

- 2015 EDITION -

GLUTTON GUIDE

MELBOURNE



THE DELICIOUS GUIDE TO EATING
AND DRINKING LIKE A LOCAL



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photo: panama dining room



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Melbourne has a sophisticated food culture, and it improves all the time. The people that live here love to eat and are always looking for the latest thing to try. New places open each week and even for locals it can be tricky to keep on top of the changes, but we have a lot of fun trying!

While many visitors think of Australia as mostly a result of nineteenth century British settlement, Melbourne is a town built on immigration from around the world and our food scene reflects that. Want coffee and a bagel in a [former printing press](#) that later housed an art gallery? What about a [Japanese fusion lunch](#) with a martini featuring local vodka? Or maybe you'd like to spend a lazy evening at a rooftop bar [modelled on a croquet club](#) paying homage to a 19th century madam? It's all here.

Designed by a Melbourne foodie for foodies, this guide is all you'll need to plan a memorable meal-based trip, highlighting the city's most authentic and delicious foods. More than just a book of listings, you'll find an overview of the best food experiences in Melbourne and her surrounds. This gets you off the tourist trail and eating the best dishes at each restaurant, shoulder to shoulder with local diners.

How to Use this Guide

Cafés, restaurants, bars and markets, gift stores and day trips are all covered here. You'll find places open from 7am until the wee hours of the morning. All listings come with public transport directions and a pricing guide.

Pricing is per person, with the following average meal cost:

\$ > AUD 15

\$\$ AUD 16-35

\$\$\$ AUD 36-60

\$\$\$\$ < AUD 61

Meal:

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner

D+ = Post-dinner drinks

H# = "Hatted" restaurant in 2015 (H1 = 1 hat to max of 3 hats)

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TOP 10 MUST-DO CULINARY EXPERIENCES

photo: chin chin

Drink in the Coffee Culture

There are few places around the globe where coffee is taken as seriously as it is in Melbourne. More than just café culture, the city's unique coffee scene has grown out of (but has now developed far beyond) the Italian espresso of the 1950s. A growing breed of boutique roasters, sometimes with a café attached, have a sophisticated understanding of all aspects of the bean, from crop to cup. Welcome to Melbourne's world of specialty coffee. [More info.](#)

Meet Up for Breakfast & Brunch

In recent years there has been a shift in the way Melbournians eat out. Many people now prefer an elaborate weekend breakfast with friends (usually eaten 10am-1pm) to going out for dinner and local breakfast menus reflect this. While eggs on toast still rule as the preferred fare, there are many variations, and chefs are getting creative with other offerings as well. [More info.](#)

Get Tippy in a Laneway or on a Rooftop

There's nothing more Melbournian than finding a bar down a laneway or climbing through a little door up to a rooftop. They differ in size, price, the crowd they attract – and some even have historical significance, a novelty theme or a killer view. [More info.](#)

Taste Authentic Asian Cuisine

The Chinese first came in numbers in 1851, and since then the local Chinatown has become one of the most diverse in the world in terms of the number of Asian cultures represented. Food from across the continent has greatly influenced the way locals eat, and visitors will find everything from cheap eats to high end dining to suit any taste - from savory [Malaysian laksa](#) to steaming hot [Shanghainese xiaolongbao](#) (soup dumplings). [More info.](#)

Explore a Market

Melbourne's history is entrenched in markets, and still today features many that provide fresh produce. The most famous and oldest remaining is the [Queen Victoria Market](#), but many worth exploring exist within a short distance from the city. Of particular interest are the [Farmers' Markets](#), where you can meet the producers and see what's in season. They move every weekend, but are easily searchable on the website of the [Victorian Farmers' Markets Association](#). Saturday morning is the best time. [More info.](#)

Lick a Gelato

Post-war Italian immigration delivered espresso to Melbourne, but it also brought along gelato. No matter if it is winter or summer, licking this frozen treat is always in season. Everyone has a favorite gelato shop; choosing the flavor(s) once you get there is the problem. [More info.](#)

Indulge in Chocolate

There are a handful of chocolate shops in the CBD run by passionate chocolatiers dedicated to their craft. Many of them are European immigrants or have studied there, and all are delicious. For true decadence, sit down and try a rich, freshly melted hot chocolate. [More info.](#)

Splurge on Fine Dining

Melbourne has some of the most creative and cutting edge chefs in the world. Some serve traditional foods with a modern twist, while others prefer to push the culinary boundaries. Eat out at some of the best fine dining establishments to see what all the fuss is about – but be prepared to leave some cash behind. [More info.](#)

Head Out of Town for the Day

There are some amazing food experiences within a couple hours drive from Melbourne, including no less than four wine regions, dining destinations, farmers' markets (and the farms themselves) and cafés in spectacular settings. [More info.](#)

Take a Tour with Walk Melbourne

Maybe Melbourne's laneways and rooftops seem a bit confusing. Maybe you're not sure what all the fuss is about Melbourne coffee. Maybe you're here for just a day or two. To get the best out of the city, join Walk Melbourne for a tour and get the answers you've been looking for. [More info.](#)

DINING SCENE OVERVIEW

Melbourne has been described as having one of the world's great food cultures. Mostly, this is attributable to two things: Firstly, Melbourne is built on immigration from around the world. While the image of the typical Australian may be a blonde surfer or a dusty farmer, it's not typical to find them in Melbourne. Most people have a family history from elsewhere, and all those cultures have brought their food here.

Secondly, Melbournians have a particularly discerning and curious palate, but don't be deceived into thinking this means fine dining. There is a clear trend towards more casual eating environments, with the food itself taking center stage. As one restaurateur has said, "If you're not doing great things, you'll pretty soon be cancelled out."

This creates a highly competitive environment – for restaurateurs and for diners. Many places have adopted a no booking policy, meaning there are often queues in the street to eat at the latest hotspot. It not unusual to turn up for dinner at 6.30pm and be told there is a two hour wait, but you can 'have a drink at the bar' if you like.

Australia doesn't award Michelin stars, but we have our own internal rating system of 'Chef's Hats'. An independent body announces 'Hatted' restaurants annually, and inclusions (and exclusions) can be controversial. Restaurants can rank from one to three hats – even achieving one hat is a fantastic effort. Similarly to Michelin stars, just a small number of restaurants make the guide. A 'three-hatted' restaurant is as good as it gets and is always a fine dining experience with a price tag to match.

There is one restaurant in Melbourne that is ranked by San Pellegrino as one of the world's best – "[Attica](#) (D, \$\$\$\$, H3)" on page 20. If you're keen to go, book three months in advance and factor in the cab ride to the suburbs. It is located 10 kilometers from the city.

It's not only dinner that attracts this kind of attention. Weekend brunch (usually eaten 10am-1pm) is a meal out in its own right. Many brunch dishes at the city's great cafes can be as creative, delicious and expensive as a dinner out. Let's get eating!

NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDES

photo: tokyo tina