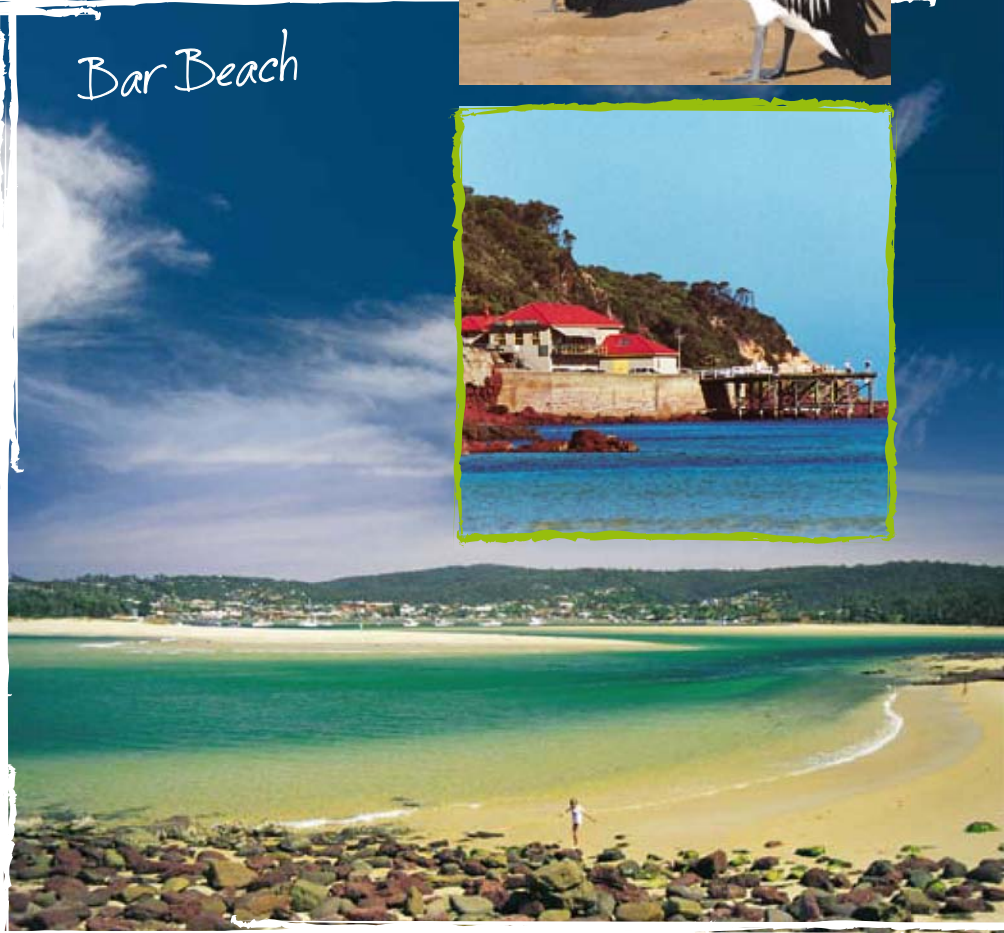
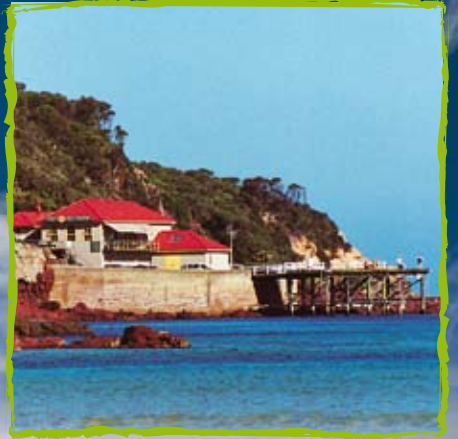


Merimbula



But it would be another 50 years or so before the largest town on the coast – and its social and retail heart – was settled. It began 'life' as a private village belonging to the newly formed Twofold Bay Pastoral Association, which opened as a port in 1855.

Some of Merimbula's attractions date back even further. While oysters are a popular and profitable industry today, the discovery of a large number of middens either side of the lake proves the original Aboriginal settlers were just as passionate about them too!

For a while, this town served as a gateway to the goldfields, for the fossickers who came to chase their fortune in the Snowy Mountains during the Kiandra gold rush. It was also during this period that a cornflour mill was established and Merimbula became famous as one of the best places in the world to grow maize. The building now known as the Old School Museum was built by the mill owner, and is the only building that still exists from that period.

Merimbula – derived from the Aboriginal word for 'two lakes' – is known as the 'Heart of the Sapphire Coast' and today a mecca for tourists far and wide. The attraction is its lakes and beaches that provide for all types of water activities, whether the visitor is experienced or a novice.

There's also plenty on offer, just a short drive from town. Visit a winery or an oyster farm, one of the neighbouring national parks, or tour amongst the hinterland, rolling hills and small country towns nearby – where you can learn more about the early pioneers in this district.

Close by are national parks offering a range of possibilities or special events that draw you to the area – the annual jazz festival, orchid shows, fishing competitions or the Merimbula Malibu or Corona Classic wavesailing, kitesurfing and SUPs (stand up paddle) local festivals.

Bass and Flinders explored the Merimbula area in 1797 – and were the first of many 'visitors' to be struck by the beauty of its waterways, and surrounding forests.

And, of course, there is wonderful seafood. Don't miss out on locally grown oysters, mussels, crayfish and prawns – they're good for body and soul! Too much indulgence on holidays? A gentle swim or walk along one of Merimbula's many beaches, or a stroll along the boardwalk should help keep everything in balance. The Merimbula Boardwalk skirts the northern shores of the Top Lake section of Merimbula Lake and is a 3.5km round trip, broken by a coffee or icecream at the café in the middle!

Merimbula truly does have something to offer every visitor. From the kids' delights at Magic Mountain, Mandeni, Merimbula

Aquarium and Potoroo Palace, to grown-up pleasures – good wine, great food, galleries and golf – as well as the tranquil pace that clears the stresses of the world from your heart and mind.

