



ENJOY

EATING



WINE & DINE

Don't limit your cellar door tasting to wine; some of the country's best restaurants are found among the vines, writes *Cyndi Tebbel*.



The wine country tourist loves getting out of town every now and then to restock the cellar and have a long, leisurely lunch. Wineries and restaurateurs have joined forces to create high-calibre, "one-stop shops" that embrace wine, food and a whole lot more. The best venues pair fabulous locations with chefs who make the most of sensational regional produce – much of which can be found growing, grazing or swimming nearby. Such bounty also bodes well for the takeaway gourmet as more wineries become boutique provedores, selling speciality lines in olive oil, cheese, wood-fired bread and other goodies at the cellar door.

Cooking classes may also form part of the package, along with star turns from visiting chefs and live music events. The only hard work is deciding whether to slip on a pair of thongs and slide into an endless afternoon of grilled crab and chilled chardonnay or set aside a whole weekend for some serious viticultural research. Your tour starts now.



TERROIR RESTAURANT AND WINE BAR

HUNGERFORD HILL WINERY, 1 BROKE ROAD, POKOLBIN, NSW

Serious oenophiles know that great wines are born of a great vintner and just the right blend of geography, climate and soil conditions – what the French call *terroir*. At Hungerford Hill's award-winning Terroir restaurant, chef de cuisine Darren Ho's menu features fresh regional produce. Signature dishes are Ho's Dixon Street-style duck with sweet pickled lemons on basmati rice and choy sum and his caramelised lemon tart with coconut sorbet. A great way to sample the menu's highlights is the \$85 degustation menu, which will also take you on a guided tour of Hungerford Hill wines, from a Clare Valley riesling, to a Tumbarumba sauvignon blanc, a sparkling chardonnay, a pinot noir, a shiraz from Orange and a Griffith botrytis semillon.

The vineyard also hosts special events throughout the year. On September 9 there is Vinefire, a black-tie barbecue, based on the Bordeaux tradition of cooking beef over fires made from vine clippings, and on

At Terroir, named the Hunter Region Restaurant of the Year, chef Darren Ho serves up regional treats with an Asian twist.

October 1 wine consultant Peter Bourne will host a Burgundy dinner with a special menu created by Ho. **VIBE:** Effervescent.
www.hungerfordhill.com.au

(02) 4990 0711

Hours: Lunch daily 12pm–3pm; dinner Wednesday–Saturday, 6pm till late; cafe, daily 10am–5pm; wine bar, Wednesday–Saturday, 5pm till late.

PETTAVEL WINERY AND RESTAURANT

65 PETTAVEL ROAD, WAURN PONDS, VICTORIA

If Geelong isn't already on most wine lovers' must-visit maps, it should be. Pettavel Winery and Restaurant is a rave-worthy destination, a short drive from Geelong and the coastal towns of Torquay and Anglesea, where chef Richard Hooper is collecting accolades and awards for his "banquet-style" entrees and generous mains, a standout being the Pettavel pigeon.

The menu changes daily, taking into account the fresh produce available. Examples include new season asparagus with Anarkie ewes' milk feta, basil and mache; seared red »



mullet with wild olives, ruby grapefruit, fennel, salmon roe and a chervil veloute; poached figs with honey-flavoured buffalo yoghurt and a saffron and cardamom sorbet.

The wine list includes Evening Star sauvignon blanc and reisling (there is also a late-harvest riesling), Platina viognier and chardonnay, Platina merlot petit verdot and the winery's flagship Southern Emigre shiraz viognier as well as international drops, available by the bottle or glass. Cooking classes are held on Fridays from April to October and cover everything from kitchen practicalities and basics like stocks and sauces, to dinner parties, ethnic cuisines (such as African and Spanish) and loads of other topics. **VIBE:** Unexpected.

www.pettavel.com

(03) 52661120

Hours: Lunch daily from 12.30pm; dinner every Friday evening over summer and a degustation dinner on the last Friday of every month throughout the year; cellar door, 10am-5.30pm, serving light meals, coffee and dessert.

