

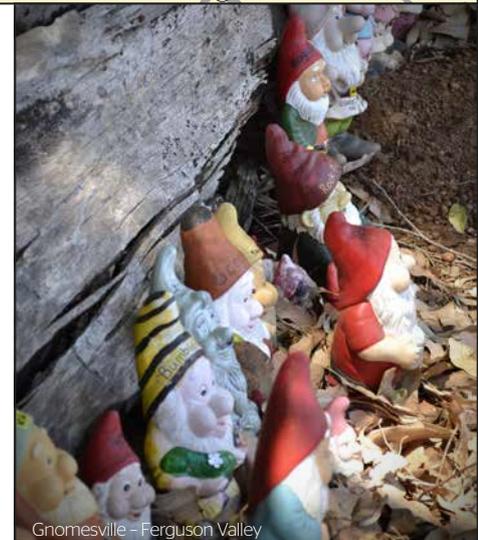
The Ferguson Valley Weekender 2-3 days



For those wanting a refreshing change to the established gourmet valleys within Perth or the well-known valleys in the South West, then it's worth exploring the alternative valley, Ferguson Valley. Set in picturesque surroundings of rolling hills the spectacular Ferguson Valley has much to offer for families, couples or any curious traveller. Here you can enjoy scrumptious local produce, walk

through stunning national parks, swim in a fresh water dam and discover quirky attractions.

A welcome change to the express and unchanging Kwinana Freeway-Bussell Highway route, travelling via the South Western Hwy opens up a myriad of places and attractions to discover! The alternative route allows you to visit quaint historic towns like Pinjarra and Waroona as well as marvel at the endless orange orchards in Harvey set amongst picturesque WA farming landscapes. And this is even before reaching your destination!



Gnomesville - Ferguson Valley

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Potters Gorge - Wellington National Park

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

Day 1 » Perth to Pinjarra 95km

From Perth take the South Western Hwy which can be accessed via Albany Hwy located in the south east of Perth. Albany Hwy intersects with the South Western Hwy in Armadale. See the changing landscape along the way as urban landscapes merge into semi-rural farming communities into expansive bushlands. Arriving in Pinjarra, park up and take a stroll down the entire length of the town which will take you past old heritage buildings including the old post office, colony-built Edenvale Homestead and the old wooden road traffic bridge. Or see some of Pinjarra's more modern attraction like the Pinjarra Suspension Bridge which spans the beautiful Murray river, Cantwell Park to visit the many sculptures on display or walk under the wooden lattice framework of the 66 year old Traffic Bridge. Pop into the Pinjarra Visitor Centre for more information on the town's history or alternative activities like kayaking, cycling, white water rafting or hiking adventures. For those feeling peckish, the famous Pinjarra Bakery is known in the area for the best pies around or you can choose to buy some food at the local shopping centre and head to the banks of the Murray river for a lovely picnic.

