



# Advantage, Melbourne

IT'S NOT JUST THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN THAT MAKES IT A CONTENDER FOR THE BEST CITY DOWN UNDER. *BY REBECCA WALLWORK*

IN THE FRIENDLY RIVALRY BETWEEN SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE, Australia's Southern city is always dubbed "more European"—shorthand for a smaller, cuisine-crazy city full of stylish urbanites who run on espresso. This may be true, but like its sister city, Boston, it is also unabashedly sports mad. And there's no better time to see this than during the Australian Open.

Here's the best of what Melbourne has to offer in off-court diversions. (Getting to places outside the central business district is a breeze, thanks to the city's distinctive and reliable tram system.)

## Breakfast

### JULIO

171 Miller St, North Fitzroy

Named for the Paul Simon song, this café on a suburban residential street is what Aussie 'brekkies' are all about. A cozy spot to enjoy a 'short black' (shot of espresso) or 'flat white' (a strong latte sans foam), and fuel up on creative dishes like rhubarb and semolina pancakes or a Spanish tortilla with house-made mayo. On weekends, locals come for the doughnuts, filled with jelly or lemon custard.



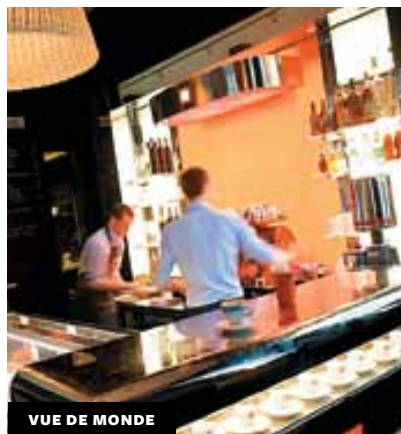
THE MELBOURNE SUPPER CLUB

## Lunch

### CAFFE E CUCINA

581 Chapel Street, South Yarra

A classy café in the Italian mold, Caffe e Cucina draws celebs and fashion-forward regular citizens with its antipasti, salads and classic pastas. The menu boasts a black Angus porterhouse and baby goat stew, but might we suggest ordering a plate of Cucina's most famous dish: the Calamari Sant'Andrea. Go for the large one.



VUE DE MONDE

## Dinner

### VUE DE MONDE

430 Little Collins St, Melbourne

Enjoy the city's finest of fine dining in its 19<sup>th</sup>-century digs now—before chef Shannon Bennett moves his temple of French cuisine to the top floor of the Rialto Tower in April. The restaurant has major foodie cred—the degustation-style menu starts at \$150 per person and can roll out to 13 courses with names that will wow your friends: Bœuf de Blackmore et Bettrave, anyone?



MOVIDA

## Light Bites & Drinks

MOVIDA 1 Hosier Lane, Melbourne

This is where Melbourne trumps Sydney best: in tapas bars within graffiti-covered cobbled lanes. Inside, you can order up raciones with some mates. The wine list is heavy on Rioja and local drops. Or you can opt for beer, port, whiskey or brandy.

## Post-Match Beers

### YOUNG & JACKSON HOTEL

1 Swanston St, Melbourne

This landmark pub near Flinders Street Station is a convenient place for a quick brew. *Chloe*, a nude painting by Jules Lefebvre, caused a scandal when she was hung at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1883. Now, she resides above the bar bearing her name.

### THE MELBOURNE SUPPER CLUB

161 Spring St, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Melbourne

Never mind the non-descript door at ground level. Upstairs lies a mood-lit bar with big leather Chesterfields and an Art Deco window overlooking Parliament House, as well as a soundtrack of lounge and jazz. Service is superb and smokers dig the rooftop lounge and cigar menu.

## Stay

### Crown Metropol

8 Whiteman St, Southbank

The newest addition to a complex that includes Crown Towers and Crown Promenade, the Metropol has luxurious, modern rooms, a day spa, new Gordon Ramsay restaurant *Maze*, sky bar, infinity pool and world-class gym. It's connected to the Crown Casino, where players can be seen trying their hands at poker.

### THE ART SERIES HOTELS

Prahran, South Yarra, Melbourne

The most interesting boutique hotels in Australia are all in Melbourne, all brand new, and all named for famous Aussie artists. Choose by location, or how you like you art: **The Cullen** is bold, **The Olsen** serene and **The Blackman** warm and chic with pops of vibrant color.



MELBOURNE'S GPO



CROWN METROPOL

## Shopping

For local labels, hit **CHAPEL STREET, MELBOURNE'S GPO** or the **CROWN CASINO**. But keep your eyes peeled for unexpected finds as you stroll the city's arcades. Try these two shops for some local character:

### CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY

2 Somerset Place, Level 1, Melbourne

At this 'gentlemen outfitter and café,' customers can buy a new suit, get a haircut, have lunch and order bespoke boots, all under one stylish roof.

### GLITZERN

1a Crossley Street, Melbourne

A teeny tiny store with big-impact jewelry and accessories. The range of contemporary, vintage and costume pieces makes this a great spot to scoop up a gift that will fit in your carry-on.

**WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH OF ALL THAT RACQUET**

**January 26: Australia Day Celebrations**  
Any of the city's major gathering places like the Kings Domain and Docklands will be a hive of Aussie pride, but head to the parks and beaches to join the locals celebrating history the best way they know: with beer and a barbie.

**January 20–26: Audi Victoria Week, Docklands and Geelong**  
This regatta of more than 400 yachts racing from Williamstown to Geelong is the oldest sporting event in the Australian state of Victoria.

**Starting January 15: Twilights at Melbourne Zoo, weekends**  
Keep the koalas and kangaroos up on summer weekends, when the zoo is open until 9:30 p.m.

**Wednesday nights: The Suzuki Night Market, Queen Victoria Market**  
See what makes Melbourne foodie central at this long-running produce market, open until 10:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. (But go on Friday, Saturday or Sunday for the Wine Market precinct.)