



[GREAT OCEAN ROAD GUIDE](#)

UNOFFICIAL GUIDE TO AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE COAST ROAD

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15 Must-See Great Ocean Road Attractions

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12 APOSTLES

The most famous spot on the Great Ocean Road, at the heart of Port Campbell National Park, the 12 Apostles sees over 2 million tourists pass through the Visitors Facility and wander the purpose-built viewing walkways and platforms each year. This makes it one of Victoria's most popular tourist destinations and an absolute must-visit on your Great Ocean Road trip.

The name, however, is deceptive, as there are now only 8, (the other 4 have been claimed by the sea); and the 'Apostles' are actually limestone stacks which were once attached to the mainland, eroded and shaped by the crashing waves and gusty winds of the Southern Ocean, first into arches before they themselves collapsed to leave the monoliths you see today.

They are an impressive sight at any time of the day, but spectacular at sunset as the sun disappears into the distance behind them lighting up the sky in beautiful colours (*if you are lucky!*). And for an absolutely jaw-dropping experience, splurge on one of the helicopter tours available from the nearby airfield. You won't be disappointed!

BELLS BEACH

Made famous in the movie 'Point Break' (both the 1991 original and the 2015 remake!), and home to the [Rip Curl Pro Surf Classic](#) for almost 60 years, Bells Beach has a special place in Surf Folklore and being close to Torquay, is a great place to stop at the start of your Great Ocean Road Tour.



Locals love this break year-round, but if you really want to get in on the action but don't fancy the icy cold water, the Australian National Surfing Museum is a dry and warm alternative, or plan to be here around Easter each year to see the professionals on the Surf League World Tour competing.

And if on land adventures are more your things, the Surf Coast Walk passes above Bells Beach (and others) and is a great way to embrace the coastline and by watching the waves understand why it is known as the Surf Coast.

LOCH ARD GORGE

Loch Ard Gorge is named after the famous shipwreck on nearby Mutton Bird Island in 1878, where 52 people were lost to the ocean, and the only people to survive the wreck were the 2 teenagers washed up on the beach here – the only safe gorge on the coast. The story is told on boards around the site, and multiple trails ranging from 200m – 3km will help you explore the area fully.



The Loch Ard Gorge is a favourite Great Ocean Road attraction and a popular place for visitors to feel the sand between their toes or go for a picturesque paddle in the chilly Southern Ocean after a long drive.

LONDON ARCH (FORMERLY LONDON BRIDGE)

London Arch (formerly London Bridge) is an offshore natural arch in the Port Campbell National Park, Australia. The arch is a significant tourist attraction along the Great Ocean Road, approximately 20 minutes further along the road from the Twelve Apostles.



This stack, like all the others along the shipwreck coast, was formed by a gradual process of erosion, and until it's collapse in 1990 formed a complete double-span natural bridge that visitors could walk over. (There were in fact two people stood on the 'bridge' – which is now the gap we see above – when it disappeared into the ocean, and had to be [rescued by helicopter](#)).

CAPE OTWAY NATIONAL PARK

Waterfalls, Wildlife and campgrounds surrounded by beautiful rainforest are just three of the things that make the [Cape Otway National Park](#) an absolute dream for lovers of the outdoors.



Maits Rest Rainforest Walk offers a newly refurbished (2020) 800-metre self-guided circuit walk at ground level through the cool temperate rainforest of the Otway Ranges near Apollo Bay, taking guests through beautiful fern gardens and past 300-year-old trees; while the [Otway Fly Treetop Adventure](#) allows people to walk amongst the treetops on elevated platforms, or soar through the trees on their eco-zipline course.

Wildlife enthusiasts should keep their eyes peeled for swamp wallabies, koalas, ring-tailed possums and grey kangaroos that call the rainforest home, and for those who seek waterfalls, scroll down and read our top tips on where to find them!

TEDDY'S LOOKOUT

There is absolutely no doubt that the Great Ocean Road is one of the most scenic drives in the world, and while it's very pretty on the road itself, the views only get better and better as you rise up and look out across the Southern Ocean and see how the road winds along the cliffside hugging the coast at the various viewing platforms and lookouts on the Great Ocean Road.

The view above is from Teddy's Lookout near Lorne, but we'd also highly recommend Cape Patton Lookout Point near Apollo Bay and Cinema Point, 8km from Aireys Inlet. Read our guide to the **Best Viewpoints on the Great Ocean Road** for more.



