

# Explore **Acland Street Village** Walking Tour



## 1. Palais Theatre

Standing, defiantly, against the backdrop of our very own Port Phillip Bay, the Palais Theatre bristles with character from the many thousands of shows that have been staged within its walls since it opened in 1927. Once Australia's largest picture theatre, seating almost 3000, this elegant and stately St Kilda monument now hosts a full calendar of international and local live music, theatre and comedy events, to loyal audiences from near and far. Put your head inside the door and you'll see why so many locals-including a swag of famous residents-stood up to developers and made sure this ageless icon would be a refurbished and protected as part of St Kilda's landscape for many years to come.



## 2. Luna Park

Across the road and battling for supremacy with the Palais as St Kilda's favourite landmark, is one of the world's oldest existing amusement parks of over 100 years. Little has changed to the facade of Luna Park since the first patron wandered through that famous laughing mouth on the corner. After snapping St Kilda's favourite selfie make sure you go in (entry is free) and lap up the fairground atmosphere of yesteryear. You could grab a bag of fairy floss or even jump on the roller coaster and take in the best views of the bay as you whiz around the track that circles the park.



## 3. O'Donnell Gardens

Now you have a taste of the Acland precinct's best known icons, it's a short and very pleasant stroll through the lush lawns of O'Donnell Gardens. This has long been a meeting point for the local indigenous community and is home to our gorgeous fountain standing under towering palms trees which will lead you across the road through the car park to your next stop: one of St. Kilda's better-kept secrets.



## 4. Veg Out Community Gardens

What was once a bowling green is now a picturesque, carefully manicured veggie garden and orchard which is tended by local residents, some of whom you will recognise for sure from the big screen. When Robert Taylor's back in Oz from his home in L.A., there's a good chance you'll find him down here amongst the 'garden art' taking great care of his precious tomatoes and asparagus. This unique inner-city piece of the countryside is open from dawn until dusk and the variety of produce in the garden, has to be seen to be believed. On a weekend you may stumble upon the local farmers market with great food and produce to be had. Now it's time to head out the way you came in and down Shakespeare Grove along the Luna Park fence until you see the pedestrian crossing. We are heading beachside.



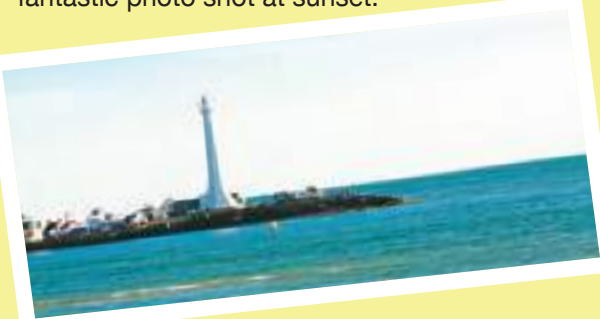
## 5. Donovan's & Stokehouse Waterfront Restaurants

Both of these gems have been synonymous with Melbourne's world famous restaurant scene for over 40 years. Both have been recently restored after fires, but from the ashes have risen two places that are even better than before. You simply must experience these iconic restaurants before you leave St. Kilda, even if only for a drink and a snack on their outdoor decks, maybe around sunset. Great spot to take a swim, it's not tropical but you haven't visited St Kilda until you've braved the water.



## 6. Lighthouse

Walk a little further along the foreshore and look up. You'll see the St Kilda Lighthouse. Despite being the tallest building on the beach, the 150 year old historic landmark is often overlooked. Don't you overlook it. You might pick up some tips on maritime signals and a fantastic photo shot at sunset.



## 7. Skate Park

Keep moving along the beachfront towards the Marina and you'll come across one of the most recent additions to the Acland Precinct, our skate park, which we are proud to say is one of the world's best. Sit and watch as the skaters strut their stuff. What some of those guys can do puts Evil Kneivel to shame.



## 8. Marina

Further down our famous beach you'll spot the Marina. Sea craft of all shapes and sizes are moored here. You can even stop and organise a ride on one of those beautiful boats. When time allows perhaps a fishing trip or a cruise around the bay, or even up the Yarra, is just the ticket. Sounds like a great way to whittle away an afternoon or morning, doesn't it?





## 9. Peanut Farm Reserve

Time to leave the water behind and head back across Marine Parade to Blessington Street. On your left you'll find the Peanut Farm which plays host to many a match in several codes between men and women. Stand back and close your eyes then imagine the time when this was St. Kilda's racetrack! While today you'll see happy dog walkers and sports of all sorts being played, back then there would be have been some sights and some stories. The mind boggles.



