

CASE STUDY

FLEURIEU FOOD FESTIVAL 2025

Delivering regional impact through collaboration and curation



Overview

The 2025 Fleurieu Food Festival marked a significant milestone in the evolution of South Australia's premier winter food and wine celebration. Managed by South Australia Destination Management Co. (SAdmc) on behalf of Fleurieu Food Inc. and Fleurieu Peninsula Tourism, the festival showcased more than 80 curated events across the region throughout August – from McLaren Vale to Yankalilla, Langhorne Creek, and Victor Harbor.

SAdmc was engaged to provide professional event coordination, marketing, communications, and stakeholder engagement – transforming the recommendations from the 2024 independent review into tangible outcomes that elevated the festival's impact, visibility, and visitor experience.

The Challenge

The 2024 Fleurieu Food Festival Review identified several challenges impacting the event's sustainability – including fragmented governance, inconsistent event quality, limited resourcing, and the need for stronger marketing and financial structures. Despite its potential, the festival required a professional, coordinated approach to deliver on its vision: celebrating the Fleurieu's producers and positioning the region as a year-round culinary destination.

The Solution

SAdmc implemented a holistic event management model, introducing structure, strategy, and storytelling to strengthen the festival's foundations.

Key deliverables included:

- **Professional Coordination & Governance:** South Australia Destination Management Co. worked collaboratively with Fleurieu Food Inc., Fleurieu Peninsula Tourism, the four regional councils, Regional Development Australia – Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, and festival sponsors to oversee program development, financial tracking, and event logistics. This coordinated approach ensured strong governance, accountability, and alignment across all stakeholders.
- **Curated Event Program:** Guided by the 'quality over quantity' principle, SAdmc curated a diverse program of over 80 events, balancing small-scale, hands-on experiences with larger hero activations that celebrated regional authenticity.
- **Integrated Marketing & PR:** Led by Fleurieu Peninsula Tourism and supported by South Australia Destination Management Co., a revitalised marketing and PR campaign drove record engagement across digital platforms. Website traffic, social media reach, and earned media exposure all surpassed previous years, with targeted PR activity delivering strong state and national coverage that elevated the festival's profile.

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Key deliverables (continued):

- **Stakeholder & Industry Engagement:** SAdmc coordinated communication across councils, tourism bodies, and operators, streamlining collaboration and ensuring local businesses were supported in creating high-quality experiences.
- **Festival Launch Event:** SAdmc coordinated and delivered the official festival launch at Vale Brewing, bringing together industry leaders, government representatives, and festival partners to celebrate the commencement of the month-long program. The team prepared detailed event briefs, issued invitations to state government representatives and key stakeholders, and ensured a seamless event experience that set the tone for the festival's success.

The Outcome

The 2025 Fleurieu Food Festival delivered outstanding results across visitor engagement, digital performance, and regional collaboration.

Festival & Marketing Outcomes

- 80+ curated events held across four council areas
- Record website traffic and digital engagement
- Increased media coverage and stronger festival branding
- Higher local participation and new event hosts supported through professional guidance
- Positive stakeholder feedback highlighting improved coordination, curation, and marketing execution

Economic Outcomes

- \$393,400 in direct visitor expenditure — primarily across accommodation, food services, and retail trade
- \$602,642 total economic output, including flow-on supply-chain and consumption effects
- \$293,287 total value added to the regional economy
- 33 local jobs supported throughout the festival period
- The festival strengthened the Fleurieu Peninsula's reputation as a leading food and wine destination and demonstrated how strategic destination management can drive measurable economic and community benefits during the winter season.

Source Economic Outcomes: Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island Economic Impact Model, September 2025.

Looking Ahead

Building on the success of 2025, SAdmc looks forward to supporting Fleurieu Peninsula Tourism and Fleurieu Food Inc. as they continue to strengthen the festival's governance, funding model, and long-term sustainability. The insights gained this year provide a strong foundation for future growth, ensuring the Fleurieu Food Festival continues to be recognised as a signature event in South Australia's tourism calendar.