



## TOP THINGS TO DO IN MELBOURNE (PART 1)

March 16, 2010



With a steady stream of visiting friends over the Christmas holidays, and many with young children, we have been busy! Whilst we treated them to the hedonistic pleasures of the Aussie beach culture, we also spent a great deal of time indoors appreciating the 'higher arts'. This can be tricky with young kids in tow, especially those who are jet-lagged and tantrum prone, but Melbourne has some fabulous museums and galleries, several of which are especially wonderful for children. Here are my top 3.

1. **Melbourne Museum** - This fabulous museum, located on the northern border of the **Carlton Gardens** behind the **Royal Exhibition Building**, is futuristic and interactive and connects architecture and nature. In the middle of the museum, you can walk through a forest! The Children's Gallery is designed for children 3 to 8 but I would think it would delight even the younger toddler. The children's exhibition, entitled **1,2,3 Grow**, explores the many ways **things**, including humans, grow. Activities, children's art, stories, an indoor sandpit with fossils beneath the sand which children are encouraged to discover, a kids puppet theatre and an outside play/picnic area including games such as skittles for the whole family, are just some of the attractions. It doesn't matter how often we visit (we **try** to put our membership to good use after all) my children are always stimulated and engaged. Young children particularly love the insect section and the Forest gallery. Click [here](#) for more details.

2. **Scienceworks** - My kids' favorite! This museum is situated in an old plumbing station and is simply brilliant. It is dynamic and interactive and a must for children who are inquisitive especially in matters relating to science and technology. The museum collection objects are combined with hands-on exhibits so you can test your reflexes, jumping and kicking abilities and are designed to be explored. Amazingly the exhibits continuously changes so repeat visits never get repetitive. The **Planetarium** is particularly fabulous and without fail my children always protest when it is time to leave! For more details click [here](#).

3. **Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI)** - One of our newest art spots in **Federation Square**, dedicated to the moving image in all its forms including cinema, television, computer games and interactive media arts. This place is amazing. I think the official emphasis here is on older kids but I could not get my 2-year-old out the first time we visited. In addition to the babies screenings there is so much child-centred programming, all very high tech - with free animated flicks and the annual **International Childrens Festival**. Kids can even create their own short film! The **Games Lab** is a changing exhibition of computer games with exhibits showing the development of the game and several consoles on which to play the current game. Needless to say, kids love this area and given that so many young children are techno savvy these days, even the toddlers can be seen having a go. The **Memory Grid** has more than 200 short films in free futuristic 'lounges'. Just brilliant. Small pods of seats surround a screen from which short films can be chosen from the touch screen. I cannot recommend it highly enough, for kids and for adults! See [here](#) for more information.

- Sara

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