



Where Party Time Is The Norm

Just a short drive south of Adelaide is the seaside town of Normanville

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The rugged hills that frame Normanville Beach create an almost unreal movie-like backdrop to the expanse of white sand that is over seven kilometres long. As you sink your toes into the sand watching the sun setting into the ocean you will see to the north, Carrickalinga Beach and Haycock Point and to the south Yankalilla Hill and the Starfish Hill wind farm in the distance. Sitting on two hilltops the wind farm was the first in South Australia and the turbines add to the dream-like quality

of the view.

Normanville is 77 kilometres south of Adelaide on the western side of the Fleurieu Peninsula and a little over 30 kilometres further south you will find Cape Jervis. It is here that ferries make the daily crossings to Kangaroo Island. This makes Normanville a popular stopping point before travelling on to catch early morning ferries. Apart from the white sand, one thing you will notice is how clean the water is for swimming in and with barely a wave along

this sheltered part of the coast it's a relatively safe swimming beach for the whole family. It's comforting to know though that the Surf Lifesaving Club is situated right next to the small jetty.

During the summer months the life savers can be seen practising their skills, patrolling and generally keeping all beachgoers safe. This includes warning people to leave the water if the odd shark is spotted as was the case with one seen cruising by on the day we arrived. A great way

The cliffs drop spectacularly into the sea. ▶



Cape Jervis and the ferry to Kangaroo Island in the background.



Beach fish sculpture.



Sunset at Normanville beach.



The little free library at home in the main street.



Boat ramp artwork.

visitors can help support the lifesavers is to head over on a Friday night or Sunday morning when the clubrooms are open for food and drinks. And with this view it's not a bad place to start or end your day.

In front of the club and on the wall of the boat ramp next to it you'll find colourfully painted beach themed murals and you can't miss the giant leafy sea dragon taking up an entire side wall of the public toilets. It won't take you long to realise that the leafy sea dragon is a common theme around here, that's because these magnificent yet mysterious looking creatures can be found gracefully floating on their way, off this southern coast. These floaty, alien looking little creatures which are related to sea horses, drift in the currents and if

you're lucky you may spot them if you try snorkelling off the Rapid Bay Jetty which is around 20 minutes' drive further south.

The jetty at Normanville Beach is not very long but you can catch a variety of fish from it when the tide is in, and beach fishing is popular also for flathead and whiting. If you're staying at the conveniently located Jetty Caravan Park you can try fishing in the Bungala River which runs through the middle of the park. Bream can be caught in the river if the egrets don't get to them first. Another interesting bird visitor around these parts is the hooded plover. These fiercely protective little birds are known for nesting on sandy beaches and Normanville is one of their choices. At times the local council will cordon off a section of

the beach if they have established a nest there. Not that it wouldn't be obvious by the echoing screech of the birds warning anyone nearby to back off from where their newly hatched family is.

The beach is a great place to spend some time walking, playing with the dog (yes they are welcome here provided that they are on leash, 100m either side of the jetty) and watching boats coming and going as they are launched from the beach. You might also spot horses from the nearby horse trail riding business coming down for an early morning dip or out for a group trail ride along the beach.

The biggest and most anticipated event in Normanville however is the annual New Year's Eve Pageant. This community

based event is a whole lot of fun for locals and visitors alike spreading an infectious friendly atmosphere as the colourful and noisy parade of around 40 floats, makes its way from the town centre in the evening and culminates at the foreshore. It truly is a safe and happy environment and the whole foreshore area is abuzz before and after the parade with amusements and rides for the kids as well as a DJ and food trucks. Some of the food vans are organised and run by local community clubs with a range of options to choose from. We couldn't go past the local football club yiros van and weren't disappointed and it's good to know that the money you spend with them helps out the local clubs.

