

Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges



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ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Located only 50 minutes from Melbourne's city centre, the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges feel a million miles away with their vast rows of grapevines, towering mountain ash forests and irresistible culinary delights from the farm gates to the Devonshire teas. Visitors can get up close to unique Australian wildlife at the Healesville Sanctuary, appreciate award-winning art at the Tarrawarra Museum of Art, or simply indulge in some of the best cool climate wines Australia has to offer at one of over 60 cellar doors. Afternoon tea and antique shopping in the quaint villages of 'the Dandenongs' followed by a scenic drive through the lush fern-lined winding roads is also a must-do of the region.

TOP ATTRACTIONS

James Halliday Handpicked Yarra Valley Trail

The fertile soil of the Yarra Valley is the birthplace of some of Australia's finest cool climate wines. To help visitors plan their trip, Yarra Valley local, and well-known wine authority, James Halliday, has selected some of his favourite cellar doors to create the James Halliday Handpicked Yarra Valley Trail. The trail includes the likes of Rochford Wines, Domaine Chandon and Oakridge and is best experienced during a two-day stay.

Healesville Sanctuary

Australian animal central, fabulous Healesville Sanctuary is where visitors can get up-close to more than 200 species of Australian wildlife in an authentic bushland environment. The new 'Tales of Platypus Creek' is a world first interactive show featuring the Platypus. Nocturnal by nature and a creature of muddy waterways and burrows, this is a rare opportunity to see the unusual mammal relaxed and at play.

Global Ballooning

A morning hot air balloon flight with Global Ballooning is the ideal way to commence a stay in the Yarra Valley. From high up in the sky, spectacular views over the valley's vineyards, farmland and surrounding mountains can be enjoyed as the balloon is ushered along by the gentle breeze. After the flight, a sparkling wine breakfast is available.

Yarra Valley Cider and Ale Trail

The Yarra Valley is home to some stellar cider and ale producers, and the Cider and Ale Trail highlights the region's best, including Coldsteam Brewery, Giverny Estate, Buckleys Brewery, Kellybrook, Hargreaves Hill and St Ronan's Cider and Napoleon Brewery and Ciderhouse.

Puffing Billy Steam Railway

A genuine relic of days gone by, Puffing Billy is Australia's premiere preserved steam railway. As the century-old steam train makes its way along its original mountain track through the Dandenong Ranges, visitors can enjoy scenes of ferny forest glades, tall mountain gums, panoramic rural valleys and rolling green hills and take in the fresh mountain air.

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KEY EVENTS

Shortest Lunch

June

The Yarra Valley's smaller winemakers celebrate the Winter Solstice and the shortest weekend of the year annually at the Shortest Lunch. Relaxed and family-oriented, the event includes progressive, all-day dining, with cuisine matched to boutique wines. This year, 15 wineries will open their cellar doors inviting visitors to enjoy their many interesting blends and varieties.

Tesselaar Tulip Festival

September/October

For four weeks in spring, the Tesselaar Tulip Festival invites visitors to wander through fields of over a half a million colourful tulips. Located in the Dandenong Ranges, the festival also features live entertainment, market stalls and food.

Yarra Valley Balloon Festival

October

The inaugural Yarra Valley Balloon Festival will be held at the Yarra Valley Racecourse. The event will incorporate Cox Plate racing followed by a Balloon Night Glow, with live music, food and wine and fireworks. At sunrise on Sunday the balloons will take off from the Yarra Valley Racecourse and glide over the valley's vineyards and hills.



PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

Touring routes

To help visitors navigate their way around the region without missing a beat, several trails are on offer: James Halliday Handpicked Yarra Valley Trail includes sixteen wineries, the Coldstream Trail incorporates the area's most popular attractions while Cool Climate Gardens of the Dandenong Ranges features some of the region's most stunning gardens. Also recently launched is the U-Pick Trail, taking in fruit orchards across the region with a chance to participate.

Yering Gorge Cottages

Luxury, self-contained cottages set in the heart of the Yarra Valley with views over the Christmas Hills. The cottages also give access to the Eastern Golf Club, home to golf champion Greg Norman's newest Australian course design. Yering Gorge Cottages come in a variety of sizes, with welcome hampers and plentiful Australian wildlife around the grounds.

Coombe – The Melba Estate

Once the home of Dame Nellie Melba, Coombe – The Melba Estate is a property with an unrivalled provenance. Highlights include the seven stunning acres of manicured gardens, the restored motor house and clock tower and seasonal and predominantly estate-grown produce that can be enjoyed at the heritage listed converted clock tower restaurant

The Piggery Cafe at Burnham Beeches

The Piggery Cafe at Burnham Beeches is a highlight of Sherbrooke's dining scene and the latest venture by Vue de monde chef, restaurateur and director Shannon Bennett. –This is the first phase of what is planned to become Australia's first six-star luxury retreat.

For more information on Yarra Valley and the Dandenong Ranges, visit www.visitarravalley.com.au and www.visitdandenongranges.com.au