



CYCLING FACT SHEET No. 40

Margaret River is a bicycle tourism magnet

Bicycle tourism is a rapidly growing industry around the world and its potential impact on the Western Australian economy is just starting to become obvious.

Apparently much of Europe is abuzz with the Margaret River region of our South-West, after hearing about its unique mix of rugged coastal scenery, spectacular caves, tall eucalypt forests and world-class wineries.

When you get the chance to explore, the region's lure for bicycle tourists quickly becomes clear, with so much to see in such a compact area and a flat terrain for easy riding.

With one exception, all of the major attractions can be reached via shared paths, rail trails or quiet back roads, thereby allowing cyclists to avoid the difficult riding environments of Bussell Highway and Caves Road.

For starters, a superb shared path runs ten kilometres from the centre of town to Prevelly beach.

North of the Margaret River, there are more than 50 wineries open to the public, with many having their own restaurant or café, and because moderate riding burns about 140 kilojoules per kilometre, bike tourists can indulge in the delicious food on offer without feeling guilty.

The key link to this northern zone is a well-signposted 20km rail trail that meanders through native forest and lush farmland, from Gnaraway Road, near Leeuwin Estate, to Cowaramup. The old railway tracks have long gone but the remaining reserve makes an ideal hard surface for hybrid, comfort and mountain bikes.

From the rail trail it is easy to branch off onto quiet back roads and visit major landmark properties such as Vasse Felix, Sandalford and Palandri, along with smaller boutique wineries, breweries, craft shops, art galleries and a chocolate factory.

South of town there are some more wineries to visit, including Leeuwin Estate and Voyager, along with Eagles Heritage wildlife park and even a seashell museum. The Lake Cave visitor's centre and nearby Mammoth Cave can both be reached via a quiet route, although from Forest Grove Road you do need to ride a few hundred metres along busy Caves Road.

East of Margaret River is the Ten Mile Trail that follows a picturesque old timber tramway along the river.

So consider taking your bike, or hiring one when you get there, and then spending a wonderful few days pedalling around the region. Just don't be surprised if you meet many other riders who have come much further to share exactly the same experience.

This fact sheet is one of a series dealing with the use of bicycles for recreation and transport in Western Australia. The series looks at a range of cycling-related topics including ride routes, touring tips, maintenance, safety, road rules, insurance and product reviews. You can find more cycling fact sheets online at www.transport.wa.gov.au/cycling



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