RGIT is expanding to accommodate growing interest from domestic students. We have acquired Level 7 at 152 Elizabeth St, which has 10 large, natural light-filled classrooms overlooking Elizabeth St and Bourke St Mall. The facility welcomed its first intake of 22 students for RGIT’s Diploma of Business last month.

RGIT plans to offer all domestic courses there eventually. These include the Diploma of Business, Diploma of Management, Diploma of Accounting, Advanced Diploma of Business, Diploma of Software Development, Diploma of Information Technology Networking, Diploma of Hospitality and the Advanced Diploma of Hospitality.

Courses for domestic students come under the Australian government VET FEE-HELP scheme which allows eligible, full-fee paying students to apply for a loan that covers part, or all, of their tuition fees.

Students must re-pay the VET FEE-HELP loan through the Australian taxation system once they are employed and earning a minimum income of $51,000.

If you want more information about VET FEE-HELP courses for yourself, a family member or a friend, just download our VET-FEE HELP Handbook from the website (under Domestic Students) or call our helpful VET FEE-HELP team:

PH: 1300 844 822  
E: feehelp@rgit.edu.au
A warm welcome to you all, our returning students, and all our new students.

For our new students, our Orientation session is held Friday 4th October 9:30am to 10:30am. Visit Level 2 to participate.

There is a lot of information to absorb in Orientation Week, but here are a few key things:

**STUDENT SUPPORT**
Our Student Services staff on level 2 are there to help you with all study-related issues, personal problems (ask for our student counsellor) and attendance issues.

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**
If you miss Orientation, ask Student Services for an “Orientation Bag”. This contains your Student Handbook, which covers important conditions of your course, and information about Melbourne.

**STUDENT LIBRARY & RESOURCES**
Our library and student resources room on Level 8 is a good place to relax with others, have lunch, do photocopying or printing, and to use free wi-fi internet. The library has lots of natural light and city views. Student-trainer meetings are often held here too.

**STUDENT PCS**
PCs for student use are available in the library, and also on Levels 5 and 8 in the foyer.

**YOUR PROGRESS**
Now that you’ve made a commitment to us, we want to make a commitment to you. We want you to do well at RGIT, which is why we ask you to participate 100% in your course so that we can help you to achieve the best result.

We ask that you:
- Attend all classes
- Inform trainers if you are having difficulties with work or attendance
- Hand work in on time

**NYCS – NOT YET COMPETENT?**
If you receive a Not Yet Competent (NYC) assessment in a study unit, sign up for reassessment to improve your progress, before it becomes an issue that could affect your visa.

Please book reassessments through Student Services on Level 2.

**SMOKING IN STAIRWELLS**
Unfortunately, it has come to our attention that some students have been smoking in the stairwells. Smoking is not acceptable at any time within RGIT. Thank you for your cooperation.

**UNSATISFACTORY COURSE PROGRESS POLICY**
Government regulations require all international students (except ELICOS students, who are monitored on attendance) to make satisfactory course progress which means you must pass at least 50% of units each term.

If you do not make satisfactory progress, RGIT will contact you and request you meet with your trainer to begin an intervention strategy. The intervention strategy is there to help you pass your failed units and to ensure that you meet your visa conditions.

If you fail 50% or more units in two consecutive study periods in the same course, RGIT is required to report you to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) through PRISMs, which may affect your visa status.

To avoid being reported, please ensure that you pass all units and if the school requests that you participate in an intervention strategy, please, do so. It is in your best interests.

**REASSESSMENT**
You will be charged a reassessment administration fee if the following applies:
- You have attended less than 70% of scheduled classes for a unit, OR
- You did not complete assessments within the term in which they were offered.

**REASSESSMENT FEES:** $20 per paper-based assessment; $100 per practical assessment (Hospitality courses only), which must be done during term break.

Remember, if you are having difficulties, ask Student Services for advice before it affects your progress.

**What’s Next?**
Hi Everyone,

If you are about to finish your course with RGIT, have you thought about what’s next?

When you’re building a career, Step 1, is to get qualified.

