

WINE FARM & HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE

Duration: 2 weeks minimum to 12 weeks.

Dates: February to November.

Capacity Max: 2 volunteers at one time

Requirements:

- Minimum age: 18.
- You must have an Upper Intermediate level of English.
- Special skills: Practical energy and a willingness to embrace the many learning opportunities that can be experienced in viticulture, estate management, wine production and promotion via tasting presentations and restaurant hospitality.

Documents required: Enrolment form, curriculum vitae, letter of motivation, passport copy, proof of medical insurance.

Day of arrival: Sunday

Day of departure: Sunday

Project Highlights:

- Gain thorough hands-on exposure to all practical aspects of boutique wine-estate management, from vineyard preparation and maintenance to harvest and wine maturation.
- Enjoy practical hands-on involvement in the 'behind-the-scenes' processes of general farming and wine-estate agricultural practices.
- Participate in the diverse daily activities of a small, busy and highly popular restaurant and wedding venue.
- Stay in a scenic environment where the general routine and bustle of urban living can be escaped.
- Experience the many naturally beautiful areas in the immediate Plettenberg Bay region and broader Garden Route district.
- Choose from a long list of outdoor and adventure activities to add to your experience - including the world's highest bridge bungy, swimming with seals, marine safari's, river-rafting, sky-diving and many more.
- Make new friends from all over the world.



Information about the Estate:

While the Plettenberg Bay Wine Route is relatively young, industry has since expanded and the route currently boasts 9 producing boutique estates. The initial plantings in Plettenberg Bay were primarily the Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir cultivars and the area has become known particularly as a Cap Classique (naturally bottle-fermented sparkling wine) region. Subsequently other cultivars, both white and red, have been introduced to expand operations. The wines (sparkling, white and reds) have enjoyed favourable receptions at presentations and reaped numerous awards.

This estate was never meant to be a wine farm – it was purchased in the early 2000s to serve as a retirement home for the owner's beloved polo ponies. The idea soon evolved however and by 2009, the first vines had been planted. The maiden vintage followed in 2012; the start of what has become a thriving boutique winemaking enterprise.

The estate has grown from the original Sauvignon Blanc and Cap Classique production to the addition of 4 red varieties, Shiraz, Mourvedre, Grenache & Carignan, which are now used to include rose and red blends into the estate's range.

The wines are available for tasting and sales at their Tasting Room Restaurant and Event Venue, which is housed in a converted Orchid greenhouse. With breathtaking views over the farm dam, paddocks and surrounding mountains, it is the perfect setting to enjoy the fresh country air with a wine tasting paired with a long, unhurried sharing board style lunch.

The annual cycle of primary activities is:

- **January:** Preparing cellars for pressing season
- **February & March:** Staggered harvest and pressing activities depending on seasonal conditions and cultivar
- **April:** Preparing new vineyards
- **May:** General maintenance
- **June & July:** Pruning after leaves have fallen and new planting preparation
- **August:** Ploughing in of cover crop
- **September:** Trellising and spring fertilizer
- **October:** Tipping: the removal of the first 2-5 cm of growing shoot to enhance development and allow the fruit to set better
- **November:** Topping: the removal of 15-25 cm of a young growing shoot, by hitting it off with a strong switch or thin stick to allow good air circulation and prevent disease
- **December:** Irrigation, hedging and disease control

Program details:

Volunteers are involved in a wide range of wine-specific agricultural activities inclusive of vineyard field management, new trellis construction and existing trellis maintenance, irrigation networks, planting, the care and training of new vine growth, the busy harvest and pressing period, vine pruning for the next season, plus then wine maturation and bottling. Kindly note that these activities are on an annual cycle but are seasonally dependent.

To the broad activity list can be added other 'as-and-when-needed' duties associated with all farms – water supply, fencing, open space management, invasive alien vegetation removal, property structure and equipment maintenance and repair, soil erosion rehabilitation, and much more.

The estate's hospitality arm includes wine presentations and tastings, as well as all food and beverage service & management aspects in the restaurant and event venue surrounded by paddocks and the estate vineyards. Their menu is sharing board style, designed to encourage social interaction over unhurried lunches, and pair perfectly with their wines. Exclusive weddings are a large part of the restaurant's business and bring variation to the hospitality learning experience.

Once volunteers have mastered the technical aspects of what the estate wines are about and seen how tastings plus the restaurant and kitchen works, they have the opportunity to add variety to their regular routine by participating in these public interface hospitality elements.

