

THE GOOD LIFE FOOD & WINE

FIVE OF A KIND

PUB ACCOMMODATION A night away from home brings everything from parmigiana to pedicures as **Chris Canty** makes a guest appearance.



BADEN POWELL HOTEL

HEAD through the private side entrance of this quiet gastro pub and you'll discover 11 comfortable rooms, all with high-speed internet, airconditioning and flat-screen TVs. The three that share a bathroom cost \$65 a night and could be among Melbourne's best pub-accommodation bargains. The hotel was renovated three years ago and its restaurant has become known for an Italian-inspired menu, while the bar features rotating taps of craft beer. Gourmet pizzas by chef Ashley James, formerly of the Botanical, dominate the menu, and the linguine with prawns, scallops, mussels, fish and squid is the house special. The two beer gardens fill up before and after events at the MCG, which is an easy 10-minute stroll away.
61-65 Victoria Parade, Collingwood, 9486 0811



THE PRINCE

DESPITE being two minutes from the beach, there really isn't any reason to leave the building once you arrive here. Live music has returned to the Prince of Wales below, Circa restaurant under the guidance of Paul Wilson and Jake Nicolson receives great reviews, and the Aurora Spa Retreat continues to pamper. The Prince was purchased by the Melbourne Pub Group in 2011. The hotel's 40 rooms are individually styled and, from the superior suites, you can take in the passing parade on Fitzroy Street from your balcony. Prices start at \$185 a night.
2 Acland Street, St Kilda, 9536 1111



NAUGHTONS HOTEL

WHEN Naughtons closed in 2010 after 137 years in the business, many thought this Melbourne Uni and Carlton Football Club mainstay would be lost to developers forever. Thankfully, it reopened a few months ago, adding 11 hotel rooms upstairs, which will open next weekend. All have LCD televisions, en suites and a thoroughly modern, minimalist fitout. Food-wise, it's classic pub grub done well, including that Aussie perennial, the parmigiana. Its proximity to the university ensures some things never change — students are enduring regulars and get 25 per cent off their food bills on Thursdays. Rooms start at \$120 a night, twin share.
43 Royal Parade, Parkville, 9347 2255



MIDDLE PARK HOTEL

THE AXMINSTER carpet and dark wood finishes give this grand old dame's downstairs area the feel of a private sporting club. That extends beyond the aesthetics, too — there are several four-person booths boasting their own LCD screens for sports events. Take a pew at what might be the biggest horseshoe bar in the state, where counter meals cost just \$15-\$20. Spring Bay mussels hit the spot, and there are 40 mainly local craft beers on tap. Upstairs, 25 rooms have been styled by architects Six Degrees, giving them a contemporary feel to match the elegant bones of the 123-year-old building. Packages start at \$179 a night for a single or \$209 for a twin.
102 Canterbury Road, Middle Park, 9690 1958



THE VICTORIA HOTEL

WHEN it opened in 1880, the Victoria Coffee Palace, as it was then known, offered an alcohol-free environment for mainly female guests from the country. Head up the grand staircase in the foyer today and you'll be able to get a beer or cocktail at Vic's, a comfy sports bar that wouldn't look out of place in a John Brack painting. On the ground floor, the decor of Alice's Restaurant, which serves Thai, is very much '80s, but so are the prices, with \$10.50 lunch deals. The 371 rooms come in all shapes and sizes but are comfortable and clean, each with double-glazed windows and LCD TVs with cable, and all in an unbeatable location. Rooms start at \$125.
215 Little Collins Street, city, 9669 0000

WHAT TO DRINK ... MORNINGTON PENINSULA PINOT NOIR