

MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

PORONGURUP | FRANKLAND | MOUNT BARKER | GNOWANGERUP | CRANBROOK

A photograph of a woman with a backpack walking away from the camera on a dirt trail through a mountainous landscape. The trail is surrounded by green vegetation and red flowers. In the background, there are several mountain peaks under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

WANDER THE TRAILS

GREAT
SOUTHERN

WA



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PORONGURUP .asn.au

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Mountain Country Tourism, together with the Shires of Plantagenet, Cranbrook and Gnowangerup, acknowledge the traditional custodians and their continuing connection to the land and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Menang, Goreng and Kaneang Noongar communities; their cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging.

© IMAGE BY FRANCES ANDRIJICH

DISCOVER
MOUNTAIN
COUNTRY



SCAN ME

MOUNTAIN COUNTRY VISITOR CENTRE

622/6 Albany Hwy,
Mount Barker, WA, 6324

Open weekdays 9am - 2pm;
weekends 9am - 1pm

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WELCOME TO MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

Breathtaking mountain ranges, scenic walks, nature trails, award-winning wines, spectacular wildflowers and fresh country air. There's all this and more when you visit Mountain Country.

Nestled between the vast Southern Ocean, the rich karri forests of Denmark and Pemberton, and the vibrant golden outback, Mountain Country is one of Western Australia's best kept secrets.

Extending from Gnowangerup in the north, Cranbrook in the west, Porongurup in the east and Mount Barker in the south, Mountain Country spans the Shires of Plantagenet, Gnowangerup and Cranbrook.

A 4-hour drive from Perth, the rugged Stirling Range National Park and the ancient Porongurup Range both loom into view from miles around, luring adventurers seeking heart-pumping hikes and spectacular views.

An internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot, nature enthusiasts will love exploring the parks, ranges and reserves of Mountain Country to discover its ancient karri forests, wildflowers, orchids and abundant bird life. Granite Skywalk is an engineering marvel and its suspended walkway wraps around Castle Rock, with panoramic views over farmland and the Southern Ocean.

The area is also renowned for its vibrant wine scene. Part of the Great Southern

wine region, the family-owned wineries of Mount Barker, Porongurup and Frankland River produce award-winning riesling, shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, pinot noir and chardonnay.

With so much to see and do, you can easily spend several days exploring Mountain Country. There's plenty of places to stay, ranging from B&Bs and rural retreats that overlook picturesque vineyards and paddocks; through to caravan and camping sites where you can take in the night skies surrounded by nature.

Why not check out the events calendar, book in some accommodation and get ready to discover ancient lands and new adventures. Mountain Country is ready to welcome you.

MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

This publication has been produced by Mountain Country Tourism, with support from the Shires of Plantagenet, Gnowangerup and Cranbrook.

*For more information go to
www.mountbarkerwa.com.au*



SCAN ME

EVENTS FOR EVERYONE

There's always something happening in Mountain Country. Check out the calendar below to start planning your next visit.

JANUARY

- Mount Barker Campdrafts.

MARCH

- Cranbrook Show
- Gnowangerup Fly-In & Fair, celebrating the wonder of aviation.

APRIL

- Art in the Porongurup exhibition, featuring established and emerging artists.

MAY

- Taste Great Southern, a popular wine and food festival showcasing local talent, produce and culture.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

- Southern Art and Craft Trail, featuring open studios, exhibitions and workshops
- Bloom Festival, showcasing the region's flora, fauna and cultural heritage
- West Australia Sheep Dog Trials, Kendenup.

OCTOBER

- Wild Gravel, with running, gravel riding, run+ride combo and walking events
- Western Australian Wine Show, the State's premier wine show judging exclusively WA wines.



MOUNTAIN COUNTRY MUSIC MUSTER, MT TRIO

NOVEMBER

- Mount Barker & Districts Agricultural Society Horse Show
- Mountain Country Music Muster, featuring three days of country music at Mt Trio Bush Camp & Caravan Park.

DECEMBER

- New Years Eve Race Day at Mount Barker Turf Club.

WATCH OUT FOR:

- Mount Barker Speedway. Season is October through to May.
- Mount Barker, Porongurup and Kendenup markets.
- Mount Barker Turf Club events, including the Mount Barker Cup and Grapes & Gallops Race Day. Season is January through to April.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND UPDATES ON EVENTS IN MOUNTAIN COUNTRY, VISIT:

- www.plantagenet.wa.gov.au
- www.gnowangerup.wa.gov.au
- www.cranbrook.wa.gov.au

TOP 10

THINGS TO DO IN MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

Nestled in the lower Great Southern, Mountain Country is Western Australia's unique wilderness hotspot. With so much to see and do, here are some local favourites.



1. Hike ancient mountain ranges

Bushwalking and climbing are some of the best ways to experience an area, which is certainly the case with the **Porongurup** and **Stirling Range National Parks**. From leisurely strolls through to challenging climbs, hitting the trails allows you to immerse yourself in the nature and beauty of Mountain Country.

2. Sample some top drops

A must-visit destination for wine lovers, Mount Barker is the heart of this internationally recognised wine area, which is the oldest region outside Perth. Particularly renowned for its riesling and shiraz, it boasts several unique family-owned and operated vineyards and wineries. Check out the Mount Barker, Frankland and Porongurup wine growing regions while you're here.

3. Climb the highest mountain

Rising to 1095m above sea level, **Bluff Knoll** (Bular Mial) is the highest peak in both the Stirling Range and the south-west. With

over 100 thousand visitors each year, it's popular with hikers and explorers. Not for the faint hearted, the return hike takes 3 - 3.5 hours.

4. Walk amongst wildflowers

Twin Creeks Conservation Reserve is home to a treasure trove of plant and animal species. It also has a striking sculpture on display, which is the result of an innovative collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and conservations groups. This privately owned reserve has signposted walk trails, picnic facilities, BBQs and toilets. Note that no pets are allowed.

5. Enjoy a birds-eye view

An engineering marvel, the **Granite Skywalk** is a suspended stainless-steel platform that wraps around the massive 570-metre high Castle Rock. Meander past boulders teetering on weatherworn pedestals before a final short scramble over rocks and a climb up an enclosed ladder brings you to the skywalk, with its spectacular views over farmland through

to the Southern Ocean. This 4.4-kilometre return trail requires both moderate fitness and an adventurous spirit.

6. Drive the Horsepower Highway

This 75-kilometre road trip along the Broomehill-Gnowangerup Road and into the Stirling Range National Park is a delightful journey through the region's history and agricultural heritage, told via the medium of farm machinery. Named the **Horsepower Highway**, this permanent rural art and historical exhibition features vintage tractors donated by farmers.

7. Get oriented

Just a short 5-minute drive from the town of Mount Barker, **Pwakkenbak** (Mount Barker Hill) is the perfect starting point for all Mountain Country adventures. With spectacular daytime views across the Stirling and Porongurup ranges through to Albany, it's also a mecca for star and planet gazing on a clear night.

8. Adventure on two wheels

Pwakkenbak also boasts a state-of-the-art mountain bike trail network. With 4.8-kilometres of single-track cross country and downhill trails, it's extremely popular with the mountain bike community and is sure to get your adrenaline pumping!

9. Discover the art scene

Meander through Mount Barker to discover galleries and murals – some

featuring renowned Australian artists, others showcasing local emerging painters, sculptors and creators. Eleven wall murals are displayed on buildings throughout town, each telling a different story from the past.

