

Things for the Whole Family to Enjoy



Victorian Goldfields Railway

Let's face it, everyone loves a steam train! The Victorian Goldfields Railway steam train runs between Castlemaine and Maldon on Wednesdays and Sundays as well as on public holidays as well as special event trains and extended days during school holidays and select Saturdays. It's just the most wonderful way to view the local landscape, count the kangaroos, and visit historic Maldon.

The train departs Castlemaine to reach Maldon around 45 minutes later and leaves you in Maldon for 2.5 hours before the return trip. That's just the right amount of time to enjoy Maldon's historic streetscapes, have lunch on one of the old family-friendly pubs and visit the famous lolly shop! Victorian Goldfields Railway also offers several special event trains and activities – check their website for details.

BIG4 Perks+ members who book train tickets directly with us enjoy a 10% discount.

Castlemaine Botanical Gardens

If you stay with us, you have the beautiful Castlemaine Botanical Gardens right next door. The gardens are famous for their established native and exotic trees, many of which are classified on the National Trust's Register of Significant Trees, including an English Oak

planted in 1863 and named Victoria's Tree of the Year in 2021. There's also a beautiful ornamental lake, garden beds, and walking and cycling paths.

The kids will love spotting the ducks and playing in the award-winning playground which features a miners' cubby hut, play train, swings and slides and bronze sculptures. There are picnic tables, shelter and barbecues for the whole family to enjoy.



See a Movie, the Old-Fashioned Way!

Take the family to see a movie at the oldest continuously running theatre on the Australian mainland. Castlemaine's iconic Theatre Royal has been an entertainment venue since 1854 when it provided live entertainment for the thousands of diggers who came to Central Victoria in search of gold. There's always a good selection of movies to choose from, including school holiday blockbusters, and in the late afternoons and evenings the theatre is also a very popular pizza restaurant and bar.

Your Chance to Go to Woop Woop

Looking for something wonderfully different, clever and colourful? Head to Woop Woop (yes, really) at Harcourt, where the five acres of bushland gardens are home to more than 100 Aussie-themed larger-than-life sculptures. There's also a nine-hole mini golf course, picnic areas and BBQ facilities. Aussie humour abounds and it's a guaranteed holiday hit for all ages.

BIG4 Perks+ members enjoy 10 percent off the entry price.

Castlemaine Art Museum

The Castlemaine Art Museum has a unique and noted collection of Australia art that is well worth a family viewing. It also has around 4000 historical artefacts in its museum collection

which detail the commercial and social life of the Goldfields region and Castlemaine, and the Jaara people of the Dja Dja Wurrung.

The social history collection includes furniture, costumes, textiles, tools, ceramics, natural history specimens and goldrush artefacts, to name just a few, and provides an intriguing and fascinating social history lesson for all ages.

Buda House

More history lessons! Take the family to the lovely Buda House, an authentic goldfields villa and gardens in Castlemaine. Named after Budapest by its Hungarian owner Ernest Leviny, it was home to the artistic Leviny family for 118 years, from 1863 to 1981, when it was opened to the public. Glimpse how life was lived all that time ago: there are original furnishings, domestic items, artworks and books, and personal effects including clothing, documents and photographs.

There is also 1.2 hectares of gardens, a near-perfect example of a late nineteenth century suburban garden maintained for decades by the family and ideal today for a game of hide and seek or a picnic. You can bring your own picnic lunch, or for a truly memorable family holiday experience let Buda arrange a gourmet hamper of local seasonal delights.



And Speaking of Picnics...!

Recreate those wonderful family picnics you enjoyed as a kid in Central Victoria's great outdoors. As well as the Botanical Gardens and Buda House, there are numerous magical picnic spots around Castlemaine, ranging from granite outcrops in a national park to gentle bushlands by a reservoir popular for swimming and canoeing.

Load up the eskies with sensational local produce from the food outlets at The Mill across the road from BIG4 Castlemaine and head off to one of our favourite places: the

Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park, Vaughan Springs or the Exhibition Pass Reservoir.

A Family Bike Ride

Castlemaine is very much a bike-friendly destination, so don't forget to bring the bikes. Enjoy easy family rides along the paths that wind through the beautiful Botanical Gardens or tackle the family-friendly 17.7-kilometre scenic Castlemaine-Maldon Trail. For something different, take your bikes on the train to Bendigo and explore the city via the picturesque, shared paths that follow Bendigo Creek Trail. Whether you're after a gentle pedal or a longer adventure, there are plenty of great cycling options for all ages and abilities.