



Beach Walks

- **The Promenade Beach Stroll**
- **Thunder Point Coastal Walk**
- **Point Ritchie Beach & River Walk**

1. The Promenade Beach Stroll:

An easy walk along the sealed promenade, encompassing the main beach and Lake Pertobe Adventure Playground. Ideal for families.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes approx.

Park at the Breakwater car park, at the end of Pertobe Road. For a shorter walk, park at McGennans Car Park, the first on your left past the kiosk as you drive down Pertobe Road.

If parking at the Breakwater, you may wish to stroll out along the Breakwater wall, viewing the spectacular Southern Ocean on your right and the tranquil waters of Lady Bay to your left. The Breakwater was completed in 1890 and was constructed specifically for protection of the early shipping fleets and beach front. A small fleet can be seen anchored in the Bay. Return to the carpark along either the upper or lower level of the Breakwater.

Make your way toward the beach and onto the sealed promenade. The promenade is designed for all forms of wheeled transport, including wheelchairs, pushers, bicycles and rollerblades. If you prefer, you can walk along the beach.

This area is the city's main beach, very popular during summer with swimmers, surfers and those who simply enjoy the sun. In peak times, a section of the beach is patrolled by lifeguards for safe swimming. You may wish to leave the promenade from time to time to enjoy the sand or wade on the waters edge.

The promenade continues for about five kilometres, up to the Logans Beach. Once you reach the surf club, turn left and cross over Pertobe Road at the traffic lights to the Adventure Playground. This 35 hectare award winning playground is a favourite with both young and the young at heart. The choices are endless, play on the adventure equipment, enjoy a game of cricket or feed the ducks.

Electric BBQ's and shelters make the area popular for family picnics. The lake complex also provides opportunities for boat hire. A walking trail extends around the lakes, providing a 'natural' contrast to the rest of the manicured park.

To return to your car, either retrace your steps, or walk up tree lined Pertobe Road to the Breakwater car park.

2. Thunder Point Coastal Walk:

A highly scenic walk along the coastline and wetlands, featuring river estuary, rocky shoreline and coastal wildlife.

Duration: 1 hour 40 minutes approx.

Park at the Breakwater car park and walk away from the main beach toward Merri and Middle Islands and the Merri River estuary. Wander down onto the soft white sands of tiny, peaceful Stingray Bay, located at the river mouth. During low tide, this sheltered area is ideal for a swim or a picnic.

During high tides, the area may be covered in water, and you should remain on the road. Make your way across the river via the footbridge.

This leads to Thunder Point Coastal Reserve, an area characterized by weathered sandstone cliffs, sculptured into tiny bays, inlets and rockpools.

Walking across the rocky clifftop, you will reach a formalised walking track. Follow the track through coastal vegetation to emerge at a small carpark at Pickering Point.

From here, you have a spectacular 360 degree view comprising the Merri River, Lady Bay and Breakwater to your right, the South Warrnambool Wetlands straight ahead, the scrubland of Thunder Point to your left and the untamed Southern Ocean behind.

Walk approximately 100m along the bitumen road, then take the track on your left. This leads to excellent views of the ocean and spectacular shoreline. Step access is provided to the water in some places, where rockpools and rock formations can be carefully explored. The track emerges at another small carpark and road.

Head left along the road, through another carpark area, and onto the formalised track at the far end of Pickering Point. Take in the breathtaking ocean views along the way.

Wander as little or as far as you wish along this walking track. Mostly, it travels through coastal vegetation and has a number of lookout points. After a short walk you will reach Shelly Beach, renowned for its shells and rocky outcrops. Here, the track ends and the open beach begins.

To return, simply retrace your footsteps. If desired, arrange for someone to pick you up from any of the carparks along the way, to shorten your return trip.

3. Point Ritchie Beach & River Walk:

A scenic coastal walk featuring soft sandy beaches, swimming, fishing and historical points of interest.

Duration: 1 hour

Park at the Point Ritchie car park, on the city side of the Hopkins River, and absorb the spectacular ocean views from the viewing platform nearby.

Take the narrow path at the left of the carpark down to a tiny beach on the river's edge. The river mouth here is constantly changing – sometimes running swiftly into the ocean and sometimes coming to a standstill.

When conditions are right, the area is ideal for a swim or for wading across to the expanse of beach which lies opposite. The rugged rocky outcrops in the area make for great exploring or even a spot of photography.

Return to the carpark, and walk down the wooden steps on the other side of the main beach. The water is dotted with sand filled rockpools at low tide, ideal for relaxing in during the warmer weather.

Lying in the sand dunes along the beach, is Granny's Grave, the burial place of the first white woman to be buried in Warrnambool, (1848).

After your beach walk, return to the carpark and back to the trail on the far side. This time, veer left rather than down toward the beach. This sheltered little trail runs parallel to the river, providing fishing access in some places, and emerging at the Hopkins River Bridge. Local fishermen are often seen here dangling a line.

Continue across Hopkins Point Road (not along the bridge), and through the gateway leading into the ground of Lyndoch. The path leads through lovely gardens along the river's edge, then finally to a bitumen road. Following the road to your right, you will arrive at the elegant Proudfoot's Boathouse.

Reflecting the early days of fishing and boating on the river, Proudfoot's Boathouse is classified by the National Trust as an early Australian recreational facility.

To return to your car, simply retrace your steps.

FOR YOUR SAFETY PLEASE

- Let someone know before you go.
- Wear suitable footwear and clothing.
- Take a drink with you.
- Put on sunscreen.
- Take care along the way.
- Fires must be lit only in fireplaces provided and completely extinguished when no longer required.
- Walkers are advised not to proceed on days of high fire danger or total fire ban.
- All cliff areas are unstable, and may collapse without warning. Stay away from cliff edges, and do not attempt to climb cliffs or rocks.
- Cliffs and rocks may collapse or move without warning. Rocks may be slippery and have sharp edges. Do not attempt to access inlets which do not have steps.
- Dangerous currents often exist where the river meets the ocean. Do not swim or wade near fast moving or churning water.
- Incoming tides may block previously accessible areas from the main beach.