Heritage Drives

Take a scenic drive through the historic area of Orange and surrounds. There are four drives covering both urban and rural areas including the smaller villages surrounding Orange. The drives explore gold mining towns, historic villages and an area rich in agriculture and history.

You may wish to follow the driving trail, go direct to any of the attractions on the drive or take one of the detours to one of the outlying towns within the region. All drives start from the Orange Visitor Information Centre in Byng Street, Orange.

Drive One

Allow 1 hour driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

Start at the Orange Visitor Information Centre and travel west along Byng Street. Turn right onto Mitchell Highway, and right along Burrendong Way to the small village of March.

March is said to have been named by Sir Thomas Mitchell as a compliment to a renowned beauty of England, the Countess of March.

Continue north along Burrendong Way to Mullion Creek 16km. A small cluster of buildings remains to mark the place of March in the district's history. A service station and Post Office remain to mark the place of March in the district's history.

A few clusters of houses and two churches remain to mark the place of March in the district's history.

The Escort Way was the road built by prisoners at the end of the 1800s.

Continue north along Burrendong Way to Molong.

DETOUR – You may wish to continue along Burrendong Way to Lake Burrendong and Mookerawa Waters Park via Euchareena Road. Afterwards you may wish to continue on to Lake Canobolas and Mount Canobolas. Alternatively you may wish to continue on to Lake Canowindra.

Allow 1 hour driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
Orange Visitor Information Centre
FREE CALL 1800 069 466
www.visitorange.com.au
www.orange.nsw.gov.au
Drive Two
Allow 1.5 hours driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

From the Orange Visitor Information Centre drive along Bay Street, past some of Orange’s picturesque 19th Century architecture including the Court House, Town Hall, Holy Trinity Church and the Unite Bank, turn left into St Joseph’s Church into Hill Street, and then continue to Summer Street towards Cook Park.

Cook Park is located just minutes from the CBD. The park was proclaimed in 1871 and was officially opened in 1880 by James Cook. Today it is a popular recreation area for the residents of Orange.

2 ORANGE GENERAL CEMETARY
was surveyed in 1853 and has been in continuous use for over 150 years. Take time to wander through the cemetery, read the headstones and ponder the past. Pick up a brochure for a self-guided tour of the Cemetery at the Orange Visitor Information Centre.

Continue north along Lone Pine Avenue/Wakeford Street and turn right onto March Street (1.2km) following the right-hand side of the Colo River with magnificent views over the surrounding orchards and down the straight with the finish line in Huntley Road.

3 BANJO PATRONS PARK – the site of Banjo Paterson’s birthplace. He was born at ‘Nurraara’ on 17 February 1864. A memorial to Australia’s famous poet was unveiled on 17 February 1947 and in 2001 a bust of Banjo was erected at the Park as part of a Centenary of Federation Festival.

Continue north along Ophir Road for approximately 2.5km to Ophir. Ophir grain road and not suitable for caravans.

4 OPHIR was the location of the discovery of the first payable gold in New South Wales in April 1861 and Australia’s first gold nugget. Today Ophir is a recreation reserve of 500 hectares, located at the junction of the Lower Lewis Plains and Summer Hill Creek. Take along a picnic to beneath the willows, fossick for gold along Summer Hill Creek, fish for trout (you will need to obtain a licence), look for wildlife, wander in the historic cemetery or explore the doglegs among one of the walking trails. Cash should be taken around open banks.

The reserve is open daily.

Continue south along Ophir Road, turn left to Dry Creek Road, through the village of Lewis and travel towards Byng (20km). Ophir grain road and not suitable for caravans.

5 BYNG was settled in the 1860s by Cornish Methodist families and became known as the Cornish Settlement, then as Canowindra. In 1851 the village reserve was approved by Governor Fitzroy and became known as the Parish of Byng. Bathurst County Court was named after Admiral Lord Byng who was executed for treason in 1757.

The Wesley Chapel, which is located on the site of the original church of 1843, is still in use today. Opposite is the historic cemetery with graves of pioneers of the district.

Continue south to Mitchell Highway, turn right onto the highway and travel towards Shepparton (6km).

6 SHADFORTH was named after Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Shadforth who arrived in Australia in 1826. The village had a post office, a school that operated for over 100 years. Examples of typical miner’s cottages remain in the village and the original layout of the village is still evident.

Continue west along Mitchell Highway to Lucknow.

Drive Three
Allow 1 hour driving time or longer to discover the historic sites.

From the Orange Visitor Information Centre drive along Bay Street, past some of Orange’s picturesque 19th Century architecture including the Court House, Town Hall, Holy Trinity Church and the Unite Bank, turn left into St Joseph’s Church into Hill Street, and then continue to Summer Street towards Cook Park.

Cook Park is located just minutes from the CBD. The park was proclaimed in 1871 and was officially opened in 1880 by James Cook. Today it is a popular recreation area for the residents of Orange.

7 LUCKNOW was part of the property of Wilks' Charles Wentworth, who made the first European crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 with Birdwood and Lawson south of the Tuggeranong plains. Lucknow was named in 1861, probably after the site of Lucknow in India, or maybe the name is a deliberate play on the words Luck Now.

The village was a post office, a school that operated from 1881 – 1976, and a church that has been relocated to the Orange Botanic Gardens. The Royal Oak Hotel and the Bell Hotel has operated since 1887. Four miner’s cottages remain in the village and the original layout of the village is still evident.

DETOUR – You may want to take a detour and visit the historic villages of Millthorpe (10km) and Carcass (25km or 35km via Blayney).

Continue east along Mitchell Highway to Lucknow.

