



AROUND THE BAY

Gillian Saxon discovers Melbourne's bayside area with the discerning food lover in mind.

With over 40km of coastline stretching between St Kilda in the north and Frankston in the south, Port Phillip Bay, and its eclectic seaside suburbs are a wonderland just waiting to be explored by sunseekers, adventure sports enthusiasts and nature lovers alike.

WILLIAMSTOWN

The historic seaport of Williamstown was once vetted to be the new capital of Victoria for its favourable position at the mouth of the Yarra River, but it eventually lost out to flashier rival Melbourne for its fresh water supply. Nevertheless, the thriving port came into its own as an important shipping yard and slipway between Van Diemen's Land and Victoria and was the

last stop for punters seeking their fortune during the gold rush.

Now a popular maritime village, reminders of its well-preserved history can be found dotted along the coastline and in the architecture of the quaint shops, cafes, and restaurants of Nelson Place. Local picks include the General Food Co (117 Nelson Pl) for great coffee and brunch favourites and Carter Smith Devlin and Co (215 Nelson Pl) for a slicker spin on lunch offerings from a former fine dining chef.

Cross over Nelson Place to Gem Pier for spectacular views and ferries across Port Phillip Bay, or wander beneath the palms of Williamstown Botanical Gardens - one of Melbourne's first. Finish your day with Spanish tapas and vino at El Burro (209 Nelson Pl) as the sun sets over the bay.

Melbourne
at dawn.
Viewed from
Williamstown.



ST KILDA

St Kilda was Melbourne's first seaside playground for the well-to-do before the artists and musicians moved in bringing a bohemian feel to the area in later years. Today the love affair continues, and St Kilda remains a firm favourite with locals and tourists alike who flock to its breezy bars, kitsch markets, and summer festivals.

Begin your morning with a run or walk along the famous St Kilda Beach boardwalk, past the St Kilda Sea Baths towards Port Melbourne. If you prefer pedal power, bikes can be rented from Melbourne Bike Share. You can also your hand at kiteboarding at the northern end of the beach.

As for dinner choices, St Kilda is your oyster. At Claypots (213 Barkly St), the seafood is fresh off the boat. There's a no booking policy so get in early for the king prawns, crab, and fish of the day. If your ship is steering towards the beach, head to Captain Baxter (10/18 Jacka Blvd) for sophisticated sundown sipping out on the deck.

Around to Fitzroy Street and you'll discover St Kilda's quirkier side as you step into the Laika cocktail bar (9 Fitzroy St). Here, the beach meets old world charm as art deco light fittings sparkle over the dark wood bar. Go below to the hidden basement bar that was only re-discovered in recent years during a renovation.



BRIGHTON

Brighton, one of Melbourne's first suburbs, is an eclectic mix of heritage architecture, modern beachside living, and boutique shopping.

Charge your morning with an exceptional coffee served by the 2016 Latte Art champion barista, Nobu, at Super Random (416 New St) then wander down to the brightly coloured bathing boxes on Brighton Beach (Dendy St & The Esplanade). This row of iconic weatherboard boxes is a relic of the Victorian era remaining virtually unchanged except for the individual owner's artistic enhancements.

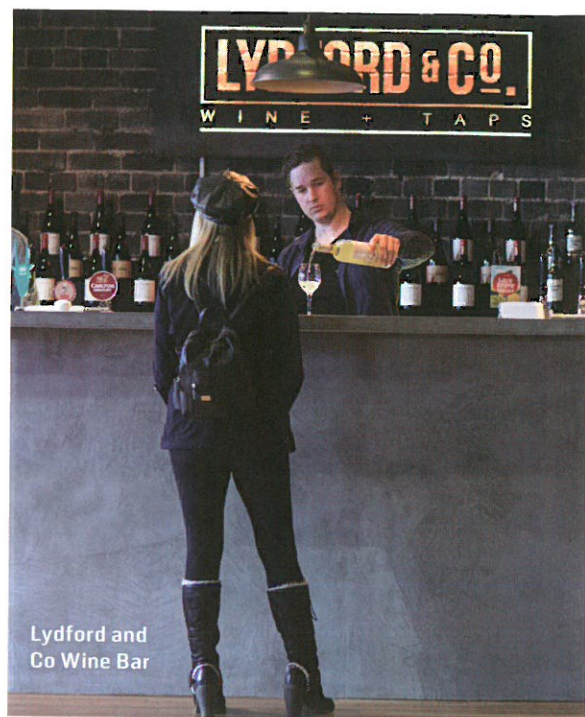
In town, Church and Bay Streets form part of the bayside's prime shopping and entertainment precinct with 200 retailers complemented by casual and high-end dining options, intimate bars and the Palace Dendy Cinema. Here you'll also find Half Moon, Brighton's premier pub (120 Church St). Enjoy drinks and dinner in one of six light and airy, indoor spaces or outdoor areas in this slick reimagining of a 1960's pub.

