

*join us on a Holiday Coach tour of
the Bendigo and Ballarat Goldfields
8 days / 7 nights ... with Mary and Brian
We pick you up and return you home*

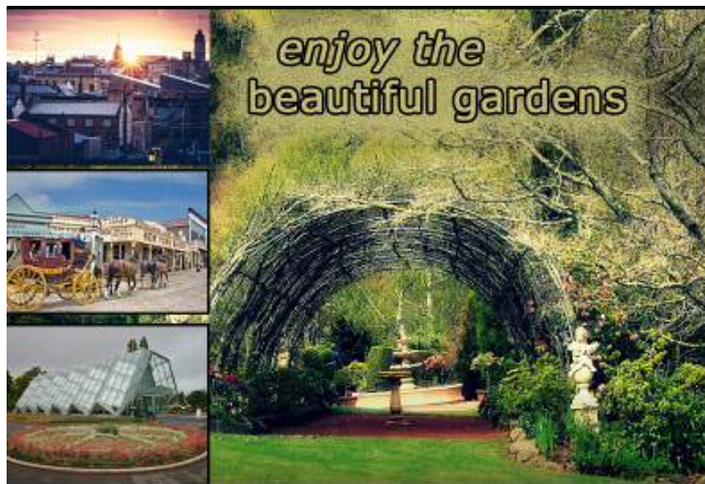


Tour Departs: 20 May - Sunday 27 May 2018

The Central Victorian Goldfields Region
Tour the stage coach route of the 1850's steeped in history with the discovery of gold. This gracious town with its exquisite gardens, noble statues and magnificent architecture.

Tour Highlights:

Noorilim Estate Homestead and Gardens; Heathcote Heritage Tour; Bendigo Historic Talking Tram; Victoria Hill Mining Reserve Discovery Tour; Golden Dragon Museum; Bendigo's "Stunning" Town Hall; The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion; Bendigo Pottery Workshop, Showroom & Museum; Bendigo's Ulumbarra Theatre - Old Sandhurst Gaol; "Beautiful" Macedon Ranges; Forest Glade Gardens & "Astonishing Stokes Collection"; Mount Macedon Memorial Cross; Ballarat Highlights Tour; Ballarat Botanic Gardens - Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial, Statuary Ave. of Prime Ministers, Robert Clark Conservatory; Sovereign Hill Gold Mining Township; Gold Museum; Creswick Woollen Mill - "A Very Fine Yarn"; Daylesford Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens; The Timber Benders; Seymour Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk; Rollonin Cafe Lunch plus lots more!



Tour Inclusions:

- ✓ Pick up from your home, transport and return
(Sydney Metropolitan area only)
- ✓ Luxury Coach Travel Seatbelts & Restroom
- ✓ All Fully cooked breakfasts
- ✓ 7 three course Dinners with choices
- ✓ Lunch days 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
- ✓ All Entry Fees and Guides as per Itinerary
- ✓ Escorted tour

Tour Fee including GST:

Members	\$2497.00
	per person twin share
Non Members	\$2547.00
	per person twin share
Single Supplement	\$476.00

Minimum loading 20 passengers book and pay
by Thursday 22 March 2018
Please note that the itinerary is
subject to change without notice

HolidayCoachTours.com.au

for Bookings and enquiries contact **Brian and Mary**



Freecall 1800 444 700

Book@HolidayCoachTours.com.au



"A journey is best measured in friends, rather than miles" - Tim Cahill

Itinerary Bendigo & Ballarat Central Victorian Goldfields Region

Day 1. Sun 20 May: Home Port - Wangaratta Dinner

This morning we begin our drive down into Victoria to explore the history of the Victorian Gold Fields Region. We enjoy several refreshment stops along the way including lunch and continue into **Wangaratta** via Holbrook, arriving at our accommodation late afternoon to check in before dinner.

Overnight: Quality Hotel Wangaratta Gateway

Day 2. Mon 21 May: Noorilim Estate - Heathcote - Bendigo Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Today we visit the **Noorilim Estate Homestead and Gardens**, situated in the Goulburn Murray River system, the Estate has been around since 1879 as a thoroughbred horse stud, a sheep and cattle station and mostly recently a vineyard. Noorilim, classified by the National Trust, is one of the grandest homesteads ever erected in Victoria and reflects the affluence of 19th century pastoralists and their role in building the Australian economy and nation. After a Devonshire morning tea and tour at the Estate, we continue our drive across to Bendigo via **Heathcote** where we enjoy a stop for lunch. After lunch we are **met by a local guide**, with a knowledge of the gold rush history and the rich indigenous history we learn what the area has to offer and explore the stories of days gone by. The streetscape provides a glimpse of gold rush times, with the Old Gaol, Courthouse and Shire Offices fine examples of the architecture of the times. Mining relics are dotted across the area as another reminder of yesteryear. We then continued into **Bendigo** where we check into our accommodation and enjoy a rest before dinner.

