

Barossa Valley

The Barossa Valley is the oldest wine producing region in Australia. Names such as Grant Burge, Wolf Blass, Jacob's Creek and Penfolds may sound familiar to you, these wine producers all operate from the 'Barossa'.

The Barossa Valley is a short drive from Adelaide, only 60 kilometres northeast of South Australia's capital. The region is made up of the towns Tanunda, Nuriootpa, Angaston, Williamstown and Lyndoch, with a collective population of approximately 20,000. The Barossa Valley is one of the most famous regions to visit when in Adelaide and there are numerous day tours on offer from the city and places to stay for those looking for an overnight adventure.

History

The Barossa was settled in 1842 by an entire European community brought from Silesia (now part of Poland) to set up a piece of the old world in the new world. These families established vineyards, some that have stayed within the family until now. There are now 500 grape growing families, many sixth generation that supply nearly 60 000 tonnes of grapes to 50 local winemakers. They were later followed by immigrants from England. The English, along with those already here from Germany and Silesia shaped and developed this area, this can be seen reflected in the architecture, food, music and internationally renowned wines of the Barossa today. There are now strict limitations on new development in the Barossa, to maintain the unique heritage of this area. The culture has also carried over to much of the local food produce also. The butchers and bakers in the Barossa Valley come from the same tradition as the grape grower, so you'll find authentic garlic mettwurst, fritz and smoked bacon and hams.

Sights & Attractions

The three major towns of the Barossa Valley all have distinct differences from each other. Tanunda is considered the most German of the three with the most long standing traditions dating back to the original immigrants. Angaston has an English feel due to the majority of English settlers and Nuriootpa is the commercial hub of the Barossa and has a mixed influence from both the German and English settlers. All have many accommodation options and are quaint, interesting places in their own right to spend a day.

Wine tasting is obviously the main thing to do in the Barossa Valley, and with over 60 wineries you're spoiled for choice!

A wine tour is the easiest way to visit the Barossa and there are many to suit all budgets that depart from Adelaide, daily. Some of the well known wineries are Grant Burge, Torbreck, Orlando (producers of Jacob's Creek), Kaesler, Penfolds, Peter Lehmann, Wolf Blass, Rockford, Elderton, Glaetzer, Saltram, Yalumba and Seppelts. The main red varieties of grapes grown in the Barossa are Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache and Shiraz. The Shiraz here is most well known as it is used in

making Australia's most famous wine, Penfold's Grange. The main white grape varieties include Reisling, Semillon and Chardonnay and there are also some fortified wines traditionally produced in the region.

If you are driving yourself or have a designated driver, the wineries are all within close distances. An itinerary might include a local produce platter on the banks of the Para River at Peter Lehmann wines, or a visit to Yalumba with its impressive stone clock tower and winery and its sweeping lawns. Jacob's Creek has a great gallery, restaurant and tasting room and informative visitor centre. Wolf Blass also boasts an impressive winery, tasting area and visitor centre. If you're after a more traditional, smaller winery, check out Two Hands, Murray Street Vineyards and Kabminye Wines. They all offer local produce along with their wines and service with a smile.

Climate

The Barossa has a mild climate, with daily temperatures in summer (December to February) of approximately 29 °C, though it occasionally heats up to the mid thirties. The winter months of June through till August bring chilly days, and cold nights, so bring warm clothes if you visit at this time of year and maybe an umbrella, as rainfall is likely. Spring (September to November) and Autumn (March to May) are pleasant times to visit, with often sunny, mild days and cool nights.

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