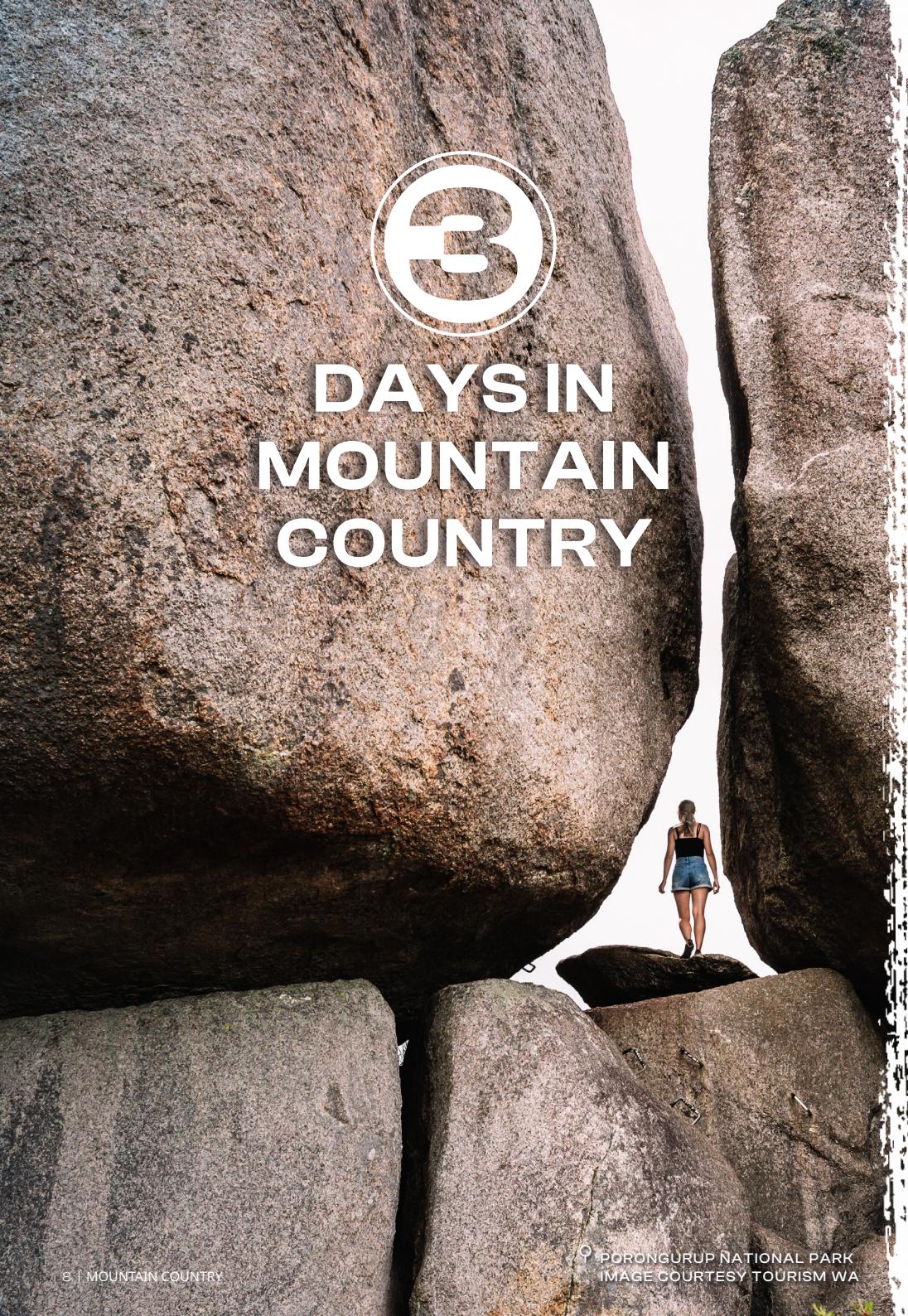
10. Take a step back in time

With its rich agricultural heritage, Mount Barker offers some of WA's most interesting historic attractions, including the Old Police Station headquarters built by convicts in 1868, and the Mount Barker Railway Station Precinct built in 1923. Follow the **Heritage Trail** - a 30km self-drive route – to discover important buildings that form the history of the shire.



© GRANITE SKYWALK TRAIL
IMAGE BY LEX POREBSKI





3 DAYS IN MOUNTAIN COUNTRY



 PORONGURUP NATIONAL PARK
IMAGE COURTESY TOURISM WA

Whether you're interested in wine, walking, wildflowers or simply a getaway to enjoy some fresh country air, Mount Barker is a perfect base. Discover the highlights with this three-day itinerary.

DAY 1 EXPLORE MOUNT BARKER

11.30am: By the time you arrive in town, you may need a pitstop, so head across to the **Mount Barker Country Bakery** for your biggest decision of the day – what to choose from a huge range of traditional bakery favourites. The length of the queue is evidence that people travel from miles around. Be warned, one visit is often not enough!

12.30pm: Next stop is the **Mount Barker Visitor Centre**, located in the historic railway station precinct. The friendly team can answer any questions, give you some local tips and supply maps before you head out on your Mountain Country adventure.

1pm: The **Mount Barker Mural Trail** is a great way to orientate yourself with the

township whilst also taking in historic murals and local galleries. Call in for a coffee at one of the local cafes as you meander around.

2.30pm: It's a short 5-minute drive from town to reach **Pwakkenbak**. This important lookout point offers the best view of the Great Southern region and on a clear day you can see both the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges, as well as farmland and the Southern Ocean. There is also a trail to the boardwalk where you can enjoy views to the coast.

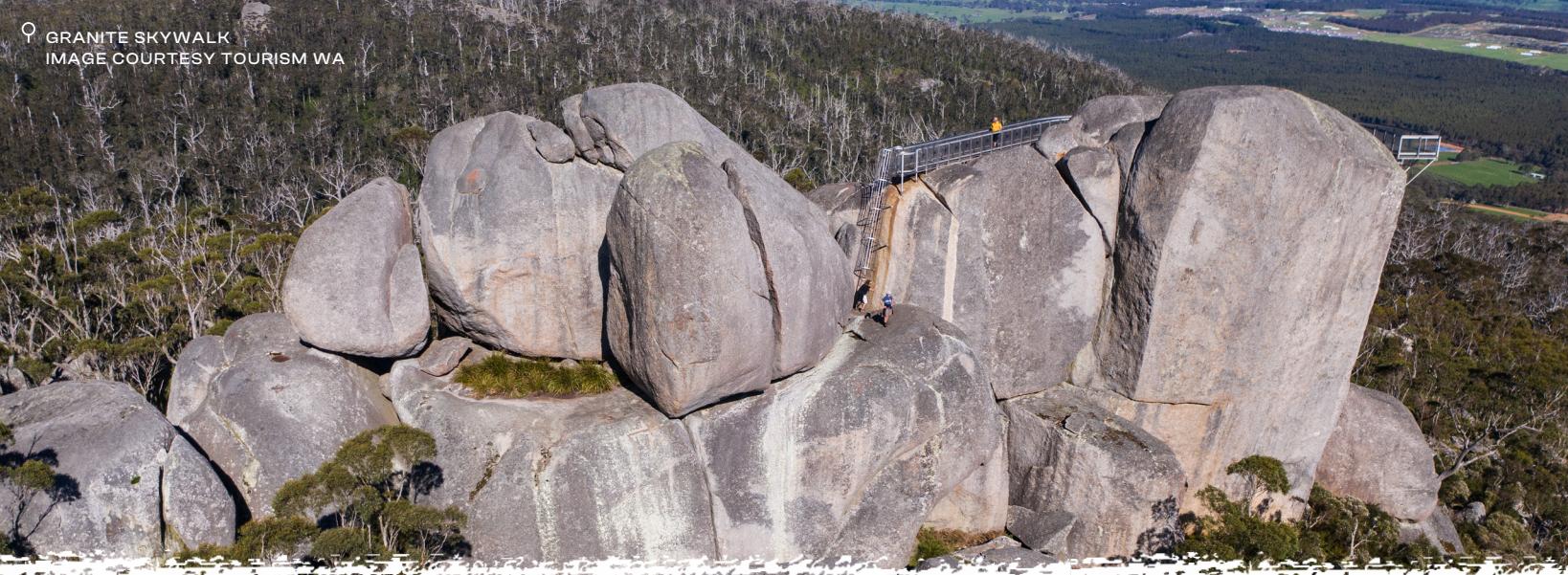
3.30pm: Check into your accommodation. There's a range of options to suit all budgets and tastes, from camping and caravan sites through to self-contained cabins and B&B's.

5pm: With an early start and lots of walking in store for your second day in Mountain Country, an early dinner is the way to go. Head into Mount Barker for a pub meal at either the **Mount Barker Hotel** or **Plantagenet Hotel**. If you'd prefer takeaway, check out the options at **Geordies Fish & Chips** or the local **Wing Hing Chinese**.



 BLUFF KNOB
IMAGE COURTESY TOURISM WA





DAY 2

EXPLORE THE PORONGURUP AND STIRLING RANGES

4am: If climbing to the top of **Bluff Knoll** in time for sunrise is on your bucket list, you'll need to set off very early! It takes around 1.5 hours to reach the top and the morning light is spectacular. Take time to enjoy the view and re-energise with a snack before you start the descent back down this 6-kilometre return trail.

8am: After such an early start, you'll be hungry! From Bluff Knoll, it's a 45-minute drive to **Gnowangerup** where you can recharge at a local café for breakfast and coffee.

9.30am: After breakfast, head to the main street of Gnowangerup and learn about its pioneering history. Here you'll find buildings that date back to the town's settlement in the early 1900's. This includes the office of the **Gnowangerup Star**, which was the town's very own newspaper. Published from 1915 to 2003, it prided itself on 'never publishing gossip and always supporting local business'.



10.30am: Make your way through to **Porongurup** via the Broomehill-Gnowangerup Road to experience the curious **Horsepower Highway**. This one-hour drive takes you past a trail of over 20 vintage and quirky tractors, each with their own personality including *Mad Max*, *Lumpy*, *Diesel* and *Bertha*. Along with rural scenery, there are great photo opportunities.

12.30pm: When you arrive in Porongurup, drop into the quaint **Porongurup Shop and Tearooms** for either lunch or their renowned high tea with scones, jam and cream. Next door is an art gallery which always features local artists.

1.30pm: From the Porongurup Tearooms, it's a quick 5-minute drive across to the Castle Rock carpark, which is the starting point for **Granite Skywalk**. Venture along the **Castle Rock Walk Trail** on a medium grade 2km uphill path, where you will encounter the extraordinary **Balancing Rock**. Scramble over boulders using steel handholds before climbing up a vertical enclosed 6-metre ladder to reach the Granite Skywalk, which wraps around the vertical face of Castle Rock. Stunning views await!

3.30pm: It's been a big day. Relax in your accommodation before dinner.

6pm: Located on a farm in Porongurup is **Maleeya's Thai Café**. With authentic Thai dishes made with Asian herbs taken from their organic vegetable garden, you can either book in for dinner or order from their takeaway menu.

