

Winter's Wonderful in Castlemaine



[The Mill](#). What can we say! This extraordinary foodie and artisan complex situated in a re-purposed 1860s woollen mill is a three-minute stroll from BIG4 Castlemaine. It's your go-to for amazing meals, coffees, breads, cheeses, wines, beers, chocolates and smallgoods with special events, live music, vintage shopping and arts and crafts thrown in for good measure.



Castlemaine Botanical Gardens. The magnificent 23-hectare Castlemaine Botanical Gardens and Bushland Reserve is right next door. Enjoy walking and cycling, admire the birdlife and the garden beds, and let the kids loose in a huge, award-winning play space.

Mt Alexander Regional Park. Located in North Harcourt, just 10 minutes' drive away, this 1400-hectare park has stunning lookouts including the popular Dogs Rocks (fantastic rock-climbing!), walking tracks, and a picnic area. It's a wonderful place to spot wildlife including Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Black Wallabies and a range of bird life. *(Note: some sections and trails remain closed following the January 2026 bushfire. See the official [Parks Victoria Mount Alexander Regional Park](#) page for updates).*

[Theatre Royal](#). Built in 1855, this legend in the heart of Castlemaine is the longest continuously running theatre on mainland Australia. Go catch a latest release or an arthouse film (by the way, kids' blockbusters feature during school holidays, perfect for a rainy afternoon) or check out a great live music gig, along with a stunning cocktail or a glass of first-rate local wine.

Markets. Head to the Wesley Hill Market at Chewton on a Saturday morning for great coffee, food, bric-a-brac, plants, crafts and clothing. It's a favourite with the locals and you'll be sure to enjoy a chat or two. On the first Sunday of each month and on Wednesday afternoons there's an excellent Farmers' Market in town and there is an Artists' Market on the fourth Sunday of the month.

[Castlemaine Art Museum \(CAM\)](#). This gallery and museum on Lyttleton Street in the heart of Castlemaine is well worth a visit for an hour or two to have a look at the range of art and artefacts reflecting the history of Castlemaine and the surrounding region, along with the gallery's noted collection of Australian art and contemporary exhibitions.



[Buda House](#). Enjoy an afternoon at Castlemaine's Buda House, a Museums Australia accredited historic goldfields villa and gardens.

[Castlemaine Maldon Trail](#). This 17.7-kilometre walking and cycling track runs alongside the heritage Victorian Goldfields Railway and across scenic farm and bush lands and historic sites.

[Victorian Goldfields Railway Steam Train](#). If you don't want to walk or cycle to Maldon alongside the Victorian Goldfields Railway tracks, hop on the train itself! A journey on the beautiful and luxurious old steam train makes a special family outing. (And remember, BIG4 Perks+ members enjoy a discount on tickets!).

Forest Creek Historic Gold Diggings, Chewton. This is an ideal starting point for exploring the history of Castlemaine's vast Central Goldfields. A 400-metre track circles around an historic alluvial goldfield and detailed signboards along the way provide fascinating facts and information about the ancient Forest Creek riverbed and the gold rush of the 1850's and 1860's.

[Jirrahlinga Wildlife Sanctuary](#). Enjoy close encounters with wildlife at this sanctuary in the Chewton bushlands, on the outskirts of Castlemaine. Feed a kangaroo, pet a wombat, take a selfie with a snake, and learn about the conservation work that is helping preserve the biodiversity of our native species (Another BIG4 Perks+ discount is on offer here!)

Stay an Extra Day or Two!

Castlemaine is literally in the heart of the Central Victoria Goldfields region, so why not stay on for a day or two and visit some of our neighbouring towns and cities. You'll discover more beautiful landscapes, more art and architecture, more great food and more family fun. See our [Scenic Day Trips From Castlemaine](#) for even more inspiration!

Bendigo. Victoria's fourth largest city is just a 35-minute drive (or 20-minute train ride) from Castlemaine. Once the site of one of the worlds' largest goldfields, Bendigo offers grand architecture, beautiful parks, gardens and lakes, extensive bush reserves, great dining and the renowned Bendigo Art Gallery. There are also plenty of adventures for the family, including the Central Deborah Gold Mine Complex, the Talking Tram tour through central Bendigo, and the Golden Dragon Museum, which pays tribute to the city's long associations with Chinese people and culture. And miss the remarkable Great Stupa of Universal Compassion. only 15 minutes outside Benda, one of the largest Buddhist monuments in the Western world. Put a day aside for your Bendigo visit – it's well worth it.

Daylesford. Beautiful Daylesford is a 30-minute drive from Castlemaine. Head there for some great galleries including the award-winning Convent Gallery housed in a 19th century former convent. Visit the Wombat Hill Botanical Gardens, perched high on an extinct volcano, for breathtaking views, or head to Lake Daylesford for a walk and a picnic and perhaps a paddle boat hire.

All this is just for starters! But whether you're after a little peace and quiet in beautiful winter landscapes, good old-fashioned family fun (think toasted marshmallows and hot chocolate around a campfire) or a few days enjoying some sophisticated wining, dining and arts, Castlemaine and Central Victoria is the place to be.