

Overview

This chapter includes information relating to Victoria's tourism and cultural activities, including the arts and recreation. Victoria is one of Australia's most diverse States with a variety of natural features, cultural activities and historic sites.

As a tourist attraction, for both international and domestic visitors, Victoria continues to make an important contribution to the growth of tourism within Australia. Metropolitan Melbourne attracts most of the State's international and domestic tourists but regional Victoria is also experiencing growth. The emerging and sustained tourism growth surrounding hallmark events (these include major sporting and cultural events) within the State has promoted Victoria to a national and international audience, and has contributed to the development of major infrastructure.

Melbourne is viewed as a culturally diverse, vibrant and green city where there is always plenty to do and a lot to see. Lifestyle features prominently in Melbourne promotions, with shopping, dining, café culture and sport topping the list of things to do. Cultural activities such as performing arts, film, literature, sports, recreation, religious practice and activities based around conservation and enjoying the natural environment provide a basis for community expression, and all share an interrelationship with tourism.

Tourism

Tourism is one of Australia's largest industries. In 1995–96, the Bureau of Tourism Research estimated that the tourism industry comprised 10.5% of Gross Domestic Product. Furthermore, total tourist expenditure is estimated at \$60.4 billion, and the tourism industry provides employment for approximately 694,000 persons directly, as well as over 1 million persons indirectly.

Overseas arrivals and departures

Short-term overseas visitors to Australia who specified Victoria as their main destination increased from 568,070 in 1996–97 to 651,940 in 1998–99 (table 11.1). Victoria's share of overseas arrivals to Australia increased from 13.4% in 1996–97 to 15.2% in 1998–99. Furthermore, the growth in visitor arrivals to Victoria in this period was 14.8% compared to 0.8% for Australia.

11.1 INTERNATIONAL VISITORS(a), Victoria as Main State of Intended Stay

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1998–99
	no.	no.	no.	%
Victoria	568 070	610 050	651 940	15.2
Australia(b)	4 252 650	4 220 010	4 288 030	100.0

(a) Short-term arrivals who stayed less than 12 months in Australia. (b) Includes 'not stated'.

Source: Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia (Cat. no. 3401.0); Unpublished data, Overseas Arrivals and Departures Survey.

In 1998–99, the major source of international visitors to Australia who specified Victoria as their main State of intended stay was New Zealand, with 19.7% of the State visitor total (table 11.2). This was followed by the United Kingdom and Ireland with 11.7%, the United States of America with 10.0% and Japan and Singapore, each with 7.6%.

From 1996–97 to 1998–99, the most significant growth in visitor numbers to Victoria came from Singapore, with a 57.4% increase, followed by United Kingdom and Ireland (22.9%) and the United States of America (19.7%) (table 11.2).

11.2 COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS, Victoria Main State of Intended Stay(a)

Country of residence	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	Percent of 1998–99 total	Percentage change 1996–97 to 1998–99
	no.	no.	no.	%	%
New Zealand	117 300	126 230	128 580	19.7	9.6
UK and Ireland	62 010	70 610	76 190	11.7	22.9
USA	54 320	59 290	65 010	10.0	19.7
Japan	41 610	50 970	49 600	7.6	19.2
Singapore	31 350	42 690	49 330	7.6	57.4
Malaysia	23 830	24 900	28 280	4.3	18.7
Indonesia	31 430	24 550	22 930	3.5	-27.0
Hong Kong	22 440	23 580	21 340	3.3	-4.9
Germany	19 880	20 740	20 670	3.2	4.0
Taiwan	13 400	13 320	13 470	2.1	0.5
Thailand	17 790	8 920	13 040	2.0	-26.7
Other countries	132 710	144 230	163 490	25.1	23.2
All countries	568 070	610 050	651 940	100.0	14.8

(a) Short-term arrivals who stayed less than 12 months in Australia.

Source: Unpublished data, Overseas Arrivals and Departures Survey.

Holidaying was the most common reason (39.2%) for overseas visitor arrivals into Australia who stated Victoria as their main destination in 1998–99 (table 11.3). The proportion of visitors who nominated visiting friends/relatives decreased from 27.8% in 1996–97 to 26.0% in 1998–99, with the proportion for business decreasing from 16.3% to 15.0%.

