



GIPPS

Wild Wonder

LAND

The gateway to Gippsland

Official Visitor Guide

WEST GIPPSLAND - BAW BAW SHIRE

WELCOME

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout the Baw Baw region and Victoria and recognise and respect the deep and continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and ask that during your travels you respect these cultures, people and land, and acknowledge their ongoing role in caring for Country.

THANK YOU

In creating this guide, we tasked a local writer and designer to experience her own back yard with fresh eyes, interacting with our communities and townships, and writing all the wonderful stories she discovered along the way. We hope you enjoy her travels and interviews with some of our locals in what we hope presents as a celebration of our gorgeous region.

Thank you to all that have shared valuable contributions, stories and local tips to create this guide, and a special thank you to Sarah Duck, from Manta Creative™.

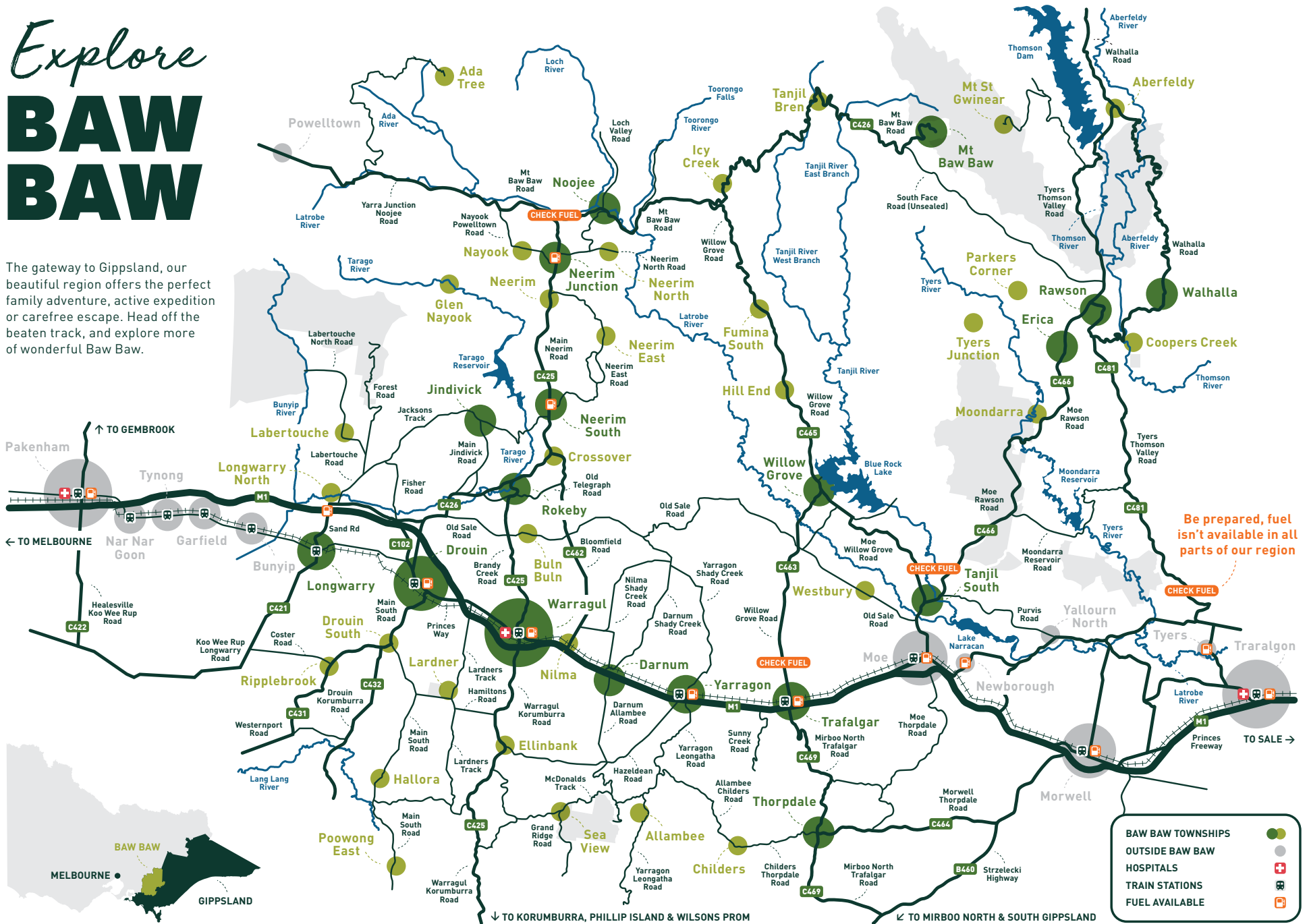
This Official Visitor Guide is proudly brought to you by Baw Baw Shire Council.



GIPPS
wonder
LAND

Explore BAW BAW

The gateway to Gippsland, our beautiful region offers the perfect family adventure, active expedition or carefree escape. Head off the beaten track, and explore more of wonderful Baw Baw.



Be prepared, fuel isn't available in all parts of our region

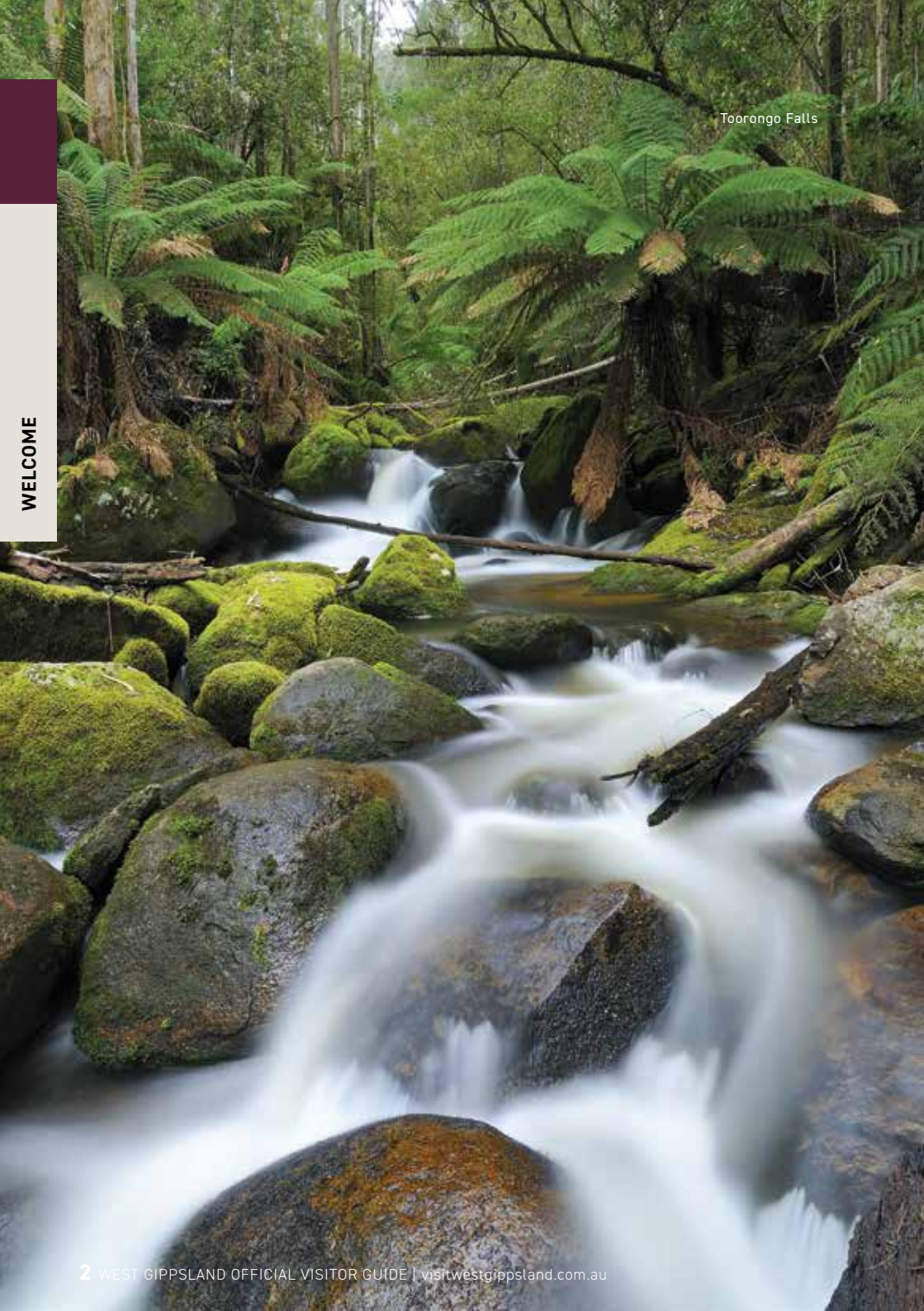
BAW BAW TOWNSHIPS	
OUTSIDE BAW BAW	
HOSPITALS	
TRAIN STATIONS	
FUEL AVAILABLE	



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Toorong Falls

WELCOME TO WEST GIPPSLAND

Unique, diverse and unparalleled in beauty, West Gippsland is Victoria's best kept secret. At just over an hour's drive east of Melbourne, West Gippsland is the perfect place for a family day trip, a romantic weekend away, or the beginning of your next big adventure.

Explore a region with spectacular natural landscapes and wilderness attractions, historic townships, gourmet delights and world-class hospitality. From the alpine majesty of the Baw Baw Plateau to the lush valleys, flowing streams and rivers, epicure food and wine and boutique shops, West Gippsland is a feast for the senses which will have you coming back again and again.

Soak up the country charm and experience a flourishing culinary culture, from popular favourites to truly ground-breaking and innovative fine foods. Enjoy farm fresh produce prepared by amazing chefs, or discover your own at our Farmers' markets and farm gate sales located throughout the region.

A region renowned for its ability to leave you inspired, its vibrant arts community will delight and engage even the most passionate art and culture lovers. With a modern arts centre attracting acts from all over Australia, and an eclectic mix of studios and galleries, West Gippsland is an art lovers paradise.

Get back to nature exploring our many natural outdoor attractions. Host to Melbourne's closest alpine and ski resort, Mount Baw Baw, and surrounded by almost untouched forests, hinterlands, lakes and rivers, this area offers an enticing array of trails and activities for the adventurer at heart.

Whether it is a day trip or a long weekend away, West Gippsland is packed with wonderful ways to escape.

ADVENTURE

Tracks, trails, roads, mountains and rivers

West Gippsland is an adventurer's playground - home to a wonderland of temperate rainforests, gullies and streams, rolling hills and valleys, mountains and river crossings.

The raw beauty of the natural landscape will delight and surprise you with forests of towering Mountain Ash and lush ferns opening to sweeping vistas across the West Gippsland hinterlands.

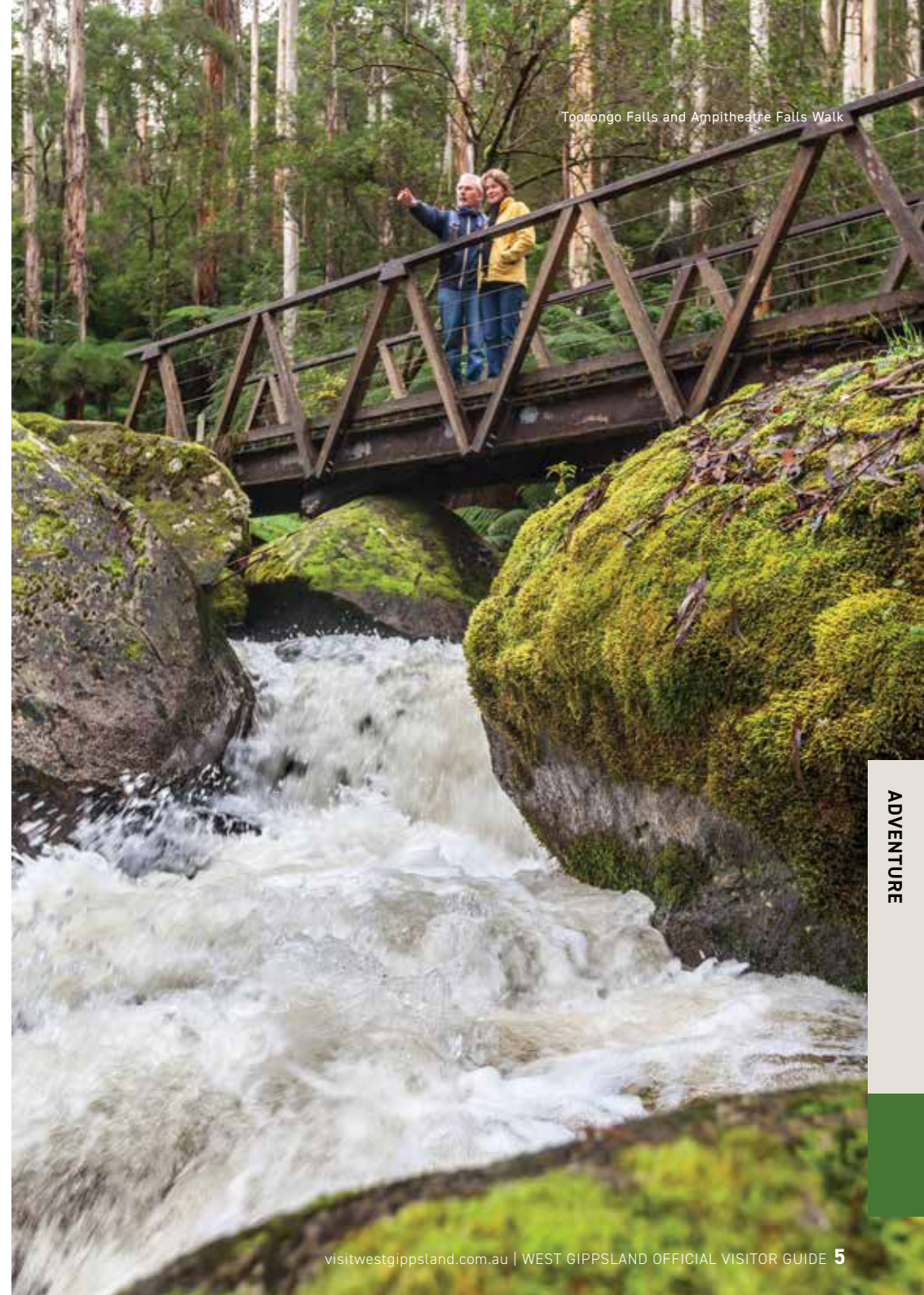
Venture into the streams for Alpine Trout, listen out for the endangered Baw Baw Frog, or paddle out into the serene expanse of Blue Rock Lake. The environment here is beautiful, peaceful and quiet.

Although wild and gorgeously untouched in places, West Gippsland presents an impressive series of trails and walks, from the gentle historic walks along the various rail trails, to hiking tracks that are sure to challenge the most energetic thrill seeker.

Whether you experience West Gippsland on foot, on your bike, from the car or from the water, the opportunity for a wilderness experience is guaranteed.

So, if you have your sights set on bushwalking, single track running, mountain biking, fishing, kayaking, cruising or four-wheel driving - start here.

You wouldn't want to go anywhere else.



Toorong Falls and Ampitheatre Falls Walk

MOUNT BAW BAW

A local experience



Make tracks for the wild to none other than the mighty mountain itself, Mount Baw Baw. It's hard to believe this beautiful, natural ecosystem is just a 2.5 hour drive from Melbourne.

With a summit of 1,564 metres, breathtaking views stretching as far out as Phillip Island, and a Village Resort that's open year round with activities for all four seasons, it makes for an exciting day trip, couples retreat, or an explorer's paradise.

The winding, picturesque drive along the Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road takes you through forests of tall Mountain Ash trees, lush fern gullies and spectacular countryside vistas.

Discover the tiny hamlets of Icy Creek and Tanjil Bren where you can stop for a rest or get your snow chains on. The drive requires some care, but with such beautiful scenery, you won't want to rush.

On the mountain there's a wide range of family-friendly activities to experience.

A must see is the *Dingo Resource Centre* featuring furry friends *Warragul*, *Rowdy* and *Bunji*. These three resident dingoes are available for guided walks



and cuddles during the green season, but you can visit their enclosure at the Resource Centre year round, and learn more about the endangered species in the area, including the Leadbeater's Possum and the Baw Baw Frog.

If skiing and snow play are your thing, then Mount Baw Baw delivers with over 35 hectares of snow terrain. Featuring a *Toboggan Park* and *Magic Carpet Lift*, kids will love tobogganing down the gentle slopes. Take advantage of the on-site ski and snowboarding lessons, and no matter what level you're at, check out the boxes, pipes and rails on *Tank Hill Terrain Park*.

Ski equipment hire is available on the mountain, and snowshoes are popular due to the 10 kilometres of awesome cross country track, which takes you through forests of snow gums and alpine meadows, complete with amazing views, you'll feel like you're on top of the world!



For couples wanting to escape the everyday hustle, Mount Baw Baw provides a stunning backdrop for a romantic and relaxing retreat. The peacefulness of this mountain escape will both nourish and inspire. Pair your experience with a gentle bush walk along the *Beech Trail*, dinner and drinks by the fire at the *Village Central Restaurant*, and end the night in a cosy little bed and breakfast for a perfect weekend away.

Take advantage of free entry over the spring and summer months to experience bushwalking, running and hiking among the wildflowers.

This place is a photographer's dream, with seasonal views, birds and wildlife, and many plant species on display in a mostly untouched landscape.

The mountain itself forms part of the 20 kilometre Baw Baw Plateau which extends from Mt Erica at the southern end to Mt Whitelaw, **Cont. p8**

and you can continue your journey from the mountain to Baw Baw National Park or to the Australian Alps Walking Track.

Be on the lookout for mountain bike events, car rallies and seasonal programming held at Mount Baw Baw.

Accommodation on the mountain offers traditional ski lodges, self-contained apartments and cabins.

The Village Central Restaurant is always open in off-peak season, and although opening times may vary, lunch, dinner, or at the very least, a cup of coffee will be available.

Mount Baw Baw's website is your best source of information for weather, conditions and what's on. With live cameras, maps and trail reports, it is essential to visit mountbawbaw.com.au to learn more before you go.

Find it: 32 Currawong Road, Baw Baw Village



Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort
Image courtesy of Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort

More info: (03) 5165 1136
guest.services@mtbawbaw.com.au



Snow play at Mount St Gwinear

OTHER SNOW-CAPPED WONDERLANDS

West Gippsland Snowfields

Mount St Gwinear



Ski, toboggan, snowshoe, cross country, snow play
FREE entry | [Check conditions](#)

Located on Baw Baw Plateau in Baw Baw National Park is Mount St Gwinear.

You'll find 12 kilometres of cross country ski trails, toboggan runs and snowshoeing to explore, plus a family snow play area, a heated shelter, and for the very brave, some dispersed sites for snow camping.

The scenery here is truly stunning, especially via the 1.2 kilometre return *Winter Walking Track* which opens up to a wonderful view over the park.

Enjoy a fun family day out here with tracks and trails accessible from the car park, as well as hot chocolate, coffee and donuts from the on-site food van which is available during peak seasons, some weekends and over the school holidays.

Tip: Make sure to come prepared to this location. Toboggan, ski gear and snow chains are available for hire at Erica or Rawson.

Tip: Contact Department Environment Land Water & Planning (DELWP) for opening hours and conditions.

More Info: 136 186

Parks Victoria: parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/baw-baw-national-park

SNOW CHAIN HIRE

Baw Baw Snow Chain Hire

Snow chains, toboggans, walking snow boots, ski pants, jackets, children's jump suits and accessories available for hire.

Find it: 2 Henty Street, Noojee

More info: 0459 582 692
fun4life.cj@gmail.com

Icy Creek Snow Chains

Snow chains available for hire and purchase.

Find it: 1690 Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Icy Creek

More info: 0491 123 958
moira@rubyandhope.com.au



Winter Walking Track, Mount St Gwinear
Image by Shane Duck

BEAU MILES

A local experience

Out-there adventurer, award-winning filmmaker, writer, and passionate West Gippy local, Beau Miles is not your average character. In fact, he describes himself as a bit of an oddball, and modestly claims that he should shower more.

Beau's infectious get-up-and-go attitude and complete commitment to living and breathing curiosity and adventure in his own backyard runs right through to his core, and also, to his legs.

As we sit and chat over a packed lamb and salad sandwich at *The Jindi Caf*, it becomes obvious that Beau carries a genuine love for where he lives and spends a great deal of time in his day immersing himself in the "temperate wonderland" that he calls home.

"West Gippy is super diverse, it bloody is! When you can go from the snowfields right down to these temperate rainforests and super-lush farmlands, vibrant rivers... We're super lucky."

Known for his adventure films including *Run The Line*, where he takes a 43 kilometre historic journey through the old hidden train line that once ran between Warragul and Noojee from the 1920s to the 1950s, Beau's knowledge of the area keeps growing with each step of the terrain he tackles.



Beau Miles, Adventurer
Taken from the film, *Big Gums*
Image by Pat Gordon

Beau is a single track enthusiast, covering countless kilometres as he runs in and around various sections of single link tracks that exist in the Rokeby area and surrounds.

Although a perfect challenge for the solo runner, hiker, mountain biker or photographer, there is also an abundance of rail trails, rainforest walks and easy going tracks to enjoy with the family when visiting. "My daughter loves bush walking," Beau says. "We tend to go to the Rokeby Rail Trail, Nangara Reserve and Glen Nayook, anywhere there's forest."

When Beau has more time up his sleeve, he ventures up to higher terrain. "A big favourite of mine is *Baw Baw*, for its snow gums and running... that beautiful temperate life up there. I almost exclusively go up there in summer. It's hard to beat in terms of its pathways into the Australian Alpine Walking Track, which is just excellent."

It's evident from Beau's enthusiasm that you don't need to go far to experience the huge diversity of West Gippsland. He offered some insight when asked about how visitors should approach a trip to the region:

"A lot of people go to places on holiday and use recreation as a form of escape and they think about their broader world. When I'm doing something recreationally, I do it for its own sake. I am there."

"Running from *Baw Baw* to *Mushroom Rocks* is probably the best bush track we've got in the area, I mean, it's beautiful," he continues. "The mountain bike trails around *Erica* make for excellent running as well as mountain biking, just fantastic, really, really awesome."

If you're looking to hike, bike or run away for a while, "*Erica's* a really good base to start. You can treat it as your adventure hub as it allows you to go high, go forested and dip your way down into the towns and villages. I've got a real soft spot for *Erica*," Beau confesses.

He also has a soft spot for Noojee, claiming the small town as, "The next best thing. I've done a lot of mountain bike riding and camping near Noojee... fishing and running there, it's great."

He's not shy of the water either, and considers *Blue Rock Lake*, near Willow Grove, a must see. "*Blue Rock's* really fantastic, for a family to get out in a

boat or a canoe and go fishing... and maybe see what's on the other side. The drive from Noojee to Willow Grove is also magnificent."

When deciding how best to spend your time in West Gippsland, Beau offered some wisdom, "My one good chunk of advice is to ask yourself, 'What do you really love doing?' Pick your form of recreation. What's your ideal day? What's it look like? Take no prisoners with how you spend your day."

And a final tip, "Get yourself a good map and you gotta follow your nose. I'm a local and I still get a map and just go out and have a look at places."

Beau screens his films seasonally at Jindivick Hall.








More info: beaumiles.com



Beau Miles making his way through dense bush.
Taken from the film, *Run The Line*
Image by Chris Ord

TRACKS & TRAILS

For walk, bike or hike

-  WALK, HIKE, RUN
-  BIKE
-  PICNIC AREA
-  PUBLIC TOILETS
-  ACCESSIBLE
-  FAMILY FRIENDLY
-  DOG FRIENDLY
-  PARKING
-  SCENIC



Toorong Falls and Amphitheatre Falls Walk

Ada Tree Walk



3.2km return | 1.5hr | Easy (gentle hills, some steps) | Explore more trails from here

Witness one of the oldest and largest flowering Mountain Ash trees in Victoria - the grand *Ada Tree*. Estimated to be over 300 years old and 76 metres tall, this gigantic tree has enough timber to build 66 homes on average in its trunk alone. It's a marvel to look at, and even more spectacular to immerse yourself in the lush, temperate rainforest as you make your way in and around it over boardwalks, bridges and formed track. There's a spot at the beginning of the track to enjoy your own picnic lunch, and options to venture off and explore longer walks if you desire.

Find it: Via the Big Creek Road turn off from Yarra Junction - Noojee Road. Turn when you see the 'Ada Tree' sign and follow Big Creek Road for 24kms. The trail begins at the car park.

Erica Mountain Bike Park



30+km of trails | Easy - Extremely Difficult (riding experience recommended)

Located between the Tyres Rail Trail and Walhalla Goldfields you'll find *Erica Mountain Bike Park*. The base of the park is made up of two sets of trails that are spread across either side of the highway at Erica, and cover some 30km of easy, to pretty full-on track, featuring all kinds of twists, turns, climbs and falls across moderate slopes.