D'ARRY'S VERANDAH RESTAURANT

D'ARENBERG, OSBORN ROAD, MCLAREN VALE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

D'Arry's Verandah Restaurant boasts a

spectacular location, with views of the Willunga Escarpment and St Vincent Gulf, and tag-team chefs Peter Reschke and Nigel Rich. These two know their way around a truly amazing array of quality local produce: almonds, olives, cheeses, honey, every conceivable berry, herbs, wild mushrooms, duck, various fruits and vegies, venison, and freshwater and ocean fish.

It's a menu with gusto: scallops on half shell with shaved fennel, celeriac, baby radish and orange vinaigrette; rabbit and pork sausage, with roasted rabbit leg, parsnip mash and truffle salsa. Desserts include poached figs with honey-saffron ice cream and pistachio croquante.

Feral Fox Pinot Noir and Lucky Lizard Chardonnay are among the wines offered on the Estate wine list; all current vintage d'Arenberg wines are available by the glass. There is also the Museum wine list, which details some very old d'Arenberg offerings that have been lovingly dusted off from the cellar.

VIBE: Where the Wild Things Are.

www.darenberg.com.au

(08) 83294848

Hours: Lunch seven days a week, from 12 noon.

Evening functions by arrangement. (The restaurant closes for two weeks each July.)

MOORILLA ESTATE

655 MAIN ROAD BERRIEDALE, TASMANIA

This is no ordinary winery dining experience. In fact, it begs a long weekend. Fifteen minutes from Hobart by car (or take a super-fast catamaran from Hobart Wharf), Moorilla Estate boasts some of the best riesling, gewurtztraminer and pinot wines in Tasmania. Its contemporary art-filled restaurant, The Source, is named for a 6m-long John Olsen painting that has pride of place over the central staircase (A-listers can ogle a Kandinsky in the boardroom). The restaurant has wraparound balconies and views over the Derwent. Then there's the on-site boutique brewery, which produces the Moo Brew label.

All in all, plenty of good reasons to stay a night or two

in one of four self-contained apartments with king-sized beds, granite bathrooms (two with spas), kitchens stocked with gourmet snacks (plus room service from The Source) and wine cellars stocked with more than 60 wines. Moorilla Estate offers various wine, food and accommodation packages. The indulgence package includes a night's accommodation, three-course dinner or lunch with a bottle of premium Moorilla wine and breakfast for \$420 per couple. **VIBE:** Fine arts.

www.moorilla.com.au

(03) 62779900

Hours: Lunch daily, including Easter and Christmas.

Dinner Friday and Saturday.





VOYAGER ESTATE RESTAURANT

LOT 1, STEVENS ROAD, MARGARET RIVER,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Elegant Cape Dutch architecture, antiques and sparkling chandeliers set the scene at Voyager Estate, where soft furnishings invite you to settle in and stay a while. The South African influences are in tribute to the first vines introduced into Western Australia from the Cape back in 1829.

Graze from a taste plate of goat's cheese ravioli; smoked haddock mini soup with garlic croutons; ostrich pate with quince jelly; blue cheese creme fraiche dip with wild mushrooms; Moroccan tiger prawns and pickled carrot salad. Mains include tokay braised beef checks with sage and reggiano gnocchi in a rich beef reduction with blistered tomatoes. Desserts and cheese plates complete the dining experience.

Of the wines on offer you may want to sample the Voyager Estate 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot, a blend that *The Australian's* James Halliday awarded 96 points in his 2007 *Australian Wine Companion*. Also impressed is the Catering Institute of Australia, which awarded the restaurant Gold Plate status in 2004 and 2005.

