



MELBOURNE: A SPORTING CITY

OCTOBER 2017

Australia's sporting capital, Melbourne, plays host to some of the world's best international events including the Australian Open Tennis Championship and the Formula 1™ Australian Grand Prix. Local favourite, Australian Rules Football (AFL) takes place each weekend throughout winter and in spring the city is in full bloom when the Melbourne Cup Carnival, including the race that stops a nation, the Melbourne Cup, hits town.

SPORTING FACTS

- Melbourne is the only city in the world that has six international standard sporting facilities (including four with retractable rooves) on the fringe of its central business district
- Melbourne was named the world's Ultimate Sports City of the Decade by Sports Accord in 2016
- Melbourne is the only city in the world to host both a Formula 1™ Grand Prix and a tennis Grand Slam tournament
- Melbourne is the only city to have ever hosted an Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, and FINA World Championships
- The Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) was established in 1853, less than 20 years after the founding of Melbourne. It was the birthplace of Australian football in 1859, Test cricket in 1877 and one-day international cricket in 1971
- Melbourne is the home to the Melbourne Cup Carnival, with four days of horse racing at Flemington Racecourse attracting more than 320,000 visitors from more than 40 countries each year
- Melbourne is home to world-renowned Sandbelt golf courses including Kingston Heath and Royal Melbourne Golf Clubs

SPORTING TOURS

Sports fans can get their fix of the action in more ways than one, with a selection of tours on offer in Melbourne to take visitors behind the scenes at Melbourne's most famed sporting precincts:

MCG tours

Widely recognised as the home of Australian sport, the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) has been the scene of many great sporting events, as well as many 'firsts' in Australian sporting history and is now included on the National Heritage List. One of Australia's most significant sporting stadiums, dating back to 1853, [the MCG Tour](#) gives visitors the opportunity to relive their great sporting memories. Visitors can view the inner sanctum players' change rooms, cricket viewing room and indoor practice facilities, media centre, library, the famous Long Room and even walk on the arena (subject to availability).

National Sports Museum

Located at the MCG, the [National Sports Museum](#) presents world-class exhibitions of significant sporting artefacts. The museum houses the Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum Collection, the Sport Australia Hall of Fame, the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame, the Australian Football exhibition (including Australian Football Hall of Fame), Champions - Thoroughbred Racing Gallery, and temporary exhibition areas addressing the sporting issues and events of the day. Interactive and audiovisual displays enhance the visitor experience. On days without major events on the arena, the Museum enables access to the Melbourne Cricket Club Museum and Library.

Rod Laver Arena Guided Tours

[Rod Laver Arena Guided Tours](#) are run daily by experienced and knowledgeable Tennis World tour guides. Visitors will be taken through the backstage areas used during the Australian Open Tournament including: Tournament Control, the Player Change Rooms used by the world's top seeded players, inside Rod Laver Arena and a Corporate Superbox, the Walk of Champions, Davis Cup Room and inside the purpose-built Media Theatre that hosts the post-match press conferences during the Australian Open.

DO-IT-YOURSELF SPORTING MOMENTS

Golf

Golfers are spoilt for choice in Melbourne. The city is home to Australia's number one course, Royal Melbourne. The Alister Mackenzie design incorporates two 18-hole layouts featuring deep rough, strategically placed bunkers and fast, true greens. There are many other public and private courses located close to the city and further afield. Many have public access and cater for all handicaps and levels of experience.

Cycling

Melbourne Bike Share enables visitors to pedal their way around town and enjoy some of the city's dedicated bike paths. The Capital City Trail starts in Southbank and links some of the best cultural, entertainment, sporting and outdoor recreation opportunities that Melbourne has to offer. The Bay Trail takes cyclists along the coastline from St Kilda. The Main Yarra Trail is a scenic riverside path from Melbourne's eastern suburban fringe to the CBD ending at Southbank, the linchpin of the city's bicycle trails system.

UPCOMING MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS

Melbourne Cup Carnival (7 - 11 November, 2017)

The [Melbourne Cup Carnival](#) features four race days over seven days at Flemington Racecourse, creating an unmissable world-class event. Racing, entertainment, fashion, culture, food and wine combine to generate a thrilling atmosphere that can be felt throughout the city. The pinnacle of Carnival, the Emirates Melbourne Cup is known as 'the race that stops a nation' because, whether at the race track or watching from public screens or private TVs, most Australians will tune in for the race. In fact, the city of Melbourne enjoys a public holiday on the first Tuesday of November, when the Melbourne Cup is run. It is a day of fun, fashion and fanfare as thousands of racegoers flock to the course to sip champagne and watch as the thoroughbreds thunder past.

Boxing Day Test - international Cricket (26 - 30 December, 2017)

There are few events on the Australian sporting calendar that evoke as much passion as international cricket and when the old rival England is the opponent, as they are this year, things move to another level again. Attending the [Boxing Day Test](#) at the Melbourne Cricket Ground is a tradition for many Australians.

Volvo Ocean Race (2 January, 2018)

Melbourne is one of 12 host cities of the internationally renowned [Volvo Ocean Race](#), which sees teams sail 45,000 nautical miles around the world. Used as a stop-over, teams competing in this prestigious race will get the rest they deserve before heading back out to the Southern Ocean, leaving a sea of excitement behind.

Australian Open Tennis Championship (15 – 28 January, 2018)

Balmy nights, world-class tennis players, colourful fans and live entertainment combine when the [Australian Open](#) hits town in January. Locals and visitors alike pack out Rod Laver, Hisense and Margaret Court Arena to watch world's greatest tennis players battle it out for the first Grand Slam title of the season.

Formula One Grand Prix (March 2018)

The 2018 [Formula 1™ Rolex Australian Grand Prix](#) will see the world's fastest cars, coolest celebrities and latest technology converge on Melbourne for four days of unstoppable action. Visitors can join a crowd of thousands to watch the world's premier drivers light up Melbourne and the Albert Park circuit. There are many ticket options available, from corporate to general admission.