

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Wednesday, 18 November 2020

## VISIT VICTORIA: EXPERIENCING THE BEST AT HOME

Regional restaurants, pubs, hotels, wineries and small businesses will be at the forefront of our recovery, with a major Budget boost to attract more visitors to regional Victoria – supporting local jobs and making sure more Victorian families can experience the best our state has to offer.

Premier Daniel Andrews today unveiled the \$465 million *Victorian Tourism Recovery Package* to help the sector bounce back after a year of bushfires and necessary health restrictions to protect Victoria from coronavirus.

The *Victorian Budget 2020/21* will help more people explore the state, with up to 120,000 vouchers each worth \$200 available to entice more people to visit and stay in regional Victoria.

Under the \$28 million initiative, Victorians will be able to apply for the vouchers as long as they spend at least \$400 on accommodation, attractions or tours in regional Victoria. The scheme is expected to be up and running in December, ensuring the benefits are felt this summer – when businesses need it most.

The Budget will also provide more than \$149 million to build new visitor accommodation, improve major tourist trails, and drive more people out to taste the world-class produce, food and wine on our doorstep.

More than \$47.5 million will build better visitor infrastructure along the Great Ocean Road, including a signature coastal walking trail along the coastline and hinterland from Fairhaven to Grey River, with up to five new swing suspension bridges providing spectacular views of Victoria's rugged Surf Coast. Some \$2 million of the allocation will be used to build more campsites along the Surf Coast.

The \$18.5 million *Gippsland Tourism Recovery Package* will build new accommodation, upgrade the East Gippsland Rail Trail, improve tourism infrastructure across Victoria's east and support local jobs.

It includes \$3.5 million to build 10 eco-pods at Cape Conran Coastal Park, \$2 million for more campsites, and \$2.5 million to help establish the Metung Hot Springs and the Nunduk Spa and Eco-Resort. The package also includes \$3.85 million to provide better access to Point Hicks Lighthouse – the tallest on mainland Australia.

Elsewhere in the state, \$15 million will go towards works on the popular Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing hiking trail, \$13 million will deliver trail heads on the Grampians Peak Trail and visitor upgrades at Mackenzie Falls, and \$4.3 million will enable the continued growth of the Prosecco Road winery district including helping to establish accommodation at Dal Zotto Wines.

There is also support for the Murray River Adventure Trail, facilities at Wilsons Promontory, the Mallee Silo Art Trail, the Brambuk Cultural Centre in Halls Gap and the Ballarat Centre for Photography to provide even more reasons for travellers from all corners to visit our famous attractions and support our local businesses.

A \$150 million Regional Tourism Investment Fund will fund nature-based, First Nations, arts and culture, and food and wine tourism projects – priorities identified in the Labor Government's Regional Tourism Review. A further \$1.6 million will support First Peoples tourism businesses through advisory services, mentoring and digital skills development.

A further \$106.5 million in tourism industry support will include a \$58 million marketing boost for Visit Victoria to promote the state's appeal to Victorians and, beyond our borders, to all Australians, in addition to support to help businesses adapt to new conditions and improve digital literacy.

The Labor Government's *Regional Events Fund* has been renewed, with \$20 million to continue supporting blockbuster events outside Melbourne.

And the Melbourne Convention Bureau will continue to bring visitors from around Australia and the world to its business and convention events as part of a \$9.7 million boost to the *Business Events Program*.

#### **Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews**

*"Whether it's a day-trip with the family or a tour along our stunning coast, we're helping more people get out and enjoy the best Victoria has to offer."*

*"This funding will help them tourism businesses bounce back from the challenges of this year – welcoming more visitors and employing more Victorians."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula**

*"Victoria has some of the most amazing attractions in the world and we're making sure they only continue to get better and more compelling for visitors."*

*"Our investment in infrastructure in every corner of the state lays the foundations for a sustained recovery – and that means more jobs for Victorians."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes**

*"Regional Victoria delivers for Victorians and visitors alike, and our commitment to infrastructure in local communities ensures people will have the best possible experience in the years ahead."*

*"We're committed to regional Victoria and the jobs that tourism brings to our state."*

#### **Quote attributable to Regional Tourism Review Special Adviser Mary-Anne Thomas**

*"We asked operators from across the state to tell us how we can make regional tourism even better – we listened and now these initiatives put words into action."*