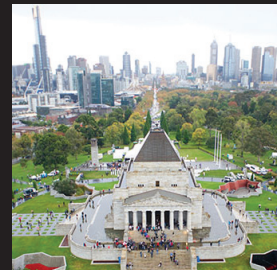
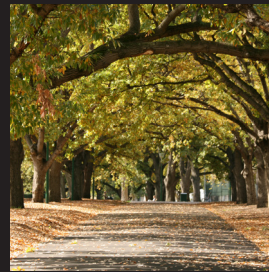


FCA STAFF'S TOP 'FREE' (OR CHEAP)

things to do in Melbourne



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Take a free guided tour of the top sights in Melbourne's CBD



1. **Walking tour of Melbourne** *(a tip for the guide is recommended)*

I'm Free Walking tours

328 Swanston Street.

10.30 am and 2.30 pm, daily, 2½ – 3 hours. Tour starts at the statue of Sir Redmond Barry in front of the State Library.

Walks101

Tour begins Gordon Reserve, 74 –108 Spring Street and ends Old Melbourne Gaol.

See laneway street art, the famous arcades and grand Gold Rush-era architecture among other sights.

2. **Ned Kelly Tour**

328 Swanston Street.

Wednesdays and Saturdays 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm at the State Library

Want to know more about notorious bushranger Ned Kelly? The State Library of Victoria has a significant collection of objects related to this divisive figure. A highlight of this free tour is the bullet-ridden homemade armour he wore at a shootout with police.

3. **State Library Tour**

328 Swanston Street. Daily 11.00 am –11.45 am.

See the heritage reading rooms including the magnificent Dome Room, browse collections of books, magazines and music, and visit the renowned galleries and free exhibitions.

4. **Melbourne Town Hall**

90 – 130 Swanston Street.

Weekdays except Tuesdays; 11.00 am – noon, 1.00 pm – 2pm. Bookings essential.

Experience the grandeur of the wood-panelled council chambers, stand on the portico where the Beatles waved, sit in the Lord Mayor's chair, and view the richly carved Grand Organ, the largest grand romantic organ in the southern hemisphere.

5. **Parliament House**

Monday May 20 and Friday May 24 as Parliament is not sitting. Times: 9.30am, 10.30 am, 11.30 am, 1pm (Express Tour), 1.30 pm, 2.30 pm, 3.30 pm and 4.00 pm (Express Tour). No bookings required unless you have a group of six or more.

Wonder at the abundance of Gold Rush-era marble, chandeliers, gilding and polished wood in this impressive 19th-century building.

6. **Garden Discovery Tour at Royal Botanic Gardens**

Daily 10.30 am – noon

Discover Melbourne's natural flora and fauna as you wander through rolling landscapes, towering trees and glittering lakes. This is a guided tour.

7. **Starchitecture at Federation Square**

Cnr Swanston and Flinders streets. Daily 11.00 am (except Sunday).

Federation Square is one of Melbourne's contemporary architectural icons. From the main plaza's textured, undulating sandstone paving to the buildings' angular, geometric Deconstructivist exteriors, it's a must for design fans.

8. **Art attack at Fed Square**

Cnr Swanston and Flinders streets

The Ian Potter Centre

NGV Australia is among Federation Square's tenants, and home to some of the nation's most important home-grown art. Nearby, [NGV International](#) showcases the National Gallery of Victoria's impressive international collection. General entry is free.

Self-guided walks in Melbourne: [download a map](#)

Melbourne Street Art Walk

One of the world's great street art capitals, the city itself feels like a canvas. Walking time 2.5 hours. Distance 6.5 km. [Download Melbourne Street Art walk brochure](#) .

Melbourne Music Walk

Explore Melbourne music city by visiting our historical venues, rock routes, sticky carpets, music laneways, record stores and more. Walking time 1.5 hours. Distance 3.5 km.

[Download Melbourne Music Walk brochure](#)

Arcades and lanes

Explore Melbourne's lanes, alleyways, little streets, arcades, cafe society and fascinating shops. Walking time 1.5 hours. Distance 2.5 km.