Overnight: Quality Inn Colonial, Bendigo

Day 3. Tues 22 May: Bendigo Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Today we experience the history of Bendigo as we travel 100 years an hour on the famous **Bendigo Historic Talking Tram**. Once onboard the meticulously restored tram the expert commentary explains the history and significance of the buildings and locations as they pass us by. We hear the story of the Majestic Sacred Heart Cathedral, The Alexandra Fountain, The Grand Beehive Store and the world famous Shamrock Hotel. After our tram tour we are **joined by our local guide from the Bendigo Historical Society** and proceed to the **Victoria Hill Mining Reserve**. During its 97 years of operation, the Victoria Hill mine yielded about \$8bn worth of gold in today's values and was the deepest mine in the world at 4,613 feet. The mine appeared on Australia's first pound note printed in 1913. We can view the 150 year old Coath Cottage nearby which was almost destroyed in the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires and has since undergone restoration. Those fit and able may climb the poppet head tower for magnificent views of Bendigo then wander through the reserve where we'll find several historical and natural landmarks as well as old mining relics from the golden days. The Goldmines Hotel opposite the reserve built in 1872, has historic significance - unlike many historic hotels which have had their layout remodelled and refurbished this hotel has retained its individual rooms and layout. Adorned by original décor, antiques and collectables it has a remarkably authentic feel, with beautiful old gardens creating a quaint atmosphere. Our morning over we proceed to the **Golden Dragon Museum** where we enjoy a **light lunch** followed by a **guided tour** through the museum and beautiful gardens. The museum houses the world's best collection of Chinese processional regalia and features the world's longest and oldest imperial dragons, which includes Sun Loong and Loong, who have been in the annual Easter Monday procession for over 100 years. The exhibition called "The Bendigo Chinese Community - A Unique History" depicts the history of the Chinese Community since the famous gold rush days. We then step back into a golden era as we experience one of the most remarkable boom time buildings in Victoria. **Bendigo Town Hall's** stunning interior features elaborate plasterwork, extensive hand painted decoration and delicate gold leading. Later in the day we return to our accommodation for a rest before dinner.

Overnight: Quality Inn Colonial, Bendigo

Day 4. Wed 23 May: Bendigo Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

This morning we take a drive out through Maiden Gully and into the "bush" to visit and tour **The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion**, same in size and design as The Great Stupa of Gyantse in Tibet. Currently rising 25 meters above Bendigo's distinctive bushland, The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion has grown well past its halfway point. While a further 20 meters will be added to complete the exterior there is already a lot to see at



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this amazing project which is about to become the largest Buddhist Stupa in the Western world. On our visit we will see the large collection of relics and artwork as well as the large brass statue of Padmasambhava which is inside The Great Stupa. Our guided tour includes an introductory DVD, master plan, tour inside of the Great Stupa before a browse through the gift shop, to buy one of the unique gifts or some refreshments. We then travel across to Epsom for a tour of the **Bendigo Pottery** regarded by many to be Australia's most famous working pottery producing quality traditional ceramic cookware and tableware available at factory prices. **The Bendigo Pottery Interpretive Museum**, is a step back in time where we learn about the production processes, machinery, working conditions and traditional skills of Bendigo Pottery from its beginning in 1858 to the present.

Bendigo Pottery has one of the most significant collections of historic wood fired kilns in the world. After our tour we enjoy a **light lunch in the cafe** before travelling back into Bendigo to tour the **Bendigo Ulumbarra Theatre** which rises majestically from within what was once the Sandhurst Gaol. Discover the symbiotic fusion between 1860s penitentiary architecture and clever contemporary design to create an extraordinary arts and community facility. Our knowledgeable guide will share the stories of inhabitants old and new, while exploring this world class performance facility. Our day done we travel back to our accommodation to relax before dinner.

