

Understand Melbourne & Victoria

MELBOURNE & VICTORIA TODAY306

Melbourne's on a high and the regions have joined the party. But will the good times continue?

HISTORY308

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

FOOD & DRINK 318

It starts at breakfast and ends when you call time; welcome to a culinary wonderland.

FASHION & SHOPPING324

Melbourne knows how to put on its best, from hipster cheek to couture chic.

THE ARTS326

Pack your black skivvy: experimentation rules in the thriving art scene.

SPORT334

Come watch the big men fly, or get out into the state's beautiful outdoors.

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 scale 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.

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

St Mary MacKillop

Dame Nellie Melba

Barry Humphries

Nick Cave

Kylie Minogue

Cate Blanchett

Julian Assange

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* magazine'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