



WINE TOURISM IN THE TOOWOOMBA AND DARLING DOWNS REGION

Wine tourism encompasses a wide range of experiences built around tourist visitation to wineries and wine regions. This includes wine tasting, enjoyment of wine and food, the exploration of regional environments and the experience of a range of cultural, nature based and lifestyle activities.

Released: September 2004

Region Description

The Toowoomba and Darling Downs region encompasses the towns of Westbrook, Toowoomba, Highfields, Texas, Jimbour, Maclagan and Vale View.

Regional Overview¹

An on-site product audit was completed on three randomly selected wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region. The results suggest that the wineries in the Darling Downs are well established with grapes grown on-site. In addition to a wide range of quality wines, they display and stock local produce.

Each winery visited offered a unique experience for the visitor. Site interpretation varied, and whilst staff knowledge for each particular winery was good, there was little information offered about the region itself.

As a total experience, there appeared to be little linkage between wineries within the region. Based on the wineries visited, this region lacks a consistent feel when compared to other Queensland wine regions.

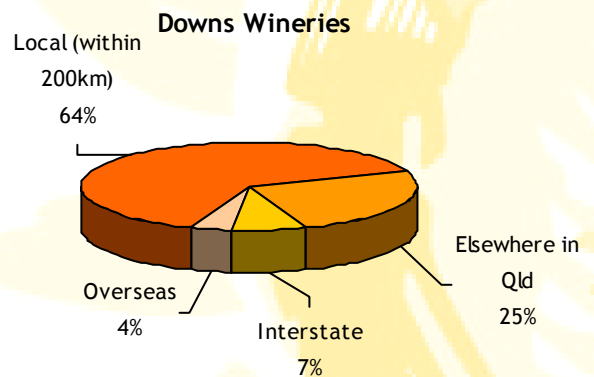
Visitor Numbers & Origin²

A wine tourism infrastructure audit was conducted over the phone with the owners or general managers of eight wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region.

On average, wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region receive 698 visitors per month.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of visitors to wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region are classified as local (i.e. their place of residence is within 200km of the winery). A further 25% are from elsewhere in Queensland, 7% are from interstate and 4% are overseas visitors.

Origin of Visitors to Toowoomba and Darling Downs Wineries



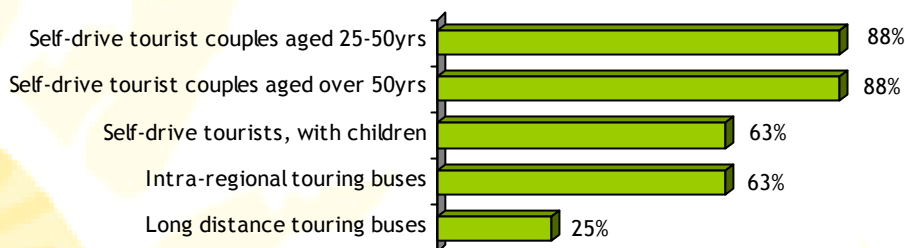
Base: All Wineries (n=8)

1. Queensland Wineries Research On-Site Product Audits, June 2004.
2. Wine Tourism Infrastructure Audit Report, July 2003.

Visitor Types¹

Most of the wineries surveyed in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region attract self-drive tourist couples aged 25-50 years and over 50 years. Other common visitor types include self-drive tourists with children and tourists travelling via intra-regional touring buses.

% of Toowoomba and Darling Downs Wineries that Attract the Following Types of Visitors:

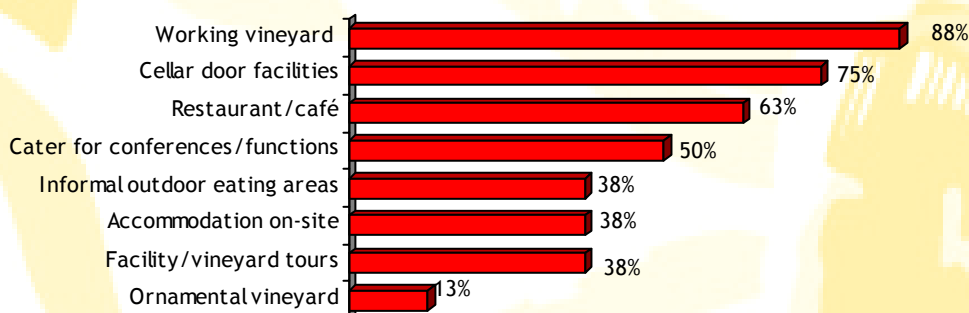


Base: All Wineries (n=8)

Facilities¹

The majority of wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region have a working vineyard and cellar door facilities. Five of the Toowoomba and Darling Downs wineries have a café/restaurant, with half catering for conferences/functions. Three of the Toowoomba and Darling Downs wineries have on-site accommodation, offer tours of their facilities/vineyards or have an informal outdoor eating area. The average capacity for on-site restaurants and cafés in Toowoomba and Darling Downs wineries is 86 patrons.

