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HD **Day tripping**
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WC 2,162 words
PD 12 January 2014
SN Sunday Age
SC SAGE
ED First
PG 8
LA English
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Jayne D'Arcy serves up a guide to the best drive-**buy** shopping.

Sometimes it takes more than just the words "Sunday drive" to get out and actually do it. What if there were gems at the destination, just waiting to be discovered? What if a Sunday - or week-day - drive could result in a car boot (or large tote) filled with bargain clothes, brilliant books or cute craft, with some refreshments along the way? It's time to set your sights on the prize, and get out there and drive!

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Geelong

This small city is home to a footy team, a declining manufacturing industry and a revamped, rather desirable foreshore.

Many of the old buildings that were once home to our local carpet- and glass-makers have taken on a new life filled to the brim with antiques.

Geelong Vintage Market

287-301 Melbourne Road, North Geelong; 5277 1186; geelongvintagemarket.com.au

The first off the Melbourne-Geelong Road is the former Pilkington Glass Factory, now a well set-out antique market, with 50 stallholders (the sellers themselves are rarely there, but staff look after you).

Items range from the 1800s to the late 1900s, but you'll find the odd Buzz Lightyear amongst the cool couches and plastic yellow 1970s lampshades. From the roof hangs the most extraordinary collection of motoring signs, for sale at the right price (which is quite a high). Open 10am-6pm daily.

The Brougham Street Market

20 Brougham St; 5221 2490

This sprawling antique market takes up a former wool store in central Geelong. It's a true find if you love your clothes pre-worn and from the '70s. Sure, a \$49 "vintage" Tonka Truck just looks like someone left it in the backyard for too long, but if you look hard you might uncover some unique furniture, or an original iMac. Open Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat & Sun 10am-6pm.

Mill Markets Newcomb

114 Bellarine Highway, Newcomb; 5248 2390; millmarkets.com.au

Out along the road to Portarlington and Queenscliff is this huge shed filled with vintage clothes, kitchenalia, stunning glass (plenty in the art deco-style) and 1970s' furniture. It's quite easy to get through quickly, but of course if you visit every one of the stalls you'll be here for hours. Open 10am-6pm daily.

Little Creatures Brewery

Corner Fyans & Swanston Streets; 5202 4009; littlecreatures.com.au

Time for a drink? While it looks like it's been here for years, this brewery is just weeks old; the red brick building was most recently a carpet factory.

Follow the long yellow path to a large outside eating/drinking area and an enormous light-filled indoor area complete with shipping containers, concrete floors and booths, benches and communal tables galore. Apart from the beers, ciders and wines, the cracking menu includes pizzas (from \$17), frites (\$8), and franks (from \$12). Open: Mon & Tue 11am-5pm, Wed-Fri 11am-9pm, Sat 8am-9pm and Sun 8am-5pm.

Torquay

Thousands of international travellers make their pilgrimage here, and no, it's not to complain that the lattes aren't as good as they are in Melbourne. They come to **buy** up big at the famous surf shops (and their cheaper outlets) on the Surf Coast Highway.

Baines Beach Surf Factory Outlet

16 Baines Crescent; 5261 0057

This Rip Curl outlet is hidden in a very unglamorous industrial shed, but come here for surfwear bargains, like \$199rrp Rip Curl watches on sale for \$50 (one day only ... sorry).

See also the trough-loads of discounted hats, jeans, wetsuits and other surfing goodies.

Open 9am-5.30pm daily.

Quiksilver Factory Outlet

16 Baines Crescent; 5261 6947

This is where the Quiksilver and Roxy brands hide, spreading out over two levels of yet another rather unattractive industrial shed.

The bargains can be brilliant (50 per cent off shorts and 70 per cent off leather jackets when we popped in) but even better; the people selling the bargains are fun and friendly. Open 9.30am-5.30pm daily.

Surf City Plaza

61 Surf Coast Highway

This sprawling plaza is filled with plenty of surf labels, including Rip Curl, Billabong and Quiksilver, and well, everyone else.

