

Hunter Valley

Eguide

The Hunter Valley is located in New South Wales, Australia. An area of wineries, mountains and historic towns. The Hunter Valley stretches inland from Newcastle through the towns of Maitland, Singleton and to the Upper Hunter.

The Hunter Valley extends about 150 km. In the Wine Country are the wineries, national parks, and lakes.

Newcastle is situated at the mouth of the Hunter River at the southern end and is the biggest city. Other major towns of the Hunter Valley are Maitland, Morpeth, Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Singleton, Scone and Muswellbrook. The Upper Hunter consists of historic towns and small villages along with National Parks.

Hunter Valley Places

Branxton

Branxton is a small town at the junction of the New England Highway and the freeway to Cessnock. Branxton is surrounded by wineries. Lot's for places to stay and many fine restaurants. Singleton is 22km away.

Broke

A short drive from Pokolbin the village of Broke lies on Wollombi Creek.

Camberwell

13 km north of Singleton along the highway is the small village of Camberwell where St Clements's Anglican Church was built between 1844 and 1855.

Cessnock

First settled in 1826, named after Cessnock Castle in Scotland and now a coal mining town. Cessnock is in the heart of the Hunter Valley wine-producing region.

Cessnock includes small towns such as Paxton, Millfield and Bellbird. Cessnock is a gateway to the wineries of the region. Many art galleries, antique shops and craft shops.

Denman

Denman is a small agricultural town on the Hunter River.

Dungog

Dungog is on the Williams River on the way to Barrington Tops National Park. First settled in 1820 has wide streets and a rural feel. Good bush walking trails, trout streams and dams and lookouts.

Gloucester

Gloucester is an access point for Barrington Tops. Many outdoor activities are available in this area. In the town is an Aboriginal Art Centre, Folk Museum and the Gloucester Gallery.

Gresford

Gresford is an access point for Barrington Tops National Park. Gresford is on the Paterson River.

Greta

Greta is between Maitland and Singleton developed due to the Greta Main Colliery.

Kurri Kurri

Kurri Kurri is 15mins from Cessnock. Kurri Kurri is the heart of the coal fields. Kurri Kurri is close to the vineyards of the Lower Hunter.



Lochinvar

Lochinvar is close to Maitland and the wineries of Lovedale and Rothbury. Lochinvar has a rural village with pub, and buildings crafted with carved sandstone and kilned bricks made using convict labour.

Luskintyre

Luskintyre is a rural area 20 minutes from Maitland. The Luskintyre Bridge was built in 1902 and an important element in the development of the Hunter region.

Maitland

Established in 1818, the New England Highway connects Maitland with Newcastle to the south, and the Upper Hunter and New England regions to the north.

Maitland has a riverine landscape with historic buildings wooden bridges and renovated industrial buildings. Maitland has plenty of places to eat and drink. The town is laid out with a series of radiating squares.

On the outer edge are North, West, South and Shannon Terraces. Roads radiate in from the corners of this square.

Merriwa

Merriwa, a small town in the west of the Hunter. The Tourist Information Centre includes a Bottle Museum. Close by is Goulburn River Park a gem fossicking zone.

Morpeth

Close to Maitland is Morpeth established in 1821 on the banks of the Hunter River. There are cafes, restaurants, galleries, and antique stores. Morpeth Courthouse Museum offers an historical perspective of life in the district.

Murrurundi

The historical town of Murrurundi has a heritage town walk.



Muswellbrook

Muswellbrook is in the Upper Hunter Valley with many wineries and restaurants. The Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre has regular exhibitions. Muswellbrook has a large shopping centre and historic buildings line the Muswellbrook Heritage Walk.



Newcastle

Newcastle lies approximately 160 kilometres north of Sydney. Newcastle was founded on 30th March 1804 as a penal settlement, so has a selection of buildings, as well as beaches, surf, impressive coastal scenery, bushland and a well-known lake.

It is also an important port, especially for the export of coal, of which resource some 70 million tonnes passes through the city annually.

Most of the attractions of Newcastle are within walking distance of the station.

Paterson

Paterson is a small historic village between Maitland and the Barrington Tops. The Paterson Court House Museum built in 1857 displays historical artefacts.