Your role:

The general farming activities are usually a Monday to Friday cycle but could include weekends during the busy harvest and pressing time. Outside of the summer year-end peak-season, when hospitality operates seven days a week, the restaurant and tasting activities operate from Wednesdays through to Sundays. By arrangement, you may be requested to work in hospitality for part or all of the weekend, taking time off on other days of the week off in lieu of this. Your working schedule for the duration of your visit will be planned with you on your initial day, during orientation.

However, the general routine programme could look like this:

- From 07.00: Breakfast.
- 07.45 – 07.50: Transfer from your accommodation to the project.
- 08.00 – 13.00: Participation in routine morning activities according to the overall seasonal programme – a mix of farm related activities (vineyards, grapes, harvest, pruning, wine maturation) or kitchen (catering preparation) and restaurant hospitality.
- 13.00 – 14.00: Lunch break – flexible and varied and may be split when involved with the restaurant over this busy time period.
- 14.00 – 17.00: Afternoon programme as required; and after your work transfer from the project to your accommodation.
- 17.00 onwards: Leisure time.
- 19.00 – 19.30: Dinner with the team and leisure time.

Please note that the seasonal nature of the vine and wine cycle PLUS the heightened hospitality demands from October to Easter as well as the peak year-end summer season will result in a different focus on activities at different times of the year, so a placement during the South African summer will be substantially different to one during the more dormant mid-year.

It is important to note that this description serves as an example only. The daily tasks and challenges depend on the volunteer, the time of year and the work that needs to be done. The final job description can therefore vary substantially from the above.

Getting to and from the project:

You need to arrive at George Airport where you will be collected by a dedicated transfer service provided on both your arrival and departure.

Please schedule your arrival and departure for a Sunday between 08:00 and 17:00.

Should Sunday not be possible, please approach us and we will sort it out together.

Accommodation:

You will stay in an established general accommodation venue based in The Craggs, a rural suburb of the greater Plettenberg Bay/Bitou Region. The accommodation is set in a 5-hectare small-holding amidst indigenous forest and open grazing pastures and about 25 minutes from the main town of Plettenberg Bay. You are accommodated in fully equipped, shared two-bed rooms, with bedding & towel provided, so will, when required, be sharing with another volunteer of the same gender. There are numerous bathrooms across the property's facilities for communal access and use.

Volunteers have full use of our well-equipped guest kitchen plus the two verandah areas - with large fireplaces - of the main homestead building. It is here that guests and hosts gather for social interaction and where evening meals are served for all to enjoy.

Kindly note that the main homestead is the accommodation base of the family of one of our team members and due to COVID and privacy considerations, is not open to anyone beyond the verandah area. On the grounds is a large group entertainment area complete with an under-cover combination plunge-pool/hot tub (the latter only fired up on request for special occasions), a bar facility (the bar itself is a prop from a period movie filmed in our area) plus an outdoor braai (BBQ) area. We have a tradition of declaring Friday's "Braaiday" so have regular local residents visiting for sundowners and a braai to mark the end of the week with our team and guests. The property also provides a golf practice putting green and a proper boule/petanque track where guests soon get to know their co-guests.

Free Wi-Fi is available at the main homestead and entertainment areas only. Bedding is changed weekly and you are free to use the washing machine for free when you wish to launder your clothing.

The Crags has two general dealers where daily consumable purchases are made but these are not within comfortable walking distance of the accommodation. Should you require transport to Plettenberg Bay for special shopping purchases, or to other venues for leisure and pleasure activities, please talk with the permanently resident accommodation team who will assist with transport arrangements, which will be at an individual cost.

Meals

Three daily meals are provided. You will make your own breakfast and lunch (continental breakfast; lunch consists of sandwiches which you prepare yourself). For dinner, you will be provided with a hot meal usually taken with all residents at the facility. All meals are eaten in the verandah area or the outside entertainment area when required.

Both vegetarian & vegan options, as well as any special dietary requirements, are available.

Free time

Friday evenings: Traditionally, a braai (BBQ) takes place on Fridays with the meal served around 20h00. The outdoor hot tub is often fired up for this evening. You are also free to make arrangements to head into Plettenberg Bay if you wish to enjoy the nightlife there.

- Saturdays: Generally, this is a free day so open to individual choice. Please note: shops, but not supermarkets, close at 13.00 on Saturday and Sunday.
- Sundays: As on Saturdays, you can enjoy free time.

