

# 6.5 Tapping into tourism

PRODUCT
DISTRIBUTION
<b>PROMOTION</b>
PEOPLE
FINANCE
RISK
GROWTH

- > *Opportunities*
- > *Potential disadvantages*
- > *Tips for success*

Many small food businesses do well from the growing interest in tourism; and it can provide valuable cash flow at relatively high margins to support other market-building activity. Opportunities include

- > negotiating to place or serve your product in local restaurants and cafés, cellar door facilities and visitor information centres
- > selling your product through local gourmet stores, or even opening your own store
- > opening up your production facility if the production process is interesting in itself, and personal and food safety risks can be managed

## **Tips for success**

- > Ensure that your product and its ingredients are as local and authentic as possible.
  - > Become a member of your local food group and regional tourism association. Liaise closely with your local food and wine region organisations and tourism membership and marketing bodies, and participate actively in regional food and wine events.
  - > Register your business with the SATC Online Services Group, which will put you up on [www.southaustralia.com](http://www.southaustralia.com).
  - > Ensure you are included on any trail map or visitor information point area diagram. Arrange clear signage from nearby intersections, and at the entry to your property, and have a simple map that you can post or fax to potential visitors.
  - > Provide advertising literature to petrol stations, local motels and caravan parks, bus tour operators, and of course the visitor information centre and council chambers.
  - > Negotiate with local restaurateurs and cafés to use and highlight your product on their menus.
  - > If visitors will be coming to your facility, ensure that it projects a consistent image with your quality product. It needs to be clean and attractive.
  - > Promote your facility on your business website.
  - > Think about offering special, focused events at a low cost to bring people in, such as guided tastings. If you provide tours, develop a standard spiel for yourself and other staff who guide visitors through. Keep it light and informative, and be ready to answer questions.
- > Support your product with recipe ideas and information about the history and production process. Display awards and qualifications prominently. Tell your story!
  - > Ensure that you have appropriate packaging for on the spot takeaway sales.
  - > Use a visitor book to collect comments, ideas, names and addresses for your mailing list. Use visitor comments as valuable, free market research, and make a note of any suggestions for presentation ideas and product extension.
  - > Rather than putting lots of money into standalone brochures that may not pay for themselves, consider higher impact advertising in the regional *Secrets* Visitor Guide.
  - > If your product fits neatly with a local theme, work with other businesses to establish a trail or joint product of some kind, and market together. Do other local businesses a favour by recommending them to visitors who come to your facility.
  - > If you supply local retailers, don't undercut them at your own front counter. Support them—and boost your margins—by charging retail prices for direct sales.



### ***Potential disadvantages***

Being in tourism may not be profitable in itself, however, and may distract you from more profitable opportunities elsewhere. As always, evaluate the opportunity carefully, weigh up the costs and benefits, and plan methodically for smooth implementation.

Above all, don't confuse tourism opportunities with your core business—unless they really are your core business! If not, think of them as an adjunct and tap into the opportunities, while maintaining your focus on your core business.

Don't forget to consider the following issues in your planning:

- > Being open to the public requires a personal presence, which may interfere with your production schedule and impose extra pressure on your personal and family life.
- > Tourists often expect you to be open long hours, 7 days a week. If you are not prepared to meet this expectation, you may experience disappointed customers and low visitor numbers. Ensure your opening hours are telegraphed to visitors well before they arrive at your front door by including them prominently in all advertising and listings.
- > Food safety and personal safety may require adjustments to your premises, and tours may require you to provide hygiene clothing.

#### **Websites**

[www.tourism.sa.gov.au/publications/ResearchReports-General/PDFDocument/OperatorsGuide2003a.pdf](http://www.tourism.sa.gov.au/publications/ResearchReports-General/PDFDocument/OperatorsGuide2003a.pdf)

#### **Case studies**

[www.winetourism.com.au/Documents/SATC\\_Thorn%20park.pdf](http://www.winetourism.com.au/Documents/SATC_Thorn%20park.pdf)

[www.winetourism.com.au/Documents/SATC\\_Island%20pure.pdf](http://www.winetourism.com.au/Documents/SATC_Island%20pure.pdf)

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