[Download Arcades and Lanes brochure](#)

A walk in the park

Magnificent cathedrals, lush parklands and delightful Flinders Lane. Walking time 2 hours. Distance 3.75 km. [Download A walk in the park brochure](#)

On the waterfront

Spectacular bridges, Aboriginal cultural history, sculptures and Southbank Promenade feature on this walk of discovery. Walking time 2 hours. Distance 4.75 km. [Download the On the waterfront brochure](#)

Elegant Enclave

Take a stroll from the city to East Melbourne and discover elaborate ironwork, classic columns and lofty verandas from the Victorian era. Walking time 1.5 hours. Distance 3 km. [Download the Elegant Enclave brochure](#)

Aboriginal Melbourne

Things to see and do to learn about the Aboriginal heritage and culture of Melbourne. [Download the Aboriginal Melbourne brochure](#)

Explore St Kilda on foot: self-guided with a map

Foreshore Trail

[Foreshore Trail](#) celebrates the 11 kilometre foreshore of the City of Port Phillip as it traces the coastline of Hobsons Bay from Sandridge to Elwood. This beachfront is one of Melbourne's most popular city destinations.

Acland Village

[Acland Village Walking Tour](#) goes from the iconic Palais Theatre to the St Kilda Marina, this trail takes in the best of the foreshore and the area's landmarks.

Hidden treasures

[Hidden treasures](#) takes in some important historic features of St Kilda.

Immigrants trail

[Immigrants trail](#) celebrates the contribution of immigrants and settlers. For many new arrivals, Station Pier was their first landfall after a long and hazardous sea journey.

Solar System Trail

[Solar System Trail](#) navigates the solar system from the sun to the outer planets by following the foreshore trail.

Free walks along the bay, the rivers and the parks

Royal Park

You'll feel like you're in the middle of nowhere, but the city skyline is in the distance. Follow the Capital City Trail through the oasis of Royal Park, and when you hit Flemington Road, head left onto Elliot Avenue and back up The Avenue to where you started. It's about a 5 km round trip.

Albert Park Lake

With the water, palm trees and a prime view of the city skyline, Albert Park Lake is an ideal place for a walk. A round trip is about 5 km, best enjoyed at sunset.

The Tan

A classic Melbourne activity. No matter what time you decide to hit the 3.8 km track round the Botanic Gardens — the lights stay on from 5.30 am until midnight — you're bound to see countless people running, walking or just strolling along.

Capital City Trail

Pick up a blue bike from Melbourne Bike Share — the daily hire cost is just \$3.

Take the scenic route from the city to South Yarra. Set off from Fed Square and walk along the banks of the Yarra until you get to the Church Street bridge. It's an easy 3 km.

Or follow the trail through Clifton Hill and Collingwood along Merri Creek to Dights Falls. Take a well-deserved break at [Abbotsford Convent](#), which is now a hub for local artists and a beautiful place to explore. For a vegetarian feast, check out [Lentil as Anything](#), the restaurant run by volunteers where you pay what you feel the meal is worth.

Bayside Coastal Trail

Enjoy some great bay views between Brighton and Beaumaris. The 17 km trail passes through Sandringham, Hampton and Black Rock, but don't skip Half Moon Bay.

Hobsons Bay Coastal Trail

The south west has lovely little beaches. Follow the Hobsons Bay Trail from Williamstown to Altona and discover Melbourne's less-trodden coastline. It's about 10 km each way.

Banksia Park to Heide walk

Visit the lovely Heide Museum of Modern Art, a centre of Australian modernism and contemporary Australian art. (\$15 – \$20) and its surrounding gardens. From Banksia Park follow the Yarra River through the old Red Gums and fruit trees. The trail takes you into the gardens of Heide Park, where you'll pass the pavilion and life-size cow sculptures, and the gallery. All up, it's a leisurely 5 km.

Further afield

1000 Steps walk

No need to count your steps on this one. It's a rewarding walk up the Kokoda Memorial Track through the Ferntree Gully Forest with great views from the top.

Sherbrooke Falls Trail

Less than an hour's drive from the CBD is Sherbrooke Falls, in the Dandenong Ranges' lush Sherbrooke Forest. Hike the Falls Trail through the ferns, sassafras and mountain ash. It is just 30 minutes each way.

Hanging Rock

Love a good view? Just an hour out of the city are the walking paths up Hanging Rock where you can get an uninterrupted view over the Macedon Ranges.

