Welcome to the Swan Valley

You might know the Swan Valley as Western Australia’s oldest wine-producing region but did you know, it is also leading in craft beer and cider.

Swan Valley brewers are producing lagers, pilsners, ales, wheat beers, stouts and more, as well as ciders, and ginger beer. Many are award-winning nationally and internationally. All are handcrafted using a combination of traditional techniques, state-of-the-art equipment, and only the best produce.

If chartering a bus for larger groups, please contact the venues to transport you around the trail.

Published days open for all venues are subject to change. Please phone or check the business websites.

Location of the Swan Valley

The Swan Valley is a short 25 minute drive from the Perth CBD and 20 minutes from Perth Airport.

One of the best ways to explore the Cider & Ale Trail is to self-drive.

Should you require a hire car, collection points are conveniently located at Perth Airport and a variety of Perth CBD locations. You might like to consider booking a rideshare service or taxi to transport you around the trail.

If chartering a bus for larger groups, please contact the venues in advance to make a booking.

About WA Food & Wine Trails

Western Australia is blessed with a huge range of memorable food and drink experiences. The WA Food & Wine Trails provide a sample of what is available across the state.

Make sure you look out for them on your travels.

Produced with the support of Tourism WA

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Cider, a fruitful history

Cider is a fermented beverage made from apples. While we know that apples have been grown for 50-60 million years, the first occurrences of ciders are not as clear. Once the drink caught on, it spread quickly. By the time the first Romans arrived in the British Isles in 55 B.C., the locals were drinking a cider-like drink made from apples, which their new visitors quickly came to love.

Soon enough, cider spread throughout the Roman Empire and across Europe, reaching our shores in 1788 with the First Fleet. Australian cider has its origins in Tasmania but this quickly grew to the southern states of the mainland, too. Cider makers in the Swan Valley source their fruit from the Perth Hills and the South West of Western Australia.

Apples are never true to their seed, so there are myriad possibilities for new varieties when growing them from seed. Most modern Australian ciders are made from culinary apples including Pink Lady, Granny Smith, Fuji, Sunsoyder, Royal Gala and Golden Delicious.

There are small orchards in Australia, including a handful in Western Australia, that are now producing traditional cider apples of the bitter and bitter sweet varieties which are crafted into traditional English-style ciders. The sky's the limit with the recent craft industry boom, with new world ciders being created every day, right here in the Swan Valley. Using methods such as fermenting with wild yeasts and even infusing with other exotic fruits and spices such as pineapple, passionfruit, ginger and much more, cider making is even more flavoursome and exciting than at any other time in its history!

Ales are older, traditional brews predating lagers by thousands of years, while lagers are a relatively modern creation, around 400 years old.

For most beer drinkers, the difference between an ale and a lager comes down to how the beer looks, smells and tastes. But to a brewer, the main differences are yeast type and fermentation temperature. Ales are fermented at a higher temperature, 18-22°C, resulting in robust, fruity aromatic styles. Lager fermentation is a cooler 12-14°C, which inhibits the fruity aromas (esters) producing a beer that is lighter, crisper and fresher in taste. Ales also use different hops to create fruity flavours, while lagers use more bittering and noble hops to achieve the crisp/clean flavour profile.

Stouts are basically stronger versions of a porter, a dark style of beer enjoyed in the cooler months. Stouts exhibit coffee and chocolate characters as a result of roasted malts. Wheat beers originate from Germany and are crafted using malted or unmalted wheat, often using a Belgian yeast to create banana, clove and orange peel flavours. On trend is sour beer, intentionally made acidic and tart, which can be refreshing in summer. Sour beers are produced using wild yeast or Lactobacillus in a kettle, or more traditionally, a barrel.

Ales too are ancient beverages. Ale and lager are the two main classifications of beer.

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