



West Wimmera

OFFICIAL VISITOR GUIDE

• APSLEY • DERGHOLM • EDENHOPE • GOROKE •
• HARROW • KANIVA • SERVICETON •

Our Attractions



The West Wimmera Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, and pays respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.



SCAN ME



Sitting pretty in the far west of Victoria, West Wimmera offers a fascinating journey along the road less travelled. And while it's a popular pitstop on the road between Melbourne and Adelaide, make no mistake – this is a region that's a destination in itself.

RED-TAILED BLACK COCKATOO; WESTERN HIGHWAY AERIAL

Its varied landscapes are lifted straight from the oil canvas of a 19th-century Australian masterpiece. A land where windmills and wheat fields meet red-gums and bounding kangaroos; and where lakes and wetlands skirt the desert scrub alit in a galaxy of spring wildflowers.

Among its beautiful scenery and historic country towns, this is a trip steeped in great tales and local legends.

Australia's first international cricket team, Victoria's oldest inland pub, the world's biggest flowering gum tree, Victoria's oldest racing club, the world record holder for running backwards, the Sheep Art Trail, a Little Desert, a Big Desert, the rare southern Red-tailed Black Cockatoo, totem of the Wotjobaluk Peoples,

a gallery dedicated to Dachshunds – from the quirky to the wonderful, a drive through West Wimmera is one that delights with each twist and turn.

What brings most travellers this far and wide is the Silo Art Trail. A part of Australia's largest 'outdoor gallery', the West Wimmera's contributions to this unique 200km drive are stunning.

Past and present, the traditional owners of the West Wimmera – the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergala and Jupagik people – all very much maintain a presence here. And its incredible cricket history is a big attraction – more tourists come with each passing year to learn the extraordinary story of Australia's first XI to tour England.



LAKE CHARLEGRARK

Natural Attractions



Discover the natural beauty of our wetlands and deserts and enjoy life's simple pleasures – free of charge! After several years of drought, our wetlands are now alive with birds, fish and fun-filled activities, while the deserts are now filled with rare and spectacular wildflowers.

Lakes & Wetlands

West Wimmera Shire accounts for an incredible 25% of Victoria's individual wetlands. You may catch a glimpse of endangered birds such as brolgas, freckled ducks as well as migratory birds during their travels from far-flung parts of the world. Residents and visitors alike enjoy the wetlands for many recreational pursuits, such as camping, water-skiing, bird watching, fishing and yabbing. **NOTE: Fishing permits must be obtained prior to fishing in Victorian waters (seniors exempt).**



LAKE RATZCAILLE

Little Desert

One of Victoria's more unique national parks is this vast, sandy expanse of low-lying scrub that spans the width of West Wimmera's upper boundaries. Famous for its spring wildflowers and Mallee Fowl, it's also known for its magical sunsets and stunning star-lit night skies.

Divided into three sections, the West Wimmera's central and western blocks beckon for the more adventurous, off-road traveller. Its deep sandy tracks are suitable for 4WDs only, and hikers will need to be self-sufficient. The West Wimmera's access points are off the Kaniva-Edenhope Rd and along the Nhill-Harrow Rd near Goroke. The lesser-visited western block of the park is even more fitting for intrepid folk and is also entered via the Kaniva-Edenhope Rd. Otherwise take the Serviceton South Rd from the north or the Minimay-Frances Rd from the south.



Big Desert

If you enjoyed the Little Desert, you're going to love the Big one.

This remote and sandy scrub wilderness is an even more adventurous destination, and one that's perfect for four-wheel drivers and experienced hikers here to get away from it all. You won't get phone coverage out here, so it's a wonderful spot to unplug from the stresses of modern living among its expansive natural beauty.



Silo Art

Few tourist initiatives have proven as successful in bringing visitors to small country towns as the magnificent Silo Art Trail.

If you paint it, they will come, and that's precisely what West Wimmera has done by joining this epic open-air gallery running through the Wimmera/Mallee region.

Stop by Kaniva and Goroke to check out each of their stunning murals splashed upon the towering old grain silos. Serviceton is also about to become the latest artwork added to the trail.

Painted by artist David Lee Pereira, Kaniva's monumental GrainCorp silo features the soaring image of an Australian Hobby (a species of falcon) that sits perched among the vivid colours of wild orchids.

Goroke's silo is also superb with its beautiful and detailed triptych of a magpie, kookaburra and a galah. And given Goroke translates to 'magpie' in the local dialect, it's a very appropriate choice of subject matter.



GOROKE SILO ART



KANIVA SILO ART

Pubs

There's simply no better place to tap into the psyche of a small country town than the local pub. And while they build 'em tough out West Wimmera way, take one step into any of its historic hotels and you'll be greeted with nothing but warmth and enthusiasm by local characters here for a yarn, a cold drink, a feed and a meat raffle.

Kaniva

Kaniva

Commercial Hotel

Taking centre stage at Kaniva's main roundabout is this landmark brown-brick corner pub. Dating back to 1927, here at this grand two-story building you can take your pick from its old-fashioned front bar, a ladies lounge, back bistro, billiards room or even a 1980s ballroom.



