

Title:

South Australia's Magnificent Barossa Valley

Word Count:

512

Summary:

The Barossa Valley is one of Australia's most significant wine regions. Its thriving community retains strong links to its rich European heritage, now combined with the down-to-earth Australian spirit to create a rich and diverse lifestyle in a relaxed, rural setting close to Adelaide.

Keywords:

barossa, valley, south, australia, tour, travel, holiday, vacation, wine, vineyard

Article Body:

The Barossa Valley is one of Australia's most significant wine regions. Its thriving community retains strong links to its rich European heritage, now combined with the down-to-earth Australian spirit to create a rich and diverse lifestyle in a relaxed, rural setting close to Adelaide. European farmers (German in particular) and English migrants settled the Barossa Valley from the 1850s, and their rich cultural legacy is evident today in superb Barossa specialty foods and historic architecture. Historic churches, stone buildings and cottages abound, while walking trails, reserves and forests offer easily access to breathtaking landscapes and scenery.

The Barossa Valley is home to the world-famous Barossa Shiraz and Eden Valley Riesling plus other premium wines, a large range of unique regional produce, and acclaimed restaurants. The Barossa's vineyards are tended by around 500 grape growing families, many sixth-generation. There are may small boutique wineries where eexquisite wines are sold out within weeks of their launch, along with larger enterprises associated with household names such as Peter Lehmann, Henschke, Seppelt, Yaldara and Yalumba.

The Barossa is located only 70 kilometres North East of Adelaide and is easily accessible by road in just over hour from the capital. From Adelaide take Main North Road (A20) to Sturt Highway and enter via Gawler and the Barossa Valley Way. Or, from Adelaide take Lower North East Road (A10) out of Adelaide and travel through Chain of Ponds in the beautiful Adelaide Hills to Williamstown in the southern Barossa. Adelaide is well serviced by domestic and international

flights, and car hire is readily available at the airport. Self-drive tours to the Barossa Valley are popular. Road conditions are generally good and distances between the region's towns are small.

Spring brings a refreshing vitality to the Barossa Valley, days are sunny with a crispness in the air and wildflowers abound. Summer brings an abundance of sunshine and warm days. The average temperature around 29 degrees celcius, but temperatures as high as 35 degrees are common. Autumn brings mild days, chilly evenings, and autumn leaves on the grape vines which are a sight to behold. Winter brings chilly days and cold nights when warm Barossa hospitality can be enjoyed around a cosy log fire.

The Barossa Valley was named in 1837 by South Australia's first Surveyor general, Colonel William Light, after Barrosa in Spain. It was first settled in 1842 by English and German settlers, the Germans having fled religious persecution in their homeland. Before long the Barossa developed its own unique culture and life style which has continued until today. Early gentlemen winemakers established the first Barossa Valley vineyards, but wealthier families with greater financial resources soon took over and developed the wine making industry we see today. Among the first was the Seppelt Family. Joseph Seppelt turned to wine making on a large scale when earlier attempts at tobacco growing failed. Other successful attempts were made by the Jacobs, Salters, Gramps, Penfolds and Tolleys, who soon dominated the industry while smaller growers supplied grapes grown on family holdings. In this way, the Barossa Valley's agricultural production slowly changed from wheat growing to grape growing.