

# SAPPHIRE COAST

## LAKES ENTRANCE - EDEN - MERIMBULA BATEMANS BAY-CANBERRA

9 DAYS THURSDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL TO FRIDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2012

MOTEL ACCOMMODATION - RESTAURANT MEALS



3 CLARKE ST. ARARAT. VIC 3377

PH: 03 5352 7928

email: [brendanstours@bigpond.com](mailto:brendanstours@bigpond.com)

### HIGHLIGHTS

**LAKES ENTRANCE**

**GIPPSLAND LAKES CRUISE**

**MALLACOOTA**

**EDEN KILLER WHALE MUSEUM**

**MERIMBULA AQUARIUM**

**BEGA CHEESE FACTORY**

**KAMERUKA ESTATE**

**MERIMBULA MOGO TOWN**

**MOGO ZOO**

**EUROBODALLA BOTANIC GARDENS**

**BATEMANS BAY**

**CLYDE RIVER CRUISE**

**CANBERRA CITY TOUR**

**GOVERNMENT HOUSE**

**DAY 1: THURSDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

**D.**

**HOME TO LAKES ENTRANCE**

Join our luxury coach and travel to Melbourne, crossing the city via the magnificent new network of roads through to the Princes Highway and on to Gippsland. Here we pass through the Latrobe Valley, a valley that contains one of the world's largest deposits of brown coal. Beyond the mines, the countryside supports a large dairying industry amongst other primary industries. Continue on to picturesque Bairnsdale, a commercial centre for wool growing, dairying, agricultural and timber industries. A feature of the town is Main Street (Princes Highway), which is divided for about 2km by a broad plantation of gardens and lawns ornamented with the 1911 Rotunda, this being a replica of one found in Cairo. Further along the Highway we reach Lakes Entrance and our home for the next two nights. The town is sometimes called "The Entrance" as it provides access to the Gippsland Lakes and is

the home of one of Australia's largest fishing fleets. From spring through to the following winter, the Gippsland Lakes are visited by many schools of dolphins that come in from the ocean to feed on the schools of pilchards and anchovies found within the lake system. The town is also a depot for the off-shore oil rigs in Bass Strait. Dinner tonight is at the motel restaurant.

Accom: Pelican At The Lakes

Ph: 03 5155 1277

**DAY 2: FRIDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

**B.D.**

**LAKES ENTRANCE SIGHTSEEING**

This morning we make our way to Buchan a pretty little town nestled in the foothills of the Victorian Alps and situated on the Buchan River. Buchan has many beautiful deciduous trees and Chinese brake ferns growing around the limestone outcrops. Nearby are the famous Buchan Caves and opportunity is available (at passengers own expense) to explore the Limestone Chambers of the Royal Caves which feature delicate stalactites and stalagmites. Above the caves, wildlife is abundant in the reserve, bellbirds and lyrebirds being commonly seen. Enjoy the magnificent timbered countryside as we return to Lakes Entrance. Our activities this afternoon include a cruise on the Gippsland Lakes, with coffee and biscuits while on board. Enjoy views of the foothills of the high country just to the north and the amazing stretch of the Ninety Mile Beach separating the lakes from the ocean - this region offers an incredible variety of natural beauty. Some free time before returning to our motel to freshen up before dinner at the motel restaurant.

**DAY 3: SATURDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

**B.D.**

**LAKES ENTRANCE TO MERIMBULA**

Farewelling Lakes Entrance this morning, enjoy a scenic drive along the Princes Highway through one of Victoria's largest natural bushland areas. Visit Mallacoota, one of Victoria's most isolated and peaceful fishing resorts. Situated in the State's eastern corner and surrounded by the magnificent Croajingolong National Park, Mallacoota still remains beautifully unspoiled by progress. The abalone industry is one of Mallacoota's most important exports. Crossing into New South Wales we continue through superbly scenic and relatively unspoiled stretches of coastline contrasting with the rugged hills and sheltered gullies inland. We arrive in the coastal town of Eden with the impressive Mount Imlay in the background contrasting with the sapphire waters of Twofold Bay. We visit The Eden Killer Whale Museum which has been in operation for seventy years and is recognized as one of the most progressive and innovative museums in regional NSW. The building is situated on a hillside overlooking the Pacific Ocean where, in the season, whales may be seen from the various vantage points. Exhibitions about the shore-based

whaling operations from Twofold Bay during the 1800s and early 1900s include a full skeleton of 'Tom' the Killer Whale, legendary Orca. Travel the short distance on to Merimbula, home for the next two nights and famous for the beautiful oysters that are harvested here in this flourishing and picturesque seaside Mecca. Merimbula was founded in 1855 becoming a popular seaside resort after the Second World War. Time to freshen up before dinner at the Merimbula Bowling Club.