DAY 3

WINE AND WILDFLOWERS

9am: As one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, a visit to **Mountain Country** between August and November will reward you with a spectacular display of orchids

and wildflowers. **Mondurup Reserve** is a haven for birds and wildflowers, as is **Twin Creeks Conservation Reserve**. Nestled between the Stirling and Porongurup ranges, Twin Creeks has an extensive range of trails and you can also see *Genestreams*, a 3.5 metre Indigenous sculpture that highlights the shared ancestry of local species and culture.

10.30am: No trip to Mountain Country is complete without sampling some of its wines. Savour the flavours of the region and take some bottles of your experience away with you on the 27-kilometre drive between prominent Mount Barker wineries including **Plantagenet Wines**, **West Cape Howe** and **Galafrey Wines**. Finish up at **Gilberts Wines** for more wine tasting before a relaxing lunch at their restaurant.

2pm: After exploring Mount Barker's wineries, it's now time to check out what the Porongurup wine region has to offer. It's 14-kilometres between **Ironwood Estate**, **Castle Rock Estate** and **Duke's Vineyard** and here you will experience world-class riesling and pinot noir.

5pm: Following your wine tasting experience, call into **Karribank Tavern** or its onsite **Six Seasons Restaurant** for a meal overlooking beautiful farmland. Established in the early 1900s, Karribank is WA's oldest continuously operated country retreat and offers a bar, restaurant, café, adventure playground and accommodation.

With so much to see and do in Mountain Country, extend this itinerary if you'd like to explore the area at a more leisurely pace.



DISCOVER MOUNT BARKER

As the gateway to the Great Southern, Mount Barker is the perfect place to base yourself for a range of unique experiences.

GET ORIENTED!

The best place to start your adventures in Mountain Country is with a visit to the **Mount Barker Visitor Centre**. Located in a beautifully restored railway building, friendly staff can help advise you on where to go based on your particular interests, as well as provide maps for all the walking, wine and wildflower experiences on offer.

RECHARGE AND EXPLORE

Take a wander through Mount Barker township for local cafes, shops and pubs. Recharge with a coffee or lunch before you take in a collection of 11 wall murals that adorn community buildings. Completed by local and international artists, the murals reflect the history of the town. Local art galleries including **Sobrane**, **Mitchell**

House Arts Centre, **The Cheeky Parrot Gallery** and **Art Chatter** are also well worth a visit and reflect the area's burgeoning art scene.

TAKE IN THE VIEW

A short drive from the town centre is **Pwakkenbak**, one of the most spectacular outlooks in the southwest with views across the **Stirling Range** (Koi Kyeunuruff), **Porongurup** (Borongup) and as far south as **Albany** (Kinjarling).

With a short, accessible nature walk and boardwalk, interpretive signage tells the stories of the region. Pwakkenbak is also home to a state-of-the-art mountain bike trail network.

HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Mount Barker offers some of WA's most interesting heritage attractions. Follow the 30-kilometre self-drive **Plantagenet Heritage Trail** and visit 10 different sites of historical significance.

For example, the **Post and Telegraph Station**, dating back to 1892, was last used as a Post Office in the 1960s. Nearby, the **Old Police Station Museum** was built by convicts in 1867 and has local ironstone blocks cemented with mud, a jarrah shingle roof and a pit sawn timber floor. Now home to the **Mount Barker Police & Folk Museum**, it is a treasure trove of local history.

One of the town's most important heritage buildings is the **Railway Station Precinct**. Dating back to 1923-24, it was considered the most imposing and up-to-date station outside Perth and is now home to the Visitor Centre.

St Werbergh's Chapel was built in 1872 on the private property of George Edward Egerton-Warburton and for many years was the only place of worship in the district. It is one of only a few church buildings in WA that was built by a landowner on his estate.

NATURAL BEAUTY

Located just outside Mount Barker, **Mondurup Reserve** has one of the richest collections of native orchids in the state. Extending over 500 acres, this Class-A reserve is home to 41 native orchid species; 17 mammal species; 10 frog species; 22 reptile species, and 75 bird species. In town, visit **Centenary Park** to enjoy a collection of endemic banksias and follow the historical trail through the park as well historical trail through the park to see the war memorial and picnic rotunda.

The Shire of Plantagenet is located 360 kilometres south of Perth and includes the towns of Mount Barker, Kendenup, Narrikup, Porongurup and Rocky Gully. For more information, go to www.plantagenet.wa.gov.au



Mitchell House Arts Centre



Local exhibitions open Friday, Saturday & Sundays 10.00 - 4.00

Painting Group: Wednesdays 10.00 - 2.00

Potters Group: Tuesday 1.00 - 4.00 Thursday 10.00 - 2.00

42 Albany Hwy, Mt Barker WA Email: mitchellhse21@gmail.com

www.Mitchellhouseartscentre.com.au

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mtbarkerbakery



RELAX, DINE AND UNWIND

IMAGE COURTESY TOURISM WA

Experience the hospitality of Mountain Country, with plenty of places to stay, sip and dine.

ACCOMMODATION

Camping

Travelling in your caravan or campervan? Mount Barker is an RV-friendly town that has both a potable water supply and dump point.

Visit **Mount Barker Caravan Park** for a full range of tent sites, budget rooms and vans through to 4-star self-contained cabins, all located on a 10-acre block that has plenty of natural bushland and is within walking distance to town. If you're bringing your pet, just let the staff know when making your booking.

With beautifully maintained, grassed sites, **Porongurup Range Tourist Park** is renowned for its natural setting. With cabins, powered and unpowered sites, it also has BBQ facilities and a camp kitchen.

No bookings are required at **Kendenup Campground**, located 15 minutes north of Mount Barker. This inexpensive bush camp has powered and non-powered sites for less than \$20 per night.

If it's seclusion you're after, there are several camping spots for both tents and

vehicles, including Hipcamp-registered **Eddie's Beach Farm**, where children and vaccinated pets are welcome.

Stirling Range Retreat is located right next to the national park, with accommodation choices to suit everyone. From rammed earth cabins to powered and unpowered caravan sites, there's also a swimming pool onsite to relax after your hike in the nearby mountains.

For a quiet escape surrounded by bushland and with the mountains right on your doorstep, consider **Mt Trio Bush Camp & Caravan Park**. Located in a peaceful bush enclave on a working farm, there is powered and unpowered sites as well as a camp kitchen, hot showers and flushing toilets.

Airbnbs

If a house or cabin is more your style, Airbnbs abound in Mountain Country.

For example, check out the secluded guest suite at **Mount Barker Paradise**, set on 25 acres with plenty of opportunity for long walks and peaceful evenings outside near the fire pit. Or you might prefer heritage living at Peggy-Anne's 1930s country style cottage, which is a short stroll from shops and cafes and has easy access to hiking trails. For something completely



IMAGE BY MIKE THORN



different, spend a few nights in **Bank-sia Accommodation**. This century-old building was once the bank manager's quarters, and is now adorned with original art by local owner-artist Sobrane.

Chalets and retreats

Just out of Mount Barker is architect-designed **Caber House**, a romantic bed and breakfast that offers beautiful views over the Stirling Range as well as the Mount Barker townsite.

Valley Views Motel (located on the entry to Mount Barker) and **Kendenup Lodge**

(located 20 minutes from Mount Barker) cater to both couples and families with their more traditional motel style accommodation as well as self-contained cottages.

In the Porongurup area, there's plenty of chalet options for your perfect getaway.

The Sleeping Lady Private Retreat is a private, cosy two-bedroom chalet that offers breathtaking views of the vineyard and the Stirling Range. Thoughtfully equipped with everything you need for a comfortable stay, it's the perfect choice for those looking to unwind and take in the serene surroundings.



At **Cloud Nine**, there is a choice of two private chalets set within 100 acres of natural bush that combine privacy with beautiful mountain and bush views from just about every window.

Porongurup Chalets offer Swiss style, A-frame chalets with 2 bedrooms, fully equipped kitchen and amazing bush views. **Porongurup Inn** has both private rooms with shared facilities, as well as two fully contained private cottages, whereas **Manyat Peak** has three different self-contained cottages to choose from.

For an indulgent escape, **Woodlands Retreat** has a two-bedroom timber chalet that invites guests to unwind in the private hot tub and soak in the magnificent views.

If you're seeking more of a farm experience, **Bolganup Homestead** is a fully restored, historic farmhouse that offers three self-contained units as well as a separate cottage, all accommodating 2-6 guests.

Thorns Mountain Retreats offer a choice of three character cottages located in the heart of the Porongurup Range. The picturesque natural setting is close enough to town for convenience, but far enough away to admire clear starry nights surrounded by pristine bushland. From their couples-only *Sunrise Suite*, through to the *Mountain View Cottage* and *Pioneer Cottage* suitable for both couples and families, they have each been set up to ensure you have the most comfortable stay.

For old-fashioned charm and hospitality, you can't go past **Karribank**, the oldest country resort in the state, nestled within Porongurup and which blends modern convenience within historic buildings.

Maleeya's Thai Café offers studio accommodation designed especially for couples. Book in advance to secure one of their secluded self-contained apartments for a perfect weekend away.

There are so many accommodation options to choose from in Mountain Country. Pitch a tent; bring your van; book into a hotel or motel; enjoy some country hospitality at a local B&B, or relax over a glass of wine from the verandah of your own self-contained chalet.