11.3 INTERNATIONAL VISITORS(a), Victoria as Main State of Intended Stay—Reason for Journey

Reason for journey	1996–97		1997–98		1998–99	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Convention/conference	17 570	3.1	15 390	2.5	19 600	3.0
Business	92 650	16.3	99 710	16.3	97 730	15.0
Visiting friends/relatives	158 010	27.8	172 930	28.3	169 300	26.0
Holiday	231 950	40.8	244 740	40.1	255 590	39.2
Employment	4 580	0.8	5 020	0.8	6 680	1.0
Education	30 190	5.3	32 700	5.4	33 900	5.2
Other and not stated	33 100	5.8	39 540	6.5	69 140	10.6
Total	568 070	100.0	610 050	100.0	651 940	100.0

(a) Short-term arrivals who stayed less than 12 months in Australia.

Source: Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia (Cat. no. 3401.0); Unpublished data, Overseas Arrivals and Departures Survey.

During 1998–99, there were 771,360 short-term departures of Victorian residents, an increase of 6.7% over 1997–98 (table 11.4). The five main destinations for Victorian travellers were New Zealand (14.0%), Indonesia (11.0%), the United States of America (10.8%), United Kingdom and Ireland (9.8%), and Thailand (4.5%).

11.4 SHORT-TERM DEPARTURES(a), By Victorian Residents

Country of stay	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1998–99
	no.	no.	no.	%
New Zealand	85 950	93 080	107 750	14.0
Indonesia	57 570	73 240	84 790	11.0
USA	83 880	87 220	83 320	10.8
UK and Ireland	72 430	79 030	75 870	9.8
Thailand	21 360	25 870	34 570	4.5
Hong Kong	38 120	30 280	31 380	4.1
Malaysia	28 900	26 520	27 700	3.6
Singapore	18 830	21 580	26 760	3.5
China(b)	17 250	21 820	22 840	3.0
Italy	22 170	20 940	20 380	2.6
Other	227 290	243 470	256 010	33.1
Total	673 740	723 060	771 360	100.0

(a) Short-term departures who intended to stay overseas less than 12 months. (b) Excludes Hong Kong and Taiwan Province.

Source: Unpublished data Overseas Arrivals and Departures Survey.

International and domestic tourism

The International Visitor Survey conducted by the Bureau of Tourism Research showed that in 1998, over 1 million international visitors aged 15 years and over came to Victoria, spending 19.9 million nights in the State (table 11.5). Although 50% of international visitors came to Victoria for holiday/leisure purposes, they comprised just 27% of visitor nights. Persons who came for “other” purposes spent almost 7.8 million nights in Victoria, or 39% of total international visitor nights.

Domestic visitors to Victoria (which include inter and intrastate visitors) differed from their international counterparts in that they were slightly less likely to come for holiday/leisure purposes, comprising 46% of visitors and 48% of visitor nights. In total, there were almost 19 million domestic visitors, who spent 55.7 million nights in Victoria.

11.5 INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC TOURISM(a), By Primary Purpose of Visit—1998

Purpose of trip	International visitors		Domestic visitors	
	Visitors	Visitor nights	Visitors	Visitor nights
	'000	'000	'000	'000
Holiday/leisure	512	5 312	8 651	26 968
Visiting friends/relatives	196	5 412	6 463	18 999
Business	156	1 410	3 024	7 669
Other	151	7 780	857	2 082
Total	1 015	19 915	18 995	55 718

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.

Source: Bureau of Tourism Research: International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey.

Backpacking

Backpacking is an important component of international tourism in Australia, one that is characterised by visitors staying for longer periods of time, spending more money, and visiting more regions than other tourists. In 1998, there were 146,600 backpacker visitors to Victoria compared to 129,500 in 1997, an increase of 13% (table 11.6). Furthermore, backpacker numbers have increased 36% since 1996. The increase in backpacker visitor nights has also been significant, with numbers increasing 22% since 1996.

11.6 BACKPACKER VISITORS(a)(b)

	1996	1997	1998
	'000	'000	'000
Visitors	107.9	129.5	146.6
Visitor nights	2 931	3 018	3 589

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over. (b) A backpacker is defined as an international visitor who spent one or more nights in a backpacker hotel or youth hostel during their stay in Australia.

Source: Bureau of Tourism Research, *International Visitor Survey*.

Tourist accommodation

At June 1999, Victoria had 698 licensed hotels, motels, guest houses and serviced apartments, a 4.3% increase on the June 1998 figure (table 11.7). Total takings from accommodation were \$718 million for the year 1998–99, compared to \$653 million in 1997–98. Although motels and guest houses comprised 73% of all accommodation establishments in June 1999, they accounted for just 35% of total takings. Licenced hotels with facilities, with 17% of the accommodation establishments, received \$356 million in takings, or 50% of the total.

