1. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Why Margaret River as a Case Study?
Margaret River is an exceptional example of a region which has successfully developed its food and drink experiences into a major visitor proposition – being regarded by many as Australia’s premier gourmet region. This case study highlights key aspects of the region’s work in developing its food and drink experiences. Rather than being a distinct project, in Margaret River’s case, food and drink work has been developed as a core element of overall destination management delivery.

The Margaret River-Busselton Region
The Margaret River-Busselton region is located on the west coast of Australia approximately 3 hours’ drive south of Perth. The region incorporates the local government areas of Shire of Augusta-Margaret River and City of Busselton. The region benefits from being able to offer a varied product offering – stunning natural assets including beaches with world class surf breaks, tall-timber forests and ancient caves, as well as its world class culinary offerings.

Long recognised as one of Australia’s premium wine regions, Margaret River is home to 95 cellar doors and more than 120 wine producers. The region’s fertile soil also supports speciality growers and producers - including fruit and vegetables, grass fed beef and lamb, venison, native foods, organic dairy and olives, in addition to fresh seafood.

To place the destination in context - Western Australia is approximately 12 times the size of the UK, with Perth being an approximate 5hr flight from its key interstate source markets in Sydney and Melbourne as well as Asian markets such as Singapore. Given Perth’s status of one of the world’s most remote major cities, the largest overnight market for Margaret River is the relatively nearby Perth metropolitan area.

Margaret River Region

Visitors can access the region from Perth by car, bus, or via a direct charter flight to nearby Busselton - in reality, like many Australian destinations it is dominated by the self-drive market.
Development of Margaret River’s Food & Drink Experiences
The Margaret River region was identified as a potentially great grape growing region in the late 1960s. During the 1970s and 80s, viticulture became firmly established in the region, taking over from the existing beef, dairy and sheep farming industry.

Tourism in the Margaret River Region was primarily managed and promoted by the local tourism organisations – Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association (AMRTA) and Geographe Bay Tourism Association (GBTA). The creation of the MRBTA in 2015 heralded the beginning of a new era in tourism for the region, marked by the release of a new regional umbrella brand - Your Margaret River Region (YMRR).

Margaret River has an abundance of nature-based experiences which are appealing to visitors, however the region’s wine industry is largely responsible for establishing Your Margaret River Region (YMRR) as Western Australia’s most visited regional tourist destination. Three components support this position;

1. The opening of winery cellar doors created some of the first tourist attractions in the Margaret River Region, and they are still a major pulling factor for many visitors.
2. The production of high quality, world-class wines has helped to create an image of prestige for the Margaret River brand.
3. The sale of these wines helped take the Margaret River brand to the world, providing invaluable promotion of, and interest in the Margaret River Region.

Food & Drink – A Regional Point of Difference
Wine and food experiences have been identified as key influences in the tourism decision making process by numerous tourism, tertiary and industry sources, including Tourism WA (Taste 2020 report), Tourism Australia (Restaurant Australia campaign), and Curtin University (Symposium on Wine and Food China, a Tourism Perspective).

While wine and food is a component of destinations worldwide, Margaret River has a distinct advantage over most potentially competing regions in terms of the quality and range of its food and drink produce and experiences alongside its unique backdrop of surf and beaches.

Wine and food production are also key export commodities for the Margaret River and greater South West region. The synergy of markets and producers makes a coordinated strategy between tourism and export marketing logical and mutually beneficial. Strategic planning by MRBTA recognises the importance wine and food plays in the overall prosperity and economic development of the region.
Challenges and Solutions

Challenge - Fully capitalising on the region’s world-class produce and producers.

The need to establish a geographic locator for the region

- Margaret River was a well-established wine region, and although a large proportion of visitors had heard of Margaret River, comparatively few could pinpoint its location.

Depth of high quality visitor experiences

- Wineries are at the core of Margaret River’s food & drink offering, and although many of these businesses had diversified to incorporate restaurants and other visitor experiences, continued development to create a greater depth and range of high quality experiences was necessary if a clear destination point of difference was to be established.

Effective governance and co-ordination as an important enabler

- The region had two well-established local tourism organisations (LTOs), however at times his led to competing market propositions. In addition, the two LTOs were not always well placed in terms of having the necessary financial support required to successfully develop and bring their visitor experiences to market.

Strategic destination direction

- The region was missing the strategic ‘glue’ which brought the diverse range of experiences together.
- Inconsistent application of regional branding and conflicting brand messages from a range of regional and local tourism and economic development agencies led to duplication and mixed messages.

