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BEECHWORTH VICTORIA

Camp Street  
Beechworth

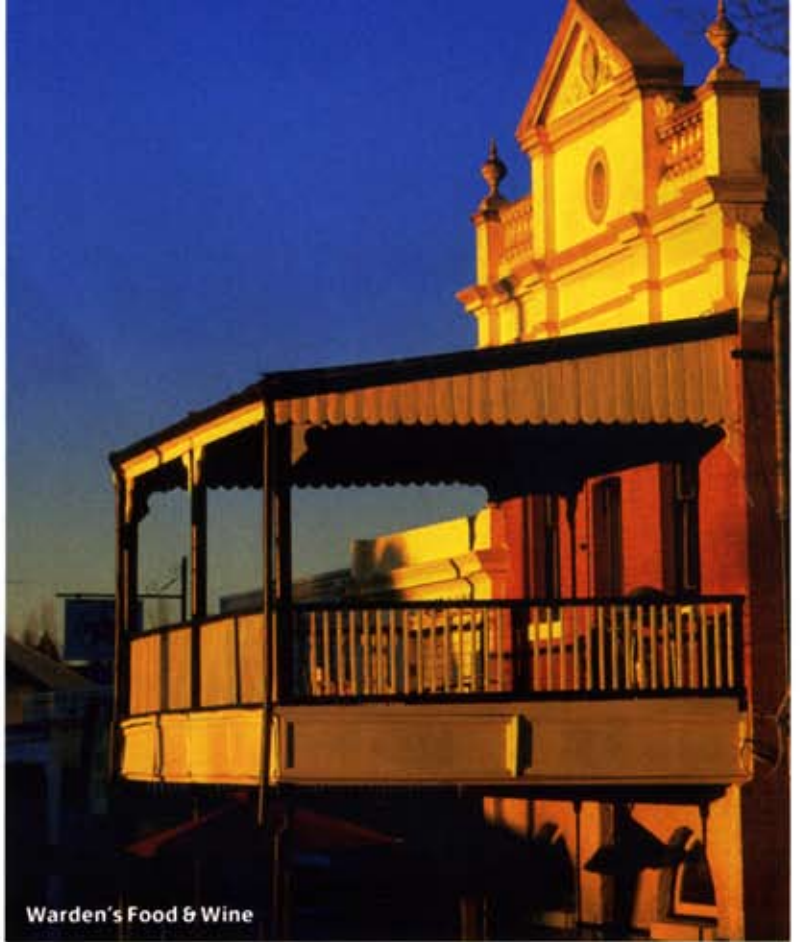
# After the goldrush

Despite the attentions of both bushfires and bushrangers, Beechworth thrives with rustic retreats, plentiful produce, boutique beverages and diverse distractions.

WORDS SUE WALLACE



Grape pickings



Warden's Food & Wine

Black Springs Bakery



Autumnal colours



**// This 1860s original slab hut retains a rustic charm, but with luxurious mod cons**



**1860 Luxury Accommodation (and above)**

**T**HE GOLDMINING TOWN of Beechworth in Victoria's north-east oozes history, character and possibly more charm than the notorious bushranger Ned Kelly, who frequented the area in the 1870s, even serving time in Beechworth Gaol. More recently the town was under threat from bushfires that destroyed lives and property in other parts of the state. Luckily, the town – home to 32 National Trust-classified buildings – remained physically untouched, the fires contained on its outskirts. Now the resilient, close-knit community of about 3000 is enticing visitors to return.

A 40-minute drive from the border towns of Albury-Wodonga, Beechworth reflects the flamboyance of the goldrush days that started when a gold nugget was discovered near the present site of Newtown Bridge in 1852. By the 1860s, up to 30,000 people lived in the town, which boasted 61 pubs to quench their thirst.

There are many stories of characters such as parliamentarian and wealthy miner Daniel Cameron who, in November 1855, upon his election as Member of the Legislative Council for Ovens, rode a horse with golden horseshoes down the main street followed by 80 boisterous supporters, also on horseback. The event has evolved into the Golden Horseshoes Festival, attracting thousands every Easter.