Come and talk to our marketing department about what other courses might complement your direction. RGIT has much to offer in Accounting, Hospitality, Information Technology and Business. Let’s get you work-ready, and able.

Come in for a chat, on Level 2, or call us on 8369 9000, or email – marketing@rgit.edu.au

**Did you know?**
Suspend or cancel studies:
To suspend or cancel studies, arrange an appointment with Student Services to discuss the reasons why you are not able to attend classes.

Change of Address:
Please keep us up-to-date: This is especially important for international students; we may need to contact you with important information relating to your visa status.
WHAT’S ON in Melbourne

Feeling Arty?

Visit Signal, a creative arts studio for young people (up to 20 years old), just behind Flinders St station, where you can work with professional artists. Learn to design and print your own fine art posters, invent your own colours and explore techniques. Your work will be displayed around the city. Bookings are essential: visit the City of Melbourne website (search for “Signal”).

When: Sat 12 Oct & Sun 13 Oct
Time: 11am to 4pm
FREE Activity

Create a Music Video

Work with animator and music video creator Iosbel Knowles to design and shoot a music video for a Melbourne musician. Should be great fun. Bookings are essential though. Visit the City of Melbourne website (search for “Signal”).

When: Sat 19 Oct & Sun 20 Oct
Time: 11am to 4pm
FREE Activity

Malaysia Street Festival

Even though it’s the Malaysian Street Festival, next to the roti canai, beef rendang and nasi lemak will be street stalls with Indonesian, Vietnamese, Singaporean and Thai food too. There’ll be Malaysian cultural performances and you can even have a go at doing some sand art.

When: Sun 13 Oct
Time: 9am to 4pm
Where: Queen St, City
FREE Activity

Diwali Festival of Light

Melbourne’s Diwali “Festival of Lights” honours the Hindu tradition of celebrating your inner light, the triumph of good over evil. Films and dances will be held in the square every evening from Sat 21st October in the lead up to Diwali. On Saturday 26th October, there will be a authentic Indian craft and food stalls along River Terrace, as well as activities like Henna painting and classical Indian and Bollywood dance performances and workshops.

For more info: www.celebrateindia.org.au
When: Sat 26 Oct
Time: 12pm to 9pm
Where: Federation Square
FREE Event
FIELD TRIP – LYGON STREET

Visiting Little Italy – Lygon St

To bring Hospitality study units to life, trainer Eugenio Giannotta took Certificate III and IV students to Lygon St, Carlton, known as Melbourne’s “Little Italy”. He wants students to understand how these welcoming Italian businesses create happy customers.

Eugenio knows lots of local business owners, so his students enjoyed a real, behind-the-scenes perspective.

TASTINGS!
They viewed mozzarella “stretching” at cheesemaker, La Latteria, in Elgin St, and tasted “buffalo mozzarella” made from buffalo milk, and “fior di latte mozzarella” made from fresh cow’s milk.

At the Grinders Coffee Shop, they learned the history of Melbourne’s coffee culture and received free coffee bean samples. They also met “Giancarlo” of University Café (pictured), who was a pioneer of coffee culture here.

Next, they visited D.O.C Gastronomia Italia, a wonderful pizza bar and delicatessen where many, for the first time, tried spicy Italian meats and olives.

“They reacted with real WOW factor because it’s a different food culture for the majority of my students, who are from Asia,” says Eugenio.

SPICE HEAVEN
The group were amazed by the unusual range of spice mixes at their next destination, the exotic Gewurzhaus spice shop.

“It’s like a lolly shop for adults,” says Eugenio, smiling wide. “They tasted truffle salt, which is my favourite, and also mulled wine, which is red wine, served warm, with spices.”

5 STAR LUNCH
And finally, they stopped for lunch at Brunetti, an Italian eatery that offers an enormous variety of cakes, biscotti, gelati, savoury treats and, of course, coffee. Yummo!

“We went to Brunetti because they can experience the whole service cycle there. Even though it’s self-service, you feel like you are somewhere special, like a 5 star hotel. These is also ‘best practice’ coffee making. They go through 300kg of coffee per week!”