CHASE WATERFALLS

If you love a good waterfall, you will be spoilt for choice with the bevy of beauties on offer in and around the Otway Ranges. Perhaps the most famous is Erskine Falls (pictured above) – but did you know there are 10 different waterfalls within 10 minutes of Lorne?! Plus another 7 in the Cape Otway National Park.

Chasing them is one of the top outdoor activities on the Great Ocean Road, and our top picks include Kalimna Falls, Hopetoun Falls and Beauchamp Falls – but you can read about all of the [waterfalls on the Great Ocean Road](#) Victoria (and how to find them) in our handy guide.



KENNETT RIVER KOALAS

Wildlife is bountiful along the Great Ocean Road, from wallabies to kangaroos, echidnas to platypus, glowworms and even whales (in the right season!); but perhaps the most famous of GOR residents are the Kennett River Koalas. Found dotted among the trees on the Grey River Road, catching a glimpse of them is easily one of the top things to do on the Great Ocean Road.

And if you love native Aussie wildlife, be sure to include the [Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve](#) on your itinerary. The reserve sits inside an extinct volcano formed some 30,000 years ago and is home to free-roaming emu, kangaroo, wallabies and koalas (to name a few). It was declared Victoria's first national park in 1892 and located approximately halfway between Warrnambool and Port Fairy, is a great little add on to the end of a Great Ocean Road adventure.



LORNE, ANGLESEA & APOLLO BAY

There are plenty of gorgeous beachside towns along the Great Ocean Road, with Lorne, Anglesea and Apollo Bay being three of the most popular, both with day-trippers and those holidaying in the area. They each make a great place to stay, eat and explore, with Lorne boasting access to the most waterfalls, Anglesea having some of the best beaches in the area on its doorstep and Apollo Bay being the start of the [Great Ocean Walk](#) which travels along the coast all the way to Gibson Steps.



BAY OF ISLANDS COASTAL PARK

Stretching out across 32 kilometres along the coast of Victoria between Peterborough and Warrnambool, the Bay of Islands Coast Park offers astounding ocean views alongside a collection of fascinating geological features and impressive limestone stacks.

The land here is traditionally Aboriginal, and the parkland is still owned by the Aboriginal people who have lived here for centuries. They still practice age-old traditions and maintain their strong connection to the land and water and their stories can be read about on boards around the Park.

Notable things to see within the Bay of Islands are the Bay of Martyrs, Massacre Point/Massacre Bay and the wreckage of [The Falls of Halladale](#).



CAPE OTWAY LIGHTHOUSE

Just a short drive off the Great Ocean Road towards the edge of the Great Otway National Park, Cape Otway Lightstation is Victoria's oldest working lighthouse built in 1848. Also known as the 'Beacon of Hope,' it sits 90 metres above the pristine ocean of Bass Strait and climbing to the top provides one of the most spectacular views of the surrounding coastline.

It is open daily and offers self-guided tours, with opportunities to talk to staff around the facility who share the lighthouses' stories. Fun Fact: in the 19th century, the lighthouse was often the first thing migrants arriving by boat from Europe and Asia saw after weeks at sea.



PORT CAMPBELL NATIONAL PARK

You've read about the Twelve Apostles, Loch Ard Gorge and London Bridge as 3 of the must-see Great Ocean Road attractions above, but there are so many more incredible limestone stacks and natural rock formations along the coast that are worth exploring.

Above are the impressive stacks at **Gibson Steps**, accessible by a steep wooden staircase which hugs the side of the cliff and down onto the beach. **The Grotto** offers a unique vantage point allowing visitors to stand practically within the cavern created by the waves which continue to crash in; **The Arch** is a naturally formed rock arch with two viewing platforms offering a vantage point quite close to the water (and sometimes the waves!) and **Thunder Cave** lives up to its name where the water rushes into the narrow gorge before crashing back out with a resounding 'boom'!



2. THE ULTIMATE GREAT OCEAN ROAD MAP 2023 (LOCAL'S GUIDE)

This is the only Great Ocean Road Map you will ever need. (Seriously!) Split into colour-coded sections to help you find exactly what you are looking for quickly and easily, the map includes viewpoints and lookouts, campsites and campgrounds, the major towns and holiday destinations, waterfalls, beaches – even petrol stations(!) – along with all the incredible attractions and things to do on the Great Ocean Road.



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Or click [this link](#) to open the map in a new tab if on mobile.