

Pinot Coast Wine Route Touring Itinerary 1

Pinot around Port Phillip

Where: The coastline surrounding Melbourne – west and south east of the city.

Best for: Discovering world-class cool-climate pinot noir along Australia's raw and majestic southern coastline.

What to expect: Windswept beaches, rugged coastlines and hillside vineyards; outstanding food and wine and beautiful views in the lap of luxury.

The experience:

- **Taste** subtle, complex pinot noir that is as pristine and seductive as the ocean that carves the southern coastline.
- **See** where the vineyards meet the ocean.
- **Smell** the fresh, cleansing sea air.
- **Feel** the bracing waters of the Southern Ocean against your skin.
- **Hear** the clink of crystal at some of Victoria's most stunning culinary destinations.

DAY ONE – GEELONG

9:30am: Check out of your hotel in Melbourne, pick up your rental car and follow the M1 over the city's famous West Gate Bridge. You're bound for Geelong, Victoria's second largest city, and a gateway to the Pinot Coast.

11am: Pull into [Provenance Wines](#), a winery built into a beautifully restored bluestone paper mill on the banks of the Barwon River. Here, at James Halliday's Best Value Winery of 2019, you'll be able to see wine being made from the cellar door as you taste your way through the estate's pinot noirs. Order one of the delicious antipasto platters to graze on while you taste.

12pm: Jump back in your car and drive 20 minutes to [Clyde Park Vineyard](#). The bistro, which spills out onto a sun-drenched terrace with views of Geelong's Moorabool Valley, is a great spot for lunch. Order a woodfired pizza and a glass of single block pinot noir and settle in.

2pm: Head for Point Lonsdale and the boutique [Lon Retreat](#) – your home for the night. It will take you about an hour to get there from Clyde Park Vineyard, which means you'll have plenty of time when you arrive to book in for a spa treatment. With options ranging from soothing facials and detoxifying body wraps to long soaks in the mineral water fed spas, relaxation is all but guaranteed.

6pm: Drive back into Geelong and enjoy a pre-dinner drink at [Geelong Cellar Door](#). It almost exclusively stocks wines from local producers, so it's a great way to taste an array of cool-climate pinot noir in one place.

7:30pm: Walk five minutes to [IGNI](#), a two-hatted (the Australian equivalent of two Michelin stars) fine diner hidden behind a dark timber facade. Chef Aaron Turner is a champion of local and native ingredients – expect to see Point Henry saltbush, Portarlington mussels or foraged samphire on your five- or eight-course tasting menu.

DAY TWO – BELLARINE PENINSULA

7am: Wake to the sound of crashing waves at nearby Point Lonsdale back beach. It's only a short stroll from Lon Retreat if you fancy an early beach walk to take in the cleansing sea air. If you'd prefer a more leisurely morning, you can order fresh eggs, bacon and other breakfast goodies to your room.

8:30am: Check out of Lon Retreat and drive 15 minutes to [Sea All Dolphins Swims](#) at Queenscliff. Spend the morning exploring the maritime diversity of the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park, where you'll get a chance to snorkel in some of Australia's most biodiverse waters, and swim with dolphins and seals. If you're not feeling overly adventurous, you can watch from the comfort of the boat.

1pm: You've no doubt worked up an appetite, so make your way to [Jack Rabbit](#) for lunch – a 20-minute drive from Queenscliff. There are two onsite restaurants to choose from: the more casual House of Jack Rabbit offers dishes like local cider-battered gummy shark with fries and lemon aioli or house-smoked seafood platters. At the upmarket Jack Rabbit Restaurant, expect charred octopus with burnt lemon and native finger lime, or seared kangaroo loin with wattleseed and macadamia granola. Whichever you choose, be sure to include a glass of the estate's pinot noir.

3pm: Head next door to [Terindah Estate](#) for a wine tasting in their stunning cellar door, or order a glass of pinot noir to enjoy on the beautiful deck.

3.45pm: Make your way to the [Queenscliff car ferry terminal](#) – you should allow 30 minutes from Terindah Estate. Ferries leave every hour on the hour, but vehicles need to be checked in 40 minutes prior to departure time. It's then a spectacular 40 minutes across the bay to Sorrento, on the Mornington Peninsula. Keep your eyes peeled for dolphins.

