

Melbourne



Siglo Bar on Spring Street

INSIDER TIP

Melbourne is fiercely **proud of its chicken parmans** (short for parmagiana) with nearly every pub in town along with many restaurants offering their own interpretations. For detailed reviews, visit www.parmadaze.com

SHOP TALK

Winter in Melbourne can be chilly, so let the city's own label, **Jack London**, supply the warmth. Its casual men's coats are inspired by British fashion in the '60s. Shop 1/258 Flinders Ln, tel: (0)3 9650 6112, www.jacklondon.com.au

CHEAP EATS

The banquet at iconic Lebanese eatery **Abla's** includes about a dozen delicious dishes. The chicken with rice might sound dull, but it's one of Melbourne's most unique creations. 109 Elgin St, Carlton, tel: (0)3 9347 0006, www.ablas.com.au

TOP TABLES

The menu at down-to-earth gastro-pub **Royal Saxon** screams quality produce, with fresh seafood and gourmet pizzas being the house specialties. Try the slow roasted pork pizza. 545 Church St, Richmond, tel: (0)3 9429 5277, www.royalsaxon.com 🍷🍷

AT YOUR LEISURE

Only 90 minutes from Melbourne, **Phillip Island Nature Parks** is home to Australia's No 1 natural wildlife attraction – the Penguin Parade, whose tuxedoed stars are residents of the Little Penguin colony here. tel: (0)3 5951 2800, www.penguins.org.au

LATE & LIVELY

For those who like their music rockabilly-style, head to the **Labour in Vain**. When the pool table is moved aside and the band starts playing, the pub starts jumping in the old-school way. 197A Brunswick St, Fitzroy, tel: (0)3 9417 5955, www.labourinvain.com.au

OVERNIGHT

The **Langham Hotel** on the Yarra River is as luxurious as it is centrally located. Highlights include its Chuan Spa Centre and amazing Indian buffet, which is popular with the locals. 1 Southgate Ave, Southbank, tel: (0)3 8696 8888, www.langhamhotels.com 🍷🍷

Perth



Cappuccino strip at Fremantle

INSIDER TIP

Perth has several **half-hidden CBD laneways**, which are being revitalised thanks to clean-ups, bold murals, specialty shops and boutique bars. Wolf Ln, Howard Ln and Grand Ln are among the gems to check out.

SHOP TALK

Aspects of Kings Park is an elegant, well laid-out showcase for quality, contemporary arts and crafts. It has pride of place in Perth's top tourist spot, Kings Park, right next to the visitor centre. tel: (0)8 9480 3900, www.aspectsofkingspark.com.au

CHEAP EATS

Miss Mauds is arguably tops in the city for value thanks to its amazing Swedish-style smorgasbord lunches and dinners. Miss Maud started her successful hotel and restaurant almost 40 years ago and it's still going strong. 97 Murray St at Pier St, tel: (0)8 9325 3900, www.missmaud.com.au

TOP TABLES

The chef warns of **Jackson's** nine-course degustation menu – "The Dego" – "this food may contain traces of nuts, love, quality produce and passion." 483 Beaufort St, Highgate, tel: (0)8 9328 1177, www.jacksonsrestaurant.com.au 🍷🍷

AT YOUR LEISURE

If golf is your game, visit **Burswood Park Public Golf Course**, located on the Swan River, next to Burswood International Resort. Roger Mackay Dr, Burswood, tel: (0)8 9362 7576, www.burswoodparkgolfcourse.com

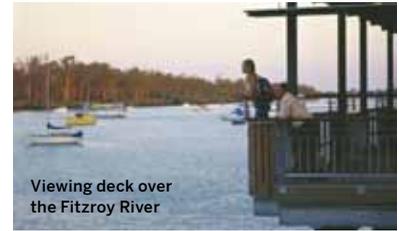
LATE & LIVELY

The Brass Monkey is the nightlife hot spot of Northbridge is home to several bars, dining, a comedy club and the best balcony spot in town. 209 William St, tel: (0)8 9227 9596, www.thebrassmonkey.com.au

OVERNIGHT

Modern, comfortable and quiet, **The Richardson Hotel & Spa** is a gem of a place, not least because of the warmth and professionalism of its staff and the food quality at its in-house modern Australian restaurant, Opus. 32 Richardson St, West Perth, tel: (0)8 9217 8888, www.therichardson.com.au 🍷🍷

Rockhampton



Viewing deck over the Fitzroy River

INSIDER TIP

Rockhampton's **Botanic Gardens**, arguably among the best in regional Australia, is often cited by locals as their favourite place in town.

SHOP TALK

Capricorn Coast artist Jo Wooler creates exquisite stainless steel sculptures under the label **mojocreations**. Inspired by her life on the sea, Wooler's works are displayed in her unique floating gallery, a 46-ft catamaran, at Yeppoon. Keppel Bay Marina, Rosslyn Bay, tel: (0)407 807786, www.mojocreations.com.au

CHEAP EATS

Frenchville Sports Club is home to bars and a coffee shop, but **Flavours Bistro** offers perhaps the best meal deal with its three-course buffet lunch. 105 Clifton St, North Rockhampton, tel: (0)7 4926 1828, www.frenchvillesportsclub.com.au

TOP TABLES

Overlooking the water at Keppel Bay Marina, **The Waterline** makes for a scenic dining experience. Chef Matt Smith's unique and award-winning Japanese fusion menu is something special. Rosslyn Bay, tel: 1800 336244, www.keppelbaymarina.com.au 🍷🍷

AT YOUR LEISURE

Upcoming **cultural events** in Rocky include Australian musical *Breast Wishes* (8-9 July), Italian opera *La Traviata* (12 Aug), the ACO2 Concert (16 Aug) and the Rocky Fringe Short Film Festival (26 Aug). Pilbeam Theatre, Victoria Parade, tel: (0)7 4924 5600, www.pilbeamtheatre.com.au

LATE & LIVELY

Overlooking the Fitzroy River, open-plan bar **The Edge** is buzzy enough to be a fun place to enjoy a mojito and chat but forgoes the annoying loud music. 108 Victoria Pde, tel: (0)7 4931 1300, www.theedgerestaurant.com.au

OVERNIGHT

Myella is a working cattle property that boasts a genuinely warm and friendly farmstay experience. Milk cows, ride horses, experience the bush or just enjoy the serenity. Transfers from Rockhampton are available. Myella Farmstay, Baralaba, tel: (0)7 4998 1290, www.myella.com.au 🍷