On the western side of Moe-Rawson Road lies the more challenging tracks including the *Axeman* and the *Scream* (steep and slippery), whereas the other side of town at Mill Park features easier single track rides including *Crazy Snake*, *Bones* and *SSS*.

This place is truly one for adrenaline junkies of all ages - great for friends who want a thrilling few days camping



Erica Mountain Bike Park

experience, families wanting to share a fun biking experience, or the hard core fans of competitive mountain biking, who want to escape and get lost in the maze of single tracks.

Tip: Check conditions before you head to this park, the site may be affected by weather events and changed conditions.

Find it: Off Moore Street, Erica

More info: facebook @EricaMTBPark
facebook @DELWPGippsland

Glen Nayook Rainforest Walk



1.5km return | 1hr | Easy - Moderate (downhill slopes)

If you have children who believe in fairies, this enchanting walk may be for you and the whole family! *Glen Nayook Rainforest Walk* is truly a delightful experience that starts from the end of Paynter Road and makes its way down into a gorgeous fern gully surrounded

by moss-covered granite boulders, on the east branch of the Tarago River. Follow the river where it runs underground for about 100 metres, and sit and relax on one of the many park benches scattered throughout the walk to take in the scenery and hear bird life and trickling water.

Find it: At the end of Paynter Road traveling west from Neerim Junction.

ON YA BIKE - ITINERARY IDEAS FOR THE THRILL SEEKER WITHIN

Biking, camping and pub grub.

Head to Erica Mountain Bike Park for a thrilling day of adventurous biking across tracks and trails, before setting up for camp at Erica Caravan Park and enjoying a hearty pub dinner at either the Erica Hotel or the Rawson Stockyard pub.



Glen Nayook Rainforest Walk



Mountain Ash forests of West Gippsland

Loch Valley Tramway Walk



5km return | 2.5hr | Easy - Moderate

The *Loch Valley Tramway Walk* takes you on a journey along the historic timber tramway line that once lay passage through this rich timber area. See remnants of the old line and its equipment at the beginning of the walk and learn about its history, before discovering a forest of giant Mountain Ash trees and tall ferns. Be sure to take some time and soak up the soothing, tranquil surroundings. You can also enjoy a riverside picnic at the end of the walk, with picnic tables overlooking the Loch River.

Tip: Take a stroll along the Latrobe river via Ralph Cornwell Picnic Area on the other side of the road. There's a cool suspension bridge there which overlooks the river too!

Find it: McCarthy Spur Road, Noojee

Mount Erica



3km return | 2hr | Moderate | Walk, Run | No dogs
Uneven track | Walk-in camping

Keep going past the Mushroom Rocks to beautiful Mount Erica and watch the landscape change from Mountain Ash, Silver Wattle and granite, to enchanting Snow Gums. This sub-alpine woodland has an elevation of 1512 metres and on a wintry day, you may be lucky enough to see the snowflakes touch the treetops over this peaceful, quiet landscape.

Find it: Walk in from Mount Erica Car Park, Baw Baw National Park

Mount Worth State Park



Variety of walks | Easy - Difficult | Bird watching

There's so much to explore at *Mount Worth State Park* - enjoy the views, scenery, and the natural, temperate environment as you journey through a variety of tracks and trails designed for walkers and hikers of all ages and abilities.

Mount Worth State Park forms part of the Aboriginal cultural landscape in West Gippsland. The most amazing panoramic views can be seen from the top of Mount Worth, looking over the Latrobe River Valley, The Great Dividing Range and Westernport Bay.

The Park is home to a variety of beautiful bird species including Lyrebirds, Tawny Frogmouths, and the rare Sooty Owl, as well as more than 40 species of fungi. You'll also find the endangered Narracan Burrowing Crayfish here, indigenous to the area.

Moonlight Creek Picnic Area

The *Moonlight Creek Picnic Area* is a great starting point for your walks at Mount Worth State Park, and a delightful picnic spot too. It's both wheelchair and pram accessible, and has toilet facilities.

Giants Circuit - 1.8km return, 1hr

Continue your discovery of giant trees by visiting the impressive *Standing Giant Tree* - a Mountain Ash species that is estimated to be around 300 years old (similar to the Ada tree), and with a girth of 14 metres!

Gardiner's Mill Track - 3km return, 1hr

This track extends from the *Giants Circuit* and takes you along Clark Creek where you can witness a regenerating Mountain Ash forest.

Maslin's Mill - 1.5km return, 40 mins

A gentle walk for people of all ages and abilities, you'll journey through the forest to the Mill site itself.



Mount Worth State Park



Mount Worth State Park

Moonlight Circuit - 8.5km return, 3hr

Suitable for experienced walkers and hikers, this walk climbs to the ridge of the Mountain Ash forest and follows the mountain stream and timber mills. Combines *Moonlight Creek Track*, *Moonlight Link Track* and *Moonlight Divide Track*.

Waterfall-Bower Track - 7km return, 2.5hr

This track combines part of the *Moonlight Divide Track* and features two small waterfalls at the midway point. More experienced walkers should tackle this track.

Find it: 301 Allambee Estate Road, Allambee

More info: parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/mount-worth-state-park

Mushroom Rocks



3km return | 2hr | Easy-moderate - Uneven track
Walk-in camping

Mushroom Rocks is one of the first spots you can experience along the *Australian Alps Walking Track*, which at its full length runs for 750kms and finishes in Canberra. The single track leading into this beautiful and sacred place can seem hidden at times beneath the dense ground cover and forest, and will lead you through a maze of giant granite tors that jut out from all angles and carve distinct pathways.

Experienced travelers can camp overnight here too - you'll need to walk in with your gear. Toilets can also be found at the base of the car park.

Tip: Rug up in winter and wear suitable footwear - snow can fall here.

Find it: Mount Erica Car Park, Baw Baw National Park.



Mushroom Rocks



Nangara Duell, Nangara Reserve

Nangara Reserve



Short tracks

Nangara means "meeting of the waters" and this 14 hectare reserve forms an important part of Indigenous culture in the region. The reserve adjoins *Bunyip State Park*, and there's plenty of space to enjoy a picnic, walk your dog, or ride your horse. There are lots of short tracks that are great for families to explore, and along them you'll find local artwork.

Find it: 95 Nangara Road, Jindivick

ITINERARY IDEAS FOR A HALF-DAY FAMILY OUTING

Walk, lunch and explore

Take a walk along the *Noojee Trestle Bridge and Rail Trail*, then stop for lunch at *Little Red Duck Cafe*, followed by a visit to the *Noojee Heritage Centre*.

Noojee Trestle Bridge and Rail Trail



6km return | 2hr | Easy

One of the most iconic landmarks of West Gippsland is the historic *Noojee Trestle Bridge*, which stands at 21 metres tall, is 102 metres in length, and has been preserved as one of the oldest timber trestle bridges left standing in Victoria.

A legacy to the old railway line that ran between *Noojee* and *Warragul* from the 1920s to the 1950s during the region's timber days, you'll hardly believe a train once traveled across these tracks.

From the top, this mega structure feels grand, sheer and dramatic, and places you right up within the surrounding tree line. Use the carved out stairs on either side of the bridge to explore the huge struts underneath, and stay a little longer if you like - there's a picnic table at the foot of the bridge.



Noojee Trestle Bridge

Find it: Walk, run or ride to the bridge from the *Noojee Heritage Centre*, or park directly at the *Noojee Trestle Bridge*, just off *Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road*.

Rokeby Crossover Rail Trail



4km + | 2hr | Grade Level 3 | Horse ride

You can access this rail trail from *Old Telegraph Road*, just past *Rokeby Hall* near the reserve. It will take you on a journey through the old rail line, all the way to *Crossover*, before continuing on into *Neerim South*.

See remnants of the old train line in and among temperate rainforest, beautiful flora and fauna and captivating views of the surrounding agricultural farmlands.

Find it: Herman Street, Rokeby

Toorongo Falls Reserve and Amphitheatre Falls



2.2km return | 1hr | Easy

Toorongo Falls Reserve is around a 10 minute drive from Noojee, past *Toorongo River Chalets*. The drive out to the falls is amazing - you get a terrific view of the valley.

Upon arrival, you'll weave your way through the rocks and streams, over the bridge and start to make your way up the steady incline through dense bushland. See glimpses of the falls as you make your way up, and when you're there, feel encapsulated by the beauty of this breathtaking, tiered waterfall.

If you have time, continue your walk in a loop to *Amphitheatre Falls* where you'll step out onto a steel overhang to witness another cascading waterfall which pools into the stream below your feet.



Toorongo Falls Reserve

Descend your way back down to the car park along the stream - the experience truly is exhilarating.

Tip: For lovers of the outdoors - camp at nearby *Toorongo Falls Campground*.

Find it: Toorongo Valley Road, Noojee

ITINERARY IDEAS FOR THE ADVENTURER WITHIN

Great alpine adventure

Hike in with your overnight gear from the Mount Erica base car park and make your way through to Mushroom Rocks for an all-out camping experience. Then continue to the Mount Erica Summit.

Come food prepared by visiting one of the many local fresh produce stores in either Warragul or Drouin before you arrive.

Two Towns Trail - Drouin to Warragul



8km one way | Easy

Connecting our region's largest towns - Drouin and Warragul, why not try walking, riding or running along the *Two Towns Trail*. A sealed trail offering scenic wetland views, boardwalks and an opportunity to take in the Baw Baw and Strzelecki Ranges.

Tip: Ride or walk the trail in either direction. Start with breakfast in one town and opt for lunch in the other. There's plenty of cafes to choose from in both Drouin and Warragul.

Find it: The trail starts at Civic Park in Drouin and finishes at the Rotary Park in Warragul.

Tyres Junction Rail Trail



21km return | Uneven dirt track - Grade level 3

This mountain bike adventure trail runs through part of the old tramway lines that used to inhabit the area during the booming timber industry in the 20th Century. Enjoy the occasional river crossing on this trail as you ride through the fern gullies and seasonal wildflowers.

Find it: Start in Erica and finish in Walhalla at Collins Siding.

Walhalla Tramline Walk

1km - 5km | 30 mins - 90 mins | Moderate | Walk, Run | Family friendly

Absorb the picturesque views of Walhalla Township via this walk which you can either experience in a short time - from the *Long Tunnel Extended*



Two Towns Trail

Gold Mine car park - or from the *North Gardens Camping Area* car park. This track has a variety of options depending on how much time and energy you've got - you can see right up to the *Thomson River* in parts.

Find it: Walhalla central township.

LOCALS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Friends of Drouin Trees

A group working to protect and enhance Drouin's natural environment, *Friends of Drouin Trees*, offer walks and talks on the area's biodiversity, and have written three books about the trees and birds of the town.

You can pick up a copy from Drouin Post Office.

DAVID EDNEY

A local experience

The energy and grace of David Edney is something to admire and reflect upon whenever anything that seems remotely challenging comes to mind.

Now in his senior years (and no, we won't talk specifics), the amount of goals this English expat is kicking in retirement is just remarkable.

Sailor of the seas, mountain biker, bush walker, hiker, kayaker, orchid cultivator, master home brewer, and the owner of a self-sufficient property... is there anything this man can't do?

Around six years ago David and his similarly adventurous wife Jean decided to call Noojee home after spending 10 years circumnavigating the oceans and islands of Asia and Australia in a yacht. They have since spent time exploring their new found home, discovering many of the paths, tracks, trails, warrens, and old tramway routes known to the region.

As we sit together in their cosy home overlooking their hand planted orchard and the Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, David talks of his most satisfying thing to do in West Gippsland, "Get on ya bike!"

"I've been riding mountain bikes for around 30 years."

"Mountain biking and bike riding is my passion, and when I first arrived here I thought, 'Great, there's so much to explore!'"



David Edney, Noojee Resident & Cycling Enthusiast

David talks about riding bikes with keen enthusiasm and exceptional knowledge. He can't wait to get off the beaten track and seldom rides the same trails over again, and with good reason, "There's a lot of 'em!"

He'll spend the morning looking over his map of the area to discover new routes. When he finds one, he jumps at the chance to explore it, "I haven't been down that track - let's see what it's like!" And off he goes.

One of the biggest challenges for David has been the enduring climbs on the bike, "There's a lot of climbing to be done here as we live in a valley." That doesn't worry him though, as he humbly puts it, "I think you've got to earn the right to come down."

"I've gone through the Poplars up towards Mt Horsfall which is constant climbing to over 1000 metres," he continues.

One of David's favourite tracks close to his home is the *McCarthy Spur Road and Monument Track*, "It's not particularly steep, and takes you back onto Loch Valley Road... about an hour. It's an easy cycling distance from Noojee, but if you want more of a challenge you can continue along McCarthy Spur Road to Warburton."

"I do like single track mountain bike riding, and there are some around here. There are a few trails around Rokeby as well, off to the sides of the rail trail."

Riding is not the only recreational activity that David spends time doing. When he's not in his workshop making spectacular home brew and wine, David, together with Jean spend time with the *Strzelecki Bush Walking Group*, and have been members with them for around two years. "We joined them because they weren't just a walking group. They also cycle, kayak, ski, and do all sorts of outdoor stuff. They've taken us to places in the Baw Baw ranges and surrounding areas that we didn't even know existed!"

Together with the group, David and Jean have explored kayaking, "We've done kayaking for years - mainly white water river stuff. We now go to Blue Rock Lake, about 40 minutes from here. It's a lot calmer than the sea, which is nice."

Their favourite part about living in Noojee is, "It's quiet and then, sometimes it's not. You get a lot of

visitors at the weekend, and then they leave, and it's quiet and peaceful again."

"It's not really too far from Melbourne either, and there are a number of adventure areas within an hour's drive from here," David says.

David's local tip: Buy the *Rooftop Map* of this area, *The Yarra Valley West Gippsland Adventure Map*.

"If you're coming into Noojee you could plan your route from this map. All distances are shown and you can do whatever suits you. There is a mix of hard trails on this map and some that are easier, you just need to be able to read the contour lines."

Take some inspiration from this wise adventure seeker - grab your gear, get out and explore!



Cycling, Tanjil Valley

ROADS & 4X4 ADVENTURES

Get off the beaten track



Experience 4WD adventures throughout Baw Baw

West Gippsland lends itself to some of the most exciting, scenic roads that Victoria has to offer - and not all of them are on the bitumen!

If you're up for an adventurous four-wheel driving experience, West Gippsland boasts great tracks from beginner to expert.

Motoring enthusiasts with classic cars and motorcycles can also enjoy scenic routes through windy, sealed roads around Noojee, Willow Grove, Mount Baw Baw and Walhalla, surrounded by sensual rainforest - as can cyclists on a day trip, overnighter or multi-day ride.

For caravans and campers, the main sealed roads are good to travel on. Some roads are tight in parts, but the key is to take your time and check conditions before you venture out.

Tip: Rawson is a terrific base to discover the four-wheel-drive tracks in and around the area.

Aberfeldy 4WD Track

4WD | 180km | 2-3 days | Unsealed
Fuel point: Rawson | Grade: Medium - Difficult

Follow the *Miners' Trail* from Walhalla to Jamieson along the *Aberfeldy Track Historic Touring Route*. Originally constructed in the early 1800s for use as a transportation route during the gold rush, this track is considered one of Victoria's best.

Explore rugged bushland and terrain, make stops in Matlock and Woods Point on your way through, and take in a multitude of breathtaking natural environments - from mountain top views, to scenic bushland and stony river crossings.

Camping is available along the route, and a popular spot is the *Aberfeldy River Camping Area*, situated right on the bank of the Aberfeldy Heritage River. You'll find car parking, fire pits, picnic tables and drop toilets here.

Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road

4WD - Car - Classic Car - Motorcycle - Cycling
53km | Day trip | Sealed | Windy climb | Snow chains required in Winter months

Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road stretches over 50 kilometres from the town of Noojee at its base, and climbs right up to *Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort*. The drive is narrow in parts, but is completely scenic, lined with temperate rainforest, tiny towns with rich agricultural land, short bridges and river breaks. Take your time along this road as the twists and turns can get quite tight, and in the winter season, don't forget your snow chains.

Tip: Snow chain hire is available from Noojee, Icy Creek and Tanjil Bren on your way up to Mount Baw Baw.

Noojee to Willow Grove

4WD - Car - Classic Car - Motorcycle - Cycling - Caravan | 33km | Day trip | Sealed | Windy

Enjoy another winding road as you turn off from the Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road onto Willow Grove Road. This beautiful, low-lying road is set right in the bush and if you're lucky, you might spot a lyrebird or two. Magnificent tall trees shape this road, and there are some tight corners to get around. As you move through the bush, you'll enter the towns of Fumina and Hill End, where the landscape changes to classic Australian bush - full of humongous Ghost Gums and farming countryside.

Thomson Dam

4WD - Car | 36km | Day trip | Sealed

The Thomson Reservoir is home to Melbourne's largest water supply, and is just a 25 minute drive from Walhalla via a sealed road. You can drive right

across the dam wall and take in the views. It's also very quiet and makes for a good picnic spot.

Tip: Surrounding the Thomson Dam is a wide range of four-wheel drive tracks, for drivers of all levels. It's an amazing place to explore!

Yarra Junction-Noojee Road

4WD - Car - Classic Car - Motorcycle - Cycling - Caravan | 46km | Day trip | Sealed | Windy and straight parts

Entering into Baw Baw Shire from the Yarra Valley, this scenic drive easily caters to all travelers with wide roads, plenty of turnouts, long stretches and juicy curves. You'll pass through the green country towns of Gladysdale, Three Bridges, Gilderoy and Powelltown, before making your way into Piedmont and Noojee.

Check out the delightful apple orchids and scenic *Seven Acre Rock*, and stop at the *Ada Tree* on your way through.



Willow Grove Road, Hill End

RIVERS & LAKES

Fishing and leisure



Local adventurer David, and 'Scratch' The Dog kayaking Blue Rock Lake

The Baw Baw region offers some fantastic freshwater streams, rivers and lakes to fish, swim and play.

Put your waders on and escape in the middle of nowhere as you cast your line and forget about life for a while.

Tip: If you plan on fishing and are over 18 years of age, purchase a *Recreational Fishing License* from Services Victoria to cover all forms of recreational fishing.

More info: service.vic.gov.au

Blue Rock Lake

Blue Rock Lake is a gentle, calm body of water located at the foothills of the Baw Baw ranges. Here, you can jump in your kayak and paddle from one side of the lake to the other, or launch your boat off the ramp and go fishing for Trout, Redfin, Carp and Australian Bass.

There is an excellent children's sensory playground here, with picnic and

barbecue facilities, and lots of wide open space to kick a footy. Walk along the banks of the lake, or even take a swim.

Find it: Spillway Road and Blue Rock Dam Road, Tanjil South



Fly fishing adventures in West Gippsland

Tanjil River

Crystal clear, shallow waters and calm pools form the majestic *Tanjil River*, in between Noojee and Mount Baw Baw.

Fly fishing is highly recommended here, and you can expect to catch exceptional Brown and Rainbow Trout in seclusion, peace and quiet.

Find it: Tanjil South

Tarago Reservoir Park

The Tarago Reservoir supplies drinking water across Victoria and Melbourne with a 37,580 megalitre capacity. It gets its water from the Tarago River that flows into it.

The park features sloping lawns set amongst bushland with views of the reservoir and surrounding landscapes, plus a large, flat grassed area that's perfect for a picnic or barbecue with family and friends.

Note: To retain the high quality of water for our residents and the production of local produce, the reservoir is closed to boating, fishing and bush walking.

Find it: Tarago Reservoir Road, Neerim South

Thomson River Canoe Trail

For those wanting white water, the *Thomson River Canoe Trail* winds through a deep river valley from the Thomson Dam to the Walhalla Road Bridge near Rawson.

The Grade 2 rapids here are perfect for first time paddlers and rafters.

Find it: Thomson River Heritage River, Baw Baw National Park, Walhalla

ITINERARY IDEAS FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE WATER

A day at the lake

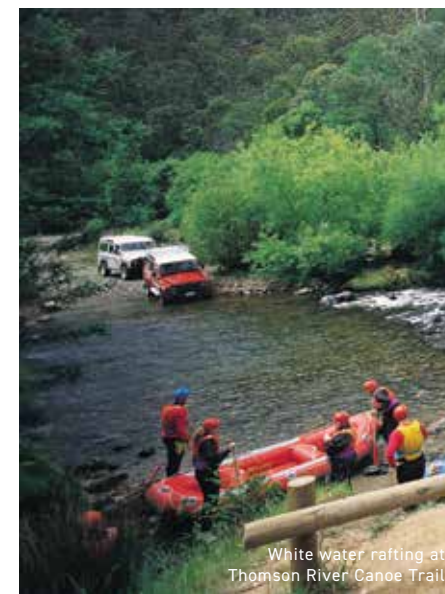
Gather your friends and family, pick up some fresh produce in Warragul, and enjoy a picnic at Blue Rock Lake, followed by dinner at The Irish at Willow Grove.

Go fish

Spend the morning trying your luck at fly fishing in Tanjil River, before enjoying lunch at the Noojee Hotel.

Weekend white water

Base yourself in Walhalla for the weekend, and tackle the rapids along the Thomson River Canoe Trail, before enjoying a hearty meal at the Wally Pub later on.



White water rafting at Thomson River Canoe Trail

FLY ADDICTION FISHING

A local experience

Corey Milner from Fly Addiction Fishing is an expert fly fisherman who has spent years perfecting his craft in the mountain streams of Baw Baw, while showing countless visitors like him where to spot the best trout in the region.

On one hand, Corey is a pretty laid back guy, and on the other, he's also pretty active - always out and about. Fishing in the morning, running after lunch, catching up for a quick coffee, then swimming in the afternoon.

A keen angler who thrives outdoors, Corey loves nothing more than to head out from his home in Drouin down to Noojee and do some catch-and-release fishing with his trusty fly rod. Ever since his old man taught him how to fly fish, he's been hooked (pardon the pun).

His favourite fishing spot in Baw Baw is Toorongo River.

"It's amazing. You get off the beaten track for a bit and end up in these beautiful rivers, surrounded by ferns. There's heaps of fish, and it's just so scenic. It's pretty accessible too."

Corey has operated fishing tours in the area for a number of years and fishes with people from all walks of life - from beginners right through to experienced locals and visitors.



Corey Milner, Fisherman
Fly Addiction Fishing

Let him pick you up in the morning in Noojee and give you a casting lesson in one of the rivers nearby, then hop in his four wheel drive and make tracks for some of the best rivers to go Rainbow and Brown Trout fishing in Victoria.

He's got such a vast knowledge of the area that he can literally pinpoint where the fish will be, *"You develop an instinct over time,"* he says.

Corey's up for camping riverside if that also takes your fancy, and he'll also bring lunch for you, as well as waders, fishing gear and everything else you might need.

Corey's local tip: *"Get off the beaten track, it's amazing what you'll find."*

More info: Instagram @flyaddictionfishing

ALPINE TROUT FARM

A local experience

The Alpine Trout Farm in Noojee makes for a great family day out. Surrounded by forest and set at the foothills of Mount Baw Baw, this tranquil environment is perfect for casting your rod and taking a break.

The friendly staff here can sort you out with a rod and reel, bait, nets and a bucket - free of charge! All you pay for is your catch.

You'll fish for Golden and Rainbow Trout here, as well as Salmon, and if you're keen to try some fly-fishing, the farm also offers a catch and release section at the back of the property.

You can't get any fresher than the fish here, and the taste - just delicious, enhanced by the region's natural cool climate.

As a supplier to many eateries in West Gippsland, including award-winning restaurant *Hogget Kitchen*, and stretching out to Melbourne and beyond, the *Alpine Trout Farm* forms an integral part of the superb produce that comes out of this region.

You also have the option to cook your catch using the on-site barbecue facilities, or take your beauties home.

Open weekends, school holidays and public holidays.