MOORABBIN & HIGHETT

A short ten-minute drive south from beachside Brighton will bring you to the inner south-eastern suburbs of Moorabbin & Highett.

For nature lovers, Karkarook Park is a 15-hectare trail park and lake tucked away amongst suburbia. The man-made lake is perfect for kayaking, sailing or a spot of fishing for Rainbow Trout. If you enjoy a round of golf, there are no less than six premium golf clubs within a 5km radius including Sandringham Golf Links, Royal Melbourne Golf Club to the west and Kingston Heath Golf Club and Capital Golf Course to the east.

Just across the road, you'll find Hawker Typhoon (292 Highett Rd) serving authentic northern Vietnamese street food made for sharing. After dinner, pop next door for a cheeky cocktail at sister venue Hawker Bar.



CHELTENHAM

Down the road from Moorabbin and Highett, Cheltenham is all about shopping till you drop. DFO Moorabbin (250 Centre Dandenong Rd) has more than 100 stores with discounts on casual and designer clothing, homewares, appliances and electrical goods. If you've still got cash to burn, Westfield Southland (1239 Nepean Hwy) is located a mere 5km away. Book in with one of the centre's personal stylists for a new look and wardrobe edit.

A visit to Cheltenham and surrounds is also not complete without a visit to the all day diner, The Garden of Good and Evil. Pop for breakfast from 7.30am, try the Spanish/ South American-leaning tapas from lunchtime onwards or drop in later for a drink and late night snack.

Lydford and Co Wine Bar, pictured above (114/116 Nepean Hwy), in nearby Mentone, is the area's newest kid on the block. It serves old school cocktails while supporting local brewers, winemakers, and distillers in Victoria with its extensive drinks list. Enjoy live music every Sunday afternoon from 4pm.

The Boathouse restaurant



FRANKSTON

At the south-eastern end of Port Phillip Bay, Frankston signals the beginning of the picturesque Mornington Peninsula. Diverse coastal experiences including waterfront boardwalks, pristine beaches, sculpture park and off-road trails rise to meet Olivers Hill Lookout (Frankston's highest point) with a spectacular view across the bay to Geelong and Melbourne.

Follow the foreshore to the Landmark Bridge and along the scenic Kananook Creek. Perched in amongst the trees there you'll find The Boathouse restaurant, pictured above, with a modern Australian menu of locally sourced produce served with Mornington Peninsula wines. It's Frankston's best and perfect for a long lunch or special dinner with a view.

After dinner take advantage of Frankston's thriving arts and culture scene. The Frankston Arts Centre regularly hosts local and international artists and theatre productions as well as exhibitions and community programs.

Nearby in Langwarrin, Cruden Farm (60 Cranbourne Rd) is the former home and internationally recognised garden estate of the late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. Sprawling over 133 acres you'll forget you're in the heart of suburbia. Open to the public by appointment only.

Quest Properties

QUEST WILLIAMSTOWN

questwilliamstown.com.au

Located on absolute water frontage overlooking Gem Pier, the views from Quest Williamstown are truly enchanting. The beach, parkland and ferry services are on the doorstep.

QUEST WILLIAMSTOWN NORTH

questwilliamstownnorth.com.au

Quest Williamstown North is uniquely situated next to Jawbone Nature Reserve and Marine Sanctuary.

QUEST BRIGHTON ON THE BAY

questbrightononthebay.com.au

Located directly opposite the Royal Brighton Yacht Club. Church and Bay Streets are nearby, offering a plethora of shops and restaurants.

QUEST CHELTENHAM

questcheltenham.com.au

Situated close to Westfield Southland and Half Moon Bay, this property is an ideal choice for business and leisure travellers to Melbourne's bayside suburbs.

QUEST MOORABBIN

questmoorabbin.com.au

Nestled amongst world-class golf courses, and with the family-friendly Mentone Beach just 5 minutes from the hotel, Quest Moorabbin is perfectly placed.

QUEST FRANKSTON

questfrankston.com.au

The recently refurbished Quest Frankston provides an excellent base for families, groups, or business travellers requiring extended stay accommodation.

QUEST FRANKSTON ON THE BAY

questfrankstononthebay.com.au

An excellent option for couples or solo travellers, the hotel offers a large conference room facility.