

FROM HERE TO...

Suburbia

Real residents dish the dirt on the best and worst from their suburb.

BRUNSWICK

Just 4 km north of the CBD, Brunswick is a creative and multicultural suburb popular with young people. It's a hotspot for food, with plenty of organic stores, vegan and vegetarian cafes, and Mediterranean and Middle Eastern delis and restaurants. The area is also jam-packed with op shops, vintage stores and offbeat boutiques. The arts and culture scene won't let you down either, with plenty of local gigs, exhibitions and art markets. Rent can vary in the area, but \$150-200 a week is the lower end of the scale for a room in a sharehouse.

CARLTON

Great brunch places and an easy stroll to the CBD and RMIT city campus. Transport options include a well serviced tram network, along with lots of bike

lanes. You are in vicinity of the hustling and bustling city, but it's leafy and a bit quieter, and you have easy access to Vic Market, along with everything the City has to offer. Rent is a little on the steeper side - you could be paying upward of \$300 per week.

COBURG

Coburg is a great balance between good house and land size, and proximity to the city. Only 25-30 minutes on the tram, or a 20 minute train ride on the Upfield line, RMIT city campus is within easy reach. If you're the kind of person that needs a back garden for your sanity, Coburg is your best bet for big blocks/ green spaces at affordable prices. There's lots of shopping within easy reach too. Expect to pay around \$150-180 per week for a room in a share house.

DANDENONG

You'll find Dandenong in the south eastern suburbs. Rents are reasonable, but what's most notable about the area is the food - if you want middle eastern,

Afghani or Indian, there is an abundance of cheap and delicious choices. Dandenong market is a fantastic place to pick up a bargain. There is a direct train line into the city, making the RMIT city campus pretty accessible. The area is also close to the Dandenong Ranges, which is home to hiking tracks, famous wineries and waterfalls in easy reach.

FAWKNER

Fawkner is situated to the north of Melbourne, around 12km from the CBD. Rents are reasonable, and it's a culturally diverse place, which is quiet, leafy and peaceful. The train ride to the city is about half an hour long, every 20 minutes. Fawkner is kind of in the middle of a lot of things - there's easy access to lots of shops along Sydney Road. There's plenty of parks around, and a few old fashioned milk bars too.

FOOTSCRAY

Not as cheap as it once was, but still has some good places at pretty low-ish rents. Footscray offers

easy access to the city on the Sunbury Train Line and multiple buses. There's lots of shopping centres close by, and Footscray market has some of the best food bargains around. You'll be in ethnic food heaven – affordable Vietnamese, Indian and African options are all really well represented here. There is a slowly blossoming hipster scene, too.

KENSINGTON

A stone's throw away from the CBD, Kensington is a quiet and leafy suburb. RMIT is only a couple of stops away from Kensington or South Kensington station on the train, and cycling is a breeze. It's a good suburb for those who prefer a quieter lifestyle, with plenty of parks and cafes. Check out neighbouring Newmarket for shopping and cheap, ethnic eats. Expect to pay around \$200-250 a week for a sharehouse room.

MELBOURNE CBD

The best thing about living in Melbourne CBD is that almost everything is within walking distance. There are various types of cuisine, many at low prices, and Vic Market is a stone's throw away for fresh and healthy groceries. You are central to all trams and trains too. You can't beat the city life for buzz and energy. The downside of living in the city is definitely the rent, and you can expect to pay quite a bit for a reasonable sized apartment.

MILL PARK

Situated close to RMIT Bundoora campus, Mill Park is beautiful, peaceful and leafy. Houses here are generally quite spacious, so if you want a garden, it might be a good choice for you. Different types of cuisines, bars, gaming zones, medical centres, shopping centres, gyms are all available easily. When compared to city life, it's vastly different, but it's great for the quiet life. There is a single tram (route 86) to get to the RMIT city campus. Rents are in and around the range of \$150 - \$200 per week.

NORTHCOTE

High St in Northcote is home to countless bars, cafes, a great live music scene, along with unique clothing and design stores. Despite it's proximity to the city, there's a small-town vibe to Northcote, and it's popular with young artists and musicians. The Yarra Bend Park and Merri Creek Trail are a short distance away, when you need some time in nature to unwind and relax. Weekly rent in a sharehouse often starts at around \$180-200 per week.

RICHMOND

Richmond is just a couple of kms to the city centre, and easily accessible by tram, train or bike. With plenty of hipster joints, and a huge variety of Asian restaurants, it's a great place to hangout. Cheap groceries are widely available, especially if you choose the ethnic retailers around

Victoria Street. Swan Street and Bridge Road have even more going, on with cafes, shopping and cool bars. Expect to pay anywhere upwards of \$200 per week for a room in a sharehouse.

THORNBURY

Lesser known but effortlessly cool, Thornbury is like Northcote's quirky older sister. Sitting further north on the 86 tramline, the suburb is a bit grungier and less gentrified, popular with students (and old, Italian Nonnas!). Psarakos supermarket is a haven for cheap fruit & vegetables, and you can get your health food fix at Naturally on High. Another gem of the 'burb is Lentil As Anything, a volunteer-run 'pay as you feel' vegan cafe (volunteer there - it's a blast). Rent in Thornbury is often around \$150 or so a week.

PARKVILLE

Aim for the quieter side, near Flemington Bridge station near the Royal Park. It's relatively peaceful, with several parks, and while it's not too far from the city, it has all the benefits of living in a beautiful suburb. Parkville is better by bike - the connectivity by train and trams is patchy and can be infrequent at non-peak hours of the day. There are loads of great (and cheap!) ethnic eateries as you venture towards Newmarket train station. \$180-200 per week is the normal starting price for a room in a houseshare.