy body representing the deaf community in Victoria; there's a decent list of useful links on the website.
- → Divine (<u>www.divine.vic.gov.au</u>) A government-funded website, advertising itself as Victoria's only online community 'for and by people with a disability'; features articles about the arts, travel and lifestyle.
- →Multiple Sclerosis Australia (<u>www.mssociety.org.au</u>) Has local branches throughout the state.
- →Out & About (http://outandaboutapp.com.au/) Download this relatively new and useful location-based mobile app from Villa Maria, which gives accessibility data on a wide range of venues and the opportunity to add your own review/feedback.
- People with Disability (www.pwd.org.au) Australia-wide umbrella organisation representing the interests of all people with a disability; sign up for its great daily newsfeed and active Twitter account.
- → Scope (www.scopevic.org.au/circ) Scope is a not-for-profit organisation that provides a wide range of disability services in Victoria. Its website lists the host of services and resources on offer for people with various disabilities, including those with communication issues.
- Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (www.scia.org.au) New South Wales-based organisation operating Australia-wide, offering a wide range of support and services to the spinal-cord injury community.
- → Vic Deaf (<u>www.vicdeaf.com.au</u>) Peak Victorian body serving the deaf community; you can book an interpreter or access Auslan translation or video productions.
- → Vision Australia (<u>www.visionaustralia.org</u>) A leading not-for-profit provider of blindness- and low-vision-services in Australia; the website also features an online shop.
- →Yooralla (www.yooralla.com.au) This umbrella organisation stands for 'a fair go for all people with disabilities'; although it may not be of any immediate use to a short-term visitor, its staff is very knowledgeable and always willing to give advice and support. The Resources tab on its website might also come in handy. This organisation operates the UCAN Cafe in Williamstown.

 Government
- Arts Access Victoria (www.artsaccess.com.au/about/about-aav) Not so much a public-facing organisation as a body promoting inclusion in the arts for people with a disability; nonetheless, there is some information on current programs and exhibitions of interest and how disabled people can become involved in the arts. What might be most useful is the comprehensive and searchable list of organisations and resources, under the Directory tab. The Useful Links section (hidden under the Access Program menu) includes a full list of municipal council contact details.
- → City of Melbourne disability services
 (www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/CommunityServices/DisabilityServices/Pages/Disabilityservices.aspx) The main landing page for disability services provided by the City of Melbourne; use the menu on the left-hand side. Be aware that some of the information on this site (eg the City Eating and City Bars guides) is quite dated.
- → City of Melbourne map (http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/index.html) The City of Melbourne has just released its new Explore Melbourne interactive map with some useful overlays, such as Essential Services and Community Facilities and Services. Of particular interest to wheelchair users is the three-tier Mobility overlay: manual wheelchair limit (1:20), assisted wheelchair limit (1:14) and steep gradient (> 1:14). Unfortunately, accessible tram stops in the CBD are not marked.
- Nican (www.nican.com.au) A government-funded organisation that supplies information on recreation, tourism, sport and the arts for people with disabilities, with a useful searchable database.
- ▶ Parks Victoria accessibility program (http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/visit/improving-park-access-for-all) The main landing page for Parks Victoria's accessibility and inclusion program with plenty of useful parks access information, contact phone numbers and links for booking all-terrain chairs, both within the Parks Victoria system and from regional councils. Scroll to the bottom of the page for some other useful external links.
- → Visit Victoria (<u>www.visitvictoria.com/Information/Accessible-Victoria-Travel-Info-Melbourne-Victoria-Australia.aspx</u>) The official tourism body's accessible Melbourne page, giving links to various other web resources.

In addition to the links above, it may be worth visiting individual local councils' webpages and typing 'accessibility' into their search engine to see what each local authority offers. A full list of Victorian local councils' home pages can be found here: www.vic.gov.au/government-economy/local-councils/victorian-local-councils.html

Mobility

Linds (www.lindsrehab.com.au) Supplies mobility and rehabilitation equipment for people with disabilities, including hire of manual and electric wheelchairs, portable hoists and ramps, and crutches. Stocks a broad selection of spare parts and offers a manual and electric

wheelchair repair service.

→Mobility Aids Australia (<u>www.mobilityaids.com.au</u>) A division of Independence Australia; hires out a variety of mobility aids and equipment such as shower commodes.

Visas

All visitors to Australia need a visa (only New Zealand nationals are exempt, and even they receive a 'special category' visa on arrival). Application forms for the several types of visa are available from Australian diplomatic missions overseas, travel agents or the website of the **Department of Immigration & Border Protection** (www.immi.gov.au).

If you are from a country not covered by either the eVisitor or ETA categories, or you want to stay longer than three months, you'll need to apply for a tourist visa.

Electronic Travel Authority (ETA)

Passport holders from eight countries that aren't part of the eVisitor scheme – Brunei, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and the USA – can apply for either a visitor or business ETA. These are valid for 12 months, with stays of up to three months on each visit. You can apply for the ETA online (www.eta.immi.gov.au), which attracts a nonrefundable service charge of \$20.

eVisitor

Many European passport holders are eligible for a free eVisitor visa, allowing stays in Australia for up to three months within a 12-month period. eVisitor visas must be applied for online (www.immi.gov.au/e.visa/evisitor.htm). They are electronically stored and linked to individual passport numbers, so no stamp in your passport is required. It's advisable to apply at least 14 days prior to your proposed date of travel to Australia.

Work & Holiday Visas (462)

Nationals from Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Turkey and the USA aged between the ages of 18 and 30 can apply for a work and holiday visa prior to entry to Australia. Once granted, this visa allows the holder to enter Australia within three months of issue, stay for up to 12 months, leave and re-enter Australia any number of times within that 12 months, undertake temporary employment to supplement a trip, and study for up to four months. For details see www.immi.gov.au/visitors/working-holiday/462. The application fee is \$420.

Working Holiday Visas (417)

Visitors aged 18 to 30 from Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan and the UK are eligible for a working holiday visa, which allows you to visit for up to one year and gain casual employment.