## 10. Botanical Gardens

Continue up Blessington Street and past a small art gallery which features some amazing street art. You need to cross Barkly Street here keeping right and a short way you'll find the entrance to St Kilda's very own historic Botanical Gardens. The Gardens were established in the mid-1800s and have been a special feature of the seaside suburb ever since. So much so they are now Heritage Listed. It has a rosary, extensive flower beds, a nursery and an ornamental pond with 'Rain Man' fountain and is a perfect setting to roll out the picnic rug, pull the cork on your favourite poison and watch as chess champions do battle on the giant chess board.



# 11. The Village Belle Hotel

The Acland Precinct wouldn't be the same without the Village Belle. After you've left the Gardens through the gate you arrived, walk back down Blessington Street on the right hand side and at Barkly Street, make a right turn and you're there. The 'Belle' served its first beer in 1925 and made such an immediate impact, it had a street named after it, although now it is known as Acland Street. This is the perfect place to grab a refreshment or a bite to prepare you for a serious dose of 'Retail Therapy' that lies ahead in vibrant Acland Street. You could stay and have a couple more instead and perhaps try your luck on the Pokies or at the TAB. Just saying... Or forget the shopping and choose a restaurant for a culinary experience you'll savour for a long time. It's not easy because there are a truckload of restaurants and there all bloody good. Spoiled for choice I'm afraid. The only answer to the conundrum is to come back (many times). Now's the time to head into our wonderland.





## 12. Acland Street Plaza

This plaza has only recently been opened and now provides a community space to relax and watch the hustle and bustle of the strip. What a great way to pass a few minutes or hours and watch the world go by in a place where there is always something to catch your eye. It could be some shop-roof art, a famous local or that something in a shop window you just know you've got to have.



# 13. Acland Street

When you dive head first into the main shopping hub and begin to discover the wonderful, unique, amazing retail experience, it will blow your mind: historical cake shops, restaurants that have been on best food guides forever, quaint cute bars, shops with the best stuff in them, stuff you can't get anywhere else. As you weave your way down Acland Street, you will find yourself catapulted into a feast of eclectic local traders with a liberal sprinkle of international flavour that caters for everyone. The strip also has on display an alluring feel of St Kilda daily life with its colourful characters, plenty of cakes from wonderful cake shops (try our famous kugelhupf from the renowned Monarch Cakes or pop into Falafel Extra and check out the history of St Kilda on its walls). In the Acland Precinct you will love the cosmopolitan life style that spills onto the footpaths with an atmosphere you won't find anywhere else in Melbourne.



## 14. The Vineyard

Heading north along Acland Street towards where your tour began, in the shadow of Luna Park is a place that once was O'Donnell Gardens Teahouse but is now better known as the infamous The Vineyard. Here great food, great service, great drinks and great music is on offer until the wee hours of the morning on most nights. It's a great place to take a break from your walk, especially if you are doing it late.



## 15. Linden Art Gallery

Continue heading up Acland Street past a stack of mouth-watering eating hotspots including an old favourite, the Dogs Bar, which was once a stately old hotel and is now a popular gem across all generations. Over the road from the 'Dogs' is Maccas (if you have to have a Maccas-at least it's not an ugly one) Soon you'll find your next stop. You're looking for a public art gallery called Linden Art Gallery which began life back in the 1870s and these days specialises in displaying contemporary art. A must visit on your Acland Walk for sure.



## 16. Esplanade

You're now coming to a picturesque end to our tour, across the road you will see Robe Street which leads you back to our bay. Cross the Esplanade and take in the magnificent views of St Kilda beach and Port Phillip Bay, whilst admiring one of our monuments that was erected in memory of Jesse Fairchild, if the sun is setting you're in for one more beautiful surprise !!



Acland Street Village  
The place to be.

Thank you for exploring  
Melbourne's best bayside playground!



**Acland St Precinct**

**St Kilda Botanical Gardens**

Glass House

10

Icon: People walking

Linden Gallery

Robe St

15

Talbot Reserve

National Theatre

CARLISLE ST

Blessington St

EcoCentre

Herbert St

11

Mitford St

Barkly St

13

12

O'Donnell Gardens

14

P

Chaucer St

16

THE ESPLANADE

3

2

The Palais

1



Luna Park

P

Shakespeare Gve

4

Peanut Farm Reserve

9



P

Jacka Blvd

5



Marine Pde

6

Boardwalk

St Kilda Beach

St Kilda Life Saving Club

7

P

Marina Reserve & Skate Park

Bayside Trail

8

St Kilda Marina