STUDENTS RECKON IT WAS...

“It is a fantastic part of the course. I hope there are more tours in the future. The tour … gives us an opportunity to know about a real situation that we are studying in the text book.”

“It was a great experience, getting to know different hospitality venues and the service as well. The coffee was the best part.”

“It was a great to know and learn different cultures and food. I loved the excursion. I hope we can have another like this again. I was really helpful to learn the hospitality areas including food, beverage etc.”

“Amazing! We learnt how to do mozzarella cheese and had a nice coffee… In addition, I had further understanding about coffee history via this tour. This tour left a deep impression on me.”

Learning the Hard Way

Our effusive Hospitality and Barista trainer, Eugenio Giannotta, learned how to make coffee the hard way.

“Originally, I wanted to become a waiter in Rome, but there were no jobs available… so I found a job as an apprentice barista. It took me three years to become a barista.”

Three years? Our coffee-making course is only 5 hours long!

Eugenio laughs. Managing an 800-1000 cup-a-day coffee service is a complex, professional operation.

“Back then, it wasn’t just making coffees. I used to do all the dirty jobs, for example, cleaning the toilets… there were no coffee courses like today, so being a Barista was, and still is, a profession, and they were secretive of their trade. I wasn’t allowed to watch, I used to get elbows in the stomach [if I got too close to the Barista]. Anyway, I would manage to learn a secret here and there!”

“When the time came to officially touch the machine, I used to get kicks in the shins and they used to say – ‘Are you calling this Espresso coffee?’ – I would say ‘y…e…s’ very timidly, and again, a kick, – ‘This is dishwashing water! Start again!’.”

Our effusive Hospitality and Barista trainer, Eugenio Giannotta, learned how to make coffee the hard way.
There is something about doing “dress-ups” at Ian Potter Gallery and sipping coffee while munching on chocolate doughnuts that loosens the lips of ELICOS students. On their field trips with trainer, Elvira, tongues waggle freely and new friendships form more easily.

“They are more relaxed when they’re out, it’s a more natural environment for interaction,” says Elvira. “They have a lot of fun.”

Last term, Elvira’s intermediate ELICOS students visited the Ian Potter Gallery, the Spanish Café and the National Gallery of Victoria. At Ian Potter Gallery, students were most intrigued by the earthy colour palette of the indigenous art exhibited. They hand-painted their own face masks (pictured) and decided they were better off studying at RGIT than becoming artists.

Many had never been to vibrant South Melbourne market, which is home to the Spanish Café, where they discovered “churros” (hot Spanish doughnuts dunked in chocolate syrup). Two students also tried the traditional Spanish seafood and rice dish, paella (pronounced “pie-yella”).

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

While waiting for food, they played the word game “Chinese Whispers”. To begin, Elvira whispered “I would like a cup of cappuccino” to one student, who then whispered the sentence to another student, and so the game goes, until the last student repeats out loud what they heard. People usually misunderstand the whispers, so the end result is often hilarious. The only word that survived this round was “cappuccino”, laughs Elvira. So, Italian, rather than English, is the universally understood language!

PARTY BUDDIES

ELICOS Trainer, Kate, and Elvira combined English classes last term for an on-campus party. Students each brought food and enjoyed a mini feast.

“They’re happier to share their ideas, experiences and emotions when we do these activities,” says Elvira. Students have also started organising their own outings together, she says. Next week, they’re off to a Latin Club. We wonder whose idea that was... The Colombians, perhaps?
WHO’S WHO @ RGIT?

Kamran Ismail

Q: How old are you?
A: 25

Q: Where do you call home?
A: Pakistan.

Q: What are you studying?
A: Certificates III & IV Hospitality (Commercial Cookery).

Q: What do you like about the course?
A: I'm learning the right words for cooking, like “poaching” and “steaming”. Now that I am studying, I know how to explain what I am doing at work.

Q: Where do you work?
A: At a very busy café and bar in Ripponlea; two days as kitchen hand, three days cooking.

