

# Understand Melbourne & Victoria

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Victoria's rich and rollicking history doesn't require a textbook – it's all around.

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# Melbourne & Victoria Today

Melbourne may be a great place to live (and to visit), but maintaining its place as one of the front runners in world and national liveability involves confronting major issues of rising costs, urban planning, social inequality, lack of affordable housing, increases in crime, and environmental sustainability. But Victoria is about more than just Melbourne, and regional Victorians have a different take on how those important questions should be answered in the future.

## Best on Film

**The Castle** (1997) Cult-comedy classic set in a working-class Melbourne suburb.

**Romulus, My Father** (2007) Moving father-and-son story set in central Victoria; based on the memoir by Raimond Gaita.

**Picnic at Hanging Rock** (1975) Sensual, haunting film based on the classic novel by Joan Lindsay.

**Dogs in Space** (1986) Chaotic chronicle of the city's punk past.

**Animal Kingdom** (2010) Menacing, moody crime-family thriller.

**Red Hill** (2010) Western/cop-thriller genre mash-up, set in breathtaking East Gippsland.

## Best in Print

**True History of the Kelly Gang** (Peter Carey; 2000) Man Booker Prize-winning novel on the notorious bushranger.

**The Slap** (Christos Tsiolkas; 2008) An incident at a backyard BBQ in suburban Melbourne divides a group of friends.

**Monkey Grip** (Helen Garner; 1982) Drugs, relationships, music and share houses in inner-city Fitzroy.

**The Ballroom: The Melbourne Punk & Post-Punk Scene** (Dolores San Miguel; 2011) Memoir of St Kilda's late-70s punk scene at the infamous Crystal Ballroom.

## The Most Liveable City?

Melbourne consistently ranks as one of the world's most liveable cities. In 2016, Melbourne basked in the title of the World's Most Liveable City for the sixth year in a row, according to the prestigious *Economist* Intelligence Unit. What makes Melbourne so good?

Melbourne always ranks highly for infrastructure and safety, and although the state hasn't been immune to the global financial crisis, Victoria has consistently recorded growth rates that are the envy of the industrialised world.

The city does have some chinks in its armour. Melbourne weather can be glorious, but it can also be wet, windy and changeable at a moment's notice. The current Labor government is facing tough challenges around the increase in crime and drug problems, which threaten the high-safety ranking, while the ever-increasing number of homeless people are left wondering just how this 'most liveable city' claim can really be true. 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, while home ownership has become an unattainable dream for many. To see what we mean, stop by a real-estate auction and watch the prices skyrocket out of control.

## Urban & Regional Sprawl

Urban planning stands at the centre of public debate in Melbourne, not least because Melbourne's population is expected to almost double to 10 million by 2050. All around its outer limits, new suburbs appear, often before transport infrastructure and other essential services are in place. With inner Melbourne already out of reach for many home buyers and renters, these questions grow in importance every year.