Overnight: Quality Inn Colonial, Bendigo

Day 5. Thurs 24 May: Bendigo - Macedon - Ballarat Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

We depart Bendigo this morning and make our way down into Ballarat via the **beautiful Macedon Ranges**. We call in at the simply **stunning Forest Glade** and tour the **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. 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. After an exhilarating morning we enjoy a **light lunch** with the ladies of the **Horticulture Society** before making our way up to the summit of **Mount Macedon to visit the Memorial Cross** which commemorates Australia's war fallen. Later in the day we arrive in Ballarat at our accommodation for check in and dinner.

Overnight: Bell Tower Inn, Ballarat

Day 6. Fri 25 May: Ballarat Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Today in beautiful Ballarat we are **joined by our local guide** and begin our **highlights tour of Ballarat** which will take in its rich historic buildings and the gold sites of Bakery Hill, Golden Point & Poverty Point. We also visit the **Ballarat Botanical Gardens** and take the opportunity to view the **Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial** which is a tribute to the sacrifice made by more than 35,000 young Australian service men and women. We can also view the exceptional statuary, the **Avenue of Prime Ministers** and floral displays in the **Robert Clark Conservatory**. After a cuppa at the gardens we make our way to the **Sovereign Hill Gold Mining Township** where all our Australian History comes alive and the spirit of the 1850's gold rush lives. Australia's foremost outdoor museum, Sovereign Hill re-creates Ballarat's first ten years after the discovery of gold in 1851 when thousands of international adventurers rushed to the Australian goldfields in search of fortune. By day, it's just like stepping back in time - from the hustle and bustle of Main Street where costumed ladies and gents parade their new-found wealth, to the excitement of the Red Hill Gully Diggings where we can pan for gold! **Witness a spectacular \$100,000 gold pour**, venture underground on a fully-guided gold mine tour or catch a horse-drawn coach and tour the town. Go shopping 1850s-style and visit hotels, schools and a theatre with goldfields entertainers. See steam-driven machinery in action and chat with our wheelwrights, candlemakers and confectioners as they ply their trades. The history continues at the **Gold Museum**, which houses a unique collection of alluvial gold, nuggets and displays relating to Ballarat's social and mining history. Later in the afternoon we make our way back to our accommodation before dinner.

Overnight: Bell Tower Inn, Ballarat



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Day 7. Sat 26 May: Ballarat - Daylesford - Wangaratta Breakfast & Dinner

We depart Ballarat today and begin making our way back home as we travel up through Creswick and Daylesford. Our stop in **Creswick is at the Woollen Mill** and will include “**A Very Fine Yarn**” which showcases the journey of fibre; all the way from its source on the alpaca, through the manufacturing process and how it ends up on the shop shelf. The exhibit gives a great insight into natural fibre, how luxurious fibres are processed and gives us a chance to see Australian manufacturing as it happens. We also have the chance to meet the resident alpacas and purchase Australian products made right at the Mill. We then continue through to Daylesford and take in the peace and tranquillity of the **Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens**, which still retain their 19th century character. Enjoy the views from the observation tower overlooking the township of Daylesford and surrounding countryside and visit the Begonia House, with its seasonal displays. We have a chance to explore Daylesford and purchase lunch. Before leaving this beautiful part of the world we take a look at the **Timber Benders**, an artisan business that has the capacity to provide steam bent timber to order. Using a range of antique and modern equipment they steam bend timber to create beautiful curves and some astounding furniture and products. Their range of products include benches, seats, railings, boats and window heads plus smaller delicate work such as hood bows for old cars, small round windows, royal tennis racquets, hand drums and saddler clamps. We then travel across to Seymour where we enjoy a break at **The Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk**.

The Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk is the only one of its kind in Australia dedicated to Vietnam Veterans. The Walk has been created using symbolic elements of Vietnam and over 60,000 names of every serviceman & servicewoman who served in the conflict are listed. Leaving Seymour we travel back past Benalla and into Wangaratta for check in and dinner.

Overnight: Quality Hotel Wangaratta Gateway

Day 8. Sun 27 May: Wangaratta - Homeport Breakfast & Lunch

Its home today as we depart Wangaratta and travel up along the Hume Highway through Holbrook and enjoy a comfort stop. We then make our way to **Bowling for lunch at the Rollonin Café**. Tony and Renata Ryan have revived the traditional slab hut to create a café that feels like it's from another era, with the horses and horse cart outside, the lush cottage garden, and the corrugated iron roofing on the charming Hut. After enjoying a light lunch we continue our journey up through Goulburn before arriving back home late afternoon after a memorable time away in the Victorian Goldfield's Region with Mary and Brian of Ezi Drive Coach Tours.



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