11.7 TOURIST ACCOMMODATION(a)

Particulars	Unit	1997–98	1998–99
LICENSED HOTELS WITH FACILITIES			
Establishments (June quarter)	no.	115	121
Guest rooms (June quarter)	no.	9 856	10 766
Room nights occupied	'000	2 259.1	2 476.6
Room occupancy rate	%	65.5	65.6
Persons employed (June quarter)	no.	13 856	14 406
Takings from accommodation	\$'000	331 256	356 050
MOTELS AND GUEST HOUSES WITH FACILITIES			
Establishments (June quarter)	no.	504	507
Guest rooms (June quarter)	no.	16 391	16 214
Room nights occupied	'000	3 052.9	2 983.2
Room occupancy rate	%	50.9	50.5
Persons employed (June quarter)	no.	5 893	5 822
Takings from accommodation	\$'000	252 769	252 577
SERVICED APARTMENTS			
Establishments (June quarter)	no.	50	70
Guest rooms (June quarter)	no.	2 603	3 786
Room nights occupied	'000	532.0	833.5
Room occupancy rate	%	67.4	67.3
Persons employed (June quarter)	no.	1 005	1,497
Takings from accommodation	\$'000	69 151	109 249
TOTAL ESTABLISHMENTS			
Establishments (June quarter)	no.	669	698
Guest rooms (June quarter)	no.	28 850	30 766
Room nights occupied	'000	5 844.0	6 293.2
Room occupancy rate	%	57.1	57.6
Persons employed (June quarter)	no.	20 754	21 725
Takings from accommodation	\$'000	653 176	717 876

(a) Comprising establishments with 15 or more rooms or units.

Source: *Tourist Accommodation, Victoria* (Cat. no. 8635.2.40.001).

Culture

National Estate

The preservation and use of historic sites are important aspects of cultural expression within the community. Many places in Australia have aesthetic, historic, scientific, economic or social significance for the present community and future generations. These include natural environments, historic buildings and sites of significance to Aboriginal people, and are collectively known as the National Estate (table 11.8).

The Australian Heritage Commission is the peak advisory body to the Commonwealth Government regarding identification and conservation of the National Estate. The Commission is responsible for maintaining the Register of the National Estate. The register lists places identified as being of cultural and natural importance which should be conserved for present and future generations.

11.8 PLACES ON THE REGISTER OF THE NATIONAL ESTATE—30 June 1999

	Indigenous	Historic	Natural	Total	% of Australia
Victoria	106	2 280	215	2 601	21.0

Source: *Australian Heritage Commission, Annual Report*.

Perceptions of what is of heritage value change over time. In the past, architecture and buildings were given pre-eminence as cultural icons. Now, Australian heritage is increasingly perceived as a record of our past, in all its facets, which assists us as a nation to understand our identity: where we have come from and where our future lies. At 30 June 1999, there were 2,601 places in Victoria on the National Estate, which was 21% of the Australian total.

Cultural venues and funding

There were 332 museums in Victoria employing 748 persons in paid employment and 3,284 volunteers at June 1998 (table 11.9). Museum income totalled \$32,553 million and expenses \$31,397 million.

11.9 KEY AGGREGATES, Selected Museums—1997–98

Selected characteristics	Unit	
Museums		
Art museums	no.	52
Historic places	no.	66
Other	no.	214
<i>Total (at end June 1998)</i>	<i>no.</i>	<i>332</i>
Employment		
Persons (at end June 1998)	no.	748
Volunteers (during the month of June 1998)	no.	3 284
Income		
Government funding	\$'000	23 319
Admissions income	\$'000	1 704
Other income	\$'000	*7 531
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$'000</i>	<i>32 553</i>
Expenses		
Wages and salaries	\$'000	16 661
Other expenses	\$'000	14 739
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$'000</i>	<i>31 397</i>
Exhibitions developed	no.	1 260

Source: Selected Museums, Australia (Cat. no. 4145.0).

Governments in Australia provide considerable financial support to organisations in the culture industry, across a diverse range of art and cultural activities.

The Victorian State Government provided funding of \$370 million for cultural purposes in 1997–98 (table 11.10). This comprised \$254.7 million (68.8%) for cultural facilities and services, \$103.7 million (28.0%) for culture n.e.c. (including recreational facilities and services), and \$11.6 million (3.1%) for broadcasting and film.

