

Lean into BOTHWELL's charms



The picturesque, agricultural township of Bothwell in the Central Highlands is lodged in the very heart of Tasmania.

You'd be forgiven for filing Bothwell in the pit stop category, one of those typical country towns dotted throughout Australia, where you time your travels just right to fill up on fuel, gamble on the coffee, and partake of the facilities.

You'll be pleasantly surprised to find out that there is so much more to Bothwell than initially thought when you discover some of the classiest restrooms in Tasmania, comprising once-consecrated sandstone blocks used initially in one of the local chapels. The surprises don't stop there, as there are several excellent coffee options and an array of locally made delights perfect for a picnic.

Established in 1822, Bothwell is a town with a deep history, much of it retained in its heritage buildings, too many to number, Australia's oldest golf course, and most of all, in the memories and lived experiences of its people, many of whom have been there for generations.

These days, Bothwell draws tourists to its beautifully preserved historical buildings, bucolic pastoral landscapes, trout fishing opportunities, boutique whisky distilling, and Australasia's oldest continuously operating golf course, 'Ratho'.

The now eighteen-hole Ratho golf course was initially constructed in the mid-1830s. Some say it may be the oldest in the Southern Hemisphere. Not everyone is a golf fan, but this town is based on pioneering and innovation, so there are plenty of alternatives. Why not

try your hand at a game of hickory golf, not quite the golf we know today but rather one where players use antique clubs with wooden shafts, be sure to grab a selfie dressed in 19th century period garb - think tartan shorts and jaunty caps, meet one of the local highland cows or a spot of trout fishing, Bothwell and surrounds offering some of the best trout fishing worldwide.

Bothwell is arguably one of the most significant Georgian towns in Tasmania, thoughtfully laid out around Queens Park, its splendid array of Georgian-style homes is a magnet for those who want to explore this heritage architectural style of early colonial Tasmania.

Settled Bothwell was founded on animal agriculture, particularly sheep farming, which is still very much alive to this day. If you're lucky enough to have timed a visit to coincide with sheep mustering season, seeing the sheep move through the town's main street, is one of those pinch moments for city dwellers and country folk alike.

Not many towns outside of the UK can claim their own tartan, but the Bothwell tartan, which is quaintly played out in the town's street signage, is Tasmania's only official





tartan. Designed and developed in Bothwell by Isabella Shorrock, a Scot, the tartan's inspiration is the blue-green-grey, rich red, and yellow hues of the local landscape. Beautifully woven throw rugs are available for purchase from the town's Visitor Centre, yet another historical building adapted for modern use, and offering the perfect memento of your stay.

The visitor centre also houses the Australasian Golf Museum, which is home to the unique history of golf in Tasmania and the achievements of Tasmanian golfers in the competitive international golf arena.

Bothwell is a town full of unique treasures, such as the Friendship Ball of Peace, which sits in pride of place in the town's visitor centre. The driving force behind the ambitious project, Barbara Fowler OAM, who sadly passed away in 2018, at 92, hoped the ball would link people across the world towards peace and greater understanding between all countries, an all-too-important sentiment. All visitors are encouraged to contribute. While there, be sure to grab one of the town's walking guides, which come in handy for your next stop, the town's historical cemetery and the surrounding churches.

St Michael and All Angels Anglican Church is a central landmark known as the 'Country Cathedral'; it was built from local sandstone and opened in 1891. During the construction, the economy was depressed. Construction only continued with the support of early Bothwell settlers. It houses an extremely rare organ, built in 1862 by master cabinet maker Samuel Joscelyne. It is still used for regular church services and occasional concerts.

The rich tapestry of this town, formed by farmers, shepherds, trappers, stonemasons, builders, grocers, butchers, and millhands, all contributed to making this beautiful township what it is today. The remains of their mark still whisper around every corner.

Bothwell offers authenticity, breathtaking highland landscapes, and a glimpse at a slower pace of life. It is far more than a pit stop along your Tasmanian journey, offering a range of accommodation and food and beverage options, from basic campsites and self-contained caravan spots, through to luxurious farm stays, with delicious homemade treats at cozy country cafes, to entertaining dinners filled with stories and theatrics.

