



Unplug & Unwind: An Eco Escape

Reconnect with nature, sip, savour, stay and explore





Escape to Heathcote for a weekend filled with relaxation, eco-friendly experiences, and indulgence.

This thoughtfully curated itinerary combines the tranquillity of nature, the delight of fresh local produce, and the joy of unhurried exploration - perfect for couples seeking to reconnect and unwind.

Immerse yourself in serene vineyards, savour farm-to-table delights, and embrace peaceful outdoor adventures - creating the perfect atmosphere to recharge and cherish meaningful moments together.



Welcome to Heathcote

Getting To Know Heathcote

- The township of Heathcote was born from the gold rush along McIvor Creek in 1852, growing to an impressive 40,000 at its peak.
- Today, Heathcote is home to more than 30+ cellar doors and even more vineyards and is home to some of the oldest Shiraz vines in Australia.
- As a key contributor to Australia's first UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy, Heathcote shines as a hub for exceptional food and wine.
- Heathcote is home to Gourmet Traveller's Best Destination Dining and The Age Good Food Guide's Regional Restaurant of the Year - Chauncy.
- Heathcote proudly features Victoria's longest main street, a charming stretch full of character.
- Located on Taungurung Country, Heathcote honours and respects the Traditional Owners of the land.
- Heathcote is linked to Bendigo through the historic O'Keefe Rail Trail, a route first travelled in 1888 when the railway connected these towns during the gold rush era.

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

We love to inspire.

Follow our social media accounts @Explore Heathcote for teasers of what to expect in our beautiful region.

Eager to know more? Do you have special requirements?

Be sure to give our **Visitor Centre** a call on 03 5433 3121 to make the most out of your stay.



Getting Here

Drive

Travel north from Melbourne via the Northern Highway (B75) to Heathcote. It's an easy drive, approximately 125km and takes around 90 minutes.

Travel Safely

Take A TAC Pause Stop

The TAC Pause Stop initiative aims to reduce driver fatigue on long journeys by encouraging road users to plan ahead, pull over, and recharge.

Here are some important tips and hints to ensure you travel safely and arrive alive.

- Plan your journey ahead of time.
- Aim to get enough quality sleep before driving – regardless of whether the trip is long or short.
- Avoid driving at times when you would usually be sleeping.
- Don't travel for more than 8 - 10 hours a day.
- Plan to pause from the road at least every two hours.
- Consider swapping drivers where possible.
- Don't drink alcohol before your trip - even a small amount can significantly contribute to driver fatigue.
- Take a 15-minute powernap if you feel drowsy.

For more information and to view the interactive map, visit tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/pausestop



Day One

LATE MORNING

Begin your weekend in Heathcote with a visit to **Heathcote General Trader** – where slow living and soulful discovery begin.

Step inside and feel the shift – the pace softens, the senses awake, and inspiration begins to stir. Nestled in the heart of Heathcote, the store celebrates thoughtful living, shaped by the beauty of the landscape and warmth of the local community. Whether it's a hand-thrown mug, a locally made candle, or something simple for the pantry, each piece is chosen to help you reconnect — with your space, your values, and the gentle rhythm of the weekend.

Let this be your first stop — a moment to ground yourself and set the tone for everything that follows.



Let the rhythm of Heathcote draw you in. This is a town that holds its history gently — where gold rush tales linger in the architecture, and time seems to soften as you wander.

Follow the path of Victoria's longest main street on the **Historical Walk**, where heritage buildings stand proudly beside cosy cafés, family-run cellar doors, and boutiques.

Let yourself slow down. Breathe it in. And when you're ready, settle in for a memorable lunch — the weekend has only just begun.

Park your car in Heathcote Town Centre & walk



LUNCH

For a truly memorable dining experience, make your way to **Chauncy** - the two-hatted, award-winning restaurant named The Age Good Food Guide's Regional Restaurant of the Year and Gourmet Traveller's Best Destination Dining.

Housed in a beautifully restored 1850s sandstone building, this French-inspired gem is the work of husband-and-wife team Louis and Tess, whose passion for creating a truly personal dining experience shines through. Their signature six-course menu reflects the season, thoughtfully crafted using produce lovingly grown and hand-picked from the gardens just outside.

What they don't grow themselves, they source from trusted local farmers and small-scale producers — people who share their commitment to quality, care, and flavour. Every dish speaks to place, season, and the quiet joy of beautifully made food.

This is more than a meal — it's a pause, a celebration, and a moment to simply enjoy being right here.

