

Media Information

Background about the Grampians – regional highlights

Overview

The sheer beauty and diversity of the Grampians region is truly breathtaking. There are lush green farmlands, bush forests, soaring mountain ranges, flowing waterfalls, semi-desert wilderness and spectacular national parks. This is the place to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life with space to think and breathe.

Rich in Aboriginal heritage and home to stunning scenery, abundant wildlife, cultural attractions, acclaimed wineries and fantastic food, the Grampians is a popular destination for couples, families and adventure-seekers.

Whether you're seeking relaxation or heart-pumping action, the region's wide open spaces and natural beauty allows visitors to escape the trappings of modern life and reinvigorate their mind, body and spirit.

The Grampians has been described as 'accessible wilderness' making it the perfect place to enjoy the great outdoors with a vast variety of drives and walks to explore. Begin your visit by calling into Brambuk the National Park and Cultural Centre, or one of the many accredited Grampians Visitor Information Centres located in and around the Grampians National Park to collect a map and talk to a local about many recreational opportunities, accommodation & attractions.

Reaching great heights

In just one day you can walk to one of the spectacular locations that appear in the new Grampians' *Space to breathe* advertising campaign. Visit Mount Abrupt – one of the Park's finest lookouts; walk to Redmans Bluff – the oldest sandstone formation in the Park; or take a hike to Mount Stapylton – a popular spot for bushwalkers.

Mount Abrupt

Aboriginal name: Mud-dadjug

Distance: 6.5km return

Time: 2.5 - 3 hours

Elevation: 457 metres

Grade: hard

Start at: Mount Abrupt car park, Grampians Tourist Road

This walk is suitable for fit and energetic walkers as it can involve water crossings, slippery track surfaces, rock hopping and rock scrambling. The steep track winds its way through heath covered woodlands and onto a ridge. The ridge leads over rocky slabs past stunted sub-alpine montane vegetation to the summit. The walk provides some of the most spectacular views of the Southern Grampians, Signal Peak and the Serra Range.

Redmans Bluff

Elevation: 1017metres above sea level

Name inspired by its appearance - a huge man formed from red stone. Redmans Bluff is located on the steep cliffs on the eastern side of the Mount William Range. The rocks are some of the oldest in the Grampians.

Mount Staplyton

Aboriginal name: Gunigalg

Distance: 4.6km return

Time: 2 – 2.5 hours

Elevation change: 278 metres

Grade: hard

Enjoy this bushwalk and be rewarded with breathtaking views of the rugged rocky peaks in the northern area of the park. The walk is strenuous and best suited to fit and energetic walkers. Signs and track markers lead up through the steep slope of flat rock to a spectacular vantage point which overlooks a natural amphitheatre. The track then descends briefly through a forested gully before climbing alongside the famous orange sandstone cliff known as Taipan Wall. The track then continues as a steady climb, before its final ascent past a wind-scoured cave to the summit. The outlook from the summit is stunning and includes views of the surrounding mountains and plains below. Return by following the same track.

Rugged beauty

With its imposing mountain ranges, lush national parks, waterfalls and colourful wildflowers, the Grampians is one of the most inspiring places to explore on foot or by car.

The Grampians National Park's four sandstone ranges provide breath-taking views and great photo opportunities. Take the track from the car park to the Boroka Lookout (about 100 metres return) as well as the MacKenzie Falls Loop Walk which winds through bushland to a viewing platform overlooking the waterfalls.

The Pinnacle walking trail is one of the most popular destinations within the National Park, attracting more than 100,000 visitors each year. The strenuous walk provides spectacular views of geology, native vegetation and scenic landscapes.

Other beautiful State Parks which encircle the majestic Grampians National Park include Langi Ghiran, Mount Cole, Mount Arapiles-Tooan, Black Range, Dergholm and Mount Napier.

There is an abundance of native wildlife in the Grampians, including bushland kangaroos, wallabies, emus, possums and lizards. The area is also a haven for birdlife, including kookaburras, lorikeets and magnificent wedge-tailed eagles, as well as some endangered species such as the red-tailed black cockatoo.

In spring, colourful wildflowers cover the ground and look magnificent.

Natural high

The Grampians is a natural adventure playground, providing lots of opportunities to mountain bike, horse ride, hike, canoe and even abseil.

