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Understand

Victoria Outdoors

Melbourne Image Gallery
Melbourne is the centrepiece of this itinerary, which combines day trips with some overnight stays. Dedicate at least two full days to Melbourne and then hit the road around the region, returning to Melbourne for the night between excursions.

After a couple of days in Melbourne, begin day three by heading southeast across the Mornington Peninsula and make for Stony Point, from where the ferry leaves for French Island. Stay overnight to really appreciate this special place where koalas abound and the clamour of modernity seems a world away. The next morning, return to the mainland and journey inland to check out a couple of Red Hill wineries. Turn back to the coast and continue to the Cape Schanck lighthouse. Next stop is the seaside playgrounds of the wealthy, Sorrento and Portsea, on your way back to Melbourne.

Early next morning, head to the Dandenongs, which offer a cool and leafy respite from the noise of the city. From the Burwood Hwy, drive east to Belgrave and climb aboard Puffing Billy for a steam-train journey through the mountains to
Gembrook. Back at Belgrave, take Monbulk Rd through **Dandenong Ranges National Park** and head to Sassafras for its village atmosphere, then grab something to eat at Piggery Cafe in Olinda and continue on to explore **William Ricketts Sanctuary**. Round off the day by taking in the view from nearby **Mt Dandenong**, before returning to Melbourne for the night.

Start day six by heading from Melbourne along the Maroondah Hwy to indulge in some wine tasting in the **Yarra Valley** before reaching **Healesville**, a lovely town with a fine animal sanctuary on the edge of the Yarra Ranges National Park. Enjoy a pub lunch at the Healsville hotel and and drop into the gin distillery. In the afternoon, head directly west via Yarra Glen and Dixons Creek to the Melba Hwy. Return to Melbourne via St Andrews.

With one day left, spend it touring the charming towns of **Daylesford**, **Trentham** and **Kyneton** via Woodend. Favourite weekend escapes for Melburnians, they are full of fine restaurants, cafes and shops to browse. Make time for a spa and massage at the bathhouse and spa at Hepburn Springs, and head back to Melbourne in a state of bliss.
PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES
The Great Ocean Road is one of the most popular touring routes in the country. Take around 10 days to get the best from this region, starting in the Bellarine Peninsula. Then spend the second half of your trip winding down through the Grampians and Goldfields.

From Melbourne, take the Princes Hwy southwest to Geelong to stroll the waterfront and spend the evening at breweries and the latest restaurant. The next day, drop by the Bellarine Peninsula's excellent wineries before visiting the coastal towns of Barwon Heads and Point Lonsdale, then on to Queenscliff, one of the state's most appealing seaside towns. The Great Ocean Road begins in earnest at Torquay, one of the surf capitals of the world, and gateway to the legendary swells of Bells Beach. Further down the coast, drop in to Anglesea then tour the lighthouse at Aireys Inlet before stopping for a night or two in Lorne, with its fine beach, stunning waterfalls and tasty eating options. Head further down the coast to Wye River for a beer at the pub, with spectacular ocean views, then to Kennett River for koala spotting. Chances are that it's close to sunset by the time you return to the coast and Apollo Bay for a night or two. Next up, explore Cape Otway, then it's on to Port Campbell National Park and its famed Twelve Apostles before spending the night in nearby Port Campbell. Look for whales off the coast of Warrnambool then continue west to quaint Port Fairy.

On the way to the otherworldly Grampians, stop for a meal at Dunkeld's acclaimed Royal Mail. Make Halls Gap your three-night base for your time among the sandstone and granite rock formations in the Grampians National Park. A loop through the gold-mining towns of Castlemaine and Maldon is a rewarding journey through the terrain that formed the basis for Victoria's prosperity – evident in the grand old buildings that dominate streetscapes across the region. Count on at least a night or two in Castlemaine. Detour north to overnight in Bendigo, one of Victoria's rural towns to watch, before sweeping back down through Ballarat, with its art gallery, stunning streetscapes and world-class Sovereign Hill historic park, for the final night of your tour.
Eastern Victoria combines the state’s thrilling coast with a mountainous and deeply forested interior – the unifying theme wherever you go is wilderness.

From Melbourne, it’s a two-hour drive down to Phillip Island to check out the cute little penguins, seals and surf beaches. On your way southeast, sleepy seaside Inverloch and foodie-heaven Koonwarra warrant a visit before spending the night in the art-deco pub in bohemian Fish Creek. Next stop is the breathtaking Wilsons Promontory National Park. The Prom is utterly spectacular, as good for pristine beaches and wandering wildlife as for the remote lighthouse and fine walking trails. A couple of nights in the area is essential.

If you can tear yourself away, follow the coast to the quiet fishing village of Port Albert for the freshest seafood, then rush for the north, passing through Traralgon en route to the timeworn gold-mining town of Walhalla. If you’re after some time out, this is the place to do it thanks to there being no TV reception, or mobile phone or internet coverage. On your way back to the coast, pass through Sale on your way to stunning Ninety Mile Beach, either at Golden Beach or Seaspray. Further east, Paynesville (reached via Bairnsdale) is a fine little detour, as well as a gateway for the koala colonies of Raymond Island. Overnight in Metung, another lovely little seaside town then head on to Lakes Entrance for boat tours, long walks and fine seafood at day’s end.

