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CAR ROAD TRIP · 7 DAYS FROM MELBOURNE

Melbourne to Adelaide by car: a 7-day food trail

Follow the Great Ocean Road and the Limestone Coast before finishing in the Barossa and Adelaide. Plan food stops around your driving days, with a room booked in each overnight town.

DISTANCE	DAYS	ROUTE	DRIVING TIME
About 1,345 km	7 days, 7 drives	One way, Melbourne to Adelaide	About 19 h 30 min by car

LONGEST DRIVE	VEHICLE
355 km, Naracoorte to Victor Harbor	Car

This trip crosses the Country of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, Bunurong, Kaurna and other First Nations peoples. Traditional Custodians



Barossa Valley, day 6 · Illustrative image



Planning overview, not navigation. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors · coastline Natural Earth · relief Terrain Tiles (Geoscience Australia, SRTM).

BEFORE YOU BOOK

Hiring a car for this trip

Compare car hire in Melbourne for your dates and choose the actual airport or city branch you want. Book every driver and check the documents needed at pick-up, card and bond requirements, including the security deposit. Choose enough luggage space for your group; you will be carrying bags between accommodation stops.

Check the rental company's road restrictions for the route and any optional detours. The map is a planning guide, not permission to use a road. Driving figures are for the mapped routes, before sightseeing stops, breaks, traffic and local drives to your accommodation.

Book a one-way hire with the correct return city and branch. Check the total, any one-way fee and interstate or ferry conditions in your quote before committing to accommodation.

WHERE TO STAY

Book rooms for your overnight stops

The places below are examples to help you plan the route, not reserved rooms. Check availability, minimum stays, cancellation terms, parking and check-in times for your dates. Book a room, apartment or cabin with the facilities you need. A campsite alone does not provide accommodation for this car itinerary.

The map links overnight towns or route bases, rather than individual hotel driveways. Local access and sightseeing detours add distance and time. If you change the overnight town, recalculate the route and the next day's drive.

Picking up your car in Melbourne

For a city stay first, you can collect from a city branch when you start driving. If you collect at the airport, check whether your booked rental company uses an airport desk or a shuttle to an off-airport branch. See Melbourne pick-up options and airport pickups.

Allow time for the paperwork and vehicle inspection. Photograph existing marks and confirm fuel and return instructions. If you are arriving after a long-haul flight, allow at least eight hours of rest before starting the road trip. A Melbourne night before the first long drive gives you room to recover.

DRIVE

145 km from Melbourne | **about 2 h 30 min** by car | Via **Princes Freeway**

DAY 1

Melbourne to Lorne

Collect your car early enough for a relaxed start towards Geelong, Torquay and the Great Ocean Road. If you are arriving on a long-haul flight, add a Melbourne night before this itinerary rather than collecting the car and driving straight to Lorne.

Geelong's waterfront and the Surf Coast make natural breaks. Leave room in the day for lunch and short walks, then continue to Lorne for the night. Once checked in, walk to dinner where practical and keep any drinks for after the driving is finished.

Stay

Cumberland Lorne Resort (https://cumberland.com.au/) has apartments in Lorne. Choose a room configuration that suits your group, and check parking and check-in arrangements.

DRIVE

205 km from Lorne | **about 3 h 30 min** by car | Via **Great Ocean Road**

DAY 2

Lorne to Port Campbell

Today's mapped route goes inland through Pennyroyal and Forrest, then back through Apollo Bay towards Port Campbell. It is a longer food-and-sightseeing day than a direct coastal drive, so choose a few stops rather than trying to fit in every producer.

Check opening days before visiting local farm shops, cafes and food producers. Bring a cool bag for anything that needs refrigeration. The overnight plan is a motel or apartment, so arrange dinner in town or choose a room with a kitchen if you want to cook. A detour via Colac and Barongarook is a different route and is not the distance shown here.

Stay — Port Campbell Parkview Motel and Apartments (https://visitgreatoceanroad.org.au/accommodation/port-campbell-parkview-motel-and-apartments/) is one option in Port Campbell. Check the room type, check-in time and parking before booking.

DRIVE

97 km from Port Campbell | **about 1 h 30 min** by car | Via **Timboon - Nullawarre Road**

DAY 3

Port Campbell to Port Fairy

The map follows the inland stop at Timboon before continuing towards Warrnambool and Port Fairy. Use Timboon for a cafe break and a browse of local produce, checking individual businesses' opening days before making a special trip.

Keep the driver free of alcohol at any distillery or brewery stop. In Port Fairy, check in before an evening walk and dinner. Buy food for cooking only if your booked accommodation has suitable facilities.

