

To get more information on the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail, use the QR Code below or visit www.gippslandplainsrailtrail.com.au

The Gippsland Plains Rail Trail is one of Victoria's premier walking, cycling and riding trails. Offering visitors access to the natural beauty, local history, and small-town hospitality of the Central Gippsland region. The trails gentle grade provide a perfect low-intensity walking or riding experience for visitors of all ages and levels of trail-going experience, and is easily accessible by train from Melbourne or Bairnsdale. There is history, vibrant wineries, contemporary restaurants and cafes, exciting specialty shops, stunning views of the Great Dividing Range, and much more to discover on your Gippsland Plains Rail Trail adventure. Catch the train to Stratford, where you can start the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail, before heading out to explore everything that the Gippsland Plains has to offer.



Length of Walk/Ride: 63kms return

GIPPSLAND PLAINS RAIL TRAIL

ABOUT STRATFORD

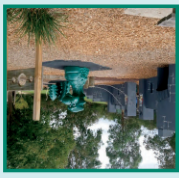


Stratford is a charming village set on the Avon River which came into existence as a result of dairy farming, as well as sheep, cattle and horse breeding in the district. The town was named by the Gippsland explorer Angus McMillan after a stream in Scotland where he had once lived.

It was the site of the first permanent settlement in Gippsland and the gold rushes in Omeo and near Dargo helped its early fortunes.

Today it is characterised by pleasant rail cycle-ways (The Gippsland Plains Rail Trail), an Arts Trail, cute cafes, the excellent Apex Park (beside the river) and the Shakespeare on the River Festival which celebrates its links with Stratford in Warwickshire, England and the great bard, William Shakespeare.

The surrounding area is dotted with some amazing historical points of interest, we recommend the Bataluk Cultural Trail, Gippsland Plains Rail Trail and the Stratford Courthouse Theatre - which hosts some fantastic shows and events throughout the year. The Courthouse Theatre is an intimate and cosy setting, and gives visitors the rare feeling of being immersed in the show.



The Apex Park in McMillan Street Stratford is an award winning medieval themed park. It is situated on the banks of the Avon River. Featuring a soft ground playground, ideal for younger children, an all abilities castle adventure, BMX track, BBQ areas, seating and grassed areas. The kids are sure to have a terrific time here! Facilities also include public toilets, car, caravan & RV parking and sheltered areas.

APEX PARK



The Knob Reserve is a small but significant site on Brayakaulung Country, 3km from the township of Stratford, which is owned by the Gunaikurnai people and jointly managed by Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and the Victorian Government. The Knob Reserve is a 56ha park on the Bataluk Cultural Trail. A lookout platform has views down upon local farmlands, the foothills and the Avon River. The Knob Reserve is a perfect spot for a picnic, with BBQ facilities and shelter areas.

BATALUK CULTURAL TRAIL



For more information on the Stratford Arts Trail, use the QR Code below or visit www.stratfordshakespeare.com.au/arts-trail

The Stratford Arts Trail features nine interactive 'Thought Spaces' which are linked throughout the trail, that winds itself through this charming township. As you explore the Stratford Arts Trail, appreciate the artistic and festive culture that is so alive in the town. Along the way, you will encounter many forms of expression, including story, song, history and sculpture. Scan the QR Code to access interactive elements associated with pieces along the trail.

The art was created by local artists, all of whom have a vested interest in maintaining Stratford's reputation as a fantastic art village. The Stratford Arts Trail offers beautiful artworks throughout the meandering streets of Stratford. Sculptures and installations centre around the Shakespeare theme for which Stratford is well known.

The Stratford Arts Trail features nine interactive 'Thought Spaces' which are linked throughout the trail, that winds itself through this charming township.



Length of Walk/Ride: 3km
Time: 40 minutes

STRATFORD ARTS TRAIL

VISITOR INFORMATION

Central Gippsland Visitor Centre
Port of Sale
70 Foster Street Sale VIC 3850
Phone: 1300 368 864

Yarram Visitor Information Centre
Yarram Courthouse
9 Rodgers Street Yarram VIC 3971
Phone: 03 5182 6553

Maffra Visitor Information Centre
Maffra Courthouse
96 Johnson Street Maffra VIC 3860
Phone: 03 5141 1811

Website: www.themiddleofeverywhere.com.au
Social Media: @themiddleofeverywhere



SCAN THE QR CODE
AND FIND OUT MORE
ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF
EVERYWHERE



STRATFORD AND BRIAGOLONG



CAFES AND SHOPPING

Stratford is home to a vibrant cafe and shopping strip, wander down Tyers Street for a great range of cafes, pubs, takeaways and shopping opportunities. With everything from the perfect cup of coffee to keep you going, to local produce, arts & crafts - you'll find something to suit every taste. Stop in at award winning cafes and restaurants to sample some of the regions best food and wine and stock up on all your goodies to take home to enjoy.

