

WEEKENDS | *Yorke Peninsula*

THE SLOW ROAD

The Yorke Peninsula is DOTTED with charming *TOWNS* that still feel completely under the radar. A road trip reveals what's HIDDEN in this wheat-and-coastal *SLICE* of South Australia.

WORDS **TEGAN FORDER**
PHOTOGRAPHY **HEIDI WHO**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Plenty of cheers at the Bond Store Wallaroo. Start your morning at oceanfront North Beach Kitchen. With blue swimmer crab scramble. Meet a feathered friend at Pura Tarnoo. You'll find nostalgia aplenty in Moonta. OPPOSITE: Take the road less travelled on the Yorke Peninsula.*

JUST OVER AN hour from Adelaide/Tarantanya, the Yorke Peninsula feels a world away from our usual frenzy of life. Long empty beaches, small fishing towns and paddocks stretching to the sea define this quiet corner of South Australia. Now, with a collection of new accommodation, breweries, distilleries and experiences, this destination is becoming harder to keep under wraps.

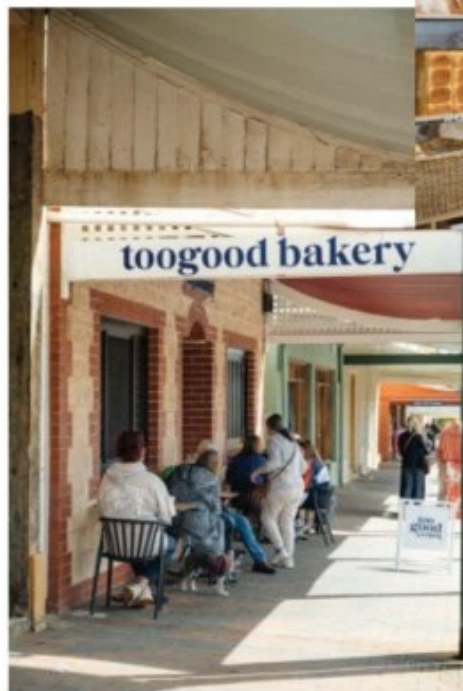
THE COPPER COAST TRIO

Start at the top of the Yorke Peninsula's west coast, where heritage meets the sea in the historic copper triangle towns of Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta.

Begin in Kadina and stock up on supplies before exploring the mining heritage streets of the town centre or stop for a local brew at Hedonbar Brewing Company. From here, follow the Copper Rail Trail to Wallaroo. Once a booming mining port, Wallaroo is now a popular seaside escape dotted with holiday homes.

In the heart of the historic main street sits the Bond Store, an industrial-style venue housed within a beautifully restored heritage building. Exposed brick, polished concrete and high ceilings set the tone for this trifecta of a restaurant, brewery, and gin and liqueur distillery. The dining room wraps around the central bar and brewery, with a glass-enclosed kitchen where chefs prepare seasonal dishes on their charcoal grill. The next morning, start the day fresh at North Beach Kitchen cafe with a plate of Port Broughton blue swimmer crab scramble and a smoothie before strolling along the sandy beach. ➔





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Toogood Bakery is well, so good (also above); Sip a top-notch drop at laid-back Barley Stacks; Wine & Beer commissions can find their bliss at Watsacowie Brewing Company; Work it all off with a roll in the surf.



Craft beer enthusiasts should detour to the wheatbelt town of Minlaton, home to Watsacowie Brewing Company, which has become something of a pilgrimage for beer lovers. Inside the relaxed taproom, locals and travellers gather over inventive brews that celebrate regional flavours.

Head back towards the water to Hardwicke Bay, where the farmland fades into sandy dunes, rockpools and a natural swimming pool just south of the town. Nearby, the sweeping arc of powdery white sand and clear shallow waters of Flaherty's Beach is one of the peninsula's most spectacular coastlines.

MARION BAY

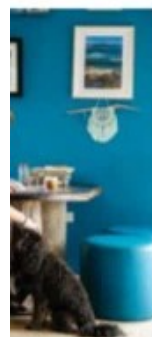
As you approach the south-western tip of the peninsula, farmland softens into greener coastal vegetation and the road winds towards the relaxed seaside township of Marion Bay.

This small town serves as the gateway to Dhuibha Guuranda-Innes National Park, one of South Australia's most beautiful coastal reserves. Much of it is accessible by 2WD, making it easy to →

MINLATON & HARDWICKE BAY

Refreshed and refuelled, hop back in the car and veer slightly inland, where the coastline gives way to rolling paddocks of wheat.

In the farming town of Maitland, Sunny Hill Distillery crafts small-batch spirits using locally grown grains, their stills turning out distinctive gins and whiskies that reflect the peninsula's agricultural heart. Not far away near Port Victoria, vino lovers can pull up a chair at Barley Stacks Wines, a laid-back cellar door also offering pizza and cheese platters.



explore at your own pace. Surfers flock to the powerful breaks along the coastline, while the sheltered waters of Pondalowie Bay offer somewhat calmer conditions for swimming.