THE SLEEPING LADY
Private Retreat



*Relax, soak up
the magnificent view,
clear your mind*

Secluded and cosy chalet
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& Porongurup Wine Region

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WEST CAPE HOWE WINES

EATING OUT

Once you've booked your accommodation, it's time to map out where to eat. From coffee to pub meals to winery restaurants, there's something for everyone in Mountain Country.

Coffees and quick meals

With a reputation that extends far beyond the shire borders, **Mount Barker Country Bakery** is the perfect place to either start your morning or enjoy a mid-afternoon boost. Here you will find award-winning cakes, pies and pastries, as well as outstanding coffee and lunches.

Not to be outdone, **Nic's Café** offers coffee and lunches, with gluten free options and a cosy atmosphere loved by the locals.

At **Strike Me Pink** nursery, enjoy coffee or a light meal surrounded by greenery. Whilst there check out **Art Chatter Gallery**, located on the premises, which often has an artist-in-residence.

A Little Bit of Barker offers an ambient atmosphere where you can enjoy coffee and cake or a relaxing lunch. Meanwhile, **Geordie's Dessert Café** has sweet treats and lunches, available every day except Tuesday.

Coffees and healthy food with a unique old-world charm can be found at **The Grocery Store Café**. And you can't go past the **Porongurup Shop and Tearooms**, open seven days a week and specialising in delicious high teas.

Leisurely lunches

Whether you're hiking, biking, or hopping between wineries, you'll soon work up an appetite in Mountain Country – so a good lunch is essential! Thankfully, this is where the region shines.

Savour great wine and flavours at award-winning **West Cape Howe** wines. Open 7 days a week, enjoy a wide selection of wines accompanied by pizzas and tasty

cheeseboards. For coffee connoisseurs, their beans are freshly roasted in-house.

Try **Gilbert Wine Café**, open Friday through Monday, where the food is designed to pair perfectly with the wines on offer and includes not-to-be-missed cheese and chocolate flights.

Family-run **Ironwood Estate** opens their café Thursdays through to Sundays and you can enjoy wine and light meals as well as stunning views of the mountains.

Conveniently located in the centre of Mount Barker, **Plantagenet Wines** is open daily for lunch and wine tasting. Their cafe has seasonal specials highlighting the best of their wine and regional food.

For something different, **Woodlands Distillery** offers a range of spirits, including single malt whiskey, vodka, gin, brandy and liqueurs made with their own cereal grains and natural spring water. Enjoy a tasting followed by light lunch.

Pubs, restaurants and evening meals

No country town would be complete without good pub food – and you can look forward to plenty of it in the area, with hearty midday and evening meals at both **Mount Barker Hotel** and **Plantagenet Hotel**.

THE SLEEPING LADY



CASTLE ROCK ESTATE
IMAGE BY FRANCES ANDRIJICH

The **Karribank Tavern and Cocktail Bar** also offers filling pub meals and accompanying cocktails from Thursday to Sunday each week.

For British-style fish and chips (with mushy peas and curry sauce), look no further than **Geordie's Fish and Chips** in Mount Barker. And for a culinary experience, **Maleeya's Thai Café** in Porongurup is an award-winning restaurant, featuring authentic Thai food flavoured with herbs organically grown right on the property.

From coffee to pub meals to winery restaurants, there's something for everyone in Mountain Country.



PORONGURUP NATIONAL PARK

CASTLE ROCK TRAIL

With its tall karri, jarrah and marri forests, dense understory and towering granite peaks, time spent in the lush Porongurup Range is an opportunity to retreat and reconnect with nature.

Spanning 12 kilometres, the **Porongurup National Park** extends over 2,500 hectares. Amongst the oldest mountain ranges in the world, spectacular granite formations formed over 1.2 billion years ago were sculpted by forces of nature. The park's highest peak - **Devil's Slide** - reaches 670m above sea level.

Porongurup originates from the Noongar words Borongur-up, meaning 'place of totem spirits'. Viewed by many as one of the most sacred places in the southwest, it is revered as the spiritual home of Noongar ancestors and represents a connection with nature and country, which is central to their beliefs.

BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT

Forming part of a south-west biodiversity hotspot, Porongurup is one of 24 regions in the world noted for its diversity of flora and fauna, with granite outcrops supporting extensive moss fields, lichen and small flowering plants.

There are a variety of habitats in the range. Over 750 plant species, 71 bird species and 17 reptile species have been recorded. Mammals, many of which are nocturnal, include pygmy possums; honey possums; brushtail possums; kangaroos; mardo (yellow-footed antechinus); mootits (bush rats), and quenda (southern-brown bandicoots).

WANDER THE TRAILS

With its landforms, habitats and scenery, it's not surprising that the Porongurup National Park is popular with locals and tourists.

To appreciate its beauty, set out on one of its walking trails. With six classified trails ranging from short easy loops through to longer more challenging hikes, there is one to suit every ability level and they all offer a combination of open spaces and woodlands. Hikers can enjoy the comforts of peaceful picnic areas, public toilets and shared barbecues at the two main carparks - Castle Rock and Tree in the Rock.

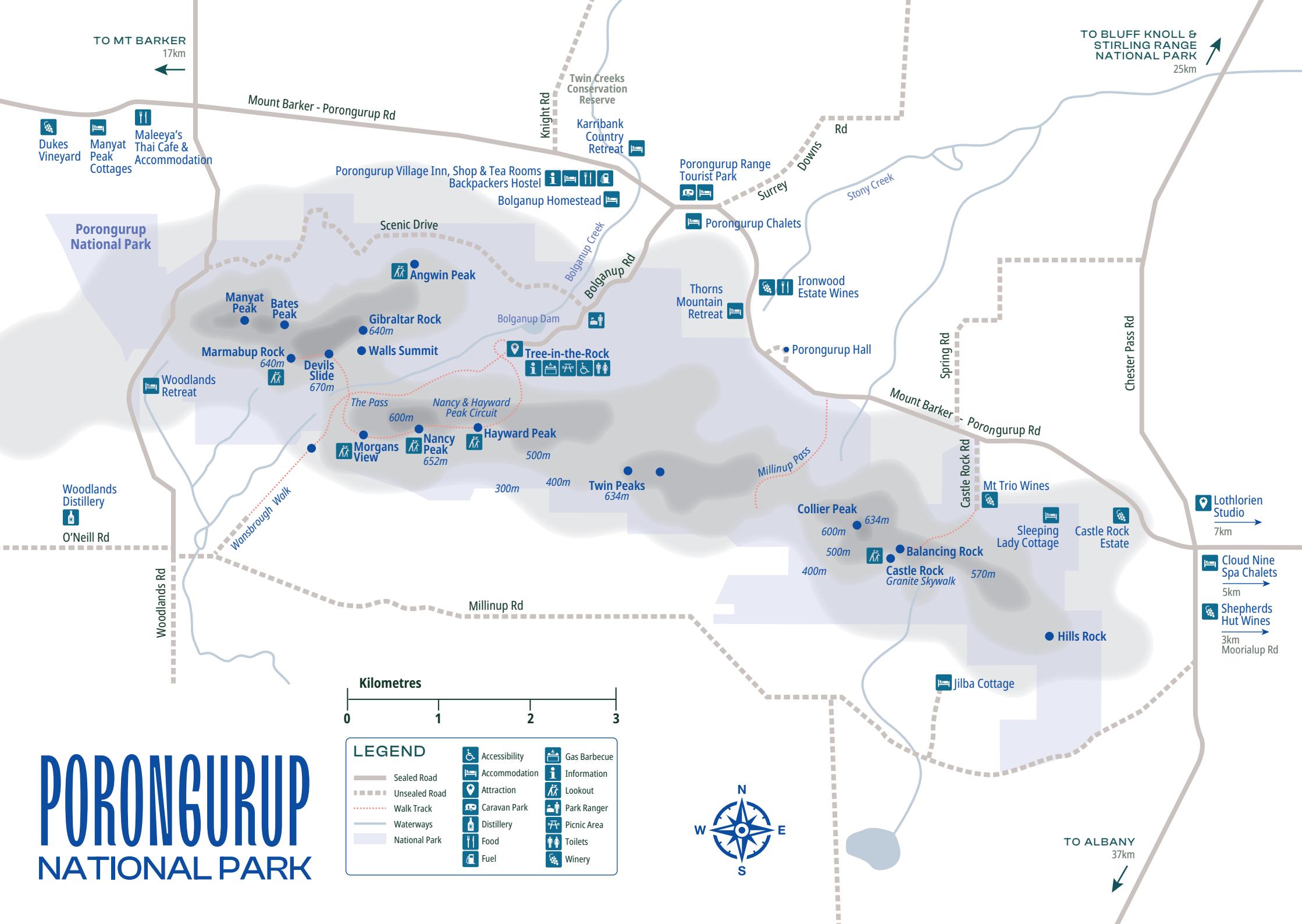
1. Bolganup Trail

(Class 2, 600m loop)

A short, easy loop that takes you from the Tree in the Rock carpark, through karri forest and along a path that crosses a small creek.



