

MEL BOURNE

Six leading lights pick out the beloved institutions and emerging destinations that make the Victorian capital so compelling.

As told to DAN F STAPLETON

PASCALE GOMES-MCNABB

A childhood spent globetrotting followed by tertiary studies in architecture primed Pascale Gomes-McNabb for her main act: designing interiors for many of Australia's best restaurants, including Bentley and Monopole. These are her favourite architectural spaces.



Retail

Acne (*The Strand, 250 Elizabeth Street; www.acnestudios.com*) is kind of mercurial — inviting and cold at the same time. The store uses perforated aluminium in various dramatic gauges and the terrazzo floor sets off a retro feel.

12 Collins St is a 1930s building that still exudes dapper charm, although its parquet floors, brass balustrades and the original tiny lift are all a bit worn. Inside are myriad interesting small businesses: a fantastic gallery, **Sarah Scout Presents** (www.sarahscoutpresents.com) that's on Level 1; a pilates studio, **Pilates on Collins** (www.pilatesoncollins.com.au); a couturier, **Material By Product** (+61 3 9482 6616); a fabulous clothing retailer, **Slow Waves** (www.slowwaves-store.com); and more. Work your way up the building.

Museums & Theatres

The **Heide Museum of Modern Art** (*7 Templestowe Road, Bulleen; www.heide.com.au*) is a restored Victorian homestead that was bought by art benefactors John and Sunday Reed.



The property features a gorgeous working kitchen garden, a 1960s Modernist house by architect David McGlashan among the gum trees, and a beautiful, expansive garden.

The Capitol Theatre (*113 Swanston Street*) is incredible in so many ways: the overall design, the attention to detail, the craftsmanship. It feels so forward thinking and is now nearly a hundred years old. It's about to be restored by owner Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and anyone can donate and help contribute to the restoration of this incredible work of architecture.

Dining

The **Stokehouse** (*30 Jacka Boulevard, St Kilda; www.stokehouse.com.au*) on St Kilda Beach, which I designed, is a homage to laid-back insouciant Australian beach luxe: raw pine walls and floors, a dramatic pink and frosted-glass chandelier and a large marble bar.

I love **Café Di Stasio** (*31 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda; www.distasio.com.au*) for its Callum Morton red-scaffold sculpture and its peeling-paint walls encased in glass — not to mention its cocktails and Italian old-school vibes.

I'm also fond of **Bar Americano** (*20 Presgrave Place; www.baramericano.com*) for its size and its film-noir ambience (they should bottle it). It's notable for cocktails that tell stories and bartenders who keep their mouths shut. 🍸

GETTING THERE TO BOOK YOUR FLIGHT TO MELBOURNE, VISIT WWW.VIRGINAUSTRALIA.COM OR CALL 13 67 89 (IN AUSTRALIA).



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Bar Americano; Neil Taylor's Theoretical Matter sculpture at Heide Museum of Modern Art; interior designer Pascale Gomes-McNabb; the Stokehouse; Acne's distinctive industrial look.