Along the way are reminders of the peninsula's layered history. At Ethel Beach, the rusting remains of the Ethel shipwreck lie embedded in the sand, while inland, the abandoned township of Innes tells the story of the gypsum mining industry that operated here from the early 1900s.

The park is now jointly managed with the Narungga people, the Traditional Owners of the land. Their dreaming story about Ngarna the Bat explains the creation of the land – one day, Baduara, a strong Narungga man, was camping and became angry when he met Ngarna on his Country. There was a battle between the two ancestors and the

land shows their footprints – the miriyarduri – salt lakes, while Ngarna became the rock formation at Nhildijari (Rhino Head).

So many awe-inspiring sightings are common down here. Emus form a greeting party upon entry, dolphins are often spotted from the cliffs and, during winter, southern right whales pass through these waters on their annual migration.

Back in Marion Bay, Penguin Point beach provides the perfect place to unwind after a day of exploring. Head along the coastal path to a set of stairs leading down to a hidden cove near the caves. Coffee and art can be found at Studio Surf gallery cafe – the 'gone surfing' sign at the front door will let you know if they're in or not.

For those wanting to linger a little longer, a new accommodation offering is raising the bar. The Sanctuary is an adults-only luxury retreat set within its own peaceful pocket of bushland. Designed with sustainability in mind, it was built using reclaimed materials and finished with soft natural textures. Unwind in the freestanding bath overlooking native bushland and cook your own meal in the separate kitchen next door. →



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Combine coffee and art at Studio Surf; Picturesque Wind Bay makes for a marvellous break; Take in the beautiful copper hues of Ethel Beach; New adults-only stay The Sanctuary at Pigeon Point; Which also offers a tiny house.





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Sweet dreams at The Sanctuary; Family-friendly Edithburgh Tidal Pool; Ride the rails on the Copper Rail Trail; Enjoy small-beer charms in Edithburgh

STANSBURY & THE EAST COAST

Travel across the peninsula to the eastern coastline and the seaside town of Edithburgh. Here, the tidal pool – one of few of its kind in the whole state – offers the chance for a sheltered swim. Divers and snorkellers regularly slip into the water near the jetty in search of the elusive leafy sea dragon.

Further north you pass through a string of small coastal hamlets including Wood Bay, with rust-coloured cliffs rising above a sheltered beach below. It's a quiet, picturesque spot for a swim or a short break from the road.

Stansbury is one of the larger towns along this stretch and offers a lovely waterfront walk that forms part of the Walk the Yorke trail. Starting at the jetty, the path winds along the foreshore past the caravan park and cemetery, with sweeping views across Gulf St Vincent towards Adelaide.

As evening approaches, settle in at the famed Dalrymple Hotel Bar & Restaurant. It's worth it for the entrées alone – scallops, prawn and ginger dumplings or duck spring rolls. Follow with garfish or flathead straight from the gulf, all washed down with a South Australian wine or locally brewed Watsacowie beer. Next door, sample the small-batch gin (the Big Thyme Gin is a winner), liqueurs and vodka at Lost Tide Spirit Co.

On the drive back towards Adelaide, make one last stop along the coast. Pick up a parcel of fish and chips from the kiosk at Port Vincent or try your luck crabbing at Ardrossan – a simple, fitting end to a Yorke Peninsula road trip. ☺



A traveller's checklist

Getting there

Kadina is a two-hour drive from Adelaide/Tamranya, while Marion Bay can be reached in three hours.

Staying there

Stay at WALLAROO MARINA APARTMENTS, with suites from \$169, or SEAGATE MOONTA BAY's family suite from around \$350. wallaroomapartments.com.au; seagatemoonbay.com.au

LOVE & MUTINY – an updated '50s beachfront shack at Chinaman Wells – hosts up to six guests. loveandmutiny.au

For a luxe adults-only retreat, book in at THE SANCTUARY BY BAYSIDE GLAMPING at Marion Bay from \$650 per night. Or bed down in a tiny house and glamping tent. baysideglamping.com.au

THE KLEIN POD near Stansbury is thoughtfully designed for two at around \$300 per night. thekleipod.com.au

Playing there

Take in 500 kilometres of the peninsula's rugged coastal scenery with sections of Walk the Yorke, including the COPPER RAIL TRAIL. Hire a bike from COPPER TRAILS BIKE HIRE for the day, or take a cycling tour: DHELBA GUURANDA-INNES NATIONAL PARK has vehicle entry fees of \$13.90. Discover the culture and history of the park and the Narungga people with a guided tour by Quenten Agius, owner and tour operator of ABORIGINAL CULTURAL TOURS. For a tour of the park by sea, join the MARION BAY OCEAN SAFARI from Pongalowie Bay.

To take advantage of the peninsula's seafood riches, climb onboard a KEEF ENCOUNTERS FISHING CHARTER in Marion Bay, or join the CATCH N COOK WORLD TOUR in Ardrossan to find your own blue swimmer crabs to feast on later.

