

# Top 10 Things to Do when you're stuck at work for the holiday season

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If you're the unlucky sod stuck at the office over the Christmas break, we at the YLJ have searched high and low to find some entertaining things for you to do around the CBD whilst everyone else is sunning themselves in Bali or in their own backyards. We are not necessarily condoning slovenly behaviour during business hours, but each item listed below can be worked into a (very) long lunch hour to ensure that your long days at work during the silly season are not as mundane.

## 1. Chocolate Indulgence Walk

For those of you craving the sweeter things in life, Susie Wharton has come up with the perfect solution. Susie conducts walking tours around the CBD, and this is her most popular tour by far. It is not hard to see why, given that she wanders around the CBD to partake in tasting at such diving spots as Cadbury's, Myer, New Zealand Natural Ice Creamery, Chocolate Box and Darrell Lea. If you can stay for the entire afternoon, indulge yourself with chocolate cake and drinks at Sheraton Towers, South Gate.

Susie also conducts a "Chocolate and Other Desserts Walk" with a similar theme - sampling Melbourne's most tempting desserts at Charmaine's Icecreams, Haigh's Chocolates and the Crown Cafe/Bakery just to name a few.

Tours are usually conducted from 12.30 every Saturday afternoon, but give Susie a call on 9815 1228 and she will be happy to arrange a different time to suit you. Tours can take anywhere from one to three hours and cost about \$20. Just remember to take a tissue to wipe the remnants of your samples from the corners of your mouth before you head back to the office!

## 2. de Biers

Most young lawyers would never dream of drinking over lunch but it may be hard to resist at de Biers. With beer taps directly in the booth beside you, the temptation to "pull your own" may be too strong! Located at 279 Flinders Street, this

venue is a must for those of you wishing to indulge in liquid lunch over everyone else's holiday period.

Reasonably priced meals are available in both the cafe and restaurant sections (the risotto with duck and shallots is highly recommended) and de Biers also has an extensive wine list and encourages its clientele to visit its underground wine cellar. For bookings, phone: 9654 0444.

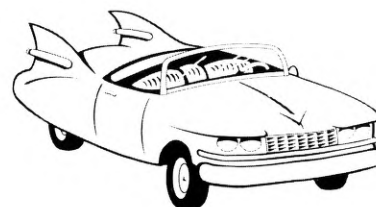
## 3. National Gallery of Victoria

Well worth a look over lunch or during the slow afternoon is the National Gallery.

Starting on the 19th of December is an exhibition by the well known Australian landscape artist, Russell Drysdale. Take in some culture and appreciate the beauty of the many exhibits as you wander through the airconditioned galleries.

## 4. Top-down Tours

Be seen and work on your tan in a chauffeur drive 1960's Chevrolet convertible! Top Down Tours will also throw in a bottle of champagne to make



your cruise around the city's sights even more enjoyable!

Tours available include surf safaris, golf tours, wineries or make your own adventure with a personalised tour but at \$90 per hour it may be wise to get a few friends together! Mention this article for a 10% discount, call 9489 4727 for more details.

## 5. Madame Tussaud's

Over 70,000 Melbournians visited this spectacle in its first five weeks of opening so you should get down to the World Trade Centre and see what all the fuss is about. See the likes of Elle Macpherson, Naomi Campbell, Liz Taylor, Princess Diana, Madonna, Arnie Schwarzenegger and Muhammad Ali in the very nearly flesh! Madame Tussaud's places characters in exciting and lifelike surroundings, such as the Garden Party on arrival which serves as the perfect setting for a party with the stars. It really is a genuine spectacle with other more gruesome settings comprising relics from the French Revolution, including a genuine guillotine bought from the executioner's family (macabre but true!)

Tours cost \$17 for adults and \$12 concession, with groups of 10 or more receiving the concession price. A journey through the exhibition should take no longer than one and a half hours - perfect for a long lunch!

## 6. Queen Victoria Market

Enjoy all the sights and sounds of the Queen Victoria Market on a unique historical or gourmet tour conducted by an experienced tour guide. The "Foodies Dream Tour" is a must to fill in a slow morning "at the Supreme Court Library" enabling you to sample some of the finest produce in Melbourne. There are also Market History and Market Walking Tours which will introduce you to a new way to shop for bargains and also educate you on the 125 year history of the great market built on the graves of our ancestors.

Tours are conducted every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday and depart around 10am. Call 9269 5822 for more information.

## 7. Parliament House

Parliament House and the Parliamentary Gardens are open to the public for free tours on days when Parliament is not in session - which is pretty much all of December and January! A tour takes around 30-40 minutes during which you will see the Lower and Upper Houses, the Queens Hall function area, the spectacular library and the Premier's Corridor. Not only will you get the opportunity to view a magnificent example of 19th Century architecture, you may also get to accost the odd roaming politician - almost better than a holiday (well, not quite).

## 8. Shopping Spree Tour

Now this will involve some creative thinking as the above tour will probably see you out of the office for the majority of the day. Perhaps a difficult mediation or arduous client conference could be blamed for your absence but how do you explain the various shopping bags that you will return with?

You will visit 10 factory warehouses from a choice of 160 which include such goodies as giftware, mens and ladieswear and chocolates. Sight seeing, a two course lunch at the Carlton restaurant and a trip to the Rialto Observation deck is included in this fantastic day out - perfect for shopaholics who had to miss the pre and post Christmas sales due to their work commitments. Such a day does not come cheap though, and will set you back about \$48 (discount on mention of this article). Call 9596 6600 for further details.

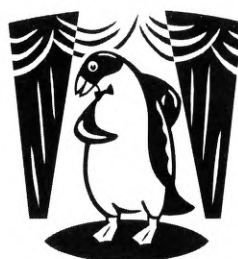
## 9. Gondola Cruise

Ah, beautiful Venice - well, almost! You can now enjoy a romantic, relaxing cruise aboard a luxurious Venetian Style Gondola on the Yarra River. The Gondola can take two to four people and breakfast, lunch and dinner packages are available. The Champagne cruise is the most romantic and costs \$60 (on mention of this article) for a 40 minute cruise which includes a bottle of champagne, nibbles and, of course, a red rose.

Bookings are essential on 0411 114 736 and the gondolier promises not to sing off-key!

## 10 Penguin Water Cruises

Captain Noel Butcher conducts a variety of cruises from both Southgate and the St Kilda pier that run daily and cruise around Port Phillip Bay and also sail through the penguin feeding grounds which are situated four kilometres from the mouth of the Yarra. The cruise from Southgate departs at 1.30pm and includes a free BBQ - a perfect way to spend a sunny summer lunch hour. The cruises are very reasonably priced and begin at \$15 for a ninety minute cruise. Noel also conducts night cruises with guaranteed close up viewing of the cute little critters. Call 0412 311 922 for more details.



These are just a sample of the many and varied things to do in and around the CBD. There are also tours of the Royal Botanic Gardens, the State Library, The Old Melbourne Gaol, the Regent and Forum Theatres and Melbourne's famous pubs to just name a few. Another good idea is to wander down to the Arts Centre and take in a matinee show or the free entertainment in the foyer of the Concert hall. Whatever you decide to do, there should not be any need for you to feel resentful of your colleagues on leave over the Christmas break given that you could be having just as much fun (well, almost) out and about in Melbourne.