PORONGURUP NATIONAL PARK





2. Walitj Meil Walk Trail

(Class 3, 1km return)

This easy-to-moderate loop walk starts from Castle Rock carpark, which has nearby picnic, BBQ and toilet facilities. Follow the trail markers through the karri, marri and yate forest for scenic views across to the Stirling Range National Park.

3. Wansborough Walk

(Class 4, 4km one way)

Walk through karri forest along a gully between Devil's Slide and Nancy Peak before continuing to the park's southern boundary. This walk ends at Tree in the Rock, which is a mature karri tree that extends its roots down through a crevice of a granite boulder.

4. Devil's Slide Trail

(Class 4, 5km return)

Conquer the Porongurup Range's highest peak - Devil's Slide. At 670m, the trail is aptly named with a steep ascent that follows the course of a small stream. In spring, spot the wildflowers that burst into abundance.

5. Nancy Peak Walk

(Class 4, 6.7km loop)

Meander through lush karri forest and take in the sights along the earthy trail that is Nancy Peak. This circuit trail is verdant with moss covered granite rocks and dense trees. Move through a dreamy nature wonderland as you pass Hayward Peak, before reaching the crest of the range at the Nancy Peak lookout with its magnificent views across to the Stirling Range and Southern Ocean.

6. Castle Rock, Balancing Rock and Granite Skywalk

(Class 5, 4.4km return)

Follow the Castle Rock Trail, winding your way through jarrah, marri and karri forest on your way through to the Granite Skywalk. Pass by the Balancing Rock - an impressive granite boulder balanced precariously upright.



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Beautiful Tearooms and Gallery nestled in the centre of the Porongurup wine and mountain region. The shop provides a range of food, affordable accommodation and a scenic garden for kids and pets.



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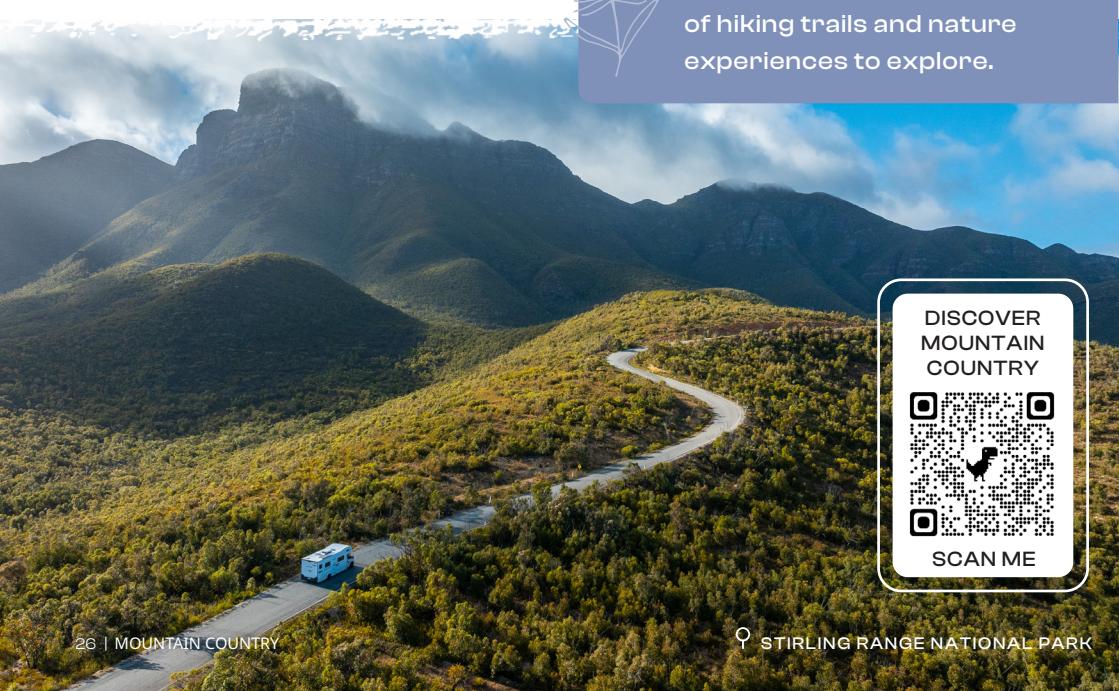




Further along, scramble between large rocks using steel footholds, before ascending a 6-metre enclosed circular ladder that takes you up to a suspended steel walkway that wraps around Castle Rock and offers exhilarating views over the Stirling Range.

SCENIC DRIVES

If you'd prefer to experience the Porongurup Range by car, there are impressive views in store. It is 23-kilometres to drive around the entire range, which is a mix of sealed and unsealed roads with some steep sections. Alternatively a shorter 5-kilometre drive along Angwin Peak Road, which is unsealed, offers outstanding views of granite outcrops and the Stirling Range.



WINE, FOOD, ART AND ACCOMMODATION

Time spent in this heritage-listed national park also allows you to explore a collection of unique tourism businesses including award-winning wineries, restaurants, a distillery, accommodation, tearoom and galleries.

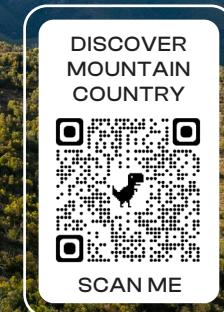
Porongurup village itself is an eclectic hamlet with fuel, refreshments, groceries, local crafts plus accommodation ranging from a backpackers lodge to guest houses and chalets.

Also an emerging wine district, there are several wineries in the area which offer tastings and cellar door sales.

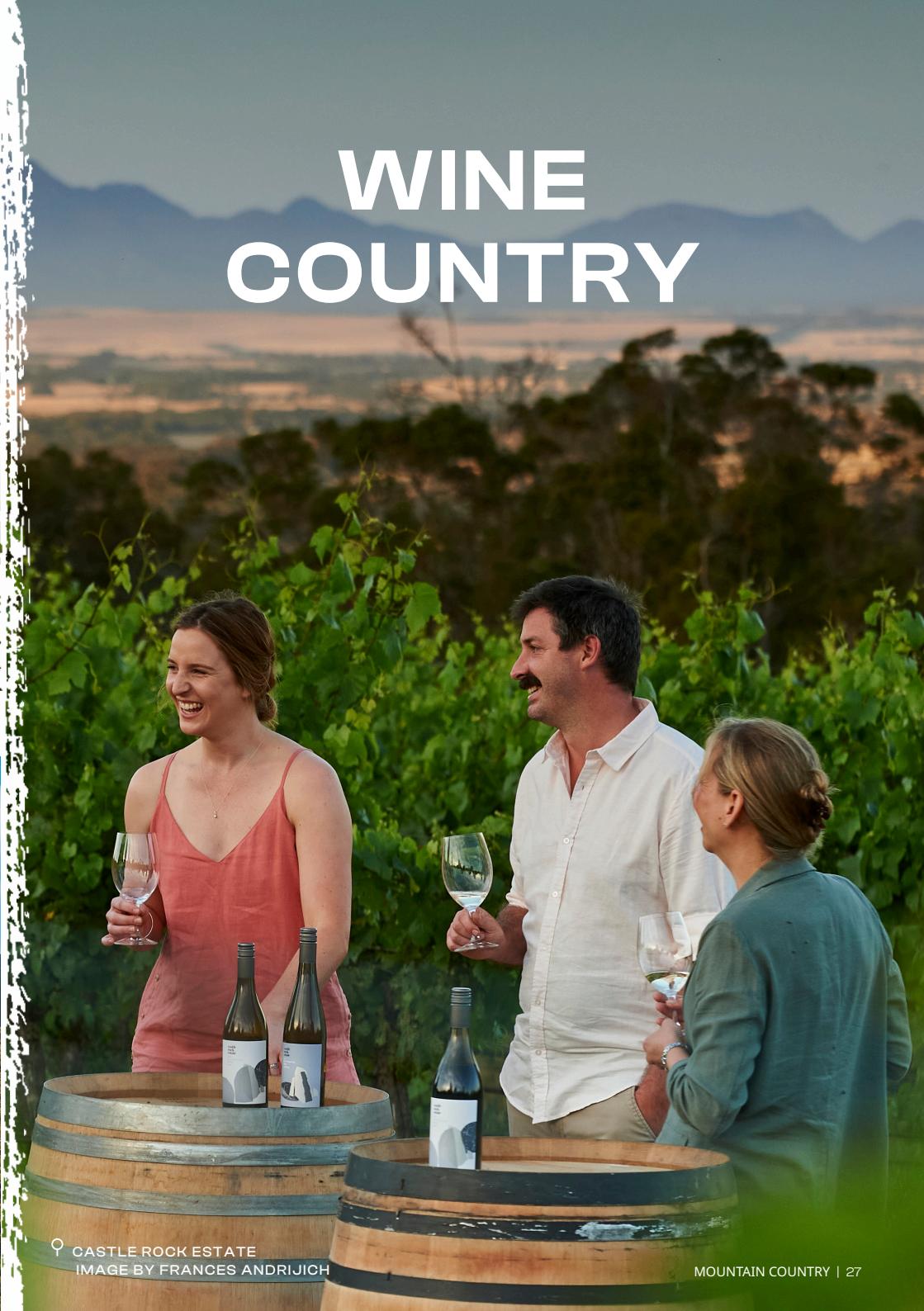
Regardless of whether you're looking for adventure, good food and wine, a romantic weekend away or a family escape, the Porongurup's have plenty to offer.