You can apply for this visa up to a year in advance. Conditions include having a return air ticket or sufficient funds for a return or onward fare. The application fee is \$420.

VISION-IMPAIRED TRAVELLERS

The following tips on travel for vision-impaired people were provided by Vision Australia.

- → <u>Travellers Aid</u> provides services for blind or vision-impaired people, such as transfers between modes of public transport (eg airport bus to trains), reading documents and filling in forms, mobility-aid hire (such as support canes useful if yours breaks!), and a medical companion service.
- → The Melbourne Visitor Centre and its roaming staff, dressed in bright red T-shirts and usually located at major CBD intersections, can assist with directions to major landmarks.
- → Contact <u>Public Transport Victoria</u> for trip-planning information, including walking directions to addresses and landmarks around Melbourne. The PTV Journey Planner website (http://ptv.vic.gov.au) has accessible versions of its Journey Planner, Next 5 and timetables for those with low or no vision.
- →If visiting Melbourne on a regular basis contact <u>Vision Australia</u> for orientation and mobility training. Staff can also assist with replacing a broken cane or worn-out cane tip.

Guide Dogs

Both federal and state legislation protect the rights of people with disabilities to access public places – including shops, restaurants and taxis – when accompanied by an assistance dog. If you need advice about travelling with your dog guide or a copy of the access legislation, contact Seeing Eye Dogs Australia (1800 037 773; https://seda.visionaustralia.org/) or Guide Dogs Victoria (03-9854 4444; www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au). For information about regulations covering import and export of assistance dogs check with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/cat-dogs/assistance-dogs).

Relief Areas in Melbourne's CBD

Assistance dogs are amazingly well trained, but even they need to answer the call of nature. Here's a list of places in the CBD where they can legitimately 'pay a visit'.

- →Outside The Age building (cnr Collins and Spencer Sts, opposite Southern Cross Station)
- →In the grounds of St Francis Church (cnr Lonsdale and Elizabeth Sts)
- Outside the State Library of Victoria (cnr La Trobe and Swanston Sts, opposite Melbourne Central)
- → City Square (cnr Bourke and Swanston Sts)
- → Federation Square (cnr Flinders and Swanston Sts, opposite Flinders Street Station)
 All areas have bins located nearby, usually near street corners.

SPP E-Book 23/12/201-

Websites

- → Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com) has useful links
- → Broadsheet Melbourne (www.broadsheet.com.au) Great source for reviews of the city's best eating, drinking and shopping spots.
- → That's Melbourne (www.thatsmelbourne.com.au) Downloadable maps, info and podcasts from the City of Melbourne.
- → Three Thousand (www.threethousand.com.au) A weekly round-up of (cool) local goings on.
- → Visit Victoria (www.visitvictoria.com.au) Highlights events in Melbourne and Victoria.

Women Travellers

Victoria is generally a safe place for women travellers, although the usual sensible precautions apply. It's best to avoid heading out alone late at night, especially when no one else is around; if you're out for a big night on the town, always keep enough money aside for a taxi back to your accommodation. Alcohol-fuelled violence is becoming more common in Melbourne's city centre. The same applies to rural towns, where there are often a lot of unlit, semideserted streets. Lone women should also be wary of staying in basic pub accommodation unless it looks safe and well managed.

Like many other places, Aussie male culture does sometimes manifest itself in sexist bravado, and sexual harassment isn't uncommon, especially when alcohol is involved.

The following organisations offer advice and services for women:

Royal Women's Hospital Health Information Service (203-8345 2000; www.thewomens.org.au; 20 Flemington Rd, Parkville)

Royal Women's Hospital Sexual Assault Unit (203-8345 3494, 1800 806 292; www.thewomens.org.au/SexualAssaultInformation; 20 Flemington Rd, Parkville)

 SPP E-Book
 23/12/2014

Transport

<u>Air</u>

Land

<u>Sea</u>

Transport

GETTING THERE & AWAY

CLIMATE CHANGE AND TRAVEL

Every form of transport that relies on carbon-based fuel generates CO_2 , the main cause of human-induced climate change. Modern travel is dependent on aeroplanes, which might use less fuel per per person than most cars but travel much greater distances. The altitude at which aircraft emit gases (including CO_2) and particles also contributes to their climate change impact. Many websites offer 'carbon calculators' that allow people to estimate the carbon emissions generated by their journey and, for those who wish to do so, to offset the impact of the greenhouse gases emitted with contributions to portfolios of climate-friendly initiatives throughout the world. Lonely Planet offsets the carbon footprint of all staff and author travel.

Air

Airlines

Jetstar AIRLINE

(**≥**131538; <u>www.jetstar.com</u>)

The budget subsidiary of Qantas also has frequent scheduled flights to/from Melbourne and Avalon airports.

Qantas AIRLINE

(MAP GOOGLEMAP ; 213 13 13; www.gantas.com)

Australia's main carrier, with frequent flights to/from Melbourne and regional centres

Rex

(Regional Express; 213 17 13; www.rex.com.au)

Flights from Melbourne to Adelaide, Sydney and regional centres, including Mildura and Albury.

Sharp Airlines AIRLINE

(21300 556 694; <u>www.sharpairlines.com</u>)

Flights from Melbourne 's **Essendon Airport** (MEB; 203-9948 9300; <u>www.essendonairport.com.au</u>) to Portland, Hamilton and Flinders Island.

Tiger AIRLINE

(203-90343733; <u>www.tigerairways.com</u>)

Budget flights to/from Melbourne to numerous destinations throughout Australia

Virgin Australia AIRLINE

(13 67 89; <u>www.virginaustralia.com</u>)

An extensive domestic network covering most major cities across the country

Airports

MELBOURNE AIRPORT

Melbourne Airport (MEL; GOOGLE MAP); 203-9297 1600; www.melbourneairport.com.au), often referred to as Tullamarine or Tulla, is around 25km northwest of the city centre. All international and domestic terminals are within the same complex. There are no direct train or tram services linking it with the city but the SkyBus (MAP) GOOGLE MAP); 303-9335 2811; www.skybus.com.au; adult one-way \$18; Southern Cross Station) airport shuttle bus service meets flights and taxis descend like flies. There is a left-luggage facility in Terminal 2 at Tullamarine Airport.

