

Winburndale Vineyard & Winery



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Location: Bathurst

Owners: David and Clare

Farm produce: Wine grapes

Size of farm: 200 hectares (500 acres)
with 8 hectares (20 acres) of vineyard

Website: winburndalewines.com.au

Agritourism offering



Agritourism activities

- Cellar door with wine tastings
- Farm tours



Accommodation

- 2 two-bedroom cottages

How we started our agritourism business

Six years ago we bought an established farm with agritourism offerings: a small vineyard from which we make small batches of quality wines, a cellar door with a tasting room, two cottages as holiday rentals, and our residence. When we bought the business, which had been started in the late 1990s, the previous owners spent a lot of time training us on how to run it.

We spent the first few years improving everything as the business was a little run down. Everything was compliant except that the tasting room should have had a Certificate of Occupancy but it didn't, so we rectified that.

"We had been living in Sydney and winemaking was new to us, so our first challenge was learning to be winemakers."

Other Bathurst winemakers (there are 5 local vineyards; 4 with a cellar door) were very generous in sharing their knowledge with us and helping us.

Nowadays, our 31-year-old son manages the farm and winemaking, and we manage the agritourism side of the business: the accommodation, wine tastings, and farm tours where we explain how we grow grapes and make wine.

Our cellar door is open Saturdays for walk-ins from 10.30am to 3.30pm, and on Sundays and weekdays by appointment. It is the main way we sell our wines. Our accommodation is booked via Airbnb.

Benefits of agritourism

- Extra income, which enables two generations to live from 20 acres of actively farmed land.
- We like the interactions that we have with guests who come from all over the world – they are happy to be on holidays so they are enjoyable.
- We aren't super busy so it's not a stressful job, and we don't need to employ anyone.
- We measure success financially, from the positive feedback we get from our wine tasting guests (which is very satisfying to read), and from learning how to make better wine.

How our agritourism business is growing

We have a long list of tweaks that we think about making to the business, such as the following.

- Generally speaking, guests on bus tours don't tend to buy bottles of wine, so we are thinking of increasing the price per person for a tasting experience as other wineries charge about twice as much as we do.
- The bedrooms in our cottages all have queen beds, and we are thinking of changing out a couple of those for twin beds that can be joined up as a king-sized bed, or separated. This will be better for families.
- We are thinking about adding a playground to entertain children while their parents relax over a wine tasting.
- We think our guests would also enjoy it if we had a couple of alpacas that they could feed.
- We've held a few private functions which went well so we are thinking of hosting events open to the public.



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Collaboration for growth

As we are looking to grow visitation and wine sales, we are members of the two local tourism organisations which are growing visitation to the Bathurst region: [Bathurst Visitor Information Centre](#) which is run by Bathurst Regional Council, and [Elevate Bathurst](#) which is run by local tourism operators. The [Bathurst and Backroads social media accounts](#) have been quite effective in recent times in growing visitation.

The state tourism organisation, Destination NSW (DNSW), approached us for mutual benefit – they are trying to encourage visitors to explore west of Katoomba in the Blue Mountains. Our cellar door which overhangs a pond is quite photogenic, and recently DNSW did a film and photo shoot on our property which they will use to help promote central west NSW and our winery.

The regional tourism organisation, Destination Central West, held an agritourism training workshop a couple of years ago which Claire attended.

All of the local wineries meet quarterly, and we promote each other, and recommend each other to cellar door guests. We also promote other local tourism businesses that our guests might be interested in experiencing.

“We also collaborate with local restaurants, where they host a meal event that we provide wine tastings at.”