

ADELAIDE

Major investment downtown, a relaunched flight route and even a record-breaking Lions rugby match are shining a light on this South Australian city, finds Clare Vooght



CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

WHY GO?

Adelaide's skyline is undergoing major changes with significant hotel openings adding hundreds of rooms in the CBD (central business district). Recent openings include the Adelaide Marriott Hotel in August 2024, but there are 14 new hotels on the way including a 240-room Westin, which will occupy a space in the 37-storey Keystone Tower, and is set to be completed in mid-2027.

At ground level, plenty of the city's Victorian character remains and it's easy for clients to escape the bustle in its relatively small centre. Ultra-green Adelaide is a National Park City and the only city in Australia surrounded entirely by parkland.

WHAT TO DO

Walk a stretch of the 11-mile Adelaide Park Lands Trail, which forms two loops around the CBD and north Adelaide. Start at the Botanic Gardens, with pretty Victorian greenhouses housing native Australian plants and those from around the globe – including 200 rare or endangered species. Bookabee offers fascinating (commissionable) tours of the Botanical Gardens from an Aboriginal perspective, teaching clients about the Kaurna people's uses for plants and trees in food, medicine and culture (from about £34).

Other attractions in the CBD include Adelaide Zoo; the Art Gallery of South Australia, which contains works by Australian and international artists spanning 2,000 years; and the South Australian Museum, devoted to natural and cultural history.

Fuel up at Adelaide Central Market, which offers everything from doughnuts and patisserie to sushi and Algerian paella. For a restaurant experience, the CBD's street-art-filled laneways are home to a multitude of scrumptious stop-offs, including NYC-style Italian restaurant Fugazzi Bar & Dining Room, where pasta plates are paired with South Australian wines.

NORTH ADELAIDE

WHY GO?

Those who cross the River Torrens to the affluent suburb of north Adelaide will be rewarded with yet more parkland, historic architecture and views of the city skyline. The area is also home to the famous Adelaide Oval.

WHAT TO DO

Book cricket fans on to a tour of the Adelaide Oval through Cultural Attractions of Australia (starting from £14, including access to the players' changing rooms and a chat with a senior groundsman). The stadium even played host to a British and Irish Lions rugby match on July 12, which brought in the city's highest-ever number of hotel bookings at 10,752 room nights, generating £1.9 million in revenue.

Clients can also explore the Riverbank area surrounding the Oval (pictured), then walk uphill further into north Adelaide, where plaques offer insight into historic buildings dating back to the South Australian Gold Rush era in the 1850s. Stop at Light's Vision, a lookout on Montefiore Hill, where a statue of Adelaide's founder Colonel William Light commemorates the establishment of the city in 1836.



PICTURES: South Australian Tourism Commission

DESTINATIONS

AUSTRALASIA | ADELAIDE

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OF THE
BEST

ADD-ONS



Classic: A visit to the Barossa Valley, an hour north of Adelaide and famous for wines including shiraz and cabernet sauvignon, pairs well with a city stay. Operators such as Elegant Resorts, Inspiring Travel and Intrepid Travel all offer Barossa Valley visits.



Detour: En route to wildlife-rich Kangaroo Island, explore the Fleurieu Peninsula with commissionable Off Piste 4WD Tours to spot koalas in the wild, as well as enjoying a picnic made with local produce. Prices from £219.

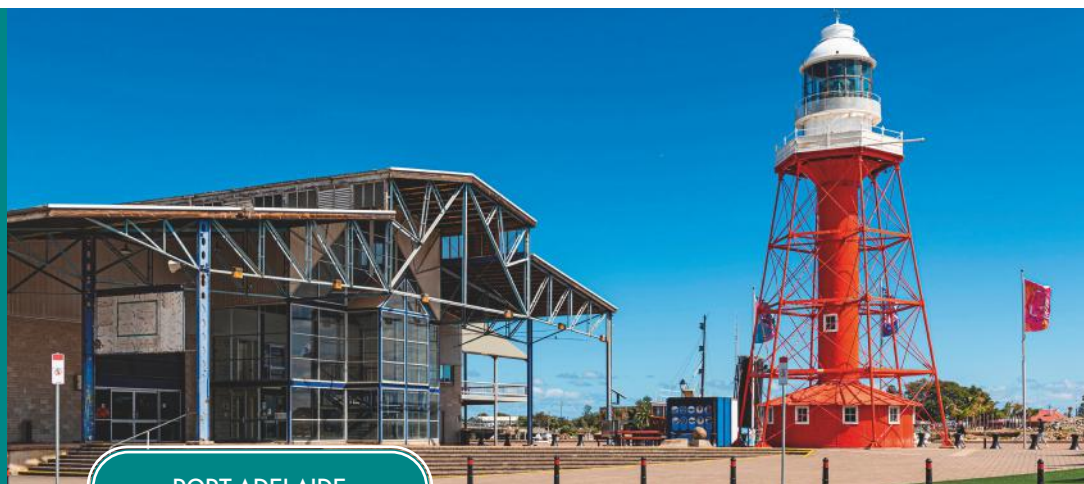
offpistetours.com.au



New product: Open-range Monarto Safari Park is home to lions, cheetahs, rhinos and giraffes. The 78-room Monarto Safari Resort, sold through Journey Beyond, opened in May and has two swimming pools and a spa.

monartosafariresort.com

PICTURES: South Australian Tourism Commission/Ian Routledge; Henschke and Co/Dragon Redacaj; Shutterstock/Majonit, Klam



PORT ADELAIDE

WHY GO?

