

Itinerary: Goolwa

Goolwa – where the river meets the sea.

Day 1

Travelling into Goolwa from the city of Adelaide you will pass through the rural hamlet of Mount Compass, the food bowl of the south. Call into Harvest the Fleurieu to pick up locally produced supplies for your stay. While in Mount Compass the Wetland Trail, behind the IGA, is a great place to explore and stretch your legs. On arrival in Goolwa, the local Visitor Centre is a great starting point to pick up some maps and uncover the local secrets while you're in town. Take a walk around the historic Goolwa Wharf Precinct and discover the significance of the Riverboat history along the Murray River.

Located in the historic buildings near the wharf you will find Fleurieu Distillery, Wharf Barrel Shed and the Goolwa Railway Station (home to the Cockle Train and local craft centre). You could choose to settle into one of these locations for the afternoon or continue following the Goolwa history walk on the self-guided maps available from the Visitor Centre. While in the Goolwa Wharf Precinct pop in to the Signal Point Gallery or South Coast Regional Art Centre where you will find a diverse selection of local and well know Australian artists work on display. Exhibitions change regularly and you may just find a memento to remember your visit to Goolwa.

Before checking in to your overnight accommodation head to Goolwa Cellar Door to sample the Finnis River Wine range. If you feel like a night in tonight pick up a bottle of wine and local cheese platter as you leave. Your accommodation tonight is at Boat House Birks Harbour; a self-contained property just for 2 located over the water. Unpack your bags and then make yourself at home on the deck for the evening as the sun sets. Or for the more active join Canoe the Coorong for a Sunset kayak tour to the Murray Mouth; bookings are a must to ensure you do not miss out.

Day 2

Indulge in a hearty cooked breakfast on your personal deck as the sun rises over the river and the local birdlife floats by your front door from their overnight resting place. Once fed stroll down to the Goolwa Wharf Markets which are held on the first and third Sunday of each month. You will find a myriad of goods on offer with around 80 stalls.

Once all the stalls of been explored, grab e-bikes from Goolwa Bike Hire and explore the Encounter Bikeway. If you're feeling energetic you can ride the full 31km length of the Encounter Bikeway as it follows the shores of the Lower Murray River through to The Bluff at Encounter Bay. For those looking for a more relaxed bike ride this morning take a leisurely ride along the rivers edge; uncover the rivers history as you speak to the volunteers restoring old wooden boats at Hector's Boat Shed, pay your respects at the War Dog Memorial or travel on an authentic, wood fired historic paddle steamer Oscar W, for a one hour cruise from the Goolwa Wharf. Past Goolwa Beach you will ride through an ancient tea tree forest within Tokuremoar Reserve. This is a significant site for the traditional custodians of the area Ramindjeri / Ngarrindjeri.

If you opted for a shorter ride, swing by the South Lakes Golf Course for a few holes and finish the day with dinner at their restaurant Birdie Bistro before checking back in at the Boat House Birks Harbour.

Day 3

Enjoy a light breakfast on the deck this morning, as you will be indulging at lunch today while exploring the Coorong National Park. Departing from the historic Goolwa Wharf take a 6 hour cruise into the Coorong with Spirit of the Coorong or Cruise the Coorong guided boat tours. Sit back and relax as your expert captain navigates the waters around the Goolwa Barrage and through the Murray River Mouth. There will be opportunities to jump out and explore parts of the Coorong National Park which are only accessible by boat. Your captain and guide will, explain the local Ngarrindjeri history of the region and offer you the chance to sample some indigenous produce.

After a big day out exploring the Coorong take the night off and eat out at one of the iconic county pubs in the centre of Goolwa. Then enjoy live music from one of our local venues or simply enjoy an evening walk along the river, back to your accommodation.

Day 4

On your last day enjoy a leisurely breakfast overlooking the water at Kuti Shack or Bombora on the River. From Goolwa Beach carpark, follow the boardwalk up into the sand dunes for a 360 degree view of the township, river and ocean. Heading out of town, on your way home, travel via Strathalbyn and the Langhorne Creek wine region. Discover the historic buildings, in the centre of Strathalbyn while indulging in some retail therapy. Stroll along the River Angus walking trail as it winds its way through the centre of the beautiful Soldiers Memorial Gardens.

Stop off in Langhorne Creek for a long lunch at Lake Breeze Wines or Bremerton cellar doors before taking the scenic route home through the Adelaide Hills.