

Itinerary: Eden Valley

There's a special valley of grapes and gums in the Barossa, world famous for the quality of its wines - particularly its Riesling - and renowned for the stunning landscapes around every corner. Eden Valley is beautiful, welcoming, surprising, relaxing and the perfect location for a romantic long weekend escape being ideally located between the Adelaide Hills and the Barossa Valley. Overflowing with hidden gems awaiting discovery, take time out to explore, meander and breath in the fresh country air in the Eden Valley.

Day One – (suggested day of arrival – Saturday morning)

With the perfect location – just over an hour from Adelaide – you have two choices of how to arrive or depart. Travel via the direct Northern Connector into the Barossa or meander through the scenic Adelaide Hills. Travelling through the Adelaide Hills from the city will take you to the edge of the Eden Valley region to the township of Mount Pleasant. The Mount Pleasant Farmers Markets on a Saturday morning are a must-do and, honestly, have one of the best brekkies going around!

This community focused food market showcases amazing local produce, small producers and a regional community spirit. There's nothing like the taste of ripe, locally grown produce, so stock up on provisions for the weekend and take the opportunity to chat to the folks behind the trestle tables – you'll be sure to uncover some great stories, recipe tips and insider knowledge.

Next stop is Springton, many agree that the S bend heading down into Springton has one of the best vista driving views in the state - decide for yourself!

Take in some of the local history at the Herbig Family Tree. If you think it's hard living with your family have a read of how they had to live! Once you have marvelled at the large gum take a very short drive to visit Michelle at Edenmae Wines. As the gatekeeper of the north east arc of the Eden Valley, she is a wealth of local information that she will happily impart whilst taking you through a tasting of her hand-crafted wines accompanied by a platter of local produce for a light lunch be sure to give a pat to Oliver and Bonnie the pups.

The Township of Eden Valley is a mere 8 minutes' drive from Edenmae. First stop is a visit to Lillefield Gallery, just off the main street of the Eden Valley township. Located at the former Uniting Church, the local volunteer operated gallery has been recently renovated, including newly restored stain glass windows. For a different art experience, stroll the main street of Eden Valley and discover the trail of historic silhouettes. You will learn the history of Eden Valley through this walking adventure to each of the silhouette sculptures situated throughout the town.

Fernfield Wines are also located just around the back of the main street, in a beautifully restored original stone homestead. Scott and Bec not only grow their grapes and make their wines, they also have found extra hours in the week to make their own chocolates and to dabble in beer. Set yourself up by the open fire or out on the deck to experience a wine and chocolate tasting or play winemaker for the day! Now that you have wet your whistle, check in to your accommodation and experience the time of the day, whether in to cooler or warmer months where the sun softens, the birds sing and the wild life emerge for the night ahead.

Naimanya Cottage offers stunning views across Flaxman's Valley from a renovated 19th century stone cottage, while Boongarrie Luxury Tent is a unique, immersive luxury camping experience, complete with seasonal campfire cooking and rain shower ensuite. Of course, if you don't fancy moving too far from your first stop, the luxury vineyard accommodation at Brockenchack Vineyards is a gorgeous base for your Eden Valley stay. With 360-degree vineyard views from the spa, you will be relaxing in no time. Penny's Farm is a wonderful option if you would like to be spoilt by host Gillian's extraordinary catering! For families looking for a camping holiday, Murray Recreation and Caravan Park is the perfect spot! Guests of the Park are sure to enjoy the idyllic peacefulness of the park. The Caravan Park offers plenty of shady powered sites and unpowered sites for your caravan, motor home, bus, camper-trailer or tent.

