

Ballarat Begonia Festival, Macedon Ranges & Goldfields Discovery - *With Trade Travel*

5 Days / 4 Nights - Ex Sydney/Brisbane

Tour Departs: **Sunday 20 March - Thursday 24 March 2022**



TRADE TRAVEL
Group & Private Tour Specialists



Day 1. Sun 20 March: Brisbane/Sydney - Ballarat

Lunch & Dinner

Flight VA308 Departs Brisbane 0655 arrives Melbourne 1015

Flight VA824 Departs Sydney 0900 arrives Melbourne 1035

After our **morning flight into Melbourne** we board our luxury coach and begin our **drive across to Ballarat**, a city that enjoyed a rich and prosperous heritage thanks to the Gold Rush which began in 1851. News that the Ballarat region was home to the richest alluvial goldfield in the world resulted in a population explosion as people came from all over the world seeking fortune. By 1855, Ballarat had grown to a city with a population of 100,000 people. Impressive public and private buildings sprung up which were financed from the wealth generated by the diggings. The city is also home to the **Ballarat Begonia Festival** which has a long and rich history, beginning in 1953 and has now become an innovative garden-based horticultural festival that showcases the city's natural assets, including its unique and rare collection of Begonias. **The Boatshed Restaurant on Lake Wendouree** provides the perfect spot for **lunch** on our arrival into Ballarat. Our afternoon is spent within the spectacular Lake Wendouree and **Ballarat Botanical Gardens** precinct which is home to the **Robert Clark Botanical Gardens Conservatory** housing an iconic **display of over 700 Begonias**. Our local guide will accompany us through other highlights within the gardens such as the **The Prime Ministers Avenue, Stoddard Collection, Statuary Pavilion** and the **Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial** with the names of more than 36,000 Australian ex-POWs etched into a 130-metre long granite wall. Before check in to our accommodation our local guide will join us on the coach and introduce us to the city's rich history, historic buildings and the gold sites of Bakery Hill, Golden Point and Poverty Point. After our tour, check in and freshen up we gather for dinner in the on-site restaurant.

Overnight Ballarat: Sovereign Park Motor Inn

Day 2. Mon 21 March: Ballarat

Breakfast & Dinner

After a good nights rest and hearty breakfast it's back on board our coach before transferring to the **Sovereign Hill Gold Mining Township** where all our Australian history comes alive and the spirit of the 1850's gold rush lives. We start at the **Gold Museum**, which houses a unique collection of alluvial gold, nuggets and displays relating to Ballarat's social and mining history. Then its time to step inside the Sovereign Hill Township itself, experiences and demonstrations we may include on our visit are the 'Musket Firing, Gold Pour, Blacksmithing, Candle Making, Coach Hitching and the Sly Grog Tent to name a few. This afternoon we view the **Eureka Flag** located at the site of the 1854 Eureka Stockade rebellion. The Eureka Centre is surrounded by the scenic Eureka Stockade Memorial Gardens and is the perfect place to grab a coffee, enjoy the wonderful park surrounds and learn more about the Eureka story. Back at our accommodation there will be time to rest up before returning to Sovereign Hill for dinner and to witness the **spectacular new sound-and-light show Aura, a multi-sensory experience**, feel the vibrations as stars explode in front of our eyes, watch as the land is transformed by the gold rush, and dive into the chaos of the **Eureka Rebellion** as we witness the creation and discovery of the world's most precious metal. This exciting presentation takes place across the whole 25-hectare panorama of Sovereign Hill. After the show we return to our motel for a good nights rest.

Overnight Ballarat: Sovereign Park Motor Inn



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Day 3. Tues 22 March: Creswick - Daylesford

Breakfast & Dinner

After a leisurely breakfast we make our way to Ascot, home to **Lambley Gardens and Nursery**, world renowned as a benchmark in beautiful sustainable gardening. David provides a wonderful guided tour through the Ornamental Gardens, Vegetable and Flower Cutting Garden and then through the Nursery. Across at the **Creswick Woollen Mill** our visit will include a self guided tour of the working machinery, a browse through the Ryzowy Gallery, the Mill Shop and then **morning tea on the viewing deck**. Our next stop is in **Daylesford** to enjoy a **guided tour of the Daylesford and Hepburn Springs area** including a drive across **Lake Daylesford** and taking in the peace and tranquillity of the **Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens**, which still retain their 19th century character. For those wishing, enjoy the views from the observation tower overlooking the township of Daylesford and surrounding countryside then step inside the **Begonia House** and view the stunning displays. Following our tour enjoy some **free time in Daylesford** to soak up the **galleries, shops and cafés** including the famous **Mill Markets**. Nestled on the crest of Wombat Hill Botanical Gardens over-looking Daylesford, is the **Daylesford Convent Gallery** which boasts expansive views of the countryside and township below. A feast for the senses, the gallery is more than a three level haven of fine art in an historic 19th century mansion. We arrive back in Ballarat mid afternoon for a rest or some free time to enjoy the shops. This evening after dinner we head up to the **Sturt Street Gardens** to view and stroll the **amazing 'Illuminated Garden of Blooms'**.

