

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Monday, 3 March 2025

FRIDA AND BENDIGO SHINE BRIGHT THIS AUTUMN

Backed by the Allan Labor Government, the Goldfields will become the home of iconic events this autumn, with visitors from interstate and overseas set to flock to Bendigo and surrounds to experience a stellar local line-up.

Premier and Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan today joined local tourism and business leaders in Bendigo to celebrate the region's impressive upcoming calendar of events.

Headlining the action is the much-anticipated *Frida Kahlo: In her own image* exhibition, which opens to the public on 15 March at Bendigo Art Gallery and includes pieces never-before-seen in Australia.

The exhibition features works direct from Mexico's Museo Frida Kahlo and explores the connections between Kahlo's personal style, her ground-breaking paintings and the now famous photos that cemented her global fame.

Labour Day long weekend brings the Lost Trades Fair to Bendigo – a truly one-of-a-kind events showcasing traditional skills, small bespoke artisans and forgotten crafts. Supported by the Labor Government, tickets are \$35 for adults, \$10 for kids over five, and free for kids under five, making it an affordable day out for the whole family.

Castlemaine Fringe kicks off from 22 March to 6 April – busting with local artists, music, comedy, workshops and free events, there is something for everyone and every budget.

In July the Castlemaine Documentary Festival will continue attracting crowds into winter, in a further boost for local hotels, restaurants and businesses.

Bendigo's proximity to Melbourne makes it a popular destination for day-trippers. Last year 2.4 million people made the trip to Bendigo to spend the day, on top of 1.3 million overnight visitors over the same period.

Daily V/Line full fares capped at \$11 is making it easier than ever for people to get out and explore the gems of regional Victoria with friends and family.

From *Elvis: Direct from Graceland, Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits* and *Grace Kelly: Style Icon*, the Bendigo Art Gallery has attracted more than 748,000 visitors and generated more than \$113 million in economic impact for Greater Bendigo since 2012.

Quotes attributable to Premier of Victoria and Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"We're bringing world-class events to cities and towns across Victoria that inspire people to take a day trip or book a weekend away – and those benefits flow straight into local communities."

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"Major events aren't just great experiences, they add real economic value – filling local cafes, hotels and businesses and backing good jobs in the region."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"With stunning regional landscapes, award-winning food and wine, and an incredible events calendar, there's never been a better time to visit Bendigo."

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Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

“In addition to the amazing pipeline of events in Bendigo this autumn, there are so many amazing natural wonders and world-class dining options for visitors to enjoy, whether they’re here for a local event or a weekend getaway.”