

LANDMARK POSTCODE

5253



View over Murray River
Image courtesy of Rural City of Murray Bridge

LOCATION: Murray Bridge
45 mins south east of Adelaide

POPULATION: 18,500

INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, manufacturing, retail and community services, tourism.

CLIMATE: Mediterranean.
Summer 14.5C – 28.9C.
Winter 5.4C – 16.2C.
Annual rainfall 347mm.

With its three bridges spanning the Murray River, this prosperous South Australian town has been an important river crossing since the days of paddle steamers.

The river is the heart and soul of Murray Bridge. It sustains industry, drives tourism and ensures a quality of life that is attracting increasing numbers of commuters and rural life-stylers from Adelaide.

Set in the fertile Murraylands and on the main route to the eastern states, Murray Bridge is the commercial centre of a rich horticultural and dairy region.

Food manufacturing is a multi-million dollar industry and includes meat, dairy, fish and vegetable processing.

Economic vibrancy is driving growth in distribution and warehousing, environmental and water resource management, mining and intensive animal industry.

Landmark's Dylan Strong says Murray Bridge is being transformed as more people realise the appeal of life in a river town.

"Tourism grows every year and many visitors have decided to make the move permanent," says Dylan.

"We are within commuting distance of Adelaide and, as other closer towns reach capacity, we are the next big centre for people wanting to make that move to the country."

The redevelopment of riverfront reserves is ongoing and next on the list is the South Terrace Retail Precinct with its mix of shops, cafes, cinemas and public library to compliment existing retail infrastructure.

Work on the new \$500 million state-of-the-art Mobilong prison begins next year and the two-year construction phase will be a major jobs boost.

The early settlers established a river port at Murray Bridge to freight wheat, wool and dairy produce – first by paddle steamer, then by rail and road.

During the 1920s and 1930s more wheat was trans-shipped across the wharf in Murray Bridge than any other port in South Australia, except Port Adelaide. There were times when 16 freight trains would leave Murray Bridge in one day.

The historic first bridge was built in 1879, a rail bridge opened in 1925, and a second road bridge – the longest across the Murray – was completed in 1979.

These days the river plays a dual role for irrigation and recreation. Murray Bridge is a summer playground for boating, fishing and swimming. Houseboats recall a paddle steamer past and there are several local marinas. Nearby Mannum has the largest houseboat fleet in Australia. Each year, visitors spend around \$80 million across the region.

The Murraylands was traditionally a major tomato growing area. These days, potatoes, onions, carrots, salad vegetables, herbs and mushrooms are part of the mix.

"The market for horticulture land has been tough during the past 24 months because the water situation for irrigators is so critical," says Dylan.

The water crisis is affecting the Murraylands reputation as a first rate dairy region.

"We're certainly seeing changes in traditional land use and a lot more dairy country is being used to run beef."

Dylan says cropping and grazing country is usually tightly held within families. Smaller parcels of land are in high demand among growers wanting to expand.

"There's huge potential here – we're only just getting started, really."

Contact:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: Good family home from \$220,000.

Lifestyle: 100 acres close to town \$150,000 to \$250,000.

With river views \$250,000 to \$350,000.

Larger acreage: Grazing and cropping \$1500 to \$2500 per acre.