The project is situated in an area where the country's best activities are offered. You are well placed to participate in a variety of fun activities that can be done over weekends and during your free time in nearby areas like The Crags, Nature's Valley, Plettenberg Bay & Tsitsikamma, and then, should time permit, other areas of our beautiful Garden Route. Within an hour's drive of your accommodation base you can go bungee jumping, skydiving, whale watching, swimming with seals, adventure boating, kloofing, kayaking, horse-riding, zip-lining, rappelling/abseiling, visit nearby animal sanctuaries and a game-reserve, enjoy local wine estates, restaurants, farm stalls and café's, plus a long list of highly recommended hikes offering excellent forest, coastal and mountain views, and many more.

To participate in these activities, just speak with the project coordinator or a member of the team at the accommodation and they will assist you with the necessary arrangements.

What to bring

There are no special requirements in this regard, but we recommend bringing pocket money/credit and debit cards, personal toiletries plus leisure/beach towels, any prescribed medication, sunscreen, mosquito repellents, travelling and practical working clothes, e.g. full length trousers – jeans or cargo pants, long shorts, t-shirts and secure closed shoes for work, a warm and/or waterproof/windbreaking top or jacket, walking shoes, sandals/slops for after-hours wear, books/laptop, camera, and any items of a personal nature. All these items (and anything else you might need, such as a local SIM card) are readily available locally or in Plettenberg Bay.

Local Transport:

Daily transport to and from the nearby farm is provided.

Transfers to town and/or any selected leisure/pleasure activity venues during your free time can be arranged – with the costs of these services being to your own expense.

Your Commitment:

Please be aware that in applying for a volunteer project, you are making a firm commitment to the project. Our projects depend on the volunteers. It is necessary that you take this commitment seriously.

Some projects will appoint specific responsibilities to you; others are less structured and require the volunteers to use their initiative. If you prefer the one type over the other, please ask us for the most appropriate project for your preference.

Your daily presence is required and working hours are to be followed strictly. Not fulfilling your obligation can result in your dismissal from the project.

Cell phone use during working hours

We kindly ask that you refrain from using your cell phone during work hours as this will distract you from doing the work at hand.

Volunteers who would like to take photographs of their projects are free to communicate this directly to their project supervisors for guidance and instruction

What to wear

You are asked to wear sensible clothing and to be culturally sensitive of the communities you are working with. You are expected to wear modest clothing, which includes jeans, leggings, long shorts, and long skirts. Closed shoes are advisable, especially when working outdoors. Underwear is not to be seen under any circumstances.

Not acceptable are low cut tops, short shorts/shirts, bikinis and swimwear, belly tops, shirts/t-shirts with no sleeves for male volunteers as well as flip flops or no shoes.

Please also do not wear any camouflage patterned clothing.

Insurance

Travel insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out full personal insurance cover.

This should include protection against theft and against loss of fees, should the whole or part of a programme or activity or accommodation not be attended.

Medical insurance

You are required to take out medical insurance before travelling.

You must ensure that you are covered from the day of departure in your home country to the day of arrival back in your home country. The minimum coverage must be US\$ 100.000 and, as part of the enrolment process, you will need to email us a copy of your insurance policy documentation.

Health

No vaccinations are required except for travellers going to the north-eastern areas of South Africa, where anti-malaria precautions are recommended. Clients should consult their doctor for recommendations.

A yellow fever certificate is compulsory for those persons who have travelled from, or intend travelling through, countries in the yellow fever belt:

Africa: Angola, Burundi, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda.

South America: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Panama, Peru, Surinam, Venezuela, Argentina and Paraguay.

Bring medication just in case you suffer from any travel-related illnesses, e.g. stomach upsets, or allergies since your body needs to adjust to the change in food, water and pollen count during your first few days in South Africa.

It is important to keep in mind at all times that HIV and Aids are widespread diseases in South Africa. The project is situated in a malaria-free area so no anti-malarial drugs are required.

Safety

Your assignment to the project will be during routine operational hours from Monday to Friday BUT may occasionally extend to some weekends (for which days off during the week will be substituted if required). You will be working with and exposed to agricultural equipment and tools as well as kitchen machinery, all of which can be potentially dangerous to inexperienced or unqualified persons. You must be safety aware at all times and only utilise equipment you have been trained in and are familiar with.

