

# 48

HOURS IN THE

# EDEN VALLEY

**Dave Brookes** spent a decade living in the Barossa, specifically the Eden Valley. Now *Halliday Wine Companion's* official taster for the region, there's no one better to show you around.

IT'S JUST DIFFERENT up there, over the Eastern Range. It's sparser than the valley floor; more spread out and filigreed. You're not bumping into vineyards on every turn. You've got to work harder to unravel its charms. And there are many ... I'm going to presume you may be arriving perhaps late on a Friday afternoon. This is a fine plan.

There are plenty of accommodation options ranging from B&Bs to hotels around Angaston, but there can be no better place to stay than the J.H.A. Stone Cellar on the beautiful Hutton Vale Farm. Your hosts will be the wonderful Angas family, pioneering landholders in the Eden Valley since John Howard Angas established Hutton Vale Farm in 1843.

AS AN INQUISITIVE wine traveller, your immediate hierarchy of needs are context, hydration and sustenance. A visit to the rustic Hutton Vale cellar door will be a swell start. Drink the wines, ask questions of the property's history, its walking trails, the produce; Jan, John and Caitlin are a font of local knowledge. Tonight, we'll head into Angaston and visit the mighty Casa Carboni for dinner. Matteo and Fiona Carboni's enoteca and Italian cooking school is one of the gems of Angaston and a Friday night dinner there is a great way to kick off any visit to the region. You'll be mingling with locals and visitors alike and the delicious food makes the most of the region's best produce. Should a bearded gentleman be waiting on your table and giving you killer wine suggestions, that would be Tom Shobbrook of Shobbrook Wines, one of our country's leading natural winemakers. Have a word in his ear and see if you can organise a visit to his property to try some wines whilst you are here. 🍷



Andy Ellis



Bottom of page (left to right):  
 Matteo and Fiona Carboni at their  
 Angaston enoteca, Casa Carboni;  
 Grant Dickson's wine bar and cellar  
 door, Otherness; Gnadenberg  
 Church. Farm dogs at  
 Hutton Vale Farm.

The cellar door at Flaxman  
 Wines is a top spot for a  
 wine tasting – and maybe a  
 three-course lunch to match.



Sven Kovac





(from top left, clockwise):  
Hill of Grace vineyard at Henschke;  
shopping at the Barossa Farmers  
Market; Yalumba cellar door;  
the cellar door at Poonawatta.



Barossa Farmers Market/Jacob Jennings Photography



## DAY 1

AS THE MORNING of our first full day dawns, a walk on the Hutton Vale property, perhaps to the highest point so we can look down over the Hill of Grace vineyard towards the famous Gnadenberg Church, is a good way to start the day. Breakfast and coffee at the Barossa Farmers Market follows, before we embark on the day's tasting adventures at Yalumba, just on the outskirts of Angaston. Established and family owned since 1849, a visit to the Yalumba tasting room is a must. There are several different tasting experiences on offer, giving you the chance to explore some of the estate's icon wines and, if time permits, go for a wander around the impressive grounds and visit the cooperage to see the barrels being made.

HENSCHKE is our next visit. We peered into the near distance and looked at the Hill of Grace vineyard, planted in 1860, on our morning walk. There are a range of tasting options available at the beautiful Henschke cellar door, from the 'Discovery' experience up to the full-blown 2.4 hour 'Hill of Grace experience' and winery tour. Now's your chance to try Australia's most renowned single-vineyard wine.

We've soaked up a lot of regional history this morning and

tummies are rumbling so we'll drive through Keyneton to Eden Valley township (hydration available in the way of Coopers Green at the Eden Valley Hotel, if required) and take a right to visit Poonawatta Wines.

We'll make the most of this lovely cellar door, trying Poonawatta's excellent range of wines before settling down next to the ancient river gums for a gourmet platter and a glass of their delicious riesling.

BACK IN THE CAR, we'll head up Seven Steps Road, perhaps calling in to taste at Shobbrook Wines if we tee'd up a time with Tom at dinner last night, before heading right into Heggies Range Road, left into Tanunda Creek Road, pulling into the carpark at the Kaiserstuhl Conservation Park for a quick post-lunch walk to spot some kangaroos before heading back to our accommodation to chill in the mid-afternoon.

Post-sundowners, we head into Angaston for dinner at Otherness, Grant Dickson's awesome cellar door, wine bar and bottle shop. Make sure you try Grant's Otherness wines, choose a bottle off the shelf and settle in for the most delicious meal imaginable, perhaps trying some Hutton Vale lamb or that delicious artichoke dish if it appears on the menu.

## DAY 2

WE'LL TAKE breakfast at our accommodation or at Casa Carboni this morning (killer coffee and bombolinis) before our first stop of the day at Thorn Clarke Wines to sample their excellent range and marvel at how Eden Valley riesling is probably the perfect start to any day. We make a mental note of this.

TODAY'S theme is 'choose your own adventure'. We dug deep into the region's history yesterday. Now it's time to look to its future. Being savvy wine travellers, we know we sometimes need to put in the legwork and make some calls/emails prior to our visit to secure some appointment-only tastings. This is where the magic happens; deep conversations about site and aspect, samples drawn from bottle and barrel. It's the real deal. This would be my shortlist:

### **SAMI-ODI WINES**

World-class wines from one of the Barossa's new wave.

### **RUGGABELLUS WINES**

Shimmering, minimal-intervention wines from Abel Gibson.

### **AGRICOLA VINTNERS**

Callum Powell's superb minimal-intervention red wines.

### **HOBBS**

Deep, resonant wines; purely fruited with powerful structures.

### **CHRIS RINGLAND**

Iconic wines from one of the region's cult winemakers.

### **MAX & ME WINES**

Phil and Sarah Lehmann's estate with brilliant wines and olive oil.

Matteo Carboni runs the cooking school at Casa Carboni.



Outdoor dining at Flaxman Wines cellar door.



Andy Ellis

Post-sundowners, head into Angaston for dinner at Otherness.



Andy Ellis



WHILE WE are up in the Flaxman Valley dress circle, we'll swoop into the Flaxman Wines' cellar door to catch up with Fi and Col Sheppard for some of their beautiful wines. Maybe even slide into their three-course lunch and tasting offering to finish off our visit to the Eden Valley in style before sadly saying our farewells to this very special part of South Australia.

I always drive out of the Eden Valley the scenic way: via Springton, Mount Pleasant (great butcher!), Mount Torrens, Oakbank and Stirling (visit Les Deux Coqs for incredible pastries and charcuterie) before swooping down the freeway and skirting Adelaide to the airport.

It seems gentler this way. There's less separation anxiety. You'll understand. ●