Club Hotel

A fixture along Kaniva's main drag is this handsome little pub that recently received a stylish refit as part of a TV renovation show. Don't miss its beer garden, which is enlivened by a vibrant mural depicting a favourite fallen son who fought in the Vietnam War painted by mural artist Callum Warren.

Edenhope

Lake Wallace Hotel

In a one-pub town you have to make it count, so fortunately Edenhope's Lake Wallace gets the job done with a cosy fire, beautiful meals made from local fresh produce and cold beer to go with a family-friendly outback atmosphere.



Harrow

Hermitage Hotel

Reputed to be Victoria's oldest inland pub is this impressive hotel that dates back to 1848. And what a beauty it is, standing gracefully like a ye olde fashioned inn where very little has changed in 170-odd years. Popular with tourists and locals alike, it's a lively spot with good food, quality wines and wellpriced accommodation and it is the home of the annual Harrow Sound and Light show.



Apsley

Border Inn

Featuring an attractive art-deco façade, this much-loved watering hole is worth travelling to Apsley alone for. In a great display of community spirit, the pub was saved by a syndicate of local farmers who chipped in together to buy it. It is one of West Wimmera's finest.



Dergholm

The Dergholm Pub

Manifesting from the bush is Dergholm's 'pub in the scrub'. This is a bona fide outback hotel, filled with a colourful cast of locals here to whet their whistle over a friendly yarn. Come by Sundays for its woodfired pizzas that are famous all over the shire.

Goroke

Goroke Hotel (Opening soon)

It's been a long time in between drinks for this sleepy frontier town, so the news Goroke's pub was to reopen was one greeted with celebration. A local family has taken over the keys to polish up its red-gum horseshoe bar in anticipation to sling cold drinks and pub meals with a focus on Italian home-style cooking.

Cricket

Of all the remarkable sporting stories to come out of the country, perhaps none are greater than West Wimmera's. Not only is this home to Australia's first international cricket team, but the nation's first sporting team of any code to compete abroad.



For further information please refer to the First Australian's XI Aboriginal Cricket Team brochure



HARROW DISCOVERY CENTRE

Their 1868 tour to England itself was one of great success. The team was made up from West Wimmera's sheep stations (who used the grassy banks of Lake Wallace in Edenhope as their training ground), and despite being newcomers to the game, these cricketing trailblazers were able to match it with the English on their home turf. On what was a gruelling tour of 47 matches, they earned great respect – on and off the field – levelling the series with 14 wins apiece and 19 draws.

There was no greater player than local legend, Johnny Mullagh (Unaarrimin). Dominating with bat and ball, only in recent years have his achievements been formally recognised: both inaugurated into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame in 2020; and having the Boxing Day Test man of the match medal awarded in his honour.

But this is a story that transcends cricket. Beyond the dazzling sporting feats, it's one shrouded in controversy and tragedy, and sheds light on Indigenous Australians shameful treatment as second-class citizens.

To learn more of their story, head to the Harrow Discovery Centre, a brilliantly curated museum dedicated to telling the story of Johnny Mullagh and the first XI 1868. It also features a priceless collection of Sir Donald Bradman items. But this is a chapter in history the entire West Wimmera is proud to promote, and you'll find commemorative markers across the shire celebrating their efforts.



Starting at the cairn beside Lake Wallace in the grounds of Edenhope P-12 College in Lake Street, this trail will take you on a journey discovering the story of the first Australian cricket team to tour England in 1868.

LAKE WALLACE, EDENHOPE Visit the training ground for Australia's first international touring cricket team. A mural depicting the team along with a cairn and information bay are open for public viewing year-round.

DERGHOLM Visit the commemorative stone for team member Brimbunyah (Tommy Red Cap) along the banks of the Glenelg River on River View Rd.

APSLEY There is a commemorative stone located at Apsley cemetery gates for team member Murrungunerrimin (Jimmy Tarpot).

BRINGALBERT STATION (LAKE BRINGALBERT) Visit the site of the first original cricket match between Aboriginal and European station hands. Visit the commemorative panels along the lakes edge that tells the story of Tom Hamilton and Unamurrimin (Jellico).

JANE DUFF MEMORIAL, GYMBOWEN In 1864, Jane Duff and her two brothers went missing in the bush. As well as the selfless actions of Jane, this memorial commemorates the joint effort of Aboriginal trackers and early settlers to find the children. There is a memorial stone for team member Djungadjinganook (Dick-a-Dick).

HARROW Visit the Harrow Discovery Centre which tells the story and houses a considerable range of artefacts. Every year on the Victorian March Labour Day long weekend, a team of Indigenous cricketers and a team drawn from the local cricket association, come together at Harrow for the honour of winning the Johnny Mullagh Memorial Cup. Visit the Harrow Cemetery where team member Unaarrimin (Johnny Mullagh) is buried. There is a headstone to mark his grave.