

## A rose amongst the vines

By Mel Jaunay

On a gentle rise nestled between the vineyards of Lyndoch on Barossa Valley Way, there is a place that invites tranquillity, permeates culture and arouses the senses.

With 22 acres of sprawling gardens first conceptualized by well-known Barossa wine maker and entrepreneur, Hermann Thumm and his wife, Inga in 1969, Lyndoch Hill accommodation and the adjoining Barossa Chateau are now almost concealed by greenery, but as current owner, Mandy Creed explains, it's a gem worth re-discovering.

"It's a perfect time to get locals into their own backyard," she said, walking along a section of the five kilometres of pathways that meander through the property, two of Lyndoch Hill's three resident dogs, Merlot and Max following closely at her heels.

"Half of Lyndoch probably haven't even walked through our gardens... It's a lovely place to stop and smell the roses, literally!"

Lyndoch Hill's gardens are home to 30,000 roses, with the Queen's Rose Garden in front of the Chateau famously opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2002.

"It's a hidden secret of the Barossa, and it really shouldn't be," said Mandy.

She and husband, Mark took ownership of Lyndoch Hill in 2008, later purchasing the adjoining Chateau as well.

In just 12 years, the couple have developed and diversified the property's offerings to include accommodation, function rooms, art and antique galleries, a cellar door, the restaurant and cafe, and gift shop.

"We've diversified because I think this

industry has to. Some days we sell more handbags than wine!" laughed Mandy, who was born in Crystal Brook and started her working life as an ER nurse.

High school sweetheart, Mark became an engineer, but the couple had such success amassing a portfolio of 17 bed and breakfasts on the side, they decided to make the full time switch to hospitality, as well as wine making under Mark's label, Creed Wines.

Together they've breathed new life into the venue, mindfully retaining the Thumm wine tourism heritage, while simultaneously breaking down the perception of it being a place reserved only for "special occasions".

"Food is a big part of what we do," explained Mandy.

"And it's real food, it's not pretentious."

Plentiful fruit and vegetables are grown on site in rows of recycled wine barrels and there is a strong focus on sustainability and sourcing local produce, steered by Head Chef of seven years, Alana Brabin.

Community is also of immense importance to the Creeds, who train and employ local people, host fund raisers, community events, and invite every opportunity to get locals through their door.

"You need community support to run these things," said Mandy, with never a truer word spoken during this COVID era and Lyndoch's 180th year, when local tourism has become so important to the survival of businesses everywhere.

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Fit for a queen: high tea in the Barossa Chateau Queen's Rose Garden with gift store manager, Belinda Edwards; restaurant manager, Krista Anderson; and owner, Mandy Creed.

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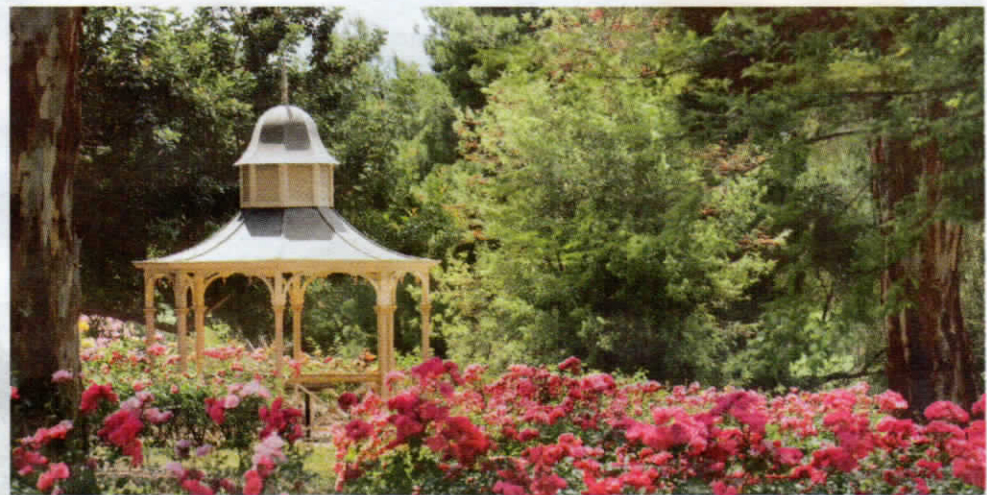
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