An ancient mountain range, the Porongurup National Park has a wonderful array of hiking trails and nature experiences to explore.



WINE COUNTRY





Part of the Great Southern wine region, Mountain Country boasts a well-established wine scene which is particularly renowned for its excellent riesling, shiraz and pinot noir.

The three distinct sub-regions of Mount Barker, Porongurup and Frankland River have been producing award-winning wines since the 1970's. Although predominantly Mediterranean in climate, each sub-region is unique and produces its own nuanced flavour profiles.

When visiting Mountain Country, take time to experience some of the country's most distinctive and elegant cool climate wines set against the picturesque backdrop of spectacular mountain ranges and verdant farmland.

MOUNT BARKER

Located just 50 kilometres from the Southern Ocean, the wineries of Mount Barker are strongly influenced by their coastal proximity. With some of the oldest

vines in the Great Southern, the area is considered ideal for viticulture with warm days and cooler nights creating an ideal micro-climate for growing wine grapes.

Based in the centre of town, **Plantagenet Wines** is one of the oldest wineries in the region dating back to 1969. With its several estate vineyards, they produce an extensive range of wines which are available for tasting from their conveniently located cellar door. Enjoy wine tasting followed by a casual lunch at their adjoining café, which features local produce.

The passionate and innovative winemakers at **West Cape Howe Wines** showcase the huge diversity of Mount Barker wine styles through their riesling, sauvignon blanc, pinot grigio, chardonnay, pinot noir, grenache, tempranillo, malbec, merlot, nebbiolo, shiraz and cabernet sauvignon. Located on the picturesque 'Langton' property, the cellar door is just 10 minutes from Mount Barker and you can sample their wines and also enjoy pizzas, platters and freshly roasted coffee.

Family owned and operated **Gilbert Wines** produce premium wines using estate grown fruit that reflect the strengths of the region, including riesling, shiraz, cabernet and chardonnay. They have a cellar door and wine café, with a menu that is designed to complement their wines.

Galafrey Wines produce chardonnay, riesling, cabernet sauvignon, shiraz, cabernet franc, pinot noir and merlot from fruit that is grown, nurtured and bottled on their estate. Sample wines from their cellar door whilst taking in views over the vines and surrounding bushland.

Award-winning Mount Barker winery **3drops** received a 5-star rating in the



With many wineries in Mountain Country being family owned and operated, it's recommended to ring ahead to check opening times or make a booking for cellar door tastings.

2025 Australian Wine Companion and was also acknowledged as Ray Jordan's 'Small Producer of the Year' in his 2025 Wine Review. Their premium wines are available online or in selected bottle shops.

Poachers Ridge is the smallest single estate vineyard in the area and they hand tend their vines to produce cool-climate, medium bodied varietals that are available for tasting from their rustic cellar door.

FRANKLAND RIVER

A little further inland you will discover **Frankland River**, which has over 1500 hectares under vine. Cool nights, warm days and undulating rolling hills characterise the area and here you can experience James Halliday 5-star rated wineries set amongst traditional farmland.

One of the founding wineries of the region is **Alkoomi**. From its traditional farming heritage, Alkoomi diversified into grapes back in 1971 and now has over 150 hectares under vine. Well known for its riesling and shiraz, other varieties include sauvignon blanc, chardonnay, gewürztraminer, cabernet sauvignon, merlot, petit verdot and malbec. Enjoy a memorable tasting experience from its

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picturesque cellar door that sits within heritage buildings and gardens that have been meticulously restored.

With its cellar door conveniently located in the township of Frankland River, **Lange Estate** produces premium cool climate wines from farmland which has been cultivated by five generations of the Lange family. Proud members of *Sustainable Winegrowing Australia*, organic growing practices are used to craft elegant wines across their *Fifth Generation, Providence Road* and *TSR ranges*.

Second generation winery **Frankland Estate** produces organically grown wines that reflect their ethos of faithfully capturing variety, site and vintage. They offer traditional as well as less common varieties including mourvédre, gruner veltliner and touriga nacional.

Ferngrove has been a James Halliday 5-star rating recipient for several years in a row and their award-winning wines can be



♀ IMAGE BY TOURISM WA

sampled from their cellar door overlooking the surrounding vineyards.

PORONGURUP

The Porongurup Range creates a special micro-climate for grape growing, with its boutique wineries creating complex and delicate wines.

Located at the foot of the Porongurup range, **Duke's Vineyard** uses premium fruit and minimal intervention techniques to produce a range of superb wines. Its *2017 Magpie Hill Reserve Riesling* was named *Australian Wine of the Year* by James Halliday in 2019, helping to cement not only the winery, but the reputation of the Great



♀ CASTLE ROCK ESTATE
IMAGE BY LEE GRIFFITH



♀ WEST CAPE HOWE WINES

Southern as one of Australia's top regions for riesling.

Renowned Porongurup winemaker Rob Dilletti has been producing medal winning wines from his **Castle Rock Estate** for many years. Established in 1983, the vineyard was one of the earliest planted in the Porongurup region and its elevated aspect ensures a long moderated growing season that is ideal for varieties like riesling, pinot noir, chardonnay, cabernet, sauvignon blanc and gruner veltliner. A visit to the intimate cellar door won't disappoint.

Our small intimate cellar door, located in the Porongurup region of the Great Southern, has spectacular views of our vineyards and Stirling Ranges. The family will host you with a personalised and friendly tasting, guiding you through our range of cool climate, Porongurup wines.

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MOUNTAIN COUNTRY | 31

STIRLING RANGE NATIONAL PARK



BLUFF KNOll
IMAGE BY LEX POREBSKI

A mecca for hikers, rock climbers and adventurers, Stirling Range (Koi Kyeunu-ruff) emerges from surrounding farmland and lures thousands of visitors each year.

With its highest peak, Bluff Knoll (Bular Mial), rising to 1095m above sea level, this is a popular playground for people seeking the coveted prize of a 'selfie' atop the mountain at sunrise'.

BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT

Spanning 65 kilometres from east to west, the Stirling Range is a significant flora and fauna habitat.

One of the world's top 35 hotspots for biodiversity, it is also on the *Australian National Heritage List*. Its peaks, sheltered valleys, moist gullies and protected crevices provide a huge variation in altitude, soil, rainfall, sunlight and exposure enabling many species of plants and animals to thrive.

Rich in banksias, eucalypts, orchids and verticordia (feather flowers), the Stirling Range boasts 1500 different flowering species, of which 87 grow nowhere else in the world. Spring delivers over 120 species of orchids and a beautiful display of wildflowers.

Discover these pocket-sized treasures for yourself or book a guided tour with one of the Stirling Range's local tourism businesses.



STIRLING RANGE
IMAGE BY LEX POREBSKI

WILD GRAVEL

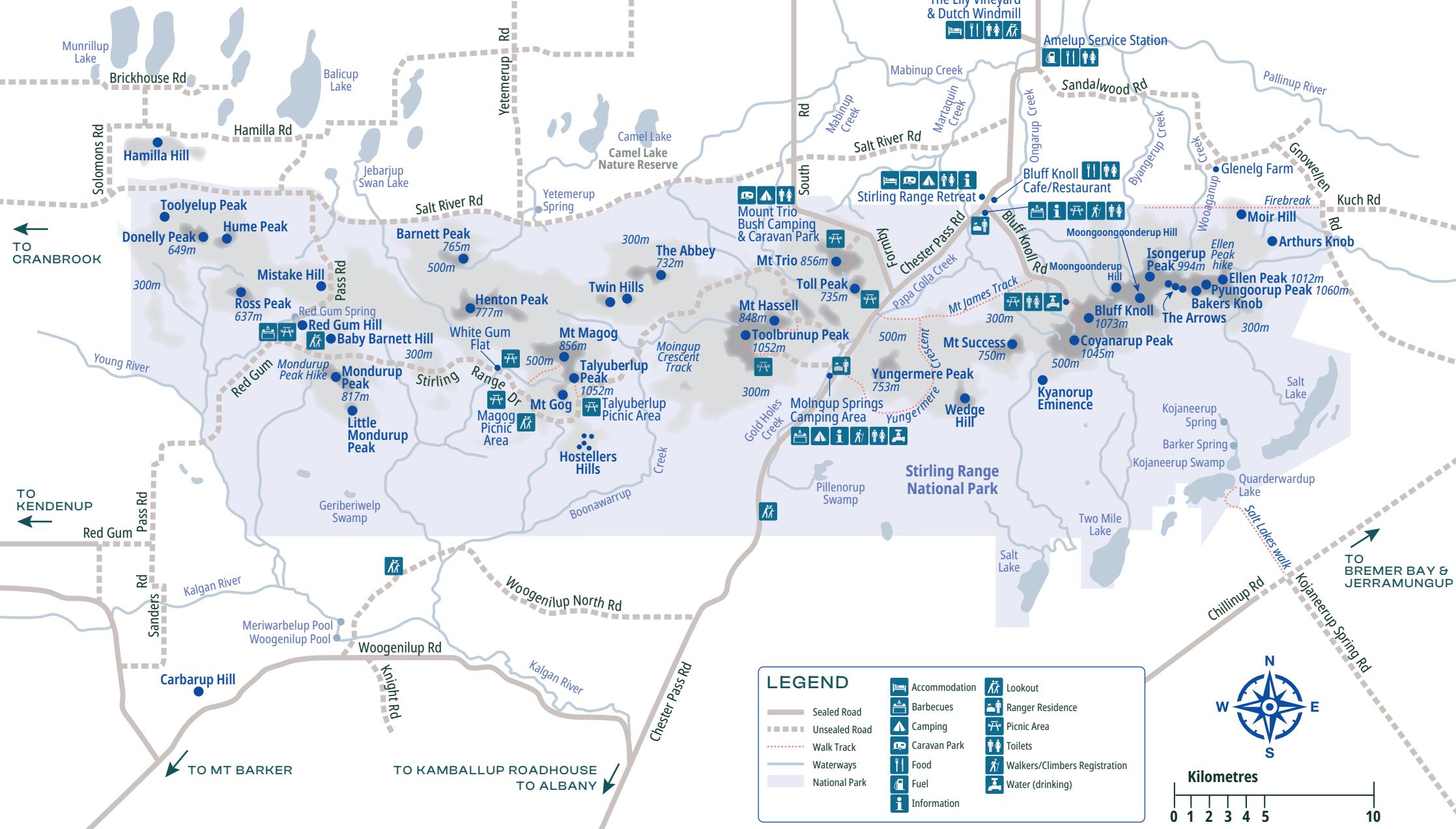
The Wild Gravel Trail is a picturesque self-guided gravel cycling loop that starts in Gnowangerup and extends 440km, allowing you to explore the Stirling Range region on two wheels. In October each year, there is also a weekend-long Wild Gravel cycling and running event which attracts walkers, runners and cyclists of all ages and fitness levels. With walks, runs, rides and combined run+ride options on gravel trails, competitors can select an event to suit them with distances ranging from 5km to 150km.

