



MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHOPPING SECRETS:

Where to find the best local produce, markets, art, antiques and much more

When you've explored our 50+ cellar doors, lazed on our superb beaches, played on our world class golf courses and pampered yourself at our day spas, it's time for some serious shopping.

In this beautifully compact region renowned for its food and wine, you'll find the most extraordinary array of local produce. It comes fresh from the farm and orchard and, in the hands of our top chefs and artisans, has been crafted into the most mouth-watering gourmet foods for your picnic basket or pantry.

Balsamic vinegar made from our own morello cherries, local olive oils with highly distinctive flavours, hand-made cheeses from our dairies, chocolates and fudge, freshly baked wine bread, jewel-bright jams and preserves from our orchards, even boutique beer that's brewed from local hops.

But hold that credit card... there's still plenty to tempt you in our art galleries, antique outlets, markets, nurseries, gardens and local shopping precincts where you'll find everything from life's little necessities to boutiques with the best of beachwear.

Top gourmet stops

You don't need to drive all over the Peninsula, seeking the best in gourmet produce, as a number of specialist retailers have already done that for you.

Merricks General Wine Store (www.merricksgeneralstore.com.au) is a delicious update on your classic old general store, with wines, gourmet produce and dining; Somers General Store (www.somersgeneralstore.com) does breakfast, lunch, weekend fish and chips and the basics you'd expect from your local new-fashioned store.

Green Olive at Red Hill (www.greenolive.com.au) has its own extensive range of gourmet produce which can be presented in beautiful hampers; Red Hill Cool Stores (www.redhillcoolstores.com.au) just about sums up the Peninsula's delectable output, with local produce, wines, olive oils, preserves, chocolates, art, crafts and gifts including hampers; Hamper yourself (www.hamperyourself.com.au) creates gourmet and pamper hampers;

The Tasting Station (www.tastingstation.com.au) will wow you with shelves filled with gourmet treats; Peninsula Fresh (website to come) is the Peninsula's newest foodie stop with the Red Hill Baker at Balnarring, fresh fruit and vegetables, seafood and a café.

Sweet teeth have also met their match: if you thought fudge came in a single flavour, visit Peninsula Fudge and Café (www.peninsulafudge.com.au) and sample fabulous fudge including fruit and liqueur flavours; Mornington Peninsula Chocolates (www.mpchocolates.com.au) will seduce you with an edible Aladdin's Cave of chocolate shapes, sizes, colours and flavours.





Berries and cherries

Garden-fresh, tender fruit and vegetables are grown around the Peninsula, especially at Red Hill, Main Ridge, Boneo, Tyabb and Shoreham, where you'll find many farm gate sales.

From November to April, visitors pick around 40 tonnes of succulent strawberries at Sunny Ridge Strawberry Farm (www.sunnyridge.com.au), one of Australia's largest such farms. The dessert café and retail outlet filled with every imaginable strawberry delight are open year round.

In December and January, cherries are at their juicy and plump peak at Ellisfield Farm (www.ellisfieldfarm.com.au) where quinces can also be picked in autumn; at Red Hill Cherry Farm; Ripe and Ready Cherry Farm (www.ripenreadycherries.com.au) where you can pick your own cherries and buy silvanberries, raspberries, boysenberries, marionberries and blueberries in season; and Staples Apple and Cherry Farm.

Say cheese!

And say it with passion around Red Hill and Main Ridge. Red Hill Cheese (www.redhillcheese.com.au) runs its own herd of sheep, and handcrafts more than 20 goat, cow and sheep cheeses to complement Mornington Peninsula wines. Main Ridge Dairy (www.mainridgedairy.com.au) creates around 10 farmhouse cheeses from its herd of around 170 goats known as 'the girls', each of which has its own name.

Cheers!

In a region filled with wineries, two local breweries fly the flag for beer lovers: Red Hill Brewery (www.redhillbrewery.com.au) sells up to 10 beers handcrafted from its own hops, while the three distinctive beers from Mornington Peninsula Brewery (www.mpbrew.com.au) are complimented by special short batch runs.

Nurseries and gardens

Home to the famous Diggers Club, Heronswood (www.diggers.com.au) has a vast array of plants, seeds, books and gardening essentials, as well as magnificent gardens and a café; Vision Gardens (www.visiongardens.com.au) will help you design beautiful landscapes and choose from a huge plant selection; Topez (www.topez.com.au) provides the finishing touches with pots, urns, water features, sculpture and garden furniture; Ashcombe Maze and Lavender Gardens has a fragrant gift shop filled with lavender and rose beauty products, giftware and gourmet goodies. Meanwhile, out in the paddocks at Freshfield Alpacas (www.freshfieldalpacas.com.au) the farmgate shop and studio offer a fine collection of alpaca garments and classes in felting, dying and spinning.

For indigenous plants and ideas about arid gardening, try the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne (www.rbg.vic.gov.au); Austplant Nursery (www.austplant.com.au) which has been advising on Australian gardens for 35 years; and Nobbies View Drought Tolerant Plant Farm (www.drought-tolerant-plants.com.au) which specialises in plants for city, coastal and country gardens.





The artist's life

Red Hill's peaceful rural landscapes have lured many artists' studios here, including the internationally renowned Gordon Studio Glassblowers (www.gordonstudio.com.au), Marion Rosetzky Gallery, whose glorious handpainted tiles grace homes here and overseas (www.marionrosetzkygallery.blogspot.com) and Whitehill Gallery and Sculpture Park with paintings, sculpture and wearable art (www.whitehillart.com.au).

Flinders is another artistic enclave, where you'll find The Studio at Flinders Gallery (www.studioflinders.com) with works including glass art, textiles, jewellery, wood and ceramics; and Flinders and Sorrento Fine Art Galleries with classic and contemporary art (www.peninsulagalleries.com.au).

Dotted around the Peninsula are other excellent galleries including the Peninsula's largest private outlet, Manyung Gallery at Mt Eliza (www.manyunggallery.com.au); Jenny Pihan Fine Art (www.jennypihanfineart.com.au) with changing exhibitions of established and emerging artists; the contemporary Ron Roach Gallery (www.ronroachgallery.com.au) at Balnarring; Cheryl Petersen Galleries (www.cherylpetersengalleries.com) at Somerville with a large number of resident artists; and the Guild Art Gallery at Tyabb (www.guildartgallery.net) which features more than 20 of the Peninsula's top artists.

If antiques and objets d'art are high on your shopping list, head for the Tyabb Packing House with (www.tyabbspackinghouseantiques.com.au) Australia's largest collection of antiques and collectables, and the Vintage Shed (www.thevintageshed.com.au) which is filled with an eclectic mix of antiques, retro pieces, French provincial reproductions and men's shed and industrial items.

To market, to market

Established more than 35 years ago, Red Hill Market is the grande dame of Victorian produce and craft markets, and is open on the first Saturday of each month from September to May. Just down the road, the second Sunday of every month is known as 'Mornington day', when the Mornington Racecourse Market sees shoppers on a winner every time (www.craftmarkets.com.au).

Life's essentials and little luxuries

Unhurried and friendly neighbourhood shopping centres are dotted around the Peninsula – try the Balnarring Shopping Centre, Dromana Hub Shopping Centre and Rosebud Plaza Shopping Centre. For high street shopping, try Mornington, Sorrento, Mt Eliza and Mt Martha. Flinders is a quiet little village with some excellent shops including fashion boutique Deuxieme Soufflé (www.dsflinders.com.au).

www.visitmorningtonpeninsula.org

