



ACADEMY
TRAVEL

TAILORED
SMALL GROUP
JOURNEYS

ART & ARTISTS OF THE WOLLOMBI & HUNTER VALLEYS



Overview

From award-winning sculptors to visual, textile, ceramic and photographic arts, the Hunter and Wollombi Valleys are renowned for the number of talented artists that live, work and exhibit here. This three-day excursion will take you from Indigenous rock art to the studios of leading contemporary artists – and, of course, you'll have ample time to enjoy the regional food and wine, fine landscapes and explore the rejuvenated towns of the region.

Our exploration includes visits to regional art galleries, which will be having several excellent exhibitions at the time of our visit. We'll also meet artists in their studios, including Braddon Snape and Fiona Lee, whose exhibition we'll see at Maitland Regional Gallery. Along the way we'll visit well-preserved historic towns, and have dinner at two excellent restaurants in the Hunter Valley, and visit the private sculpture park and studios of Paul Selwood, one of Australia's leading sculptors.

Tour leader

Dr Nick Gordon holds a University Medal and PhD in History from the University of Sydney and has taught at Australian universities for 10 years. Nick's academic expertise is complemented by the specialised knowledge he has gained as an artist, and he brings these insights to the art enjoyed throughout this tour. Nick has been leading tours for Academy Travel since 2007.

Essential information

Tour dates: November 10-12, 2021

Price per person: \$2,380

Supplement for sole use of double room: \$470

Maximum number in group: 18

Start: 9.30am, November 10, Regimental Square (Wynyard)

Finish: 6pm, November 12, Regimental Square (Wynyard)

Fitness level

★★ Good overall fitness required

Itinerary

Hunter Valley (2 nights)

Further information and bookings

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Highlights

Visit the studios of leading Australian artists: Paul Selwood, Braddon Snape, Fiona Lee and Richard Tipping.

Tour the first-rate public galleries of the region at Maitland and Newcastle.

Enjoy the scenic beauty of the Wollombi Valley and the Broken Back Range.

Learn about Indigenous art and history, including the Bulgandry Aboriginal Art Site.

Explore historic Morpeth and rejuvenated Newcastle.

Hotel

Mercure Resort Hunter Valley Gardens (2 nights)

4.5* hotel with spacious modern rooms and private balconies in the Hunter Valley wine region.

Detailed itinerary

Included meals are shown with the letters B, L and D.

Wednesday 10 November - Wollombi

At 9.30am, enjoy a coffee at Wynyard in the Sydney CBD before heading north to Wollombi, a well-preserved colonial town on the original Great Northern Road. After lunch in a local café and a stroll among the colonial-era buildings, we visit the home and studio of Paul Selwood, one of Australia's most successful sculptors, and hear him talk about his art and the sculpture garden he has created nestled in the Wollombi Valley. In the late afternoon, we continue to the Hunter Valley. After checking into our hotel, there is time to relax before we enjoy dinner at an excellent Hunter Valley restaurant. Overnight Pokolbin (L, D)

Thursday 11 November – Towns and Galleries

Today we explore the art and heritage of the Hunter Region. Our first stop is Maitland, where we visit Maitland Regional Gallery's diverse range of well-curated exhibitions. A highlight of our visit is the artist Fiona Lee who will speak to us about her exhibition at the gallery. We then visit a new gallery opened by artist Richard Tipping, who'll meet us at the gallery and discuss the work on show. After a break for lunch, we continue to Morpeth, a pretty, well-preserved colonial town on the Hunter River, before continuing to Newcastle Regional Gallery. After visiting the gallery, we'll stop by Margell Hinder's sculptural fountain before returning to the Hunter. After time to relax and freshen up, we dine in a fine Hunter Valley Restaurant. Overnight Pokolbin (B, D)

Friday 12 November – Newcastle Artists

Newcastle has substantially changed from the days when it was one of Australia's largest industrial centres. These changes are seen across the city, which provides easy access to quiet city beaches and to its hinterland in the Hunter Valley. But the former industrial spaces of the city have also become a haven for artists. This morning we visit Creator Incubator, where artist Braddon Snape has transformed an industrial warehouse complex into 34 open artist studios. After Braddon talks to us about his own work in his studio, he will show us around the complex. In the afternoon, after a picnic lunch by the beach, we return to Sydney stopping to visit the Bulgandry Aboriginal Rock Art site, near Kariong. Here we see an exceptional number of very well-preserved Aboriginal engravings of animals and of Bulgandry man, an ancestral hero. Continuing to Sydney, we arrive at Wynyard in the early evening. (B, L)