

If you're itching to get out there and explore, then make sure you observe all the safety measures in place – keep your distance, wear a facemask and practise good hygiene. The best way to stay informed is to check the government website [here](#) and follow the links throughout this post for the relevant local areas.

Whether you want to relax at the campsite, go hiking, bike-packing, 4WDing, hit the alpine slopes or take a road trip in summer, autumn, winter or spring, this eastern state of Australia offers a choice of adventure for all to enjoy.

Home to the Arts and considered the cultural hub, is the capital city of Melbourne. Drive a couple of hours out and you've got the iconic snow-capped scenery of the High Country, the premium food and wine enjoyed in the Yarra Valley, the forests of the Dandenong Ranges, historic Goldfields, and the spectacular rugged coastline along the Great Ocean Road.

Now that restrictions are easing and Victorian city dwellers are able to travel more regionally, we've curated the best outdoor activities and places to visit on your next getaway.

If you'd just like to skip ahead to certain activities, then click the links below:

- [Camping & sightseeing](#)
- [4WDing & road trips](#)
- [Alpine adventures](#)
- [Hiking & walking](#)

Camping & sightseeing

Grampians National Park

You can't talk about outdoor adventures in Victoria without mentioning the heritage-listed Grampians National Park, one of the most popular areas in the state for hikers, campers or climbers.

Known traditionally as Gariwerd, the park has a large number of culturally significant Aboriginal art paintings that are more than 20,000 years old, and you can learn more about the history at the Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre [nearby](#).

Book a [campsite](#) in advance, and use that as a base to explore the park on foot. It wouldn't be the full Grampians experience without checking out the Pinnacle walks, MacKenzie Falls and the highest peak in the park – Mount William. Bring along your fishing tackle and kayak so you can while away the hours at Lake Wartook, or if an overnight hike is more your speed, pack your lightweight gear and walk the Mt Thackeray Overnight Hike, Major Mitchell Plateau or the famous Grampians Peaks Trail.

It's a good idea to check through the [Parks Victoria](#) website for up-to-date info on health and safety so you don't hit any snags once you're there.



The Grampians is ready for adventure. Image: Roaming The Outback

Howqua Hills/Sheepyard Flat

The [Howqua Hills Historic Area](#), colloquially known as Sheepyard, is a 3-4 hour drive North East of Melbourne. This spot was once an old gold mining settlement and is the traditional country of the Taungurung landowners, so it has a rich cultural history that's well worth learning about when you're there.

Pack a picnic and do a day trip, or load up with your camping gear for a longer stay so you have time for horse-riding, swimming in the river, bushwalking along the local trails, or to explore the area by 4WD. If you head to Howqua Hills in winter you may even get a glimpse of the snow-topped Mt Buller and the surrounding peaks.

Learn more about Howqua Hills and get the latest updates on the Parks Victoria website [here](#).



Camping at Sheepyard Flat. Image: Emma McPherson

Yarra Valley

If you like your nature with a side of world-class produce, wine, and other bevvies – then why not take a cheeky extra day off and enjoy a long weekend in the Yarra Valley. At just under an hour from the Melbourne CBD, it's a fairly quick trip in the car with the fam.

Chock-a-block with activities ranging from walking and cycling trails, golf courses and cellar door wine tastings, to arts and cultural events, well-being resorts and spas for pampering – there won't be complaints from anyone in your group. Stay at the local caravan park or campground or treat yourself to one of the many other fancier accommodation options in the [region](#).

To plan your trip, head over to the [Yarra Valley's website](#) for all the details on what's happening, when and where.



Give your tastebuds a holiday at the Yarra Valley. Image: Balgownie Estate

High Country in Summer

If you're not a powder hound, then don't worry there's plenty to do in the High Country even during the [summer](#) months when there's no snow around.

Head away for a couple of days of camping, mountain biking, kayaking, bushwalking, trail running, or 4WDing. Or if you want to take it easy and let your [tastebuds do the exploring](#), make it your mission to visit all the local craft breweries, wineries, bakeries and cafes in the area.



Even without snow, you can enjoy the delights of the High Country. Image: Ben Trewren

4WDing & road trips



Dargo High Plains

If a rugged 4WD escapade is more your speed, then switch on your wild side, load all your recovery gear, and take a trip up to the [Dargo High Plains](#). You'll definitely need to have lots of experience handling a 4WD and a decent [map](#) to take on the challenges of this terrain. Known for its epically steep 4WD tracks such as the Blue Rag Range Track, Billy Goat Track, and Wonnangatta Station – you can tackle these tracks in your vehicle while taking in the breathtaking scenery of the High Country.



The 4WD trails in the High Country are perfect for experienced drivers. Image: Michael Page-Sharp

Great Ocean Road

Arguably one of the most well-known and scenic coastal drives in Australia, the [Great Ocean Road](#) can be done by anyone with a well-maintained 2WD or 4WD and an adventurous spirit. This road begins at Torquay which is around a 90-minute drive from the Melbourne CBD and runs for 243km, finishing up in Allansford.

Along the way check out the renowned 12 Apostles sandstone formation, the Cape Otway Lighthouse, the Bay of Islands limestone stacks, or just simply gaze out the window at the endless blue ocean as you cruise by.



The Great Ocean won't disappoint when it comes to scenery. Image: Sputnik

Alpine adventures

Mount Buller

You can't really talk about the best of Victoria without mentioning the snowy slopes of Mount Buller. A 3-hour drive from the Melbourne CBD, this ski town is the most accessible major snow resort in Australia and offers all the alpine activities your heart could desire.