Tip: Pick up some smoked trout while you're there - it's heavenly mixed with cream cheese, chives and lemon - the ultimate *Smoked Trout Dip!*

Find it: Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Noojee

More info: alpinetroutfarm.com.au



Alpine Trout Farm, Noojee

ART & CULTURE

Arts centre, gallery spaces and gardens

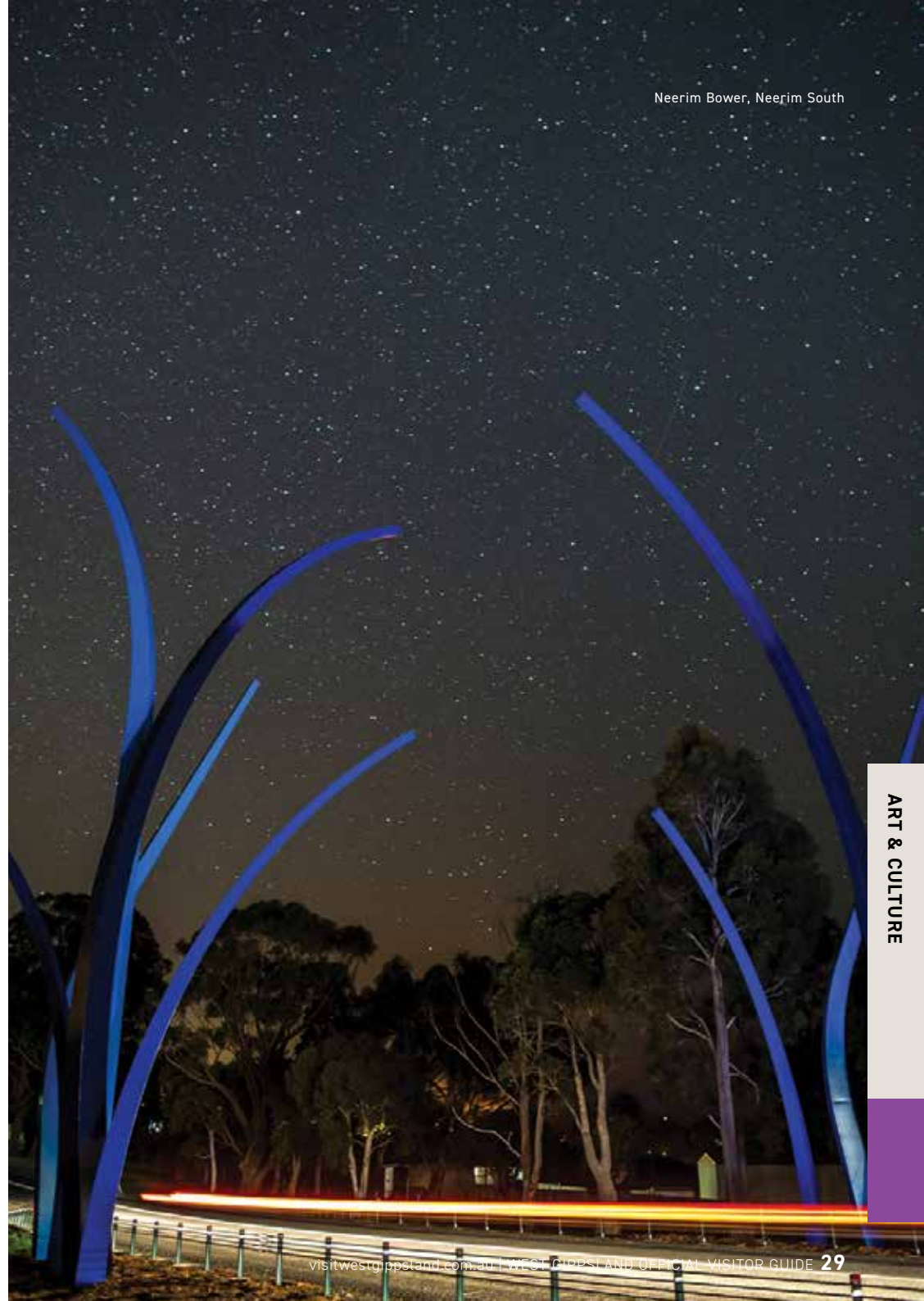
The romance of West Gippsland's wild and untamed landscape has captured more than one artist's imagination, and is now home to a thriving creative community.

West Gippsland is a dynamic and diverse hub for arts, performing arts and cultural activities. Explore the many galleries, theatres, artist studios and workshops, decadent gardens, creative events and public art that this region has to offer.

Wander through the streets of our local townships, gardens and reserves to discover an abundance of creative street murals and public art installations.

Catch a show at *The West Gippsland Art Centre* - the region's premiere performing arts, cultural and community venue. Holding pride of place in the beautifully landscaped *Civic Park* in Warragul, the theatre is on the national and state touring circuit, playing host to performing arts companies such as *The Sydney Theatre Company*, *The Australian Ballet*, *The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra* and many others.

There is bound to be something in West Gippsland that inspires your own creativity, and we encourage you to celebrate it.



WEST GIPPSLAND ARTS CENTRE

A local experience



West Gippsland Arts Centre (WGAC)
Image by DMG Landscape Architects

Make art and culture part of your story by experiencing The West Gippsland Arts Centre (WGAC) in the heart of Warragul township.

Surrounded by the gorgeous botanical gardens of *Civic Park*, the tall, cascading facade of WGAC cannot be missed, sweeping down from its peak to form a uniquely curved arc, with a tiered, communal outdoor space that doubles as a great meeting spot or place to mingle. On occasion, you'll even be entertained by live music performers right on the very steps.

Enter the classic cinema-style foyer and feel the excitement build as you discover the talent on offer here. The diversity of performers is outstanding, with a combination of featured big name acts, alongside community performances, kids shows, orchestras, plays, musicians, and comedians - there is literally something for everyone to experience.

The intimate 750 seat theatre not only makes for great viewing no matter where you sit, but it also has a unique way of showcasing and honouring WGAC's 40 year history. Backstage, the exposed brick walls are handsomely graffitied with the signatures and



WGAC walls featuring performing artists

paraphernalia of decades of performing artists. It's quite remarkable, inclusive and immersive to be in this space, almost like being in a *Hall of Fame*.

What's more, are the testimonies from some amazing performing artists, who make visiting West Gippsland part of their very own performing experience:

"We love touring the Aussie regions! Packing the car, hitting the road, leaving the city behind. Gippsland is one of our very favourite places to tour, we love the region, the restaurants, the landscape but most of all, the audiences!"

- Malia Walsh, Performer and Producer
CircusTrick Tease

"There is a beautiful reciprocity about being a touring actor. We get to share our show and in return, we are gifted with seeing the unique offerings that each town is proud of. Whether it's the wine, market stalls, or gardens and parklands, every place we tour to has its own story. Access to the arts is more than a human right, it's a soul essential."

- Julia Billington, Performer
Bell Shakespeare

If you're looking for something to do besides going to a show, why not pop into the WGAC's gallery space located



Live music on the steps of WGAC

over three levels, where you can view and even purchase local artwork, and admire the Baw Baw Shire Council's collection, which includes works from *Kenneth Jack*, *Victor Cobb* and *Hedley Potts*, as well as local artists *Gary Miles*, *Kerrie Warren* and *Maery Gabriel*.

If you fancy a bit of entertaining yourself, the grand piano is also available for you to make your mark.

Awakening the senses in this refreshingly vibrant, creative space should form part of your visit to West Gippsland. Find out what's on and make it part of your regional experience.

Find it: Corner of Smith and Albert Streets, Warragul

More info: wgac.com.au

LAURIE COLLINS & RED TREE GALLERY

A local experience



Red Tree Gallery

Exploring the world of Laurie Collins is an absolute delight - interesting, down-to-earth, friendly, organic, and above all, imaginative - and one that you must experience on your visit to Jindivick.

His *Red Tree Gallery* and *Sculpture Garden* is part of *Open Studios West Gippsland* - a collection of local artists from around the region who open up their own galleries, art spaces and workshops to visitors over the course of several seasonal weekends to showcase their unique, weird and wonderful works.

Laurie spends his time pottering in his eclectic, 'tools, stuff and things-everywhere' workshop inventing all sorts of quirky, thought-provoking, metal-based sculptures, made from completely recyclable materials ranging from scrap, metal, old gates, nuts, bolts and yeah... golf clubs.

The grand 'junk pile' at the front of his workshop is where it all begins. Laurie carefully selects bits and pieces to craft, weld, bash out, and transform into complete works of art. There are very few people who can make a golf club and a cinder block look amazing, but Laurie achieves this with such modesty, labelling himself, "A ratty old guy who loves what he does."

When working on a piece, how Laurie starts is not necessarily how he finishes. There is a true honesty in his work that develops simultaneously with both the idea and the design.

"There's nothing to stop the imagination."

As you tour the *Sculpture Garden*, you really get a sense of just how challenging it is to present what was once junk, into a perfectly formed piece, which in its ironic constraint, contains so much organic creativity.

There is meaning behind all of Laurie's work - it's emotional, political, expressive, loving, humorous. His work is not linear, and carries all the wise-man charm of a person who shares stories, knowledge and skill, through his art and in person.

The *Sculpture Garden* has been growing for around 12 years, with an artwork-for-seedlings exchange being responsible for the acre of leafy, green gardens that houses it. The walking track takes you through a mix of beautiful, interesting and alluring sculptures that seem to either poke out of the ground, stop you in your tracks, or lead you off the path in circles.

The *Mosaic Mercedes Benz* is a must see - completely covered in mirrored mosaic tiles and just like a giant pot plant, you can see grass growing up through its old windows.

Powerful pieces including *The Refugee* and *Tony's World* speak to Australian



Laurie Collins, Sculpture Artist

political and cultural discord, and the gorgeous *Mother and Daughter* sculpture makes you want to hug your kids. The quirkiness of *Mr Junk Head* and *No Spring Chicken* will make you laugh.

As you make your way through the Garden and into the adjoining *Red Tree Gallery*, the gigantic, steel-cut huntsman that welcomes you is thankfully, fixed to the wall, and not for the faint hearted!

The Gallery's best feature is its revolving program of local artists, who take up monthly residence here to showcase their amazing artworks, one of which is *Pen On Parchment* Calligraphy Artist, Anita George.

Laurie and his wife Marian spend time curating the Gallery's space, nurturing all artistic walks of life, celebrating diversity and giving locals a platform to launch their careers. "We provide an affordable space for local artists to make their mark," Marian says.

This is an inclusive space, perfect for anyone. It's family oriented so take the kids (or grandkids) down and let them wander through the garden and play on one of two playgrounds.

Laurie's place is open year round and you can drop in and watch him work away at his craft, which is very dear to his heart. You can also purchase his works directly from the Garden and the Gallery.

Find it: 420 Main Jindivick Road, Jindivick

More info: lauriecollins.com.au

THE GARDEN AT BROUGHTON HALL & MUSKERS RARE PLANT NURSERY

A local experience



The beautifully landscaped gardens of Broughton Hall
Image courtesy of Broughton Hall

Driving through the rolling hills of Jindivick feels like traveling through the English Countryside - it's so lush and green, with pretty-in-pink flowers, tall trees, white fences and a gentle elevation exposing you to the scenic views of distant mountains.

On the outskirts of this gorgeous little hamlet, you'll find *The Garden at Broughton Hall* - a truly amazing sight to see. This privately owned estate is impressively breathtaking, positioned high atop Palmer Road overlooking the stunning *Tarago Reservoir*, and features four acres of perfectly landscaped gardens, paths, lawns and hideaways. It's a beautiful place where you can truly escape, explore, relax and dream the day away, with undeniably exquisite views to match.

The Garden carries the formal feel of elegance, quality and intrigue, and as you make your way through the grounds, you could easily find yourself

floating off into romantic fantasy amongst the delight of lemon scented roses, splashes of colour and rare plant varieties.

Pass through the gates and observe the *Peacock Aviary*, then stroll through the grand, tree-lined entrance to the immaculate series of featured gardens which showcase a mix of classic topiary, colourful roses, sweet cherry blossoms, interesting sculptures, and of course, rare and unusual plant varieties that thrive in Jindivick's rich, earthy, volcanic soil.

On a clear, still day the waters of *Tarago Reservoir* look like glass, and are perfectly framed by a line of towering trees and heavenly green lawns.

The temperate climate of West Gippsland is literally a gardener's dream, and Broughton Hall is worth a visit at most times of the year, but

in particular - Springtime, through to the Autumn months where the colours change and the flowers bloom.

In its 25-year history, Owners David Musker and Philip Hunter have welcomed all walks of life to this captivating landscape, and have created a space that truly resonates with the mind, body and soul. The combination of David's exceptional eye for detail and meticulous green thumb, together with Philip's career in physiotherapy and his innate knowledge of meditation and respite, has helped them to carve out something truly special from this once humble farmland.

"We've thought about everything."

Together, this hard-working couple have amalgamated their talent and style and brought their distinctive vision to life on this grand property, captivating countless garden



Majestic pathways to wonder through
Image courtesy of Broughton Hall

enthusiasts, photographers, couples, families and visitors alike.

The fresh air, open space and sheer quiet is to die for - you feel like you've completely escaped the *rat-race* and entered high-end heaven.

And if wondrous escape isn't enough, you can also discover the wild and wonderful at *Muskers Rare and Unusual Plant Nursery* located on-site at the front of the gardens, featuring a plethora of rare, distinctive trees, shrubs, bulbs and perennials available for purchase. David's knowledge of plant care and maintenance is superb, and he can help you choose that special living thing to make its way into your very own garden, serving as a constant reminder of your timely experience.

The nursery is teamed up with a garden retail store where you can splash out on luxurious gardening equipment, local preserves and even purchase a copy of David and Philip's book, *The Charmed Garden*, which celebrates all they have achieved at Broughton Hall.

Broughton Hall is opened seasonally and group bookings are essential.

Meditation sessions are also offered on occasion in the ground's *Tea Room*.

Visit the website for opening times, entry fees and further details.

Find it: 125 Palmer Road, Jindivick

More info: muskersbroughtonhall.com.au

OTHER CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Art hubs, gallery spaces and performing arts

Baw Baw Arts Alliance, The Station Gallery Trafalgar and Yarragon

Trafalgar Pop-up Shop and Art Space

Open Tuesday - Friday

Yarragon Gallery and Gift Shop

Open Wednesday - Sunday

The Station Gallery, located in Trafalgar and Yarragon is run by a team of volunteers who form the *Baw Baw Arts Alliance*. They provide studio, exhibition and performance space to local artists from around the Baw Baw region. You can find a collection of works by talented local artists at either of these galleries.

Find it: (Trafalgar) Trafalgar Station, Princess Highway, Trafalgar

Find it: (Yarragon) Yarragon Station, Princess Highway, Yarragon

More info: bawbawartsalliance.org.au

The Serigraph Gallery & Public Art Space, Neerim South

Open most Sundays 10am - 3pm (call to confirm)

The town of Neerim South lends itself to an open arts space. You are welcomed by a giant bower as you enter the town from the west side and you'll find a number of stunning public art pieces around the town.

The Serigraph Gallery opens by appointment and displays many artworks from local artists.

Find it: 157-161 Main Neerim Road

More info: serigraphgallery.com



Town and Country Gallery, Yarragon

Open 7 days per week

Venture into the eclectic town of Yarragon, where arts and culture carry a very prominent vibe. For 30 years, *Town and Country Gallery* has been showcasing an ever-changing exhibition of the highest quality Australian contemporary art and hand-crafted works - from sculptures, pottery and paintings, to quality handmade leather goods, jewellery and clothing, plus an interesting collection of books.

This gallery is not just for show - you can take a piece of it home to enjoy.

Find it: 111 Princes Highway

More info: townandcountrygallery.com.au

WAS Gallery, Warragul

Open Wednesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm

Free entry

WAS Gallery is part of *Warragul Art Studios*, an enterprise set up by the Lorraine family. The gallery is open to the public for free and holds numerous exhibitions each year by diverse artists.

Find it: 37 Latrobe Street

More info: wasgallery.com.au

Wesley of Warragul, Warragul

Open for events/bookings by appointment

Considered one of the finest nineteenth century churches in Gippsland, *The Wesley Church* building was purchased and lovingly restored by the *Warragul Heritage Preservation Association* in 2002, and now serves as a performance venue, hosting regular concerts and events including fine music, cabaret, comedy and theatre productions. *Wesley of Warragul* boasts extraordinary acoustics and is also home to the *West*

Gippsland Chorale and the *Warragul Theatre Organ Society*.

Find it: 64 Victoria Street

More info: wesleyofwarragul.org.au

WEEKEND ITINERARY IDEAS FOR THE CREATIVE HEART

Sat: Visit The Garden at Broughton Hall and Laurie Collins Sculpture Garden/Red Tree Gallery. Enjoy lunch at The Jindi Caf or Five Aces Brewery, followed by a walk through Neerim South's Main Street sculpture collection. Book dinner at Neerim South Hotel.

Sun: Breakfast and Serigraph Gallery (by appointment) then enjoy a scenic drive through the countryside to spend an afternoon in Yarragon exploring The Station Gallery and Community Arts Hub, plus Town and Country Gallery, followed by some retail therapy.



OPEN STUDIOS WEST GIPPSLAND

A local experience



Helen Timbury, Open Studios Artist

Among the rolling hills of West Gippsland lies a trail of independent artist studios and boutique galleries just waiting to be explored.

From painters, to sculptors, and installation artists, *Open Studios West Gippsland* offers you a unique opportunity to meet with local artists and learn about their creative processes, as well as browse and purchase their artwork.

The *Open Studios Trail* is best discovered over a weekend, starting with a relaxing country drive exploring the spectacular scenery of West Gippsland, before making your way to visit and feel inspired by our collection of artists.

Team up your cultural experience with a visit to some of West Gippsland's indulgent cafes and wineries, before spending the night in a cosy bed and breakfast.

Open studios runs in November and April each year. Visit the website for more details and to download the *Open Studios Map*.

More info:
openstudioswestgippsland.com.au



Artwork by Janine Riches

OPEN STUDIO ARTISTS

Local talent, local artwork

Janine Riches

Janine started painting at just 11 years of age, inspired by oil painting lessons with artist *Muriel Balmain*, and after much experimentation with various mediums, and a Bachelor of Fine Art, has established herself as a local artist of note with regular exhibitions around West Gippsland.

Janine describes being part of Open Studios as a lot of fun.

"It provides an opportunity for me to share my art practice and meet people who tell me about their creative ideas as well."

Her practice is often inspired by the lush countryside and trees in the West Gippsland region, allowing her environment and childhood nostalgia inform her work.

"I like to distort and abstract the reference into shapes and form and through various painting techniques I create a rustic and weathered appearance."

More info: Instagram @janine_riches11

Helen Timbury

Helen Timbury is a local artist who has been involved with the Open Studios for some time. As a child she can barely remember a time without having a pen in her hand, and she lived for her art classes at school. After graduating from RMIT Graphic Design, Helen started her career making black and white illustrations for national park signage. She drew flora and fauna for years, and this still influences her artworks today. When graphic design moved to digital, Helen turned her hand to linocut printmaking, wanting to keep the connection and experience of working by hand with paper and ink.

Helen says the best thing about opening her studio is the special conversations and connections her linocuts create.

"The studio is filled with a buzz of energy after the weekend."

The rich and unique biodiversity is what Helen loves about her home in West Gippsland, often enjoying the birdsong from her studio. *"My designs of landscape and place, plants and animals are informed by my love and knowledge of the Australian wilderness."*

More info: helentimburydesign.com.au

ENTERTAINMENT & ACTIVITIES

Live music, expos, museums and fun for all ages

West Gippsland is home to some really niche entertainment and activities, with something fun and interesting for all ages.

There's plenty to do here in between your adventures in nature, with some wonderful live music offerings and various events, festivals and expos that are attracted to the region's lush backdrop and close proximity to Melbourne.

The *history buff* will love experiencing the beautifully preserved heritage township of Walhalla, with its own restored railway and gold mine. Spend a day with the family exploring this living piece of history, or enjoy the serenity and grandeur of this location on a romantic weekend away.

Or for the *car lover* - a wander through *Trafalgar Holden Museum* is always worth including.

Walhalla Goldfields Railway



JAK'S MUSIC

A local experience



Live on stage at Jak's Music
Image courtesy of Jak's Music

For the best Open Mic Night ever, you've gotta get yourself over to Jak's Music.

Finding this place triggers memories of those 90s underground grunge venues. Hidden on the outskirts of Warragul in the industrial part of Alfred Street, all the music magic happens in a giant, black shed.

Inside, you'll find a home for music enthusiasts all round, with a full stage setup and room for live performances that can attract crowds of up to 200 people. This section of Jak's presents a variety of professional live gigs mostly held on Saturday nights, and it's well worth experiencing the entertainment it brings to Warragul, and to the region.

The neighbouring lounge area is where the dedicated *Open Mic* space lives on the first Friday of every month from 6.30pm. Bar stools, beanbags, gig posters, comfy lounge suites, and a

well loved beer provides the perfect scene for a good night out with friends, and a reason to get out and enjoy live music.

Jak's is not just a live music venue, it's also a music store, a repair shop and a dedicated music school.

The music store is what you see when you first walk through the doors, and it is impressive, with a string of electric and acoustic guitars up high on the wall among painted artworks of music legends including *Morrison*, *Knopfler*, *Mercury* and *Richards*. The leopard print lounge invites you to pick up an Australian made *Cole Clark* acoustic and strum away, and then there's the wall of strings, music books, drum kits, the keyboards and many other musical treasures to discover.

Owners Mark and Kate have spent years creating this feel-good music space, and also have a reputation in

the regional community for running excellent, sought after music lessons that book out within days each term.

Jak's also runs community support programs, including the recent *Music Mental Health Program for First Responders* in conjunction with *Fortem Australia*, where emergency services workers have the opportunity to take up music lessons to aid recovery from conditions such as PTSD.

"It's a real way to support our emergency services workers, who put themselves on the line and support our community so much."

If he's not playing guitar, you'll usually find Mark at the front desk or at his repairs table doing what he loves, carefully bringing an instrument back to life. Together with Sam - a music teacher with multi-instrument experience, a mild obsession with *King Gizzard and The Lizard Wizard*, and fabulous super-long braided hair, they regularly perform at Jak's and help keep the good music vibes alive.

Their collective efforts have supported a community of music lovers and music players, giving them a regular platform to perfect their craft.

Find it: 94 Alfred Street, Warragul

More info: jaksmusic.com.au

ITINERARY IDEAS FOR THOSE WHO LOVE LIVE MUSIC

A day out exploring, followed by a night out of dinner, drinks and good times.

Enjoy lunch in Warragul at Frankies Cafe, before heading to nearby Trafalgar to check out the classic Holden Museum. If you have a classic car, the Princes Highway is perfect for cruising.

Later, enjoy a Mexican feast and a few fine local ales at Bandolier Brewing, before heading to Jak's Music for some live entertainment and good times.

Spend the night at the Mecure Hotel in the centre of Warragul township, and enjoy breakfast at the adjoining Newmason's restaurant the next morning.



Mark Graham, Owner, Jak's Music
Image courtesy of Jak's Music

LARDNER PARK

A local experience



If special events and entertainment are what you're after on your visit to West Gippsland, then keeping abreast of the event juggernaut that is Lardner Park, is a must.

Imagine packing up your car for the weekend and heading out on a road trip with friends to a music festival for big name acts, or ringing in the new year at a major music festival. Pitch your tent, watch the sun go down over sweeping mountain vistas, and party the night away.

Or perhaps you're wanting to dive into period life in the 16th Century via *Swordfest* - no phones, no socials, no computers, just knights in shining armour wielding their swords, grand jousting tournaments, lutes, ladies in waiting and medieval meats.

Maybe you're keen to check out *Farm World* - home to the biggest major agricultural exhibition event in

Gippsland. Attracting more than 40,000 people and featuring everything farm related - from tractors and equipment, to agri-demonstrations, fresh local produce, animals and equestrian expos. If that's not enough, explore the rodeo and motocross entertainment, with boats, caravans, and cars also forming part of the showcase. It's massive.

If home improvement is where you're at, the new *Home Ideas and Garden Show* is something to add to your calendar, filled with renovation ideas, gardening expos, expert tips, talks, and advice, plus plants galore to get started on your new landscaping project.

All of this big stuff and more, is presented on this amazingly diverse 300 acre property just 12 minutes from Warragul. *Lardner Park* caters for a huge range of premiere, commercial and community events, with its 1000 seat event centre and *Burnt Store* art gallery space, commercial kitchen,



training rooms, heritage stockyards, and vast outdoor space that can take you lakeside or countryside with views to ignite the senses - it even has in-built 4WD tracks!

Craig Debnam is a passionate CEO, full of enthusiasm and wonderful to talk to. He has a wealth of knowledge of the local area and takes great pride in what Lardner Park has to offer, and that is indeed a lot!

"Anything goes at Lardner Park."

He gives a tour of the property, pointing out the camping space that housed 1300 scouts the night before, to the heritage stockyard rotunda, to a drone team that set up their equipment in Lardner's Pavilions.

A not-for-profit organisation with a strong team focused on supporting local jobs and community, Lardner Park

is built on diversity, with something for everyone, of which both visitors and Gippslanders truly benefit. "Our primary focus is to stimulate the local economy," Craig says. Lardner Park is governed by a voluntary board, and all profits are reinvested back into the organisation to help the facility grow and support many local community events.

So, when you're gearing up for an event at Lardner Park, you're also gearing up to support West Gippsland. Not just from the ticket you buy, but from the cup of coffee you pick up in Warragul on your way through, to the local servo where you buy your fuel, to the place you rest your head. And us Gippslanders thank you for it.

Keep track of the events happening at Lardner Park via the website.

Find it: 155 Burnt Store Road, Lardner

More info: lardnerpark.com.au



OTHER THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Railway lines, thrill seeking and family fun

Noojee Heritage Centre, Noojee

Discover the rich timber and railway history of Noojee, Loch Valley and surrounds by visiting the *Noojee Heritage Centre*, where you'll find a replica of Noojee's original railway station, plus a 1950s J Class locomotive that on occasion, blows a bit of smoke!