Free things to do in the CBD

Loo with a view

The Sofitel hotel boasts one of the best views of the city ... in its swanky sky-high bathrooms.

One of Melbourne's best views

Get a bird's eye view from the balcony of Hamer Hall. Walk up the stairs on the outside of Hamer Hall (accessed from the grass next to the Arts Centre) and step outside its warm, red walls to absorb the riverside.

Free coffee every Friday morning

Market Lane holds public cuppings every Friday from 10.30 am. Cupping is like coffee tasting, and it's done in a similar way to how you taste wines. Try eight or so cups of current and newly arrived coffees at Market Lane, 305 Coventry Street, South Melbourne. Places are limited to six people, so try to arrive 15 minutes early to score a spot.

See the penguins on St Kilda Beach

Take in the sunset while you stroll down Jacka Boulevard to St Kilda's breakwater for a peek at a colony of little penguins (also called fairy penguins).

See free live music

CBD bar [Ferdydurke](#) hosts all kinds of action, from collaborative art projects to DJs and live music most evenings of the week.

Sit in the TV audience of The Project

Channel 10's The Project is filmed in Melbourne. All you have to do is register online, then prepare to clap hard and laugh hard.

City Circle trams

Hop on one of these cute heritage trams as they rattle around the city. This free shuttle loops around the CBD and Docklands, all the while playing an audio commentary that focuses on the history of Melbourne.

Other things to do

[Tuck into dumplings at HuTong](#) or Shanghai Street on Little Bourke Street.

Eat oysters with a glass of bubbles overlooking Victoria Harbour at [The Woolshed](#).

[Drink a cocktail at hidden bar Beneath Driver Lane](#), an underground bar in the CBD.

[Have a drink at Rooftop Bar](#) – climb the stairs at Curtin House, 252 Swanston Street, then quench your thirst while taking in the heart and soul of Melbourne from above. Lose yourself in the spectacular view.

Lord it over the city from the 88th floor of the [Eureka Skydeck](#) \$21.

Be spooked at the [Melbourne General Cemetery's fascinating night tours](#) which bring history (and dearly departed souls) to life. \$20 – \$25.

Markets

Queen Victoria Market

The largest and most intact surviving 19th-century market in the city. Fresh produce, specialty shopping. Open every day except Monday and Wednesday.

Rose Street Artists' Market

Each Saturday and Sunday the Rose Street Market gathers some of Melbourne's most exciting artists and designers to display their wares and talk all things handmade.

Weird and wonderful shops

Magic Lantern Studio

155 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy

Shortly after artists Gonzalo Varela and Lucy Parkinson arrived from Barcelona, they took over a small shop near the foot of Smith Street.



Over the course of the next year, the front window gradually filled up with a mysterious miniature landscape of plants, plastic animals and tiny dolls. Finally, they unveiled the Magic Lantern Studio, selling 'pre-cinema toys' like marionettes, stereoscope cards, zoetropes and hand-coloured slides.

Third Drawer Down

93 George Street, Fitzroy

This objets d'art emporium is your one-stop awesome gift shop.



Starting out more than a decade ago with a range of artist-commissioned tea towel designs, this Collingwood joint is now a design studio, museum and shop all in one. A place to find excellent gifts.

Wunderkammer

439 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

Wunderkammer, or 'wonder-chamber', deals in scientific curios and antiques. The objects on display all fall somewhere between the educational and the artistic, "where art and science meet".

Highlights include: old-timey scrimshaw, ancient fossils, vintage laboratory equipment, life-size phrenology models, emu eggs, storm glasses and Foucault's Pendulum. There's also a range of animal taxidermy, priced from \$5 for a tiny puffer fish to \$1,650 for a peacock.

A cheap night out

The Big HOO-HAA!

The Butterfly Club, 5 Carson Place, Melbourne. Melbourne's longest running and most successful improv comedy night, the Big Hoo Haa, is improvised comedy at its rawest: minimal pretension, audience participation and maximum laughter.

Imperial Comedy

Imperial Hotel, Melbourne. Every Tuesday night a fleet of Melbourne's best comedy talent set foot on the stage and plant their flag of foolery. Tickets (online or at the door) are \$10.