% of Toowoomba and Darling Downs Wineries with the Following Facilities:



Base: All Wineries (n=8)

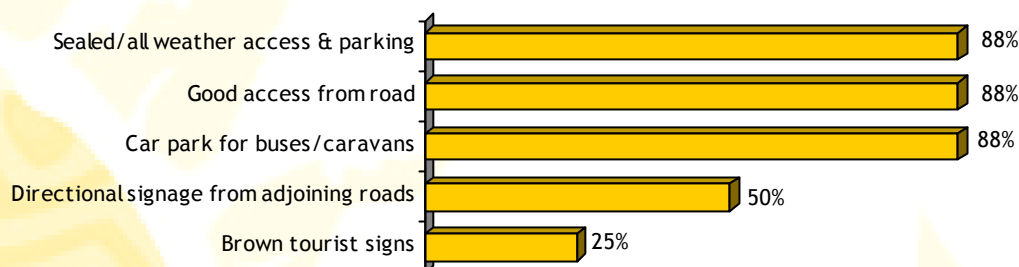
Three of the wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region are open seven days a week. The remaining three wineries that have cellar door facilities are open on the weekends in addition to varied days during the week.

Four wineries in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region cater for functions or conferences. The average capacity for functions is 151 guests and the average capacity for conferences is 58 delegates.

Access and Parking¹

Winery access and parking facilities are good at most Toowoomba and Darling Downs wineries. Most of the Darling Downs wineries have sealed/all weather access and parking, report 'good access' to their property from the road and have a car park large enough for buses and caravans to turn in.

% of Toowoomba and Darling Downs Wineries with the Following:



Base: All Wineries (n=8)

Future Developments¹

Five of the Toowoomba and Darling Downs wineries plan to extend their tourist experience in the next 12-18 months. Three wineries also intend to add to the tourist experience in the next 3-5 years.

The areas for development in the short term (i.e. next 12-18 months) include the addition or upgrade of restaurant facilities, accommodation, conference/meeting facilities and car parking facilities.

The areas for development in the next 3-5 years include the addition or upgrade of restaurant facilities, accommodation, car parking facilities and on site interpretative signage. Another area for development is offering tours of sites/facilities.

Number of Toowoomba and Darling Downs Wineries Intending to Add to Tourist Experience

	Next 12-18 Months	Next 3-5 Years
# of wineries intending type of development (total # of wineries in region)		
Add or upgrade a restaurant/cafe	1 (8)	1 (8)
Add or upgrade accommodation	1 (8)	1 (8)
Add or upgrade conference/meeting facilities	1 (8)	0 (8)
Upgrade car parking facilities	1 (8)	1 (8)
Upgrade on site interpretative signage	0 (8)	1 (8)
Offer tours of your site and/or facilities	0 (8)	1 (8)
Extend opening hours/days	0 (8)	0 (8)
Other	4 (8)	1 (8)

Data Sources

Queensland Wineries Research On-Site Product Audits 2004 Report

The Queensland wineries on-site product audits were commissioned by Tourism Queensland's Sustainable Tourism Department. The primary aim of the research was to make an assessment of the 'point of difference' that is reflected in the overall 'look and feel' of Queensland's wineries, as well as to assess the product, interpretation and experience offered by Queensland wineries.

The research was conducted through a series of product audits at selected wineries across the seven wine regions of South East Queensland. Three different types of wineries from each region were chosen. These were a purpose built tourist winery, a boutique winery and a lifestyle winery. As audits were only completed on three wineries in each region the results may not be reflective of the whole region.

Researchers visited the wineries as part of a 'tourist' experience and completed a comprehensive checklist immediately after each visit. Each region was visited over one or two consecutive days and other regional attractions and experiences formed part of the overall evaluation.

Wine Tourism Infrastructure Audit 2003 Report

The Wine Tourism Infrastructure Audit was commissioned by Tourism Queensland's Sustainable Development Department and represents the first comprehensive study of operators in the South East Queensland wine tourism industry. The purpose of the audit was to provide a database of information as the foundation for future growth and promotion of the industry.

The audit is based on telephone interviews with an individual responsible for the management of the winery, for example the owner or general manager. Interviews were conducted with ninety-two (92) wineries across Queensland.

Further Information

Research Department

Tourism Queensland

Ph: (07) 3535 5420

Fax: (07) 3535 5329

Email: research@tq.com.au

Website: www.tq.com.au/research