

VA & NZ Corporate Famil

# Melbourne



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# Melbourne Corporate Famil

TABS ON  
**TRAVEL  
TODAY**

Tue 10 Nov 15 p2

## Spoiled For Choice In Event-ful MEL



**Corporate clients heading to Melbourne in the coming months will find plenty to keep them entertained between business, says Tourism Victoria.**

"There's so much coming up in Melbourne, it's our big blockbuster event season—we'll have Ai Wei Wei at the National Gallery, Andy Warhol, then we move in to the tennis, grand prix, Melbourne food and wine festival," says Tourism Vic's New Zealand regional manager Joanna Garrie. "There's always so much happening, it's best for clients to stay on for a few days."

The city is also experiencing much-needed growth in accommo-

dation, with new hotels like a QT property, Ritz Carlton, and a new development for the Crown all in the pipeline.

"There's more and more room stock coming on board," says Garrie.

Corporate agents have been experiencing Melbourne and surrounds on the final Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia Experience Australia famil this week.

They travelled to the city in VA's business class product, which launched on the Tasman earlier this year.

The group is pictured enjoying views 88 floors above Melbourne from The Edge on the Eureka Skydeck.

### Shopping Still Top

Shopping remains a key drawcard for Kiwi visitors to Melbourne, and with the NZD still holding fairly strong against the AUD there are plenty of bargains to be had. Agents on the famil spent an afternoon checking out Bourke St Mall, where the size of this purse outside H&M just about matched their spending aspirations. Pictured is Brigitte Lister, HRG; Kayleigh Macher, HRG; Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson; and Jacasta Brown, Orbit Christchurch.



### VA Business Time

Virgin Australia stepped up its appeal for corporates by launching its new business class product on the Tasman earlier this year, and it received a big thumbs up from agents on the famil—particularly when it took under 10 minutes to whizz through security, collect their bags and skip to the front of the Customs queue. The roomy seats, in-flight iPads and food (including bircher muesli and sweetcorn fritters with bacon) also received praise.

Pictured on the Auckland-Melbourne flight is: **1** Sweetcorn fritters. **2** Brigitte Lister, HRG. **3** Stephen Hilton, Tandem Travel with Jay Gilbert, Flight Centre.

### MEL Capacity Growth

Capacity to Melbourne has grown some 6% during the northern winter compared to the same time last year, thanks to the Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia alliance—and the growth includes increased offering for business travellers.

Capacity growth has primarily been driven by the Auckland-Melbourne route, up 7%—including an NZ wide-body air craft operating the afternoon flight from this northern winter, meaning an extra service offering business class.

With the changes, business class is now offered on three quarters of all flights AKL-MEL, as well as CHC-MEL once a day, while premium economy is available daily AKL-MEL.

### Living On The Edge

The best way to get a feel for the scale of Melbourne is by heading up to the Eureka Skydeck, where there's views over the entire city. For clients with an added sense of adventure, they can try out the Edge, a glass box which extends over the side of the building, 88 floors up. It's a pretty scary experience and not for those who have a fear of heights. See [eurekaskydeck.com.au](http://eurekaskydeck.com.au)

### Leading Business Hotel

Grand Hyatt Melbourne was named Australia's Leading Business Hotel at the 22nd Annual World Travel Awards in Hong Kong last month.



### Lounging Around

Agents had the chance to check out Air New Zealand's new lounge at Auckland International Airport on Sat morning—including the outdoor area, where they were able to watch the sun rise over the aircraft on the tarmac.

Pictured is Jay Gilbert, Flight Centre with Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson.

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TABS ON  
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Wed 11 Nov 15 p3

## Relaxing Day Trip To Mornington



The Mornington Peninsula is experiencing something of a boom in tourism numbers, thanks to a new highway which makes it easily accessible on a day trip from Melbourne—and it's a perfect escape for clients in town for business.

It only takes around an hour to get to the picturesque region, which boasts beautiful beaches and plenty of wineries.

The famil group travelled to the peninsula with Melbourne Private Tours, which offers small-group, high-end tours of Melbourne and its surrounds, including The Great Ocean Road, Phillip Island and Yarra Valley. The company can tailor-make tours to clients' preferences, and their food-themed journeys are especially popular. See [melbprivatetours.com.au](http://melbprivatetours.com.au)

The famil group is pictured at the Mills Beach scenic look-out.



### Fresh Produce A Highlight At The Green Olive

On a famil that involved an awful lot of eating, the Green Olive at Red Hill was a stand-out for its fresh produce (most of which is grown on-site), olive oil and lovely wines produced from its vineyard. It's unsurprisingly an incredibly popular spot, so clients should book in advance if they're planning on visiting during their Mornington trip, especially on weekends. The Olive also hosts cooking schools and other food experiences. Check them out at [greenolive.com.au](http://greenolive.com.au)

**1** Enjoying a feast fit for kings is Courtney-Jane McCarthy, Air New Zealand; Michelle Miller, World Travellers; Jacasta Brown, Orbit Christchurch; Debbie Chong, Tandem Travel; and Nicola Segal, Virgin Australia. **2** Stephen Hilton, Tandem Travel and Louise Mings, Executive Travel.