The Grampians National Park offers thousands of rock climbs to suit beginners through to advanced climbers. Some of the most popular rock faces for climbing are Mount Staplyton and Summer Day Valley.

Some top spots to visit on foot include the unusual Byaduk lava tube caves, Nigretta Falls near Hamilton as well as The Balconies (nicknamed the Jaws of Death) for amazing views over the surrounding ranges.

If you prefer a more relaxed outdoor experience, the Grampians is a great place for picnicking, fishing, golf and camping.

Cultural discovery

The Grampians – known traditionally as Gariwerd - is rich in Aboriginal history and boasts the largest collection of rock art sites in southern Australia.

About 60 rock art sites depicting more than 4,000 different motifs have been identified in the Grampians National Park.

Bunjil's Shelter, located 11 kilometres from Stawell and signposted off the Stawell-Promonal Road, is considered one of the most significant artworks, depicting the creation of the whole world.

Brambuk the National Park and Cultural Centre at Halls Gap is a large educational hub which exhibits a collection of interesting Aboriginal artefacts and photos. It also has a multimedia Dreaming Theatre where visitors can watch the creation story as well as daily rock art tours.

Exciting new developments

Blaze Rock Retreat in Pomonal recently opened a new spa pavilion where the mountain views from the bath houses are absolutely spectacular. The retreat is also building two new luxury villas.
www.blazerock.com.au

Royal Mail Hotel, Dunkeld has an exciting new chef and the menu features produce grown on the adjacent property specifically for the restaurant. The restaurant's reputation is growing and it was described by renowned food critic, John Lethlean, in the *Australian Gourmet Traveller*, February 2008, as possibly Australia's most exciting regional restaurant.
For more details, go to www.royalmail.com.au

A new four-star golf resort, Fairways Resort, is being built at Horsham's famous golf course. Units will feature direct course access.
For more information, call Mark McIntyre on 03 5382 3312 or for more details go to www.horshamgolfclub.com

Hamilton Visitor Information Centre is undergoing a major facelift. The refurbished centre will feature facilities to better service the visitor, including the new display and merchandising stands, plus aesthetic improvements such as new carpet, remodelling of the customer service area, signage and landscaping. The upgrade will increase the centre's facilities with a new space for small meetings and workshops.
For more information call 03 5572 3746.

Halls Gap Visitor Information Centre has outgrown its current site and will relocate to a brand new building with the first stage of the \$500,000 scheduled to start soon.
For more information call 1800 065 599.

Navigating the region

The spectacular Grampians region is located midway between Melbourne and Adelaide.

There are various touring routes – such as the Great Grape, Great Southern, Desert to Wetland and Arts and Cultural Touring Routes – around the region which allow visitors to plan a trip that suits their specific interests.

The touring route itineraries range from day trips to five-day expeditions, depending on the amount of time travellers plan to spend.

To obtain free Grampians touring maps, drop in to one of the region's Visitor Information Centres.

Village life

The bustling towns and quaint villages dotted around the Grampians are steeped in gold rush and agricultural history and are definitely worth a visit.

Stroll around the beautiful Botanic Gardens in Horsham and Hamilton; step back in time at the Hamilton Pastoral Museum; and admire the huge collection of paintings, furniture, tapestries and oriental ceramics at the renowned Hamilton Art Gallery.

Stawell is probably best known for its prestigious foot race – the Stawell Gift - held each year at Easter time. The Stawell Gift Hall of Fame Museum provides a fascinating insight into the history of the event which dates back to 1878.

At Dunkeld, situated at the foot of Mount Sturgeon, you can take the glorious walking track along the red gum-lined creek to the arboretum and enjoy an outstanding meal at the historic Royal Mail Hotel.

Get up close to more than 280 native and exotic birds and animals at the Halls Gap Wildlife Park. Many of the animals are free range and visitors are able to pat and handfeed them.

Have a grape time

The Grampians has a long history of wine-making and is renowned as the birthplace of Australia's sparkling wine industry.

Some of the must-see local wineries and cellar doors include: Seppelt Great Western which is more than 150 years old and offers a guided tour of its underground cellars that were dug by miners in the 1860s and 1870s; and Best's Great Western which produces outstanding shiraz and cabernet.

For more information and more ideas about what to do in the Grampians region and how to get there, go to **visitgrampians.com.au**