

Down Under Winery Tour

Arrival Day 1, Sydney, New South Wales (NSW)

Spend the day resting on the beach, shopping or walking around this amazing international city known for its Harbour and parks. Dinner tonight will be on your own, be sure to try the barramundi served at restaurants along the Harbour. To avoid jet lag, drink lots of water and get to bed at a reasonable hour.

Day 2 Sydney, NSW

Transfer for the day to Bankstown Airport to meet your plane and our crew. A CFI will be on hand to perform the check rides, sign off for your Australian licensing, and conduct the tour briefing. Afterward, enjoy a "welcome" dinner with your travel companions onboard a spectacular Sydney Harbour sunset cruise.

Day 3, Griffith, NSW

With a population of 25,000, Griffith is the third-largest population centre in Riverina and is the richest tract of agricultural country in Australia. North-east of town is the 8356-ha (20,648 acre) Cocoparra National Park. Here a low mountain range rises above the plain and is home to a host of tea tree, acacia, and profuse amounts of wildflowers. The park is a nesting place for the peregrine falcon and the wedge-tailed eagle as well as parrots, grey kangaroos and ring-tailed possums. Griffith is totally surrounded by orchards and vineyards. In the surrounding district is McWilliams winery. Even though select varieties of their wines are available here in the US, the winery itself is still fascinating. There is an outdoor museum with old winery equipment housed in an enormous wine bottle and tastings are held inside an enormous wine barrel with a mural out the front. Casella Wines, makers of yellow tail wines, are on the itinerary for today.

Day 4, Swan Hill, NSW

Around Swan Hill and particularly to the north are vast citrus farms and vineyards that produce such wonderful vintages as Great Western Champagne. The area, once known as an inland trading post, now boasts a large agricultural demographic and the largest Moreton Bay Fig tree in Australia. Fresh caught Murray cod is an icon in this town, which is proven by the 36 foot replica in the middle of town and the plethora of plates it can be found on in local restaurants.

Day 5 and 6, Adelaide, SA

The Barossa Valley is a world class wine producing region and was listed in New York Times as one of the "53 Places to go in 2008." The Barossa is one of South Australia's most scenic touring destinations as its winding country roads weave through vineyards and villages. Its home to some of the world's oldest Shiraz vineyards, acclaimed Rieslings and is a gourmet lover's paradise. We stay here for two days so that plenty of time is available, to nibble in the cheese and chocolate factories, share a secret at the Whispering Wall and, of course, play with a kangaroo. Be sure to try the fortified "port" wines. They even come in chocolate.

Day 7: Kangaroo Island, SA

Despite devastating bushfires in 2008, Kangaroo Island remains one of Australia's most loved attractions. With incredible people, vineyards, unique natural rock formations, pristine beaches and amazing sunsets, Kangaroo Island has been graced with a classic and tranquil beauty. On the tour, be sure to take photos of the wild New Zealand fur seals who call this island home.

Day 8/9: Mt Gambier, SA

The Blue Lake is the only lake in the world that changes from somber grey to brilliant blue each summer. In November, as the water inside the crater of this long extinct volcano begins to heat from the sun causing the top layers to turn color. Mount Gambier is the largest town in South Australia outside of Adelaide and is home to 30,000 people. Vineyards produce Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon and early and late harvest Chardonnay, all grown on the rich soil surrounding the extinct volcanic crater of Mount Gambier.

Day 10/11 Bendigo, VIC

After leaving Mt. Gambier, we fly southeast over the Great Ocean Road and the Twelve Apostles before heading back inland to Bendigo. Majestic building display Bendigo's "Gold Rush" past line the main streets offering an ever present reminder of the riches found in its surrounds. Natural bushlands gives the town the name "City within a Forest." After winning awards in Europe for its rich dark red wines, Bendigo's vineyards have produced some of the world's best Hermitage and iconic varietals.

Day 12 Wagga Wagga, NSW

Situated on the Murrumbidgee River, Wagga Wagga is New South Wales's largest inland city and is considered the capital of the Riverina area. The name derives from a local Aboriginal word meaning 'place of many crows'. A river cruise, a visit to the award winning botanical garden, kangaroo petting and local wineries, are on the agenda for the next two days. If you're interested, a visit to the Rustique Lavender Farm is also available. Fancy a massage with home grown organic lavender oil or homemade scones with lavender honey? If not, take a stroll through the cities beautiful tree-lined streets or do a bit of browsing at the local market.

Day 13/14 Hunter Valley, NSW

On the short trek south to Pokolbin/Cessnock, NSW, notice the length of the Gibraltar Ranges and the scattered National Parks that dot the countryside. On day two, after breakfast, enjoy a regional trip around the Hunter Valley. Described as "a day to remember" this tour takes you to the smaller boutique style wineries located in the Hunter Valley. Meet with the vineyard owners and learn first hand how the grapes are grown, crushed and later bottled. A visit to the local cheese and chocolate factories as well as an olive grove is scheduled for the morning. Not a wine person? No problem. Alternate tours are available. Try taking a cooking class from a World Class chef, for example.

Day 15: Sydney, NSW

Despite the tour being officially over once we land, Australian Air Safaris would be happy to assist in arranging activities for you for the day. Transportation back to the hotel is already organized.

Included in the tour: All aspects of the plane (Australian Licensing, check ride, fuel, insurance, charts), transfers, accommodation, all main meals (with the exception of the occasional lunch), all daily/city sight tours, guide pilot and more. The only things not included are souvenirs and alcohol (with meals). Cost for this tour is \$10,000.00 USD per person for pilots, \$9,000.00 USD for non pilots.

TERMS: A 10% deposit is required to hold your spot on the tour. All tours are provisional until we have sufficient bookings. The 10% deposit will be refunded if Australian Air Safaris is unable to operate the tour. Once we have sufficient bookings, for the tour to proceed, we will contact all participants and a payment of 25% of the tour cost is required. The balance of the tour is due 60 days prior to tour departure. A cancellation after the tour is confirmed will mean non refund of the deposit and 25% of tour cost (per person).

DISCLAIMER: As this is a flying tour, we are at the mercy of the weather. Therefore, tour cities are subject to change. Current pricing is based on a \$1.85 per litre fuel cost. As this tour is scheduled for 2009, pricing may be affected by rising fuel costs. Australian Air Safaris will only pass on additional costs for avgas if increase is considerable. Notification will be sent to you prior to the 60 day closing period.

Australian Air Safaris would be happy to arrange all of your international airfares as well. These fares will be based upon current airline rates and availability and are additional to the cost of the tour itself.