

SELF DRIVE ITINERARY

Heathcote

- village vibes -

3 DAYS 2 NIGHTS



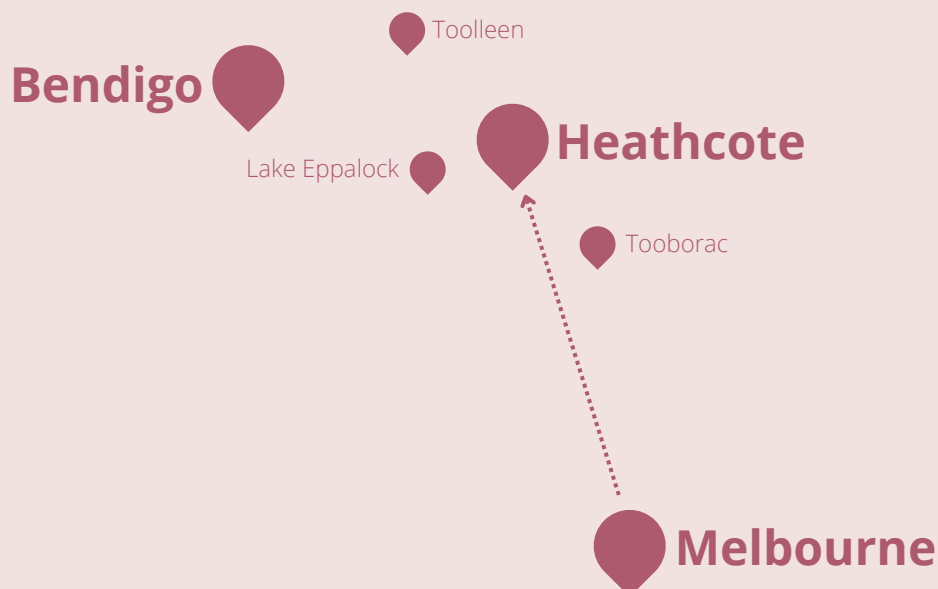
SELF DRIVE ITINERARY 3 DAYS 2 NIGHTS

Based in the heart of Central Victoria and nestled between the stunning McHarg and McIvor Ranges, you'll find the charming township of Heathcote. Where a perfect combination of relaxed and intimate, boutique and artisan are taking pride of place, offering those village vibes that visitors and locals alike have come to know and love.

Curated for couples, this three-day, two-night itinerary targets Lifestyle Leaders seeking out new experiences and a desire to escape city life and embrace wine and food, nature and the outdoors.

GETTING HERE

Take a 90-minute (125km) drive north from Melbourne via the Northern Highway (B75) to Heathcote.





day one...

Early morning – kick start your day with a caffeine hit at Rutherford & Maine, a contemporary boutique store complete with homewares, coffee and a courtyard overlooking the passing thoroughfare.

Set off on foot for the short stroll to Heathcote Visitor Centre where you will be welcomed by friendly local volunteers. Here you'll find an insider's guide to the region with sound local knowledge and experience, maps and brochures, armed and ready to get amongst it.

Mid morning – established in the 1850s after gold was discovered in the area, Heathcote is full of hidden gems. Continue along country Victoria's longest main street following the Historical Walk. View the craftsmanship and architecture from a gold rush era gone by, where a beautiful blend of modern and quaint little cafes, boutique retail and cellar doors proudly take their place.

Lunch – indulge in a French-inspired long lunch at Chauncy Heathcote. Located in a beautifully renovated sandstone building dating circa 1853, husband and wife team, Louis and Tess, have lovingly created and finessed an impeccable dining experience. Their signature four-course menu is personally sourced from regional and seasonal produce showcasing their love for artisan food and exceptional wine.



day one continued...

Mid afternoon – take the short stroll to Heathcote Wine Hub, formerly the Wooden Church. Be spoilt for choice with more than 200 local wines on offer. It's the perfect introduction to our beautiful and diverse wine region. Enjoy a tasting and cheese platter whilst learning about the region.

Late afternoon – a five minute drive from town, check in to your first night's accommodation at Mt Ida Eco Cabin, an off-grid cabin made with recycled materials, a touch of style and luxury, and where you'll leave no carbon footprint. It offers peace and quiet with picturesque views over the local farmland and Mt Ida.