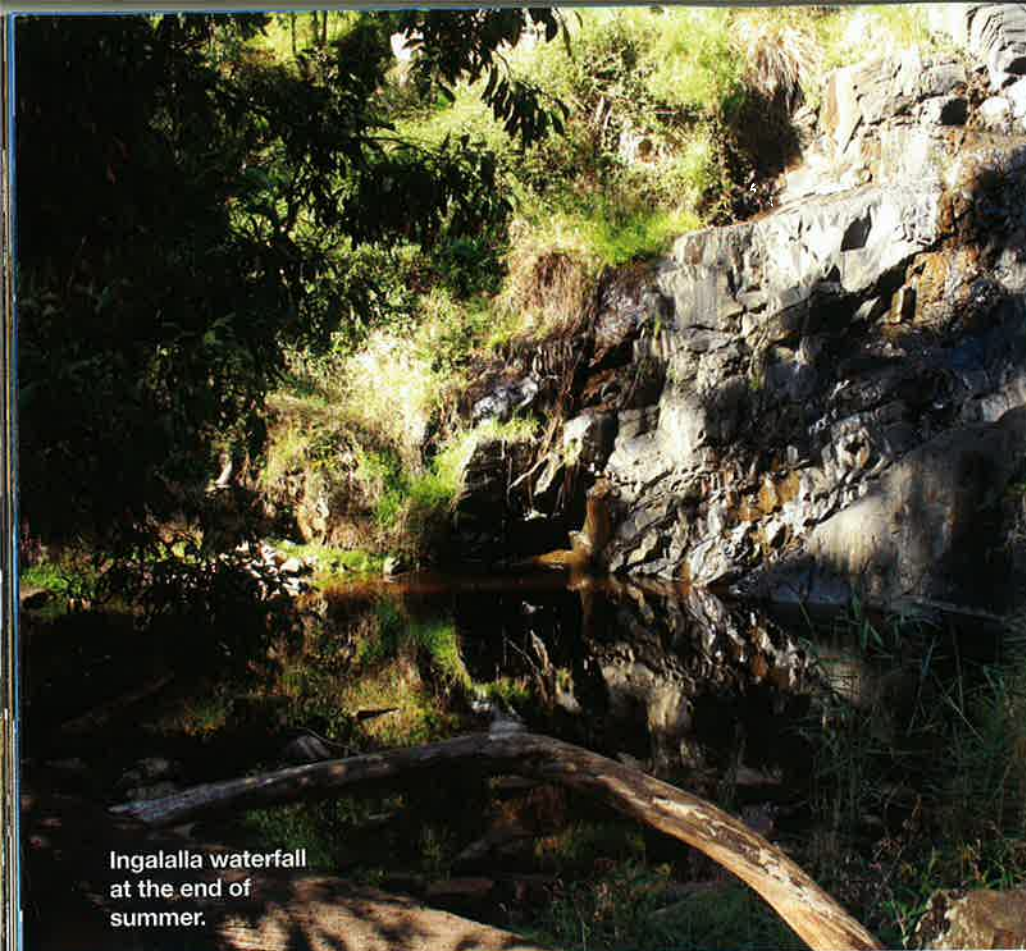
The icing on the cake is the fireworks

display in the evening which is set up on the beach during the day and has everyone mesmerised with an impressively long display. This is especially so considering that apart from a few sponsors, the parade and fireworks are possible due to fundraising throughout the year and by donations collected on the night of the parade. After the fireworks finale, the street party at the foreshore goes on for a little while longer and there is a great family party atmosphere in the caravan park as well. Of course the bonus of staying so close to the event is that everyone can enjoy the evening and everything is accessible by foot.

The centre of town is a short 10 minute walk from the caravan park and boasts a hotel "The Normy", cafés, takeaway, su-

permarket, a bakery and a host of small galleries, clothing and gift shops. A quirky thing to keep your eye out for is the Little Free Library. Sitting happily in the main street is "Storm Boys Cottage", a mini wooden house for books which was made by volunteers out of recycled materials. The idea of the Little Free Library is to drop off a book or magazine and swap it for another. A great idea and a great way to spend another relaxing day at Normanville. For a scenic daytrip though you can't beat jumping in the car and taking your own tour around the nearby areas to see everything from waterfalls to quiet hidden beaches.

Our journey started by going to see the Ingalalla Waterfalls which are 10 kilometres



Ingalalla waterfall at the end of summer.

from town on the Hay Flat Road. The bitumen lasts for two kilometres and then turns into a reasonably well graded dirt road, definitely accessible by conventional car. Sign posts will lead you into the Second Valley Forest Reserve and from the car park area to the falls is only a short, easy walk to a pool surrounded by giant boulders and the rock face with the waterfall. The falls have water all year round but at the end of summer it's little more than a trickle but still a very cool and peaceful spot to stop and there are picnic tables dotted around if you wanted to spend a while.

From there we headed back into Normanville then took the scenic drive known as the Fleurieu Way as far as Cape Jervis. On the way take the detour off road to get up close and personal with the Starfish Hill Wind Farm and you'll be amazed at the sheer size of the wind turbines and how close you can get to them. There is something both beautiful and imposing when you watch them in motion. Meander down to the bay at Cape Jervis and here you'll find the ferry for Kangaroo Island which is easily visible being just 16 kilometres from the mainland.

Heading back towards Normanville our next stop was Rapid Bay. This spectacular little bay is known for its deep water fishing off the over 400 metre long jetty and it has a campground which sits practically on the beach. It's a basic campground with grassed sites, all unpowered, a couple

of BBQs, some shade and a toilet block but no hot showers. You need to bring in all your provisions too as there aren't any shops here and fires aren't permitted at any time. Dogs on lead however, are welcome. For only \$7 per night for adults, the location more than makes up for the lack of frills.

Our next leapfrog stop was at the base of Yankalilla Hill at Lady Bay. There is a large car parking and viewing area here to take in the coastline and also a memorial to commemorate the two Australian navy vessels named HMAS Hobart. The anchor of the decommissioned destroyer HMAS Hobart which had 3 tours of duty during the Vietnam War, rests here and points towards where the ship was scuttled approximately 6 kilometres off the coast in 2002. It has now become an artificial reef and another spectacular dive site and fishing ground.

The final leg back into Normanville takes us past fields with mobs of kangaroos grazing in the late afternoon and to the most picturesque dining experience you can have. The Links Lady Bay resort is a golf course with accommodation and an onsite restaurant aptly named The Peninsula. To dine here is a 'must do' not only for a great meal but for the best view of the coast and surroundings. Make sure you ask for a balcony table and you can dine while watching the sun set into the sea and family groups of kangaroos milling about and boxing on the putting green below. 🚗



A good spot for a drink on the deck.

An arty welcome as you enter Normanville.



FACT FILE

Getting there:

Normanville is 77 kilometres south of Adelaide via the Main South Road and Southern Expressway.

When to go:

Normanville knows how to party on New Year's Eve, so this is the best time to see it and get involved in the local spirit. It is however a beautiful relaxing town best experienced from January through to March.

Where to stay:

There are two caravan parks in Normanville, the Jetty Caravan Park which as it suggests is situated near the jetty tucked away on the foreshore, or the Beachside Holiday Park which is a little further south but also has great boardwalk access to the beach.

What to do:

The Fleurieu Way is a scenic drive which takes you past the coastline and allows you to wind your way down hills to explore small settlements along the way with breathtaking hideaway beaches.

The southern fleurieu area is a mecca for fishers, divers, photographers and anyone with a penchant for unspoilt beaches and bays.

For further information:

www.jettycaravanparknormanville.com.au
www.beachside.com.au
www.facebook.com/NormanvilleNewYear-sEvePageant
<http://www.links lady bay.com.au>