Comedy at the European Bier Café

European Bier Café, Melbourne. A Thursday night staple in Melbourne, comedy at the European Bier Cafe is still going strong. It's a guaranteed high-quality night of laughs for just \$12.

Catfish Comedy

The Catfish, Fitzroy. This little bar does a mean Philly cheesesteak and a good craft beer but they also run comedy nights every Tuesday.

Babydrag

Sircuit Bar, Fitzroy. Upcoming drag king and queens get the chance to practise their shows and refine their acts every Thursday night at Melbourne's favourite LGBTQIA+ venue (as voted by Time Out readers) Circuit. The bar offers \$5 pints from 7.00 pm until 10.00 pm, and entry is free.

Planetarium Nights

Scienceworks, Spotswood. The Planetarium will be offering guests the chance to explore the cosmos with a series of after-hours and adults-only film screenings on the huge planetarium dome. Every Friday night those over 18 can explore everything from black holes to fluorescent coral. The shows are loaded with amazing visuals and stellar content. Two screenings, one at 7.30 pm and the other at 9.00 pm Planetarium Nights are on every Friday until May 31.

A big night out

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is taking on James Bond in this live concert of Casino Royale.



Thursday May 23 and Friday May 24. Book online, tickets start at \$65.

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child

Princess Theatre, Melbourne. Harry Potter and the Cursed Child is a marathon, five-hour spectacle with a dense and sprawling plot.

Muriel's Wedding The Musical

Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne. The musical was adapted for the stage by PJ Hogan, who wrote and directed the original 1994 film starring Toni Collette.

Cloudstreet

Malthouse Theatre, Southbank.

Tim Winton's Cloudstreet has come out on top in just about every poll of Australia's favourite books since its release. The book has been turned into a TV series, an opera and even a radio play.

It's been almost two decades since Nick Enright and Justin Monjo's acclaimed stage version of the novel has been seen in Melbourne. That's because it's a huge undertaking for any theatre company—it runs to about five hours.

Così

Southbank Theatre (Melbourne Theatre Company), Southbank. Louis Nowra's Così, which tells the story of a young director who stages an opera starring the patients of a mental health facility, is one of the best known Australian plays. But it's never had a production at a state theatre company until now.

Exhibitions

While away an afternoon at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image in Fed Square. There's always something eye-opening at the national museum of TV, film, games, art and digital culture.

Showing at Ian Potter Centre is [Darren Sylvester: Carve a Future, Devour Everything, Become Something](#). It's a reflective showcase featuring 70 works, including 43 of the surreal, perfectly posed tableaux the artist is known for, as well as installations, sculptures and an interactive dancefloor inspired by a Yves Saint Laurent makeup compact.

Also at the Ian Potter is [Hans and Nora Heysen: Two Generations of Australian Art](#). Father and daughter artists Hans and Nora Heysen helped shaped the course of 20th century Australian art. Nora became the first female winner of the Archibald Prize and Australia's first female war artist. This is the first major exhibition incorporating both their works and it brings together 270 works from the artists, including Hans' famous landscape *Driving into the light* 1914-21.

At the NGV International, Southbank is [Liquid Light: 500 Years of Venetian Glass](#). Venetian glass is known across the world for its vibrant colour, elaborate designs and exquisite craftsmanship, honed over centuries by traditional glassblowers on the Venetian island of Murano. Liquid Light explores the development of the Venetian glass tradition through an extensive collection of glass pieces.

[Terracotta Warriors: Guardians of Immortality](#) opens on May 24 at the NGV International.

The Geelong Gallery, Geelong, is exhibiting [Sidney Nolan: Ned Kelly](#). Nolan's famous series of paintings depict Ned Kelly and the stories of his famously ferocious Kelly Gang. The paintings have been exhibited in New York at the Metropolitan Museum of the Art but are rarely seen in Australia outside of Canberra.

Last but not least Bendigo Art Gallery will

be hosting [Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits](#). The exhibition features more than 150 works from the National Portrait Gallery in London, many of which will grace Australian shores for the first time.

Paid-for tours

[Shrine of Remembrance Tour \(\\$34\)](#)

11.00 am and 12.45 pm. Duration: 75 minutes.



[Old Melbourne Gaol \(\\$28\)](#)

Hangman's Night tour; A Night in the Watch House