AVALON AIRPORT

Avalon Airport (AVV; 203-5227 9100, 1800 282 5661800 282 566; www.avalonairport.com.au) is around 55km southwest of the city centre on the way to Geelong. At the time of writing, only Jetstar flights to/from Sydney and Brisbane use the airport. Sita Coaches (203-9689 7999; www.sitacoaches.com.au; adult/child \$22/10) operates an airport shuttle, meeting all flights and picking up or dropping off at Southern Cross Station (\$22/42 one way/return). The trip takes around 40 to 50 minutes.

REGIONAL AIRPORTS

Mildura Airport (MQL; ≥03-5055 0500; www.milduraairport.com.au) has scheduled flights to/from Melbourne and Adelaide. During the ski season, Qantaslink (≥13 13 13; www.qantas.com.au) flies from Sydney to Mt Hotham Airport (MHU; www.mthotham.com.au).

Land

Rus

The following long-distance buses depart from Southern Cross Station main terminal. There's a left-luggage facility at the station. It costs \$12 to store a backpack or suitcase for 24 hours.

Firefly BUS

(MAP GOOGLEMAP); 21300 730 740; www.fireflyexpress.com.au)

Day and overnight buses from Melbourne to Adelaide (\$60, 11 hours) and Sydney (\$60, 14 hours)

Grevhound Australia

(21300 473 946; <u>www.greyhound.com.au</u>)

Interstate buses between Melbourne's Southern Cross Station and Adelaide (\$60, 10 hours), Sydney (\$79, 14 hours) and Canberra (\$70, nine hours).

Premier Motor Service

(213 3410; www.premierms.com.au)

Interstate buses between Melbourne and Sydney via Gippsland and the NSW coast (\$85, 18 hours), continuing to Brisbane and Cairns

Train

Interstate trains arrive and depart from Southern Cross Station

NSW TrainLink TRAIN

(213 22 32; www.nswtrainlink.info)

Express trains to Melbourne from Sydney (\$110.70, 11 hours, two daily) via Albury (from \$56.85, 31/4 hours, two daily)

Great Southern Rail TRAIN

(≥13 21 47; <u>www.gsr.com.au</u>)

Operates the Overland service between Melbourne and Adelaide (\$58-166, 10 hours, three weekly), departing Melbourne at 8.05am and Adelaide at 7.40am. Bring your car along on the Motorail.

V/Line TRAIN, BUS

(**≥**13 61 96; <u>www.vline.com.au</u>)

No direct interstate rail services but has train and coach combinations to Adelaide, Sydney, Canberra and Mt Gambier (via the Great Ocean Road).

Sea

Spirit of Tasmania (MAP) GOOGLE MAP); 21800 634 906; www.spiritoftasmania.com.au; adult/car one-way from \$174/89) is a beloved vehicle- and passenger-ferry sailing nightly to Devonport on Tasmania's northern coast from Station Pier in Port Melbourne, with additional day sailings during summer. The crossing takes around 11 hours. A wide variety of seasonal fares are available, from basic seats to private en suite cabins. Vehicles can be taken across from \$89 one-way.

GETTING AROUND

To/From the Airport

Tullamarine Airport

Inconveniently, there are no direct train or tram routes from Tullamarine airport to the city

The most popular airport transport option is <u>SkyBus</u>, a 24-hour express bus service from Southern Cross Station to Tullamarine Airport (20 to 30 minutes; departs every 10 minutes between 4.45am and 1.15am, every 20 to 30 minutes between midnight and 4.30am). There is a free transfer service to several city hotels to/from Southern Cross Station (6am to 10.30pm Monday to Friday and 7.30am to 5.30pm on Saturday and Sunday; no service Christmas Day); otherwise you'll need to catch onward transport or a taxi to your destination.

The fare for a taxi to Melbourne's city centre will start from \$50, depending on traffic (expect around \$65 to \$75, including surcharges and tolls, from midnight to 5am).

Drivers need to be aware that part of the main route into Melbourne from Tullamarine Airport is a toll road run by CityLink (113 26 29; www.citylink.com.au). You'll need to buy a Tulla Pass (\$5.30) or, if you're travelling on toll roads (including CityLink and EastLink) for less than 30 days, a Melbourne Pass (\$5.50 start-up fee, plus tolls and a vehicle matching fee). If you have more time than money, take the exit ramp at Bell St, then turn right onto Nicholson St and follow it all the way south to the city centre.

Avalon Airport

Sita Coaches meets all flights flying into and out of Avalon. It departs from Southern Cross Station and meets all flights. No pre-bookings are required. One way to/from Avalon Airport for adult/child is \$22/10, and takes 50 minutes.

Bicycle & Handcycle

Just about anywhere in Victoria can be good for cycling and <u>handcycling</u>. Melbourne has an excellent 45km network of long urban bike trails, and scant hills.

Cycling maps are available from the Visitor Information Centre at Federation Square and Bicycle Victoria. The urban series includes the Main Yarra Trail (35km), off which runs the Merri Creek Trail (19km), the Outer Circle Trail (34km) and the Maribyrnong River Trail (22km). There are also paths taking you along Melbourne's beaches.

To hire a handcycle, contact Disability Sport & Recreation (www.dsr.org.au)

Wearing an approved bicycle helmet is compulsory in Victoria

Boat

BUS

The only scheduled boat services are the regular daily Queenscliff-Sorrento Car & Passenger Ferries (0.3-5258 3244; www.searoad.com.au; adult/child/car return from \$20/16/112) between Queenscliff and Sorrento and the Inter Island Ferries (0.3-9585 5730; www.interislandferries.com.au; adult/child/bike return \$24/12/8) from Stony Point on the Mornington Peninsula to French Island and Phillip Island.

Car

Victoria has some fantastic driving tour routes, and a lack of public transport in many areas outside the metropolitan area means your own vehicle is often the best way to go.

