



Short Trips from Melbourne

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Why Go?

Getting out of the city for a day, a weekend or longer is easy – the question is not why, but where to first? Should you hit the surf beaches down south? Spend a day tripping from one winery to the next in the Yarra Valley? Disappear into the tall forest with a pair of walking boots and a keen eye for native wildlife? Or get downright pampered with a massage and mineral spa?

Whatever your taste or emotion, you don't have to go far out from Melbourne's sprawling suburbs to hit the countryside or coast and get a real taste of what Victoria has to offer. And don't think you have to rough it – Daylesford, the Yarra Valley, the Bellarine Peninsula and the Dandenongs have some of the finest boutique accommodation, cafes and restaurants in regional Victoria, with fresh country air to match.

With a short trip you can experience historic towns, mountains, rivers, beaches, bush, vine-covered hills, cycle paths and wildlife. Now go. Enjoy!

Best Places to Eat

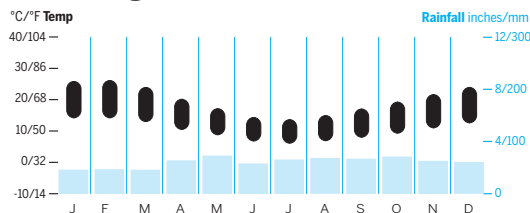
- » Loam (see boxed text, p154)
- » Chowder House (p148)
- » Sault (p147)
- » Yering Station (p140)
- » Lake House (p146)

Best Places to Stay

- » Vue Grand (p152)
- » Observatory Cottages (p136)
- » Delderfield B&B (p142)
- » Lake House (p146)
- » Healesville Hotel (p139)

When to Go

Dandenong



Feb-May Visit the Yarra Valley when the landscape is at its most colourful; grape harvest starts in February.

Oct-Nov Festivals and spring weather make this a good time to hit the peninsula or Dandenongs

Jun-Sep Cross-country skiing at Lake Mountain or a hot winter soak in Spa Country



Short Trips from Melbourne Highlights

1 After a dawn balloon ride, sample Australia's finest cool-climate wines in the **Yarra Valley** (p137)

2 Soak in the soothing mineral spa at **Hepburn Springs** (p144)

3 Steam along on Puffing Billy then cruise the hills of the **Dandenongs** (p135)

4 Explore the historic fort or jump aboard the Blues Train at **Queenscliff** (p152)

5 Commune with native wildlife at **Healesville Sanctuary** (p139)

6 Dine in style at the Lake House or Sault in **Daylesford** (p147)

7 Relax in pretty **Marysville** (p142), then hike or ski **Lake Mountain** (p143)

8 Join the alternative crowd at the **St Andrews Community Market** (p142)

9 Cycle the **Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail** (p141) in the Yarra Valley