Stay — Seacombe House (https://www.seacombehouse.com.au/) offers motor inn suites, historic cottages and guest house accommodation in Port Fairy. Facilities differ by room type, so check the one you book.

DRIVE

305 km from Port Fairy | **about 4 h 15 min** by car | Via **Riddoch Highway**

DAY 4

Port Fairy to Naracoorte

Travel west towards Portland and Mount Gambier, then north through Penola and the Coonawarra region to Naracoorte. This is a substantial driving day even before stops, so plan a lunch break and keep optional detours modest.

If you want to taste wine in Coonawarra, arrange a non-driving way to do it or save tastings for a longer stay. Check that your car hire allows the interstate journey. South Australia uses a different time zone from Victoria, so use local time for check-in and booked activities.

Stay

The Avenue Inn (https://www.theavenueinn.net/about) is a motel in Naracoorte, with self-contained apartments also listed by the operator. Check your room type and arrival arrangements.

DRIVE

355 km from Naracoorte | **about 4 h 30 min** by car | Via **Dukes Highway**

DAY 5

Naracoorte to Victor Harbor

Continue towards Victor Harbor through the Limestone Coast and across the Murray at Wellington. The mapped route includes the Wellington ferry. Check its operating status with South Australia's ferry information (https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/driving-and-transport/roads-and-traffic/river-murray-ferries) before leaving, and check that the ferry crossing is permitted under your rental conditions.

Allow time for the crossing, any queue and a proper lunch break. If the ferry is unavailable or your rental conditions require another route, recalculate the day's drive before setting out. Spend the evening in Victor Harbor after checking into your room.

Stay

Hotel Victor (https://www.hotelvictor.com.au/) offers accommodation in Victor Harbor. Check parking, room configuration and check-in details directly.

DRIVE

160 km from Victor Harbor | **about 2 h 30 min** by car

Via **Victor Harbor Road**

DAY 6

Victor Harbor to the Barossa Valley

Head towards Tanunda via the Adelaide Hills, with a stop in Hahndorf if it suits your day. Leave time to browse food shops and have lunch rather than treating the whole journey as motorway driving.

Once in the Barossa, settle into your hotel before dinner. For cellar doors, book a local tour or transport, or add a second night and plan a day without driving. A tasting itinerary is not a reason to drive between wineries after drinking.

Stay

Mercure Barossa Valley (https://www.barossaweintal.com.au/) is a hotel option in Tanunda. Check your dates, parking and room type before booking.

DRIVE

76 km from Barossa Valley (Tanunda) | **about 1 h** by car

Via **Northern Expressway**

DAY 7

Barossa Valley to Adelaide

Drive from Tanunda to Adelaide, allowing time beyond the mapped drive to reach your booked return branch. Refuel according to your rental agreement and leave room for the return inspection before your onward transport.

If you want to explore the Adelaide Central Market or other city food stops, check their opening days and do it after the car return where practical. Add an Adelaide night if you would otherwise be rushing the final day.

Returning your car in Adelaide

Return to the branch and time on your booking. Check car hire in Adelaide for location options, and allow extra time to get from the return branch to your onward transport. Follow the fuel policy on your rental agreement and keep your final fuel receipt.

Allow time for the inspection, take return photos and retain your return receipt. If you are running late, call the branch. After-hours arrangements and late charges differ by company; check them in advance. See returning your car and late and early returns.

Compare Melbourne car hire and select the pick-up and return branches that suit your route. Choose your dates to see the cars and conditions available.

About this car itinerary

If you prefer to travel with your accommodation, see the camper itinerary.

Traditional Custodians

Melbourne: Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin (City of Melbourne (https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-melbourne))

Adelaide: Kaurna People of the Adelaide Plains (City of Adelaide (https://www.cityofadelaide.com.au/about-adelaide/our-city/reconciliation/))

Country boundaries are approximate, and some are shared or contested. These names follow local councils and park managers. The AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia (https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia) shows the wider picture.

Pay your respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which you are travelling, and to their Elders past, present and emerging. The Australian environment is fragile, so tread lightly: take only photos and leave only footprints.

DriveNow Disclaimer

DriveNow's suggested itineraries help you plan your own trip. Distances and times are from mapped routes and are a guide only. Driving times are mapped car times. Allow extra time for stops, traffic and accommodation access. Road conditions, closures, opening hours and prices change, so check them before you travel. Any reliance on this itinerary is at your own discretion.

DriveNow receives no money or commission for any accommodation, restaurant, cafe, pub, tour or attraction named on this page. We include them because they suit this car road trip, and we check them from time to time.

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