TOP TOURING ROUTES

Great Ocean Road (Torquay to Warrnambool)

Great Alpine Highway (Wangaratta to Bairnsdale)

Eildon-Jamieson Rd (Eildon to Jamieson)

Grand Ridge Road (Warragul to Korumburra)

Bogong High Plains Rd (Mt Beauty to Omeo)

Grampians Tourist Rd (Halls Gap to Dunkeld; Halls Gap to Wartook)

Around the Bay (Melbourne to Melbourne via Sorrento, Queenscliff and Geelong)

Yarra Ranges (Healesville to Marysville and Warburton)

Wilderness Coast (Orbost to Mallacoota via Marlo and Cann River)

Goldfields Touring (Castlemaine, Maldon, Maryborough, Dunolly, Bendigo)

Car & Van Hire

Europcar (🛂 1300 131 390; www.europcar.com.au) offers the wheelchair-accessible Kia Grand Carnival for hire from Melbourne Airport (Tullamarine) and its Melbourne City office (🛂 03-8633 0000; 89 Franklin St; Se 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Sat-Sun). Check out www.europcar.com.au/EBE/module/render/wheelchair-accessible-car-rental for more information.

Wheelies Van Rental (1300 352 742; http://www.wheeliesvanrentals.com.au/; 16 Tullamarine Park Road, Tullamarine) offers a couple of different models of wheelchair-accessible vehicle, but phone ahead to find out about availability as stocks are limited. A terminal pick-up/drop-off service is available and flights can be met seven days a week. There are some geographic limitations to far-flung places. Rates start at \$110 a day for a seven-day hire.

Crown Coaches (03-9845 1400; www.crowncoaches.com au; 79 Norcal Road, Nunawading) has a variety of wheelchair-accessible coaches, which can be configured according to the number of wheelchair spaces needed: four seats are removed for each wheelchair spot. Availability during school term is limited, since most of the fleet is chartered, but during school holidays you shouldn't have a problem securing a bus. With enough notice, however, they should be able to accommodate your needs even during school term time.

The following major car hire companies are represented at the airport, at city locations and in major regional centres:

Avis (13 63 33; <u>www.avis.com.au</u>)

Budget (21300 362 848; www.budget.com.au)

Hertz (213 30 39; <u>www.hertz.com.au</u>)

Thrifty (21300 367 227; <u>www.thrifty.com.au</u>)

Driving

Foreign driving licences are valid as long as they are in English or accompanied by a translation. If in doubt, pick up an International Drivers Licence from your home country's automobile association.

Driving is on the left-hand side of the road. The speed limit in residential areas is 50km/h, rising to 70km/h or 80km/h on some main roads and dropping to 40km/h in specially designated areas such as school zones. On highways the speed limit is generally 100km/h, while on some sections of freeway it's 110km/h.

Wearing seat belts is compulsory, and children up to seven years of age must be belted into an approved safety seat. Motorcyclists must wear crash helmets at all times. The police strictly enforce Victoria's blood-alcohol limit of 0.05% with random breath testing (and drug testing) of drivers.

Parking inspectors are particularly vigilant in the city centre. Most of the street parking is metered and it's more likely than not that you'll be fined (between \$72 and \$144) if you overstay your metered time. Also keep an eye out for 'clearway' zones (prohibited kerb-side parking indicated by signs), which can result in sizable fines. Central city parking is around \$5.50 per hour, and \$3.20 per hour in the outer central areas. There are plenty of parking garages in the city; rates vary. Motorcyclists are allowed to park on the footpath.

AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

Royal Automobile Association of Victoria

CAR

(RACV; ≥131955; <u>www.racv.com.au</u>)

Provides emergency breakdown service, literature, maps and accommodation service. For roadside assistance, RACV has reciprocal agreements with automobile associations in all other states, and many international countries. Basic membership costs \$95 (plus \$52 joining fee).

DISABILITY PARKING PERMITS

Interstate visitors who hold a disability parking permit have the same parking rights as Victorian disability parking permit holders: they are allowed to park in disabled parking spaces for the specified time and may also park in ordinary parking bays for twice the specified time (upon payment of the applicable parking fee).

Overseas visitors should bring a current permit with them when travelling to Australia. A temporary permit, recognised throughout

Australia, can be arranged before arrival through <u>VicRoads</u>. Apply at least one month prior to arrival by email (disabledparking@roads.vic.gov.au), fax (03-9853 0341) or post (VicRoads 60 Denmark Street Kew 3101), enclosing a copy of your overseas parking permit together with dates of arrival in and departure from Australia, and your address when first arriving in Australia.

DRIVING LICENCES

Foreign driving licences are valid as long as they are in English or accompanied by a translation. If in doubt, pick up an International Drivers Licence from your home country's automobile association.

Toll Roads

Melbourne's <u>CityLink</u> tollway road system has two main routes: the Southern Link, which runs from the southeastern suburb of Malvern to Kings Way on the southern edge of the city centre; and the Western Link, which runs from the Calder Fwy intersection with the Tullamarine Fwy south to the West Gate Fwy.

A CityLink 24-hour pass costs \$14.90 and is valid for 24 hours from your first entry through a tollway. A 24-hour Tulla Pass is \$5.30 and a weekend pass is \$14.90. The easiest way to buy a pass is with a credit card online or by telephoning CityLink.

If you accidentally find yourself on the CityLink toll road (and it's very easy to do), don't panic – there's a three-day grace period in which you can arrange payment. Passes are not required for motorbikes.

EastLink (13 54 65; www.eastlink.com.au), which links the Eastern, Monash and Frankston freeways, charges \$5.69 for a full-trip pass. To use CityLink and EastLink, you can start a 30-day Melbourne Pass (\$5.50 start-up), which will automatically accumulate your tolls and fees.

TAXIS FOR WHEELCHAIRS

Wheelchair-accessible taxis come in two varieties: most are maxicabs that can take up to two wheelchairs plus additional seated passengers, but there are a few converted sedans (mostly Kia Grand Carnivals) that take a single wheelchair plus a couple of seated passengers.

