

Rail Trail Six-Pack

6 Trails in 5 Days - Snowy to San Remo

Wednesday 06 February, 2019 to Sunday 10 February, 2019

A typical day on the ride: You wake up to the morning bird calls and are feeling good after yesterday's invigorating ride. Step out onto the balcony to greet the day before heading to meet the rest of the group for a wholesome bike rider's breakfast.

You push off along the rail trail and come across a small town or a clearing in the trees for some morning tea. After a chat and refilling your water bottles you head out again for a good ride, stopping in eventually at one of the small villages dotted along the trail for a cafe lunch with some great choices of local produce, and enough sustenance and energy to take you through into the afternoon. The last leg of the day takes you through more lovely scenery and spectacular cycling while the AllTrails support vehicle is not far away with water refills, bananas, home-baked goodies and advice on the best places to go and the best places to stop.

You will arrive at your overnight accommodation with plenty of time to explore another interesting town, enjoy the afternoon with a cuppa & biscuit, a wine in the garden or a craft beer at the local brewery. Later on we share a few stories at the evening briefing followed by a delicious dinner, then it's off to bed for a well-deserved slumber so that we can do it all again tomorrow.

Location	Distance	Date	B	L	D	A
Orbost to Lakes Entrance	56km	Wed 6 Feb 2019	--	Y	Y	Y
Nowa Nowa to Bairnsdale	58km	Thu 7 Feb 2019	Y	--	Y	Y
Stratford to Traralgon	67km	Fri 8 Feb 2019	Y	--	Y	Y
Boolara to Foster	61km	Sat 9 Feb 2019	Y	--	Y	Y
Foster to Woolamai	47km	Sun 10 Feb 2019	Y	--	--	--
Total distance cycled	289km		4	1	4	4
Average daily distance	58km					

Meal and accom inclusions noted as B, L, D, A (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation)

Orbost to Lakes Entrance — 56km — Wed 6 Feb 2019 — - L D A

Our ride begins in a small country town sitting on the banks of the iconic Snowy River, Orbost. We will arrive at lunchtime after a bus transfer from Southern Cross Station Melbourne (depart approx 6:30am). Orbost is at one end of the 100km East Gippsland Rail Trail which is looked after caringly by a management committee and a 'Friends of the Trail' group. After we have lunch, set bikes up and run through a safety briefing, you are on your way through 2km of backroads before hitting the trail. This is a beautiful section of the trail and a great way to begin the ride as you head away from civilisation, not crossing paths with any towns or communities for 38km. It's a great opportunity to truly immerse yourself in nature as you navigate along the path that takes you through the sheltered forest and over three trestle bridges. At the 38km mark we hit Nowa Nowa where we will pack up the bikes and head down the road to where the East Gippsland Rail Trail sends a branch off towards Lakes Entrance. This branch is called the Gippsland Lakes Discovery Trail, and it is a bit more like a dirt track through the forest than the hard-packed gravel from where we came from, but the scenery is magnificent, and it is considered one of the most beautiful forest rides in Australia. With 'seaside charm and lakeside living', Lakes Entrance has Australia's largest inland network of waterways and has thus been a popular holiday spot for generations. We have a great award winning motel in a central location with a pool, as well as a bistro and bar where we will gather together tonight for a fun briefing of the day's events, what to look out for tomorrow, and a pre-arranged group meal.

Nowa Nowa to Bairnsdale — 58km — Thu 7 Feb 2019 — B - D A

This morning you can take one last look around the hamlet of Lakes Entrance and perhaps go for a quick walk along the lovely foreshore shared path, then we are into the vehicle and back to Nowa Nowa. Here you jump back on the East Gippsland Rail Trail and finish off the rest of the trail to Bairnsdale. The first section takes you through cool shady forest with the iconic Stony Creek Trestle Bridge. Make sure you stop for some great photos. At the 30km mark you will find yourself in Bruthen where the AllTrails crew will be stationed for a while to direct you to the best lunch spots, coffee outlets, picnic supplies shops, or a local brewery if you are feeling ready for that. The next part of the ride through to Nicholson and on to Bairnsdale allows you wonderful views over Slaughterhouse Creek Valley (nicer than the name suggests), another trestle bridge crossing the Nicholson River, and a final sealed section of road with wonderful lake and bushland views as you arrive into Bairnsdale. Here we park up in a well-appointed hotel complete with gym and spa – the perfect way to relax after a day on the bike. Tonight we gather again for a round-up of the day's events, a briefing on tomorrow's ride and a group meal.