The main shops, which err on the size of mammoth, usually stock the current lines, so expect to pay full price. But if you're in the game for a surfboard is there really any better place to **buy** one?

Open daily, hours vary between shops.

Bomboras Cafe

Fisherman's Beach The Esplanade; 5264 7881; bomboras.com.au

Opposite the magnificent world of surfing (aka Surf City Plaza) is much-loved restaurant Bomboras, but closer to the actual water is its toned-down version.

This casual kiosk is perfect for a snack by the beach, and it's the only Torquay cafe that actually meets the sea. Staff are friendly and the food's reasonably priced (fish and chips come in at \$10, and a ham, **cheese** and tomato toastie will set you back \$6).

Open 7.30am-3pm-ish (depending on the wind, sometimes open till 5pm).

Kyneton

Piper Street screams "foooooood", but this town also hosts great minds who have a certain je ne sais quoi when it comes to interior design.

Perhaps bring your credit card along with you on this day trip.

L'Echoppe

12-14 Piper Street

Is that French for shop? Je ne sais pas. Owner Darryl Mossman certainly collects some lovely French items on his annual sojourn to the Paris Maison & Objet (fair), and it's these and the handmade cushions with European cloth and duck feathers (from \$110), and handmade lampshades that buyers love.

Prices for the smattering of antiques Mossman has on display are very reasonable, so you won't need to max your credit card out for a special piece or two.

Open Wed-Sun 10am-4pm.

Lauriston Press

37B Piper Street; 5422 1710; lauristonpress.com.au

Goodbye blank walls. This shop may have bare wooden floorboards, a corrugated iron roof and be inaccessible for those with pushers or wheelchairs, but it holds an excellent collection of country- and nature-inspired prints.

It's full of original works on paper, including woodcut prints. Artist Sarah Gabriel set up Lauriston Press in 2008, and you'll probably see her when you pop in. If you can't afford the big stuff (plenty are in the \$400-\$800 range), go for the cards.

Open Thur-Mon 10am-5pm.

Mollisons

116-118 Mollison Street; 0412 384 056; mollisons.net.au

Mollisons is set off the main fame drag of Piper Street, but makes the most of its rather gothic former bank home (check out the external Art Nouveau lettering).

Inside, a well-selected gathering of baby and children's gifts, homewares including lamps, and jewellery take up quite a few rooms. There's luxury accommodation on offer here, too, and uniquely, if you like what you see (and sleep on), you can **buy** it too!

Open 10am-5pm daily.

Mr Carsisi

37C Piper Street; 5422 3769; mrcarsisi.com

Mr Carsisi has been dishing up Middle-Eastern food in a former iceworks on Piper Street for a while now and it's a local and visitor fave.

The mezze (\$7-\$14) are popular, and its 2014 menu is more about sharing plates and set menus (once only available for groups of eight or more). This year couples (and small groups) can join in the set menu for lunch for \$30 each for five small courses.

Open 11.30am to end of dinner Fri-Tue.

Daylesford

These days this day-tripping fave is more luxury spas and fancy dining than candles and rainbow flags, but it's always been home to a good book.

Paradise Bookshop

46 Vincent Street; 5348 1288; paradisebooks.com.au

It's been a fixture in a Georgian-style former bank building on Vincent Street for over 20 years, and it seems to have grown and grown (and changed its name) over the time; there are 14 rooms packed with a huge selection of new and old books.

Pop in here for a look, and you'll probably end up buying something: maybe a relatively cheap Taschen book on architect Le Corbusier (\$24.95) or a current summer novel or two. Open 10.30am-6pm daily.

The Bookbarn

Lake Daylesford; 5348 3048

Drive off the main road, past the famous two-chef's hatted restaurant, the Lake House, and over the bridge to find the lakeside Bookbarn.

The neighbouring Boat House Cafe burnt down over a year ago, and remains a fenced-off bit of nothing, but the ducks still hang around the picnic area and there are heaps of secondhand books (and a small cafe) in this cute barn. Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm-ish, Sat & Sun 10am-6pm-ish.