There are two cab companies in Melbourne: Silver Top Taxis 203-8413 7202, best in the western suburbs, and Yellow Cabs 203-9277 3877, best in the eastern suburbs. Even though these numbers are dedicated wheelchair 'hotlines', make it clear you need a wheelchair-accessible taxi when speaking to an operator. There are also many informal taxi networks among the drivers of maxicabs; if you are offered a card, take it because these networks are often more reliable than the main taxi companies.

Be aware that you can wait up to two hours for a wheelchair-accessible taxi, especially during rush hour, so book ahead of time if possible. Even then, you may be left high and dry. Finding a wheelchair-accessible taxi from 8am to 9am, 3pm to 6pm or later at night is particularly challenging.

If you are asked for a \$16 'lifting fee', don't pay it! This fee is covered by government subsidy for holders of an M31 taxi card (available to permanent residents of Australia living in Victoria with a disability). Instead, taxi drivers may run the meter while loading and unloading your chair.

Note that scooter users will need to transfer into one of the passenger seats as it is illegal for them to remain on their scooter.

Public Transport

Metropolitan Melbourne

Central Melbourne is well serviced by accessible trains, trams and buses. The two major train stations, Flinders Street and Southern Cross, are fully accessible, as are the three City Loop (underground) stations that link the corners of town: Flagstaff, Melbourne Central and Parliament.

Melbourne Central Station, on the corner of Swanston and La Trobe Sts, gives good access to much of central Melbourne's shopping and dining, and is itself built below a shopping centre. The station layout can be confusing, and the lifts are tucked away in odd places. To get out of the station by lift, pass through the gates at the busy Swanston St exit; lifts to the upper floors are straight ahead, in the left-hand corner.

An extensive network of **trams** covers every corner of the city, running north—south and east—west along most major roads. Trams run roughly every 10 minutes Monday to Friday, every 15 minutes on Saturday and every 20 minutes on Sunday.

Check **Public Transport Victoria** (PTV; MAP GOOGLE MAP); 1800 800 0071800 800 007; www.ptv.vic.gov.au; Southern Cross Station; Southern Cross Station;

Bicycles and handcycles cannot be taken on trams or buses, but can be taken on trains

To help plan your trip, visit the PTV Journey Planner website (http://ptv.vic.gov.au), which has accessible versions of its Journey Planner, Next 5 and timetables for those with low or no vision. The PTV app also works well for both the motor- and vision-impaired. Large-print brochures and timetables are available free of charge: to obtain them, use the feedback form on the website or call 1800 800 007. For detailed advice on how to use the website, the app and other public transport tips see section on Taking Public Transport in Melbourne & Victoria.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT TICKETS

Metropolitan Melbourne

Melbourne's buses, trams and trains use myki, the controversial 'touch on, touch off' travel-pass system. It's not particularly convenient for short-term visitors, requiring you to purchase a \$6 plastic myki card and then put credit on it before you travel. Cards can be purchased from machines at stations, 7-Eleven or newsagents, but some hostels collect myki cards from travellers who leave Melbourne. Travellers are best advised to buy a myki Visitor Pack (\$14), which gets you one day's travel and discounts on various sights; available only from the airport, SkyBus terminal or the PTV Hub at Southern Cross Station.

The myki card can be topped up at 7-Eleven stores, myki machines at most train stations and at some tram stops in the city centre; frustratingly, online top-ups take at least 24 hours to process. For Zone 1, which is all that most travellers will need, the Myki Money costs \$3.50 for two hours, or \$7 for the day. Machines don't always issue change, so bring exact money. The fine for travelling without a valid myki card is \$212 – ticket inspectors are vigilant and unforgiving.

Regional Victoria

Myki can be used on V/Line train services and buses in Seymour, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, the Latrobe Valley and Warragul. V/Line tickets must be used on all other regional services. For more information, visit http://ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/v-line-tickets/

Companion Card

The Companion Card can be used on all Victorian public transport services. Cardholders can have their companions travel without charge on all metropolitan train, tram and bus services, as well as country trains, coach and town bus services.

TRAM ROUTES

Not all stops on all tram routes are wheelchair-accessible. See the $\underline{\text{Taking Public Transport in Melbourne \& Victoria}} \ boxed \ \text{text for details}.$

Brunswick/Parkville 1, 8, 19, 55, 96

Carlton 1, 3, 8, 96

Collingwood 86, 109

Docklands 30, 48, 70, 86, 109

Fitzroy 86, 96, 112

Northcote 86

North Melbourne 55, 57, 68

Prahran 64, 72, 78, 79

Richmond 24, 45, 48, 70, 75, 78, 109

St Kilda 3, 3a, 16, 67, 78, 96, 112

South Melbourne 1, 55, 96, 109, 112

South Yarra 8, 72

Toorak 8

Regional Victoria

BUS

Victoria's regional bus network <u>V/Line</u> offers both a relatively cheap and reliable service, though it can require planning if you intend to do more than straightforward city-to-city trips. The buses basically supplement the train services, so you'll often find yourself on a train and bus combination, changing services en route. For getting between smaller country towns, a bus may well be the only public transport option and it may not even run daily. In some regions, private transport companies run bus services that often connect with V/Line trains and buses.

TRAINS

V/Line runs a network of long-distance trains around the state, most emanating out of Melbourne's **Southern Cross Station** (www.southerncrossstation.net.au; cnr Collins & Spencer Sts, Melbourne). It's a comfortable and efficient way to travel but the rail network is limited to a handful of main lines, so you will often need to rely on train-bus combinations (conveniently also operated by V/Line). Reservations are required on some services; visit http://ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/v-line-tickets/reservations/ for details.

Regional Train Lines	Main Stations
Geelong	Melbourne, Geelong, Colac, Warrnambool
Bendigo	Melbourne, Kyneton, Bendigo, Swan Hill, Echuca
Ballarat	Melbourne, Ballarat, Ararat, Nhill
Gippsland	Melbourne, Traralgon, Bairnsdale
Seymour	Melbourne, Seymour, Wangaratta, Albury

LONG-DISTANCE TRAIN FARES AT A GLANCE

Sample one-way V/Line fares from Melbourne:

Destination	Fare (\$)	Duration (hr)
Ballarat	12.40	11⁄₂
Bendigo	19	2
Castlemaine	13.80	1½

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 23/12/2014

Swan Hill	35.80	4¼
Echuca	24.60	3½
Seymour	10	1¼
Bairnsdale	31	3½
Warrnambool	31	3½

For information on using V/Line buses and trains, see the <u>Taking Public Transport in Melbourne & Victoria</u> boxed text.

TAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN MELBOURNE & VICTORIA

Martin Heng, Accessible Travel Manager, Lonely Planet

The Public Transport Victoria (PTV) website (http://ptv.vic.gov.au) is a godsend, not least because it has accessible versions of its Journey Planner, Next 5 and timetables for those with low or no vision. (To switch to the accessible version of a timetable, click the accessible timetable link next to the save button.) There's also an app that works well for both the motor- and vision-impaired. Large-print brochures and timetables are available free of charge: use the feedback form on the website or call 2 1800 800 007.

Using the PTV Journey Planner Website

The *Journey Planner* feature has a huge database of landmarks in addition to specific tram stops, bus stops and train stations. It's simple to use: just select your point of departure and your destination and a selection of routes with times, maps and step-by-step guides will appear.

Ironically, finding accessible information is a little trickier. Here's what to do. In the Step 1: enter journey details box, just above the black Show journey button, click the very small link that reads More search options. Here, under Special Requirements, select Only use services with wheelchair access or Only use stations/stops with wheelchair access.

We haven't been able to work out what algorithms PTV uses to determine the results of selecting one or the other of these options, but it appears that the first selection will give results usually based on bus and train services only, whereas ticking the second box will include trams that (hopefully!) have accessible tram stops and low-floor trams. Note that selecting both options won't give you both results and that each option presents different results even when no tram route is available. Our advice is to click each and both options and see what results it gives you before deciding your route. Despite this idiosyncrasy, the PTV Journey Planner is a fantastic resource for wheelchair users planning a trip around Melbourne.

Using the PTV Journey Planner App

Using the PTV Journey Planner App is simpler and more intuitive. Both Apple and Android versions are available; go to http://ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/mobile-apps/ for links to downloads and instructions for use. The home screen defaults to nearby stops and gives you the next five departures. The *Plan journey* screen allows you to set start and end locations, and the blue *Set journey preferences* button will allow you to set your preferred modes of transport and walking speed and will also give you the two options: accessible services or accessible stops. Note that you can set these as your default preferences on this screen or on the *More* screen.

Guide dogs, hearing guide dogs and guide dogs in training can travel for free on all public transport services. Other assistance animals – such as those used by the aged and people suffering from mobility restrictions and psychiatric illness or for medical alert – require an Assistance Animal Pass. Download an application form from the PTV website.

Trains

Metropolitan Melbourne

All 80 'premium' stations, which include all city loop stations, are staffed from first to last train; you'll find a full list of these stations here: http://ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/stations-and-stops/premium-stations/. All metropolitan train stations (except Heyington Station, on the Glen Waverley line) are wheelchair-accessible. Some metropolitan stations have ramps to enter the station and platforms, some have lifts and the best have both. Note that access to some stations for people using a mobility aid can be tricky and you may need assistance (available from staff only at premium stations). If you haven't used a particular station before – or if you know that platforms are accessible only by lift and you haven't been there for a while – it's wise to call ahead to check accessibility.

All metropolitan trains are wheelchair-accessible. When boarding trains using a wheelchair or scooter, you need to board at the first carriage, so be waiting there as the train pulls in so the driver can see you. The driver will place a ramp for you to board and will ask you where you intend to disembark. This system is not foolproof; if you suspect the driver may have forgotten you, position your wheelchair/scooter between the doors so they can't close, since the train can't leave the station without the driver checking why the doors won't close.

Platforms 1, 4 and 5 at Flinders St Station have raised platforms that do not require a ramp to access the train. On the Belgrave/Lilydale line, platforms 2 and 3, city-bound, and Platform 3 Lilydale-bound (but not Platform 4) at Box Hill Station are also built up, as are both Platforms 1 and 2 at Mooroolbark Station. However, do not board the train without first letting the driver know where you want to get off.

At Flinders St Station, all platforms except Platform 1 are accessible via ramps and the tunnel at the west end of the platforms; lifts are located at the east end. Access to Platform 1 is only via the Flinders St entrance at the west end of the platform or by the lift at the east end.

At Southern Cross Station there are lifts at either end of the platforms. Those at the east end are larger; those at the west end fit only one wheelchair and seem to double as toilets – use the lifts at the east end if you don't have a strong stomach or if you are travelling with someone else, particularly another wheelchair-user.

Although there are accessible toilets at some metropolitan stations, they're usually locked and opened only on request, and then only when station staff are on duty. Your best bet is to use the accessible toilets operated by Travellers Aid at Flinders St and Southern Cross Stations.

Regional Services

All V/Line stations and trains, and V/Line coaches on regular timetabled services, are wheelchair-accessible, but again the conductor will need to help you embark and disembark by placing a ramp between the platform and the carriage. Station staff are also available to help passengers with special needs. Wheelchair-accessible toilets are on Sprinter and VLocity trains, while limited accessible toilet facilities are on locomotive-hauled trains.

If you have difficulty carrying your luggage on board you can book your luggage through V/Line's checked luggage service on most long-distance services. Checked luggage must be booked at least 30 minutes before train departure; the total luggage limit for all V/Line services is 30kg. This is available on the Albury, Bairnsdale, Shepparton, Swan Hill and Warrnambool lines. Checked luggage will only be carried to stations beyond Seymour (Albury and Swan Hill services), Traralgon (Bairnsdale services), Eaglehawk (Swan Hill services) and Marshall (Warrnambool services). If the checked luggage service is not available on your service, you can still ask V/Line staff for help.

V/Line has just unveiled Victoria's first Boarding Assistance Zones at Geelong and South Geelong stations in a three-month trial with a view to rolling out the zones to stations across the V/Line network. The zone is a painted area on the platform designated for passengers needing help or advice to safely board a train.