Heathcote Town Centre > Chauncy:
11 minutes | 800m walk
Cost: \$\$\$\$



MID AFTERNOON

Spend your afternoon at **Envy Distilling** - a small-batch, 100% off-grid distillery where sustainability meets craft. This solar-powered, emissions-free gem is run by passionate husband-and-wife duo, Nathan and Vanessa — the “N” and “V” behind Envy.

Everything here is grounded in place. Inspired by the land and community around them, Nathan and Vanessa craft gins that carry the essence of Heathcote — from The Dry, echoing the region's rugged beauty, to their Shiraz Gin, a nod to the area's iconic wine varietal.

Enjoy a gin flight and take a peek behind the scenes to learn how it all comes together. Wander through their developing vineyard, and don't be surprised if you're introduced to a llama or two along the way.

It's a down-to-earth experience — where you can relax, sip, and connect.

Heathcote Town Centre > Envy Distilling:
7 minutes | 9km drive
Cost: \$\$\$



LATE AFTERNOON

As the day winds down, check into **The Yellow Box Wood**, your peaceful home for the weekend — an eco-friendly luxury glamping experience tucked away in 100 acres of native bushland. This is where luxury meets the land, offering a space to escape the hustle-n-bustle, and just relax.

The safari-style tent is designed with comfort and sustainability in mind, blending seamlessly into its natural surroundings. Here, you'll feel the land beneath your feet and the stillness of the trees around you, with the changing seasons unfolding in every view.

It's more than just a place to stay — it's an invitation to slow down, breathe deeply, and embrace the simplicity of life off-grid. You'll fall asleep to the sounds of the bush, wake to the soft light of the morning, and feel a deeper connection to the land that surrounds you.

Envy Distilling > The Yellow Box Wood:

25 minutes | 28km drive

Cost: \$\$\$



DINNER

As evening settles in, take a scenic drive to **Tooborac Hotel & Brewery** - the oldest National Trust-listed country pub in Victoria.

The journey leads you past rolling hills and volcanic boulders, creating the perfect backdrop for a peaceful, charming night ahead. Arriving at the historic bluestone building, you'll step into a place full of warmth and character.

Renowned for its hearty pub fare, friendly atmosphere, and onsite brewery, Tooborac is the perfect spot to unwind. Kick back in the beer garden or by one of the roaring fireplaces inside. Whether you're sipping a cold one in the sun or enjoying a warm drink by the fire, the atmosphere is always relaxed and inviting.

It's the kind of place that wraps you in comfort — a perfect end to a day of exploration.

Insider tip: try the Woodcutters Ale alongside one of their famous Lamb & Shiraz pies, both inspired by the local region.

The Yellow Box Wood > Tooborac Hotel & Brewery:
23 minutes | 27km drive
Cost: \$\$



EVENING

Back at The Yellow Box Wood, step outside and sink into the quiet stillness of the bush. Take a seat on your private deck and look up - you're beneath one of Victoria's most beloved night skies, known by astronomers for its clarity and depth.

With no city lights in sight, the stars stretch endlessly above you. Telescopes are available if you feel like exploring the constellations, or you can simply sit back, wrapped in a blanket, and take it all in.

It's a moment of calm and wonder - just you, the stars, and the gentle sounds of the bush — the perfect way to end the day.



Day Two

MORNING

Ease into your morning with a visit to **Fodder Cafe**, a vibrant local favourite in the heart of Heathcote. The scent of freshly brewed coffee drifts through the air, and you're welcomed with a warm smile as you settle in for a breakfast that's as wholesome as it is delicious.

With its bright, modern charm and a menu full of favourites, Fodder is the kind of place that lifts your spirits and fuels the day ahead. It's more than just breakfast — it's a joyful start to a new day in Heathcote.

The Yellow Box Wood > Fodder Cafe:

16 minutes | 18km drive

Cost: \$\$



MID MORNING

As the morning unfolds, take the scenic route on foot down Jennings Street and across the charming swing bridge into the **Valley of Liquidambers** - a breathtaking plantation where the trees shift with the seasons, painting the landscape in vibrant colour. The gentle rustle of leaves and dappled light create a sense of calm as you walk beneath their towering canopy.

From here, wander a little further into the **McIvor Range Reserve** and follow the 2.6km loop walking track. The path winds past the historic Powder Magazine, once used in the gold rush days, before climbing gently to **Viewing Rock Lookout**. From the top, take in sweeping views across Heathcote — a quiet moment to pause and take it all in.

On the way down, the trail leads you to Devil's Cave, tucked into the hillside, adding a little mystery to the journey. It's a mid-morning walk that invites you to slow down, breathe deeply, and reconnect with the land.