Overnight Ballarat: Sovereign Park Motor Inn

Day 4. Wed 23 March: Mount Macedon - Bendigo

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Today we depart Ballarat and travel up to Bendigo via the **beautiful Macedon Ranges** home to some of the most beautiful gardens in Australia. On arrival enjoy a cuppa up at the **Top of the Range Cafe** and marvel at the views from the **Memorial Cross** which commemorates Australia's war fallen. We then call in at the simply **stunning Forest Glade Gardens** and astonishing **"Stokes Collection"**. The collection is regarded by many antique experts as the greatest private collection in the southern hemisphere. After touring the collection it's time to meander through the **Forest Glade Gardens** which is one of Australia's finest private gardens, that has existed for nearly one hundred years. **Pick a spot amongst the garden to enjoy our picnic lunch**. The magnificent landscaped garden covers fourteen acres (5.6ha) and has four distinct sections: The large English section with its huge exotic trees and masses of colour, the delightful Japanese section complete with bonsai house, the beautiful woodland section displaying masses of shade-loving plants and the cool fern gully. The features of the garden include a stunning blue bell patch and an impressive daffodil lawn during spring; a topiary garden, two aviaries, a magnificent laburnum arch, a peony walk highlighted with climbing roses, as well as numerous pergolas, ponds, fountains and statues. Later in the day we arrive in Bendigo at our accommodation for check in and dinner.

Overnight Bendigo: Quality Inn Colonial

Day 5. Thurs 24 March: Bendigo - Melbourne Airport - Sydney/Brisbane

Breakfast & Lunch

After breakfast and check out this morning we travel 100 years an hour on the famous **Bendigo Historic Talking Tram**. Once aboard the meticulously restored tram the expert commentary explains the history and significance of the buildings and locations as they pass us by. We travel past and hear the story of the Majestic Sacred Heart Cathedral, The Alexandra Fountain, The Grand Beehive Store and the world famous Shamrock Hotel. Next stop is the **Golden Dragon Museum and Gardens**, a living history of the Chinese people of Bendigo from the goldrush to the present day. As well as the museum and its wonderful dragons, processional regalia, stunning textiles and other treasures we also visit the Yi Yuan Gardens (Garden of Joy). Based on the Imperial Palace in Beijing, the architecture and construction of the gardens is authentic in every way. After our tour and morning tea we are joined by one of the **'Friends of Bendigo Botanical Gardens'** for a guided tour through one of regional Victoria's earliest botanic gardens. Established in 1857, and which was included on the Victorian Heritage Register in 2001 due to it's historical, architectural, scientific, botanical, aesthetic and social significance. The Heritage Garden forms a picturesque landscape around a central billabong surrounded by various display gardens and plant collections. After our tour and **lunch at the Botanical Hotel** we head back down to Melbourne Airport for check in and our flight back home after a wonderful few days down amongst the historical Victorian Goldfields regions and stunning begonia displays of the Ballarat Begonia Festival with Trade Travel.

Flight VA859 Departs Melbourne 1600 arrives Sydney 1725

Flight VA337 Departs Melbourne 1600 arrives Brisbane 1710



Begonia's & Goldfields Discovery



Tour Highlights:

Lunch Boatshed Restaurant Lake Wendouree; Ballarat Botanical Gardens - Robert Clark Botanical Gardens Conservatory Begonia Displays, Prime Ministers Avenue, Stoddard Collection, Statuary Pavilion, Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial; Ballarat Guided Highlights Tour; Sovereign Hill Gold Mining Township; Gold Museum; The Eureka Flag; The Spectacular New Sound & Light Show 'Aura'; Lambley Gardens & Nursery; Creswick Woollen Mill - Ryzowy Gallery, Mill Shop; Highlights Tour Daylesford & Hepburn Springs; Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens & Begonia House; Daylesford - Galleries, Shops, Cafés & Mill Markets; Daylesford Convent Gallery; Macedon Ranges - M/Tea Top of the Range Cafe; Macedon Memorial Cross & Lookout; Forest Glade Gardens & The "Stokes Collection"; Bendigo Historic Talking Tram; Golden Dragon Museum & Garden; Bendigo Botanical Gardens plus more.

Tour Price Includes:

- Return flights to Melbourne ex Sydney/Brisbane
- Luxury coach travel
- 4 Nights quality accommodation
- Breakfast, lunch & dinner as per itinerary (11 Meals)
- All entry fees & guides as per itinerary

\$1898.00 per person Twin Share Ex Sydney

\$1998.00 per person Twin Share Ex Brisbane

(Single Supplement \$336.00)

Tour cost based on minimum 20 pax

The tour prices valid for travel in 2022. Please note that the itinerary is subject to change without notice.

For information, bookings & travel insurance contact:

Trade Travel 1800 034 439

email: bookings@tradetravel.com



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