### A-Mazing Adventures At An Enchanted Garden

The Enchanted Adventure Garden features sculpted gardens and mazes, high ropes courses and a zip-line, and while it's especially popular with families it's also great for a spot of corporate team building. It's also a popular space for events, and can seat up to 160 people in its event space, with another, smaller area (seating up to 40) being built. The gardens are open 1000-1800 daily, see [enchantedmaze.com.au](http://enchantedmaze.com.au)

**1** Kayleigh Macher, HRG; Jay Gilbert, Flight Centre and Courtney-Jane McCarthy, Air NZ. **2** In the tree-tops preparing for action is Michelle Miller, World Travellers and Nicola Segal, Virgin Australia. **3** Courtney-Jane McCarthy, Air NZ takes to the skies. **4** Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson; Kayleigh Macher, HRG; and Brigitte Lister, HRG. **5** After their adventure is Nicola Segal, VA; Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson; Courtney-Jane McCarthy, Air NZ; and Michelle Miller, World Travellers.



### Wine Tasting And Architecture At Port Phillip Estate

The Mornington Peninsula is a popular wine-growing regions and the Port Phillip Estate is one of the largest in the area. Aside from some stunning wines, it's worth a visit to admire the architecture of the estate, which also features a limited number of guestrooms. See [portphillipestate.com.au](http://portphillipestate.com.au)

**1** Jacasta Brown, Orbit Christchurch; Nicola Segal, VA; Jay Gilbert, Flight Centre; Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson; Kayleigh Macher, HRG; and Brigitte Lister, HRG. **2** Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson and Kayleigh Macher, HRG. **3** Kayleigh Macher, HRG; Ashley Buchanan, Calder and Lawson; and Lani Carter, House of Travel on Victoria.

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## Food For Thought: Where To Dine In MEL

Cuisine is undoubtedly one of Melbourne's top attractions for visitors, but in such a big city it can be daunting to know where to go and how to find those hidden gems that may not feature in Michelin guides. Melbourne Food Experiences is the perfect way to uncover the city's top dining, and is a great way to start a trip so clients can head back to re-visit the highlights later.

From the best \$2 egg tarts and laneway discoveries, to the city's top rated restaurants, the company's knowledgeable guides will take guests on a food journey.

The company was started by top foodie Allan Campion, and guides include Cameron Smith, who is well known in the food industry and hosts a regular Eat It radio show. See [melbournefoodexperiences.com.au](http://melbournefoodexperiences.com.au). Below are some of the highlights from the agents' food tour:

**1** Allan Campion of Melbourne Food Experiences gives agents a rundown



### Premium Experience

Topping off an all-round premium famil experience, agents had the chance to experience Air New Zealand's premium economy on the Melbourne-Auckland flight, including its Spaceseats. Giving a big cheers to that is Louise Mingins, Executive Travel and Jay Gilbert, Flight Centre.

on MEL's laneway eateries. **2 and 7 Ganache:** Ganache (254 Collins St) apparently does an exquisite hot chocolate but its iced chocolate was the highlight for agents. Flight Centre's Jay Gilbert is pictured playing waiter with Ganache macarons, which are made to a very particular standard. **3 Phillipa's Bakery** Sourdough fans should seek out Phillipa's Bakery (15 Howey Pl), and while they're there try out the delicious parmesan sables (being handed out by guide Cameron Smith).

**4 Belleville:** Like many Melbourne bars, it's a little tricky to find, but Belleville is worth the hunt. The relatively new bar (the entry is off the nondescript Globe Alley in Chinatown) has a distinctly Kiwi flavour, a cool vibe and very reasonable prices. Flight Centre's Jay Gilbert is pictured trying out a Waitakere Daquiri. **5 and 6 Spring Street Grocer** Spring Street Grocer's highlights are hidden—head down the staircase to find a cheese cellar full of fantastic cheeses



### The Colonial Tramcar

Travelling around the city in a historical tramcar might seem a little gimmicky but it's actually a great way to see the city by night—and the food is fantastic too. There's two options, an early three-course sitting and late-night five-course meal, and drinks are included. Clients should book well in advance. See [tramrestaurant.com.au](http://tramrestaurant.com.au). Pictured is Michelle Miller World Travellers with Nicola Segal, VA.

from around the world, while at the shop's entry there's a gelato bar where the gelato is concealed beneath the counter. It's at 157 Spring St. Stephen Hilton of Tandem samples some gelato; and lovely cheesemaker Reece gives a lowdown on the wares. **8** Louise Mingins, Executive Travel and Debbie Chong, Tandem in the Royal Arcade. **9** Jacasta Brown, Orbit CHC and Michelle Miller, World Travellers hunt for a bar down a laneway.

Other food highlights included:

**Supernormal** Started by the brains behind top restaurant Chin Chin, Supernormal (108 Flinders

Lane) is one of the hottest places on Melbourne's food scene, and serves food with an Asian influence. It's a short walk from Federation Square.

**Maxims** For egg tart fans, this nondescript bakery is a must-try—and at only \$2 a pop, it's worth a visit. It's in Chinatown at 173 Little Bourke St. **Pho Nom:** It's an unlikely place to find authentic Vietnamese but fans of the cuisine should definitely head to Pho Nom on the lower ground floor of the Emporium shopping centre, where they can find pho made from wagyu stock—and all at extremely reasonable prices.



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