

Great Ocean Road



Great Ocean Road

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Spanning South West Victoria from Torquay to the South Australian border, this spectacular region is rich in diversity. A place of contrasting natural beauty, its hinterland waterfall walks traverse lush forests and its lively salt-washed villages serve up tantalising gourmet fare. Home to one of the most incredible scenic coastal drives in the world, the Great Ocean Road itself hugs the winding coastline to reveal wild seascapes at every turn. Accessible within two hours from Melbourne, the region is perfect for day trips as well as extended touring.

TOP ATTRACTIONS

The 12 Apostles

One of the best-known highlights of the Great Ocean Road, the 12 Apostles is situated in the Port Campbell National Park. The 45 metre high limestone structures leave onlookers awe-struck with their size and beauty, whether viewed from land or from a helicopter. The 12 Apostles Marine National Park, which runs along 17 kilometres of coastline, is also home Loch Ard Gorge, London Bridge, Bay of Islands, and Bay of Martyrs.

Great Ocean Walk

Stretching from the seaside village of Apollo Bay west to the 12 Apostles, the Great Ocean Walk shadows the coastline. Giant eucalypt forests full of wildlife, and meandering estuaries brimming with birdlife intersperse remote beaches where whale sightings are common. Walkers can choose a section of the track to tackle, or opt for a multiday hike, staying in on-trail campsites or enjoy the comforts of B&Bs, hotels or lodge accommodation.

Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve

Located west of Warrnambool, Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve is formed by an enormous volcanic crater and home to koalas, kangaroos, emus, and plentiful birdlife. Visitors can also learn about bush tucker and gain an understanding of the area's rich Aboriginal heritage. There are a number of well-marked, self-guided walks and guided interactive walks available during the day or at night. The onsite visitor centre hosts a collection of Aboriginal arts and crafts.

Otway Fly Treetop Adventures

In the heart of the Otway Ranges, the Otway Fly Treetop Adventures Treetop Walk boasts a 30 metre high treetop canopy walkway - the longest and tallest walkway of its kind in the world. The Zipline Eco-Tour is a fully guided experience where visitors can 'fly' through the rainforest on a series of steel cables suspended up to 30 metres above the forest floor.

Cape Otway Lightstation

At the iconic Cape Otway Lightstation, visitors can learn about the history of the lighthouse keepers, watch whales, learn about the region's indigenous culture and soak up the natural beauty of the Cape. Tour guides are on hand to share their knowledge, and heritage accommodation is available onsite.

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KEY EVENTS

Port Fairy Folk Festival

March

This well-known music event hosted its 40th event in 2016. The Port Fairy Folk Festival program includes 20 international acts and approximately 80 national acts performing folk, acoustic roots, blues, jazz, world, country roots and bluegrass. There is also comedy, spoken word, a children's festival, street performers and a Fringe Festival, plus craft and market stalls, workshops, and one of the best exhibitions of Australian made, hand-crafted musical instruments.

Rip Curl Pro

April

The Rip Curl Pro is the longest running professional surfing contest in the world, and 2016 celebrated the 55th event. Swells roll into the 'Bells Bowl' providing consistent waves for the world's best to battle it out and deliver a show for the thousands of fans lining the beach and grandstands.

Great Ocean Road Marathon

May

The Great Ocean Road Marathon has been running for 12 years. With panoramic views of the Southern Ocean, the famous road race attracts entrants from across Australia to participate in one of the six events each May. More than 6000 runners join the event.



PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

Flagstaff Hill

Warnambool's Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village brings stories of the shipwreck coast to life. Its recently revamped sound and light show now features a new night time experience and an updated daytime show. The site is also now more easily accessible and an update to its wharf area means improved access for onsite boats.

Middle Island Maremma Walking Tours

The Middle Island Maremma Project began in 2006 when there was a sharp decline in the colony size of Little Penguins on Middle Island due to fox predation. With fewer than 10 surviving penguins inhabiting the Island in 2006, it was closed to the public to protect penguin burrows from human trampling. Since Maremma Guardian dogs were introduced to protect the Little Penguins from foxes there has been a steady increase in penguin colony size. Now during summer, visitors are invited to join the 'Meet the Maremma Tours' on Middle Island and experience the project firsthand.

Gourmet Trails

The 12 Apostles Gourmet Trail is a 70 kilometre loop that includes award-winning cheese, whisky, wine, gourmet chocolate, crayfish, ice cream, yoghurt, strawberries and beer. Timboon is a feature on the route with its famous ice creamery and Railway Shed Distillery. It joins other foodie highlights of the region including the Otway Harvest Trail and quality restaurants: Brae, La Bimba and Merrijig. A food trail is also planned for Port Fairy, with the foundation of Gourmet Port Fairy bringing together local foodie producers.

Great Ocean Walk developments

Parks Victoria is delivering the final stages of the \$4.16 million government funded program to enhance the Great Ocean Walk to improve its safety and address the its environmental impacts. Upgrades include: track widening, replacing timber structures on several gully crossings, drainage and resurfacing, new signage, new timber bench seats, new steps, and a 60 metre boardwalk to protect a fragile dune system.

For more information on the Great Ocean Road, visit www.visitgreatoceanroad.org.au