Business development priorities

- Many of the region’s SMEs were relatively slow to adopt online booking functionality, limited their levels of international and trade distribution readiness.
- Investment in new and refreshed products and experiences was insufficient to meeting ever-increasing visitor expectations.

Seasonality of product availability

- Many operators chose to operate only on a seasonal basis, limiting the attractiveness of the destination to visitors in shoulder and off-peak periods.

Status as a self-drive destination

- Margaret River was predominantly a self-drive destination. While typical of most Western Australian regions, this presented a challenge for increasing visitation, particularly in its key Asian growth markets.
Solutions
As an integral element of overall destination planning, a series of steps have been taken which have helped transform Margaret River into a first class food and drink destination;

Evolution of the Local Tourism Organisation
- In 2015, the Margaret River and Geographe Bay LTOs merged to form the Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association (MRBTA). Although still in its early stages, the new organisation has been able to leverage its enhanced range and depth of visitor experiences and be sufficiently resourced/well-placed to engage in the type of partnerships necessary to deliver the region’s potential.

Partnership Development
- MRBTA has successfully engaged with economic development and tourism partners, building excellent links between the tourism and food sectors.

Funding
- MRBTA has successfully attracted financial support for marketing and destination development from public sector partners including the South West Development Commission – financial support which made a tangible difference to the organisation’s capacity to support industry partners.

Strategic Alignment
- Through its strong food and drink assets and a proactive approach to engagement, the region successfully leveraged the benefits of Tourism Australia’s prioritisation of food and drink marketing at national level.

Establishing a signature event as a means of growing market awareness.
- Margaret River Gourmet Escape http://www.gourmetescape.com.au/ was established in 2013. Now in its 5th year, the event has been highly successful in generating awareness for the destination. Consensus from local stakeholders is that Margaret River Gourmet Escape has played an important role in building the region’s reputation as a food and drink destination.

Consistent Branding
- Although still comparatively new to market, creation of the Your Margaret River Region brand has presented a new unified brand proposition.

Innovative Story Telling and Engagement with Consumers
- MRBTA has developed a programme of innovation services which help bring the region’s food and drink experiences to life including; proactive food and drink stories and blogs, itinerary development, and development of interpretative storylines.

Complementing the Region’s Self-Drive Options
- MRBTA has been working in in partnership with industry to offer a wide range of tour options and providing online booking functionality via www.margaretriver.com
2. The Margaret River Story

Overview of food and wine experiences/products
Margaret River is recognised as a signature wine region, boasting world class wineries that have a strong presence in the international market. Most wineries are open to the public, specialising in cellar sales and wine tasting and many serve gourmet food using local fresh Margaret River produce. Among the most famous are Vasse Felix, Leeuwin Estate, Amberley, Howard Park, Madfish, Cape Mentelle, Evans and Tate, Brooklands Valley and Sandlefords.

Margaret River is one of 11 regions selected by Ultimate Winery Experiences Australia as home to some of Australia’s premium wineries offering quality winery experiences based around world class wines, warm and knowledgeable hospitality and culinary excellence.

In addition to wineries, the region is increasingly recognised for its high quality produce and food products including grass-fed beef and heirloom organic fruit and vegetables. Tourists can visit boutique breweries, such as the Bootleg Brewery, and purchase local produce such as wood fired bread, traditional French baked goods, artisan cheeses, chocolates, fudges, sweets, coffee and ice cream. Farmers markets held around the region almost every weekend provide an opportunity to taste farm fresh produce and meet the locals. Margaret River also boasts award winning restaurants, cafes, beach cafes, bistros and beer gardens that at draw inspiration from local produce and the stunning landscapes.

Hay Shed Winery, Wilyabrup

Experiencesmith Luxury Tours
Key Destination Food and Drink Components and Deliverables

Implementation Structures and Partnerships

- Newly established local tourism organisation - larger geography provided even greater depth of food and drink experiences, and removed the need for competing propositions in the marketplace
- Membership structure provides for requirements of food and drink and tourism businesses
- Appendix 1 contains a summary of MBRTA objectives and budgets.

MRBTA has established a memorandum of understanding with South West Development Commission (SWDC) - a statutory authority of the Western Australian government.