Accom: Black Dolphin Resort Motel Ph: 02 6495 1500

**DAY 4: SUNDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL B.D.  
MERIMBULA SIGHTSEEING**

This morning we visit the historic and beautiful Kameruka Estate, a rural estate that pioneered the Dairy Industry in the Bega Valley. The 5000 hectares estate has a gracious homestead with extensive English gardens. It was built, as English agricultural estates were in the early 1800's, in the shape of a village with its own colonial church, school, shops and other community buildings. The estates name is synonymous with champion jersey cattle, and its cheeses and butter won international awards after being shipped across the world over 100 years ago. Return to Merimbula to visit Wheelers Oyster Farm which is located in the pristine waters of Merimbula Lake. This farm has been producing the finest Sydney Rock Oysters for almost 100 years. At the retail outlet, we will have the complete oyster experience tasting oysters straight from the farm and being part of a guided tour and visiting the souvenir shop. This afternoon we visit the Merimbula Aquarium for a guided tour. This Aquarium has 27 tanks and a fantastic Oceanarium full of large ocean fish and sharks. We visit Merimbula's sister village Pambula. Pambula is a historic village with its first European settlers establishing cattle runs on the rich Pambula river flats in the 1830s. Dinner tonight is at the Merimbula RSL Club

**DAY 5: MONDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL B.D.  
MERIMBULA TO BATEMANS BAY**

Farewell Merimbula this morning and travel the short distance inland to Bega, a busy commercial centre on the Sapphire Coast. Bega is set on the picturesque Bega River amidst a rich farming area famous for its cheese. Visit the Bega Cheese Heritage Centre where not only can you taste the local cheeses but also you can learn how they were made both today and yesterday. There is opportunity for purchase too. Continuing further north, we stop at historical Central Tilba, a fascinating working village classified by the National Trust and situated at the base of Mount Dromedary. Central Tilba is included in the World Heritage list and here the clock seems to have stopped at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the crafts and skills of yesteryear still alive and working. Continue through to Moruya, known today for its dairying, timber and oyster farming, and onto Batemans Bay, our home for the next two nights. Batemans Bay is a popular holiday resort situated on the broad sweeping estuary of the Clyde River and an area renowned for its crayfish and oysters. Captain Cook named the bay in 1770 after Captain Bateman with whom he had sailed. Time to freshen up before dinner at the motel restaurant.

Accom: Bayside Motel Ph: 02 4472 6488

**DAY 6: TUESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY B.L.D.  
BATEMANS BAY - CLYDE RIVER CRUISE**

A relaxing day today as we enjoy a luncheon cruise on the peaceful Clyde River, the best known river in the Eurobodalla's River System. The Clyde passes no less than

ten state forests on its way down to Batemans Bay. Visit the Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens and enjoy a town tour with the brilliant views both up river to the mountains and seaward to the island dotted horizon, before returning to our motel. The remainder of the day is free for you to relax or maybe do some shopping. Dinner tonight is at the motel restaurant.

**DAY 7: WEDNESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY B.D.  
BATEMANS BAY TO CANBERRA**

After another hearty breakfast this morning, we head off to take a drive to the charming historic gold mining village of Mogo and visit the privately owned Mogo Zoo. Take a guided tour and see the commitment to the survival of endangered animals with facilities for over 200 animals with more than 39 rare and exotic species, including the rare white lions of "Timbavati". Enjoy some time to sample the old world village atmosphere and browse through the wide variety of art and craft stores. Farewelling Batemans Bay this afternoon, we climb the Great Dividing Range, passing through the village of Nellingen, which lies in one of the majestic Clyde River's sweeping bends. Further along is Braidwood, a historic gold mining town with many early Georgian buildings still in evidence. Continue on to Canberra for our overnight stay.

Accom: Pavilion on Northbourne Ph: 02 6247 6888

**DAY 8: THURSDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> MAY B.D.  
CANBERRA TO HOLBROOK**

We spend this morning touring Canberra our National Capital and are treated to a guided tour of Government House and its magnificent surrounding gardens. We enjoy a short city tour passing by Parliament House, The Australian War Memorial, The High Court, The National Gallery and Embassy Drive with many of the unusual and fascinating Embassy buildings. Join the Hume Highway and continue on to Holbrook for our last night away. Dinner tonight is at the motel restaurant.

Accom: Byer Fountain Motor Inn Ph: 02 6036 2077

**DAY 9: FRIDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY B.  
HOLBROOK TO HOME**

After breakfast we farewell Holbrook on the final day of our tour and make our way down through the rich agricultural areas of Northern Victoria. Return to your home town after a memorable nine days sightseeing.

**PRICE: inc GST \$2760.00 per person**  
**SINGLE SUPP: \$ 510.00**

**PRICE INCLUDES:**

**Luxury coach travel**  
**Motel accommodation - Twin share**  
**Admissions to attractions as specified**  
**Meals as per itinerary B: Breakfast**  
**L: Lunch**  
**D: Dinner**

**Pick up and return to your home town.**

**Travel Insurance is highly recommended and is the responsibility of each passenger.**