See www.wildgravel.com.au



WILD GRAVEL

STIRLING RANGE NATIONAL PARK





A BUSHWALKER'S PARADISE

With some of the best hiking in WA, the chain of mountains within the **Stirling Range National Park** offers an array of walks, from easy strolls through to harder climbs. Hikers will discover towering peaks separated by broad valleys, excellent views, as well as a huge diversity in vegetation.

There are six classified trails in the National Park, ranging from class 4 trails at **Bluff Knoll**, **Mount Trio**, **Talyuberlup** and **Mount Hassell**, through to class 5 trails at **Toolbrunup** and **Mount Magog**. Hikers are recommended to carefully prepare as all walks are steep, have uneven surfaces and the weather can change quickly.

1. Bluff Knoll

(Class 4, 6km return)

Listed as one of Australia's 25 best hikes, **Bluff Knoll** is the most popular trail in the Stirling Range. As the highest peak in the south-west of WA, the return hike takes 3-4 hours return and there are outstanding 360 degrees views from the summit, with views across to the ocean on a clear day. The most popular time to visit is late spring through to early summer when wildflowers are at their peak and a clear view from the summit is more likely.

2. Mount Trio

(Class 4, 3.5km return)

This walk has three peaks linked by a plateau and offers sweeping views over Toolbrunup Peak. The first third of the trail is steep, before levelling out. Allow 2-2.5 hours return and enjoy a great wildflower display on your way to the summit if visiting between mid-August and October.

3. Mount Hassell

(Class 4, 3km return)

Also with excellent views of Toolbrunup Peak, this popular walk is a reasonably easy climb. A short steep scramble at the end leads you to beautiful views from the summit. Allow 2-3 hours return.

4. Talyuberlup

(Class 4, 2.6km return)

Chasms, rock ledges, pinnacles, caves and gullies make **Talyuberlup** a really interesting climb. Steep terrain takes you through varied vegetation, with sweeping views over the Stirling and Porongurup ranges from the summit. Allow 2-3 hours return.

5. Toolbrunup Peak

(Class 5, 4km return)

Considered one of the most appealing climbs in the Stirling Range, **Toolbrunup** is its second highest peak. With magnificent views from the top, this 3-4 hour walk is more challenging and requires a good level of fitness. Steep rocky sections and rock scrambling are required near the top, where you'll pass underneath a huge balancing stone before reaching the summit and its spectacular views.

6. Mount Magog

(Class 5, 7km return)

Starting out in tall wandoo woodland, the **Mount Magog** trail offers a wilderness type experience as you move through a beautiful valley before heading up a steep trail. Some rock scrambling is required to

reach the summit, with panoramic views in all directions. Allow 5-6 hours return.

7. Stirling Range Ridge Walk

(Extreme, 28km return)

This challenging hike is completed over several days and takes in three, 1000 metre peaks as well as rugged summits. With unmarked trails, navigation is a major challenge and there are also narrow ledges, very steep ascents and descents, jagged rocks and thick bush. Preparation is key.

EXPLORING BY CAR

If you prefer exploring from the comfort of your own vehicle, the **Stirling Range Drive** provides an excellent introduction to the region as it meanders through the heart of the national park.

This scenic 42-kilometre unsealed route offers beautiful vistas, hidden picnic areas and picturesque views of the mountain peaks. There are three lookout points along the route and the halfway point is Central Lookout, where a 30-minute return walk offers impressive views over the surrounding peaks and Porongurup Range.

The Noongar name for the Stirling Range - Koi Kyeunu-ruff - means 'a place of ever moving mist'. Steeped in significance to the Noongar people, it is considered a place of powerful natural forces and is respected to the present day.

More than a billion years ago, the area was covered by a shallow sea, with minerals, dead plants and sea animals forming a layer of sediment. As the Australian continent grinded and shifted against the Antarctic continent, the tectonic plate shifted to form the Stirling Range we see today.



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GNOWANGERUP AND THE HORSEPOWER HIGHWAY



As the eastern-most shire in Mountain Country, Gnowangerup blends outback beauty and country hospitality against the backdrop of the Stirling Range.

Incorporating the towns of **Gnowangerup**, **Ongerup** and **Borden**, the Shire covers an area of 5,000 square kilometres. Its townships were established in the early 1900s and thriving communities are based around the main industries of grain and sheep farming.

Tourism also plays an important role in the local economy, with a range of activities and attractions on offer to make your trip a memorable one.

WHERE TO STAY

The Lily, near Borden, features one of the largest traditional working windmills in Australia as well as sixteenth century replica Dutch cottages. A private air strip makes it a perfect choice for those flying in on their own small aircraft.

For a taste of farm life, **Yardup** offers both a heritage cottage and authentic shearers' quarters with beautiful views over the

farmland and Stirling Range. If you'd prefer a bed and breakfast experience, there's **Murray's Bed and Breakfast** and **Amy's BnB**. Another option is **Butterfly Cottage**, which is a fully furnished quaint Airbnb located in the heart of Gnowangerup.

The **Gnowangerup Caravan Park** has powered and unpowered sites, as well as self-contained chalets ideal for families and small groups. Conveniently located near the national park, **Stirling Range Retreat** has onsite vans, cabins, motel style rooms, chalets as well as caravan and camp sites.

In Ongerup, the **Ongerup Caravan Park** is pet friendly and has onsite accommodation as well as caravan and camping sites and the **Ongerup Hotel** has family rooms with private bathrooms.

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Hotels are the hub of each community and pub meals are perfect for recharging your batteries. Sit and enjoy a drink or meal at either the **The Pub Borden** or **Ongerup Hotel**.

In Gnowangerup, there is great coffee and cake at **The Rustic Chicken** or the **Roast and Brew Café** (which also offers light

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lunch). The **Gnowangerup Roadhouse** has takeaway coffee, freshly made food and a dine in restaurant. Alternatively, **Fowl Play Café** and **Ongerup Lunch Bar**, both located in nearby Ongerup, offer lunch and coffee.

WHAT TO SEE AND DO

Naturally the Stirling Range, which looms in the distance, is a key highlight of any visit to the Gnowangerup Shire.

Get active

Hiking and walking tours are available in springtime, but if you prefer to hike alone, rest assured that the trails are well marked and maintained. There's a range of different hikes for various abilities, and breathtaking views of the surrounding peaks and farmlands always make it worthwhile.

If you're a cyclist, you can challenge yourself on the **Wild Gravel Trail**, a 440-kilometre circuit route that not only runs through the Stirling Range National Park, but also eight towns within Mountain Country. Take your time cycling along the trail and enjoy each town's hospitality along the way.

For nature lovers

Enjoy a conservation success story at the **Yongergnow Malleefowl Centre**, located a 35-minute drive away in nearby Ongerup.

Meander along walk trails and explore natural bushland and wildflowers whilst learning about the endangered malleefowl, a small ground-dwelling bird native to the area. Stop and enjoy a coffee and snack at the **Fowl Play Café** and wander through the art gallery while you're there.

Only a few minutes out of Gnowangerup is **Aylmore Mineral Springs**. Once the site of the town's first swimming pool, this is now a pleasant picnic and BBQ area. The natural spring flows at over two litres per second and its high iron content accounts for the unusual water colour.

History buffs unite

For a stroll through the region's pioneering history, head to the main street of Gnowangerup where you'll find buildings dating back to the town's early settlement.

The **Gnowangerup Heritage Trail** is a two-kilometre walk that bypasses buildings like the railway station and post office, which are now over 100 years old. Storyboard signs along the trail explain their significance.