Government partners:
- Austrade
- Tourism WA
- Australia’s South West
- Tourism Australia
- WA trade offices
- Wine Australia
- Department of Agriculture
- Augusta Margaret River Shire
- City of Busselton

Industry partners:
- Universities and colleges
- Media partners
- Regional producer associations
- Chambers of Commerce

Corporate partners:
- Airlines
- Wholesale and ITO travel agents
- Tourism support services
- Hotel and accommodation partners
- International banking and trade institutions
MRBTA in partnership with SWDC developed the *Your Margaret River Region Wine & Food Promotional Plan*, released in 2016. The purpose of the Promotional Plan is to develop a cohesive and collaborative wine and food tourism model to connect industry with stakeholders in domestic and international markets. The aims of the Wine & Food Promotional Plan are to:

1. Increase visitation and spend to Your Margaret River Region
2. Increase trade opportunities for Your Margaret River Region
3. Help to increase the exposure and profile of regional wineries, wine producers and growers
4. Help to increase the exposure and profile of regional producers, chefs and artisans
5. Incorporate and embed the YMRR brand with wine and food producers and on all product promoted

Strategic alignment with state and national agencies, positioning food and drink as a key pillar of local, regional and state tourism marketing

Operational Activities include:

- Implementing the new thumbprint approach to branding which integrates the region's 5 key tourism propositions
- 2016 campaign targeting Singaporean visitors, “First Class in a Glass”
- In partnership with the wine industry - opening a wineshop in Beijing (plans for more outlets)
- Presentation of itinerary options on [www.margaretriver.com/itineraries](http://www.margaretriver.com/itineraries)

Itineraries are aimed primarily at the self-drive market. Booking support is not currently available for these itineraries.
Marketing and Sales (continued)

- MRBTA has developed booking functionality on www.margaretriver.com which allows consumers to directly book over 100 tours (35 food and drink) provided by MRBTA member businesses;
  - Tour gift vouchers are available
  - Tour bookings are for set tours rather than offering the option to select tailor-made itineraries
  - Booking functionality is powered by Bookeasy software solutions http://bookeasy.com/
  - Trade/ tour operator engagement is primarily via regional, state and national tourism agency partners
  - Stories and interpretation to drive consumer engagement
  - A stories section of the website https://www.margaretriver.com/stories/ has been developed, providing editorial/blog style content directly from the producers – the stories add an element of authenticity to presentation. A programme of new video content is coming on-stream in 2016 to help activate the Margaret River Wine Story.

Margaret River Gourmet Escape - A New Signature Event

- Signature event held annually since 2013
- 3 day festival, star name chefs, high quality event
- Highly regarded as one of Australia’s premier food and drink events
- Credited with lifting regional awareness
- Privately owned event (formerly Brand Events, now IMG)
- Benefitted from large scale grant funding via State Government
- The intent of the event was specifically on profile raising rather than acting as a showcase for local produce and food heroes. Local businesses do however have the opportunity to participate.
Prospects and projections – Where to next?
Margaret River Region is well set to continue to cement its status as a signature location for wine and food tourism. MRBTA has a number of upcoming projects which seek to further promote and expand food and wine tourism experiences and products for the region as detailed below:

Your Margaret River Region Wine & Food Promotional Plan
The next steps in implementing the Wine & Food Promotional Plan include:

- Collaborative promotional and marketing activities with interested and willing industry partners, where cost benefits and outcomes match the MRBTA and SWDC aims
- Development of interstate and international promotional campaigns incorporating wine & food trade, tourism industry and media
- Development of an annual calendar of promotional activity to enable advanced buy-in from suppliers
- Establishment of trade and industry registers to facilitate the connection between buyers and sellers
- Establishment of a visitor numbers record and database for bookable and non-bookable members, to enable measurement of performance and to provide an ongoing direct marketing opportunity
- Development of “wine & food” trails within Margaret River and the South West Region, and assisting producers to design experiences to attract visitors which can also be packaged for international sale
- Increasing the profile of local chefs and wine makers to create demand through recognition and reputation
- Planning and implementing a consolidated or centralised means for consumers or trade to purchase branded wine & food produce
- Increasing links with the education sector and developing tourism packages incorporating specialized wine and/or food focus.

Cabin Fever event – to be held in 2017
A major initiative of the Your Margaret River Region Wine & Food Promotional Plan and supported by the South West Development Commission (SWDC) and MRBTA) Cabin Fever will feature:

- Great food prepared by amazing local chefs using the freshest regional produce
- Some of the best wines in the world produced by award-winning local winemakers
- Live music, art and entertainment from contemporary to conservative
- An array of top locally made boutique beers, ciders and whisky
- Inspiring locations and unique experiences.