After your repast, admire the roses and the ornamental *werf garden* (inspired by traditional South African walled gardens) and check out the shop: clothes, books, wine accoutrements and Voyager Estate produce. On October 11 and 12, classical guitar quartet Saffire will play at

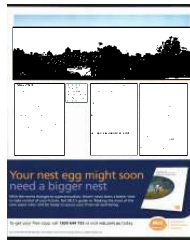
the Estate; tickets for the performance and a three-course menu cost \$90. **VIBE:** Svelte veldt. www.voyagerestate.com.au

(08) 9757 6354

Hours: Daily (except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Good Friday) for lunch or coffee and cake, 10am-4.30pm. >>



Executive chef Nigel Harvey and his team at Voyager Estate Restaurant serve up the best of local Margaret River produce



« **BELLA VEDERE**

BADGER'S BROOK ESTATE, 874 MAROONDAH HIGHWAY, COLDSTREAM, VICTORIA

There's a nod to Audrey Hepburn in this Yarra Valley establishment located at the Badger's Brook Estate. It's a 1954 Vespa that chef Gary Cooper and Tim Sawyer use as a design feature to set the mood at their joint-venture restaurant, Bella Vedere.

The food focus embraces the "slow" philosophy. The aroma of organic bread wafting from the woodfired oven provides a constant reminder of good things to come. You'll sample the bread with your meals, of course, but you can also take loaves home with you. First, though, try some at breakfast with a strong coffee, or at lunchtime with duck and cherry tart, or with the five-course degustation dinner

The menu changes daily, steered by the seasonal produce available, and there is an extensive list of Australian and international wines. A broad selection of Yarra Valley wines includes some smaller, upcoming vineyards and showcases the chardonnay, pinot noir and shiraz that the Badger's Brook vineyard specialises in.

If you like the food so much that you'd like to replicate it in your own kitchen, watch the website for details of forthcoming "intimate cooking classes" that will be hosted by Cooper.

VIBE: Roman Holiday.

www.bellavedere.com.au

www.badgersbrook.com.au

(03) 59626161

Hours: Breakfast, lunch and coffee from 8.30am from Wednesday to Sunday; a five-course

degustation dinner starts at 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays; the restaurant is open for Christmas lunch.

MILLBROOK WINERY RESTAURANT

OLD CHESTNUT LANE, JARRAHDALE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

This pretty 19th-century chestnut farm, 50 minutes southeast of Perth, became a vineyard in 1996 and released its first vintage three years later. Hewn from local stone and timber, the restaurant here is where chef Scott Harpham works his magic with marron from dams on the property, fruit from the orchards, olives, fowl ... yes, it's another winery bursting with bountiful goodness.

Order a la carte or go bush with one of Harpham's gourmet hampers (cutlery, crockery, wine cooler, water bottle, napkins and rug included) with fresh Millbrook bread, spiced nuts, assorted dips, crispbreads, smoked salmon Italian smallgoods, cheeses, marinated olives, semi-dried tomatoes and pickled vegetables. And there's a sugar-fix basket to satisfy those with sweet teeth. All Estate wines are available by the bottle and glass.

Cellar-door takeaways: homemade preserves, chutney, tapenade, orange and quince pastes, lavoche and Millbrook's limited edition sauvignon blanc, chardonnay, viognier, shiraz viognier and cabernet merlot. **VIBE:** Vintage.

www.millbrookwinery.com.au

(08) 9525 5796

Hours: Lunch from 12 noon, Wednesday to Sunday. Tasting room daily from 10am-5pm; groups by appointment.



Discover la dolce vita at Bella Vedere, on the family-owned Badger's Brook Estate in the heart of the Yarra Valley.



HOME HILL VINEYARD AND WINERY RESTAURANT

38 NAIRN STREET, RANELAGH, TASMANIA

It's all here: a pretty avenue of fruit trees leading up to a striking building of rammed earth and glass where you'll be treated to views of Mt Wellington and Sleeping Beauty.