Insider tip: visit the Valley of Liquidambers mid-autumn when the leaves change colours and it's a sea of rich golden hues, or the McIvor Range Reserve in spring for native wildflowers.

Fodder Café > Valley of Liquidambers:

2 minutes | 150m walk

LUNCH

Make your way north to experience the unique charm of **Silver Spoon Estate**, a fully off-grid winery committed to sustainable vineyard practices. Here, you can enjoy a thoughtfully crafted seasonal lunch menu that highlights local ingredients, accompanied by a wine tasting designed to complement the flavours.

Passionate owners Peter and Tracie will guide you through their approach to sustainability, sharing insights into how their practices shape both the vineyard and the dining experience.

Silver Spoon Estate exemplifies the importance of eco-conscious business in creating exceptional food and wine moments while respecting the environment.

Fodder Café > Silver Spoon Estate:
17 minutes | 19km drive
Cost: \$\$\$



AFTERNOON

Continuing your journey north, your next destination is **The Shiraz Republic** and **Cornella Brewery**, where a winery and brewery experience come together in one charming, rustic setting.

This family-run vineyard and microbrewery is an experience that speaks to the heart. Whether you're savouring their carefully crafted wines and beers, exploring and learning the stories them, indulging in delicious food, or soaking in the energy of live music each weekend, you'll be embraced by the warmth and charm of their inviting atmosphere. Every visit feels personal, creating moments to connect, unwind, and truly enjoy.

Insider tip: if you're visiting during autumn, **Rent-a-Row** and make your own wine, or join a **Stomping Party**. If you're visiting at the end of winter, you can walk amongst the canola fields and be surrounded by a sea of yellow flowers.

Silver Spoon Estate > The Shiraz Republic:
9 minutes | 11km drive
Cost: \$\$



DINNER

Wrap up your day with a laid-back dinner at **Palling Bros. Brewery**. Inspired by the notorious local legend Henry Rood Palling, this brewery brings charm and character to every sip and bite, specialising in handcrafted artisan beer, share plate and mains dining in a beer hall style.

Owner Peter's dedication to the community shines through, with regular events like poetry and open mic nights, comedy shows, live music, and art exhibitions adding a creative and unique flair.

Join in the fun with a brewery tour, sip your way through a beer paddle, and savour a delicious meal - all in a lively, welcoming spot that's filled with great vibes.

The Shiraz Republic > Palling Bros. Brewery:
20 minutes | 28km drive
Cost: \$\$



EVENING

Before calling it a night, make a stop at Barrack Reserve on High Street to admire the Acknowledgement of Country Shadow Sculpture. Created by Taungurung artist Isobel Morphy-Walsh, this captivating piece draws inspiration from the crow's perspective of Mount Camel and the surrounding mountain range.

Insider tip: the sculpture is best seen at night and is lit up every evening from 6pm.

Palling Bros. Brewery > Barrack Reserve:
1 minute | 400m drive

Barrack Reserve > The Yellow Box Wood:
16 minutes | 18km drive



Day Three

MORNING

Make the most of your final morning relaxing amongst scenic bushland, surrounded by the gentle sounds of birdlife. Ease into your day with a gourmet breakfast basket at The Yellow Box Wood, filled with fresh local artisan bread, condiments, bacon and eggs, fresh fruit and juice. A delicious start to the day!

Insider tip: enjoy a leisurely stroll around the property and into the adjoining Heathcote-Graytown National Park.

LATE MORNING

Take one last opportunity to immerse yourself in nature by visiting Heathcote's most iconic attraction - **Pink Cliffs**. This unique landscape shaped by early gold mining, transforms throughout the day as the light dances across its colourful formations. Take your time exploring the trails, breathing in the fresh air, and admiring the natural beauty of this remarkable landscape.

The Yellow Box Wood > Pink Cliffs:
18 minutes | 19km drive



LUNCH

No visit to the Heathcote region is truly complete without stopping by **Gaffney's Bakery**. Take a stroll through this local gem and feast your eyes on an irresistible line up of pies, pastries, cakes, and sweet treats - each one packed with local flavour and charm. Grab a bite to enjoy now and don't forget to snag a little something to savour later.

Pink Cliffs > Gaffney's Bakery:
2 minutes | 1km drive
Cost: \$



Highlights



Picturesque landscapes



Eco-friendly experiences



Award-winning restaurant



Welcoming community



Local wineries, breweries
and distilleries

For more information, to start planning or to book your stay, visit
www.heathcote.org.au