Have a chat to the friendly volunteers who run the centre, view historic photos and other memorabilia and learn more about timber life and culture in this part of West Gippsland.

Afterwards, take a stroll down to the *Noojee Waterwheel Walk* that overlooks the Latrobe River.

Find it: Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road

More info: noojeerailwaystationprecinct.com



Noojee Heritage Centre
Image by Shane Duck



Phoenix Paintball

Phoenix Paintball, Rawson

For an adrenaline-filled experience book a session at *Phoenix Paintball* in the beautiful nature-based township of Rawson.

Battle your opponents in fully-fitted paint ball gear while roaming through a variety of high quality fields set amongst natural forest and bushland, built structures and flat grassy terrain.

Group bookings are available all year round for corporate work break-ups, birthdays or just social events.

Find it: 11 Depot Road

More info: 1300 785 378 or phoenixpaintball.com.au



The Summit Adventure Camp

Rooster Tours, Drouin

Organise a guided tour for your next West Gippsland adventure. *Rooster Tours* offers recreation and nature-based activities to enhance health and wellbeing including kayaking, bushwalking, mountain bike riding and so much more!

More info: 0414 377 347 or visit roostertours.com.au

The Summit Adventure Camp, Trafalgar East

Challenge yourself and experience a fun-filled adventure at *The Summit Adventure Park* in Trafalgar East.

This award-winning camp and event space is set on 50 acres and is filled with a variety of activities, outdoor apparatuses and workshops designed to test your limits and help develop lifelong individual and team building skills.

The Summit team are industry experts in creating experiences that combine the perfect mix of fun and inspiration, and can even develop a customised program for your group.

Find it: 21 Cemetery Road

More info: thesummit.net.au

LOLLY HUNTING

Take the kids on an old-fashioned lolly expedition to experience all of your childhood candy favourites. There are several stores to explore within the region:

Pennyworth O'Lollies

Find it: 101 Princes Hwy, Yarragon

The Chocolate Shop

Find it: 10 Palmerston St, Warragul

Walhalla Old Fashioned Lolly Store

Find it: Mechanics Institute in the heart of Walhalla Township



Pennyworth O'Lollies, Yarragon

WALHALLA Historic Township



Walhalla Historic Township

Walhalla - take a trip back in time.

There is something truly magical about the unique *Walhalla Historic Township*, set in a little valley surrounded by the mountainous areas of West Gippsland which border Mount Baw Baw.

This lovingly restored and beautifully preserved village began its colonial life in 1862 as a gold mining community, then known as *Stringers Creek*, named after one of the very first prospectors to lay a claim.

As the community began to flourish, the town soon became known as *Walhalla*, after one of the larger mines. This reference is thought to have drawn upon Norse mythology, '*Valhalla*' and '*The Valley of the Gods*', and certainly captured the imagination and hopes of many a prospector, trader and publican during the time.

The township developed a population of over 4000 residents at the turn of the century with the discovery of *Cohens Reef* - the single largest quartz reef to

have ever been found in Victoria, which yielded over 55 tonnes of gold in its lifespan. When the gold dried up around the 1920's, Walhalla's main industry moved into timber and farming.

Today, Walhalla is a much-loved working tourist town, surrounded by breathtaking scenery, and a living piece of history that shouldn't be missed. Home to a cafe or two, and the cosy *Wally Pub*, Walhalla gives a warm welcome to visitors all year round.

SELF-GUIDED TOURS

Go at your own pace

Take a self-guided town walk starting from the Town Centre, where you'll pass many historical landmarks accompanied by pictures and stories of the town's heritage. Stop for coffee or lunch along the way, or pack your own picnic and enjoy at any of the areas rich parklands.

Walhalla Goldfields Railway, Walhalla

Ride one of Victoria's most iconic, scenic railways. Reconstructed in 1994, this 4km track takes you on a historic journey through the wondrous valley of Walhalla, where you can experience the stories of the gold rush era and take in the pristine sights along the train line.

The railway is run entirely by friendly volunteers and there are two stops - *Walhalla* and *Thomson* where you'll find gift shops and refreshments.

Find it: 2 Main Road

More info: walhallarail.com.au



Walhalla Goldfields Railway, Walhalla Station

Goods Shed Cafe, Walhalla

If you are after a great cup of coffee, a hearty lunch or hot breakfast, you can't go past this wonderful little cafe that resides alongside the *Goldfields Railway* tracks overlooking Walhalla Station. Plan a train ride and a stop

here, take in the views and explore the quirky heritage items and photographs displayed throughout. In the cooler months, be greeted by a roaring fire.

Open anytime the train is running.

Find it: 2 Main Road



Walhalla Goldfields Railway

The Corner Stores, Walhalla

This historic gold-era building is open every day and sells a range of products and gifts made in Gippsland, as well as local history books, maps, firewood and general supplies. It also serves as the contact point for the town's very popular *Ghost Tours* which occur every Saturday night.

Find it: 42A/120 Main Road

Ghost Tours, Walhalla

This heritage town is filled with a rich history, many gold mining stories and a few intriguing mysteries. What better way to experience it all than by taking a *Ghost Tour*, which begins from the Walhalla Post Office and takes you by torchlight through the town to explore its rich vein of otherworldly phantoms and poltergeists. Bookings are essential.

Find it: 122 Main Road

More info: walhallaghosttour.info



Long Tunnel Extended Mine Tours



Walhalla Historic Township

Long Tunnel Extended Mine Tours, Walhalla

The *Long Tunnel Mining Company* was the largest gold mining company in Walhalla, laying claim to almost half the gold extracted from the region. The remains of the *Long Tunnel Extended Mine* are still available to visit today. Explore deep underground to see how the miners worked and catch a glimpse of *Cohens Reef* on this informative tour.

Find it: 165 Main Road

More info: walhallaboard.org.au

Walhalla Witchery, Walhalla

Grab a coffee, treat or lunch at this delightful cafe and gift shop situated in the middle of the township. There is a lovely courtyard and even an old fashioned red telephone box outside. Open every day 10am - 3pm.

Find it: 98 Main Road

More info: 0427 092 010

EXPLORE WALHALLA

Historic Township

Old Mountain Brass Band Rotunda

As a much loved and photographed focal point, the rotunda was built in 1896, designed by Frederick Meyer, to accommodate the many brass bands that were popular in the town at the time.

Walhalla Cemetery

Situated on a steep cliff face, this unusual cemetery hosts over 1000 graves, with many of the headstones describing the hardships and stories of the gold mining era. A wonderful afternoon of exploring for those who enjoy a bit of history.

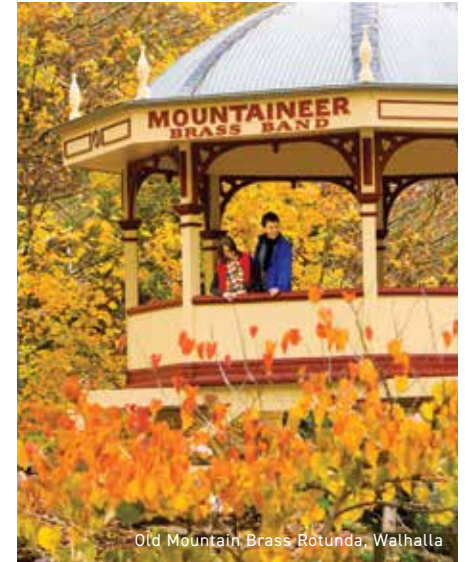
Walhalla Cricket Ground

This lofty sporting ground was created by literally slicing the top of the hill off by hand, in a bid to create flat land for sporting enthusiasts. It is said that the 1km zig-zagging path to the top of the hill was often hiked by the home team the day before an important match to give them the advantage of rest and recovery over the visiting side.

Walhalla Post Office

This beautifully restored building is today, run as a museum by volunteers who will be sure to share their many secrets about the town's history with you.

Download the *Storytowns* app and start your journey!



Old Mountain Brass Rotunda, Walhalla

STORYTOWNS DRIVING TOUR

Podcast tours on the go

Do you love travelling and discovering new places?

The team at *Storytowns* have created mini-podcasts that feature local folks who narrate the sights and towns around the West Gippsland area as you travel.

The podcasts play automatically via your phone or device as you near a site - it's just so easy!

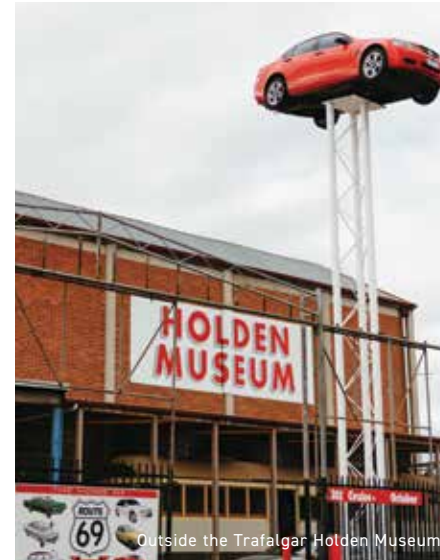
The audio guides take you through the dense mountain forests of Noojee, Willow Grove and Walhalla and rolling green hills of Yarragon and Trafalgar, where you'll hear all about the beautiful historical towns featuring local characters, artists and even a bagpiper too!

TRAFALGAR HOLDEN MUSEUM

A local experience



Trafalgar Holden Museum



Outside the Trafalgar Holden Museum



Inside the Trafalgar Holden Museum

For car lovers of all ages, a visit to the Trafalgar Holden Museum is a must.

This incredible museum celebrates the heritage of Australia's much loved Holden, long before this famous brand started rolling cars off the production line.

See original horse-drawn buggies, pedal cars, trams and aero engines alongside a rich collection of vintage cars, utes and motorsport vehicles.

This huge collection housed inside the old *Trafalgar Butter Factory* will take you through a detailed history of this iconic Australian brand, including some very rare and customised vehicles, a room full of immaculate *Monaros*, concept cars that never quite made it to production, all the way up to the very last modern Holden to roll off the line in Australia - all meticulously labelled with historic information.

The obsession continues beyond the factory floor to the rest of the buildings

and exhibitions out the back, extending your experience of the ultimate Holden discovery.

Even if you are not a car fanatic, you will be surprised at just how much you'll learn from the many exhibits, well beyond the impact this manufacturing giant had on the Australian car industry. The stories here go right back to the company's beginnings as a saddlery maker in 1859, and the museum is packed with all kinds of memorabilia, including fantastic examples of military items chronicling Holden's crucial role in manufacturing during war times.

It is obvious to anyone entering that there is passion and love behind this extensive collection.

Owner and President, Neil Joiner, originally opened the museum in 2014 to house his own private collection of heritage Holdens after he ran out

of room in his shed, and with a lot of hard work restoring the building, and attracting over 60 passionate volunteers today, this not-for-profit organisation has quickly grown to become one of the largest car museums in Australia.

Admission fees apply and group bookings are welcome.

Find it: 74 Waterloo Road, Trafalgar

More info: trafalgarholdenmuseum.com.au



Discover the story of Holden at the Trafalgar Holden Museum

FOOD, WINE & BREW

Coffee, cafes, dining, pubs and wineries

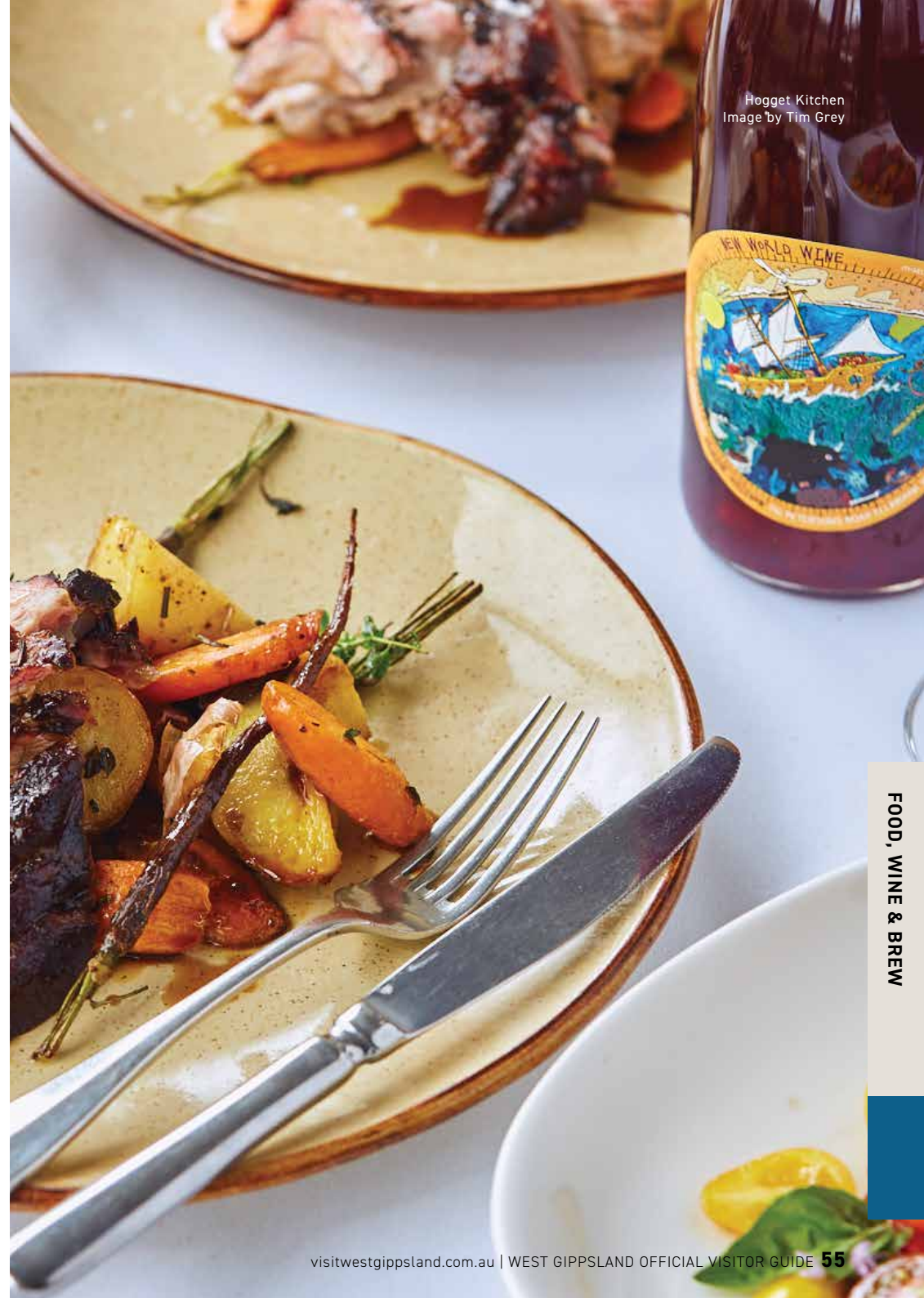
West Gippsland is known for its lush dairy country - the home of *Gippsland Jersey* milk, *Tarago River* and *Jindi* cheese, and countless other micro-dairies, farm gates, makers and producers who live off the land and spend their time packaging up delicious products for us to enjoy.

These rolling hills have also attracted a new generation of award-winning winemakers, distilleries and breweries, hatted restaurants and exceptional dining experiences that will have you coming to the region time and time again.

Design your own food and wine trail, sample the brews, ales and gins local to the area, or simply grab brekky, lunch and a great coffee at one of our many cafes and coffee houses.

Included in this guide are some of the fabulous fooderies, wineries and pubs that celebrate Gippsland's local produce, all with a warm welcome and some great, old-fashioned customer service.

Enjoy all that Gippsland has to offer on your next weekend away.



Hogget Kitchen
Image by Tim Grey

COFFEE & CAFE LOVERS

On the go, brekky and lunch



One of the most important things when travelling is knowing where to get excellent coffee. Here are some of our favourite Coffee Houses and Cafes from around the region to get your bean fix.

The Bean Scene & Bean Scene Around, Warragul

This coffee house is a well established institution in Warragul, and a favourite among locals. Trust *The Bean Scene* to serve you up freshly brewed coffee, and team it with one of their delicious cakes in the newly renovated cafe located in the Warragul Plaza Arcade.

If you prefer to make a cup yourself, pop around the corner to Smith Street where you'll find *Bean Scene Around*. Here you can pick up a variety of freshly roasted beans - the *Honduras* and *El Salvador* blends are terrific - full of flavour. You can also pick up an *Aeropress* or cold-brew kit while you're there and take it with you on your

camping trip or to your accommodation site. Staff are friendly and have expert tips and advice for a great coffee setup.

Find it: Warragul Plaza and Smith Street

More info: beanscenearound.com.au



The Shot House, Yarragon

You'll find this coffee gem in the *Village Walk Arcade* in Yarragon. Order your favourite cup of coffee and search the shelves for a brand new travel mug - the range here is excellent - full of styles, sizes and vibrant colours.

The Shot House also has their own Australian single origin blend, roasted in Gippsland, plus a range of interesting organic coffee and tea blends including the very delicious *Prana Chai*.

Find it: 2 Village Walk

More info: facebook @theshothouse

Frankies, Warragul

Frankies is a great family place to take the kids for a milkshake and a stack of pancakes. You can also indulge in a fried chicken burger or Mexican-style burrito, made in-house by Frankie's Chefs who display their talents in the open kitchen. This cafe is spacious and carries a busy vibe, full of friendly hustle and bustle, adding to the experience. Sit inside or out on the street and take in the town's scene.

Frankies is also the home of *Frankies Community Kitchen*, where a team of dedicated volunteers prepare wholesome meals for people in need from food that would otherwise go to waste.

Find it: Crn Palmerston & Victoria Streets

More info: frankies.com.au

French Pear Cafe, Drouin

In the heart of Drouin you'll find this vibrant cafe turning everything a little

bit French. With house-made coloured macarons, traditional cakes, pastries and sandwiches, this is a lovely cafe to experience a high tea with friends among the eclectic wall art and gold trim.

Find it: 83-85 Princes Way

More info: facebook @frenchpearcafe

Little Red Duck Cafe, Noojee

This little cafe adjoining Noojee LPO is full of modern country charm, friendly service and a warm atmosphere, especially when the central fireplace is lit. The food is delicious - with a selection of house-made pies, sausage rolls and pastries, as well as a good breakfast menu and other seasonal lunch items. The kids will enjoy an ice cream here, and you'll also find general store items and a providore dedicated to local produce.

Find it: 1 Bennett Street

More info: facebook @littleredduckcafe



Soul Sisters Cafe, Longwarry

Just up the road from Longwarry Station you'll find *Soul Sisters Cafe*, winner of the *People's Choice Award* in 2021 for *Outstanding Business in West Gippsland*. This is the go-to place for a delicious, hearty breakfast with all the extra yummy bits, and milkshakes that are a meal on their own. The outdoor seating area carries a relaxing street vibe and staff are warm and friendly.

Find it: 9 Mackey Street

More info: soul-sisters-cafe.business.site

South Brew Cafe, Warragul

What was once an old bank building in Smith Street is now a gorgeous place to have breakfast or lunch. South Brew's decor is fresh and funky, featuring high ceilings, natural timber, modern tiles and brass cutlery, with a beautiful portrait of a black cockatoo hung proudly on the wall. If you're looking for vegan and vegetarian options, there is a great selection to choose from. This cafe is also licensed and offers a great selection of wines.

Find it: 3 Smith Street

More info: [facebook @southbrewcafe](https://www.facebook.com/southbrewcafe)

StrEATside Cafe and Eatery, Warragul

A traditional Italian-style cafe that is literally street side - adjacent to the Mercure Hotel, you'll find big, delicious meals just like *Nonna* used to make, and a wonderful selection for the kids too. The food here is exceptional - traditional cotoletta, ricotta pancakes, pasta, lasagne, and all day breakfast.

Pick up Italian biscotti, great coffee, a tray of cannolis and traditional beverages right here as well.

Find it: 1-2 Williams Square

More info: streatsidecafeeatery.com.au

The Jindi Caf, Jindivick

For old-fashioned country hospitality, stop by *The Jindi Caf* in the heart of Jindivick. Serving traditional roast sourced from local *Jindi Pig Butchers* on Sundays with all the trimmings. With all day brekky, mean salad sandwiches, big burgers and coffee and cake throughout the week, The Jindi Caf has something for every traveller. If the promise of great food isn't enough, the stunning views overlooking rolling hills and green pastures are sure to please.

Find it: 1070 Jackson's Track

More info: jindivick.com.au



The Jindi Caf, Jindivick

FOZIGOBBLE CAFE

A local experience

Fozigobble Cafe is a community cafe in the town of Yarragon that speaks diversity in all its forms.

There is such a relaxed, laid-back vibe here, with classic plastic, white lawn chairs scattered out the front inviting you to come and sit down like you're visiting a neighbour in their own backyard.

All walks of life eat, mingle and work here - the older folk, the younger crowd, the gender-diverse, mums and dads with their kids, and everyone's furry friends - yes, *Fozigobble* welcomes your pets!

Owner Michael Fozard took the next step in his career from running *Old Gipps town* - a not-for-profit historic village located in nearby Moe - and for

the last 10 years has been dedicated to bringing sustainability, nutritious food and people from everywhere together in a friendly, easy-going setting where they can chat, engage and enjoy themselves over some good food.

"My passion in life is to focus on the community."

The diversity of Fozigobble's extends to the food and the coffee, with everything made in-house. Meals carry a Sri Lankan twist - think tagine, curries and the delicious stewing of organic vegetables served with rice and nann bread. Vegan and vegetarian options are also sought after here.

Pick up some fresh produce on your way in or out including eggs, fruit and veg, garlic from *Green Hills Farm* and other items from *Labertouche Organics*.

Find it: 79 Princes Highway, Yarragon

More info: fozigobble.com



Fozigobble Cafe, Yarragon

PUBS, BREWERIES & ALE HOUSES

Wet your whistle and indulge in traditional pub fare



Breweries are popping up everywhere around West Gippsland alongside our traditional, friendly pubs, and here are some of our favourites to kick off your celebrations.

Most venues feature a variety of brews - including their very own, plus live music, and all have a great atmosphere teamed with charming hospitality that is sure to make your night out terrific.

Bandolier Brewing, Warragul

Bandolier Brewing is a recent addition to Warragul - an independent, family run microbrewery, bar and Mexican kitchen with an exciting atmosphere.

You'll find tasty local beer inspired by classic styles from all around the world, live music, great vibes and irresistible *Las Garnachas* - slang for authentic Mexican street food.

Find it: 28 Mason Street

More info: bandolierbrewing.com

Drouin Family Hotel

The *Drouin Family Hotel* has a great atmosphere, friendly service and everything you'd expect from a typical family pub. The food is great for everyone, the bar offers a selection of tap beers, pre-mixers and wines, and you can enjoy a game of pool in the *Sports Bar*.

There is an indoor adventure playground for the kids, teamed with a camera-tv on the outside so that you can keep an eye on them! This is an ideal place to visit on school holidays as there is usually something special on for the kids.

Find it: 65 Princes Way

More info: drouinfamilyhotel.com.au

Erica Hotel, Erica

Erica Hotel is home to the 'Hot Rock' steak. Let it sizzle right before your eyes as you relax in the warm, cosy surrounds loaded with country charm.

The burgers here are gigantic and topped with absolutely everything - egg, beetroot, pineapple, even a hash brown!

This hotel makes for a great lunch or dinner stop when out an about camping, adventuring or touring around the mountain rivers region.

Find it: 8 School Road

More info: ericahotel.com

Five Aces Brewing, Neerim South

This up and coming American-inspired microbrewery features live music and a funky outdoor seating area with cosy fire pits - the perfect environment for enjoying a local ale or two with friends.

See the original brew before your eyes in the exposed vats upon entry, and have a chat with the great local staff.

Find it: 135/137 Main Neerim Road

More info: fiveacesbrewing.com.au



Five Aces Brewing, Neerim South



Erica Hotel, Erica

Neerim South Hotel, Neerim South

For a meal with great countryside views, try *Neerim South Hotel*. The menu is packed with all your pub favourites, including special parmas and burgers on selected weeknights.

A popular spot with the locals, this hotel is also family friendly and on occasion, you can even participate in entertaining trivia nights, raffles and *Happy Hour* with discounted drinks and bar snacks.

There's even a bottle shop for take away and motel-style accommodation.

Find it: 91-109 Main Neerim Road

More info: neerimsouthhotel.com

Noojee Hotel "Nooj Pub", Noojee

You can't visit West Gippsland without a visit to the iconic *Nooj Pub*. Winner of the *Best Country Pub in Victoria*, this laid back hotel offers excellent riverside views from its outdoor balcony. With an extensive range of parras, traditional beers on tap and live music on weekends, pick up your very own branded flanny and a bumper sticker and get amongst it all.

