

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

MCLAREN VALE

Siggy and Heather | Travel Blog

Surprise Packet

What surprises this trip has delivered us so far. We thought that most of SA was like the Murray River country around Mildura - dry, old gums, lots of dust. So far, nothing could be further from the truth. It has mainly been rolling hills, swathes of cultivated land, the most beautiful gum specimens we have ever seen, clean tidy farmsteads and many beautiful solid stone buildings.

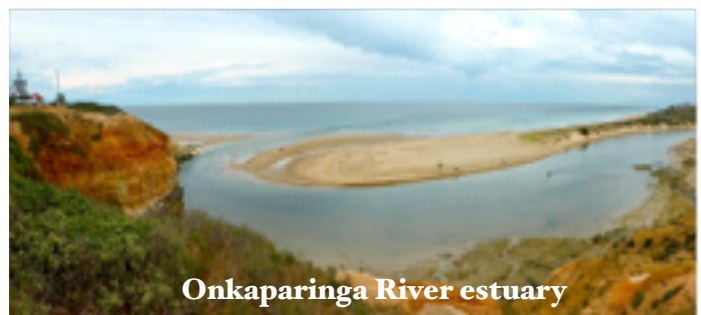
For the last 4 days we have stayed in a caravan park in McLaren Vale. We chose this because it has another great bike path that winds through the surrounding area. The town itself is not particularly exciting but the caravan park is green, clean and quiet. We would normally have moved onto a different locality but the Fleurieu Peninsula is quite small and we can therefore get to most parts easily enough from here.

This morning, for example, we drove over to the west coast (Port Noarlunga) and rode beside the beach. It is much cooler today and we enjoyed the estuary where the Onkaparinga River flows into the sea. Lots of people were walking, riding and running. Most of this area has quite high cliffs composed of crumbling layers of what look like ancient sand dunes.



Great Rides, Terrific Scenery

The Coast to Vines Rail Trail is 37 km in length. As the name suggests it has been built on an old railway corridor. The slope is only ever mildly undulating. This suits Heather fine. Over the first 3 days we rode sections of it. Fabulous scenery. About a 15 - 20 km round trip is quite enough for us. We figure if we exercise for a few hours we can then lie around and do nothing for the rest of the day! This doing nothing is becoming very enjoyable. Heather reads and Sig spends his time with his favourite friend - Mr Mac Air. So what's different? The difference is there is nothing else that we should be doing and therefore we can thoroughly enjoy doing whatever we want to do. Quite a change from being home where something always needs doing.