Tasmania's Huon Valley shares a maritime climate with France's famous wine region of Bordeaux and for Home Hill that means a wine list that includes pinot noir reserve, pinot noir, sylvaner, unwooded chardonnay, reserve chardonnay, sparkling cuvee and a late-harvest sticky. Try them by the glass (or bottle) with chef Mark Benz's seasonal menus. A 2004 Home Hill Kelly's Reserve Pinot Noir, for example, is the right drop for his pan-seared fillet of venison on herb mash with quince chutney and

roasted shallots. Then, perhaps, a raspberry brulee tart served with cream and a glass of Reserve Sticky?

Other Huon Valley produce on the menu when in season includes salmon, rainbow trout, Bruny Island oysters, sardines, blue eye cod, lobster, buffalo beef and berries. To indulge yourself when you get home, buy some chocolates, chutney and jams.

VIBE: French toast.

www.homehillwines.com.au; (03) 62641200

Hours: Closed in July every year. Otherwise daily (except Christmas and Good Friday) for morning and afternoon tea and lunch from 12pm-3pm; dinner, Friday and Saturday, 6pm till late. Cellar door every day from 10am-5pm.



« BRIDGEWATER MILL

MT BARKER ROAD, BRIDGEWATER,
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Just 25 minutes' drive from Adelaide is the historic Bridgewater Mill, home to an award-winning restaurant, and the cellar door for Petaluma's wines. Diners can sit outside overlooking the giant waterwheel or inside the renovated flour mill that dates from 1860.

Executive chef Le Tu Thai, a refugee from Vietnam who started as a kitchenhand at age 15, is now acclaimed as one of the country's best chefs. His contemporary Australian cuisine is based on a fusion of his Asian ancestry and his passion for classic French cooking. The menu features dishes such as drunken quail with sushi rice, sashimi of marinated yellow fin tuna, jellyfish and cucumber salad, and roasted Kangaroo Island chicken breast with scampi, cepes fricassee and parsnip fritters. The wine list showcases Petaluma's Clare Valley riesling, cabernet sauvignon and merlot from Connawarra, pinot noir and chardonnay from the

Piccadilly Valley and Mt Barker viognier and shiraz. **VIBE:** Historic.
www.bridgewatermill.com.au
(08) 8339 9200

Hours: *Lunch from Thursday to Monday from 12 noon; dinner for functions and special events only; tasting room open daily from 10am–5pm.*

WYNDHAM ESTATE CELLAR DOOR

700 DALWOOD ROAD, DALWOOD, NSW

Hugging the Hunter River since 1828, Wyndham Estate is the country's oldest operating winery. Apart from its famous Shiraz, Wyndham is also known for its concerts by big names such as Shirley Bassey, Cliff Richard and Michael Crawford, and every October it holds an evening of Opera in the Vineyards. This year's Gala Night of Puccini is on October 21 and stars soprano Leanne Kenneally. It will be preceded by an afternoon food and wine fair so you can fill up your picnic basket before settling down to enjoy a night of highlights from *La*

Boheme, Madame Butterfly, Tosca and Turandot.

The vineyard's a la carte restaurant has a seasonally changing menu, a feature of which is the tasting plates – mini degustation menus of four courses with matching wines. The red tasting plate, for instance pairs duck mousseline with a glass of 2005 Bin 33 Pinot Noir, pork cutlet with a 2004 Bin 999 Merlot, rack of lamb with a 2003 Bin 555 Shiraz and Hereford beef with a 2003 Show Reserve Shiraz (great value at \$35).

Serious foodies mark their diaries for Wyndham's Season's Plate Lunches (held quarterly on the first weekend of each season) hosted by celebrity chefs. Book now for the Summer Seasons Plate Lunch on December 2, devised by Steven Snow from Fins Restaurant in Byron Bay. **VIBE:** Solid.

www.wyndhamestate.com.au

(02) 4938 3444

Hours: *Lunch daily from 11am–3.30pm, except Good Friday and Christmas Day.*

ADDITIONAL REPORTING: SARA VERGE