Segue Arts Cafe is also well worth a visit. A community arts hub and neighbourhood house, Segue has a fantastic selection of local produce and arts & crafts by local artists and creators, and a great gift shop and cafe for you to enjoy. Open Monday to Saturday, stop by and check out their exhibitions.



THE AVON RIVER

Believed to be the fastest rising and falling river in the southern hemisphere during floods, it is normally a tranquil and relaxing site. The river forms a boundary for the Macalister Irrigation District with Nuntin Creek joining 10km downstream of Stratford contributing to a large amount of the irrigation drainage to the river. Visit the Stratford Historical Society to uncover displays related to the full ferocity of the Avon River.

The gently flowing river and persistent bird calls provides a scenic backdrop for swimming, fishing and canoeing by locals and visitors alike.



ABOUT BRIAGOLONG



At the foothills of the Victorian Alps sits this hidden village is a great starting point to explore the high country.

The town is perhaps best known for the tranquil Blue Pool swimming hole, a large natural pool in a gorge on Freestone Creek that is an amazing place to spend a summer afternoon.

The original inhabitants of the area, the Briakooloong people utilised the Briagolong State Forest area for resources in canoe, shelter, food, clothing and tool making. In the late 1800's, these forests teemed with prospectors searching for the ever elusive gold to bring them instant wealth.

These days, the forests provide a variety of activities to enjoy, including picnicking, camping, walks, swimming, sightseeing and car touring.

Gold panning is still currently undertaken in the Freestone Creek area to the north of Briagolong.

While visiting Briagolong, make sure you stop in at the Briagolong Art Gallery, where works from local artists are on display. The Briagolong Hotel is also a great spot to stop to enjoy a meal, or a cold drink on a warm summer day.

Throughout the town, you'll also find a great selection of street art by Gippsland artists.



FREESTONE CREEK

Only a short drive from Briagolong on Freestone Creek Road, you'll find the hidden gem known as the Blue Pool.

The Blue Pool is a waterhole and gorge near Briagolong, is a well-known swimming spot by locals.

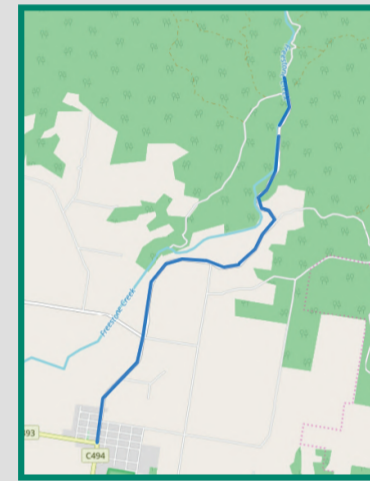
The pools consist of a large waterhole that starts off shallow but quickly gets deep. The Bluff is a nice and steep five-minute climb with some amazing views over the Blue Pool area. You'll also find an awesome rope swing that will be sure to call your name for a flip or two!

If you fancy a bit more of a walk, the surrounding Briagolong State Forest has some amazing walks to take in, and you'll even find some quiet camp areas to pull up in and lay your head for the night.

The Freestone Creek, Lees creek and Granite Creek areas were the location of a number of alluvial gold mines. These were first discovered in the mid-1860's and though not highly profitable, continued to be worked into the twentieth century.

These days, if you are lucky, you may still be able to find gold in areas such as Freestone Creek.

Information on the walks throughout Freestone Creek can be found by using the QR Code below.



BRIAGOLONG STATE FOREST

The Bluff:

Length of Walk: .2km return
Time: 5 mins



A short easy walk to a lookout point that provides excellent views of the Blue Pool area below.

Peregrine Walking Track

Length of Walk: 3km return
Time: 2 hours

As the name suggests, Peregrine falcons may be seen from the lookout (during September to December) throughout the breeding season. The track winds its way through dry open forest, made up predominantly of Red Box, Stringybark and Ironbark. A mine and chimney ruin along the way are reminders of days gone by. You may continue all the way up to McKinnon's Point and return via Gladstone Creek and the Froam Picnic Area via Track 96.