Buses

More than 80% of Melbourne's bus services are wheelchair-accessible on weekdays. Most bus services are wheelchair-accessible on the weekend and public holidays. Some bus routes are fully wheelchair-accessible and others are partly wheelchair-accessible. Some buses can 'kneel' to the curb, but for wheelchair and scooter users, the bus driver also places a ramp between the front door of the bus and the kerb. Many bus stops have tactile ground surfaces in bright colours to help people with vision impairments, as well as Braille ID numbers and telephone numbers to call for timetables.

Timetables are reliable, although online timetables are more up-to-date than those printed at bus stops. On timetables, accessible services are shown with an access symbol ('W' (wheelchair) or 'LF' (low-floor)) on the front of the timetable booklet or next to the relevant service. On website timetables, the access symbol appears above the time of the service.

Bus drivers are helpful, but do vary in their understanding of the needs of passengers with disabilities. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance if you need it. Some drivers are more careful than others, but if you're a wheelchair user and you don't have good core stability and strength it's highly advisable to wear a seatbelt if you have one attached to your chair. When travelling on regional coaches, using the seatbelt attached to your chair is mandatory.

Several different bus companies operate in Melbourne. The largest service provider (around 30% of services) is Transdev, whose fleet of 500 buses is almost entirely wheelchair-accessible. The PTV website indicates the bus company operating the route; customers with disabilities should contact the relevant bus operator for information on which services are most suitable. Bus companies will try to schedule a low-floor bus for you, provided adequate notice is given. A list of contact details is given here: http://ptv.vic.gov.au/customer-service/operator-contacts/bus-operators/.

Regional bus services operate in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Moe, Morwell and Traralgon. Some regional city routes operate with low-floor buses. In Ballarat, all services are wheelchair-accessible.

Trams

Yarra Trams is steadily increasing the number of wheelchair-accessible tram stops across their network. At the time of writing, there were 360 accessible stops, but there is no map telling you where they are. Instead, you need to look at individual timetables or go to http://ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/accessible-transport/accessible-trams/ and use the drop-down menu to discover the tram stop numbers, which you will then have to locate on individual tram route maps. This is extremely laborious. Alternatively, visit http://www.yarratrams.com.au/using-trams/route-guides/ and click on the route number to access a route guide that shows accessible stops (the black dots). The only map of accessible tram stops was created by AQA Victoria and can be found at https://maps.google.com.au/maps/u/0/ms?

 $\underline{\text{ie=UTF8\&oe=UTF8\&msa=0\&msid=204066764651567909841.0004c757c0f3c5691ed2c\&dg=feature}} - \text{but this has not been updated since August 2012}.$

It's important to note that not all 'accessible' tram stops are created equal – the gap between the platform and the tram may vary, which will cause problems for some wheelchair users, particularly those using power chairs. Some – not all – low-floor trams have buttons that alert the driver to activate the 'bridging plate' to bridge the gap between the tram and the platform; press this before the tram comes to a halt.

Selected stops in the CBD have audio buttons that provide real-time arrival information. The newest accessible stops feature pedestrian crossings with flashing amber lights, improved lighting and tactile paving to assist visually impaired passengers to safely cross the road, raised platforms with ramp access, real-time tram arrival information and glass shelters. Vision-impaired travellers, though, should be aware that using trams presents some difficulties (see the section on Public Transport for Vision-Impaired People for details).

There are nearly 100 low-floor trams on Melbourne's tram network, including the majority of services on routes 96 and 109 and some on routes 5, 6, 8, 48, 16 and 72. These trams feature colour-contrasting grab handles, step edging for people with a vision impairment and improved customer-service information via automated announcements and electronic displays, as well as two allocated spaces for passengers using wheelchairs or mobility aids. Some low-floor trams have a call button that overrides the automatic door closing mechanism to allow passengers using wheelchairs or mobility aids extra time to enter or exit the tram. These trams also have a blue external door release button to help passengers using wheelchairs. You can use the tramTRACKER® app to find out whether the next tram at your stop will be a low-floor tram.

High-floor trams have steps, so they are unsuitable for wheelchairs or scooters, but passengers with limited mobility can use priority seats near the doors closest to the driver's cabin.

Mobility Aids

Restrictions on travelling with a mobility aid vary among different modes of public transport. If you rely on a wheelchair, scooter or motorised vehicles, you'll need to consider the size of the area allocated when planning your journey. Most trains will accommodate most mobility aids, but there is limited space on trams and buses. In general, the recommended dimensions are 1300mm (length) by 800mm (width) and the total weight of yourself and your mobility aid should be less than 300kg. To be absolutely sure, contact the relevant operator before you travel (http://ptv.vic.gov.au/customer-service/operator-contacts/). It goes without saying that you will need good driving skills in the confined spaces of public transport vehicles, particularly buses and trains during rush-hour.

For further information on accessible transport services, call PTV on 1800 800 007 or visit http://ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/accessible-transport/, from which much of the above information is taken.

Public Transport for Vision-Impaired People

The following information was provided by Vision Australia.

For people who are blind or have low vision there are some great accessibility features across Melbourne's public transport, including:

- *On-board announcements on most of Melbourne's trains, SmartBus services and some trams
- → The Public Transport Victoria (PTV) hub on the ground level of Southern Cross Station adjacent to Spencer St, whose staff can answer all your questions concerning public transport.
- * Customer service staff at major train stations and tram stops.
- * Public transport apps, website and phone service to help you plan your journey, including walking directions
- *The free Stop Here app, which provides alerts on your smartphone to let you know when you're approaching your public transport stop.
- * Real-time tram information from the TramTracker app.

- * Audible information at tram stops and Smartbus information poles
- * High-contrast (white writing on black background) display screens at lower height at Flinders Street Station concourse (before using escalators to platforms).
- * High-contrast yellow doors on trams
- *The extensive array of tactile ground surface indicators around the CBD, particularly in transport hubs, which lead you to Customer Service Staff and other major reference points. Most suburban railway stations are also well endowed with tactile ground surface indicators.

However, as with any public transport system there are still some challenges. Here are a few tips to smooth the way.