Once you're settled in, it's time to make like a local. On your way to dinner, a stop in at the Eden Valley Scenic Lookout will provide you with vista views and a sunset - nature really puts on a show! Saturday night at the Eden Valley Hotel is a great way to get the feel for the region. Enjoy a meal by the fire in winter or out in the beer garden on a warmer night. Co-owner Cassaly Fitzgerald happens to be one of the Barossa's most respected wine authorities, so keep an eye out for the very comprehensive wine list. You'll find tiny Eden Valley producers next to internationally recognised Champagne labels and plenty of hard-to-find gems in between (and, who knows – one of those producers may be sitting in the front bar!). Have a chat with the team and the locals to find out what's going on in the area and pick a few tips to discover during your stay. The Eden Valley Hotel also offers a courtesy pick up and drop off service from the accommodation in the area so be sure to ask about this when you book your stay. A diverse menu with crowd favourites being their generous hand-crumbed schnitzels or the Cheesey Cheese Burger (not for those with a heart condition!!).

Feeling relaxed yet?

Day 2 – no alarms required just listen to the birds sing their morning songs

Wake up slowly and enjoy a leisurely breakfast with your goodies picked up at the Farmers Market the day before.

Having fortified yourself with breakfast, it's time to experience Henschke; a courtesy call to book your tasting will ensure the team are ready to welcome you. Sit down, relax and work your way through a wine tasting showcasing their vinous skills in their newly renovated cellar door. There is a lot of history at Henschke, and you can feel a keen sense of their multi-generational devotion to excellence. In addition to their Cellar Door tasting, Henschke offer a number of immersive experiences, including the very rare and exclusive opportunity to walk the Hill of Grace Vineyard, hosted by a staff member, taste the renowned Hill of Grace Shiraz. These experiences must be booked in advance but are the doorway to a lifetime of memories.

Time does tend to stand still at Henschke, but by now it should be time to start thinking about lunch. Back in Eden Valley, drop in to see your new friends at the Eden Valley Hotel and sit up at the bar for a tasting of Max & Me Wines. Created by Phil and Sarah Lehmann, these beautiful wines are a reflection of the cool, crisp Eden Valley climate, and a rare opportunity to do a fine wine tasting at the front bar of a country pub! While they are taking you through a tasting, your lunch will be prepared from local and South Australian producers.

An alternate Lunch and tasting option, head to Poonawatta's newly build cellar door. Poonawatta, a word meaning 'good country' in Peramangk is truly that. Andrew and Michelle

are avid custodians of some of the oldest vines in the world on historical family and indigenous country, and have integrated their winemaking skills with Andrew's photography skills to show you the finest Eden Valley has to offer. As with nearly all cellar doors in Eden Valley you have fireside tastings in winter and outdoor air in the warmer months, tempered by gully breezes through the gums. Enjoy casual or structured tastings, then relax with a glass of your favourite wine among ancient river gums while you graze on a gourmet platter or artisan cheese plate.

Wherever you have chosen to enjoy your lunchtime feast, it's now time to discover Flaxman Wines.

Col and Fi, along with their official welcome mascot Gus, the Staffy, have established a beautiful cellar door on Flaxman Valley Road – their own little corner of paradise. Col and Fi make micro-quantities of wines that are pristine and cellar worthy for those disciplined enough to lay them down. Enjoy a relaxed tasting and perhaps book in some dates for a return to coincide with one of Col's legendary Leisurely Long Lunches. Just a suggestion!

Check for opening times, but Really Useful Pots in Flaxman Valley is an amazing mother/daughter potting studio creating bespoke handcrafted wares that will make a perfect edition to your kitchen, garden or living area.

With hearts and stomachs full, it's time to choose your exit-route from the Valley, either via Springton through the Adelaide Hills, or back through the Barossa Valley via Angaston. If Angaston is your choice, then meander back down along Eden Valley Road to Barossa icon Yalumba, Australia's oldest family-owned winery. Here you can enjoy a tasting of some extraordinary Barossa wines, accompanied by a locally-sourced produce platter. The warmth of the fire in winter, or the shade of the vine-covered verandah in summer will be your accompaniment to a genuine Barossa wine experience or explore the only on-site winery Cooperage in the Southern Hemisphere.

By now you would have realised that two days and one night really isn't enough time to see it all, Eden Valley is a destination of discovery, where the fresh, crisp country air refreshes your senses and the friendly, welcoming locals will delight in sharing their slice of paradise with you. Take the time to slow down and linger like a local in the valley of grapes and gums.