Fern Gully

Length of Walk: 1km return
Time: 30 mins

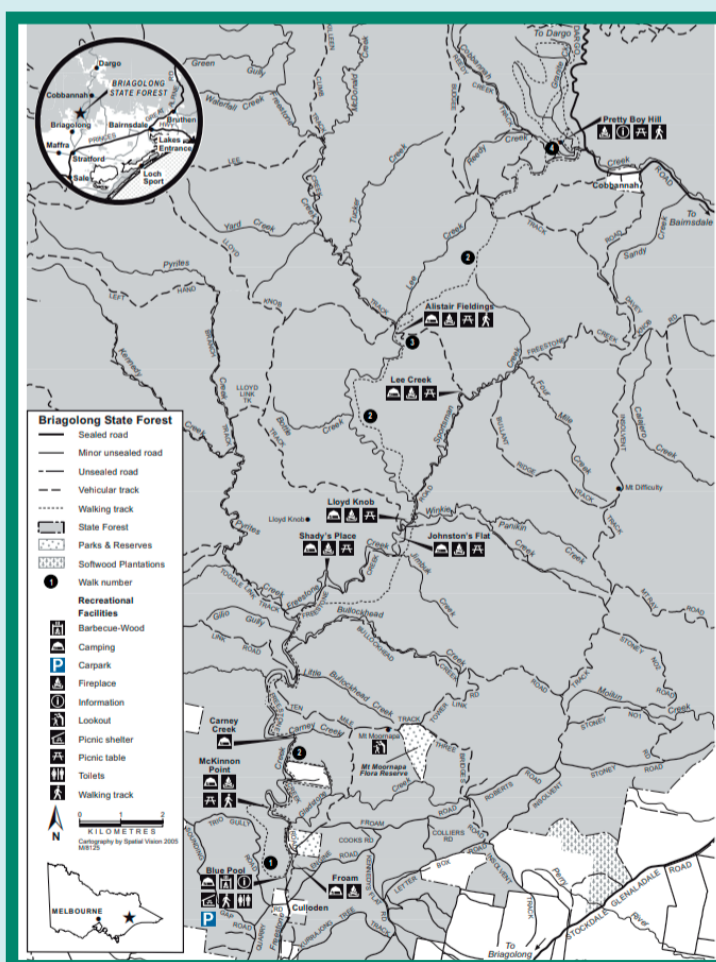
A small gull provides just enough moisture to provide a much different range of plant species to that of the surrounding dry ridge.

Track 96

Length of Walk: 60km way
Time: 3 Days

The walking track, as well as being interesting historically, traverses some very scenic forest with camp and picnic sites - Track 96 totals 60kms of walking, providing various degrees of difficulty for the casual or experienced walker. The first section may be started just north of the Blue Pool walking tracks. On leaving the area of Gladstone, Track 96 crossed what is now private property known as Paddy Melon Gully. To pick up Track 96, you will have to walk around the Boundary Track or take the shorter route via Freestone Creek. The track takes you through Lees Creek mining area, up to the main range, to finish at the southern end of the Granite Creek goldfield.

BRIAGOLONG STATE FOREST



Lees Creek Walking Track

(Also known as Alistair Fielding Memorial Track)
Length of Walk: 3km return
Time: 2 hours

Alistair Fielding was a Park ranger from Briagolong who saw the potential of opening this area up to the public. The walk takes you back to Lees Creek alluvial gold mining era of the 1890s, where you'll be able to view old housing sites, alluvial diggings and a water race that was used to bring water from a dam to the diggings. Nature also abounds with lyrebirds, giant Mountain Grey Gums, tree ferns and you may also be able to see the Fringed Helmeted Orchid with its bright red flower.

FOREST RED GUM WALK

Length of Walk/Ride: 7.6km
Time: 1.55 hours

Located just south of the Briagolong township, you'll find the Forest Red Gum Reserve Walking Trail.

The reserve is home to a range of fauna - including common brushtail possums, sugar gliders and echidnas, along with lizards that can be seen in spring. A diverse range of bird life can be seen throughout the forest including the majestic wedge-tailed eagle, kookaburra and the tiny yellow-rumped thornbill.

A car park is provided in Cemetery Road, together with interpretative signage and seating options. Seating is again provided approximately every 500m of the walk to enable visitors a chance to relax and enjoy the surrounding bush setting, you may even be able to spot a kangaroo or two.

To find out more on the Forest Red Gum Reserve Walking Trail, use the QR Code below.