Pinjarra to Harvey via Waroona 55km

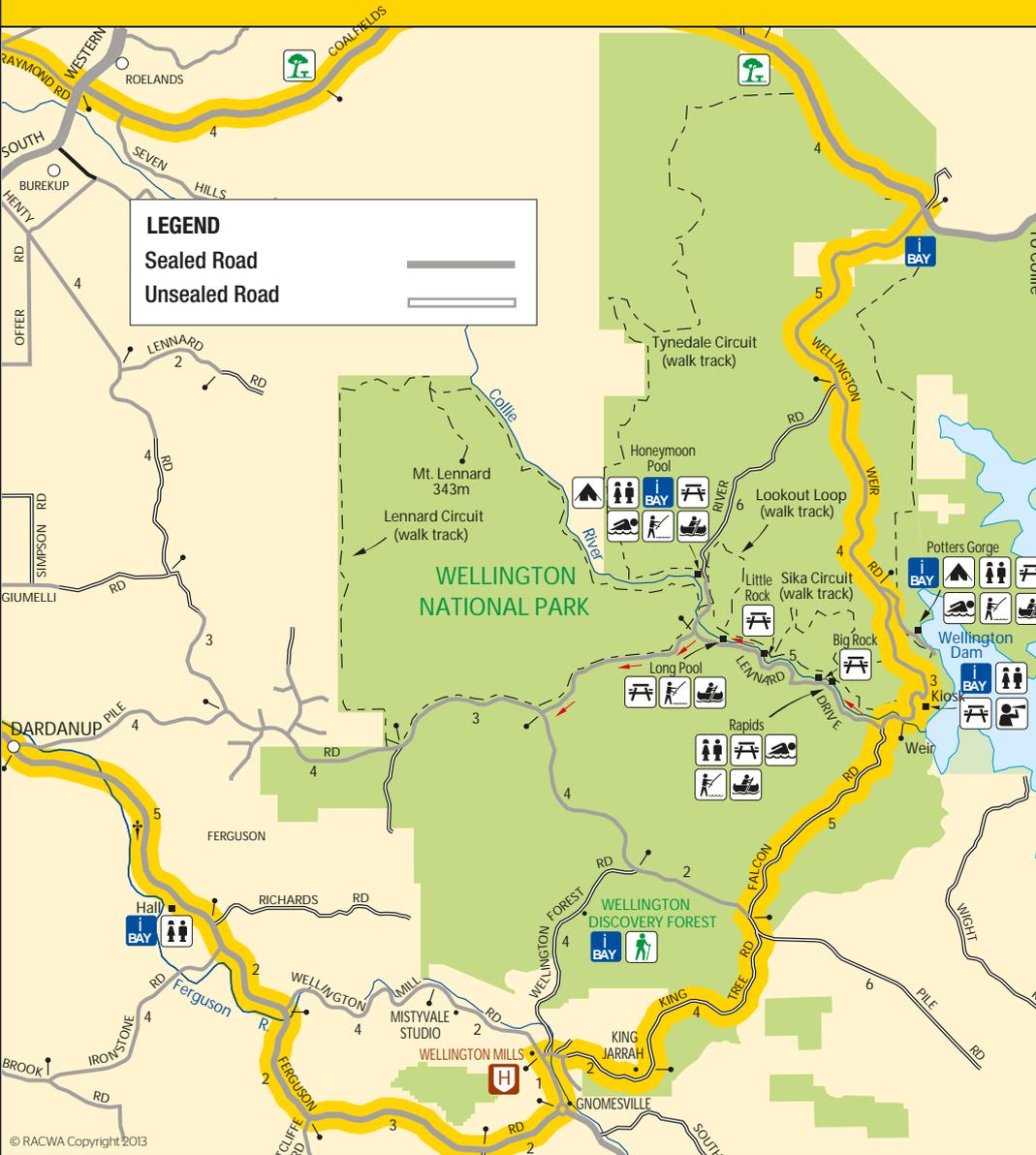
From Pinjarra continue south towards Waroona via the South Western Hwy. There are many arts & craft galleries to buy local creations or head a little further a field and visit Lake Navarino, a fresh water lake nestled amongst lush Jarrah Forest. Perfect for a quick swim or for the more adventurous, the lake is popular for water skiing and other water sports. Arriving towards Harvey, notice the rolling hills and dairy farms in the distance. The region, known as the fruit bowl of WA has many fruit and dairy farms with famous cheeses, orange juices and other gourmet food on offer in-town. Be sure not to miss the big orange, a small right hand turn off before entering Harvey. A gold coin donation gives access to the Big Orange lookout located within. Inside, a small picture gallery of the history of Harvey farming, in particular citrus fruit growing is shown as well a panoramic view of the thousands of orange trees within the Harvey Fresh orchards that stretch as far as they eye can see. Make sure to stock up in the Harvey Fresh shop on 100% freshly squeezed orange juice. For the Cheese lovers out there Ha Ve Cheese factory is a must taste attraction! The centre of town boasts a good selection of shops and cafes to explore and for those staying longer visit Stirling Cottage, a rustic timber replica cottage, modelled on the homestead built by governor Stirling's Harvey estate in the mid 1800's. Enjoy a traditional Devonshire tea or light country style lunch here as well.