The Rail Motor Society of Paterson presents a history of train transportation in the region.

Paxton

Paxton south west Cessnock is a wine and horse stud region.

Scone

Scone is famous for horses. 15km east of Scone is Glenbawn Dam.

Pokolbin

6 kilometres west of Cessnock with resorts, guesthouses, restaurants and cafes in the town close to the Lower Hunter wineries.

Very much a centre of the wine industry. Along Broke Road are many wineries and restaurants and around McDonalds Road. Many golf courses are found in this part of the Hunter Valley.

Singleton

Singleton is on the New England Highway between the Lower and Upper Hunter Valley. Singleton has gardens, historical and cultural sites, vineyards and modern wineries.

The wine industry is the major attraction with many cellar doors on Hermitage Road.

Singleton has heritage buildings dating from 1863 many are historic homesteads from the early days of settlement.

The two main buildings are the All Saints Anglican Church and the elaborate Victorian Gothic rectory built in 1875. The Sun Dial at Singleton is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and forms a gateway to the Hunter River and developed as part of the 1988 bicentennial project.

Upper Hunter

The north end of the Hunter Valley is called the Upper Hunter with the communities of Denman, Merriwa, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook and Scone.

The vineyards here are larger and produce varieties such as Rieslings. The Upper Hunter is the location of the World Heritage listed Barrington Tops National Park.

The area is a mix of agriculture, wine production, coal mining, power generation and rural life. The Upper Hunter Valley is renowned for its spectacular natural scenic beauty. Rocky outcrops, sandstone cliffs and rugged scrub-covered mountains provide a stunning backdrop to rich farmland, rolling pastures and manicured vineyards.

Vacy

Vacy lies on the banks of the Paterson River near Barrington Tops with some historic buildings.



Wollombi

Wollombi is on the Great North Road, a small historical town established in 1820, thirty kilometres from Cessnock. Wollombi is in a wooded river valley. In the valley are the villages of Laguna, Wollombi and Millfield.

Hunter Valley Museums

Dobell House

A museum dedicated to Sir William Dobell. *47 Dobell Drive, Wangi Wangi.*

Dungog Historical Museum

A display of historical artefacts collected from around Dungog. *Dowling Street, Dungog (02 4992 1760).*

Endeavour Museum

The museum is in the first Wollombi courthouse that was constructed in 1866. Exhibits are from around the area and a large part showing 19th century clothing. *Maitland Road, Wollombi (02 4990 1788).*

Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery

A purpose built art gallery on the shores of Lake Macquarie. *Awaba House 1A First Street, Booragul (02 4921 0382).*

Gloucester Historical Society

The collection is housed in the Council Chambers that were built in 1909 and include displays of World 1 and II memorabilia. *Church Street, Gloucester.*

Maitland National Trust Museum

A collection of local memorabilia with Aboriginal and German heritage exhibitions. *Gardener and Kilkerran Terrace.*

Morpeth Museum
Morpeth was the original centre of commerce in the Hunter Valley and the museum explains this past history. *Morpeth Courthouse, 123 Swan Street, Morpeth. (02 4934 4301).*

Newcastle Police Station Museum

The original building was built in 1926 and the exhibits are housed in this heritage house. *90 Hunter Street, Newcastle (02 4929 5550).*

Newcastle Regional Art Gallery

A mix of owned and visiting works. *Laman Street, Newcastle (02 4974 5100).*

Newcastle Region Maritime Museum

Housed in the grounds of Fort Scratchley with models of ships and other artefacts. Also included is the tunnel complex, barracks and guardhouse of the Fort. *Fort Drive, Newcastle (02 4929 2588).*



Newcastle Regional Museum

The museum is in the old Castlemaine and Wood Brothers Brewery. The collection covers mining, Newcastle's earthquake and other historical events. *787 Hunter Street, Newcastle West, (02 4974 1400).*

Paterson Historical Court House Museum

The court house was built in 1857. *King Street, Paterson (02 4943 4526).*

Richmond Vale Railway Museum

A mining and railway museum and tours of the John Brown's Richmond main colliery. *Leggetts Drive, Pelaw Main (02 4955 1904).*