Q: How busy?
A: We do up to 200 docket orders on weekend for breakfast and lunch.

Q: Wow! Does that stress you out?
A: In the beginning I found it stressful, but now I'm used to it. The staff are very friendly and nice to me. When it's busy, it gets complicated. One docket may have 10 dishes that we must prepare and serve at the same time. It takes practice, and practice, to remember everything.

Q: How did you get that job?
A: When I came to Australia, I asked my friend. He took me to meet the boss. I said I would do anything. In the beginning, I was a kitchen hand doing small jobs – washing dishes, cutting herbs, grating cheese, peeling potatoes. Now I'm cooking burgers, fritters, making sweet buns. The head chef does the omelettes, gnocchi and other pasta.

Q: What do you find tricky on the course?
A: Not much. If we have any problems, the teacher explains it to us.

Q: What is the one thing you would really like to have in your kitchen at home?
A: Not one thing. Many! A professional kitchen, or a good fry pan.

Xiaodang Chang

Q: May we ask your age?
A: 22

Q: Where’s home?
A: China, north, near Beijing.

Q: What course are you doing?
A: Certificate III and IV in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery).

Q: Did you do much cooking before doing this course?
A: Not really. I was doing nursing before this, but my friends were studying here and said it was nice. I was working in Aged Care in Blackburn.

Q: What do you like cooking?
A: Chinese food. Friend rice and seafood dumplings.

Q: Do you have work in hospitality?
A: I applied at a Chinese restaurant, but I did not get anything.

Q: What do you like about the course?
A: We do theoretical and practical class together, so it’s not boring. We get to do team work. It’s a very well organised class. And the classes are at a good time, so I have time to earn money.

Q: What do you find challenging about the study?
A: Some words are difficult for me to remember. It used to be “osso bucco” and “parsley”, but I can remember them easily now.

Q: What’s one thing you’d really like to have in your kitchen at home?
A: An oven! I don’t use one in Chinese cooking and in the class we learn a lot of things that use an oven. Then I could practice at home.
Who's who @ RGIT?

Rai Ramlallah

Q: Where are you from?
A: Mauritius.

Q: How old are you?
A: 25.

Q: What course are you doing?
A: The Diploma of Management.

Q: Is the course helping with your job?
A: Yes. I work in customer service at Noisette, in Port Melbourne... I may become a supervisor there. Sunila, my trainer, has been a fantastic coach and very approachable. I relate all the flaws from my workplace and we brainstorm ... Sunila tells me what she thinks, other students give their perspectives, and I listen and form my own opinion.

Q: Why is your English so good?
A: I've been here 5 years. If you really want something, you have to work at it. I practised and practised. I really like the older style of English, it's very refined and polite, so I downloaded a lot of things from the BBC [Presenters on the BBC media network in England are known for their beautiful English accents].

Q: What was tough when you first arrived?
A: I was brought up in a very protected environment. My whole life here has been an adventure. My eyes opened wide and shining ... I was alone and didn’t have any friends, so it was a big challenge for me to get to know people, to overcome the language barrier.

Q: What advice would you give others students on getting started socially?
A: Don’t be timid. If you feel you want to talk to someone, there is one universal language. Smile. It's a powerful tool... Most of my friends were customers that I met at work.

Q: What is your age?
A: 31

Q: Where are you from?
A: Taiwan.

Q: What course are you doing?
A: (Commercial Cookery)
eLiCos general and Hospitality Course:

Gyeseon Noh

Course: ELICOS General and Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)

Q: Where’s home for you?
A: Korea

Q: How old are you?
A: 46

Q: What do you miss about Korea?
A: Good skin care products! My daughter has eczema.

Q: What do you think your friends think about you?
A: My friends at work would say charming, polite, helpful and hard-working.

Q: What is your English like?

Q: Who do you admire?
A: My older sister. She lived alone in Australia since she was 25. She is married and now has three children. She is very strong and positive. She was manager of a nursing home, and now works as a nurse in a big hospital.

