

Melbourne – Best for Business and Sport

The cosmopolitan capital of the state of Victoria, Melbourne is well known for its friendly locals, cultural creativity, fine wine and dining and world-class facilities for leisure and business tourists, who pump AUD\$15.8 billion into the Victorian economy.



With a population of around four million people, the city prides itself on its art and culture, chic cafes, bars and restaurants, hidden laneways, shopping and fashion.

The state's public transport and roads network places Melbourne within an hour's drive of regional Victorian destinations, which offer spectacular scenery, national parks and native wildlife, numerous vineyards and day spas.

Voted one of the world's most liveable cities, the city also is a world-leading destination for business events tourists, attracted by its world-class accommodation and meeting facilities, a skilled workforce and reputation for innovation in fields such as medical research, creative services, research and development, biotechnology, education and agriculture.

Many business travellers plan their trips around the city's sporting culture. From events such as the Australian Open Tennis Championships in January to the Boxing Day Test cricket match in December, the city lives and breathes sporting achievement.

This international status was recognised in November 2009 when Melbourne was named the Best Sports City in the world, at the SportBusiness Sports Event Management Awards in London.

Apart from the tennis and the cricket, visitors to Melbourne can experience the Formula 1 Grand Prix action at Albert Park in March or the world famous Melbourne Cup horse race during the Spring Racing Carnival in November.

From March to September, thousands of people don team colours and head to the Melbourne Cricket Ground or the Etihad Stadium to attend Australian Rules football matches.



There is soccer, basketball, hockey, netball, swimming, surfing at the famous Bells Beach and much more.

The city's sporting infrastructure is unsurpassed. The addition of the new AUD\$268 million Melbourne Rectangular Stadium makes Melbourne the only city in the world to boast three retractable roof stadiums. The venue will accommodate more than 30,000 spectators and will be home to the Melbourne Victory soccer team and the city's rugby league heroes, Melbourne Storm.

HiSense Arena offers state-of-the-art facilities and hosts cycling, tennis, basketball matches and concerts, while the new AUD\$58 million National Ice Sports Centre in the Docklands precinct will host a range of elite ice sports events and provide a recreational hub for winter sports enthusiasts, when it opens later this year.

And Victoria's championship golf courses have hosted the likes of Greg Norman, Robert Allenby and Tiger Woods. Woods recently won the Australian Masters tournament at Kingston Heath Golf Course, while the prestigious Presidents Cup returns to Royal Melbourne Golf Course – rated the sixth best course in the world – in November 2011.

Recently, Melbourne's business events industry have focused on increasing delegate numbers at business events, and delivering greater value for money through investment in time and money-saving technology.

This is particularly evident in the new, state-of-the-art Melbourne Convention Centre, which is one of the best equipped centres in the world. The convention centre, which has a 6-Star Green Star energy rating, has a 5,553 seat plenary hall, 32 meeting rooms, a grand banquet room, foyer for 8,400 guests, sophisticated audio visual and communications technology and is within five minutes walk from the five major convention hotels.

With more than 40,189 rooms in Victoria – 15,100 of them in the City of Melbourne – there is no shortage of accommodation for business and leisure travellers, ranging from prestigious five-star hotels, eco-friendly hostels to funky boutique properties and serviced apartments.



The Ascott Group is investing AUD\$136.2 million in the development of a 398-unit serviced residence in Melbourne's CBD. Citadines Melbourne on Bourke will be Ascott's first Citadines in Australia and will open in the second half of 2010.

The new 658-room Crown Metropal opens early this year and will include Gordon Ramsay's first Australian restaurant, Maze. Celebrity chef Ramsay is just one of the leading foodies who have recognised the city's strong food and wine culture. The city has more than 3000 restaurants, cafes and bars, serving around 75 different ethnic cuisines.

Popular Melbourne dining options include wagyu beef at Nobu, contemporary French-style cuisine at Vue de Monde, stylish Greek fare at The Press Club, quality Cantonese at the Flower Drum or Spanish-style tapas at MoVida.

Alternatively, head for the bustling Vietnamese precinct in Richmond's Victoria Street, find a table in Melbourne's Chinatown district or pick up some humble, newspaper-wrapped fresh fish and chips on the St Kilda pier.

Photos: Tourism Victoria

www.visitvictoria.com

www.mcvb.com.au

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