The next morning, head north to the caves at Buchan, then loop up through the gravel tracks of Snowy River National Park via McKillops Bridge, before detouring into the exceptional forests of Errinundra National Park. Camp overnight in one of the parks, then pass through Orbost on your way to Cape Conran Coastal Park, where the Wilderness Coast really earns its name – soak it up over a couple of days. As far east as you can go in Victoria, Mallacoota has a wonderful end-of-the-road feel to it, which is true up to a point – if you travel from here out into Croajingolong National Park, you’ll really feel like you’ve fallen off the map. Stay three days; you’ll never want to leave this wildly beautiful place.
Plan Your Trip Itineraries
PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

Mt Buller
King Valley
Mt Buffalo
Mt Hotham
Chiltern
Beechworth
Yackandandah
Milawa
Myrtleford
Bright
Power’s Lookout
Mt Buller
Mt Hotham
Harrietville
Mansfield
Eildon
Jamieson
Rutherglen
Chiltern
Yackandandah
Melbourne
Port Phillip

Itineraries
Victoria’s High Country is a fabulous place for car and motorcycle touring, especially outside the winter months, when even the highest roads are clear of snow. With historic towns, stirring mountain scenery and renowned gourmet regions to serve as focal points for your explorations, even 10 days may not prove sufficient.

Start your journey from Melbourne by heading up through the Yarra Valley, over the scenic Black Spur and up to Eildon, the base for fishing and houseboat holidays on Lake Eildon. From here, take the southern road around the lake to Jamieson, a quaint little former gold-mining town with an excellent brewery. Then it’s on to the all-seasons adventure town of Mansfield, gateway to Mt Buller and a base for horse riding and mountain biking; stay a couple of nights. The utterly scenic Mansfield-Whitfield Rd winds up and over the ranges before plunging down to the King Valley – don’t miss Power’s Lookout about halfway along. Spend a few hours in the King Valley – an increasingly important wine region – before hitting the gourmet trail in earnest at Milawa, where wines, cheeses and mustards are all on offer.

As the sun nears the horizon on day five, head for gorgeous Beechworth, a stone-built village that glows golden close to sunset and which has wonderful restaurants, local honey and a brewery. Three nights is ideal here, with visits to the postcard-perfect town of Chiltern, and on to Rutherglen for a night or two to tour the historic wineries renowned for fortified wines and big brash reds. Next up, make your way back through Chiltern to Yackandandah, a great place to nurture your love of antiques. Returning down the Great Alpine Road, detour up spectacular Mt Buffalo and drop your bags off for a couple of nights in Bright, famous for its autumn colours and spring blossoms. From here, branch out to Harrietville and the hairpin ascent of Mt Hotham. Enjoy the expansive alpine views from the summit before continuing through alpine meadows to the historic town of Omeo.
Victoria’s Murray River is utterly unlike anywhere else in the state, with soulful riverbank towns, drowned forests of eucalypts and the semidesert Mallee region not far away. It’s hard to lose your way on this route – although roads in these parts don’t always follow the river, it’s never far away, and sticking close to it means you can’t go wrong.

Begin by flying from Melbourne to Mildura, a lovely town to get acquainted with – we recommend at least two nights; its food and wine are worth the trip alone. Out here, you feel like you’re on the cusp of the outback. To get a taste of what we mean, pick up a rental car and head out for an overnight camping trip at Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, where you can pitch alongside one of the Murray River’s beaches. Or you could take to the water by renting a houseboat for a few nights.

Follow the river’s path through the landscape southeast to overnight in Swan Hill, another important provincial centre by the river. There’s an attractive riverside park and other important landmarks; Swan Hill’s Pioneer Settlement is a wonderfully evocative place to learn about the town’s past. On your way to Echuca, Gunning National Park boasts some of the most beautiful river-red-gum forests in the state and is well worth a detour.

Echuca is arguably the pick of the Murray River towns and deserves at least two nights. Apart from being a picturesque town in its own right – its main street is quintessential rural Australia – its paddle steamers and historic port are where the Murray’s historic role as lifeblood of Victoria’s north really comes alive. Consider sleeping on a houseboat.

Sticking to the river, check out the drowned river red gums of Barmah National Park and continue on to Yarrawonga. Check out Lake Mulwala and hop on a lunch cruise around this dammed section of the river to get among the sculpturelike remains of long-dead trees.
Map Legend

Sights
- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours
- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping
- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating
- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife
- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment
- Entertainment

Shopping
- Shopping

Information
- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic
- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population
- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport
- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

Routes
- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries
- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography
- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas
- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove
OUR STORY
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, Dublin, 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’.

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Having worked for Lonely Planet for over a decade now, Kate has been fortunate enough to cover plenty of ground working as a travel writer on destinations such as Shanghai, Japan, India, Zimbabwe, the Philippines and Phuket. She has done stints living in London, Paris and Osaka but these days is based in one of her favourite regions in the world – Victoria, Australia.

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After a successful career in niche newspaper and magazine publishing, both in his native New Zealand and in Australia, Peter finally gave into Kiwi wanderlust, giving up staff jobs to chase his diverse roots around much of Europe. Over the last decade he’s written literally dozens of guidebooks for Lonely Planet on a disparate collection of countries, all of which he’s come to love. He calls Auckland, New Zealand his home – although his nomadic existence means he’s often elsewhere.

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