Q: What makes you angry?
A: If someone says bad things about my family.

Q: Who is someone you admire?
A: My mother and my brother. And I'm a good singer [Gyeseon is a solo singer in her church choir. We're impressed!]

Q: What do you like doing in your life?
A: I would like to be the lead singer in my own band.

Q: If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be?
A: No killing of animals for food. Be vegetarian. I don't think we need meat or seafood. It makes me sad. People always want more, more, more. Sometimes, I don't want to be human.

Q: Thanks Sih-Yu. Your English is awesome!

Sih-Yu Yin

Course: ELICOS General

Q: Where are you from?
A: Taiwan.

Q: What’s your age?
A: 31

Q: How would you describe your personality?
A: Silly! Crazy! Open. I don’t worry about how people see me.

Q: What do you miss about Taiwan?
A: My mother and my brother. And vegetarian hot pot.

Q: Who is someone you admire?
A: Myself, because I am always learning in life.

Q: What makes you angry?
A: If someone says bad things about my family.

Q: What is something you would like to do in your life?
A: Going to the gym, and walking after dinner. The city used to be just all buildings and concrete. Now it has more natural spaces and water features for walking.

Q: What is popular in Korea exercise-wise?
A: Going to the gym, and walking after dinner. The city used to be just all buildings and concrete. Now it has more natural spaces and water features for walking.

Q: What is your age?
A: 46

Q: What do you miss about Melbourne?
A: I love the big trees and the sound of the birds and the small animals. The possums make such cute sounds in my house. My daughter and I were scared at first by the scratching and knocking. Now we wait to hear them.

Q: What do you think your friends like about you?
A: I'm kindly. Soft-spoken. Positive. And I'm a good singer [Gyeseon is a solo singer in her church choir. We're impressed!]

Q: What do you want to be in the future?
A: I want to work as hard as I can and keep adapting.
WHO’S WHO IN SUNNY QUEENSLAND?

MARY SAVAGE, AITE, Cairns Campus

We’re looking at arts and crafts, paintings, traditional indigenous paintings, and beadings – necklaces and bracelets. My whole family is pretty talented in that area. They’ve been selling some of their work in local areas, and up north. Knowing my side of the family, they will probably be interested [to be involved] as well.

Q: Where is your family from originally?
A: We’ve always lived in Cairns but my family is from the Torres Strait, Moa Island (past the northern-most tip of Australia).

Q: Will your art work be influenced by that area?
A: We do have different techniques in our paintings compared to Aboriginal art, mainly, different totems; there is a way to paint each totem, and we put really fine details into it. The totems also have traditional stories.

Q: Got a name for the business yet?
A: I was thinking of putting it half in Torres Strait, and half in Aboriginal, because my friend is Aboriginal.

Q: What are 4 words that describe you?

Q: What else do you want to quietly achieve?
A: More study. I’m hoping to continue management study.

ELIZABETH SCHOLL, AITE, Brisbane Campus

determined. And I always keep my promises.

Q: What do you plan to do with your Diploma?
A: I’d like to work in business administration, the day-to-day running of an office. Everything has a place. And if it doesn’t have a place, I want to know where it is and who has it!

Q: What hidden skills do you have?
A: I’m licenced to drive semi-trailers and buses. I was a transport driver in the RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) in Townsville. I used to refuel aircraft too.

Q: What do you like to do when not studying?
A: Play with my kids. My eldest is four, a boy, and my daughter will be three in December.

Q: If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be?
A: Give everyone the opportunity they want.
IT Trainer Syed Qumber Ali, and Library Officer Rakesh, are putting together a staff-student cricket team – RGIT 11 – for a Cricket Tournament to be held on Sunday 27th October.

Are you game? Got a bit of cricket skill up your sleeve? It's okay if you don't, but a little bit of on-the-field know-how would be great.

**HOW IT WORKS**

There will be eight teams (11 players each) and 10 overs. It will be a tap ball tournament, so no cricket kit is required. The tournament will be played on a knock-out basis. If any team loses a match, they’re out of the tournament.