Whilst in town, also visit the **Gnowangerup Noongar Heritage Museum** which highlights the importance of the Noongar people's history and connection to the region.

THE HORSEPOWER HIGHWAY

Gnowangerup is part of the **Horsepower Highway**, a trail of vintage and quirky tractors that lead through to the Stirling Range National Park. Along this 75km drive, enjoy rural scenery and some great photo opportunities as you come across tractors parked on the side of the road, each with a name and story about its past.

Described as a permanent art fixture, it is constantly changing as new tractors are added – many donated by local farmers – and colourful murals feature along the trail. Highlights include blue-and-red Hanna, a restored JI Case tractor which is almost 100 years old; and Hero, which is painted in orange and blue to honour the Gnowangerup community's tireless SES volunteers.

The winner of multiple art awards, the installation runs along the Broomehill-Gnowangerup Road and is a joint collaboration between community group GNP 360, the Gnowangerup Shire and local artists. A map is available from the **Mount Barker Visitor Centre** with information on each of the tractors.



© HORSEPOWER HIGHWAY

Shire of
GNOWANGERUP
BORDEN • GNOWANGERUP • ONGERUP
Heart of the Stirlings



SCAN ME

The Shire of Gnowangerup is home to the Stirling Ranges, and the towns of Gnowangerup, Borden and Ongerup.

For more information, go to www.gnowangerup.wa.gov.au

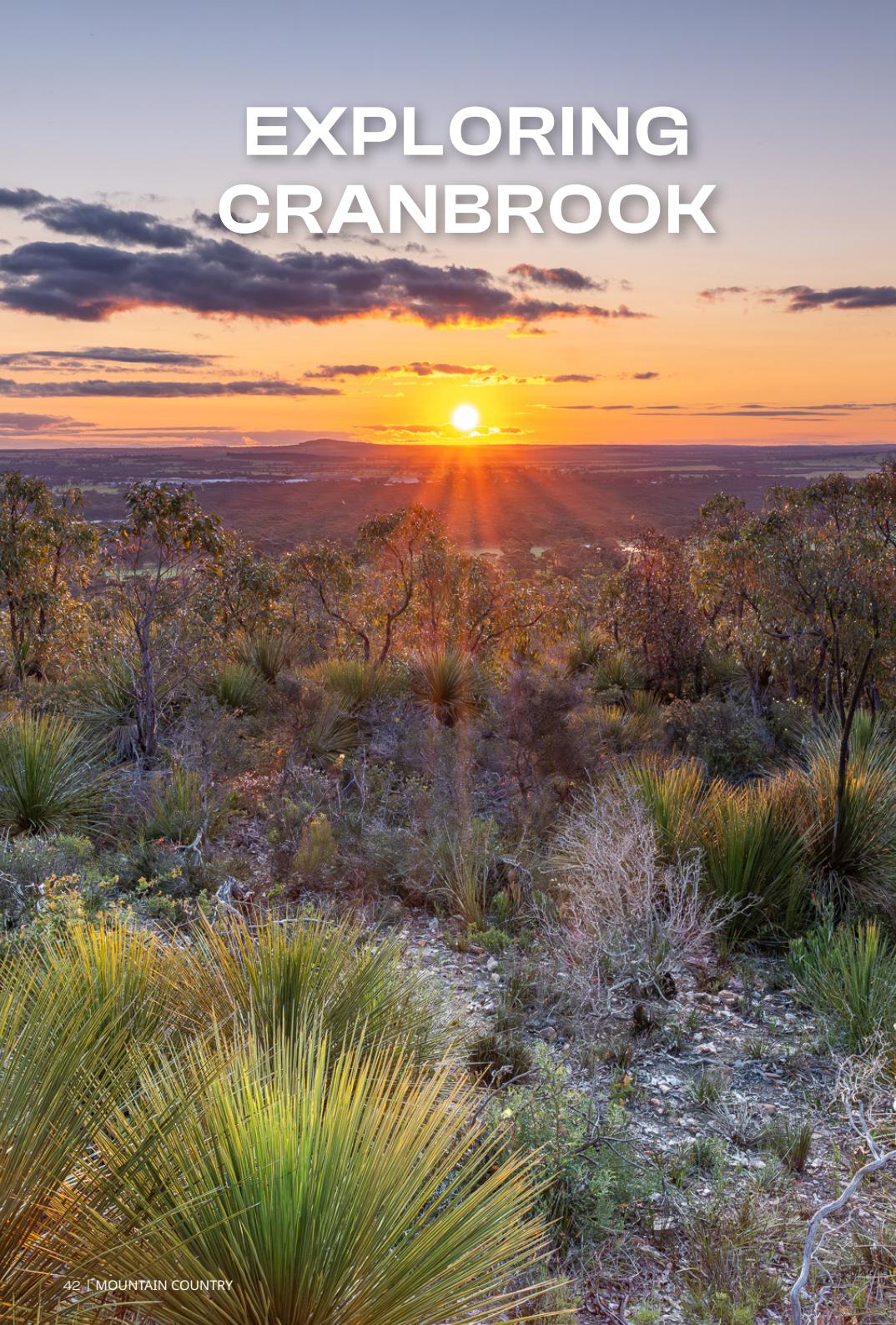
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EXPLORING CRANBROOK



In the heart of the Great Southern, the Shire of Cranbrook is a delight waiting to be discovered.

Made up of three townships - Cranbrook, Tenterden and Frankland River - these quiet but welcoming communities offer much to see and do. The area is known for its farmland and wineries, as well as its proximity to the wonders of the Stirling Range.

WHERE TO STAY

There's plenty of accommodation options in Cranbrook and surrounds, from tent or caravan sites through to hotel rooms and self-contained cabins.

Both **Frankland River** and **Cranbrook Caravan Parks** have powered and unpowered sites as well as cabins and park homes, and both have well maintained BBQ, laundry and bathroom facilities. **Cranbrook Hotel**, conveniently located in town, also has rooms available.

Lakeside camping is a well-kept secret of the region and is available at **Lake Nunijup** and **Lake Poorrarecup**. These lakes are

ideal for swimming, and in the summer months, water skiing is also popular on Lake Poorrarecup. The area is a hotspot for birds and other wildlife, and at night, the dark skies allow for breathtaking stargazing. (Note that there is no potable water at either lake.)

Quirky charm awaits you at **Cranbrook Railway Carriages**, which are renovated and self-contained for up to five guests. In Frankland River, cabins are available at the secluded and beautiful **Frankland River Retreat**, or visit **Ferngrove** to stay in chalets surrounded by tall, majestic gum trees. **Alkoomi Wines** also have chalets where guests can experience quiet, natural surroundings before enjoying some wine tasting at their cellar door.

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

The region boasts numerous wineries where you can sample award-winning wines while soaking up breathtaking scenery. Take a day trip to visit **Alkoomi Wines**, **Frankland Estate**, **Ferngrove** and **Lange Estate** for tastings and the opportunity to take home your favourites.



LAKE POORRARECUP



The Shire of Cranbrook, nestled in the heart of WA's Great Southern, is a gateway to the stunning Stirling Range. Renowned for its farmland, premium Frankland River wines and wildflowers, you'll be welcomed with warm country hospitality.

To balance out the wines, there's hearty fare available seven days a week at Kaffe 107 Cranbrook, Cranbrook General Store, Frankland River General Store and Frankland Farmhouse Diner. Or drop into the Frankland District Country Club, Cranbrook Sporting Club or Cranbrook Hotel to enjoy a country pub meal.

WILDLIFE WONDERS

For bird-watchers and nature-lovers, the Shire of Cranbrook is a haven. No trip is complete without a hike through the mountain range so you can hopefully spot some of the flora that is unique to the region.

Wildflowers are on show during spring (late August through to early October). The annual **Bloom Festival**, held in September/

October each year, celebrates all things floral with guided wildflower walks.

Also check out **Pink Lake**, which is part of a salt-lake system that follows an ancient waterway. Located next to the Great Southern Highway, this gorgeous lake gets its bright pigment from a combination of algae and bacteria that thrive in the very salty water.



For more information, go to www.cranbrook.wa.gov.au



BEYOND MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

After exploring the mountains, wineries and wildflowers of Mountain Country, consider a change of pace with a side-trip to nearby Albany.

From Mount Barker, it's another 50 kilometres down the Albany Highway to reach this popular tourist town that is filled with history and local attractions.

Walk up the gangplank and step aboard the *Brig Amity* - a convict ship from 1826; visit the Convict Gaol built in 1852; or learn about the whaling industry with a tour of the *Albany Historic Whaling Station*.

The *National ANZAC Centre* offers an immersive experience that follows the personal stories of people who actively served in WW1.

There's plenty of natural beauty to discover too. *The Gap* and *Natural Bridge* are two

lookouts with breathtaking views over the southern coastline, and the *Blowholes* are a natural phenomenon that are active when the ocean swell is high.

Voted the best beach in Australia, *Misery Beach* is located 20 minutes out of Albany. Other popular spots include *Waterfall Beach*, *Middleton Beach*, *Frenchman Bay* as well as *Little Beach*, regularly ranked as one of WA's best beaches.

After all the sightseeing, sample some locally produced beer, gin or wine and relax over a meal at one of Albany's many cafes or restaurants.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE AREA, VISIT:

www.albany.wa.gov.au

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