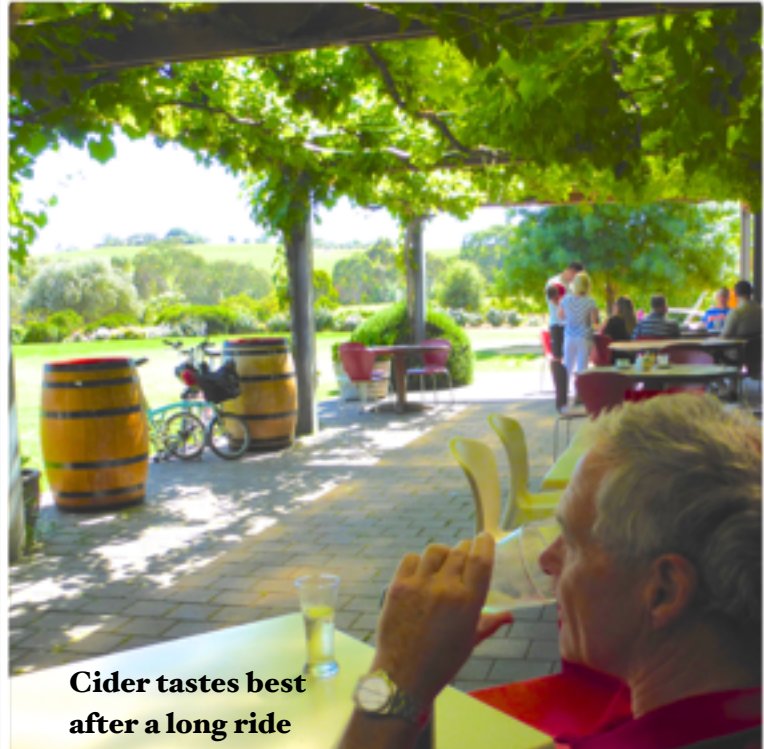


Onkaparinga River estuary

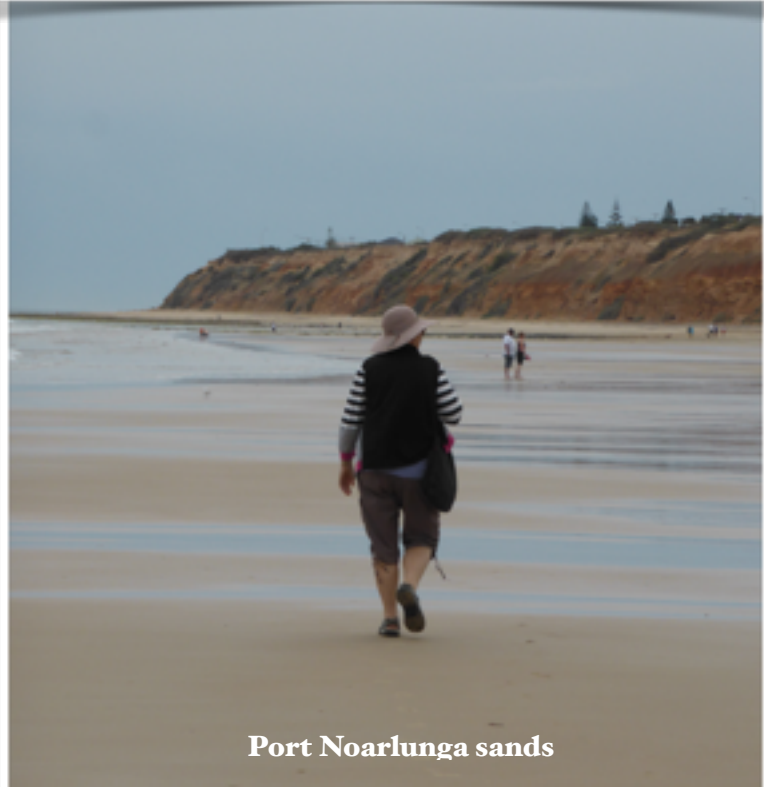


Relax in McLaren Vale

McLaren Vale, or "the Vale" as it is known by the locals, is remarkably busy. It has one of the best information centres we have come across. The caravan park is on the edge of town and its long meandering entrance is through a winery. With so many things to occupy our time, and everything only a short drive or bike ride away, we decided to stay for 4 nights and really get to know the area. The weather was perfect - quite cool at night and early in the morning but as each day progressed the temperatures got warmer. Great for some exercise in the morning - a stroll and/or a bike ride. After that there is ample time in the afternoon to laze around camp and chat to fellow campers. Heaven.



Cider tastes best after a long ride



Port Noarlunga sands



Sticky beak - photo bomber



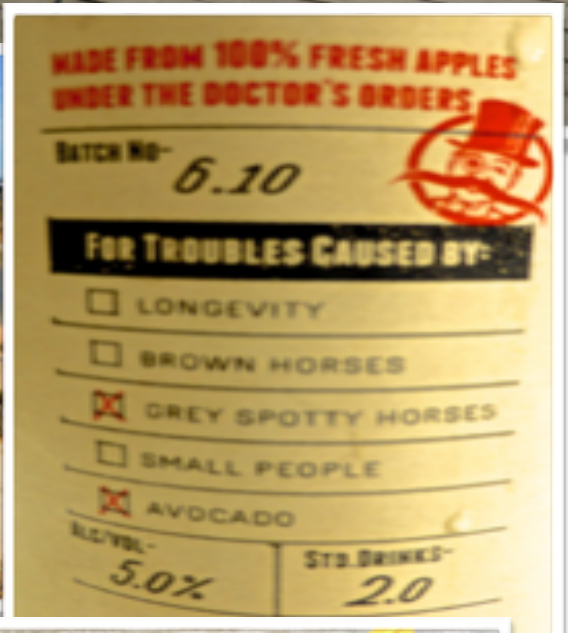
Heather's version of keeping to the left



Heather's itchy bum desperate to get into the news



Onkaparinga River estuary



Noarlunga's red band of rock



Onkaparinga ironman competition