



4 GREAT DAYS OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

4 DAYS / 3 NIGHTS

Buckle up and dive into the Aboriginal Dreamtime as you enjoy four great days of food, wine, history and natural wonders on Australia's best road trip.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- The world's most iconic coastal drives, the Great Ocean Road
- Discover the Grampians landscape and ancient culture at its heart
- Enter the 1850s gold rush era at Sovereign Hill living museum

DAY 1

Melbourne to Halls Gap

Depart: Melbourne

O/night: Halls Gap

Distance: 257.3 km

Travel time: 3 hrs 11 mins

Morning

Your adventure begins just over an hour from Melbourne, as you travel along the Western Highway to the historic City of Ballarat. Step back into 1851 with a visit to the living museum of **Sovereign Hill**. And if all that panning for gold works up an appetite, grab a bite at **The Provincial Hotel's** restaurant **Lola**. Named after one of the most notorious characters of the gold rush, Lola Montez, the seasonally driven, modern European menu will also give you a tantalising flavour of Ballarat today.

After you've enjoyed amazing local food and wine, it's time to soak up a little culture. So why not stroll the heritage streets a couple of blocks to the **Art Gallery of Ballarat**, with an awe-inspiring mix of classic, Indigenous and modern artworks. If all this appreciation is making you thirsty, Ballarat's first officially licenced pub, **Craig's Royal Hotel**, is calling. Enjoy coffee or a cocktail in the 19th century front bar, before continuing on Australia's best road trip!

Afternoon / evening

On the drive from Ballarat to Halls Gap, you'll wind through the award-winning Pyrenees wine region. Taste everything from Shiraz to Sauvignon Blanc at top spots like **Mount Langhi Ghiran**, **Grampians Estate**, **Best's Wines**, **Pomonal Estate**.

Now it's time to get a taste for history again, so check out the local indigenous cultural centre, **Brambuk** and learn about the region's first inhabitants.

Sunsets in the Grampians are epic, so if you need help finding a spot, the guys at **Absolute Outdoors** can point you in right direction. If you don't have time for a tour, go straight to **Reed Lookout** or **The Balconies** for stunning, panoramic views. For dinner, you can't beat the American-style smokehouse, **Flame Brothers**. Or you could have your own Aussie-style BBQ at **Halls Gap Lakeside Tourist Park**, before glamping under the stars. Just remember to say goodnight to your neighbours, the hundreds of Eastern-grey kangaroos who are permanent guests.

Mount William Station offers visitors the opportunity to experience a grand early settlers homestead including accommodation in the shearers quarters.



Sovereign Hill

FAST FACTS

Time: 4 days

Distance: 786.2 km

Nearest major city: Melbourne

Price: \$\$

HASHTAG

#ballarat #grampians #12apostles #greatoceanroad #geelong #gstr #roadtrip

DAY 2

Halls Gap to Port Campbell

Depart: Halls Gap

O/night: Port Campbell

Distance: 247 km

Travel time: 3 hrs 2 mins

Morning

Visit a state of the art Aquaculture Centre & Café on the shores of **Tae Rak (Lake Condah)** which offers Aboriginal cultural experiences throughout the World Heritage listed **Budj Bim Cultural Landscape** in south-west Victoria. Gunditjmara guided cultural tours of the landscape show visitors how Gunditjmara people worked with the natural resources and environment of the region to establish a permanent place of human society dating back 30,000 years. Visitors see first hand age old lava flows, evidence of stone huts and fish traps and ancient aquaculture systems.

Now onto the picturesque seaside town of Port Fairy, where you can take a leisurely stroll and lose yourself along the piers and pretty boutiques that dot the water's edge. It's a great destination to find locally made, artisan souvenirs for family and friends.



Reed Lookout, Grampians NP

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Great Southern Touring Route
AUSTRALIA

Afternoon / evening

On towards the rugged, coastal beauty of Warrnambool, if you're lucky enough to be travelling through between May and September, you could spot Southern Right or Humpback Whales as they make their annual journey from Antarctica. But don't worry, there's plenty to see all year 'round, like the fascinating **Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum and Village**, where you can hear the stories of hundreds of ships lost at sea. Or if you're happier in shallower waters, head to **Deep Blue Hot Springs** and soak your cares away, before a well deserved lunch at one of the many scenic, beachfront cafés.

Now to the quaint, seaside town of Port Campbell, home of the iconic 12 Apostles... where sunset is a must-see! First, check in to your overnight accommodation - **Anchors Port Campbell** and **Southern Ocean Villas** come highly recommended. Then, head to the **12 Apostles**, where you can walk around to see the best pink-sky views of the incredible, eight remaining rock pillars.

DAY 3

Port Campbell to Lorne

Depart: Port Campbell

O/night: Lorne

Distance: 142.1 km

Travel time: 2 hrs 21 mins

Morning

Bright and early, head right back to the 12 Apostles and go down the **Gibson Steps**. Here you'll get a different view of the eight remaining apostles from the beach, as your ten toes sink into the cool sand. Then it's back in the car, bound for Apollo Bay where you can visit **Cape Otway Lightstation** - watch out for koalas in the gumtrees on the way! But don't just look at the lighthouse from afar, go inside and climb the spiral stairs. It's only from way up the top at the viewing platform you can experience the magnificent views, and learn about local history from a friendly lighthouse keeper. Don't worry; you can also have a coffee at the café back at ground level!

Afternoon / evening

By the time you arrive at Apollo Bay, it'll probably be hard to keep your hunger at bay. Lucky Apollo Bay Fisherman's Co-op is not just any fish and chips, it's the freshest, because it's the last working fishing harbour on the Great Ocean Road. Once you've had your fill, walk it off with a guided 75-minute tour through the magical Otways with **Wildlife Wonders...** who knows what new furry friends you'll make! Then, journey along the breathtaking Great Ocean Road coastline, where you might see whales, and you'll always see waves.

Lorne is the jewel of the coastal towns to spend the night, with hip Melbourne-exported restaurants like Movida and Coda available for dinner, and quality accommodation like the **Cumberland Lorne** within walking distance.

DAY 4

Lorne to Melbourne

Depart: Lorne

O/night: Melbourne

Distance: 139.8 km

Travel time: 2 hrs 25 mins

Morning

Grab a coffee from HAH Lorne beach and take a stroll along the shore. Then it's time to jump in the car and put Queenscliff into the GPS. And you might want to add a couple of extra stops as **Anglesea Golf Club**, famous for kangaroos, and the **Australian National Surf Museum** are both on the way. If you're hungry, **Jack Rabbit Vineyard** is a must stop at spot. Just remember to ask for a table on the deck to pair the incredible food and wine with panoramic bay views.

Afternoon / evening

After lunch, walk along Geelong's sparkling waterfront, before heading to Little Malop Street for a glass of local sparkling wine at Geelong Cellar Door to raise a toast to the great cultural road trip you've had before heading back to Melbourne.



Port Fairy

