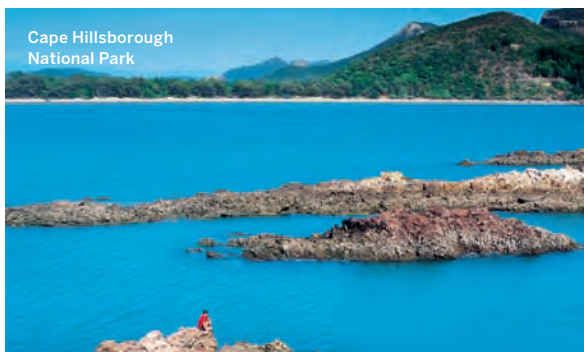


Mackay



Cape Hillsborough National Park

INSIDER TIP

Mackay Tourism holds guided **Historical Walks** around the city every Wednesday for coin donations. tel: +61 (0)7 4944 5888, www.mackayregion.com

SHOP TALK

Central Queensland is renowned for its gemstones so why not take some home with you? Stunning Queensland sapphires and rare and beautiful rubies, emeralds, opals and pearls can be purchased at **That Sapphire Place**, 20km inland along the Bruce Highway, Lot 1, Westlake Dr, The Leap, tel: +61 (0)7 4954 0011

JAVA JOLT

Coffee can be good, coffee can be decadent, but the offerings at **Sinful Coffee** are, well, downright devilish. That is to say, devilishly good. Shop 21, 26 River St, tel: +61 (0)7 4953 5330

CHEAP EATS

The big meat pie is a genuine Australian icon and the mouth-watering creations of **Byrne's Pie Factory** are famous throughout Mackay. Try one fresh and piping hot from the oven. 7 Brisbane St, tel: +61 (0)7 4957 4526

TOP TABLES

Do great crêpes make Mackay the "Paris of the Southern Hemisphere"? That's highly

debatable but you can still enjoy this Gallic delicacy along with a little bit of France at the **Crêperie Restaurant**. Gregory St, tel: +61 (0)7 4951 1226 ☹☹

AT YOUR LEISURE

Mackay Marina Village and Shipyard is a great place to get back to the sea. Stroll the promenade, wet a line and catch some fish, or just chill out in the cafés and bars. Mulherin Dr, Mackay Harbour, tel: +61 (0)7 4955 6855, www.mackaymarina.com

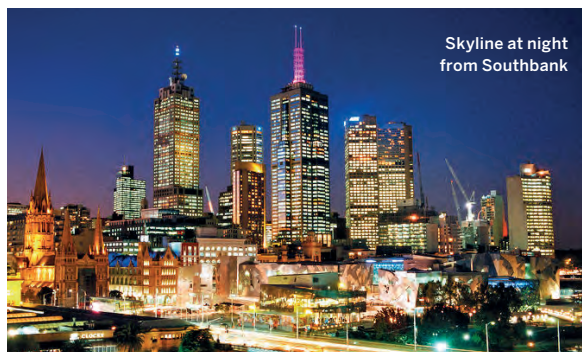
LATE & LIVELY

The Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre boasts a great line-up of live acts in November and December, including David Campbell, Xavier Rudd and Smokie, as well as theatre, dance, comedy and much more. Alfred St, tel: +61 (0)7 4961 9700, www.mackayecc.com.au

OVERNIGHT

Taking its name from the Septimus Primary School whose grounds it now occupies, the **Old School House** offers "sleepovers for grown-ups", or more accurately, luxury escapes. 888 Gargett Mia Mia Rd, Septimus, tel: +61 (0)7 4958 5760, www.oldschoolhouse.com.au ☹☹☹

Melbourne



Skyline at night from Southbank

INSIDER TIP

Exploring Melbourne and its surrounds on a Sunday can be cheap as chips with the **Sunday Saver Metcard**, which allows unlimited train, tram and bus travel in selected zones for about A\$3/\$\$4.

SHOP TALK

For seekers of hard-to-find vinyl records, the **Last Record Store** has been a treasure trove for nearly 20 years. And it continues to supply inspiration for countless Melbourne musicians. 304 Smith St, Collingwood, tel: +61 (0)3 9416 2000, www.lastrecordstore.com

JAVA JOLT

Colombia is known for its coffee beans, and at **Sonido**, the Colombian owners don't let their nation down. The coffee goes down especially well with an *arepa* (a type of corn bread). 69 Gertrude St, Fitzroy, tel: +61 (0)3 9495 6636, www.sonido.com.au

CHEAP EATS

Providing disadvantaged youths with a pathway into the hospitality industry, **Streat** is a tiny food cart that serves Asian-style street food including curries and wraps at bargain prices. Federation Square, tel: +61 (0)3 9629 4222, www.streat.com.au

TOP TABLES

The slow-cooked duck at the newly opened and appropriately named **Duck Duck Goose** is so succulent that it is quickly becoming one of Melbourne's signature dishes. If you're on the lookout for Chinese fine dining with an excellent wine list, this is the place. QV Centre, tel: +61 (0)3 9005 0888, www.au-ddg.com ☹☹

AT YOUR LEISURE

To make the most of the hot weather, take a day trip to **Torquay** – 90 minutes from Melbourne – which has some of the best and most consistent waves in the country.

LATE & LIVELY

The usually sedate legal district has come alive with the sound of clinking beer glasses and DJ-spun tunes thanks to the opening of **Biero Bar**, which offers some of the world's most award-winning and hard-to-find beers. 525 Little Lonsdale St, tel: +61 (0)3 9600 0940, www.bierobar.com.au

OVERNIGHT

A blend of modern design and historical splendor, the **Middle Park Hotel** is home to stylish rooms with all the amenities and is just minutes from the city. 102 Canterbury Rd, Middle Park, tel: +61 (0)3 9690 1958, www.middleparkhotel.com.au ☹☹



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