

Looking up

Considered the cultural capital down under, Melbourne is also an economic powerhouse and lives at an electric pace, with fashionistas, foodies and admirers of everything fine, it's time to flock to Australia's south-eastern hotspot in Victoria

Since 2002, Melbourne has ranked in the top three most liveable cities in the world on the Economist Intelligence Units (EIU) Global Liveability Index. It's also a vibrant and all-encompassing place to visit.

WHERE TO STAY

Opening in February, Hotel W is coming to Melbourne, with a rebellious Flinders Lane address,

taking design cues from the famous Laneways of Melbourne. Extending the Laneway culture inside, 294 bold rooms and suites explore the city's rich history in a playful manner. Vibrant restaurants and bars – WARABI, Lollo and Curious – amp up the experience; in addition to a state-of-the-art FIT gym and, of course, W's famous WET® Pool, with skyline views.

Equally daring, bold and brash, The Cullen Hotel is a Mantra Art Series boutique hotel situated in cosmopolitan Prahran, five kilometres from the CBD. With a fully equipped kitchenette, Smart Cars and Lekker Bicycles on hand to hire, this screams for hunter gatherers to head to the amazing Prahran Market and return to kick back in style and admire the mind-boggling art. For those who

don't want to worry, the hotel also has two great restaurants.

Back to the Laneways, the Adelphi Hotel also features boldly decorated guest rooms, but unlike any other, features a cantilevered rooftop pool to help create an atmosphere that's rare among Melbourne hotels. Pack your sweet tooth because this is a dessert-themed hotel.

W Melbourne

+61 3 9113 8800
marriott.com.au/hotels/travel/melwh-w-melbourne

The Cullen

+61 300 987 603
mantrahotels.com/art-series-the-cullen

Adelphi Hotel

+61 488 080 500
adelphi.com.au

WHERE TO EAT

Cutler & Co. in the funky Fitzroy area offers refined, simple, hospitable dining with a bar that is a destination in its own right. The hefty wine list is available in the bar, but its own drinks list, a two-pager of cocktails, vermouth and aperitives and wines by the glass, better sets the scene. The choose-your-own food adventure approach offers everything from a finely crafted five-course dégustation to excellent comfort food in the form of dry-aged steak built for two (from McConnell's own butcher Meatsmith). The food is clever and pretty, but never forgets flavour.

Japanese restaurant Supernormal is no 'normal' Japanese restaurant. You might be forgiven for thinking it is given the aesthetic, but the chef's

Left: The MCG and Aami Park light up the Melbourne dusk

Above: The iconic Flinders Street station Below: The Yarra River goes right through the heart of Melbourne's CBD



devotion is to flavour, no matter its origins. From eight-hour braised lamb shoulder, to kingfish sashimi, this is free-wheeling, fun and flavour-forward.

It's an uncomplicated approach to food and wine at Embla too, with a very welcoming and comfortable – even rustic – atmosphere. Designed by New Zealand architect Allistar Cox, it's all dark floors, naked wood and sandy brick. Lamb neck is cooked in the wood oven and served with

romesco sauce and rainbow trout is served whole with horseradish and foraged purslane; a mildly sour succulent, similar to pigface.

Cutler & Co

+61 3 9419 4888
cutlerandco.com.au

Supernormal

+6 13 9650 8688
supernormal.net.au

Embla

+61 455 122 121
embla.com.au

WHAT TO DO

Melbourne is a sports lovers' dream – with the famous 100,000 capacity Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), the 1948 Olympic Stadium, the National Tennis Centre, AAMI Park and the Collingwood Football Club training complex all within earshot of a Pat Cash serve. The MCG is a must visit – for watching cricket in the summer or Australian Rules Football in the winter. Travel a little further and you can access the municipal Albert Park Formula One track, which is open to the public for walking, cycling and driving (slowly) all year except when the Australian Grand Prix comes to town. Melbourne Cup racecourse Flemington is also just a short tram ride from the CBD. Elsewhere, the Eureka SkyDeck 88 offers fantastic views of the city and the Laneways provide a real taste of Melbourne.

Melbourne Cricket Ground

+613 9657 8888
mcg.org.au

Flemington Racecourse

+613 300 727 575
flemington.com.au

Visit Victoria

+613 9653 9777
visitvictoria.com.au