Royal Australian Infantry Corps Museum

The museum has a collection of infantry equipment, weapons and memorabilia. Singleton Army Camp, Lone Pine Barracks, Singleton. *(02 6570 3257).*

Scone Historical Museum

A collection of 19th and 20th century portraits in a historic complex of buildings. *43/47 Kingdom Street, Scone (02 6545 2189).*

Singleton House Museum

Singletons first courthouse and jail with a collection of memorabilia. *Burdekin Park, New England Highway, Singleton, (02 6577 8536).*

Sir Edgeworth David Memorial Museum

The main feature is the extensive library detailing the history of the Hunter Valley. *Grounds of Kurri Kurri High School, Kurri Kurri.*



Hunter Valley Wild Places

Barrington Tops

Barrington Tops is a World Heritage wilderness area with walking trails, white-water canoeing, kayaking, four wheel driving and rafting. Barrington Tops is a plateau rising to 1,500 metre between a series of extinct volcanic peaks in the Mount Royal Ranges. An area of streams, Antarctic beech forests, waterfalls, animals and birds with clear water flowing from sphagnum moss swamps. For the Gloucester River camping area and Gloucester Tops day use area, take the Buckets Way from Gloucester then take Cobark Road, to Gloucester River Road and then Gloucester Tops Road. The Williams River is accessed from Dungog. The Burruga Swamp area is about 1.5 hours drive from the Williams River picnic area, along the Mt Allyn Forest Road. For the Barrington Tops Plateau area, use Barrington Tops Forest Road between Gloucester and Scone.

Blackbutt Reserve

Blackbutt Reserve is about 6km from Newcastle and an area of Eucalypt forest and pockets of rainforest. *Carnley Avenue, New Lambton (02 4957 6436)*.

Hunter Wetlands Centre

The Hunter Wetlands Centre is about 10 minutes drive from Newcastle and good for walking, bird watching and also has a children's discovery centre. *Sandgate Road, Shortland (02 4951 6466)*.

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Lake St Clair

To the north west of Singleton the lake, covering 1540ha, is named after St Clair homestead, which was covered by the lake. Camping, barbecue areas and a boat ramp are available. (02 6571 5888).

Lake Macquarie

Lake Macquarie is a large coastal salt-water lake at the south of the Hunter Region and about an hour from Sydney. It is four times the size of Sydney Harbour and good for sailing, fishing, swimming, cruising and scuba diving.

Surfing is possible at Blacksmiths, Caves, Catherine Hill Bay and Dudley. Wangi Point, Pelican, Cam's Wharf and Shingle Splitter's Point are good for swimming. The Watagan Mountains at the back of the Lake Macquarie have hiking and horse back riding trials.

Mount Royal National Park

Mount Royal National Park is adjacent to the south-western edge of Barrington Tops National Park and contains part of the Barrington Tops Wilderness Area. It was declared over former state forest in 1996 and includes rainforest areas that provide habitat for threatened species such as the Hastings River mouse.

The park is 50km north of Singleton. Turn right into Bridgeman Road off the New England Highway north of Singleton and follow the signs to Lake St Clair.

Wollemi National Park

A large wilderness area and part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. There are historic ruins at Newnes, across the Wolgan River from the camping area. Dunns Swamp has easy walks and plenty of opportunities for canoeing. *Dunns Swamp is 20 km from Rylstone along Narrango Road.*



Woko National Park

Woko is about 30km from Gloucester and a steep hillside with two walking tracks in the rainforest. *Curricabark Turnoff, Gloucester (02 4987 3108)*.

Hunter Valley Wineries

Climatic and soil conditions in the Hunter Valley are excellent for Semillion, Shiraz and Chardonnay production. The Hunter Valley is now recognised for its full-bodied white wines, 'medium weight reds' and some excellent ports.

There are some world brands including Lindemans, McWilliams, Rothbury, Wyndham Estate, Tyrells and Draytons. Wine tasting is very much part of life in the Hunter Valley with most wineries opening daily. Wineries are found in the full length of the Hunter Valley. The area known as Wine Country is around the towns of Cessnock, Branxston, Maitland and Muswellbrook.