Walk the main streets and you probably won't get far. There's a line-up of cosy cafes and shops selling everything from old-fashioned sweets to eclectic jewellery and funky fashions. The newest additions include Provenance restaurant and accommodations in the heart of the town, and Larder, Natasha Davis' fromagerie. Don't leave town before treating yourself to an ironbark honey and macadamia ice-cream at the Beechworth Honey Experience.

*Beechworth Visitor Information Centre: 1300 366 321.*

**STAY**

**BLACK SPRINGS BAKERY**

**464 Wangaratta Road.  
(03) 5728 2565. [www.blackspringsbakery.com](http://www.blackspringsbakery.com)**

A double-storey stone cottage amid French-inspired gardens, 4km from Beechworth. Climbing roses frame the doorway of the plush, self-contained accommodation, the former bakery's converted barn, and guinea fowl strut the lawns. The French decor, furnishings and toiletries are guaranteed to please discerning Francophiles. From \$220 per couple/night.

**1860 LUXURY ACCOMMODATION**

**4 Surrey Lane. 0408 273 783.  
[www.1860luxuryaccommodation.com](http://www.1860luxuryaccommodation.com)**

This 1860s slab hut was relocated then restored. The self-contained accommodation resembles a high-country cattlemen's hut with luxury mod cons. From \$275 per couple/night.

**PROVENANCE LUXURY SUITES**

**86 Ford Street.  
(03) 5728 1786.  
[www.theprovenance.com.au](http://www.theprovenance.com.au)** Once the carriage house and ➤



Black Springs Bakery

Quail, prune and  
bacon terrine at  
Warden's



## Beechworth reflects the flamboyance of goldrush days

stables of the historic Australasia Bank, the four suites are set in a shady courtyard. Located in the heart of town close to Provenance restaurant, the suites feature spa baths and double rain showers. From \$275.

### EAT

#### WARDEN'S FOOD & WINE

32 Ford Street. (03) 5728 1377.  
[www.wardens.com.au](http://www.wardens.com.au)

Owners Rocco Esposito and Lisa Pidutti opted for a tree change from Melbourne and revamped the old Warden's Hotel in October 2004. Esposito's impressive wine list has local, national and international wines, while chef Douglas Elder creates an Italian-inspired seasonal menu. Think tastes with a twist, such as ricotta and black pepper gnocchi with brown butter; mint pesto and shaved pecorino toscano; or roasted quail with Sicilian flavours, pickled fig sausage, fregola sarda and a marsala sauce.

### PROVENANCE

86 Ford Street. (03) 5728 1786.  
[www.theprovenance.com.au](http://www.theprovenance.com.au)

Michael Ryan from Range at Myrtleford has relocated to the former Bank of Australasia, built in 1856. His take on fresh, regional produce includes lemon-brined Milawa poussin with grilled onion, confit garlic, green pea puree and bread sauce. The dining room has tall ceilings, ornate rosettes and arched windows. The vault is still in use, home to gold of a different kind, such as Beechworth's Pennyweight Gold dessert wine.

### GIGI'S OF BEECHWORTH

69 Ford Street. (03) 5728 2575.  
[www.gigisofbeechworth.com](http://www.gigisofbeechworth.com)

Allan Parker purchased Gigi's from the restaurant's founder, Luigi "Gigi" Cipolato, in 2007. Parker and chef Megan Chalmers produce house-made sourdough bread, pasta, charcuterie, prosciutto and ricotta. The extensive wine list includes Beechworth's highly



awarded Giaconda label. Gigi's signature dish is wild rabbit maltagliati pasta in a carbonara sauce with crispy jamon.

### SHOP

#### BEECHWORTH BAKERY

27 Camp Street.

(03) 5728 1132. [www.beechworthbakery.com.au](http://www.beechworthbakery.com.au)

Once a shoe shop, this thriving bakery is where entrepreneur Tom O'Toole and his staff bake daily 250 types of breads, pies, pastries and cakes. The restored two-storey building dates back to 1857. With live entertainment every Sunday.

