

LANDMARK POSTCODE

3311



Views overlooking Casterton.
Image courtesy of Rod & Ann James, Casterton.

Story: Sheryl Allen

LOCATION: Casterton
4 hours west of Melbourne

POPULATION: 2,000

INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, dairy, timber

CLIMATE: Temperate
Summer: 11.8°C – 27.1°C
Winter: 4.9°C – 13.4°C
Rainfall: 652mm

Known as “Kelpie Country” Casterton has a special link to rural Australia. The iconic Kelpie working dog was first bred here at Warrock Station in the 1870s.

Each year, over the June long weekend, the Casterton Kelpie festival celebrates that heritage. The three-day extravaganza, which drew a 5,000-strong crowd in 2009, boasts a packed program of activities and entertainment including the Australian Kelpie Muster, the Kelpie Dog Auction, the Stockman’s Challenge, the Kelpie High Jump, a street parade and much, much more.

How fitting that Aussie outback’s canine favourite has its origins in Casterton where relaxed country living is alive and well.

Settled in 1840 on the banks of Western Victoria’s Glenelg River and surrounded by rolling hills, Casterton is a medium-sized service centre to a predominantly pastoral and farming district. Thanks to its proximity to larger centres such as Mount Gambier and Portland, the township has retained its reputation for the

quiet life and is a popular retirement and “tree-change” destination.

“Casterton offers all the services you’d expect in a town this size,” says Landmark’s Greg Bright. “The Shire has an office and depot, there are schools, shops, a supermarket and sporting facilities.”

Agriculture is the mainstay with mixed farming the most popular activity. “Cross-bred sheep and cattle, and dairying are in the mix,” explains Greg. “Timber production has long been part of the regional economy. In later years, that’s meant blue-gums alongside the traditional radiata pine plantations.”

According to Greg, rural properties around Casterton are fairly tightly held. “The most interest seems to be from existing farmers expanding their holdings into neighbouring or nearby properties.”

In the town itself, the property market has different drivers. Landmark’s Tammy Luers explains: “Interest comes from out-of-towners looking for a change from the city and from retirees, coming off the land or from further afield.”

Casterton’s attractions evidence its pastoral heritage.

Warrock Station is classified by the National Trust and recognised as the “most important pastoral station complex in Victoria.” Its 30-plus well-preserved farm buildings, spread over two acres, transport visitors back to the mid nineteenth century, when Scottish cabinet-maker George Robertson was landowner.

The stock selling ring at the Casterton Saleyards is heritage listed and considered

historically and architecturally significant. Thought to have been built in the 1920s, the central octagonal ring with its monitor roof and tiered, rough timber benching features detail in local timbers. The Casterton Saleyards hosts several renowned store cattle, summer sheep and weaner cattle sales each year, providing premium quality stock in a historic setting.

Situated a few kilometres east of Casterton, the Wannan River Bridge is the longest nineteenth-century Victorian railways timber bridge still in existence. Though no longer in use, its long curving form snaking across the broad flood plains of the Wannan and Glenelg Rivers makes a beautiful vista.

Each year Casterton hosts a vintage car rally, a polocrosse championship, a feature horse racing event, a woodturning exhibition and a Christmas carnival.

From Kelpies to cattle to carnivals, Casterton is a country township with its own unique character.

CONTACT:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: older home \$130,000 – \$150,000

Rural: good grazing country \$1,400 – \$2,000 per acre