

Melbourne



Melbourne is a city you need to get to know. It might not immediately take your breath away and its many charms aren't always apparent on first meeting, but there's no doubt this city will get under your skin.

Few cities grew as fast and furiously as this one, as it launched itself onto the world stage with an arriviste swagger and a gold-tinted twinkle in its eye. With its Victorian streetscapes and genteel demeanour, Melbourne was considered the most British of Australian cities. These days, it possesses both an adopted European grace and a nonstop energy more akin to the urban hubs of Asia.

Melbourne's citizens look as diverse as they are. It's a city of immigrants whose backgrounds usually span multiple ethnicities. They're good-looking too, though that can be more about culture than nature. Melbournians are passionate about enjoying life: food, fashion, sport and socialising are cherished. Its many bars, cafés and restaurants draw on the best from Europe and Asia, whilst retaining an easy-going, quintessentially Australian feel.

Melbourne is brainy, industrious, imaginative and creative: prolific in architecture, performance, live music and the visual arts, but endlessly self-deprecating. It's one of the world's youngest cities yet also one of the longest-inhabited places on Earth. Melbourne is a city worth exploring: let it win you over.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the world-class **Melbourne Zoo** (p87) and **Royal Botanic Gardens** (p86)
- Sip a latte and watch the eclectic crowd on **Brunswick St** (p87)
- Head to seaside **St Kilda** (p88) for cafés, stylish nightlife, a soak in the **St Kilda Sea Baths** (p88) or a cake on Acland St
- Catch a movie at ACMI in **Federation Square** (p81) or check out the Australian art at the **Ian Potter Centre: National Galley of Victoria Australia** (p81)
- Get caught-up in the roar of the crowd at a footy match at the **Melbourne Cricket Ground** (p99)
- Immerse yourself in the **Queen Victoria Market** (p83)
- Get seriously fashionable in the city's **boutiques** (p99)



MELBOURNE IN...

Two Days

Start at **Federation Square** (p81) and take our **walking tour** (p88) ending with lunch at **Journal Canteen** (p95). In the afternoon, visit the esteemed **Ian Potter Centre: National Galley of Victoria Australia** (p81) or catch a film at **ACMI** (p81). Take a stroll through **Chinatown** (p82) and chow-down on some Cantonese before an evening of **bar-hopping** (p97) around the city laneways.

On the second day visit the bustling **Queen Victoria Market** (p83) and wander around **Melbourne Museum** (p87) before heading to **Brunswick St** (p87) to drink proper coffee, have dinner at **Añada** (p96) and settle into an evening of rowdy music at the **Tote** (p98).

Four Days

Same first two days. On day three visit the **Royal Melbourne Zoo** (p87) or the **Royal Botanic Gardens** (p86). Have lunch in one of the city's arcades and follow it up with a **Melbourne River Cruise** (p90) and see the city from the Yarra. Catch a performance at the **Victorian Arts Centre** (p86) before or after dinner and drinks at **Cookie** (p95).

On your fourth day head to **St Kilda** (p88), Soak in the **St Kilda Sea Baths** (p88), savour a cake in **Acland St**, stroll along **St Kilda Pier**, have some fish and chips and then enjoy the tradition that is the **Espy** (p97).

One Week

A full week will allow you to squeeze in the **Immigration Museum** (p83), have a monster shop along **Chapel St** (p100) and visit the **Dandenongs** (p103).

ORIENTATION

Melbourne hugs the shores of Port Phillip, with the city centre on the north bank of the Yarra River, about 5km inland from the bay. Most of the attractions covered in this chapter are within the city and inner-suburban areas, accessible by public transport.

The inner suburbs that surround the city centre, which is known as the central business district (CBD), are like a ring of urban villages. Beside the Yarra River, on the corner of Swanston and Flinders Sts, is Flinders St station, the main station for suburban trains. The other major station, for country and interstate services, is Southern Cross station (formerly Spencer St station), at the western end of Bourke St.

Maps

You can pick up a free copy of the *Melbourne Visitors Map* at the Melbourne visitors centre (p81) at Federation Sq or at the Melbourne visitors booth (p81) in Bourke St Mall. Street directories are detailed and extremely handy if you're driving. They can be purchased from newsagents and bookshops for around \$50. Lonely Planet's *Melbourne City Map* provides excellent coverage.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Borders (Map p92; ☎ 9824 2299; www.borders.com.au; Jam Factory, 500 Chapel St, South Yarra; ☹ 10am-11pm) This bookstore chain has seven stores in Melbourne with huge selections and late opening hours.

Metropolis (Map pp78-9; ☎ 9663 2015; www.metropolisbookshop.com.au; Level 3, Curtin House, 252 Swanston St; ☹ 10am-6pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 10am-7pm Fri, 10am-5pm Sun) Lovely bookish eyrie with a particular focus on art, architecture, fashion and film.

Readings (www.readings.com.au) Carlton (Map pp84-5; ☎ 9347 6633; 309 Lygon St; ☹ 9am-11pm Mon-Sat, 10am-11pm Sun); St Kilda (Map p92; ☎ 9525 3852; 112 Acland St; ☹ 10am-10pm) A potter around this defiantly prospering indie bookshop can occupy an entire afternoon if you're so inclined.

Emergency

In an emergency, dial ☎ 000 – a free call from any phone. Your call will be diverted to either the police, ambulance service or fire brigade.

Lifeline Counselling (☎ 13 11 14; www.lifeline.org.au; ☹ 24hr)

Police station (Map pp78-9; ☎ 9247 5347; www.police.vic.gov.au; 228-232 Flinders La; ☹ 24hr)

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