



ACADEMY
TRAVEL

TAILORED
SMALL GROUP
JOURNEYS

VERDI IN THE VINEYARDS

A musical retreat in the Hunter Valley
with Robert Gay

Overview

For many music lovers Giuseppe Verdi epitomises Italian Opera, which is hardly surprising considering that for half a century he completely dominated the Italian opera scene with his stirring dramas and thrilling music.

Discover more about this fascinating and deeply private man, while gaining insights into his complex and ever-evolving musical imagination, during this 4-day musical retreat in the Hunter Valley, led by one of Australia's most experienced music educators.

Exclusive use of a luxurious boutique hotel, The Convent (above), has been arranged for the tour, which also includes a visit to the fine Maitland Regional Art Gallery and gourmet dining at two of Pokolbin's most stylish and highly regarded restaurants.

Lecturer & Tour leader

For more than thirty years, Robert Gay has taught a wide range of music history courses at the Centre for Continuing Education at Sydney University, as well as having designed and led more than ninety musical and cultural tours to Europe, Scandinavia and America.

Essential information

Tour dates: April 4-7, 2022

Price per person: \$3,780

Supplement for sole use of
double room: \$1,020

Maximum number in group: 28

Start: 10.15am, April 4, Central
Station

Finish: c4.00pm April 7, Central
Station

Fitness level

★ Good overall fitness required

Itinerary

Hunter Valley (3 nights)

Further information and bookings

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Highlights

A masterclass in Music History

Popular music educator Robert Gay shares his wealth of knowledge, in person, with this seven-part course on Verdi's life and music. Works discussed will include all the best-loved Verdi operas, plus *Luisa Miller*, *Attila*, *Sicilian Vespers*, *Don Carlos*, *Falstaff*, and the great Requiem.

Luxurious Hotel

Our group will have exclusive use of the luxurious boutique hotel called The Convent, which is situated on an extensive estate in the Pokolbin wine district. This 19-suite hotel offers lovely views of the estate and 'farm to fork' dining from its many organic gardens.

Fine Dining

Enjoy two outstanding meals at two highly regarded Hunter Valley establishments: a lunch at Restaurant Cuvée overlooking the vineyards, and a superb dinner at award-winning Muse.

Maitland Regional Art Gallery

This fine regional gallery hosts over 20 exhibitions and showcases thousands of artworks annually. The award-winning building is as much a part of the experience as the artworks themselves.

Detailed itinerary

Monday 4 April – Setting off

This morning, we meet at Sydney's Central Station at 10.15am for our coach departure soon afterwards to the Hunter Valley. After a short stop for lunch at Wollombi, we arrive at our hotel and check in. At 4.00pm, join your fellow participants for welcome drinks, followed by Robert's first talk. This evening, dinner is served in the hotel. (L, D)

Tuesday 5 April – Pokolbin

After breakfast, we meet for Part 2 of the course, followed by lunch at the nearby gourmet Restaurant Cuvée. Part 3 continues back at the hotel, where, after a light dinner, you will be entertained with images of the *Terra Verdiana* in the Parma region of the Po Valley, the *Casa di Riposo per Musicisti* in Milan, and the people central to Verdi's life, most importantly his second wife Giuseppina Strepponi. (B, L, D)

Wednesday 6 April – Maitland & Morpeth

This morning we meet for Part 5 of the course. In the early afternoon, we drive to Maitland where we will be guided through one of the current special exhibitions in the Maitland Regional Art Gallery. After strolling along the picturesque main street of nearby Morpeth, we return to the hotel for Part 6 of the course. This evening, we drive to Muse for a memorable farewell dinner. (B, D)

Thursday 7 April – Heading home

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and leave your bags at Reception. Following this, the course will conclude with Robert's final talk. We depart at 12.30pm, stopping for lunch at Wollombi. We should be back at Central by about 4.00pm. (B, L)

The Course

Part 1 Fathers & Daughters

Part 2 Hero of the *Risorgimento*

Part 3 Verdi and the Orchestra

Part 4 Letters & Slides

Part 5 The influence of French Grand Opera

Part 6 Verdi & Shakespeare

Part 7 Comic Verdi

Note that all the talks will be illustrated by musical excerpts on CD

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