What's included / not included

Included:

- Project placement
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure (George Airport)
- Accommodation (shared rooms, breakfast, lunch and dinner, laundry)
- Daily transport to and from the project
- Good Hope Volunteers welcome pack
- An orientation at the beginning of your volunteering
- Electronic certificate (printed copy on request)
- Local support, including a 24-hour emergency number
- WiFi

Not included:

- Any other transport
- Excursions for leisure & pleasure
- Meals and refreshments on outings
- Personal toiletries and towels

Visa

You can volunteer in South Africa on a visitor's visa for up to 90 days.

Nationals from certain countries (e.g. Brazil, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, France, the Netherlands, Spain) will receive their visa when entering South Africa. Other nationals need to apply for a visitor's visa at a South African Embassy in their home country before travelling.

If you come to South Africa on a visitor's visa, you can extend once by another 90 days.

If you plan to come for more than 90 days, you need to apply for a volunteer visa at a South African Embassy in your home country. Please ask us for the necessary documents for your visa application.

For the latest information contact the South African Embassy or Good Hope Volunteers.

PROGRAM AND PACKAGE DETAILS

Transport

Arrival: Collection by Shuttle at either George or Port Elizabeth Airport and transferred to Firefly Falls base camp.

Departure: Shuttle to George or Port Elizabeth Airport from Firefly Falls (Alternative destinations can be arranged at extra cost)

*Please note airport transfers are only included for a minimum 3 week stay. For any stays under 3 weeks airport will be charged separately

Getting to and from the Project: Weekly transportation to your project site

Activities: Transport provided BUT on clients account

Accommodation: (Firefly Falls)

- Shared two-bed rooms with bedding and towels provided.
- Well-equipped communal kitchen as well as other communal areas.
- Entertainment facilities including a hot tub, bar, and outdoor BBQ area.
- Free WiFi at the main homestead and entertainment area.
- Bedding changed weekly, laundry facilities available.
- Bordering an indigenous forest

Meals:

- Daily breakfast and lunch are self-prepared (basic continental breakfast and build your own sandwiches for lunch if you lucky, maybe some leftovers from dinner)
- Home style and home cooked sit down dinners provided with entire team.
- Vegetarian, vegan, and special dietary options available. (please communicate dietary requirements before arrival)
- Tea, coffee and hot chocolate station
- Food eaten between meals is for the volunteer's own account
- If you require extra snacks or sweet treats we will happily transport you to the nearest local superette on collection from the days project.
- Any restaurant/takeaway meals over down time is at clients cost

Free Time:

Numerous adventure activities within an hour's drive, including bungee jumping, skydiving, swimming with seals, whale watching (in season), numerous hiking trails, ziplining and more. Consult project coordinators for activity arrangements once you have arrived.

What to Bring:

- Pocket money/credit and debit cards.
- Personal toiletries, beach towels, and prescribed medications.
- Sunscreen, mosquito repellents (There are lots of mosquitos in the forest)
- Practical working clothes are very important, bring long sleeved tops and long pants for work. (Mosquitos!)
- The correct footwear is very important for the reforestation project, please ensure you have strong boots that are ankle height, they need to be weather resistant and comfortable. (You will have long days of manual labour making a positive impact one day at a time)
- Books, laptop, camera, and personal items.

Cell Phone Use: Cell phone use is prohibited during working hours. Discuss photography with project supervisors for guidance.

Clothing Guidelines (while in the field): Modest clothing is essential. No low-cut tops, short shorts, or swimwear. Bring long sleeved tops and long pants for work as well as the correct shoeing that will allow you to work in a stable yard as well as ride horses.

Medical Insurance: You must have medical insurance covering a minimum of US\$100,000 from departure to arrival in your home country.

Health: No vaccinations are required unless traveling to specific areas, consult a doctor for recommendations. Keep in mind that HIV and AIDS are prevalent in South Africa.

Safety: Training will be provided for before you head into the field. Please stick to these training guidelines.

Included:

- Project placement.
- Airport transfer.
- Accommodation.
- In field transport
- Meals.
- Welcome pack.
- Orientation.
- Electronic certificate.
- Local support.
- WiFi.

Not Included:

- Activities and other transport outside of programme transport.
- Personal expenses. (including additional food costs)
- Visa costs.
- Travel insurance.
- Flights.

Your Commitment: Take your commitment to the project seriously. Your daily presence and adherence to working hours are essential and will help keep the experience positive for all involved

Please let us know if you have any further queries around this project.

We look forward to hosting you.