**WHY RGIT WANTS YOU**

Syed wants everyone to get to know each other a little better. That doesn't mean you’re allowed to play cricket in the corridors at RGIT, but it does mean you’ll make a few more friends to hang out with on the weekend.

**WILL WE GET FED?**

Lunch and refreshment will be provided during the match.

**WHERE?**

Freeway Reserve, Mulgrave - which is on Monash Freeway, Wellington Road exit.

**TIME**

The first match starts 10:00am on Sunday 27th October. It will be one day tournament, which RGIT 11 will win.

**HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?**

Every team has to pay a $110 entry fee. So your share will be $10.

**HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?**

Register with Rakesh in the library on Level 8, or call Syed Qumber Ali on 0402 242 593.

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**FROM ZEENA'S DESK**

Q: **HOW MANY STUDENTS WOULD YOU SEE EACH WEEK?**

A: To be honest, I don’t really keep a track of the numbers 😊. All I know is that I have a steady stream of visitors every day, which keeps me busy.

Q: **WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON QUERY?**

A: "When are the holidays?" – No matter how many notices we put up, everyone still wants to know when they don’t need to attend classes!

Q: **WHAT'S YOUR BEST TIP/ADVICE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NEW TO MELBOURNE?**

A: Identify your goals and take up a course that suits your needs. And GUMTREE is the Google of Australia. *Everything* you need to find in terms of accommodation, furniture, gadgets… you’ll find it there.

Q: **WHAT PROCESS ARE STUDENTS LEAST FAMILIAR WITH?**

A: The ‘Leave Applications’ process. I’d like students to know that they need to visit Student Services on Level 2 and tell us if they are planning to go home, or are unable to come to school for any reason.

Q: **WHAT DO STUDENTS FORGET TO DO MOST OFTEN WHEN ENROLLING?**

A: Students tend to forget to fill in the course they are enrolling in, and the duration.

Q: **WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?**

A: I like talking to people and therefore I enjoy the daily interactions with our students. I do like to get an insight into their lives and their goals, hopes and aspirations.

Q: **WHAT DO YOU FIND CHALLENGING?**

A: The challenges are in understanding personal issues that the student’s face and in helping them find their way back to academics.

Q: **HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?**

A: Well, it would help if they didn’t come to us at the last minute for problems that could have been resolved if they had come in on time.

Q: **HOW COULD YOU MAKE THEIR LIFE EASIER?**

A: That is for them to tell me, and for me to know. I’d love to get their feedback too 😊.

Q: **SHARE WITH US THE SECRET LIFE OF ZEENA ...?**

A: Everything has a reason, and happens for the best.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

If you have undertaken study, or have work experience (including volunteering), in your area of study interest, you may receive credits toward that qualification at RGIT. In some cases, your prior experience may entitle you to a full qualification from RGIT, without further study.

Contact: enquiries@rgit.edu.au

Check out the following RPL-friendly courses:

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“I applied for a full Certificate III Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) through RPL. RGIT was really well organised. It only took a month. I gave references from Jamie Oliver’s “Jamie’s Italian” restaurant in Leeds, and menu plans, photos and videos of me working in kitchens here. I work full time for my sponsorship, about 75 hours a week. What’s great is that RGIT understands my time constraints.”

- Christopher Newman
New Opportunities for RGIT Students

RGIT students can now apply to Chifley Business School to undertake its Business and Management programs ranging from Graduate Certificate to MBA level.

Students who complete RGIT’s Diploma or Advanced Diploma of Management receive a one unit credit into the MBA program offered by Chifley Business School.

Chifley has a strong reputation of providing high level postgraduate education which should appeal to RGIT students. It offers flexible and online programs, allowing you to complete your studies in your home country if required. Chifley’s strong connections with industry and education partners, and its continuous material-review process, ensure that its offerings are relevant to industry needs and in line with future trends.

Some of Chifley’s exciting offerings are the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Master of Project Management, providing a comprehensive business-ready foundation that will equip professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in management roles, including interpersonal skills, the ability to communicate your findings and to implement solutions effectively.