- * Announcements on trains and trams are inconsistent, sometimes inaudible and sometimes out of sync with the actual train stations or tram stops be prepared to ask a fellow passenger for help.
- * When catching trains, board at the front carriage so the driver can see you board and alight some train doors are harder to locate than others.
- * Mind the gap when boarding or disembarking a train: the gap between train and platform varies depending on both type of train and platform.
- * Trams run along tracks in the middle of the road, but many tram stops are located on the footpath, which may mean crossing a lane of traffic (and/or bike lanes) to board. Sometimes there are marked pedestrian crossings and sometimes there aren't.
- * In Australia remember to look right, then left, then right again before crossing the road
- * The SmartBus network has a range of assistive features and technology, but this is not always switched on and volume settings vary. Unfortunately, the driver has no control over this; it is controlled from a central location.
- * Drivers across the public transport network demonstrate varying levels of understanding about the needs of people with disabilities and the aged. Have some alternative strategies (like reminder cards or asking fellow passengers) to make sure you get to your destination!

Tours

Ambleside Tours (03-9720 9800; www.amblesidetours.com, info@amblesidetours.com) offers customised accessible day tours of Philip Island, the Great Ocean Road and other places around Melbourne.

If you want to venture further afield there are dozens of tours throughout Victoria to suit all tastes and budgets. However, not all of these operators offer support for people with disabilities — call ahead for details.

Adventure Tours Australia BUS TOUR

(21300 654 604; <u>www.adventuretours.com.au</u>)

Backpacker-style bus tours between Melbourne and Adelaide, and Melbourne and Sydney, via the coast roads, plus a whole range of single- and multi-day tours.

Autopia Tours BUS TOUR

(203-9318 0021; <u>www.autopiatours.com.au</u>)

Small-group tours to the Grampians, Great Ocean Road, Yarra Valley and the snowfields, lasting one to three days

Bunyip Tours BUS TOUR

(MAP) GOOGLEMAP; 1300 286 947; www.bunyiptours.com)

Tours to the Great Ocean Road, Phillip Island, Mornington Peninsula and Wilsons Promontory.

Echidna Walkabout BUS TOUR

(≥03-9646 8249; <u>www.echidnawalkabout.com.au</u>)

Runs nature ecotrips (from one- to five-day expeditions) featuring bushwalking and koala spotting as far afield as East Gippsland.

Go West BUS TOUR

(203-9485 5290; <u>www.gowest.com.au</u>)

Day tours to Great Ocean Road and Phillip Island with provided commentary (in several languages) on iPods

Groovy Grape BUS TOUR

(**1800** 661 177; <u>www.groovygrape.com.au</u>)

Backpacker-style minibus with tours between Adelaide and Melbourne via the Great Ocean Road

Steamrail Victoria TRAINTOUR

(203-98441122; www.steamrail.com.au)

For steam-train devotees, and those who are looking for an unusual day out, this not-for-profit organisation puts old trains back on the tracks for jaunts to various country destinations around the state.

Wild-Life Tours

BUS TOUR

(21300 661 730; <u>www.wildlifetours.com.au</u>)

One- to three-day trips to the Grampians and Phillip Island, and Melbourne to Adelaide via the Great Ocean Road

Behind the Scenes

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We love to hear from travellers – your comments keep us on our toes and help make our books better. Our well-travelled team reads every word on what you loved or loathed about this book. Although we cannot reply individually to postal submissions, we always guarantee that your feedback goes straight to the appropriate authors, in time for the next edition. Each person who sends us information is thanked in the next edition – the most useful submissions are rewarded with a selection of digital PDF chapters.

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Luke Savage (Accessible Melbourne)

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Top: Lawn bowls player, Disability Sport & Recreation © Middle: Woman & guide dog, Image Source / Getty Images ©

Bottom: Tennis player, Tiffany Mather / Mather Photography / Photoability.net ©

THIS BOOK

This 1st edition of Lonely Planet's *Accessible Melbourne* guidebook was based closely on the 9th edition of Lonely Planet's *Melbourne & Victoria* guidebook. *Melbourne & Victoria* was researched and written by Anthony Ham, Trent Holden and Kate Morgan, with Maryanne Netto as Commissioning Editor and Tasmin Waby as Destination Editor.

Accessible Melbourne was commissioned in Lonely Planet's Melbourne office and produced by the following

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OURSTORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap.* Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS

Anthony Ham

Coordinating Author of the 9th edition of Melbourne & Victoria

Anthony was born in Melbourne, grew up in Sydney and spent much of his adult life travelling the world. He recently returned to Australia after 10 years living in Madrid. In this coastal odyssey he found a perfect fit for his passion for wild landscapes that reminded him just how much he missed the land of his birth. He brings to the book the unique perspective of knowing the land intimately and yet seeing it anew as if through the excited eyes of an outsider.

Trent Holden

Contributing Author of the 9th edition of Melbourne & Victoria

Trent's a proud Victorian who's certain he lives in the best city in the world. A rabid AFL footy fan (carn the Hawks!) and cricket tragic, he's an equally passionate supporter of Melbourne's underground rock'n'roll scene. He's also spent several years living down the Great Ocean Road and has had a stint in country Victoria in Trentham. Melbourne & Victoria was Trent's 15th title for Lonely Planet, covering destinations across Asia and Africa

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Kate grew up in the southeastern suburb of Frankston before living for several years in the seaside suburb of St Kilda and finally crossing the river to the inner-north neighbourhood of Northcote. She's spent the past few years travelling the world writing guidebooks and has recently relocated to London as Lonely Planet's Destination Editor for Western Europe. Kate loves coming home to Melbourne for a good coff ee, the great live-music scene and trips down the Great Ocean Road.

Luke Savage

Digital Content Producer & Author of Accessible Melbourne

Luke has spent most of his 40-odd years living, working and mucking around in Melbourne, while also travelling around enough to not be too much of a dullard. This is his first book for Lonely Planet although he has worked at the company's Footscray HQ for more than eight years in the area of digital and mobile content. Luke became interested in accessible travel while working on mobile products, and has immensely enjoyed working on *Accessible Melbourne*.

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