11.10 CULTURAL FUNDING BY VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT—1997–98

Particulars	\$m
Cultural facilities & services	254.7
Culture n.e.c.(a)	103.7
Broadcasting & film	11.6
Total	370.0

(a) 'Culture n.e.c.' includes 'recreational facilities and services'.

Source: Unpublished data, Cultural Funding Survey (Cat. no. 4183.0).

Attendance at cultural venues and sporting events

Apart from State Government, Victorian Local Government spent \$163.1 million on cultural funding during 1997–98. Libraries accounted for \$83.7 million of this, public halls and civic centres \$38.7 million, and other cultural facilities and services \$32.7 million.

Table 11.11 presents data showing the perceived importance of cultural venues. In November 1997, libraries were perceived by 95% of Victorian residents as highly valued venues, followed by performing arts venues (78%), museums (75%) and art galleries (73%).

11.11 PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL VENUES(a)—November 1997

Type of cultural venue	Very important	Important	Not important	Don't Know
	%	%	%	%
Libraries	69.5	25.8	3.3	1.4
Museums	31.9	43.1	21.4	3.6
Performing arts	26.9	51.0	16.8	5.3
Art galleries	21.7	51.4	21.7	5.3

(a) Refers to a person's view about the importance of cultural venues in their community.

Source: *Public Attitudes to the Arts, Australia* (Cat. no. 4157.0).

Cinemas were attended by 2.6 million people (68.3% of the Victorian population) at least once during the year to April 1999; followed by botanic gardens (40.9%); national, state or local libraries (37.5%); and animal or marine parks (36.1%) (table 11.12). Popular music venues (24.9%) were well attended, closely followed by art galleries (21.0%).

11.12 CULTURAL VENUE ATTENDANCE—May 1998 to April 1999

	Age (years)			Persons attending	Total Attendance rate(a)
	15–24	25–44	45 and over		
	'000	'000	'000	'000	%
Cinema	604.3	1 124.1	830.8	2 559.1	68.3
Botanic gardens	273.9	636.9	621.5	1 532.3	40.9
National, state or local library	278.1	584.4	541.3	1 403.8	37.5
Animal or marine parks					
Zoo	183.6	500.8	264.3	948.7	25.3
Animal or marine park other than zoos	131.4	379.6	216.3	727.2	19.4
<i>Total animal or marine parks(b)</i>	255.0	691.8	407.4	1 354.1	36.1
Popular music	257.6	437.5	239.0	934.1	24.9
Art gallery	148.0	284.3	353.9	786.2	21.0
Opera or musical					
Both opera and musical	*5.4	26.8	30.7	63.0	1.7
Opera only	*9.8	24.5	41.3	75.5	2.0
Musical only	78.7	218.7	217.3	514.7	13.7
<i>Total</i>	93.9	270.0	289.3	653.2	17.4
Theatre	118.2	274.9	256.4	649.5	17.3
School college or university library	353.0	181.6	83.1	617.7	16.5
Museum	118.1	244.0	238.9	601.0	16.0
Dance	62.8	130.3	127.0	320.0	8.5
Classical music	36.5	106.4	162.2	305.1	8.1
Other performing arts					
Circus	68.0	208.8	95.8	372.6	9.9
Other performing arts — other than circuses	61.4	180.1	127.3	368.9	9.8
<i>Total other performing arts(b)</i>	121.8	355.7	207.5	685.1	18.3

(a) Attendance rate is persons attending the venue at least once during the year as a percentage of the civilian population. (b) Total does not equal sum of components as a person can visit more than one component.

Source: Unpublished data, *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues* (Cat. no. 4114.0).

Recreation

Australian rules football was the most popular sport, attended by 33.9% of the Victorian population aged 15 years and over at least once during the year to April 1999 (table 11.13). Other popular sports were horse racing (attendance rate of 13.0%) and motor sports (11.6%). Overall, attendance rates for males were higher than those for females, especially for Australian rules football (41.9% for males, 26.1% for females), motor sports (17.0%, 6.4%) and cricket (11.8%, 4.5%). The only sports for which the attendance rates for females were higher than that of males were tennis and netball.

