

in ECHUCA MOAMA

ECHUCA MOAMA

Beyond the Iconic

Follow the River,
FIND Your Freedom



TOP:
Green Pedal Cycles



RIGHT:
St Anne's Winery

I arrived in *Echuca* as the day softened into evening, but it was the next morning that the town really made its first *impression*.

At sunrise, the riverfront felt suspended in time - still water, pale light, cockatoos overhead, and the gentle splash of a paddlesteamer at the historic wharf preparing for departure. Steam drifted into the cool air, and within minutes what had felt like an easy drive from Melbourne became something more distinct: a genuine shift in pace.

That's part of the appeal. Just 2.5 hours from the city, Echuca Moama is close enough for a spontaneous weekend, yet far enough away to feel removed from routine.

LEFT:
Port of Echuca and Murray River

Set on Yorta Yorta Woka (Country), where the Dhungala (Murray), Kaiyala (Goulburn) and Yakoa (Campaspe) rivers meet, the region carries depth beyond its postcard river-town image - there is history, yes, but also movement - stories unfolding and old spaces finding new energy.

To learn more about the local history and soak up the natural beauty of the native bush I opted for a three-hour e-bike tour with local guide, David, of the highly recommended Green Pedal Cycles. We explored riverside tracks leading to St Anne's Winery where a well-earned sampling of award-winning wines and a Ploughman's platter was shared with our small group in the company of pelicans on the pond.



ABOVE:
Rich Glen
Providore

RIGHT:
American Hotel



As I explored the HISTORIC PRECINCT

*I uncovered so much romance,
but also mysterious history of crime, murder and mischief.*

You are spoilt for accommodation choices with hotels, houseboats and caravan parks. I chose the Nirebo Motel for its great value and walking distance to eateries and attractions that had caught my attention.

One of them, the Port of Echuca, has a cinematic quality - timber wharves, heritage buildings and paddlesteamers moored along the riverbank as though they never really left. Once Australia's largest inland port, I could imagine how busy this place must have felt in the 1800s when wool, wheat and timber moved through here by river.

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So I braved the Port After Dark Tour that promised to take me on a walk on the dark side into a time when scandal and mayhem ran the town. It didn't disappoint! (You have to be over 16 to do this tour).

A paddlesteamer cruise was impossible to resist. Once on board, your perspective shifts completely. The paddlewheel turns, the wharf slips behind you, and suddenly the scale of the Murray becomes the main story – this is slow travel in the best sense.

My curiosity for more adventure on the river led me to the delightful Jess at Echuca Moama Stand Up Paddleboarding. Jess helped me find my mojo to confidently navigate the river this way. Moving downstream with the current felt less like an activity and more like an introduction to this humble river life destination. Do this at any time of the day, but sunrise will give you spectacular insta moments!

Back in town, I headed to Echuca Distillery, where twin brothers Peter and David are winning international awards for their agave spirits after just a few years in business. I settled on a two-course lunch and a sneaky local spirit at the venue's Bar Lee restaurant. From here you can witness the Italian copper still, Lavender, quietly working her magic.

My afternoon activity was something completely different - The Great Aussie Beer Shed.

What I expected was beer memorabilia. What I found was one of the most entertaining regional attractions I've visited. The best part was owner and storyteller, Neil Thomas, regaling intimate details about his more than 20,000 beer cans, vintage machinery, classic cars and Australiana. My tip, be prepared to stay for longer than you planned.

TOP RIGHT:
Port of Echuca
Museum and
Wharf

MIDDLE:
The Great Aussie
Beer Shed

BELOW:
Echuca Moama
Stand Up
Paddleboarding

Dinner at the Asian-inspired Monkee & Co was a highlight with a menu packed with delicious twists on dishes such as nasi goreng and a chicken noodle laksa. Or if you dine with others, the share plates are the go.

What has stayed with me most about Echuca Moama was how naturally everything connected. The river never felt separate from the food, the history never felt disconnected from the present, and none of the experiences felt designed simply for a promotional brochure.

Instead, the region feels confident enough to let visitors discover it gradually.

That may be Echuca Moama's real strength: it never tries too hard to impress, yet still leaves you planning your return trip before you have left.

If you're building your own weekend escape, Visit Echuca Moama has plenty more inspiration at www.visitechucamoama.com.au