Cabin Fever will bring together a range of individual events taking place across the Margaret River region to be marketed under a single brand. Events will include a mix of both free and ticketed functions.
**Budget and sources of funds**

Food and drink investment is integrated within MRBTA’s overall programme of activities. MRBTA is a not for profit incorporated association, currently with 780 members. MRBTA operates six tourist attractions – Lake Cave, Mammoth Cave, Jewel Cave, Ngilgi Cave, Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse, and Cape Naturaliste Lighthouse – and manages ground handling at Busselton Regional Airport. With the funds generated, it operates visitor centres in Busselton, Dunsborough, Margaret River and Augusta, and markets the destination to intrastate, interstate and international visitors.

**Sources of Funds**

Membership income represents only a small proportion of annual revenue - the majority of the $8.4m annual income in 2016 (approximately £4.9m) being driven by admissions, commissions from bookings and retail sales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Stage</th>
<th>Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret River Gourmet Escape</td>
<td>State Government grant of approximately $7.5m (£4.4m) over first three years of operation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRBTA marketing investment</td>
<td>Approximately $1.25m (£735k) was invested in marketing activities during 2016 (all marketing activity, not solely food and drink). This included; a $40k investment in the “First Class in a Glass” Singapore campaign and $70k on new video content to activate the Margaret River Wine Story.</td>
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**Measurement of success**

As an overall strategic outcome the Margaret River Region aims to contribute to Western Australia’s 2020 visitation target by increasing visitation to the region by 40% from 2013 - 2020. This means:

- 1.164 million (2013) to 1.630 million (2020) overnight visitors by the year 2020
- $521 million (2013) to $729 million (2020) overnight visitor spend (direct and indirect) by the year 2020

Performance in MRBTA’s first year of operation in 15/16 was impressive;

- +37% in international visitation
- +32% in visitation from other Australian States
- Over 1.1m session on margariver.com

Food and drink are a lead proposition for the region in achieving these targets. At present the region is on target to meet and exceed its 2020 overnight visitor expenditure target.
SUCCESS FACTORS

High Quality Product as a Starting Point
- The region offers a genuine depth and quality of food and drink experiences.

Wine-led
- In common with many of the world’s premier food and drink destinations, the region’s proposition is wine-led to a significant extent. A number of leading wine brands which are distributed globally provide the opportunity to raise awareness of the destination.

A Signature Event
- The Margaret River Gourmet Escape is a high quality event that was specifically targeted at lifting destination profile. It was not developed with the intent of being based solely on local businesses and producers, although opportunities are available in the gourmet village component of the event. Alongside recognition as a wine region, the event has certainly been successful in building destination profile. A practical challenge to consider is that Gourmet Escape is a privately owned event supported by national and state funding – MRBTA as the local tourism body has comparatively little influence on the event itself.

Burgeoning Links between the Tourism and Food & Drink Sectors
- Significant work has gone into delivered shared benefits – examples include; MRTBA membership options than provide options for all businesses, sharing wine volume sales and visitation growth as co-outputs in a funding programme and building supply chain/ buyer & seller linkages. Approximately 15% of MRBTA’s members are wine businesses.

Timing
- Development of Margaret River’s food and drink experiences has allowed the region to surf the wave of food and drink popularity – with the impetus provided by proactively pushing content opportunities to Tourism Australia, the region has benefitted from a high profile in the highly successful Restaurant Australia campaign.

Alignment
- The region has been able to fully leverage partnership benefits through ensuring that strategic priorities are aligned. MRBTA’s MOU with the South West Development Corporation is especially illustrative - wine industry sales volumes are incorporated in the project alongside tourism outcomes.

Adding Value
- MRBTA’s work on itineraries, interpretative stories and building distribution of tour options has started to add significant value.
SUCCESS FACTORS (cont.)

Responsive Tourism Structures
- MRBTA has been successful in creating strong linkages between the food and drink and tourism sectors - membership packages provide for the needs of both sectors. MRBTA’s structure and expertise has enabled it provide tour and experience booking solutions which add value to existing provision.

Distribution and Trade Relationships
- MRBTA’s focus to date has primarily been on marketing direct to the consumer via its destination website and campaign activity - MRBTA is a new organisation and it has made a conscious choice to focus on consumer engagement. In terms of distribution, it relies significantly on being able to leverage the reach provided by regional, state and national tourism agency partners.