Harvey to Ferguson Valley 55 km

Picturesque farmland changes into rolling hills nearing the Ferguson Valley. Continue south on the South Western Hwy and look out for Waterloo Rd which takes you direct onto Ferguson Rd, right into the heart of the Ferguson Valley. Here a spectacular backdrop plays host to an emerging wine and food region with many cellar door tastings on offer. For a food and wine trail map head to Dardanup Visitor Centre. Don't miss Ferguson Valley's creative side with a myriad of art galleries, shops, markets and wood craft workshops scattered throughout the area. Buy locally made paintings, etchings, sculptures, timberworks and glass. Drive towards Gnomesville, located at the end of Ferguson Rd. This attraction is the magical home to thousands of gnomes scattered amongst bushland, who have migrated here from all over Australia and the world. Wander through and find naughty, playful and sentimental Gnomes climbing trees, hanging in logs, playing cricket and even flying planes. The clever Gnomish puns are a funny addition to this quirky attraction where 'Gnome sweet Gnome' is a well-known phrase or you can meet famous Gnomes like 'Gnoami Campbell' and 'Astrognome!' After a long day of sightseeing drive to one of the many B & B's located within the Ferguson Valley or for more modern accommodation, Bunbury is a short 20min drive away.

Call 9436 4840, go to rac.com.au/greatdrives
or pop into your local RAC Travel Centre





Highlights

- » Pinjarra Suspension Bridge
- » Lake Navarino
- » The Big Orange
- » HA Ve Cheese
- » Gnomesville
- » Wellington Dam
- » Potters Gorge

Safe Driving Tips

- » Take a current detailed road map from the local visitor's centres. They are usually free!
- » Be aware of your vehicle's limits and take your time.
- » Be aware of fire bans during summer in Wellington National Park.
- » Beware of native wildlife, on roads and in remote areas, especially at dawn and dusk periods.
- » Check road conditions and weather in winter as un-sealed road may be difficult to access for 2WD.
- » Take your RAC member card to access Travel Member Benefits in the area.

Visit rac.com.au/travelmemberbenefits

Visitor Centres

Pinjarra	(08) 9531 1438
Waroona	(08) 9733 1506
Harvey	(08) 9729 1122
Dardanup	(08) 9728 1551

Day 2-3 » Ferguson Valley to Wellington Dam/Potters Gorge 10km

Today is all about slowing down, enjoying the ride and relaxing. After enjoying some local fare for breakfast visit stunning Wellington National Park, a 17,000ha unique eucalypt forest of Jarrah, Marri and Karri trees. The central feature of the Park is the beautiful Collie River Valley with its ancient valley gorge below the magnificent lake situated behind the man-made, Wellington Dam. To access the Dam there are two routes; one via Falcon Rd which is an unsealed gravel road accessible for 2WD (at times corrugated) or via the Wellington Dam Rd which is sealed and turns in from Coalfields Hwy. Falcon Rd takes you along a picturesque, winding, unsealed road via Jarrah King Tree, believed to be

about 400-500 years old; it stands as the oldest tree in the Park. There is a boardwalk that takes you direct to the tree from Falcon Rd. Continuing along this winding path you'll arrive at the doorstep of Wellington Dam. With a 34m high wall and a high pressure release valve, releasing tonnes of water per minute, it is an impressive sight! Come winter there have been occasions of the weir overflowing, as it has done before! Not to be missed! Take the sealed road (Wellington Dam Rd) straight to Potters Gorge, a popular swimming and fishing spot with wood BBQs, facilities and camping areas. Stay longer if you fall in love with it! Otherwise a perfect way to wind down after a long day journey, by swimming in a refreshing fresh water lake before heading home via Bunbury on the Bussell Hwy/ Forest Hwy express.

Accommodation

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Useful tips

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