



# THE BEAN TRAIL

What could be better than exploring a new city on two wheels, stopping for a reviving brew or two along the way? Claire Henderson samples some of Melbourne's best cafes for cyclists

Cycling is a great way to explore a new city and Melbourne is well equipped with scenic bike trails to make this possible. What's more, they're lined with a plethora of welcoming cafes and restaurants, all the better to fuel your journey. The Anchorage Coffee Shed ([anchorage.com.au](http://anchorage.com.au)) is the perfect place for riders on The Strand bike path to pause for a drink and a delicious cake, or grab a coffee to go. Take a seat outside and enjoy spectacular views across Hobsons Bay to the CBD or watch giant container ships navigate the Yarra River.

Fancy a Devonshire tea? Make your way to Fairfield Park Boathouse & Tearoom via **The Main Yarra Trail**. This delightful inner city oasis is close to the city yet surrounded by bush ([fairfieldboathouse.com](http://fairfieldboathouse.com)). Tuck into tea and scones or enjoy a big brekky at the Tearoom, or pack a picnic to eat on the banks of the Yarra as you watch the kayaks and canoes go by. If you're tempted to join in the fun, you can hire your own from the Boathouse.

Sitting on the **Capital City Trail**, Green Park is a family-friendly brunch spot by day, and by night it's a cosy Spanish-themed bar serving wine and charcuterie ([greenparkdining.com.au](http://greenparkdining.com.au)). Pull up a chair in the lively outdoor area, where you can grab a coffee, nibble on Mediterranean fare, and be treated to live jazz on Sundays.

Set in a beautifully renovated rowing shed along the **Maribyrnong River Trail**, upmarket eatery The Boathouse is a collaboration between *MasterChef* judge Gary Mehigan and partner Steve Bogdani ([theboat-house.com.au](http://theboat-house.com.au)). Don't miss out on award-winning smoky wood fired pizzas, perfectly rounded off with Gary's cheesecake, toasted nut crumble and rhubarb syrup.

Café Racer is the perfect refuelling stop for those on the **Half Moon Bay Trail** ([caferacerstkilda.com](http://caferacerstkilda.com)). The beachside spot is a popular haunt with serious lycra-clad cyclists, who meet up here before and after their morning ride, lured by the hearty all-day breakfasts and "race smoothies" brimming with goodness. The smooth, rich coffee goes down a treat, too.

Environmentally conscious travellers will love The Merri Table. Nestled in CERES Environment Park not far from the **Merri Creek Trail**, which is shared by walkers and cyclists, The Merri Table specialises in organic fare (CERES environment Park, Corner Roberts and Stewart Street Brunswick East). Try the Indonesian fried eggs served on rice with a chilli sambal, soy, peanuts and coriander for a breakfast with pizzazz that tastes even sweeter when you know it was cooked using green energy and local ingredients. **DV**

## Need to know

### MAIN YARRA TRAIL:

Follows the Yarra River from Southbank to Westerfolds Park.

**Distance:** 33 kilometres

**Highlights:** A scenic riverside trail passing ancient gums and billabongs. For more, visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au)

### CAPITAL CITY TRAIL:

Follows the Yarra River from the Charles Grimes Bridge to the Eastern Freeway, then follows Merri Creek to the edge of Yarra's boundary.

**Distance:** 27 kilometres

**Highlights:** Collingwood Children's Farm, Dights Falls and Yarra Bend Park. For more, visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au)

### MARIBYRNONG RIVER TRAIL:

Connects cyclists to Brimbank Park, Victoria University, Footscray Road and the Williamstown foreshore.

**Distance:** 28 kilometres

**Highlights:** Melbourne's Living Museum of the West, Pipemaker's Park, Footscray Community Arts Centre and Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre. For more, visit [maribyrnong.vic.gov.au](http://maribyrnong.vic.gov.au)

### ST KILDA TO HALF MOON BAY

Follows the beachside bike path from St Kilda Beach via Brighton and Sandringham to Half Moon Bay.

**Distance:** 18 kilometres

**Highlights:** Brighton Baths, coastal views. For more, visit [bayside.vic.gov.au](http://bayside.vic.gov.au)

### MERRI CREEK TRAIL:

Follows Merri Creek from Dights Falls in Yarra Bend Park, through the northern suburbs to the Western Ring Road Trail.

**Distance:** 21 kilometres

**Highlights:** Coburg Lake Reserve, the Brunswick Velodrome and CERES Community Environment Park. For more, visit [moreland.vic.gov.au](http://moreland.vic.gov.au)