

Adelaide & Around



Sophisticated, cultured, neat-casual – this is the self-image Adelaide projects, a nod to the days of free colonisation without the ‘penal colony’ taint. Adelaidians may remind you of their convict-free status, but the city’s stuffy, affluent origins did more to inhibit development than promote it. Boggled in the old-school doldrums and painfully short on charisma, this was a pious, introspective place. As Paul Kelly sang in ‘Adelaide’: ‘Find me a bar or a girl or guitar where do you go on a Saturday night?/...And the streets are so wide everybody’s inside/Sitting in the same chairs they were sitting in last year’.

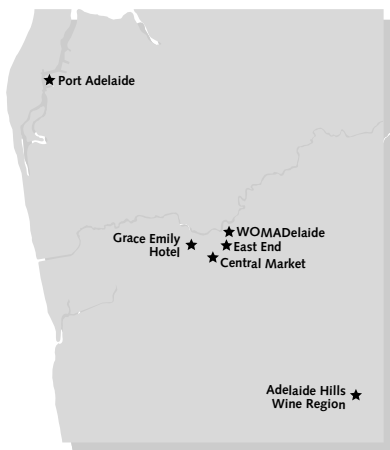
But these days – thanks in part to progressive premier Don Dunstan, who started to shake things up in the ‘70s – things are much improved. Multicultural flavours infuse Adelaide’s restaurants, there are pumping pub, arts and live-music scenes, and the city’s festival calendar has vanquished dull Saturday nights. And, of course, there’s the local wine. Residents flush at the prospect of a punchy McLaren Vale Shiraz or summer-scented Clare Riesling.

That said, a subtle conservatism remains. ‘What school did you go to?’ is a common salvo from those unsure of your place in the social hierarchy, while countercultural urges bubble up through Adelaide’s countless sex shops, kung-fu dojos and canyon-sized bottle shops.

Just down the tram tracks is beachy Glenelg – Adelaide with its guard down and boardshorts up – and Port Adelaide, a historic enclave fast becoming South Australia’s version of Fremantle. Inland, Adelaide’s plains rise to the Adelaide Hills, just minutes up the freeway. The Hills’ gorgeous valley folds, old-fangled towns and cool-climate vineyards are all close at hand.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sniffing out the ripest cheese, fullest fruit and strongest coffee at Adelaide’s world-class **Central Market** (p51)
- Dining out – feasting or snacking – on Rundle St in Adelaide’s **East End** (p58)
- Exploring the historic streets and museums in **Port Adelaide** (p65)
- Diving headlong into musical frenzy at **WOMADelaide** (p54)
- Wobbling between cool-climate vineyards in the **Adelaide Hills Wine Region** (p69)
- Catching a gig at the **Grace Emily** (p59), the rockin’ heart of Adelaide’s ubercool West End



ADELAIDE

pop 1,158,300

HISTORY

There have been a lot of jokes about Adelaide over the years – ‘Adelaide is well laid out because it’s been dead so long’, and the nickname ‘the Delayed’ (Adelaide’s time zone is 30 minutes behind Sydney and Melbourne) spring to mind – but this rock-solid city has weathered the jibes with grace. Indeed, the city is well laid out – no other Australian capital had such a complete, functional town plan as its basis. Most cities developed randomly and sporadically; even Canberra failed to adhere fully to Walter Burley Griffin’s grand urban plans. Against this trend, Adelaide has remained true to its design: a pure, orderly grid that has informed both its growth and social consciousness.

But the choice of Adelaide’s location wasn’t clear-cut: Colonel William Light, assigned the task of establishing the South Australian capital, had to argue with Governor Hindmarsh and the South Australian Commissioners in London who wanted a coastal city built at Port Lincoln or Encounter Bay, and before that at Kingscote on Kangaroo Island. Much squabbling transpired but Light eventually won through, seeing that Adelaide’s fertile plains, river and rain-catching hills and were firm footings on which to build the capital. So said the Colonel:

The reasons that led me to fix Adelaide where it is I do not expect to be generally understood or calmly judged of at present. My enemies, however, by disputing their validity in every particular, have done me the good service of fixing the whole of the responsibility upon me. I am perfectly willing to bear it; and I leave it to posterity, and not to them, to decide whether I am entitled to praise or to blame.

We vote praise!

ORIENTATION

Adelaide’s city grid is bordered by North, East, South and West Tces. King William St bisects the city north–south; most cross-streets change names here. Victoria Sq, the city’s geographical centre, has bus stops and the Glenelg tram terminus. Franklin St, west of Victoria Sq, has the regional bus station.

Heading north, King William St crosses the River Torrens then rises into elevated North Adelaide. In the East End, Rundle St is Adelaide’s social epicentre, dotted with restaurants, bookshops, retro-chic boutiques and independent cinemas. Heading west Rundle St becomes Rundle Mall, the main shopping strip, then Hindley St in the West End, with its grungy ramble of bars, clubs and strip joints.

Maps

The free maps from the South Australian Visitor & Travel Centre (p50) are fine for navigating your way around central Adelaide.

For more detailed maps:

Map Shop (Map p48; ☎ 8231 2033; www.mapshop.net.au; 6-10 Peel St; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat) Maps, charts and guides for walking, hiking and touring, plus GPS sales and advice.

Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (RAA; Map p48; ☎ 8202 4600; www.raa.net; 55 Hindmarsh Sq; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) RAA, Hema and Westprint maps.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

ABC Shop (Map p48; ☎ 8410 0567; www.shop.abc.net.au; level 2, Myer Centre, Rundle Mall; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 5pm Sat)

Adelaide Booksellers (Map p48; ☎ 8410 0216; www.adelaidebooksellers.com.au; 1st fl, 6a Rundle Mall; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat) Quality secondhand books.

Dymocks Booksellers (Map p48; ☎ 8223 5380; 135 Rundle Mall; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Thu, to 9pm Fri, to 5.30pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun) Mainstream books & mags.

Imprints Booksellers (Map p48; ☎ 8231 4454; www.imprints.com.au; 107 Hindley St; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon, Tue & Sat, to 9pm Wed-Fri, 11am-6pm Sun) Jazz, floorboards, Persian rugs and the best books in print.

Mary Martin Bookshop (Map p48; ☎ 8359 3525; www.marymartin.com.au; 249 Rundle St; ☎ 10am-late) Adelaide’s oldest bookshop (since 1945).

Emergency

Ambulance (☎ 000 emergency, 13 29 62 non-emergency; www.saambulance.com.au)

Fire (☎ 000 emergency, 8204 3600 nonemergency; www.samsf.sa.gov.au)

Lifeline (☎ 13 11 14; www.lifeline.org.au; ☎ 24hr) Crisis counselling.

Police (Map p48; ☎ 000 emergency, 8303 0525 non-emergency; www.sapolice.sa.gov.au; 26 Hindley St)

RAA Emergency Roadside Assistance (☎ 13 11 11; www.raa.net)