

TRAVEL

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You're a peach, MELBOURNE

From historic shopping lanes to icons of film and fashion, dome trips and, erm, charred emu skewers, the state capital of Victoria is full of surprises, says **Laura Millar**

MELBOURNE has always been a culture hotspot, home to high-profile museum and galleries as well as offering on-foot adventures and a real insight into the area's history. With so much to soak up, here's our quick guide to the must-sees of the moment.

Feeling arty

Visit now and you can catch the electrifying Alexander McQueen: Mind Mythos Muse at the National Gallery of Victoria (until April 16, tickets £16, ng.vic.gov.au). The collaboration between the gallery and Los Angeles County Museum of Art showcases a drool-worthy collection of the designer's clothes and accessories, paired with gallery artefacts that reflect his inspiration.

The Australian Centre for the Moving Image launches Goddess: Power, Glamour, Rebellion on April 5 (tickets £14, acmi.net.au) celebrating kick-ass female movie stars from Marilyn Monroe to Michelle Yeoh.

Take a walk

The state capital's beautiful, 19th-century Royal Exhibition Building was modelled on London's Crystal Palace. It has just added a new element to its guided tour, the Dome

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

Grand designs: Mind Mythos Muse shows Alexander McQueen originals

Where Aboriginal tradition meets sustainable dining

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Promenade, where you can explore its 68m-high exterior dome, offering views across the city (tickets £16, museums-victoria.com.au). A Lanes and Arcades tour, meanwhile, takes in elegant, art deco shopping precincts - the arcades - and the interesting, narrow laneways. Many are lined with European-style cafés or, like the famous Hosier and

AC/DC lanes, covered in vibrant street art (tickets from £54 for three hours, hiddensecretstours.com).

Prefer the water? Then grab a picnic and putter along the Yarra River in one of a fleet of new e-powered GoBoats (one hour from £70, seats up to eight, goboat.com.au).

Aboriginal experiences

Aboriginal culture is prevalent throughout the country and in May, Melbourne holds Australia's only First Nations-led arts festival, YIRRAMBOI. The word means 'tomorrow' to the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung peoples of Victoria, and this festival connects First Nations creatives locally, nationally and internationally to showcase the richness of their culture.

More than 250 individuals are behind 100-plus events including dance, theatre and cinema (May 4 to 14, yirramboi.com.au).

Familiarise yourself with Aboriginal history and traditions at the Koorie Heritage Trust on Federation Square, (korieheritagetrust.com.au).

Tuck in

Next to the trust is the recently opened Mabu Mabu Big Esso (mabumabu.com.au), which brings indigenous ingredients and flavours to a diner-style joint. Created by Torres Strait islander chef Nornie Bero, it offers kangaroo and pepperberry tartare, and charred emu liver skewers.

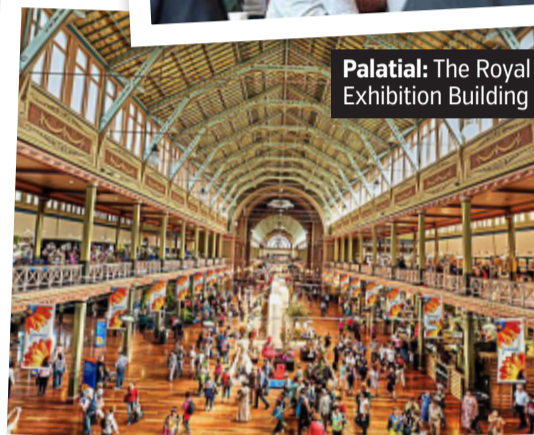
If you like it hot, the hip new Thai restaurant BKK offers spicy ocean trout salad, chicken curry puffs and Chiang Mai sausage. Don't miss its rooftop bar HER (bkk.melbourne).

The newly opened Parcs (parcs.com.au) specialises in zero-waste, sustainable dining, using leftovers and cooking byproducts. And Victoria By Farmer's Daughters is the latest iteration from Peruvian chef Alejandro Saravia, who uses produce from farmers, growers and artisans within the state (victoriarestaurant.com.au).

Rooms at Voco Melbourne Central from £142pn, ihg.com. For more information, go to visitvictoria.com and visitmelbourne.com



Tasty: Mabu Mabu Big Esso



Palatial: The Royal Exhibition Building



Cultural centre: Federation Square



Streets ahead: Hosier Lane



Try me a river: An electric GoBoat

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