



HEAR IT ON THE *Grapevine*...

Just launched in September 2008, VisitVineyards.com is Australia's first comprehensive online resource for wine and food explorers. The site provides up-to-date information, news and reviews of the best regional wine and food travel experiences across the country. VisitVineyards.com has been carefully developed to cater to the needs of today's food and wine traveller.

VISITVINEYARDS.COM is based on a deep understanding of customers' needs and the challenges often presented by planning a getaway in this highly fragmented market.

Australian wine and food country offers many wonderful and diverse experiences, but travellers can find themselves spending hours trying to find the right information. Providing easy to access information on small but important details such as cellar door opening hours, restaurant meal

times and exactly what kind of experience each winery can offer is the mission of VisitVineyards.com.

VisitVineyards.com pools more than 30,000 wine, food and travel experiences across Australia. Importantly, the site does not have a city or regional bias. It aims to help people discover what's going on, the places and products not to be missed and up-to-date information about their next wine or culinary destination, wherever that is around the country.

Visitors to VisitVineyards.com can search the site free of charge and will soon be able to craft an itinerary to suit their specific interests – whether it be visiting a winery for a degustation lunch; staying overnight at a secluded retreat; sampling homemade chocolates from a local chocolatier; playing golf at a local club; or a combination of them all!

A must-visit site for every food and wine explorer.



Image courtesy: Visit Vineyards



MEET THE FOUNDER

Necessity is the mother of invention, and when Robyn Lewis, founder and CEO of VisitVineyards.com decided that she needed an easier way to source wine, food and travel information and advice she invented one. The site and the terrific membership program offering just launched (see the next page) will be gratefully embraced by foodies and wine buffs seeking personally recommended and easy-to-organise experiences.

“Having travelled extensively internationally and within Australia, I was well aware of our fantastic regional food and wine experiences and was keen to explore more, but found I was wasting far too much time searching and planning when I could have been on the road exploring. VisitVineyards.com will connect epicurious travellers to the many fantastic wine and food producers in Australia, saving them time and ensuring they get the most out of their travels,” says Robyn.

With 15 years experience in the wine, food and travel industries, Robyn has a sound knowledge of what constitutes a great travel experience. She works alongside her team of industry experts to seek out the smallest artisan cheese maker, the best country guest house and the finest local winemakers and to include them in the ever-expanding VisitVineyards.com community. www.VisitVineyards.com

FIVE VALUE-ADD FEATURES

At least five major factors set VisitVineyards.com apart from other wine, food and travel websites. They include:

1. It is an active online publisher – not just a directory or list. This means the content is live and constantly being updated by a team of passionate, well recognised and well-informed wine, travel and food writers.
2. It does not sell food or wine products and is not associated with any producer, wholesaler or retailer. This results in unbiased coverage and an inclusive approach.
3. It does not charge its customers to access information or to build an itinerary.
4. It does not request a participation fee from its listed partners, providing them with a complimentary way to market their products and services to an interested and active audience, thus enabling the inclusion of very small, boutique producers.
5. It was established by people with a background in food, wine and travel, who are passionate about connecting producers with a knowledge-seeking, wine and food savvy public.

VisitVineyards.com

YOUR ACCESS TO AUSTRALIA'S LEADING FOOD AND WINE COMMUNITY

The VisitVineyards.com membership program enables wine and food explorers to take their regional travel experiences to a whole new level. VisitVineyards.com has focussed on Victoria's iconic Mornington Peninsula for the first phase of its membership program.

FOR AN INTRODUCTORY price of AUD\$49, the annual membership program has been carefully developed to accommodate the expectations of today's food and wine traveller, providing them with behind the scenes experiences at a diverse range of food, wine and travel businesses usually reserved for friends, family and journalists!

"Our membership program is about offering people exclusive, memorable experiences they can't access during a standard regional visit," says founder and CEO of VisitVineyards.com Robyn Lewis. "We connect members directly with producers – some are iconic experiences, and others are 'hidden gems' – so they can begin to truly uncover the

secrets of each place they're visiting." The Mornington Peninsula has immediately moved to support the initiative with more than 70 businesses joining the program including wineries, breweries, restaurants, food producers, art galleries, spas and accommodation providers.

Anyone who visits VisitVineyards.com can subscribe to the free monthly e-newsletter which includes offers at featured wineries, restaurants, accommodation and other travel experiences around the country.

Subscribers have the added benefits of accessing opinions and advice from like-minded people and posting their own comments.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

VISITVINEYARDS.COM

MEMBERSHIP OFFERS INCLUDE:

- › Wine flights of chardonnay or pinot noir with lunch or dinner at Montalto Vineyard and Olive Grove
- › Behind the scenes tours of the winery and cellar door by the winemakers at Stoniers
- › Priority booking, including a special VisitVineyards.com discount, for Paradigm Hill's 'A springtime celebration of new wine releases' event at held at Vines of Red Hill in November
- › Sampling of beer, bread and olives produced on site at Hickinbotham
- › Tastings and take-away treats from the award-winning Mornington Peninsula Chocolates
- › A local wine, cheese and bread platter on arrival at Easton Grey Luxury Bed & Breakfast
- › Access to the thermal pools with any spa treatment at Peninsula Hot Springs

VisitVineyards.com members will also receive the latest news from the 'inside' via exclusive access to product reviews, news and recommendations by industry experts, such as renowned restaurant reviewer John Lethlean, wine writers Jane Faulkner and Tyson Stelzer and winemaker Jim Chatto. Members can also share experiences and form their own food and wine networks via the VisitVineyards.com community forum.

Launched in September 2008, VisitVineyards.com brings together wine, food and travel providers across every Australian region and is connecting them to a large and growing number of subscribers. The site now has an advanced search feature which enables visitors to search for very specific information from more than 30,000 listings of wine, food and related lifestyle travel experiences across Australia.



Images courtesy: VisitVineyards