The Amazing Mill Markets

105 Central Springs Road; 5348 4332; millmarkets.com.au

Just out of town is another of the Mill Markets **group**, and you're bound (excuse the pun) to find loads of second-hand books among the collectables, memorabilia, vintage clothing and bric-a-brac.

Though it might take you a few hours to find them. Open 10am-6pm daily.

Wombat Hill House

Wombat Botanic Gardens; wombathillhouse.com.au

Who doesn't love a cafe that has a blackboard listing wombat sightings on its wall? If you've spotted one in the district (or perhaps two on East St, like someone else has), you can jot it down here.

This is the little sister to Alla Wolf Tasker's fancy Lake House, and it's in a terrific location up in Daylesford's lush Botanic Gardens.

Park at the top and follow the path down, or walk up from town, then enjoy coffee, a zingy beetroot salad (\$8 small) and some of the chunky cakes for your efforts.

Open 9am-4pm daily until Jan 13, closed Tue & Wed after that.

Olinda

The Dandenongs are just so deliciously fresh and green, yet only minutes from Melbourne. Hop out of the car, sniff the tree-scented air and get into some art and craft.

The Real Thing Craft Centre

13-15 Olinda-Monbulk Road; 9751 1616; therealthingcraftcentre.com.au

Pass by the iron sheep and rams out front and enter this many-roomed wonderland of Aussie gifts; things you'd only usually find in posh stores; and things that really shouldn't have been invented (those signs saying "Teenagers, you know it all, so act now, move out, get a job ..."). Open Mon-Fri 10.30am-5pm, Sat & Sun 10am-5.30pm.

Red Gum Gallery

Shop 3 47-53 Olinda-Monbulk Road; 9751 2546; redgumgallery.com

Craving a bit of local craft? Much of the craft here is locally made and totally deserves its shelf space. There's stunning pottery by Olinda local Olga Maxwell - a small platter starts around \$45.

If you're into souvenirs, **buy** an Australian animal hand puppet made by Nessie Shand. They're cute critters, a little bit quirky, and, yay, they're not made in **China**.

Open Mon-Fri 11am-4.30pm, Sat & Sun 10am-5pm.

Geppetto's Workshop

25 Main Road; 9751 0005; geppettosworkshop.com.au

Oh lordy, a toy shop that actually avoids toys with batteries? Brilliant.

Special aunts, uncles, parents, kids and kids-at-heart will enjoy this cute shop which has everything real (that is, made of wood) that a child could want.

Its bigger bro is in the nearby (and equally cute) town of Sassafras. Open 10am-5pm daily.

Pie in the Sky

43 Olinda-Monbulk Road; 9751 2128

You could come here for its name alone but thankfully its pies do live up to most folks' expectations (gourmet pie with sauce, \$6.90). Of course, they also offer the Devonshire tea (\$9.50), which is a Dandenongs' day-tripper staple.

Open Mon-Fri 10am-4.30pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 9.30am-5pm.

Getting there - and no, you don't need a car

TO GEELONG

V/Line has regular services to Geelong, North Geelong and South Geelong. Drivers take the Princes Freeway into the city.

TO TORQUAY

There's a V/Line train to Geelong, change to a bus to Torquay. Drivers can take the Geelong bypass and get into Torquay via Anglesea Road, Mount Duneed Road then Surf Coast Highway.

TO DAYLESFORD

Catch the V/Line train to Woodend railway station and the coach to Daylesford. Drivers can head along the Western Freeway, turning off at Ballan-Daylesford Road.

TO KYNETON

Catch the V/Line train to Kyneton Railway Station. Drivers can get there via the Calder Freeway.

TO OLINDA

Catch the 688 bus from Upper Ferntree Gully Station or the 694 from Belgrave Station. Drivers can hop onto the M1 to Ferntree Gully Road, turn right onto Burwood Highway and continue on to Mount Dandenong Tourist Road.

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