Dinner – back into town and to enjoy an evening of alfresco dining at Heathcote Inn. Choose from seasonally-inspired dishes created by Chef Andy, previously hailing from a Michelin Star restaurant in London, plus an extensive drinks' menu showcasing local wines, craft beer and cocktails.

Evening – head into Juniper Lounge for a gin tasting and piano bar music before calling it a night.



day two...

Early morning – start your morning right with a visit to Fetching Treasures in the heart of Heathcote for a delicious home-style cooked breakfast. Be sure to wander through the treasure trove of antiques and collectables before leaving.

Mid morning - explore Heathcote's best natural attractions. Discover the colourful Pink Cliffs (less than 2km from the main street), a landscape legacy of early gold mining activity, everchanging colours at different times of the day and the perfect spot for a selfie.

A two-minute drive will take you back into the town centre. Walk the swing bridge and through to the Valley of Liquidambers, a spectacular plantation of trees in changing seasons, especially autumn with its sea of golden rich hues.

Take the hike up McIvor Range Reserve walking track (2.6km loop) passing by the historic Powder Magazine once used to house gold mining explosives, up to Viewing Rock lookout for views across the township, and to Devil's Cave before heading back down.

Lunch – it's time to curb your appetite with a visit to Palling Bros. Brewery. Named after the infamous local, Rood Palling, they specialise in handcrafted artisan beer and dining, sourcing local produce where they can. Owners, Peter and Colleen, are passionate about supporting and being a part of the local community. Enjoy a tour of the brewery, a beer paddle and lunch out in the beer garden.

Palling Bros. also support grass roots talent hosting regular poetry, comedy, music and art shows. Check out the mural in the beer garden created by local artists.



day two continued...

Afternoon – it's wine time! With more than 30+ cellar doors in the region, the options are endless. This afternoon we'll take the northern route including the Heathcote Women in Wine Trail, where you can visit four beautiful cellar doors each being led by incredible female winemakers.

- Sanguine Estate – taste award-winning wines in the Barrel Room with Jodi.
- Munari Wines – enjoy a tasting in their rustic cellar door or courtyard amongst the vines with India.
- Vinea Marson – take a seat at the table for an Italian-style family tasting and antipasto experience with Madeleine.
- Silver Spoon Estate – visit this sustainable and off grid cellar door for a tasting with Tracie.

Before reaching your stay for this evening, stop into Peregrine Ridge along the way for breathtaking views and award-winning reds. The cellar door is set 290m above sea level on the Mt Camel Range offering some of the best views in the region.

Late afternoon – check in to your luxury self-contained villa, The Cellars at Heathcote II, featuring a contemporary design features, fireplace, kitchen, your very own walk-in wine cellar and large deck overlooking olive groves and the vineyard.

Dinner – a short 2 minute drive down the road, be treated to a true country pub fare at Toolleen Hotel. Think country hospitality, a friendly face and a great range of modern and traditional pub fare and an extensive local drinks menu including local boutique wines and craft beer.

Evening – enjoy astronomer's favourite Victorian night sky for the best stargazing. Heathcote's clear and dark night skies make for the best uninterrupted views.



day three...

Early morning – soak up the morning sun with a gourmet breakfast hamper at The Cellars with fresh artisan bread, milk, freshly squeezed juice, condiments made on site from the orchard, farm fresh eggs and bacon, and more. Yum!

Mid morning – on your way back into Heathcote, be sure to drop into The Shiraz Republic and Cornella Brewery. This rustic family-run vineyard and micro-brewery offers a diverse range of experiences from wine tastings, stomping parties, a taproom, accommodation amongst the vines, food and live music on the weekends from the back of a Bedford truck, just to name a few.

Lunch – no visit is complete to the Heathcote region without a visit to Gaffney's Bakery. Take your time to wander around and appreciate the incredible range of locally inspired pies and pastries, cakes and sweet treats, and much more. You're guaranteed to pick up something to eat now and take home for later, it's that good.

Early afternoon – take the time to jump on a bike and ride a portion of the very popular O'Keefe Rail Trail. Beginning in the centre of Heathcote you'll pass by stunning bushland, recreation reserves and Lake Eppalock.

Late afternoon – heading south on your way home, you'll travel past rolling hills and volcanic boulders to the oldest National Trust-listed country pub in Victoria, Tooborac Hotel & Brewery. Renowned for its bluestone building, charm, pub fare and their own brewery onsite, try their Woodcutters Ale alongside one of their famous Lamb & Shiraz pies.