You'll need to book your accommodation and passes well before your trip, sometimes even a whole year in advance depending on how busy it gets! Resorts in the area have now reopened, as have all walking and bike trails but read [here](#) for the most up-to-date information.



Hit the slopes at Mt Buller. Image: Emma McPherson

Falls Hotham Alpine Crossing

The [Falls Hotham Alpine Crossing](#) features spectacular mountains, rocky trails, snow gums, as well as the heritage of the Victorian High Country.

The trailhead at the Rocky Valley Dam, near Falls Creek, is around a 5-hour drive from Melbourne. This 37km [hike](#) can be completed over 3 or 4 days and is divided into three legs. It's recommended to walk from November to April to avoid the snow, so stick to the top of

your list for one to hit over the coming months.

Make sure you check the availability of the campsites before your trip and book in so you don't miss out.



The Falls Hotham Crossing takes you through Alpine National Park. Image: Chris Newman

Mt Bogong & Mt Feathertop

Mt Bogong is Victoria's highest peak with Mt Feathertop coming in at second. Both offer an excellent hiking opportunity, whether you choose to undertake the challenge in one long day or spend a bit more time enjoying the experience and carry supplies with you for an overnight hike.

These mountains are part of The Great Dividing Range and are located in the Victorian Alpine National Park. Access to the national park is via the towns of Bright and Mt Beauty, each around a 4-hour drive from Melbourne.

Feathertop is a 21km return hike that starts at Diamantina Hut west of Hotham Village and follows the Razorback to the summit. Mt Bogong is of similar length if descending via Staircase Spur Trail and features incredible panoramic views and fascinating heritage. The trail starts and ends at Mountain Creek Camping Area approximately 14.5km northeast of Mt Beauty by way of Tawonga.



Hiking up Razorback Spur. Image: Chris Newman

Mount Buffalo National Park

Whether it's warm or cold, you can find something fun to do at Mount Buffalo National Park. Around a 4 hour drive from Melbourne, if you head there in winter, you can make use of the toboggan slope, go snowshoeing or just try and build a snowman. Alternatively, throughout the warmer months, you'll be able to check out the waterfall at Ladies Bath and Eurobin falls and dip your toes into the water. Or if you enjoy a good vista and don't mind an uphill climb – take a picnic lunch with you and hike up to The Horn – where at the summit you can see the surrounding mountains from the stone lookout.

You can stay the night at the Lake Catani campsite, or if you're feeling more adventurous – there are two campgrounds available that you hike into instead – which you can book here. South of Mount Buffalo is another spectacular hike-in area that is popular for multi-day hiking, Mount Howitt and Crosscut Saw. The trails here are only open during the warmer months after the snow season has passed so depending on when you're planning your trip, it's best to double-check with Parks Victoria in case they delay the opening due to late-season snow.



Mount Buffalo rewards the early morning hiker with a spectacular view at sunrise. Image: Hannah S

Hiking & Bikepacking

Day hikes near Melbourne

Got a morning or arvo where you'd like to squeeze in a walk? The surrounding hills and forest offer plenty of opportunities for a day hike.

History buffs will appreciate following the old timber rails along the trail from Warburton to Powelltown. Or for views across the local area, check out the Steavensons Falls and Keppel Lookout circuit in Maryville. Alternatively, the stunning scenery at the top of the Mount Macedon Walking Trail at Mt Macedon is sure to take your breath away.

You could also head to the Olinda Falls and Valley Circuit in the famous Dandenong Ranges, or arguably the best spot for day hikes if based in Melbourne – the Cathedral Range Northern/Southern Circuit is situated near Buxton, approximately an hours drive northeast of the city. For details on each one, read through our guide to day hikes in Melbourne [here](#).



The Northern Circuit Cathedral Ranges in Buxton. Image: John Feeney

Great Ocean Walk

The [Great Ocean Walk](#) is 100km long and can be done from end-to-end, or as a series of day or shorter multi-day walks.

It follows the same stretch of coast as the Great Ocean Road and begins in Apollo Bay, passing through the Great Otway National Park then towards the Twelve Apostles National Park, and finishes between Princetown and Port Campbell at Gibson Steps. The trailhead in Apollo Bay is roughly 198km 3 hours south-west of Melbourne and 123km or 2 hours if you're travelling from Geelong. It's easy to access shorter sections as there are numerous car entry points and guided walks with transfers and accommodation are also available.

There are campsites for walkers, that you'll need to book online [here](#) before your trip and for more details and up to date info – head to the [Parks Victoria website](#).



The views from Wreck Beach along the trail. Image: Kevin Leslie

Great Victorian Rail Trail

Whether you're a walker, cyclist or even horse rider – the [Great Victorian Rail Trail](#) is a fantastic chance to stretch your legs and fill your lungs with fresh air. With the option to do as much or as little of it as you wish, you'll be able to fit in a little getaway even if you've got a busy schedule.

It starts out at Talarook, passing through Goulburn Valley, Yea, Yarck, Bonnie Doon – the town made famous by *The Castle* – and finishes up in Mansfield. Pack your [cycle touring gear](#) and camp out along the trail, or book your [accommodation](#) in a resort, cottage, cabin or farm stay for something more luxurious.



Ride the Great Victorian Trail. Image: Paul Goodsell

What's your favourite hidden gem in Victoria?