6pm: Drive from the Sorrento ferry terminal to [Lindenderry Red Hill](#) and check-in to your room. Recently refreshed by Melbourne design studio Hecker Guthrie, the luxurious country-house hotel features exquisite gardens, vineyards and a cellar door, and guest lounges with open fireplaces.

7:30pm: Dinner time. The restaurant at Lindenderry offers both a la carte and tasting menu options. On both, expect dishes like Koo Wee Rup asparagus with baba ganoush, parsley and paperbark, or a kaffir lime meringue-based Eton mess with eucalyptus sorbet, vanilla custard and finger lime.

DAY THREE – MORNINGTON PENINSULA

8am: When you wake, head back to the hotel's restaurant for a gourmet breakfast of coffee, smoothies made from local Sunny Ridge strawberries, eggs made to order and other delights.

9am: Head to the [Peninsula Hot Springs](#), a 20-minute drive from Red Hill and spend the morning in the healing waters. Explore the thermal pools hidden away among the trees, fed by natural hot springs deep in the earth.

12:30pm: After a rejuvenating soak, make your way to [Point Leo Estate](#) for lunch. It's about a 30-minute drive from the hot springs.

1pm: One of the Mornington Peninsula's biggest drawcards, lunch at Point Leo Estate can be enjoyed either in the more casual bistro, or in the two-hatted fine diner Laura. Be sure to bookend your meal with a stroll through the estate's stunning sculpture park.

4pm: Enjoy a post-lunch pinot noir on the lawn at [Foxeys Hangout](#), or sneak upstairs to the barrel room for a quick tasting.

5pm: Make your way back to Lindenderry and relax in your hotel room or one of the guest lounges before dinner.

7pm: Dinner tonight is at [Ten Minutes by Tractor](#), a winery restaurant just five-minutes' drive from your hotel. Chef Adam Sanderson's menu is driven by what's local and in season on the Mornington Peninsula – expect dishes like kangaroo wrapped in pastry (a perfect pairing for pinot), or a sweet-savoury dessert of fresh peas, buttermilk ice-cream and green pinecone.

DAY FOUR – MORNINGTON PENINSULA

9:30am: Check out of Lindenderry and make your way to [Johnny Ripe](#), a produce-drive bakery in Main Ridge – less than 10-minutes' drive. Enjoy a leisurely breakfast of poached eggs, coffee, and one of their famous homemade apple pies.

11am: After breakfast, make your way to [Bass and Flinders Distillery](#) – about a 10-minute drive – for a gin masterclass. Here, you'll taste Bass and Flinders' range and learn how to blend your own, which you'll get to take home with you.

1:30pm: It's time for a picnic lunch at [Montalto](#). Choose from one of ten exclusive and secluded sites throughout the estate and enjoy loaves of crunchy, house-baked bread with local olive oil, lightly-smoked chicken with fresh salads, cheese and, of course, pinot.

4pm: Your final stop is [Crittenden Estate](#) – about a 15-minute drive from Montalto. The family's patriarch, Garry Crittenden, was a pioneer of Mornington Peninsula pinot, and the cellar door is built into what was once the family's home. Today, winemaking operations are led by Garry's son Rollo Crittenden – say hello if you spot him during your tasting.

5pm: Head back to your Melbourne hotel. It should take you just over an hour to get there from Crittenden Estate, leaving you plenty of time to enjoy an evening in the city.

Find out more

Australia's Pinot Coast wine trail wraps around some 750km of Victoria's raw and spectacular Southern Ocean coastline. The trail consists of three distinct regions –

Geelong/Bellarine, Mornington Peninsula and Gippsland – all of which produce outstanding maritime pinot noir. With some 146 cellar doors and some of Australia's most acclaimed fine dining restaurants there are plenty of opportunities to try these wines. For more information about exploring the Pinot Coast wine trail, visit visitvictoria.com/pinotcoast

- *Always be sure to enjoy Victoria's wine regions safely with a designated driver.*