

NORTH EAST VICTORIA – MURRAY TO THE MOUNTAINS RAIL TRAIL 7-days / 6-nights QUALITY, guided cycling with gourmet food & wine from Beechworth to Bright



Join us to explore North East Victoria, to experience the incredible alpine valleys and mountain scenery that were once the home of high country cattlemen, legendary bushrangers and the miners of the Australian gold rush in the late 1800's. A region now known for world class local food and fine wines that are widely exported.

This guided cycling tour follows the mostly sealed **Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail**, from historic Beechworth to beautiful Bright in the foothills of the Victorian Alps. We ride mainly flat stretches of the trail through the Ovens and King valleys past impressive vineyards and fertile farmland where hops, nuts, apples, berries and black Australian Angus beef are grown. There are undulations of course which give views across the valleys to forested foothills and Mount Buffalo, one of Victoria's oldest National Parks and the Australian Alps.

We stay in comfortable, quality accommodation and enjoy the gourmet foods and wines of the region including cellar-door platter-style lunches in season showcasing local cheeses and fresh tasty produce. Wine-tasting is an important part of the tour. Taste the iconic Shiraz wines, full-bodied reds that are bursting with Australian sunshine. Go back in time to taste the traditional fortified wines at Milawa. The King Valley offers white wines including Riesling, Prosecco and Sauvignon Blanc and the Alpine Valleys region has cool climate wines such as Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay and lighter style reds including Tempranillo, Sangiovese and Pinot Noir. Along the way we can try wines from lesser known grapes such as Saperavi and Fiano. For a change, quench your thirst with mountain-crafted beers at the Bright Brewery made with local hops.

We provide multi-gear hybrid bikes, or bring your own bike if you prefer. E-bikes are available (at extra cost).

Cost from: **\$3095** per person, twin-share Single supplement from \$800

Departs: 18 March, 29 April 2024

Includes: 6 nights in comfortable hotel or B&B accommodation with ensuite; 6 full breakfasts, 4 winery or café lunches, 4 dinners at local restaurants or breweries; wine tastings; luggage transfers and purchase pickups (ie. wine bought along the trail); bike hire with small pannier; water bottle; t-shirt; expert local guides with support vehicle.

Not included: Meals not mentioned, other drinks, personal expenses, arrival and departure transfers. Bike helmets are required and are available, but we recommend you bring your own or buy one locally.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Grade: Easy to moderate, mainly on quiet country roads or on paved trails. The itinerary is at the discretion of the guides and subject to local conditions and weather.

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1 – Arrive Beechworth

Plan to arrive in Beechworth by mid-afternoon to allow time to explore this unique town, with its gold mining history, heritage precinct well-preserved Victorian period buildings and links to the outlaw Ned Kelly. There are quaint souvenir shops to discover as well as an award-winning bakery and ice-creamery. Meet your guide and group at a local restaurant for a dinner and briefing on the week ahead.

Day 2 – Beechworth to Yackandandah

Cycling @ 25km

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel then stroll to the Old Beechworth Gaol to collect your bikes and make any adjustments. Then we'll cycle along the new rail trail extension to Yackandandah, a delightful small town which feels like you've stepped back in time. Enjoy a gourmet platter lunch and tasting at a local Gin Distillery before being transferred back to Beechworth. Dinner is at your own arrangements and there are plenty of restaurants to choose from.

Day 3 – Beechworth to Milawa

Cycling @ 35km

After breakfast, we begin with a 15km downhill ride on the rail trail from Beechworth to Milawa, with wine tasting stops at Pennyweight's organic winery and Woodpark Cellar door before lunch at Sam Miranda Winery. Surrounded by the sights, sounds and smells of the typical Australian bush, we find hidden valleys and cycle across railway heritage brick bridges. There is an optional stop at an olive farm for an olive oil tasting and then onward to the well-known Milawa Cheese Factory for a tasting of award-winning cheese. There are plenty of produce venues to visit around Milawa township including the mustard factory and local cellar doors all within easy riding distance. Dinner tonight is at the highly regarded Restaurant Merlot.

Day 4 - Milawa to Myrtleford

Cycling @ 45km

Depart the King Valley on the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and tackle the only hill of the route on the way to the Ovens Valley. We visit Gapsted Winery, where a table tasting is included with a tasty platter lunch. There are views along the rail trail to the mountains ahead and a short ride downhill into Myrtleford where you stay tonight. Dinner tonight is at a lovely local woodfire pizza restaurant.

Day 5 – Myrtleford to Bright

Cycling @ 30km

Ride a short distance to a hearty breakfast at a local café, the first of many stops today on the ride to Bright. The rail trail follows the Ovens Valley overlooked by the impressive monolith of Mount Buffalo. We visit the first and only pumpkin seed factory in Australia and then stop for lunch at Ringer Reef Winery, where a gourmet platter lunch and wine tasting with a view to Mount Buffalo are all part of the experience. After lunch we ride along the trail to Bright, perhaps stopping for coffee and cake at the Rail Trail café or a mountain-crafted ale at the Bright Brewery. We stay in Bright for two nights, a pretty, riverside town with its many deciduous trees, so spectacular in Autumn and Spring. Dinner is your choice from the town's many award-winning restaurants.

Day 6 – Bright to Wandiligong and return

Cycling @ 25 or 50kms

After breakfast you have a free day in this lovely town. Cycle the newly completed rail trail to the pretty town of Harrierville, perhaps stopping at the trout farm along the way. Or take an easy ride on the bike trail beside Morses Creek, past Mystic Park (a world class paragliding site and a mountain biking mecca) to visit Wandiligong, with its National Trust classified landscape and 1800's gold mining history. Or perhaps choose horseback riding or a high country hike. Return to Bright for a farewell group dinner.

Day 7 – Depart Bright and onward transfers

Tour ends

Transfer back to Beechworth (or depart at your own arrangements).

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Outdoor Travel offer guided cycling and walking in Australia and New Zealand. The **Barossa** and **Clare Valleys** offer great cycling in South Australia. Explore the Australian Outback of the **Flinders Ranges** and the **Larapinta Trail**, or Victoria's **Great Ocean Walk**, Western Australia's **Cape to Cape Track** or Tasmania's **Freycinet Peninsula**. In New Zealand you can cycle to the **Marlborough** wineries, along the **Nelson Great Taste Trail** or **Otago Rail Trail**. Walk the **Milford**, **Hollyford Track** or **Queen Charlotte** or combine walking, kayaking and cycling the **Abel Tasman** peninsula to the north of the South Island.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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