11.13 SPORTING EVENT ATTENDANCE(a)—May 1998 to April 1999

Sporting event	Number			Attendance rate(b)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	'000	'000	'000	%	%	%
Australian rules football	768.8	500.2	1 269.0	41.9	26.1	33.9
Horse racing	256.6	232.2	488.8	14.0	12.1	13.0
Motor sports	311.0	123.3	434.3	17.0	6.4	11.6
Cricket	216.4	85.7	302.2	11.8	4.5	8.1
Tennis	124.7	131.6	256.3	6.8	6.9	6.8
Basketball	97.8	78.4	176.2	5.3	4.1	4.7
Harness racing	91.1	72.6	163.8	5.0	3.8	4.4
Soccer	73.4	31.2	104.6	4.0	1.6	2.8
Netball	13.1	52.4	65.5	0.7	2.7	1.7
Rugby league	47.0	15.4	62.5	2.6	0.8	1.7
Dog racing	36.9	20.6	57.5	2.0	1.1	1.5
Golf	39.8	9.3	49.0	2.2	0.5	1.3

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over. (b) Attendance rate is persons attending the sporting event at least once during the year as a percentage of the sex civilian population of the same sex.

Source: Unpublished data, Sports Attendance (Cat. no. 4174.0).

Sports involvement

In 1997, 32% of persons aged 15 and over (40% of males and 25% of females) had either paid or unpaid involvement with sport (table 11.14). Involvement in sport was more likely to be unpaid—a total of 82,900 persons (7.1%) either had paid or paid and unpaid involvement in sport in the 12 months to March 1997.

11.14 PERSONS WITH PAID AND UNPAID INVOLVEMENT IN SPORT(a)—April 1996 to March 1997

	Sport involvement					Participation rate
	Paid involvement	Unpaid involvement only	Paid and unpaid involvement	Total	No involvement	
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%
Males	27.0	662.8	22.5	712.2	1 060.6	40.2
Females	16.2	425.5	17.3	459.0	1 392.2	24.8
Persons	43.1	1 088.3	39.8	1 171.2	2 452.8	32.3

(a) Persons aged 15 years and over.

Source: *Involvement in Sport, Australia* (Cat. no. 6285.0).

A total of 2,004,900 Victorians participated in sport or physical activity in 1998–99, resulting in a participation rate of 58.2% (table 11.15). Participation rates were higher for males (61.4%) than females (55%). Participation rates declined steadily as age increased—the participation rate for 18–24 year olds was 81.3% compared to 35% for persons aged 65 years and over.

11.15 PARTICIPATION IN SPORT(a)—1998–99

Age	Number participating			Participation rate (%)		
	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
18–24 years	196.4	180.2	376.6	83.4	79.1	81.3
25–34 years	266.6	236.3	502.9	74.6	64.8	69.6
35–44 years	213.4	206.1	419.6	60.6	57.4	59.0
45–54 years	174.5	161.2	335.7	57.7	52.6	55.1
55–64 years	87.4	94.7	182.1	43.4	46.6	45.0
65 years and over	99.0	88.9	188.0	41.3	30.0	35.0
Total	1 037.4	967.5	2 004.9	61.4	55.0	58.2

(a) Relates to persons aged 18 years and over who participated in sport or physical activity over a 12-month period prior to interview during 1998–99.

Source: *Participation in Sport and Physical Activities, Australia* (Cat. no. 4177.0).

References

Data sources

The tourism statistics contained in this chapter are based on information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Bureau of Tourism Research (BTR). Care should be taken in comparing data from these sources because of differing survey methodologies, such as differences in population age groups.

The BTR International Visitor Survey (IVS) is the major source of information on travel patterns of international visitors to Australia. It provides a profile of the characteristics, travel behaviour and expenditure of international visitors. The IVS was first conducted in 1969 and then intermittently throughout the 1970s. A survey has been conducted annually since 1981, with the exception of 1982 and 1987.

The BTR National Visitor Survey (NVS) began in 1998. Major improvements to the previous Domestic Tourism Monitor (1978–79 to March 1998) mean that data should not be compared with NVS results.

ABS sources

Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia (Cat. no. 3401.0)

Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues (Cat. no. 4114.0)

Selected Museums, Australia (Cat. no. 4145.0)

Sports Attendance, Australia (Cat. no. 4147.0)

Public Attitudes to the Arts, Australia (Cat. no. 4157.0)

Participation in Sport and Physical Activities, Australia (Cat. no. 4177.0)

Cultural Funding, Australia (Cat. no. 4183.0)

Involvement in Sport, Australia (Cat. no. 6285.0)

Tourist Accommodation, Victoria (Cat. no. 8635.2.40.001)

- Non-ABS sources** Australian Heritage Commission, *Annual Report*.
Bureau of Tourism Research, *National Tourism Monitor*.
Bureau of Tourism Research, *International Visitor Survey*.
- Internet** Bureau of Tourism Research <http://www.btr.gov.au>

