

Melbourne's freebies

10 great things to see and do in Melbourne, for free.

1 TAKE THE TRAM: a trip to Melbourne isn't complete without a ride on a Melbourne icon the tram. And the best way to get around the city is on the free City Circle Tram. The circuit takes about 30 minutes but you can get on and off as many times as you want. City Circle Trams are burgundy and gold in colour and the stops are specially marked.

2 NGV INTERNATIONAL: Australia's oldest public art museum and home to one of the country's most important art collections with everything from Egyptian and Roman antiquities and Asian art, through to Renaissance, Baroque and everything up to and including contemporary art. 180 St Kilda Road. Open daily except Tuesdays, 10am-5pm. www.ngv.vic.gov.au.

3 THE IAN POTTER CENTRE NGV AUSTRALIA: more than 20 galleries presenting the history of Australian art from the Colonial period through to contemporary art, and includes photography, prints and drawings, fashion and textiles, decorative arts, and a suite of galleries dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. Federation Square. Open daily, 10am-5pm. www.ngv.vic.gov.au.

4 AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE MOVING IMAGE: the first centre of its kind in the world, dedicated to the moving image in all its forms from early cinema to the latest digital media. Two multi-format cinemas, the world's largest dedicated screen gallery with changing exhibitions and movie/art installations, and hands-on public activity, education and production zones. Federation Square. Open daily, 10am-5pm (until 6pm on weekends). www.acmi.net.au.

5 THE AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART: photography, video, electronic imaging, painting and sculpture as well as new developments in sound, movement and popular culture. 111 Sturt Street, Southbank. Open Tues-Sun, 11am-6pm. www.accaonline.org.au

6 ON YOUR BIKE: Melbourne is a great city for cycling. The Bay Trail starts at St Kilda Pier and heads past historic Luna Park before dropping in at a bustling Acland Street café for cakes and coffee, past the colourful St Kilda Marina, parks, restaurants and sports grounds to finish in Brighton, 6km or 40 minutes later. If you want to walk it will take around two hours.

7 QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET: cnr Victoria and Elizabeth Streets, Melbourne. Everything from fruit and vegetables, fresh produce and delicatessen goods to clothing, plants & pets are sold at this market which covers seven hectares (around 1000 traders). Market Days: Tues and Thurs 6am-2pm, Fri 6am-6pm, Sat 6am-3pm, Sun 9am-4pm. Closed: Mondays, Wednesdays, and public holidays www.qvm.com.au.

8 ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS: 35 hectares of extensively landscaped gardens near the centre of the city on the South Bank of the Yarra. They are widely regarded as the finest botanical gardens in Australia, and among the best in the world. Free guided walks or self-guided audio walks are available. Open daily from 7.30am-6pm April to October and until 7.30pm November to March.

9 SLV: take a free one-hour tour of the domed La Trobe Reading Room, the elegant Cowen Gallery and the new Dome Gallery at the State Library of Victoria. 328 Swanston St. Open daily, 10am-6pm, and until 9pm Monday to Thursday. www.slv.vic.gov.au.

10 YARRA RIVER ART: the Yarra River winds through the heart of the city, providing the backdrop for a vibrant outdoor contemporary art gallery. Wander past sculpture, paintings, architecture and a 'soundscape' that allows you to temporarily escape the noise of the city, while you check out spectacular views.



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