

Great Ocean Road

& Melbourne International Flower Show

26
March
2010
13 Days

\$2529ppts
\$756s/s

Day 1: Home—Albury (LD)

An early start from Thornton we make our way south to Peshurst Hurlstone Park RSL, to collect our fellow travellers, then join the Hume Highway, stopping at Goulburn, Gundagai, and Holbrook for the first of many **home made morning teas and lunches**, arriving in the now bypassed town of Albury mid afternoon. You will be pleasantly surprised by the quietness of the city now that the noisy traffic has been diverted.

[Country Comfort Hovell Inn Albury 02 6042 3900](#)

Day 2: Albury—Ballarat, including Melbourne International Flower Show (BD)

An easy drive into Melbourne today, arriving around noon. At the **International Flower Show**, you will have the rest of the day to enjoy this annual special event. The Flower Show is the largest and most prestigious event of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere and second only to the Chelsea Flower Show in the UK. The show is located in the magnificent Carlton Gardens with over 300 exhibits "on show" representing horticulture, nurseries, landscape gardening, florists, and cut flower products and services. Also based at the Royal Exhibition Centre, you can see floral arrangement competitions and workshops as they happen! Next door to the Flower Show is the Melbourne Museum with its extensive collection of everything from Australian society, to Phar Lap.

[Vibe Hotel Carlton 03 9380 9222](#)



Day 3: Melbourne—Ballarat (BLD)

Before leaving Melbourne, we will have time at the famous extensive Queen Victoria Markets, offering everything from clothing, to nicknacks, and all sorts of fresh and exotic gourmet foods. We will make our way to Bendigo for lunch in this beautiful heritage gold mining city before joining the **Talking Tram** for a tour and a visit to the **Tram Museum**. We will head through the spa district of Daylesford to Ballarat. Dinner tonight will be at **Sovereign Hill's Napier's Hotel**, before the spectacular Light and Sound Show "**Blood on the Southern Cross**", depicting events of the Eureka Stockade in 1854.

[Bell Tower Inn 03 5334 1600 \(2 nights\)](#)



Day 4: Ballarat Begonias, Sovereign Hill (BD)

After a town tour of Ballarat, the highlight for garden lovers will be the **Begonia Display** on the shores of Lake Wendouree. Beautifully presented garden beds highlight the Prime Ministers' Avenue and the Conservatory filled with tuberous begonias, with time in Ballarat, to explore its wide heritage streets. We spend the afternoon at **Sovereign Hill Village** and Gold Museum, to pan for gold, watch wood turners at work, see gold being poured at our leisure.



Day 5: Ballarat—Apollo Bay, Great Ocean Road (BD)

Heading south we travel to Geelong, where we will have morning tea and time to photograph the unusual bollards along the Esplanade. We continue on our way along the coast through Torquay, scene of the Bells Surf Classic, we will join the **Great Ocean Road** which hugs the coastline. We will stop for lunch at Lorne before making our way to Apollo Bay before checking into Skene's Creek Lodge, offering spectacular views of the sea.

[Skene's Creek Lodge 03 5237 6918](#)



Day 6: Apollo Bay—Warrnambool—Otway Fly, 12 Apostles, Warrnambool's Light & Sound show (BLD)

Today we head inland to visit the **Otway Fly**, a unique 600 metre walk through the treetops of native eucalypts in Victoria's rugged forest region. We enjoy lunch at Princetown as we start to hug the coastline of the Great Southern Ocean, the scene of many shipwrecks. Our first visit will be the **Twelve Apostles**, where a scenic helicopter flight is available (own expense). **Loch Ard Gorge**, named from the ship wrecked at this spot, will show us the rugged cliff line and ferociousness of the sea. We will visit the **Arch**, the remains of the **London Bridge** and the **Bay of Islands**. Bring your camera as there will be lots of opportunities to record this rugged coastline today. Tonight we will visit **Warrnambool's Sound & Light Show "Shipwrecked"**, the story of the Loch Ard Wreck.
[Gateway Motor Inn 03 5562 8622](tel:0355628622)



Day 7: Warrnambool—Mt Gambier (BLD)

We will visit the **Flagstaff Maritime Village** with shops, ship building and a museum housing the beautiful Loch Ard Peacock. We will visit the gardens of the **Fletcher Jones Factory** before lunch at Port Fairy. We arrive in Mt Gambier and drive around the **Blue Lake** and visit the beautiful **Umpherston Cave** then go to our motel.
[Comfort Inn Silver Birch 08 8725 5122](tel:0887255122)



Day 8: Mt Gambier—Barossa Valley (BLD)

We will follow the coast line through Millicent to Kingston S.E, for morning tea. We will continue travelling the **Coorong** with its rugged dunes, coastal vegetation and over 400 bird species. After lunch we head to our motel in the beautiful Barossa Valley.
[Barossa Weintal Resort 08 8563 2303 \(3 nights\)](tel:0885632303)



Day 9: Barossa Valley—Wine, Cruise & Art (BLD)

This morning we will visit the **Whispering Wall** to hear its secrets and **Mengler's Hill** for a spectacular view over the Barossa Valley from the **Pioneer Memorial and Sculpture Display**. We will visit Tanunda, enjoy a picnic lunch and then head to a **local winery for a tasting**. A tour of the **Chateau Barossa** including its beautiful 18th Century furniture collection and wine tasting will complete our afternoon. We will travel to **Mannum** to visit the wharf area or antique shops, before enjoying a **Dinner Cruise** on the **Murray Venturer III** whilst watching the beautiful sunset. We may also be lucky enough to spot some wildlife in the gums at dusk.

15

Day 10: Adelaide, Haighs Chocolate, Hahndorf (BD)

Off to Adelaide today, our first stop will be **Haigh's Chocolates**, then some free time in Rundle Mall to shop, relax or sightsee. This afternoon we will head through the Adelaide Hills to spend some time in **Hahndorf Village** before returning to the motel.

Day 11: Barossa—Mildura—Orange World (BLD)

Today we must leave the Barossa and head towards the Riverland towns. Blanchetown is the beginning of the locks and weir system on the Murray. Lunch will be at Mildura and we will visit **Orange World** for a train ride through the extensive orchards to learn about the industry, and perhaps gain some hints for our own trees!
[Boulevard Motor Inn 03 5023 5023](tel:0350235023)

Day 12: Mildura—Wagga Wagga (BLD)

We will leave the Riverland and travel via Balranald for morning tea. Lunch will be at Hay before we travel through a little of the **Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area** at Narrandera on our way to Wagga Wagga. The MIA covers 550,000 hectares and is one of the richest food producing areas in Australia, including citrus and stone fruits.
[Country Comfort Wagga Wagga 02 6921 6444](tel:0269216444)

Day 13: Wagga Wagga—Home (BL)

This morning we will leave Wagga Wagga and follow the river into Gundagai, where we rejoin the Hume Highway for our trip home, with morning tea and lunch en route, arriving back in Sydney mid afternoon.