Find it: 411 Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road

More info: noojeehotel.com.au

Rawson Stockyard, Rawson

For a fun night out, head to *Rawson Stockyard*, where you'll experience true-blue Aussie ambiance among the timber and the corrugated iron. Enjoy music shindigs and delicious pub grub - great on a cold night.

Find it: Depot Road

More info: 03 5165 3111



Travellers Rest Hotel, Thorpdale



Noojee Hotel, Noojee

The Irish at Willow Grove, Willow Grove

This traditional Irish pub is open seven days a week and offers splendid meals for lunch and dinner among its bluestone walls - indoors or outside in the courtyard. Terrific for families and right on the doorstep of *Blue Rock Lake*, it's easy to make a visit here as part of your day trip or weekend.

Find it: 14 Moe-Willow Grove Road

More info: facebook @the-Irish-at-Willow-Grove

The Robin Hood Inn, Drouin West

The Robin Hood Inn is one of Victoria's most historic hotels, and was built in 1870 for use as a *Cobb and Co* stop for travellers. Enjoy live music with your favourite ale out in the beer garden, or indulge in one of the generous sized meals inside the restaurant/bistro. You can even stay in one of the 10 hotel

rooms available, and there's also a bootleshop for takeaway convenience.

Find it: 655 Princes Way

More info: therobinhoodinn.com.au

Travellers Rest, Thorpdale

Prepare to be spoiled with an indulgent pub lunch or dinner in the beautifully restored *Travellers Rest Hotel*, set amongst the rolling hills of Thorpdale. Established in 1908 and originally founded as a hotel and general store, this venue now provides locals and travellers with a well stocked bar, a restaurant serving delightful meals, and accommodation facilities.

Find it: 2 Station Street

More info: 03 5634 6240 or visit travellersresthotel.com

Walhalla Lodge Hotel "The Wally Pub", Walhalla

The Wally Pub is another piece of iconic history in Victoria, located in the picturesque village of Walhalla and featuring everything *Australiana*. You'll feel like you're stepping back in time as you approach the bar and marvel at the relics, quirky signs and memorabilia. Friendly service and good country food live here - you'll have a great time!

Find it: Walhalla Road

More info: facebook @walhalla.lodge.hotel

Yarragon Hotel, Yarragon

Yarragon Hotel has a great selection of beers on tap, as well as a pop-up beer garden with seasonal live music, making it exceptional for large groups

and families. If you prefer something quiet, this Hotel also has you covered inside its relaxed, intimate dining area. The food here is delish and there are quite a few options to choose from. It's also a great mid-way stop for lunch on your travels through the region.

Find it: 105 Princes Highway

More info: yarragonhotel.com.au

Yarragon Ale House, Yarragon

This up-and-coming Ale House at the town end of Yarragon is worth a visit. With over 300 local and international craft beers in the fridge alone, plus a *Taphouse* with rotating beers, you could say that *Yarragon Ale House* has Gippsland's largest range of craft beer. The Ale House also supplies home brewing kits, and you can chat with the experts to get your home brew started.

Find it: 4 Rollo Street

More info: yarragonalehouse.com.au



Yarragon Hotel, Yarragon

NOOJEE TOOLSHED

A local experience



Noojee Toolshed Bar, Bistro and Cabins
Image courtesy of Noojee Toolshed

Tucked away up the road on the Loch Valley side of Noojee, you'll find The Toolshed Bar, Bistro and Cabins.

This small-town property is full of rustic, country appeal, made extra special by the surrounding bush scenery, its infamous blue stone fireplace, and arguably one of the largest chicken parmans in the State.

From its original establishment around 26 years ago, this business has continued to maintain its exclusive, hearty character, and now with new owners Mark and Bec, and their daughter Brianna, *The Toolshed* is undergoing some changes to not only preserve its legacy, but to enhance the experience for all its patrons.

Having owned a property nearby for a number of years, Mark and Bec made the commitment in late 2021 to make *The Toolshed* part of their very own story.

"We're along for the ride and want to preserve this place and enjoy it for years to come."

They bring to *The Toolshed* their family values, warm hospitality and a vision for its future, and this is already evident from the brand new kitchen that's recently been installed, as well as new landscaping projects, and their well-fostered relationship with the local staff.

The rustic charm of the *Toolshed Bar* has come a long way from its humble beginnings as an old chook shed. Still showcasing some of the original tools from its infancy, with solid timber everywhere, a pool table, corrugated iron panels and of course, the very celebrated blue stone fireplace. The Bar holds history for the town of Noojee and surrounding Loch Valley.



Famous bluestone fireplace in The Bar
Image courtesy of Noojee Toolshed

"We have lots of people coming in to look at the photos... granddaughters for example, coming in here looking for their grandfather's picture on the walls," Bec says.

History also extends past the photographs in this place. Long-time Bartender, Neil, is as classic as they come - long beard, matured, and well versed in conversation, he's run this bar for years.

"This place is a part of me, and a part of every local in this town."

The adjoining *Bistro* is great for families and functions, and carries a warm, country forest log cabin feel, complete with a fireplace and a balcony with outdoor seating overlooking a delightful grassed area with views of rolling hills and native bush.

Top picks from the menu include the *Whole Trout* sourced locally from the *Alpine Trout Farm*, or a delicious steak sourced from Neerim South butchers, *Jindi Pig*. However, if you want to experience the all-time signature dish, you really need to go for a *Parma*, *"They are fantastic, and huge!"* Brianna says.

There is accommodation available on site as well, with four newly renovated, self-contained cabins that can accommodate 4-5 people, set in quiet, natural surroundings - it's a lovely spot to base yourself as you explore Noojee and beyond.

While you're here, it's worth a wander around the gardens where you'll find a variety of native and deciduous trees, amazing staghorns, and a kids playground.

Find it: 38 Loch Valley Road, Noojee

More info: facebook @ToolshedNoojee



Noojee Toolshed grounds
Image courtesy of Noojee Toolshed

HOGGET KITCHEN

A local experience

The dining atmosphere at Hogget Kitchen

If you want to experience the true taste of Gippsland, step into the wondrous Hogget Kitchen for an intriguing dining experience, and be surprised by more than just what's on the plate.

Escaping via the back roads of Warragul into the rolling hills, you'll discover *Hogget Kitchen* via a solid brass sign, hidden among the famous *Wild Dog Winery* of which *Baw Baw Cellar Door* also resides.

Towering gums line the road as you meander your way through the grapevines leading to the restaurant. The entry into the dining room features floor-to-ceiling timber-framed glass windows which invite in the stunning panoramic views of the winery and the hills beyond.

Hogget's decor takes on a 1960s retro charm with a clean, modern twist. Soft, earthy green tones combined with natural timbers, country larder-style

shelves filled with jars of black garlic, dried herbs and live potted plants adds the warmth and neighbourly feel of a country farmhouse.

The open kitchen also allows you to witness the culinary skills of Hogget's Chefs, who on any given day could be carefully filleting whole sides of beef, getting excited about the arrival of fresh local figs, or combining lemon myrtle and honeycomb from the restaurant's native herb garden and beehives into delicious desserts.

Head Chef, Trevor Perkins and partner, General Manager, Kylie Wilson, are warm, welcoming and passionate. For over five years they've been working tirelessly to build an experience for diners that resonates with their values and vision for eating great food in the West Gippsland region.

There is a strong emphasis on all things local in this restaurant - and wherever it is in Gippsland, Trevor will find it.

He connects with local suppliers around the region to develop an almost weekly seasonal menu featuring Gippsland's finest produce, with the option to match dishes to local wines. From the alpine trout of Noojee, to potatoes sourced from the red rich soils of Lardner, the produce dictates what will be presented on the plate.

"We don't have an idea for a menu item and then try to source that food. Instead, we let the produce tell us what we're cooking."

The seasonality of fresh, local produce, combined with the ethos of a nose-to-tail/paddock-to-plate approach, paves the way for endless opportunities to source and celebrate something new. That's what makes this dining experience uniquely diverse and dynamic, playing to the season's

Exquisite dishes on offer at Hogget Kitchen



Trevor Perkins, Head Chef
Hogget Kitchen

strengths and bringing the best out of what Gippsland's makers and producers have to offer.

Trevor, who grew up and received early training as a chef in Gippsland, has since made it his mission to train local chefs and pass on his culinary knowledge and skills, helping to create local jobs and support a thriving local economy. Trevor's and his team's efforts to continually redevelop and re-imagine how best to present Gippsland on a plate is also a testament to a dining experience that is without a doubt, unlike anything else in the West Gippsland region. It is bound to leave a long lasting impression that you'll talk about for years to come.

Hogget Kitchen has been awarded their third consecutive Australian Good Food Guide Chef's Hat.

Find it: 6 Farrington Close, Warragul

More info: hogget.com.au

OTHER DINING EXPERIENCES

Restaurants, bars and bistros



Bank, Warragul

Bank Warragul is a venue with everything on offer. Located on the bottom floor is *Portelli's Italian Restaurant* featuring traditional woodfired pizza and tapas. Upstairs, discover *Bank Rooftop* which offers a casual dining menu and cocktail bar - great for couples or a night out with friends.

Find it: 5/7 Smith Street

More info: bankwarragul.com.au

Isshin Japanese House, Drouin

This all-you-can-eat Japanese restaurant is great to go to with a group of friends, but it does fill up quite quickly so book in advance via the website to avoid disappointment. Enjoy Japanese beer on tap, or traditional sake, and get ready for a tasty selection of authentic Japanese cuisine including, sushi, sashimi, gyoza, seafood, meat

and vegetable dishes prepared to order. Each banquet session lasts for two hours, but if you'd prefer to take it easy there's also an a la carte option.

Find it: 2/7 Bank Place

More info: isshin.com.au

Middels, Drouin

Located in the heart of Drouin, *Middels* is known for its fusion tapas and cocktail menu, along with a great selection of Australian and New Zealand wines. Dine indoors or outside over lunch or dinner, or even stop in for a delicious breakfast and choose from an extensive list of gluten free, vegan and vegetarian options.

Open 7 days a week.

Find it: 3/94 Princes Way

More info: middels.com.au



The Courthouse, Warragul

The Courthouse, Warragul

Put your gluttony on trial at *The Courthouse Restaurant and Garden Bar*, featuring delicious bistro classics in this charming 1880s building located in the heart of Warragul. The atmosphere is stunning, with a fantastic live music program during the warmer months.

Find it: 72 Smith Street

More info: courthousewarragul.com

Village Central Restaurant, Mount Baw Baw

This inviting restaurant located in the heart of the *Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort* has a relaxed atmosphere and arguably one of the best restaurant views in Victoria. With an open fireplace, good meals, coffee and a stocked bar, this is an experience you need to have when visiting the region.

Find it: Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort

More info: mountbawbaw.com.au

Newmason, Warragul

For a delightful family night out, try *Newmason* next to the Mercure Hotel. There's something here for everyone, with *Fox and Sky Sports* on the telly, an indoor adventure playground for the kids, and a relaxing lounge area with a fully stocked bar and a great selection of craft beers. The menu is big and good value with Modern-Australian options, as well as woodfired pizzas.

Find it: 25 Mason Street

More info: newmason.net

Sampsons Bar and Grill, Trafalgar

For all things steak and ribs, try *Sampsons Bar and Grill*. With a menu featuring all your grilled, seared and smoked favourites, alongside loaded burger options and decadent desserts, this is well worth a stop for a great feed.

Find it: 15 Contingent Street

More info: sampsonsbargrill.com.au



Village Central Restaurant, Mount Baw Baw

WINERIES

Tastings, dining and relaxation



Wild Dog Winery

Brandy Creek Estate, Drouin East

Brandy Creek Estate encompasses a Spanish vibe with its cool climate wine varieties including *Temperanillo*, with scrumptious paella nights, a tapas-style dining menu and sultry decor adding to the atmosphere.

Take in the exquisite views of rolling vineyards and the Baw Baw ranges from the restaurant and bar lounge, or relax and admire your surroundings from the recently built outdoor deck.

Wine tasting is available at the *Cellar Door* by appointment, and you can even take the opportunity to get pampered all over in the highly sought after luxurious *Day Spa*.

Recently awarded *Reader's Choice* in the *Australian Good Food Guide*.

Find it: 570 Buln Buln Road

More info: brandycreekestate.com.au

Everything's Better With Wine, Warragul

This exciting new wine bar in Warragul is dedicated to celebrating all things food and wine from around Gippsland.

Showcasing an impressive selection of local regional wines and gin, thoughtfully paired with seasonal local produce including, terrine, cheeses, pickles and preserves, it's a wonderful way to spend an afternoon or evening relaxing with good company and indulging in a glass or two with fine charcuterie.

Expect warm hospitality, local knowledge and good conversation.

Open 7 days a week.

Find it: 77 Queen Street

More info: [@everythingsbetterwithwine](https://www.facebook.com/everythingsbetterwithwine)

Ripplebrook Winery, Ripplebrook

Established in 1998 by a second-generation family from the Aeolian Islands off the coast of Sicily, this delightful winery produces premium cool climate wines from their dry-grown, organic, single vineyard.

Discover the rich family history, passion and dedication that has gone into establishing and cultivating the 22 acres of land here, surrounded by grand views of Mount Baw Baw.

Offering a cellar door with tastings, plus a restaurant featuring traditional handmade, woodfired pizzas made with local ingredients, this is a lovely, warm place to experience lunch or dinner with friends.

Find it: 681 Gardner and Holman Road

More info: ripplebrookwinery.com.au

WEEKEND ITINERARY IDEAS FOR THE LUXE ROMANTIC

Fri: Take a long weekend away by heading out early on a Friday for lunch and a spa date at Brandy Creek Estate, followed by a cosy, romantic night in at The Ridge House in Yarragon.

Sat: Make your way to Ripplebrook Winery for lunch and a wine tasting, before heading to Mount Worth State Park, followed by a romantic dinner at Hogget Kitchen.

Sun: Visit one of the seasonal markets or shop at Gippsland Food and Wine for local nibbles and fresh produce, and make for a romantic picnic at Narracan Falls – or skip the picnic for a cosy pub lunch at the Traveller's Rest, Thorpdale.



Brandy Creek Estate

BAW BAW CELLAR DOOR

A local experience

While you may consider West Gippsland to be more dairy than wine country, we invite you to discover Victoria's best kept secret.

These volcanic soils are not just primarily home to green pastures and *cud-chewers* any longer, they are increasingly becoming home to a series of seriously dedicated winemakers who are keen to put West Gippy on the cool climate wine map.

Inspired by internationally-renowned winemaker, William Downey (known for his award winning pinot), you'll find him, along with a young, family oriented, passionate co-op of quality winemakers who together, each claim a spot at *Wild Dog Winery*, cultivating their own vineyards, giving birth to a new range of beautiful local wines, and also, to *Baw Baw Cellar Door*.

Wine tasting here is rather unique, as it brings together over half a dozen makers and producers from around the region, not just those who utilise Wild Dog's land. Sommelier, Kim Woulfe is an expert on cool climate wines, and will take you on a tasting of the regions' best. From Wild Dog's very own range, and the glorious pinots of *William Downey*, through to up-and-coming producers *A.R.C Wines*, *Entropy* and *Krooked Row* - there's an unpretentious feeling of community spirit that flows through with each drop, supported by a taste that is truly unique to the region, and as close to natural as you can get.



Baw Baw Cellar Door

The Cellar Door itself is just a stone's throw away from hatted restaurant *Hogget Kitchen* and features a relaxed, sunken outdoor seating area with art sculptures and on occasion, live music.

As you walk the vineyard trails of Wild Dog land after your tasting, you learn that this winery is more than just about producing product. There is innovation and cleverness here. This batch of small producers work together to create sustainable farming and cultivation practices, barrelling their original, distinct, naturally produced wine. Sharing equipment, recycling, minimising waste, and learning from each other - putting sustainability, quality and growth at the forefront of their minds.

James from *A.R.C (A Random Collection) Wines* is one of those young forward-thinkers - friendly, courteous and very proud of his crop, and also, a very clever wine producer.

On a Saturday afternoon while barrelling *Viognier* into French Oak, he openly shows you around the vats and gives an insight into the fermentation process - skins on, tasting the berry, gauging the flavours and feeling the fruit textures.

As you walk out to the vineyards with him you get a sense that he is keen on his fruit, taking extreme care with his 40-year old vines, meticulously pruning, netting and savouring each grape for the possibility of great wine. Drinking *A.R.C's Cab* is like picking the berry straight off the vine itself - the wine is so pure, smooth and velvety with distinct flavours that only get better with age.

Nothing is wasted here on this ethical farmland. The expired canes from the vines are fed to the cattle that reside on part of the land, and the grape skins are recycled back into the crop. No irrigation is necessary due



Gin range at Baw Baw Cellar Door



Wild Dog Winery
Image by James Lauritz

to the region's constant rainfall and moisture in the air, and so the process of producing wine here is remarkably natural and sweet.

Wild Dog Gin is another edition to Baw Baw Cellar Door, and you can opt for a tasting as well to experience gin infused with botanicals grown on site including lemon myrtle, aniseed and raspberry. Distinct and delicious, especially the *Dry* version which is full of juniper flavour.

While you're here, continue your tastings by picking up a bottle of your favourite local, teamed with the on-site charcuterie and local cheeses from award-winning *Tarago River* and head off for a picnic a cosy night in.

Accommodation is also available on-site via the *Winemakers Cottage* which can accommodate up to 10 guests.

Find it: 6 Farrington Close, Warragul

More info: bawbawcellardoor.com.au



ALBERTOS PIZZA

We are a small, family owned local pizza shop providing the community with delicious pizza, tasty sides and fast delivery.

Find it: 32A Queen Street, Warragul

More info: 03 5622 1922 | albertospizzawarragul.com.au



CARVERY KING

Carvery King offers a boutique takeaway and dine-in menu, specialising in chef cooked roasted meats and poultry carved to the diner's request. We also offer catering.

Find it: Shop 1, 34-38 Princes Way, Drouin

More info: 03 5616 2900 | carveryking.com.au



COMMERCIAL HOTEL WARRAGUL

Warragul's local Pub since 1912, featuring cold beer, loud sport and good times! Serving up all your Pub Classics from Tuesday-Saturday, lunch and dinner. Also featuring a large Drive Thru Bottle Shop.

Find it: 115 Queen Street, Warragul

More info: 03 5627 0714 | facebook @commercialhotel.warragul



DROUIN PIZZA BURGER LOUNGE

Everything under one roof - pizza, burgers, pasta, Indian curries, chips, shakes, alcohol.

Find it: 101 Princes Way, Drouin

More info: 0466 749 445 | drouinpizzaburgerlounge.com.au

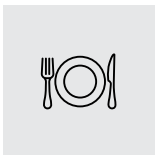


EAT LIVE FRESH

This country cafe in Trafalgar serves all-day breakfast, coffee, cakes, and homemade meals. Outside catering also available.

Find it: 20 Contingent Street, Trafalgar

More info: 03 5604 3332

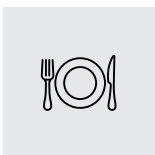


LA PASSION RESTAURANT

Italian family restaurant offering dine in and takeaway pizza, pasta and dessert. Pickup or delivery to Warragul and surrounding areas.

Find it: 71-73 Queen Street, Warragul

More info: 03 5622 3633 | lapassioncafe.com.au



MISTY HILLS CAFE

Country cafe offering homemade-style food, coffee and good service. Take home meals available. Good for children. Pet friendly.

Find it: 119 Main Neerim Road, Neerim South

More info: 03 5628 1155 | facebook @mistyhillscafe17



RAILWAY HOTEL

The Railway Hotel has been an iconic space in the community of Warragul for over 133 years. Serving classic style pub meals with a blend of modern cuisine.

Find it: 81 Queen Street, Warragul

More info: 03 5623 1623 | railwayhotelwarragul.com.au



SWEET TREATS BY JAMIE-LEE - THE STUDIO

We are a boutique cafe specialising in custom cakes, homemade patisseries, delicious savories and phenomenal coffee. With a warm and friendly vibe it is the perfect place to meet.

Find it: 14 Contingent Street, Trafalgar

More info: sweettreatsbyjamielee.com



THE HILLTOP MILK BAR

Drouin take away and tradie stop offering quality coffee, sandwiches, rolls, toasties and much more.

Find it: 212 Princes Way, Drouin

More info: 03 5605 8045 | hilltopmilkbar@gmail.com



THE PLACE TO BE VAN

West Gippsland's newest coffee and sandwich van.

Serving St Ali coffee, Gippsland Jersey milk, sweets and sandwiches daily.

Available for your next private function or public event.

More info: 0421 075 887 | theplacetobevan.com.au



WILD DOG PIZZA

Warragul's friendly, local pizza place featuring take away pizza, loaded with toppings that go right to the edge.

Find it: 8/76 Smith Street, Warragul

More info: 03 5622 2220 | wilddogpizza.com.au



YARRAGON MILK BAR

A traditional milk bar experience right in the heart of Yarragon Village.

Find it: 95A Princes Highway, Yarragon

More info: 0428 660 818



ZINGARELLI PIZZA AND PASTA

Take away pizza and pasta.

Find it: 79 Princes Highway, Trafalgar

More info: 03 5633 1730 | zingarellipizza.com.au

MARKETS & SHOPPING

Markets, shopping strips, retailers and fresh produce

Whether you are grabbing some great fare for a picnic or road trip, or keen to spend some time truly indulging in serious retail therapy, you are sure to find something special in West Gippsland.

Immerse yourself in community by shopping, eating and celebrating all things local. Everything here is unique, and customer service is at the forefront of what we do.

With fabulous shopping strips boasting a mix of boutique, one-of-a-kind shops and retail outlets, our friendly, hardworking business owners are always happy to extend their local tips and knowledge to you.

Wander through our many villages and townships to find fantastic fashion and vintage offerings, take home a new artwork or redecorate your home with handmade furnishings.

Make a day of it, and find a bit of everything at one of the region's plentiful markets - with one on every weekend!

There is something for every taste and style in West Gippsland.

Yarragon Vintage Market



MARKETS

Makers, producers, growers, foodies and artisans



Our markets are famous. With some of the oldest running markets in Victoria, our stallholders get up early every weekend to present their quality items in their own, authentic way.

Come and explore, meet the makers and enjoy yourself. The community vibe is infectious, the smell of hot food and fresh coffee enticing, and the choice of what to buy is literally endless.

Drouin Craft and Produce Market

When: 3rd Saturday of every month
Time: 8.30am - 12.30pm
Where: Young Street

This busy, vibrant lake-side market features everything from plants, crafts, tools and equipment, to local eggs, honey, cakes, nuts and fresh coffee. There's an abundance of stalls to choose from and the vibe here is always friendly - definitely worth a trip!

More info: facebook
@drouincraftmarket

Ellinbank Farmers Market

When: 5th Saturday of the month where applicable
Time: 8.00am - 1.00pm
Where: 10 Community Place

Foodies will love this community market rich in fresh, local produce with everything from pumpkin bread and home made jam to fresh veggies, wild mushrooms and of course, hot coffee. Located in and around Ellinbank Public Hall, just 10km South of Warragul.

More info: facebook
@Ellinbank-Farmers-Market

Jindivick Country Market

When: 1st Saturday of Oct, Dec, Mar or Apr
Time: 9.00am - 1.00pm
Where: Jindivick Hall and Grounds

From the *Grower* to the *Maker*, this market presents the very best local crafts and produce from Jindivick and surrounds, set against a stunning backdrop of rolling hills, beautiful flowers and green pastures.

More info: jindivick.org.au/jcm

Longwarry & District Fire Brigade Market

When: Monthly between Mar - Dec
Time: 8.30am - 12.30pm
Where: 15 Bennett Street

Passionate volunteering and fundraising is at the heart of this monthly local market, run by the local Fire Brigade. You can grab a hot coffee here and explore the many stalls featuring arts and crafts, quality plants and fresh organic produce.

Rokeby Market

When: 2nd Saturday of every month between Sep - May
Time: 8.00am - 12.30pm
Where: 1016 Brandy Creek Road

Make it, bake it, grow it! This is the theme for the wonderful *Rokeby Market*, one of the oldest running markets in Victoria. Jam-packed with a wide range of makers and producers from all over the Gippsland region, there's everything here from arts and crafts, to fresh produce and plants,



whiskey and gin tasting, children's toys, fashion and beauty.

Stop by the hall and explore terrific hand-made arts and crafts, or venture back outside to explore the many plant nurseries offering an abundant variety of native shrubs, vegetable plants, and orchard trees.

The market is held on the community reserve in Rokeby, eleven kilometres north of Warragul. There is also a children's playground and rail trail to explore once you've finished your wandering.

Tip: Parking can get very tight around here so drop in early.

More info: rokebymarket.org.au

The Winter Market at Neerim South

When: The 2nd Saturday of every month in Jun, Jul, Aug
Time: 9.00am - 1.00pm
Where: Algie Hall, Neerim South

While other markets around the region closed for the winter, *The Winter Market* at Neerim South does not! Held inside Algie Hall (with the heaters on), there's no excuse not to venture out and enjoy the liveliness and community spirit that lives and thrives with these markets. Open to a variety of local makers and producers, this is the perfect winter experience.