Brand-led
- The adoption of Your Margaret River Region branding across all aspects of tourism in the region, including marketing and signage, provides a common look and feel across products and a consistent regional brand message. The thumbprint branding adopted reflects the 5 key propositions for the region (wine & wineries, arts & wellbeing, active & adventure, nature & environment and eat and drink) enabling an integrated approach to be taken to destination marketing, with each of the elements being able to be lead propositions where appropriate. Consensus suggests strong support for the brand. Partnerships with the wine industry (Singapore Campaign, wine shop partnership etc.) provide examples of a brand-led approach which delivers value and mutual benefits for two sectors of the economy.
Implications for the projects delivered through the Discover England Fund

IMPLICATIONS FOR DISCOVER ENGLAND FUND PROJECTS

Overall, MRBTA is pleased with the progress that has been made in a short period, with good progress in establishing itself as an organisation and bringing a new brand to market. Points to highlight include:

- Margaret River is a largely a self-drive destination. However with growing numbers of visitors from Asian markets who are looking for tour options, the region has responded to an identified need. Over 100 commercially-provided tours are available on the destination website, with MRBTA providing a booking platform (via a DMS provider). A range of self-drive itinerary options are also presented for visitors, although these are not currently bookable. The organisation is planning a review of their booking platform, and although not a priority at present would potentially include reviewing the feasibility of developing dynamic packaging functionality related to itineraries.

- Margaret River has a high quality set of food and drink assets which enables it to use this subject area as one of its leading destination experiences. MBRTA integrates food and drink as a part of its overall marketing and positioning – the ‘wine & wineries’ and ‘eat & drink’ work streams represent approximately 40% of the organisation’s investment alongside the other elements of its ‘thumbprint’ branding strategy (wine & wineries, eat & drink, arts & wellbeing, active & adventure and nature & environment). The majority of marketing activity is targeted at mainstream leisure audiences rather than ‘foodies’. For destinations that are not renowned for their food and drink experiences, integration as supporting rather than leading market propositions represents a potential opportunity.

- There is no substitute for depth and quality of food & drink produce as the basis for initiatives. In Margaret River’s case, the addition of a signature event added value to an already strong proposition, accelerating growth in destination profile and awareness.

- Alignment with national programmes should not be underestimated. Successful positioning as part of Tourism Australia’s food and drink marketing activities significantly extended market reach beyond what would have been possible for the destination to achieve through its own investment.

- Margaret River authorities have done a great job in aligning food and drink and tourism objectives - both industries readily acknowledge and embrace available synergies. Of 780 MRBTA members, 120 are wine businesses.
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Appendix 1: Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association (MRBTA)

Destination Ambitions and Objectives

Vision for the MRBTA

By 2020, the MRBTA will be regarded as Australia’s leading Destination Tourism Association, inspiring the world to explore The Margaret River Region.

To achieve this, MRBTA’s Wine & Food Promotional Plan proposes various actions including:

1. Developing and implementing a food and wine promotional strategy
   a. Including a clear range of activities and programs that interested wine and food industry businesses can participate in to promote their product and tourism related experiences.
   b. Incorporating key measurable outcomes and performance indicators to enable the review and identification of success of activities.
   c. To increase brand awareness, visitation to businesses and sales of product.

2. Improving and streamlining communications involving export and promotional opportunities available and connect businesses with those opportunities
   a. to destinations identified as “key” as part of the strategy
   b. including both promotion and sale of product

3. Work with businesses to expand and develop export ready product across wine, food, accommodation, tour and events, and ensure incorporation of consistent branding on all product

4. Capitalise on international media/promotion/event opportunities through joint investment between South West Development Corporation & MRBTA, and collaborative partnerships with producers and other industry partners.

5. Facilitate partnerships with food, wine, trade and tourism industry bodies to gain greater access to markets and leverage promotional opportunities.