Stratford to Traralgon — 67km — Fri 8 Feb 2019 — B - D A

This morning after breakfast we will transfer you to the start of the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail at Stratford where you will have 67km of riding today. The trail passes through high quality dairy country and offers panoramic views of the Great Dividing Range to the north and sweeping views across the Great Gippsland Plains. Stop to investigate the towns along the route to discover some of the specialty shops, history, wineries and cafes (to which the AllTrails crew can direct you as we meet along the route). Arriving into Traralgon we are again treated to a modern 4-star motel in the heart of town, complete with pool, gym, bar & lounge. Evening briefing and plenty of laughs over dinner and drinks before retiring to bed to prepare for another great day on the trails tomorrow.

Boolara to Foster — 61km — Sat 9 Feb 2019 — B - D A

This morning after a lovely breakfast in Traralgon we head to the start of the Grand Ridge Rail Trail in Boolara. This is yet another smooth gravel track that winds its way through the forest of the Strzelecki Ranges, passing beautiful flora reserves and the large embankments that connect Boolara to the town of Mirboo North. Around the half way point you can take a little break at Darlimurla where stands an information shelter with a trail map. Look out for 'The Big Tree' – it's worth the short detour off the trail to check out this natural historic remnant of the huge trees that used to grow in the area. The end of the 13km trail leads to the doorstep of the famous Grand Ridge Brewery and Restaurant which will be a great option for something to eat. Don't linger too long though as we are off to explore the Great Southern Rail Trail from Leongatha through to Foster. This trail guides you over lush farmland, bush and wetlands offering many opportunities to view the towering gum trees, local wildlife, historic railway trestle bridges and quirky little towns along the route. Just before reaching the end of the day's ride near Foster, look out for kangaroos and wallabies in the dense forest on the side of the track. Foster is a small regional town initially built as a gold mining town in 1871 but now better known for its rolling green hills, award winning local produce, great wineries and a handy access point to Wilsons Promontory. The vibrant main street is just around the corner from our welcoming accommodation which is set on 4 acres of Australian bush with hundreds of large gum trees and wild life traversing the property. Tonight we celebrate our last evening together on tour with our final group dinner and evening briefing.

Foster to Woolamai — 47km — Sun 10 Feb 2019 — B - - -

This morning we continue along the remainder of the Great Southern Rail Trail from Foster, past the giant wind turbines perched high on the hills, past the dairy farms and forests, through the town of Welshpool and on to the coast at the fishing village of Port Welshpool. It's a lovely place to take a breath and have a snack with views of Snake Island, Corner Inlet and the northern end of Wilsons Prom just off into the distance. After taking in the atmosphere of it all, we board the vehicle and transfer you to the start of our final trail, The Bass Coast Rail Trail. This ride begins in Wonthaggi and is the only coastal rail trail in Victoria, providing some spectacular and dramatic scenery out to Bass Strait, the Southern Ocean, roaring surf and sandy beaches – quite a contrast to the inland scenery on the previous trails. The fresh ocean breeze will keep you cool until you pass through Kilcunda where you'll find yourself heading away from the coast with a bit of a climb up to the tiny community of Anderson. The last leg from here, allows you to take in the panoramic views of the surrounding bush, farms and Western Port Bay as you enjoy a steady drop in elevation through to the end of our trail and indeed the end of the tour at Wollamai Rec Reserve. Congratulations all round as you tick off the last of the 6 trails on this tour. It's quite an accomplishment, and to be able to do them all in a few days makes it all that more special. All aboard the vehicles for a transfer back to Melbourne, or feel free to spend a few more days down here – after all we are just around the corner from Phillip Island, San Remo and French Island.