More info: facebook
@thewintermarketns

Warragul Farmers Market

When: 3rd Saturday of every month
 Time: 8.30am - 1.00pm
 Where: Civic Park

Every month you'll find live music, organic fruit and veggies, artisan bread, hot coffee and delicious street eats at *Warragul Farmers Market*. Dedicated to all things food, plus plants, seedlings and other natural products, this market showcases Gippsland's best producers of all things fresh, earthy and yum! *Civic Park* is also a great spot for the kids to have a play afterwards, or to enjoy a walk with your takeaway coffee.

More info: facebook and Instagram @warragulfarmersmarket

Warragul Arts Market

When: 3rd Saturday of every month Oct - Mar
 Time: 8.30am - 1.00pm
 Where: Civic Park

This eclectic market features all things art and craft - paintings, jewelery, fashion, ceramics, candles, bags and more. It's a real treat to explore the many talented artists here who make their mark with their unique works!

More info: facebook @artsmarketwarragul

Yarragon Craft and Produce Market

When: The 4th Saturday of every month
 Time: 9.00am - 2.00pm
 Where: Waterloo Park, Yarragon

Expect to find treasures, jewelery, mosaics, designer cushions, bags and fashion, teamed up with carnivorous plants, hand-painted rocks and beeswax candles. The *Yarragon Craft and Produce Market* is original and authentic, with a mix of quirky stallholders to capture anyone's interest. There's so many gift



items here and great things to take home and pop on your shelf. You'll also find fresh, local produce here, along with a range of hand-made food options.

More info: facebook @YarragonCraftAndProduceMarket



Jindigo Naturals Goats
 Image by Jindigo Naturals

MARKET STALLHOLDERS

Local makers and producers

Jindigo Naturals

Ros and Meaghan from *Jindigo Naturals* appear at both the *Rokey Market* and *Warragul Farmers Market* with their stunning range of 100% natural, cruelty free, handmade soaps, hair care products, lotions and sustainable laundry products.

Made with pure, natural goat's milk from their hand-reared tribe of goats that live on their scenic farm in Jindivick, the soap's velvety texture, tantalising smell and healthy skin benefits are sure to peak your interest.

"We love going to the markets," Ros says. "It's great to be able to share our natural products with the community."

Naturally sourced ingredients, including *Australian botanicals* and *green and pink clay*, combine with the goats milk to produce a variety of beautiful products.

The old barber style shaving cream pods also make the perfect gift, and you can pick up beautifully presented gift packs wrapped in natural raffia and hessian-style gift sacks.

Don't forget your pooch either! *Jindigo Naturals* have dog soap to make your furry friend fresh and clean!

More info: Instagram @jindigoats

St Fiacres Farm

A beautiful farm set in the lush green hills of Neerim South, *St Fiacres Farm* grows everything from citrus to vegetables. From there, Maria and Dave turn whatever produce is grown into preserves, concentrated cordials, sauces and chutneys.

Under the wine label *Krooked Row*, they also have a hand-planted vineyard consisting of cool climate reds - *Sangiovese, Shiraz, Grenache* and *Tempranillo*.

With a background in food chemistry, Maria puts her skill into excellent use, extracting every drop of goodness and flavour from her produce into their superior homemade products, which are harvested, chopped, cooked, packaged and labelled by hand at the farm.

You'll find their incredible selection of products at *Rokey Market, Jindivick Country Market, Yarragon Craft and Produce Market, The Winter Market at Neerim South, and Warragul Farmers Market*.

More info: stfiacresfarm.com.au

SHOPPING

Threads, home wares, nic-nacks, food and beverage



Itinerary ideas for a great shopping day out in Yarragon.

As you leave the city and head west along the Princes Highway past Warragul, the surrounding landscape begins to transform - Strzelecki Ranges to the right, Yarra Ranges and Mount Baw Baw to the left. Very seldom do you receive a breathtaking view from a freeway. Surprisingly, a bustling little township pops up alongside it, Yarragon.

Funky vibes, bespoke shopping, sustainable cafes, local brew - Yarragon could very well be the Brunswick Street of Gippsland.

For a great day of shopping and a central base to explore the region, visit the quaint town of Yarragon. From quirky second-hand vintage shops, to unique fashion boutiques,

bespoke home wares and children's games and books, Yarragon is a shopping destination that provides a unique experience for just about anyone, and it's one that you'll remember, and want to make the trip back to!



Start your morning with a great takeaway coffee from *The Shot House*, before discovering the beautiful fashion store *Wardrobe in the Lane*. It's stocked with gorgeous linen clothing and home wares, locally made soaps and exquisite crockery to set any table.

Next, wander around the corner to *Town and Country Gallery*, which features locally made artwork, plus everything from leather bags to carved sculptures.

For those feeling spiritual, visit *Crystal Ocean* and discover handmade jewelry, crystal cleansing and healing books.

Kids will love the *Three Cheeky Monkey's Toy Store* - featuring handmade, traditional and educational toys that make great gifts.

If Op-shopping and treasure hunting is what you love, then Yarragon has a few in town for you to explore. *The Old Vintage Shop* is a must see - displaying

a huge range of pottery, old time furniture, tins, and memorabilia from decades gone by.

Feeling hungry? Stop at *Gippsland Food and Wine* to stock up on all your foodie essentials, or grab a pie at the *Yarragon Country Style Bakery* next door.

Wander down the opposite end to explore a wonderful plant nursery where you'll find baby chickens wandering around the windy paths that lead in all directions. Discover native plants, ferns, vegetables and flowers, most of which are for sale.

Finish your day at *Yarragon Ale House* with a good ale and discover the art of home brewing.

If you're looking to extend your time, visit nearby *Mount Worth State Park*. With a variety of walks to choose from, great views and picnic spots, it's well worth it.

Find it: Princes Highway, Yarragon.



STELLA'S PANTRY

A local experience

You can't visit West Gippsland without picking up a wedge of our local cheese. After all, you are in dairy country!

Stella's Pantry in Warragul is by far the go-to-place for cheese. In its eight year history, their stunning cabinet has grown to stock and celebrate an array of award-winning Gippsland artisan cheeses, including those from *Prom Country*, *Berry's Creek* and *Maffra*.

This mediterranean-inspired larder is also packed full of provisions that inspire curiosity and delight the senses. The shelves are stocked from top to bottom with interesting, tasty delights including truffled risotto rice, duck fat, smoked salts, *Mörk* hot chocolate, peach and vanilla jam, organic dried fruits and gourmet snacks.

Stella's is also home to quirky, ethical chocolate brand *WaWa*. Locally made and now in its second year, you'll find a delicious range of remarkable milk, dark and caramelised white chocolates that's sure to capture your attention, especially with flavours such as *Blueberry and Blue Corn* and *Toasted Sourdough*.

Not sure what to decide? Let *Stella's* friendly, knowledgeable team sort you out with a bespoke bag. They have a passion for fine foods and will be happy to prepare something special for you.

From cured meats and marinated morsels to give you the perfect picnic hamper for your day out, or a charcuterie board for your night in,



Stacey Wagner and Amy O'Brien celebrating the new ownership of Stella's Pantry
Image courtesy of Stella's Pantry

or even something to take home and cook up a delectable storm.

Former owner, Stacey Wagner, is a proud Gippslander and cheese lover who has just passed the torch onto long term member of staff, Amy O'Brien.

Stacey leaves behind the proud legacy of a friendly, local good-food establishment, and is thrilled to see Amy develop her own vision and direction for *Stella's*, which includes combining her own catering businesses - *Lola Catering and Events*.

"This is an exciting time for me and the team. We plan to offer a cafe-style experience, plus takeaway meals and easy access to good food at home."

Find it: 5/12 Victoria Street, Warragul

More info: stellaspantry.com.au

GREEN GROCERS, BUTCHERS & LOCAL PRODUCE

Fresh and fabulous

Baw Baw Food Hub, Warragul

This organic grocery store combines a collection of local growers, makers and producers to present fresh, organic produce.

Find it: 156-158 Queen Street

More info: bawbawfoodhub.org.au

Cheffield's Providore, Warragul

Led by a love for the paddock-to-plate concept and the Gippsland region, *Cheffield's* proudly curates the greatest selection of Gippsland's finest at the store in Warragul.

Find it: 24 Masterson Court, Warragul

More info: 1300 854 299 or cheffields.com.au

Gippsland Fresh Wholesale, Warragul

A fruit and veggie store with a continental twist. You'll also find a good range of Mediterranean cold meats, cheeses and groceries.

Find it: 9A Endeavour Street

More info: gippslandfresh.com.au

Gippsland Food and Wine, Yarragon

Choose from a gourmet range of locally produced cheeses, chocolates, coffee, wine and more.

Find it: 123 Princes Highway

More info: gippslandfoodandwine.com.au

Jindi Pig Butchers, Neerim South

For a great local butcher, visit *Jindi Pig* in Neerim South. With a selection of quality pork, beef and lamb, as well as seasonal fish and smoked meats from *Garfield Smokehouse*.

Find it: 141 Main Neerim Road

More info: facebook @jindipigbutchers

Lean and Green, Warragul

You'll find all sorts of tasty things here at *Lean and Green*. From fresh, local fruit and vegetables, to gourmet frozen dinners, rich stocks, plus sauces, gypsy ham from *Garfield Smokehouse*.

Find it: 3/43 Smith Street

More info: abetterchoice.com.au



Jindi Pig Butchers, Neerim South

THE PRESS CELLARS

A local experience

Experiencing The Press Cellars of Warragul is like the adult version of being a kid in a candy store. This traditional, old-fashioned bottle shop is renowned for being one of the very best in Victoria - rich in its library of liquor, with an astonishing selection of wines, beer and spirits from near, far and around the globe.

Owners, Stu and Saffron have been operating this fine store since 2008, and together with their dedicated small team, pour into it their true knowledge, hospitality and customer service that cannot be beat.

“We’re a local bottle shop that brings the world to Warragul, always with an element of craft.”



The 'Wall of Wine' at The Press Cellars
Image courtesy of The Press Cellars



Stu, Owner, The Press Cellars
Image courtesy of The Press Cellars

Browsing the store's classic timber shelves in low light feels a bit like stepping back in time, and the store itself carries a bit of Old English period-charm. You'll definitely find something here to wet the whistle, wind down with, socialise or celebrate.

Their house-made *Press Port* and *Press Muscat* have been maturing for almost eight years in-store, presented in barrels, one of which is 43 years old and original to the region.

Stu leads his team the traditional way, offering great service, attention to detail and genuine advice to customers, which makes for a terrific shopping experience.

If you happen to be around on a Friday night, pop in for one of *The Press Cellars* regular weekly wine tastings where you can sample the wide range.

Find it: 2/80 Smith Street, Warragul

More info: thepresscellars.com.au

NICKELBY'S

A local experience

Looking for unique, high quality fashion? Take home something truly original from *'the little shop around the corner'* known more formally as *Nickelby's*.

This colourful, quirky fashion store adopts what Owner and Fashion Designer, Angela Betharas calls a *'paddock-to-rack'* approach. Her handwoven range of scarves, hats, shawls, jackets, dresses, pants and tops are made with all natural fibres, including luxuriously warm alpaca wool that comes directly from her farm of around 60 alpacas in nearby Darnum.

Angela not only grows the fleece, but also spins, dyes and weaves it into these gorgeously coloured, hand-made wearables using the philosophy of *SAORI weaving* - where every piece is unique, and no other garment is ever the same.

On most days you can find Angela working on her loom in-store - just like an open studio.

“My business is all about sustainability. It's important to buy clothing made from natural fibres which won't damage the environment.”

As you browse the racks and feel the material, there is a real sense of craftsmanship and care that lives in each piece. Whichever one you choose, you can wear it proudly knowing that it's completely native to the Baw Baw region.

Angela's local tip: *“Don't rush your stay in Baw Baw. Have a chat to the locals, they have lots of knowledge about the area and are always up for a chat!”*

Find it: 1/9 Campbell Street, Yarragon

More info: nickelbys.com.au



Angela Betharas, Owner & Fashion Designer, Nickelby's
Image courtesy of Nickelby's

STRING & SALT

A local experience



The wall of spices at String & Salt
Image courtesy of String & Salt

Warragul is fast becoming a hub for great shopping. This friendly, bustling town is full of original stores that offer a unique, personalised shopping experience, great customer service and thoughtfully curated brands and products. If there's one store that ticks all of those boxes, it's kitchenware and spice emporium, *String & Salt*.

Located in the heart of Smith Street, *String & Salt* was founded by husband and wife team Dave and Michelle Cann in 2014, and over the years the business has grown into a brand that is highly regarded in West Gippsland region.

"We wanted to bring brands and products to Baw Baw that reflected our love of home, food, good design and sharing with friends and family."

String & Salt offers tasteful, modern homewares, and a tantalising range of quality spices, herbs and original blends from their brand, *Spice Oddity*.

The evocative aroma of spices ignites your senses as you browse the store, with a rainbow of coloured powders in apothecary style jars lining the shelves from floor to ceiling. Friendly staff will greet you and carefully weigh and package whatever you need to complement your home-cooking.

Among the homewares range you'll find gorgeous mugs and teapots, pizza paddles, cheese boards, quality knives, stylish aprons, cast iron pots, and more - everything you need for vibrant entertaining, and beautifying your kitchen.

You'll also find locally manufactured products including coffee beans from *Swig Coffee Roasters*, artwork by Printmaker, *Helen Timbury*, and organic

soaps and bath products by *Barany Naturals*. There are so many things in store to make the perfect gift.

There's a lot going on in this store beyond selling spices and cookware. Upstairs you'll find a dedicated kitchen and dining space which is home to *String & Salt's* seasonal cooking school. Chefs and cooks from around the region and afar come to host events here, and classes book out fast! Everything from salami making, fermentation and gluten free pasta, to traditional Chinese, Turkish and Mexican cuisine is on offer. The workshops are perfect for anyone wanting to learn, have fun and experience good food.

Some of the biggest culinary experiences on offer include *The Big Pig Weekend* - a two-day masterclass dedicated to all things nose-to-tail butchery, and the *Mushroom Foragers Tour*, which takes participants on a tour of West Gippsland's farms and forest plantations to hunt for safe, wild edible mushrooms and weeds before enjoying a foraged meal teamed with a glass of wine.

"Our classes are mostly focused on grass roots and traditional cooking skills. It's honest food using good produce in a fun, inviting atmosphere."

Alongside the retail store and cooking school you'll also find *String & Salt's* premier kitchen showroom which is home to an array of quality kitchen and laundry appliances and fireplaces set to inspire and complement any home. Among the range is Dave and Michelle's



String & Salt Masterclass

own appliance brand, *Cleaver Salumi Cabinets* - a range of specialist devices for curing salami and charcuterie at home all year round.

In March each year Dave and Michelle take the business on the road to *Farm World* at *Lardner Park*, hosting a home expo and cooking main stage. *String & Salt* were winners of the *Best General Interest Exhibit Award* at *Farm World* in 2022.

Dave and Michelle on West Gippsland: *"We love the Baw Baw region, you couldn't find a better community to live and do business in. There is so much going for West Gippsland - a solid economy and thriving small business community, fantastic schools, and it's easy traveling distance to city, coast, and alpine regions."*

Find it: 42 Smith Street, Warragul

More info: stringandsalt.com.au

STRATING & SON

A local experience

Nestled between the fashion boutiques of Napier Street in Warragul, you'll find a delightful, country craftsman and his stunning solid timber showroom.

Heath Strating is a natural timber Designer, who has spent the last 15 years handcrafting solid timber furniture from recycled and sustainably sourced materials.

In this local business' 20-year history, *Strating and Son* originally started constructing furniture in Neerim South, and have recently expanded to a showroom in Warragul. You'll find both modern and traditional timber pieces for your home, as well as an assortment of vintage wares, handcrafted knives, ceramics and pottery to complement any space.



Heath Strating, Owner & Furniture Designer,
Strating & Son
Image courtesy of Strating & Son

"We make unique pieces to suit that space in your home, and have a passion for minimising our impact on the environment without compromising quality or style."

The showroom is great to visit for homeware ideas and inspiration, and you'll also see and feel first-hand, the immeasurable quality of this fine work.

Bring your own ideas in for a bespoke piece and work with Heath to bring your vision to life - he loves producing custom designs.

Heath's local tip: *"It's always nice to get some fresh, forest air in the lungs with a stroll up to Toorong Falls, followed by a feed and a cold beer at either the Nooj Pub in Noojee, or Five Aces Brewery in Neerim South."*

More info: Instagram @strating_and_son



Fine timber on showroom display
Image courtesy of Strating & Son



ANNABELLES OF WARRAGUL & YARRAGON

Annabelles is a beautiful shop offering a wide range of giftware and homewares for all occasions. Store locations in Warragul and Yarragon. Open 7 days a week in Yarragon except Christmas Day and Good Friday.

Find it: Shop 18, Warragul Shopping Plaza, Warragul | Shop 1, Main Street, Yarragon
More info: Warragul - 03 5623 4233 Yarragon - 03 5634 2055



BLERICK TREE FARM

Blerick Tree Farm is a retail nursery located in Neerim South specialising in selling advanced trees direct to the public. Open by appointment only or order online for delivery to your door.

Find it: 55 McDougal Road, Neerim South
More info: 0417 535 917 | blericktreefarm.com.au



CRYSTAL OCEAN

Crystal Ocean offers a large, unique range of crystals, jewellery, books, oracle and tarot cards, crystal singing pyramids, crystal and tibetan singing bowls, incense, candles, clothing and giftware.

Find it: 95 Princes Highway, Yarragon
More info: 03 5634 2869 | crystalocean.com.au



KEITH'S SISTER

A range of products and gifts for everyone. We offer eclectic and one of home decor and furniture, snuggle Hunny kids baby wear and accessories glasshouse candles and fragrances...Al.ive body range & more.

Find it: Shop 5/97 Princes Highway, Yarragon



NOOJEE BUSH GOODS

We rent and sell snow equipment during winter, the rest of the year we operate as a bait and tackle store. We have a huge range of trout lures, camping equipment, wood, ice and general store items.

Find it: 11 Henty Street, Noojee
More info: 0447 849 079 | hannoparker@gmail.com



RENDEZVOUS OF YARRAGON

Beautiful range of womens clothing, shoes, jewellery & accessories. Open 7 days, 10-5pm

Find it: 103A Princes Highway, Yarragon
More info: 03 5634 2305 | rendezvousyarragon@gmail.com



TWELVE SOUTH BRIDAL

TWELVE SOUTH is a modern and intimate bridal boutique, spilling with a thoughtfully curated edit of gowns from leading Australian and international designers.

Find it: 3 Village Walk, Yarragon
More info: (03) 5644 3254 | twelvesouthbridal.com.au



YARRAGON RECLAMATION

New, old and middle aged goods.

Find it: 100-102 Waterloo Road, Yarragon
More info: 0419 397 482

STAY A LITTLE LONGER

Accommodation and camping

Wake up feeling refreshed in the magnificent landscape that is West Gippsland. A wildness and a serenity can be found in these hills, mountains and valleys that will recharge the most world-weary traveller.

For the self-sufficient adventurer, picturesque camping locations and hiking rest stops are in abundance, as well as a range of family friendly parks and reserves in beautiful locations.

Throughout West Gippsland you will find amazing boutique hideaways unique to the region, with hosts that go out of their way to offer a genuine local experience. With some gorgeously curated luxury and comfort options, a good night sleep and a weekend of relaxation can certainly be found.

Whatever your travel style, West Gippsland is sending out a warm welcome. Come stay with us!

The Ridge House, Yarragon



STAY

STAY

THE RIDGE HOUSE & GREEN HILLS FARM

A local experience



As you enter the eclectic little town of Yarragon, take a short drive up the road from Yarragon Ale House to find the spectacular Ridge House.

The short drive does not disappoint, in fact, it gets a little more exciting with each turn of the corner, as you only have to look out your car window to admire the breathtaking views.

The house itself - a long-homestead style, is draped in vine leaves and perched high, to give you an almost 360 degree view of the rolling hills below and the Baw Baw ranges beyond.

The vibe is quiet, relaxing, and feels miles away from anything, perhaps because of its sheer elevation. It's almost hard to believe that there is such a place, just 30 minutes from Traralgon, and just under 90 minutes from Melbourne's CBD.

Inside, the superbly decorated house features a fully equipped kitchen for

the culinary connoisseur, complete with locally sourced ingredients for breakfast and a selection of cook books for inspiration.

If cooking is not your fancy, you can expect a home-cooked meal made



with fresh produce sourced from the adjoining *Green Hills Farm*, ready to heat up and serve upon arrival, and thoughtfully prepared by Kristy, Owner of *The Ridge House*.

Kristy's warm personality and genuine, hospitable nature is at the forefront of *The Ridge House*, and she's dedicated to delivering an experience that she herself would expect to have. You can just tell from the property's quality finishings, fine furnishings and attention to detail that this space is presented to you with care, consideration and comfort as a priority.

"I want guests to feel welcomed at home the minute they arrive. Just as if they were staying in my own home."

Kristy proceeds to give a tour through the house and surrounding 50 acre property set in pristine, private bushland.

There is a cosy nook with WiFi, board games and *Netflix* that is perfect for kids at one end of the house, and to the other, a grand living room featuring timber accents, leather, natural fabrics and a wood fireplace. It's the perfect spot to share a drink with friends, read a book in silence, or just cuddle up with a woolen blanket and relax.

Small groups and families can be accommodated in the house's four bedrooms, but if you're a couple wanting a romantic escape or an ideal honeymoon spot, then this is the place for you.



The west-facing black-framed windows capture the incredible scenes and frame the outside view like a picture.

Wander down past the deck and the outdoor fire pit to the 'Love Seat' at sundown with a bottle of local vino and watch the wallabies coast through the valley below, and let your eyes wander endlessly into the distance.

There are several walking trails on the property to help you properly escape, and as you disappear into nowhere, the tantalisingly fresh bush scents ignite the senses. Some of the tracks have even been formed on old timber rail links dating back to the 1880s, paying homage to the property's history as an original source of timber.

Over the fence, Green Hills Farm (which is also owned by Kristy and her husband, Neil), is home to an amazing kitchen garden of which they have spent nearly seven years in the making, transforming what was **Cont. p96>**

once a haven for capeweed into a thriving agri-business. Raspberries, zucchini, tomatoes, sunflowers, and chamomile grow here among so many other things - and that's only the beginning. With a bee garden to complement their on-site hives, and a farm featuring chickens and a green house - even a pizza oven (the chimney of which is the remainder of the previous house that once stood), this place is clearly a labour of love, hard work and dedication.

What Green Hills Farm is famous for though is its garlic, and as a local producer, Kristy and Neil take the time to not only hand plant and harvest their perfect product, but to team up with other local businesses, including *String & Salt*, *Hogget Kitchen*, *Fozigobble Cafe* and *Rokeby Market* to not only develop a sense of community and promote local produce, but to help showcase West Gippsland's finest to locals and visitors alike.



The 'Love Seat' at The Ridge House

From nothing to something - it takes careful planning, vision and commitment, which has ultimately resulted in the perfect property that warrants peace, sustainability and promotes life's simple pleasures.

Find it: 442 Yarragon South Road, Yarragon South

To book: theridgehouse.com.au

ROSEMONT HOUSE

A local experience

For a delightful, relaxing escape, there's no better place to stay in West Gippsland than luxury bed and breakfast Rosemont House, right in the heart of beautiful Noojee.

Take advantage of this couples-only retreat - newly designed and appointed with grand fabrics, astonishing furniture and all the mod-con features to keep you warm and cosy. There's even an easy-light modern fireplace in each room!

Owner and luxury lover, Di Johnston, has been busy transforming this once traditional home into the ultimate private hideaway where you literally have the option to stay in bed for the weekend, and given the rooms' tranquil setting, inviting bed sheets, and splendid amenities, it's very tempting!



Di Johnston, Owner, Rosemont House
Image courtesy of Rosemont House

Di's down-to-earth nature and practical sense, teamed with a keen eye for detail and the intuitive know-how of what every tired, stressed out individual needs, comes together in these two beautifully presented rooms, aptly named *Toorongo* and *Latrobe*.

"I love to look after people."

The rooms are decadent, curated with comfortable furnishings, warm cozy throws, high ceilings and superbly decorated with the sculptures and prints of local Gippsland artists - *Laurie Collins* and *Dani Till*.

The bathrooms are beautiful, fitted with monsoon shower heads and dressed in modern, ornate tiles.

There is also the offering of complimentary gourmet snacks and a selection of teas from a traditional chest that's sure to please. **Cont. p98>**



Toorongo Room, Rosemont House
Image courtesy of Rosemont House

It really doesn't matter what time of year you come to stay at Rosemont House, you'll fall in love with Noojee's relaxed, temperate surrounds and splendid community charm.