#### LARDER

14a Camp Street.

(03) 5728 2299.

Former Sydneysider Natasha Davis opened this fromagerie

last year. She has cheeses from home and abroad, including Victoria's Locheilan farmhouse cheeses and sweet, hand-stretched buffalo mozzarella from Shaw River. Stock up for picnics with terrines, pates and smoked trout, packed in a returnable wicker basket.

#### BEECHWORTH HONEY EXPERIENCE

Ford & Church Streets.  
(03) 5728 1432. [www.beechworthhoney.com.au](http://www.beechworthhoney.com.au)

Fourth-generation honey producers Steve and Jodie Goldsworthy have a self-guided honey-making tour. You can see bees up close and taste traditional and new products, such as creamy honey with fig and ginger. They stock the best honey ice-cream imaginable. >



Loafing around at Beechworth Bakery; the vines that produce the wines (right)



**THE GROWING SUITCASE**

**74 Ford Street. 0438 286 101.** Rob Cowell brings a little Paris to Beechworth with Le Prince Jardinier. This is one of 20 shops worldwide to stock its high-end clothes, gardening tools and homewares. Also on offer are exquisite old French linens and treasures such as Paris lampshades made from old documents and pleated silk.

**SEE & DO**

**THE SPA AT BEECHWORTH**

**La Trobe at Beechworth, Albert Road. (03) 5728 3033. www.thespaatbeechworth.com.au**

In a National Trust Italianate building set in tranquil gardens, the spa offers luxurious treatments including private meditation, kinesiology, holistic life coaching, reiki and yoga.

**GUIDED WALKING TOURS**

**Beechworth Visitor Information Centre, 103 Ford Street. 1300 366 321. www.beechworthonline.com.au** Ned Kelly: villain or folk hero?

Australia's most famous bushranger and his links with Beechworth are the focus of a one-hour tour departing daily at 10.30am. A goldrush tour leaves at 1pm daily.

**RAIL TRAIL**

**www.murraytomountains.com.au**

Get on your bike for an invigorating 16km ride down the Rail Trail to Everton, part of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail. If you can't face the uphill return, call Bus-A-Bike for pick-up: (03) 5752 2974.

**BEECHWORTH GHOST TOURS**

**La Trobe at Beechworth, Albert Road. 0447 432 816. www.beechworthghosttours.com** History buff Adam Wynne-Jenkins dons top hat and tails for his nightly tours of the former Mayday Hills Lunatic Asylum, where more than 3000 people died between 1867 and 1995 (when it closed down). Wynne-Jenkins is full of fascinating tales gleaned from

the 28 members of his family who worked there.

**CELLAR DOORS**

**PENNYWEIGHT WINERY**

**Pennyweight Lane. (03) 5728 1747.**

**www.pennyweight.com.au** Winemaker Stephen Morris' great-grandfather George Francis Morris established the first Morris winery at Rutherglen in 1860. Today they produce wines certified organic from handpicked grapes rested in oak casks, some brought from Spain in the 1930s.

**SMITHS VINEYARD**

**27 Croom Lane. (03) 5728 2364.**

**www.smithsvineyard.com.au** Established in 1978, this is the oldest vineyard in Beechworth. Will Flamsteed produces acclaimed chardonnay, as well

as cabernet merlot and shiraz. The cellar door is in a landmark sandstone building.


**AMULET VINEYARD & WINERY**

**1036 Wangaratta Road. (03) 5727 0420.**

**www.amuletwines.com.au** Enjoy views of rugged valleys and granite outcrops while tasting Italian and French grape varieties. Sue and Eric Thornton and son Ben Clifton produce two labels: Scarecrow and a premium range under the Wood Duck label.

**BRIDGE ROAD BREWERS**

**Old Coach House Brewers Lane, Ford Street. (03) 5728 2703. www.bridgeroadbrewers.com.au**

Drop in for a sip or a session at Ben Kraus' brewery in the Cobb & Co coach-house. Save room for the pretzels. 

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