For more information, contact our marketing department on (03) 8639 9000 or marketing@rgit.edu.au.

Coffee Art on Special

If you need to earn some extra money, you can’t go past being a barista. Melbourne is Australia’s coffee capital, and baristas are needed in every café and shopping area. These days, having coffee art on your resumé is like having an MBA; it’s essential.

From 1st October, our Coffee Art class is available for the special price of $59. The course normally costs $109.

The 3-hour long class will teach you how to create the crema and milk texture that you need to pour beautiful latte art motifs.

**Where** : RGIT, Level 6

**When** : Wednesdays & Saturdays

**Time** : 3:00pm – 6:00pm

**Enrol** : Visit Pritisha, Level 2, at Student Services
Places for People Watching

You’ve absolutely got to get your head out of the books to chillax sometimes. People-watching is relaxing, it’s free and, who knows, you might make some new friends if you watch someone really hard! Here are some of our favourite watch-the-world-go-by places.

1. **ST KILDA BEACH**

   Especially on weekends, the St Kilda Beach boardwalk and Pier offer a colourful parade strolling visitors. On Sunday’s, there’s also an excellent art and craft market on the upper Esplanade and there’s fabulous Luna Park, the 100-year-old theme park, to check out. Walk toward the St Kilda Marina at the end of the beach, and there’s a skate park with amazing talent on skateboards, trick bikes and roller blades. Trams # 16, 96 & 79.

2. **ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, BIRDWOOD AVE, SOUTH YARRA**

   Spring is wedding season, summer is picnic season. It’s a beautiful place to lounge around with friends and is popular with snuggling couples. Tram # 8 or the Melbourne Visitor Shuttle (from Federation Square)

3. **ABBOTSFORD CONVENT**

   The Convent is always alive on weekends with people enjoying the gardens, artsy events and occasional markets. It’s adjacent to a pretty walking track by the Yarra River and the cute-as Collingwood Children’s Farm. There are places to eat too, including eat-by-donation Lentil as Anything vegetarian. Checkout the website www.abbotsfordconvent.com.au for information on how to get there. It’s a bit tricky, but worth it.

4. **BIRRARUNG MARR**

   Just down below Federation Square, beside the Yarra River, Birrarung Marr is Melbourne’s newest major park. There are often festivals and events here for added excitement, but you also have the river traffic and some interesting sculpture installations too.

5. **FEDERATION SQUARE**

   Opposite Flinders St Station, sprawled in the sun, “Fed Square” is prime people viewing, and there is often has free entertainment.

A Cheap Day Out

The Melbourne Visitor Shuttle is a pretty cheap day at just $5 for an all-day ticket (available from the Melbourne Visitor Centre at Federation Square). It leaves from Federation Square and departs every 30 minutes from 9:30am to 4:30pm.

If you stay on the bus initially to orientate yourself, the full trip takes about 90 minutes but to string it out into a day trip, just hop on and off and visit the various tourist precincts.

If you stay on the bus initially to orientate yourself, the full trip takes about 90 minutes but to string it out into a day trip, just hop on and off and visit the various tourist precincts.

A good place to start is the bustle Lygon Street (Stop 6) for a strong coffee, and maybe a wander around the University of Melbourne’s (Stop 7) gracious lawns and sandstone buildings.

Then head off to Queen Victoria Market (Stop 8) to browse the stalls and pick up some yummy food from the delicatessens for lunch and afternoon tea. Jump off at Fitzroy Gardens (Stop 3) for a leisurely picnic lunch and enjoy its spectacular, flower-filled Atrium, followed by a spot of culture at the Melbourne Museum (Stop 5). You can work off lunchtime sluggishness at the Eureka Skydeck (Stop 12), Melbourne tallest building with views from a glass cube on the 88th floor and a stroll along the Southbank promenade (Stop 12) by the Yarra River, which usually has street performers on weekends.

There are endless combinations, depending on your mood. You can print out the bus stop schedule (www.thatsmelbourne.com.au) and ask your trainer to help you plan a trip.