These days the cobbled lanes and 19th-century warehouses of characterful Port Adelaide (pictured above) are packed with pubs, street art and cultural attractions – but back in the 1830s, this area was nicknamed Port Misery by early European settlers who arrived at the swampy landing spot. Come here to discover the city's maritime history and how it has changed.

WHAT TO DO

Hear the stories of Adelaide's early settlers on a two-and-a-half hour walking tour with agent-friendly Flamboyance Tours (about £43), then head to the South Australian Maritime Museum to learn more about the journeys people took to reach Australia. Also visit historic Port Adelaide Lighthouse, the oldest clipper ship in the world at Port Adelaide Docks, and the National Railway Museum, a must-see as Port Adelaide was home to Australia's first steam-powered railway.

NORWOOD

WHY GO?

Bougie Norwood (pictured below) is an affluent neighbourhood in the city's relaxed eastern suburbs, just half an hour's stroll from the CBD. Its mix of leafy residential streets shows off the city's historic architecture – think intricate cast-iron lacework on balconies and verandas – but Norwood is also a charming hub for independent businesses, thriving bars and restaurants.

WHAT TO DO

It's all about eating, drinking and shopping in boutiques and bookstores on the Parade, as well as mooching around laid-back record stores and antique shops on Magill Road. Follow the Eastside Wine & Ale Trail for a boozy tour of 13 micro-breweries, gin distilleries and cellar doors serving wine from the surrounding region's vineyards.

top tip

The Adelaide Fringe festival is the world's second-largest Fringe (after Edinburgh) and takes place from mid-February to mid-March. There are plenty of free events alongside ticketed shows. adelaidefringe.com.au





GLENELG

WHY GO?

Glenelg is a 20-minute tram ride from Adelaide's CBD, which means clients can be sipping cocktails at beach bars and unwinding on one of the city's most popular stretches of sand in no time.

WHAT TO DO

Either head straight to the public sandy beach or bag a daybed or lounge at The Moseley Beach Club, which serves food and cocktails with live music and has DJs powering up in the early evenings. Head to

Jetty Road for more foodie options (there's everything from a doughnut shop to spicy Chinese hotpot and bottomless brunches). Boat cruises also operate from Glenelg, with the opportunity to spot dolphins or enjoy the sunset from the water.

ADELAIDE HILLS

WHY GO?

The area's natural beauty, all rolling hills and verdant forests, comes with a hip community of winemakers and chefs. It's known as one of the coolest parts of Adelaide and is roughly a 30 to 40-minute drive from the CBD.

WHAT TO DO

Book a winery tour and tasting at one of Adelaide Hills' plethora of vineyards and

cellar doors to sample the region's cool-climate wines, then reserve a table at one of the many restaurants serving local produce. The region is known for growing strawberries and cherries and for producing pork, which is best sampled in Hahndorf, Australia's oldest-surviving German settlement. Don't miss Mount Lofty for views of the Adelaide skyline, as well as Mount Lofty Botanic Garden, home to lakes, native plants, sculptures and walking trails.



PICTURES: South Australian Tourism Commission; Nathan Godwin

WHERE TO *stay*

Eos by SkyCity is a glitzy five-star hotel featuring rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows, big bathrooms with marble tiles and gold accents, plus a terrace with a pool. Rooms from £160 a night, room-only. skycityadelaide.com.au

Adelaide Marriott Hotel

opened last year in the CBD's General Post Office building, which retains its original facade. Rooms feature contemporary design and there's an indoor pool. Rooms from £157 per night, with breakfast. marriott.com

Hotel Indigo Adelaide Markets

features vibrant decor – think raw bricks, copper accents and striking art. Its two restaurants serve local food, a nod to its location close to gastro-hub Adelaide Central Market. Rooms from £82 per night, room-only. ihg.com

BOOK IT

Audley Travel's 19-day Best of the Outback by rail and air itinerary visits Adelaide, Adelaide Hills, Kangaroo Island, Darwin, Arnhem Land, Bamurru Plains and three nights on The Ghan train. From £18,315 per person (based on twin-share), including flights, transfers, accommodation and excursions, in April 2026. audleytravel.com

Elegant Resorts offers four nights in Adelaide staying at Eos by SkyCity with a Barossa Valley day trip, two nights in Adelaide Hills and three nights on Kangaroo Island, from £5,549 per person, including transfers and flights departing on October 5. elegantresorts.co.uk