Whether you take up the stay-in-bed option, or are keen to explore Noojee's beautiful landscape via the *Tramway* walk in front, or the *Trestle Bridge* walk behind the property, time is on your side here, and you can feel at peace knowing that you have the freedom and privacy to go at your own pace.

There are also options to stroll across the road or up the street for a coffee, breakfast, or lunch at *Little Red Duck Cafe*, or a meal at *The Toolshed Bar, Bistro and Cabins*, or *Noojee Hotel* - it's all within walking distance from Rosemont House.

Find it: 68 Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road, Noojee

To book: rosemonthouse.com.au



Relax by the fire at Rosemont House
Image courtesy of Rosemont House



Stunning views from the Verandah
Image courtesy of Rosemont House

OTHER LUXURY PLACES TO STAY

Experience local hospitality

Mercure Hotel, Warragul

The *Mercure Hotel* offers quality accommodation right in the heart of Warragul. It's easy walking distance to shops, cafes, restaurants and entertainment, and not far from Warragul train station.

Choose from a range of hotel rooms, including the *Premier King Room* which comes complete with a king-size bed and spa bath.

There is a lounge area at the front entrance to relax and free WiFi for each guest.

Find it: 23 Mason Street

To book: Google '*Mercure Hotel*' for a range of booking agents, or phone 03 5618 3500

Ooh Lah Lah, Trafalgar

This two-bedroom apartment in Trafalgar is truly unique with its grand European style, touches of French baroque and an inspired eclectic design.

Behind the unassuming entry, this heritage building boasts three levels comprising of two bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, luxury lounge room, bathroom, stairwell nook and entry foyer, and can accommodate up to six guests.

Find it: Level 1, 81/83 Princes Highway

To book: Search '*Ooh Lah Lah - Trafalgar*' on Riparide or AirBnB.

Neerim Country Cottages, Neerim

This five-acre property with stunning mountain views and glorious gardens boasts beautiful self-contained cottages, perfect for couples and families. You'll also find a solar heated swimming pool, tennis court and games room on the property.

Find it: 2470 Main Neerim Road

To book: Google '*Neerim Country Cottages*' for a range of booking agents, or phone 03 5628 4451



Ooh Lah Lah, Trafalgar



Vivere Retreat, Neerim South

Parnassus, Drouin East

When the rooms here aren't reserved for wedding guests, you can stay and enjoy a relaxing escape overlooking the panoramic views of Gippsland. This sought after wedding venue also has its own *Steak House* where a variety of functions are catered for.

Find it: 180 Lardners Track

To book: Phone 03 5626 8522

Toorong River Chalets, Noojee

For the ultimate in luxury accommodation, *Toorong River Chalets* in Noojee is just wonderful. This stunning property set in Toorong Valley, the perfect romantic couples retreat, or quiet family holiday. With three chalets to choose from, each with a fully-equipped kitchen, cosy beds and even one with an outdoor spa bath, it's the perfect opportunity to kick back and relax.

Find it: 105 Toorong Valley Road

To book: Google 'Toorong River Chalets' for a range of booking agents, or phone 0499 994 886.

Vivere Retreat, Neerim South

Nestled in amongst 18 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens, *Vivere Retreat* in Neerim South offers a luxurious retreat with spectacular views all year round. Perfectly positioned in the foothills of Mount Baw Baw, explore the local wineries, restaurants and great outdoors without compromising on comfort.

The Retreat has two King bedrooms and two bathrooms and accommodates up to four guests in self-contained, modern luxury. There is also cottage and studio accommodation on site.

Find it: 1719 Main Neerim Road

To book: vivereretreat.com.au

Winemakers Cottage, Warragul

Wild Dog Winery offers group accommodation in their *Winemakers Cottage* for up to 10 guests across four bedrooms - it's perfect for families, or a group of friends making tracks around West Gippsland for the weekend. While you're there, stroll through the wetlands and walking tracks on the property and check out the fern boardwalk. You can also visit the bush tucker garden and olive grove, and say hello to the *Black Angus* cows.

Find it: 6 Farrington Close

To book: Search 'Winemakers Cottage at vineyard' on AirBnB

CAMPING EXPERIENCES

Tent, camper trailer, caravan and cabin

For camping enthusiasts, there are many scenic areas to choose from in West Gippsland.

Chinese Gardens, Walhalla

Fees apply | Tent | Camper trailer | Small Caravan
Toilets | Fire pit | Picnic & BBQ | Pets welcome

Set on the banks of *Stringers Creek* in what used to be a garden market area run by the Chinese community during Walhalla's gold rush era, these quiet, unpowered sites offer relaxing views and hot water for individuals, couples and small groups.

Find it: 288 Main Road

To book: walhallaboard.org.au

Erica Caravan Park, Erica

Fees apply | Tent | Camper trailer | Caravan
Cabins | Picnic & BBQ

With friendly, accommodating staff, a great outdoor camp kitchen and excellent facilities, this cosy, family campground set in beautiful countryside is a terrific place to pitch a tent, park your van or rent a cabin. There's even a giant human chess board and a real-life *Scooby Doo* wandering around the park.

Find it: 14 Station Street

To book: Phone 03 5165 3315

Mountain Rivers Tourist Park, Rawson

Fees Apply | Tent | Camper Trailer | Caravan |
Cabins | Bunkhouse | Motel Rooms | Spa Chalet

Encompassing the *Happy Jack Creek Valley* in Rawson, where lush farmland meets forest, sits the spacious grounds of *Mountain Rivers Tourist Park*. With a wide

range of accommodation options, there is something here to suit any holiday maker.

Find it: 11 Depot Road

To book: mountainrivers.com.au

Poplars Reserve, Loch Valley

Free | Tent | Camper trailer | Caravan | Toilets
Fire pit | Picnic

Just a short drive from Noojee, you'll find this delightful camp spot, featuring spacious flat camping areas among the Poplar trees.

Find it: 670 Loch Valley Road

Rawson Caravan Park and Holiday Units, Rawson

Fees apply | Tent | Camper trailer | Caravan
Cabins

A great family holiday park, you'll find the *Rawson Stockyard* is a part of the bar and bistro here. Great facilities and amenities for the ultimate family holiday.

Find it: Depot Road

To book: Phone 03 5165 3439

Toorong Falls Campground, Noojee

Free | Tent | Camper trailer | Small Caravan | Drop
toilets | Fire pit | Picnic

Experience camping among mountain forest and little rivers at the base of *Toorong Falls*, with easy access to walking trails and essential amenities.

Find it: 640 Toorong Valley Road

Tip: Download the 'More to Explore' App to learn more about camping restrictions, conditions and availability.

DROUIN & SURROUNDS



DROUIN MOTEL

Drouin Motel offers renovated accommodation and country hospitality in West Gippsland. It is located in the town center, 10 mins drive to Warragul. Free car park and Foxtel are available.

Find it: 275 Princes Way, Drouin

More info: 03 5625 3296 | info@drouinmotel.com.au



GLEN CROMIE RESERVE

Glen Cromie Caravan Park and Day Park. Powered or unpowered Caravan sites available. Tent sites available, On-site Vans and Cabins and 5 Large Shelters are also available for day hire.

Find it: 850 Main Neerim Road, Drouin West

More info: 03 5626 8508 | glencromiereserve.net.au



RAVENSWOOD DROUIN

Ravenswood, a charming luxury period residence. Centrally located in Drouin with access to all that West Gippsland has to offer. Yarragon Village, Mt Baw Baw, Award winning restaurants and wineries.

Find it: 7 Main South Road, Drouin

More info: 0414 366 464 | drouinaccommodation.com

NEERIM SOUTH, JINDIVICK & ROKEBY



GRACEFIELD ESTATE

Gracefield Estate is situated in beautiful West Gippsland. Gracefield Estate offers the ultimate luxury country escape. Your private accommodation at either Gracefield Farmhouse or Gracefield Cottage.

Find it: 135 Latrobe River Road, Neerim South

More info: 03 8772 9230 | gracefield.co



NEERIM SOUTH CARAVAN PARK

Quiet country caravan park.

Find it: 410 Neerim East Road, Neerim South

More info: 03 5628 1248 | neerimsouthvanpark@bigpond.com



CYC FOREST EDGE - GROUP ACCOMMODATION

We are a group accommodation facility, east of Melbourne where you can escape to your own river valley where quiet rivers, lush fern gullies, tall old growth forests and majestic mountains meet.

Find it: 405 McKenzie Road, Neerim East

More info: 03 5628 4224 | forestedge.cyc.org.au

NOOJEE & SURROUNDS



ANARE SKI CLUB

ANARE Ski Club operates an A frame Ski Lodge in Mount Baw Baw village. Accommodation bookings for the whole lodge are available for 2 nights or longer. The lodge sleeps 14.

Find it: 35 Currawong Road, Baw Baw Village

More info: 03 5165 1136 | anareskiclub.org



PARROTS NEST HIDEAWAY

Perched high up on the hill of Old Noojee Road you'll find The Parrot's Nest. With a beautiful garden and scenic views from inside and out, a stay here is very relaxing. Fully equipped with room for up to 6 people and just a short walk into town.

Find it: 22-24 Old Noojee Road, Noojee

More info: 0409 484 570 | facebook @parrotsnesthideaway

WALHALLA, ERICA & RAWSON



ERICA COUNTRY RETREAT

Erica Country Retreat is the Gateway to Mountain Country. It is a beautifully appointed 4 bedroom home which can sleep up to 8 people, in a tranquil, country style setting.

Find it: 13 Beasleys Road, Erica

More info: 0407 812 215 | ericacountryretreat@gmail.com



ERICA HOTEL MOTOR INN

Great Australian pub menu with the must Hot Rock. The hotel has 7 recently renovated rooms, all with TV, tea/coffee making facilities and own bathroom.

Find it: 8-10 School Road, Erica

More info: 03 5165 3252 | ericahotel.com



RAWSON VILLAGE - GROUP ACCOMMODATION

Rawson Village is an ACA accredited Group Accommodation facility in West Gippsland. Accommodating up to 300 guests, and set in the beautiful rolling hills of Baw Baw National Park.

Find it: 1 Pinnacle Drive, Rawson

More info: 03 5165 3200 | rawsonvillage.com



SANCREED COTTAGE

Sancreed Cottage is the perfect base for your stay in the historic Gippsland gold mining township of Walhalla. It is fully self contained and is located overlooking the iconic Walhalla Band Rotunda.

Find it: 4 Church Hill Road, Walhalla

More info: 03 8373 4049 | sancreed.com.au



SILVERTOP COTTAGES

Quality Self contained Accommodation, choose from 3 Unique "Storybook" cottages set in 12 acres of private forest. An ideal base for exploring Mt Baw Baw, Walhalla and the Mountain Rivers regions.

Find it: 9 McLelland Road, Erica

More info: 0414 537 267 | silvertopcottages.com.au



TWITCHERS COTTAGE

Holiday Accommodation. Cosy Cottage set in natural garden and bush.

Find it: 1156 Darnum-Allambee Road, Cloverlea

More info: 0403 051 853 | twitcherscottage.business.site



WALHALLA STAR HOTEL

Stylish & welcoming boutique accommodation in the heart of beautiful Walhalla, providing an ideal base to explore the many activities this historic township has to offer. Great meals & country comfort.

Find it: 130 Main Road, Walhalla

More info: 0436 462 462 | starhotel.com.au

WARRAGUL & SURROUNDS



ALLAMBEE CAMP - GROUP ACCOMMODATION

Allambee Camp is a group accommodation popular with family groups on weekends and over the school holidays. Families can relax, enjoy the outdoors and participate in fun outdoor adventure activities.

Find it: 390 Mirboo-Yarragon Road, Allambee

More info: 03 5634 4221 | allambeecamp.com.au



COMFORT INN & SUITES WARRAGUL

This Warragul motel accommodation takes pride in offering guests friendly country hospitality and quality, relaxing rooms. Enjoy the boutique local wineries, discover antique shops, or attend an event at Lardner Park.

Find it: 1845 Princes Way, Warragul

More info: 03 5623 2189 | warragulmotel.com.au



EDINBURGH MOTOR INN

Edinburgh Motor Inn is a gorgeous property right in the heart of Warragul.

We cater to all sorts of visitors and events including weddings, conferences, staycations, tourists and loads more.

Find it: 61 Princes Way, Warragul

More info: 03 5622 3339 | edinburghmotorinn.com.au



LANTILLY HOUSE

Lantilly is a unique clinker brick period house on the fringe of Warragul's CBD. It is fully self-contained with two queen ensuite bedrooms, and has everything you need for a memorable stay.

Find it: 3 Toorak Avenue, Warragul

More info: 0411 772 176 | lantilly.com



SEAVIEW PARK FARM B&B

Our unique B&B/farm stay accommodation option is located on a 540 acre farm where we breed cattle, sheep and pigs as well as grow heritage cider apples. Only 18km from Warragul towards Korumburra.

Find it: 59 Seaview School Road, Seaview

More info: 0415 312 966 | seaviewparkfarm.com.au



WARRAGUL GARDEN HOLIDAY PARK

Warragul Gardens Holiday Park offers accommodation in the form of 18 x two bedroom cabins with ensuite. Powered and unpowered camping sites. Beautiful gardens, set in acres of parkland close to town.

Find it: 44 Burke Street, Warragul

More info: 03 5623 2707 | warragulcaravanpark.com.au



WARRAGUL LARDNER COTTAGE

Warragul Lardner Cottage is a recently renovated rustic farm cottage with all the modern amenities. The cottage offers 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms and can accommodate up to 8 people.

Find it: 331 Warragul Lardner Road, Warragul South

More info: 0417 932 552 | warragullardnercottage@gmail.com



WARRAGUL VIEWS MOTOR INN

Motel Close to Warragul township and an easy hour from Melbourne, you can relax and enjoy comfortable, spacious and modern accommodation, with dinner and drinks available in our brand new restaurant.

Find it: 50 Rulemount Road, Warragul

More info: 03 5623 5222 | warragulviewsmotorinn.com.au

YARRAGON & SURROUNDS



ANDERLEY

Two separate, self-contained secluded cottages with stunning mountain and valley views. Set on a 35 acre property in the foothills of the Strzelecki Ranges and close to Yarragon Village.

Find it: 312 Old Yarragon-Leongatha Road, Yarragon South

More info: 0419 263 262 | anderley.com.au

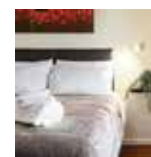


MIRADOR SPRINGS

Mirador Springs is one of Gippsland's most beautiful accommodation venues and offers luxury glamping or a country cottage all set high on the Strzelecki Ranges on 15 acres of botanical gardens.

Find it: 95 Haynes Track, Trafalgar South

More info: 0407 053 265 | miradorsprings.com.au



SHORT STAYS GIPPSLAND (TRAFALGAR)

Fully Serviced, Self Contained Apartments in Trafalgar providing a comfortable home away from home for visitors to Gippsland.

Find it: 17 Brown Street, Trafalgar

More info: 03 5126 1162 | ssgippsland.com.au



THE SUMMIT ADVENTURE CAMP - GROUP ACCOMMODATION

The Summit Adventure Park is a multi-award-winning venue located on 50 acres, just 90 minutes from Melbourne.

Find it: 21 Cemetery Road, Trafalgar East

More info: 03 5633 3236 | thesummit.net.au



YARRAGON MOTEL

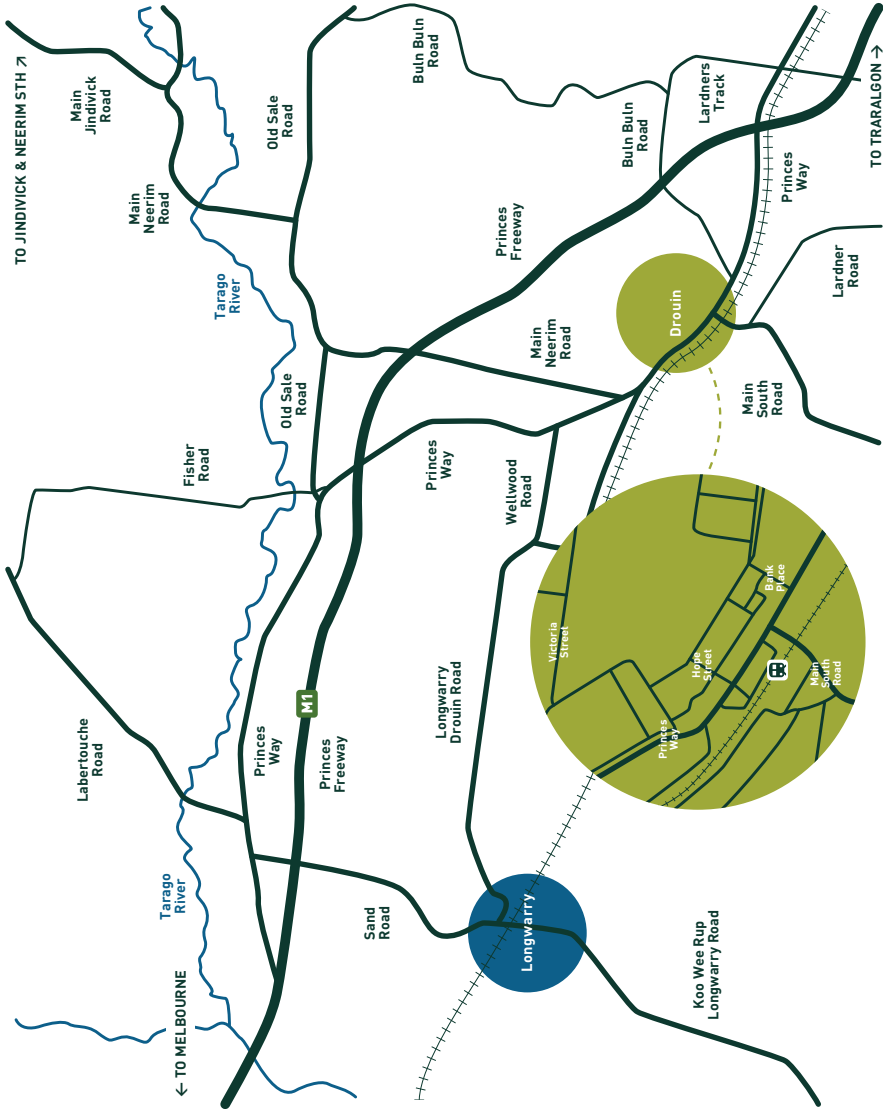
Yarragon Motel is a family owned and run business, located in the heart of Yarragon. Nestled in among the local shops and eateries, it's a perfect and affordable place to stay while in town.

Find it: 119 Princes Highway, Yarragon

More info: 03 5634 2655 | yarragonmotel.com

DROUIN & SURROUNDS

Drouin, Labertouche, Longwarry



DROUIN

Drouin carries all the charm of a traditional country town, and is the second largest in West Gippsland next to Warragul. The town is becoming well known for its progressive, creative hairdressing and beauty outlets, wholefoods stores and French-inspired cafe, alongside the art that resides in the streets. Drouin is also family friendly, with great kid friendly restaurants, town walks and playground areas.

Stay in Drouin while you explore the rest of the region. The beautiful *Drouin Civic Park* is home to one of the best kids' playgrounds in the region, a fantastic skate park, and many family friendly trails and public artworks to explore.

With the famous *Robin Hood Inn* just off the Princes Highway, and *Brandy Creek Estate* in the east that features a *Day Spa*, you don't have to venture far to partake in a girls getaway experience.

History and facts

Drouin means 'north wind' in Indigenous language, and the town is a part of Gunai-Kurnai land.

Highlights

Beauty and hairdressing, dining, Drouin Gardens.

What to expect

Shopping - essentials, retail, wholefoods stores, petrol stations.

Dining - cafes, pubs and restaurants.

Entertainment - kids playground, gardens and walks.

Accommodation - motels, holiday park, bed and breakfasts.

Distance from Melbourne

98 kms (1hr 8mins) by car.

LABERTOUCHE

Labertouche is located on Jackson's Track and lies to the east of Bunyip River, along the edge of Bunyip State Forest. For the experienced explorer there are some very interesting caves to be found in the bush around here.

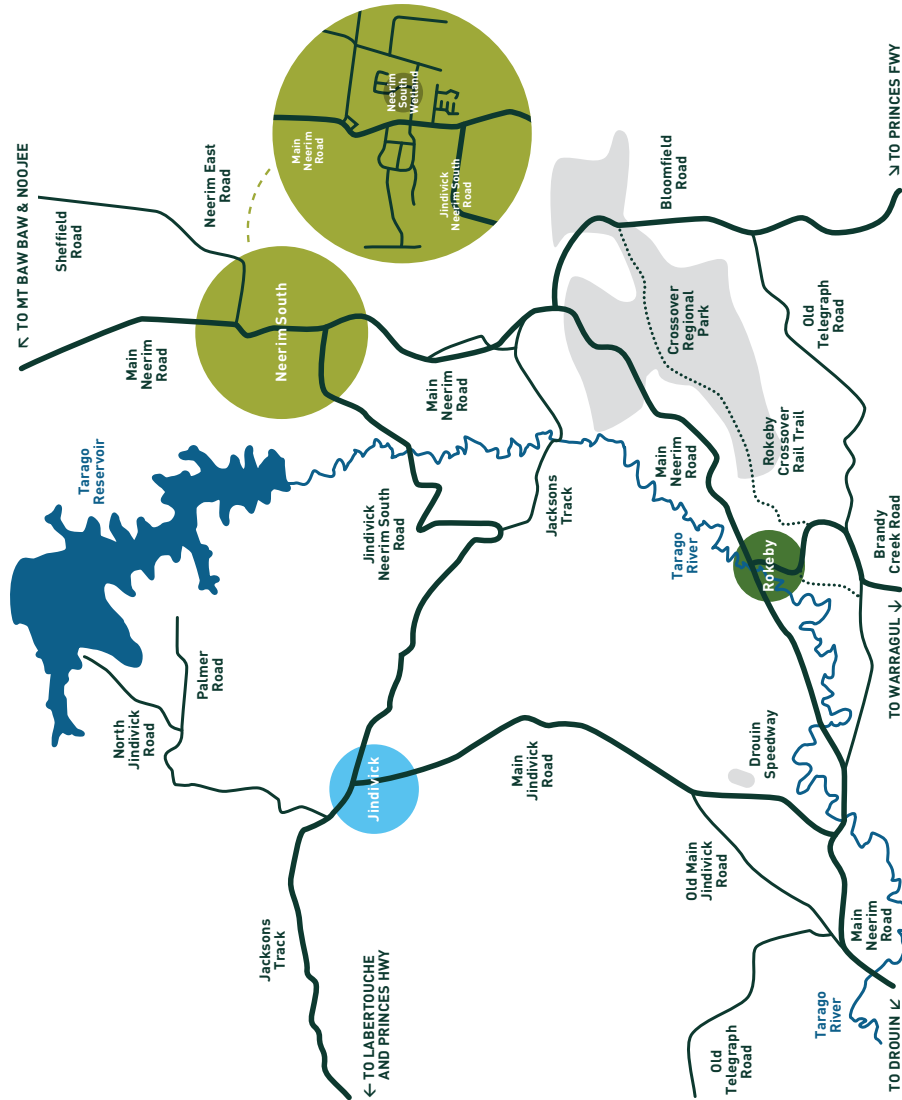
LONGWARRY

Longwarry is a small township, home to some great cafes and *Robin Hood Reserve*. Not far from *Gumbuya World*, explore the informative *Bandicoot Walking Track*, local reserves and parks.



Drouin Township

NEERIM SOUTH, JINDIVICK & ROKEBY



NEERIM SOUTH

Neerim South boasts a creative community and friendly local businesses, including supermarket, bakery, gallery, cafes, a brewery and the famous *Jindi Pig* butchers. *Neerim South Hotel* is also a popular pub for locals and passing motorcyclists, classic car lovers and caravans tourers.

When you arrive in town you'll be greeted by a huge sculpted blue bower that towers over Main Neerim Road representing the flourishing Bower Bird population in West Gippsland, alongside a fascinating collection of sculpted artworks throughout the town centre.

Neerim South is the central hub to branch out to the hamlets of Jindivick and Rokeby, where you'll find breathtaking countryside, rail trails and solo single tracks, art galleries, picnic reserves and community markets.

Head north-east from Neerim South towards Noojee and on the way, stop at the *Apex Lookout* (on your left, about a 10 minute drive) for stunning views of Tarago Reservoir and West Gippsland's high country.

History and facts

The densely forested area was initially developed during the gold rush in the 1870s, with lush green hills making this the centre of dairy and potato farming in the early 1900s.

Neerim South is 256 metres above sea level. The annual average rainfall is 1128mm.

Highlights

Outdoor sculptures and public art trail, well loved brewery and local pub, and Tarago Reservoir.

What to expect

Shopping - essentials, groceries, petrol, butcher, opportunity shop.

Dining - bakery, cafe, pub, brewery.

Views - picturesque countryside.