Margaret River Region – Progress against 2020 Expenditure Target

Source: MRBTA, AGM Presentation, 2016
MRBTA Income and Investment

MRBTA Sources of Income 2016

MRBTA Expenses 2016

MRBTA, AGM Presentation, 2016
Specific performance measurements include;

Tourism Measurement
- Increased annual regional visitation
- Package itinerary bookings & sales
- Growth in proportional value added to Tourism WA targets
- Growth in proportional value added to Tourism Australia targets

Media Measurement
- Coverage and presence in print publications
- Online coverage (including unpaid advertising) on Australian and foreign based or targeted websites
- Total projected $ value of media exposure

Activity Measurement
- Number of promotional activities launched and completed
- Volume of new product added to Producer Database
- Volume of new saleable wine and food product added to margaretriver.com

Wine Export and Wine Sales Measurement
- Increased presence in international markets with distribution partners
- $ value increase in export sales
- Sales return on event and promotional activities
- Inward niche wine & food groups hosted within the region
- Proportional value added to Austrade / Wine Australia targets

Source: Food and Wine Promotional Plan, MRBTA, 2016
Appendix 2: Governance and Structure of the Margaret River Visitor Economy

Tourism Australia is the Australian Government agency responsible for attracting international visitors to Australia, both for leisure and business events. The organisation is active in around 16 key markets and activities including advertising, PR and media programs, trade shows and industry programs, consumer promotions, online communications and consumer research. Led through its award winning ‘Restaurant Australia’ initiative, food and drink has been a key strand of national tourism marketing.

At State level, Tourism Western Australia (TWA) focuses on marketing the State; developing, attracting and promoting major sporting, arts, cultural and business events; and supporting major projects that will draw visitors to particular destinations. The organisation works in partnership with the private sector, industry and government to develop WA’s iconic tourism experiences and promote them locally, nationally and internationally. TWA are a key partner in promoting Margaret River to domestic and international markets. In addition, TWA in its role as co-ordinator for the State’s major event funding, financially supports the Margaret River Gourmet Escapes event – the region’s premier food and drink experience.

Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) are responsible for marketing and promoting each of their respective destinations. In WA, there are 5 RTOs that cover Perth and surrounds, the South West, the Coral Coast, the North West and the Golden Outback. Margaret River is a signature destination within the South West region. Australia’s South West Inc. (ASW) is the peak tourism body for the region with the primary role to stimulate visitation.

Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association (MRBTA) was established on 1 July 2015 and is the product of two previously competing entities, the Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association (AMRTA) and Geographe Bay Tourism Association (GBTA). The formation of the MRBTA marks the beginning of a new era in tourism for the Margaret River Region. It is not for profit incorporated association with more than 700 members. The MRBTA operates six tourist attractions – Lake Cave, Mammoth Cave, Jewel Cave, Ngalgi Cave, Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse, and Cape Naturaliste Lighthouse – and manages ground handling at Busselton Regional Airport. With the funds generated, it operates visitor centres in Busselton, Dunsborough, Margaret River and Augusta, and markets the destination to intrastate, interstate and international visitors.
Food and drink is an increasingly important component of the Australia's tourism experiences. Recent research by BDA Marketing for Tourism Australia demonstrates that ‘great food, wine, and local cuisine’ is a key factor for deciding on holiday destinations in the global market, ranked ahead of world class beauty and natural environments xi.

In response to the growing demand for food and wine experiences, Tourism Australia established the Restaurant Australia initiative to put the spotlight on Australia’s finest array of produce served in the most stunning locations in the world. The campaign has improved the international perception of Australia’s food and wine fare, and research indicates that visitor expenditure on food and wine in Australia has grown by $1 billion (or 25%) since 2014 xii.

At State level, Western Australia has positioned itself as an internationally recognised destination for gourmet travellers. Taste 2020 developed by Tourism Western Australia, seeks to deliver on visitors’ demands to taste authentic local produce in spectacular surroundings, elevate tourism, wine, agricultural and fishing industries and to help meet the State’s target of increasing the value of tourism in Western Australia to $12 billion by 2020 xiii.

The Margaret River Region is recognised at national and state levels as a star location for food and wine tourism. The wine and produce form the Margaret River Region, and signature food event - Margaret River Gourmet Escape; have been actively profiled under the Restaurant Australia initiative.

Taste 2020 identifies Margaret River Gourmet Escape as the State’s flagship food and wine event that showcases Western Australia as a world-class culinary destination. The strategy highlights the wineries of the Margaret River Region, combined with seafood and natural beauty, as significant draw-cards for tourists to WA. Tasting and appreciating wines in the Margaret River is identified as the top appealing culinary tourism experience to meet the State’s primary target tourism markets.
Tourism Western Australia, ‘Destination Margaret River’, viewed 13 September 2016 at http://www.westernaustralia.com/en/Destination/Margaret_River/56b266c62880253d74c4eee9
Margaret River Wine and Food Promotional Plan
Ultimate Winery Experiences Australia is a membership program with strict criteria to ensure only the highest quality wineries are eligible. Details at http://www.ultimatewineryexperiences.com.au/