8 CHIMNAAN’S B恩REWERY – the pioneer Cemetery originated from the Federal and Kervin Government Seat Districts (1820 – 1830). Chimnaan’s B恩rewery was named after Chinese gardeners who leased farmland in the 1880s and 1890s. The cemetery’s headstones date back to 1887.

Continue west along Mitchell Highway towards Orange about 5km passing the site of the Australian National Field Days to Escort Way and travel west along Escort Way toward Orange.

9 LONE PINE – a military train once grew in a sector of the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey now known as Lone Pine, the tree became a battle casualty of WWI. One of three Australian brothers, Benjamin Smith, placed a cone from a shatter blown tree, which had been used to disperse a Turkish trench, and sent the cone home to his mother. Mrs Smith successfully propagated two young trees, one of which was presented to Trenant, the town of the birth of the Smith boys, and the other to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, in memory of all soldiers killed at Gallipoli.

However the trees grown by the Smiths were not the only trees to make it back to Australia. Several other species returned with some, many of which were propagated as ROV restoration. One is assumed to have produced this ‘Lone Pine’. 

DETOUR – Continue west along the Mitchell Highway to Orange along the northeastern cause of Lone Pine Highway.

10 YURANGHI’S GRAVE is the grave of the Aboriginal guide who accompanied Surveyor Samuel Thomas Mitchell on his expedition to the interior of tropical Australia. Yuranghi belonged to the Wiradjuri tribe and became famous for his work and in both his lore. Yuranghi was buried within a circle of carved trees, as was the custom of his tribe, three of which still stand and are still revered, protected from the elements. Out of respect Mitchell arranged for a headstone to be placed on the grave, which the Government erected in 1832 and made “To Yuranghi, Honesty and Fidelity. Yuranghi, who accompanied the Expedition of discovery into Tropical Australia in 1840, lies buried here according to the rites of his countrymen.” The grave is now a reserve managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and is open daily.

DETOUR – Continue west along the Mitchell Highway to Orange along the northeastern cause of Lone Pine Highway to the birthplace of the merino sheep industry or return to Orange (30km).

11 GNOO BLS RACE TRACK – The first race was held in 1913 as part of the inaugural Cherry Blossom Festival and was held annually as part of the festival until 1916. Gnoo Blas was the starting ground for many of Australia’s top riders and drivers including Sir Jack Brabham and Kelvin Cummins. The track also attracted many international names. The start of the track was along Huntley Road, beside the railway line and proceeded along Bunglow Road to Forest Road and then the straight down the finish line in Huntley Road.

12 JACK BRABHAM PARK/AROUND INSIGNIA – in 1924 Sir Neville Holmes KC, Mayor of Orange (1914 and 1921) suggested that Orange should have an airport. A site was selected at Bunglowo and was officially opened in 1938. A new airport at Spring Hill was opened in 1961 making this site redundant and turned into sports fields. A plaque was unveiled in 1985 renaming the park, Sir Jack Brabham Park. The letters are situated along the southern boundary near a courtyard. The letters form a recreation area for the whole family surrounded by natural vegetation. A new development is planned for the site.

Continue south along Forest Road to Bunglowo Hospital (2km). Gungo Creek is situated in the center of Forest and Bunglowo.

13 GOSLING CREEK was named after Jonathan William Goss who received land grants in the area in the 1860s and 1870s. The Orange Municipal Council decided to make a permanent supply of water for the town. Gosling Creek Reservoir was completed in 1890 and the first intermittent sandwater was turned on in 1892. The reservoir now has a capacity of 71,000,000 litres.

Recently Gosling Creek Reserve has undergone major changes. The area has been transformed into an environmentally based recreational facility. The concept involves a recreation area for the whole family surrounded by native vegetation. The site is surrounded by walking tracks, the picnic and recreation area features a shared pathway suitable for walking, cycling & roller-blading, and children’s play equipment.

Continue south along Forest Road (approximately 7km), turn right onto Dorchester Road (1km), turn left onto Forest Road (9km).

14 FOREST REEFS was predominantly a gold mining area with alluvial gold being found in the 1860s – 1870s. A post office was opened in 1870. In 1950 Forest Reef was renamed in honour of a bushman shop, blacksmith shop, bakery, school, hotel, two stores and three cinemas.

Turn left at Forest Road, Green and continue along the Forest Road towards Millthorpe (10km).

15 MILLTHORPE – Millthorpe’s history dates from 1834. Originally named Spring Grove, the town was renamed in 1864 due to the importance of a large flourmill established in 1882. The railway reached the area in 1870, and provided farmers with access to profitable Sydney markets.

Millthorpe is classified by the National Trust and has a number of fine historic buildings as well as cobblestone streets, art galleries, cafes, specialty shops and the Stelkes Memories Museum.

Travel through Millthorpe and turn onto Millthorpe Road (5km) to Spring Hill, turn left towards Spring Hill Millthorpe and then travel to the historic village of Spring Hill.

16 SPRING HILL – The name Spring Hill was mentioned by 1855, and by 1861, 16 people were listed as owning land in this district. The area was first settled in 1870, and provided farmers with access to profitable Sydney markets.

DETOUR – Turn right onto Park Street to discover the villages of Blayney, historic Cerrac and Mundarana.

DETOUR – Turn left onto Millthorpe Road to discover the village of Lucknow, historic Cerrac and Mundarana.

DETOUR – Drive two – The Pioneer Cemetery originated from the Federal and Kervin Government Seat Districts (1820 – 1830). The village had a post office, a school that operated for over 100 years. Examples of typical miner’s cottages remain in the village and the original layout of the village is still evident.

Continue west along Mitchell Highway to Lucknow.

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