Distance from Melbourne

110 kms (1hr 36mins) SE by car.

NEERIM JUNCTION/NAYOOK

Neerim Junction has a licensed General Store with essential items and a petrol station - good for a quick stop or supply top up. Discover the beautiful, captivating *Glen Nayook Rainforest Walk* at the end of Paynters Road.

JINDIVICK

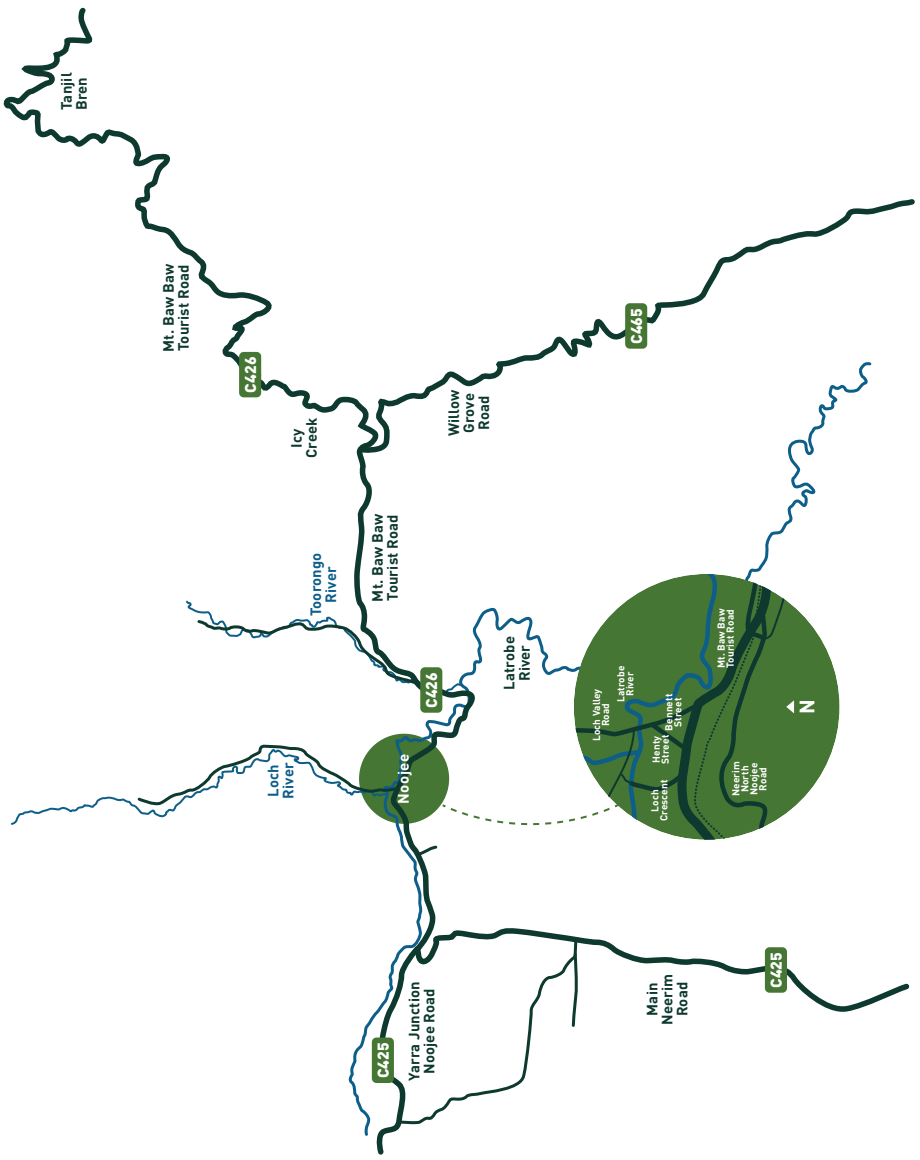
Jindivick is famous for its locals doing amazing things. It's the home of adventurer *Beau Miles*, sculpture artist *Laurie Collins*, and garden extraordinaire *David Musker*. The rolling hills resemble lush English countryside and the scenery here is just delightful, especially the view from the Jindivick Cricket Ground.

ROKEBY

Rokeby boasts a fabulous market, featuring local makers and producers from right around Gippsland. You can also hop on the *Rokeby Crossover Rail Trail* here, and there's a great children's playground too.

NOOJEE AND SURROUNDS

Noojee, Tanjil Bren, Icy Creek



NOOJEE

Noojee is a peaceful place to relax, unwind and become a part of the natural scenery of West Gippsland. Set in a valley of lush bushland and towering trees, with pleasant walks, trails and a quaint township, Noojee is also the gateway to *Toorong Falls*, and *Mount Baw Baw*.

If you love fishing, the Latrobe, Toorong and Loch rivers that run alongside this tranquil town are stocked with rainbow and brown trout, or you can even try your luck at the *Alpine Trout Farm*. Visit the *Noojee Heritage Centre* which boasts one of the old steam trains that ran the line back in the 1920s (you'll even find smoke pluming out of it from time to time!) If you're after a hearty pub meal then you have your choice of *The Toolshed Bar, Bistro and Cabins*, or the famous *Noojee Hotel* - locally known as *'Nooj Pub.'*

History and facts

Noojee means 'valley of, or a place of, rest' in Indigenous language. Noojee was historically a timber town in the early 1920s, and the iconic *Trestle Bridge* - one of the last standing of its kind, is around 100 years old and once connected Noojee to Warragul during the booming timber industry. The town was destroyed by fire in the Black Friday fires of 1939.

Highlights

Noojee Trestle Bridge, Noojee Heritage Centre, bushwalking.

What to expect

- Dining** - cafe, pubs.
- Recreation** - bushwalking, cycling, hiking and running, fishing, parks, playground, family day out.
- Accommodation** - camping, luxury accommodation, bed and breakfasts.

Distance from Melbourne

133 kms (1hr 48mins) SE by car.

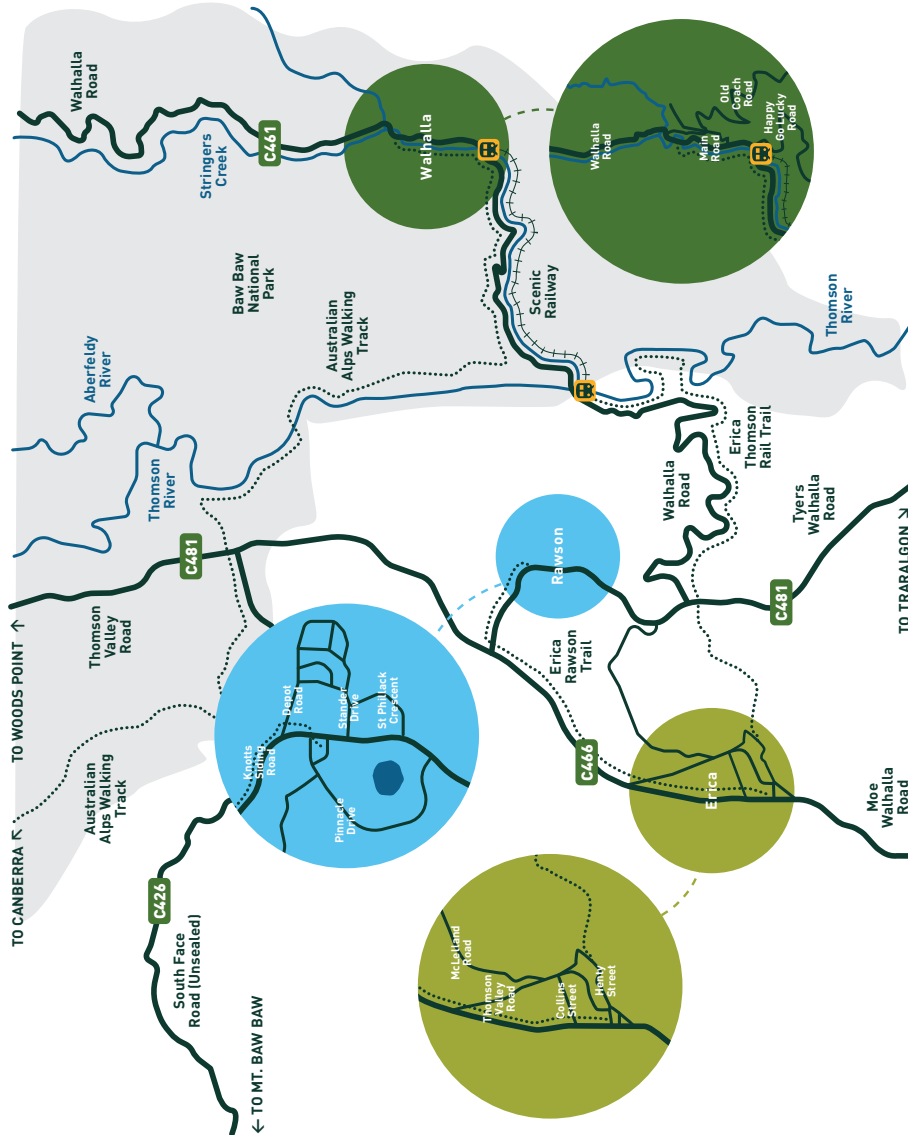
TANJIL BREN

Tanjil Bren is a historic timber town and close to *Mount Baw Baw*. Offering excellent fishing in bush settings, some off the grid accommodation options, and lovely picnic grounds and amenities. You may even be greeted by a local bagpipe player if you are lucky.



Alpine Trout Farm, Noojee

WALHALLA, ERICA & RAWSON



WALHALLA

This historic 19th century township still remains an active, working town, carefully preserved by the people who live, work and volunteer here. You'll feel like you're literally stepping back in time into the gold rush era upon arrival. This picturesque gold mining town is set in a steep mountain valley, with extraordinary scenic views, meandering rivers and the most glorious autumn colours.

In 1994 part of the *Walhalla Goldfields Railway* line was resurrected, giving way to tours through the old gold mining routes via the town's historic trains. You can also explore Walhalla on foot or via mountain bike through the *Walhalla Goldfields Mountain Bike Rail Trail*, and even camp overnight in one of the many scenic camping areas in and around the town.

History and facts

At the peak of the gold rush, Walhalla was home to over 3500 residents, attracting prospectors and entrepreneurs hoping to find their fortune. The many stories of the trials and tribulations of this period in history, can be found on the tombstones of one of Victoria's most unusual cemeteries - set high on the side of a steep hill above town.

Home to only 20 or so permanent residents today, this living heritage town and its various historical attractions are maintained and preserved by passionate local volunteers.

Highlights

Walhalla Goldfields Railway, Walhalla Long Tunnel Extended Mine, Ghost Tours (tours available for all of the above), luscious autumn scenery.

What to expect

Dining - cafes, pubs and restaurants.

Recreation - bushwalking, cycling, hiking and running, historical sites.

Views - Stunning views, calm, tranquil surrounds.

Accommodation - camping, bed and breakfasts, *The Star Hotel*.

Distance from Melbourne

184kms (around 2 hours and 25 minutes) by car.

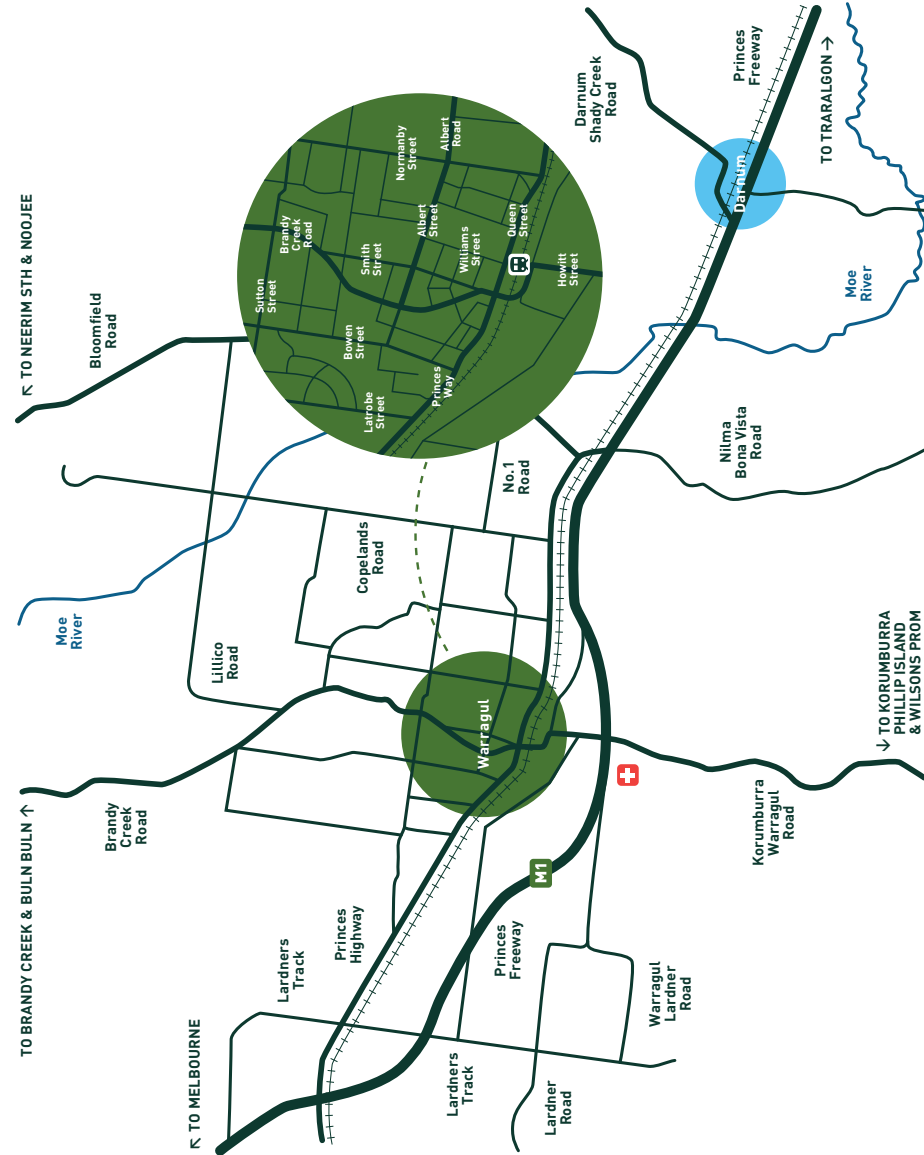
ERICA & RAWSON

The small townships of Erica and Rawson offer country charm, friendly local service, excellent camping grounds, general stores, and of course, a good watering hole or two. Aside from that, these towns provide visitors with the perfect base to explore the great *Alpine Walking Track*, the historic town of Walhalla, Mount Baw Baw and the Mountain Rivers Region.

There are excellent picnic and barbecue facilities in both towns as well. The *Erica Reserve Picnic Pavilion* for one, provides great shelter from the elements, and also has a playground and huge oval to kick a footy around. The adjacent *Erica Campground* also has excellent facilities and the friendliest, accommodating local staff you'll meet.

WARRAGUL & SURROUNDS

Warragul, Darnum & Lardner



WARRAGUL

Warragul is fast becoming the destination town for Victorians and visitors alike. It's the largest town in West Gippsland, and boasts excellent outdoor strip shopping, arts and entertainment, plus a great choice of cafes and restaurants.

Quality butchers and farm fresh produce can be found in the niche greengrocers and farm gates, and at the *Warragul Farmers Market*.

This town is a perfect base to explore the West Gippsland region, with accommodation options including the *Mercure Hotel*, *Warragul Gardens Holiday Park*, and a string of bed and breakfasts.

Warragul is the gateway to *Mount Worth State Park*, and less than 10 minute drive along the Princes Highway to the nearby trendy town of Yarragon.

History and facts

Warragul Railway Station opened in 1878 and was used to transport timber from West Gippsland to Melbourne.

Warragul has rich soil and pristine grazing pastures. Dairy is one of Warragul's biggest exports.

Highlights

Restaurants, winery, entertainment and shopping, farmers market.

What to expect

Shopping - essentials, retail, fresh local produce, petrol stations.

Dining - cafes, pubs and restaurants.

Entertainment - cinema, bowling alley, Arts Centre, live music venues.

Accommodation - hotels, holiday park, bed and breakfasts.

Distance from Melbourne

104 kms (1hr 30mins) SE by car.

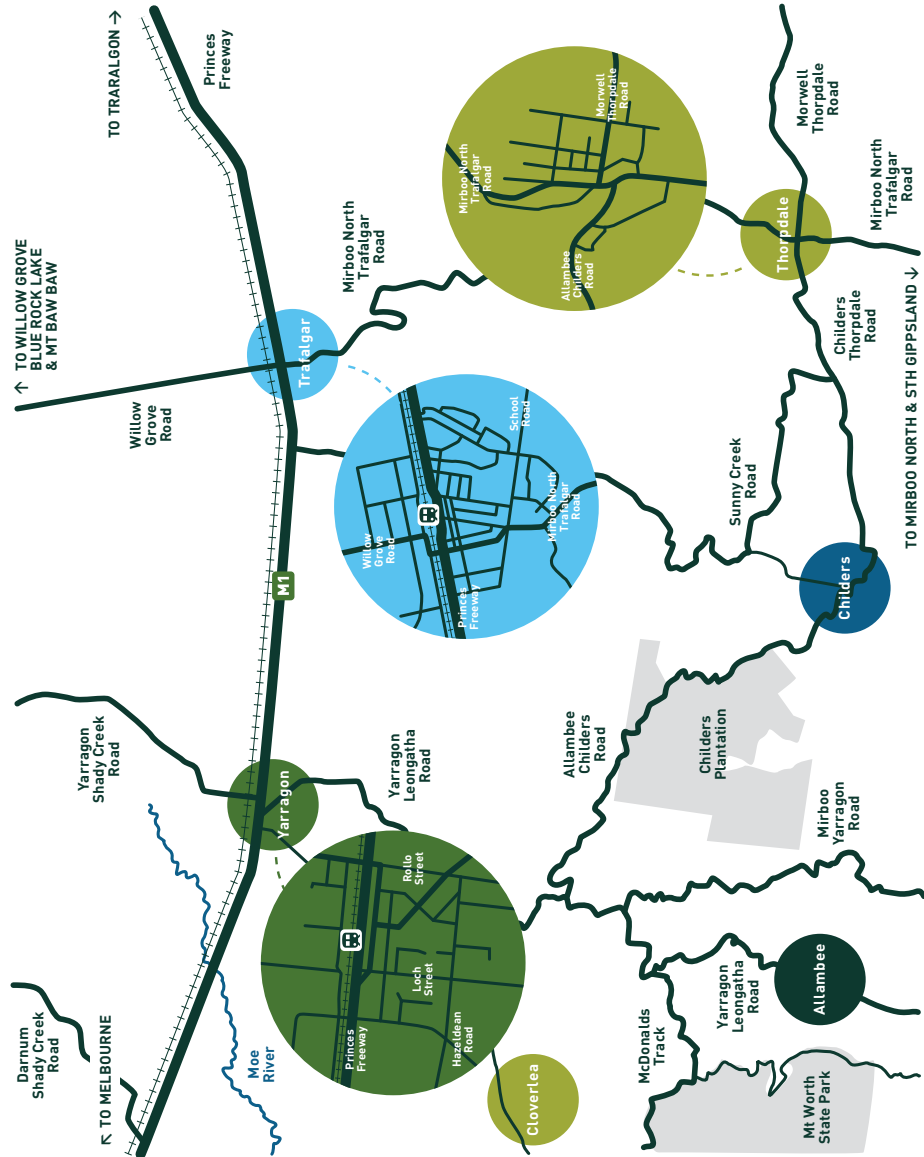
DARNUM

Darnum is on the doorstep of *Mount Worth State Park*, and a short drive west of Warragul. It's a lovely spot to pull off the freeway for a while and visit the *Darnum Stump Tea Rooms* - you can't miss the giant stump from the Princes Highway.



YARRAGON & SURROUNDS

Yarragon, Thorpdale, Trafalgar, Willow Grove



YARRAGON

Yarragon is one of the most surprising little towns to pop up alongside the Princes Highway. Full of historic charm, quirky art, vintage markets and original fashion stores, it's a shoppers paradise no matter what your age and budget. Yarragon also has excellent coffee, its very own ale house, bakery, and a providore dedicated to fresh, local produce, including wine and cheese.

History and facts

Yarragon was originally named 'Little Moe' as it lies on the flat plain of the Moe River. The town's name was then changed to 'Waterloo' in 1878 after the railway station was opened, however, the name was changed again to 'Yarragon' in 1884 to stop confusion of the town's mail going to another Waterloo near the town of Beaufort.

Highlights

Great shopping, scenic views, luxury accommodation, vintage market.
Friendly street vibe.

What to expect

- Shopping** - essentials, retail, fresh local produce, vintage stores, gift shops.
- Dining** - bakery, cafes, pubs.
- Entertainment** - Yarragon Hotel and Yarragon Ale House
- Accommodation** - bed and breakfasts, motels, luxury stays.

Distance from Melbourne

118 kms (1hr 24mins) SE by car.

THORPDALE

Thorpdale is farming country, and the place to enjoy a relaxing, scenic drive. Think fields of potatoes growing in red rich volcanic soil, teamed with views of the Strzelecki Ranges. This town is also famous for their bakery which sells award-winning pies.

TRAFALGAR

Trafalgar is a great little hub for all of your essentials - you can fill up your car and pick up some groceries including fresh, local produce from *The Spud Shed* or even pick your own at *Sunny Creek Berry Farm*. It makes for a good pit stop to break up your driving, especially if you're hanging out for a morning coffee, sweet treat, or light lunch - *Bella's Bakehouse* has you covered.

Trafalgar is also the home to the famous *Holden Museum*, which pays homage to the story of this great Australian vehicle.

Adventurers can take advantage of the 60 kilometres of on and off-road cycling tracks that take you from Trafalgar through to Darnum, Narracan, Willow Grove and Old Sale Road and back again.

WILLOW GROVE

Willow Grove is a small country town that lies at the base of Mount Baw Baw, and is surrounded by *Blue Rock Lake*, offering boating, fishing, water sports, great picnic spots and scenic walks. This gentle town is the perfect place to spend lakeside, followed by a meal at *The Irish at Willow Grove*.

SAFETY INFORMATION

Things you need to know

Explorer Essentials

If you're heading bush, bring a backpack containing the following essentials:

- Drinking water. Note - it is not recommended that you fill up your water bottles in rivers, lakes and streams either unless otherwise advised.
- Snacks - once you start to get away from the major towns, food options can be limited.
- First aid kit
- Towel
- Wear appropriate footwear - closed shoes for hiking, or snow play
- Insect repellent
- Sun protection - hat, sunscreen, sunglasses and long sleeve tops
- Hand sanitizer
- Appropriate clothing for all weather conditions, as it can change quite quickly.

Mobile Reception

If heading in the bush or mountain areas, on a hike or trail, please carry a fully charged mobile, and remember mobile reception can be patchy in some areas. Always let someone know before you go before planning your next adventure.

Petrol

Once you get off the main highway or larger townships to explore, there are limited petrol stations available. We recommend filling up in Warragul, Drouin or via the Princes Highway before heading to your destination. There are small petrol stations located in:

- Neerim Junction (General Store - open 7 days, closes at night)
- Neerim South (self-service open 24 hours)

Keep your emergency roadside assist number handy (if you have them).

4WD Routes

Pay attention to road closures and private land tracks. You will need to be well prepared and experienced to handle 4WD tracks in these areas.

Taxis

There are limited taxi services in the more remote locations and smaller towns, so if you're planning to be dropped off somewhere, make sure you have

the means to return safely. Courtesy buses may operate at some venues - make an enquiry with the venue for more information.

Mount Baw Baw / Mount St Gwinear Snow Chains

Roads leading up to Mount Baw Baw and alike can be covered in snow during winter, and snow chains must be carried (at a minimum) during the snow season as a legal requirement.

There are several places you can hire snow chains, including Noojee, Icy Creek, Tanjil Bren and Erica. Check ski.com.au for conditions before you leave, or the live cameras via mountbawbaw.com.au

Emergency Alerts

Download the VicEmergency app on your phone and check conditions before you head out on your journey. You can also check for recent road closures via VicTraffic.

Emergency Numbers and Broadcasters

CFA - District 9

For emergencies dial 000 or visit cfa.vic.gov.au

SES - Warragul Unit

Phone: 132 500 or visit ses.vic.gov.au

West Gippsland Hospital

41 Landsborough St, Warragul VIC 3820

Phone: (03) 5623 0611

Website: wghg.com.au

Emergency department open 24 hours.

DELWP (Department of Environment Land Water and Planning) For tree hazards:

12 McCarthy Spur Road, Noojee VIC 3833

Phone: 13 61 86

Parks Victoria

For information about camp grounds and national parks, visit parks.vic.gov.au

Local Radio

- ABC Gippsland 100.7
- West Gippsland Community Radio (3BBR)

All information presented in this guide is correct at time of printing. For any queries please contact tourism@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

