

LANDMARK POSTCODE

5343



Strawberry Farm, Adelaide Hills
Image courtesy of South Australia Tourism

LOCATION: Berri
2 1/2 hours east
of Adelaide

POPULATION: 7,000

INDUSTRIES: Horticulture, retail and
community services, tourism

CLIMATE: Temperate
Summer 15.2°C - 31.1°C
Winter 5.3°C - 15.5°C
Rainfall 261.6mm

Berri is the heart of South Australia's fruit bowl - the Riverland.

Here the Murray River is on its home stretch, winding its way through thousands of hectares of orchards, irrigated pastures, internationally significant wetlands and a vast recreational playground stretching hundreds of kilometres.

The Riverland is best known for growing citrus but it is also the biggest wine producing region in Australia and more than half of South Australia's wine grapes are grown here.

Berri is the Riverland's thriving commercial centre, sitting between Australia's largest winery and one of the country's busiest fruit juice factories.

The town is economically vibrant and well-serviced. Locals enjoy some of the longest hours of sunshine in Australia and a wide range of outdoor activities and water sports help create a perfect lifestyle.

Landmark's Gus Combatti says Berri is well positioned on the Sturt Highway and has good access to transport routes to all major states.

"All the Riverland towns are within 45 minutes

drive from Berri, so if it is not here, it is not far away." A regional airport is just 20 minutes down the road, between Berri and Renmark.

Schooling is provided through to tertiary level and the standard of local sporting facilities is high enough to regularly attract state and interstate carnivals.

There are plans to build a new recreation centre, enhance the main streetscape and improve access to the riverfront. Housing stocks have recently been boosted by the approval of a 250-lot estate.

"Berri is an attractive retirement destination for people moving in from around the region. We are also seeing more families from the mining industry. We have great facilities for children and it's easy to fly-in and out from here."

The lower reaches of the Murray were always destined to prosper. Charles Sturt explored the area as early as 1830 and a town emerged during the paddle steamer era. The arrival of irrigation in 1910 boosted farming productivity and Berri hasn't looked back.

By the 1950's a major fruit cooperative dominated the town. Twenty years later it was producing more than 150 different lines - everything from juice and wine to peel and dried fruits.

These days Berri Estates is Australia's largest single winery and distillery complex, processing 70,000 tonnes of grapes a year. Local labels include Nottage Hill and Banrock Station.

Citrus is still a major crop - Berri Ltd is Australia's largest juice manufacturer - but stone fruit, apples, almonds, vegetables and olives are also grown locally.

Gus says despite the appearance of plentiful water in the large expanses of green lawns and pasture, water shortages are having a major impact on traditional farming enterprises.

"There's been a marked shift from orchards to vineyards because vines require less water."

"All irrigators started the year with zero allocation so efficiency is the key. Government grants have been made available to some growers in order to upgrade poor and less efficient irrigation systems.

Larger operators, however, are still growing which is testament to continued confidence in the district," he says.

Contact:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: Contemporary 3-bedroom home from \$300,000.

Lifestyle: 5 acres with house from \$400,000

Larger farm: Irrigation land up to \$5000 an acre plus water allocation

Cropping country from \$300 an acre