

Undulating Roof of Southern Cross Station

Southern Cross, formerly Spencer Street is a major railway station and transport hub in Melbourne Docklands, Victoria, Australia. It is located on Spencer Street between Collins and La Trobe Streets at the western edge of the central business district. The Etihad Stadium sporting arena is 500 metres south-west of the station.



The undulating roof of the Southern Cross Station is the unique feature of the main railway station in the city. In 2002, Melbourne decided to develop the former Spencer Street Station into a modern well-designed transportation.

Southern Cross Station is the most important rail terminal in Victoria and has been redeveloped into a world-class public transport interchange, with fast rail connections to regional Victorian centres and new facilities for rail, taxi and bus passengers. Now more than just a railway station, Southern Cross Station is a combination of railway, shopping centre and bus terminal.

Opened as Spencer Street in 1859, five years after Flinders Street; the station was a dead end terminus, running parallel to Spencer Street with a single main platform and a dock platform at the north end. It was not until 1874 that an extra platform was provided.

The two stations were not linked until 1879, when a single-track ground-level line was opened. It operated only at night, and only for goods trains. In the 1880s, it was proposed that Spencer Street station be removed in order to facilitate the westward expansion of the city, however the plan was subsequently rejected.



From 1888 to 1894 the layout of the station was altered, with new country platforms being built on the angle they are today. The current coach terminal location was the site of a number of new platforms built for suburban services.

In 1888 work started on the double-track Flinders Street Viaduct linking the station to Flinders Street, the line opening to goods traffic in 1891 and in 1894 to passenger trains. It was at this time that the first through platform was provided at the station, for suburban trains from Essendon and Williamstown. The viaduct to Flinders Street was expanded to four tracks in 1915,[5] and in conjunction with the electrification works on the suburban network today's platforms 11 though 14 were opened between 1918 and 1924, along with the pedestrian subway providing access to them.

In October 1960 work on the 'modern' Spencer Street Station commenced, sparked by the construction of the interstate standard gauge railway link to Sydney. A new station building was constructed, a new 413 metres (1,355 ft) main platform was built, and the subway from the 1918 works was extended to country platforms.



Today the station is the terminus of the state's regional railway network operated by V/Line, The Overland rail service to Adelaide, and the Countrylink XPT service to Sydney. It is one of five stations on the City Loop, a mostly underground railway that encircles the CBD. Based upon suburban passenger boardings it is the third busiest railway station in Melbourne, in 2009 the average was 42,900 per day. These figures exclude V/Line passengers that also use the station.

Southern Cross Station also has a coach terminal under the shopping complex, from which operates the Skybus Super Shuttle service to Melbourne Airport and Sunbus Shuttle service to Avalon Airport; Greyhound Australia, Firefly Express Coaches, Premier Motor Service interstate coach services; and V/Line coach services to Yarram, Mansfield and other non-rail served towns.

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